Hispana/Latina Psychology

Hall & Barongan: Ch 7
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Introductory Comments on ‘La Psicologia Chicana/Latina’
.a.k.a. the Psychology of Hispanics

1. Definitions:
   – **Chicano (Chicana) & Mexican (Mexicana) American** = US residents of Mexican origin (native and long term immigrant)
   – **Latin (Latina/o) & Hispanic (Hispana/o) & La Raza** = generic term for all people of Spanish-speaking origins.
   – **Hispana/o** = Spanish origins (Does not include Brazilians who speak Portugese)
   – **Latina/o** = Latin America (Central & South America) origins
     • Mexicana/o = Mexican origins
     • Chicana/o = Mexican origins in US
   – **Mestizo** = people of Spanish and Central South American Descent.
2. Demographic Data
   • US Census 1990 =
     – 22.4 million Hispanics in US (53% increase from 1980: US pop increased by only 10%) 10% of pop is Hispanic.
     – US Census 2000 = (based on estimates)
       • 32.4 million (13% of population is Hispana/o or Latina/o).
       • 13.5 million Chicana/o (½ of all Latina in US) (54% increase from 1980)

     – Fastest Growing group is “Other Latina”
     – 1.3 million from Central America
     – 1 million from South America
     – .5 million from the Dominican Republic
     – 2.7 million Puerto Ricans (35% growth)
     – 1 million Cubans (30% growth)

   • 1998 26 % live in poverty (comparable with African American %)
II. Amado M. Padilla
“Synopsis of the History of Chicano Psychology”

A. Psychology in Spain
   1. Spain is the Cradle of Psychology
      – Psychology and Medicine were intertwined
      – Medical Belief system influenced by Celts, Phoenicians, Visigoths, Romans, Jews, & Moors. (The best/worst of Middle East, North Africa, and Europe).
      – 1409 - first hospital for the mentally ill is established in Valencia.
      – Hospital de Nuestra Dona Santa Maria de los Inocentes.

   2. Juan Luis Vives (1492-1540)
      – The Father of modern psychology
      – Called for an empirical approach to the study of mental activity, memory, and emotions (forerunner of Descarte & Francis Bacon).

   3. Spain’s focus on humane treatment of the mentally ill preceded the same movements in France (Phillipe Pinel), England (William Tuke, a Quaker), and Italy (Vincenzo Chiarugi) by nearly 400 years (circa 1790's).
C. Psychology in the New World

1. Prior to conquest.
   - Extensive medical and psychological knowledge was accumulated by the Aztecs, Mayas, and Incas.

2. The Aztecs at the time of conquest.
   - Cortez arrives in Tenochtitlan in 1519
     - Finds well developed systems of astronomy, mathematics, architecture, farming, botany, public sanitation, sewage disposal and medicine.
     - Recognized mania, schizophrenia, hysteria, and depression.
   - Two types of insanity
     - Passive Insanity (tlauiiliscayotl)
     - Active Insanity (xolopeyotl) result of use of jimson weed, peyote buttons, and psilocybin mushrooms.
   - Spanish Destroyed the medical records of most of the native civilizations they came in contact with.
Chicano Psychology cont

3. Psychology in Mexico after the conquest.

- 1567 – First Mental Heath facility in the Americas, established in Mexico. *Hospital y Asilo de Convalesientes de San Hipolito*. (First US facility established in 1751)
- Benito Diaz de Gamarra - *Elemanta Recentioris Philosophiae* (1774) - book on topics of consciousness, self knowledge, biological aspects of the mind, and treatment of mental problems.
- Jose Ingnacio Bartolache - first study of Hysteria one hundred years before Charcot, Jenet, and Freud’s work on the same topic.
- 1916 – First Psych lab in Mexico Established by Enrique O. Aragon
- 1936 – psychology first taught as a discipline in Mexico by Ezequiel Chavez.
- 1942 – First Department of Psychology in Mexico Established.
III. Cultural Values (hall, p. 244)

- **Respeto**
  - respect deference and obedience to elders.

- **Machismo**
  - Courage, family responsibility; potentially sexist, antisocial, and narcissistic

- **Marianismo**
  - Spirituality, enduring suffering, sexual purity, place child welfare above own.

- **Personalismo**
  - Importance of interpersonal relationships

- **Familismo**
  - Importance of immediate and extended family

- **Religiosity**
  - Belief in and worship of a higher being, fatalism
IV. Cervantes & Ramirez
“Sprituality and Family Dynamics in Psychotherapy with Latino Children”

1. Spirituality
   - a transcendent level of consciousness
   - Allows for:
     - existential purpose and mission
     - the search for harmony and wholeness
     - a fundamental belief in the existence of a greater, all-loving presence in the universe.

2. Mestizo Perspective = includes physical, psychological, cultural, and spiritual aspects from both Spanish and native cultures.

3. Arises from:
   - the need for survival of the native people facing Spanish domination lead toward spiritual cooperation.
   - the amalgamation of two worldviews and orientations toward life.
   - Intersection of native and European religious practices.
   - Struggle to preserve Native ideologies in face of new European learning.

4. Process is viewed as a dynamic interaction bc ultimately both cultures were changed.
IV. Spirituality Continued

5. Characteristics of the Mestizo Perspective.
   a. each person’s life experience is important (we all have stories to tell and lessons to learn.
   b. physical and social environment must be in harmony for psychological adjustment (e.g., respect for all living things)
   c. openness to diversity and acceptance of all peoples.
   d. learning from diversity to advance all people (humanism)
   e. theistic cosmology that protects, influences, and engages all life.

- Family and Social Connectedness are dominant issues in the Mestizo Perspective.
IV. Spirituality Continued

6. Curanderismo

A. Curanderos: folk healers of Central and South America

- Treatment focused on social, psychological, and physical factors.
- Social – Community was responsible for helping individual attain health (much like our current focus on Community Mental Health practices).
- Psychological – Treated by specialists called Tonalpouhiqui. Who used dream interpretation and psychotherapy similar to Freud’s later work.
- Physical – Heart is seat of the mind (feelings and motivation). Wear a flower to protect the heart (keeps one from “losing his heart”).
IV. Spirituality Continued

B. Four Views of Illness and Health
   a. Life is ordained by Devine will - disobeying this will results in illness
   b. Illness has spiritual, social & interpersonal aspects not a chance biological event.
   c. Metaphysical framework
      1. the mind can influence social, interpersonal, and spiritual events.
      2. wishes and ritual can cause good or bad fortune
      3. communication with the spirit world is real and can have healing outcomes.
   d. health is a naturalistic process, the goal is homeostasis between biology, social factors, psychological factors, and spiritual factors.

C. Healing makes use of imagery through prayer, ritual, and directed thought sequences that provide patients with a context from which to view their problem (giving them feelings of control over the problem = e.g. half the cure is knowing what the problem is)

7. There is much variation in the spirituality of Chicano families and this needs to be taken into account when determining the course of therapy.
   – E.g., Level of acculturation is very important