Applying Liberation Psychology Tenets to the Career Trajectory of the First Chicano Psychologist

Sarah E. Sanders
University of Akron Main Campus

Alejandra Gonzalez Lopez

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Cover Page Footnote

"*En cada cabeza un mundo*" (In each head a world). So often said the first Chicano to earn a Ph.D. in psychology, Alfredo Castañeda (1923-1981). This traditional Latin American *dicho*, or adage, was a favorite of Castañeda's, and captures the aim of his research in both theory and practice, as it highlights the value he placed on diversity and the unique contributions of each individual's worldview. Castañeda's fondness for the saying is characteristic given that he was a pioneer and proponent of various inclusive frameworks (i.e., cultural democracy, cultural pluralism, and biculturalism) as tools to promote social justice, particularly in the realm of educational equity in the United States.

Castañeda was the first Latinx (i.e., individual of Latin American descent living in the United States) to earn a Ph.D. in psychology and the first Mexican American to hold a full professorship in the United States (American Psychological Association, 2005; Ramirez, 1981). The term Chicano (i.e., a label signaling pride in one's Mexican American identity and commitment to social justice activism; Aviña, 1973) is used in the current work's title to highlight Castañeda's legacy of activism and social justice for marginalized populations, particularly Mexican American children. Castañeda experienced a prolific career in teaching and research that began by exploring universal elements in children's learning and anxiety and ultimately transformed into an emphasis on multiculturalism, cultural strengths, advocacy, and social justice.

Little has been documented regarding contributors and precipitants to Castañeda's decision to pursue doctoral-level studies and ultimately experience an influential career as the first Latinx Ph.D. psychologist in the United States. However, exploring his career trajectory reveals the presence of key tenets of liberation psychology – particularly in the realm of accessing cultural strengths inherent within traditional Latinx values. We do not know what drove Castañeda to carve out a path then unheard of among his Mexican American peers to enter the field of professional psychology. In re-examining his career, we can infer that the transformation of his professional focus and the spirit for this work was sustained through psychological liberation via an emphasis on, and reconnection with, culture.

We used a combination of data to inform the current project, including interviews from Castañeda's former graduate students, published obituaries and memorial tributes, and Castañeda's published and unpublished works in an aim to gain a sense of his early life and motivations for pursuing psychology. There is a dearth of published information on early Latinx psychologists and, more specifically, pioneering Mexican American psychologists embracing a Chicano identity. Given that Chicano is a self-ascribed label to highlight pride in one's Mexican American ethnic identity and commitment to social justice (Aviña, 1973), we sought to highlight his unique perspective by tracing his work through a model of identity development and social justice activism through liberation.

Castañeda's former students, Manuel Ramirez III of the University of Texas, Austin and Lewis Lipsitt of Brown University, were identified by Dr. David Baker, Director of the Cummings Center for the History of Psychology and Professor of Psychology at the University of Akron, as gracious beneficiaries of Castañeda's mentorship who were willing to discuss their personal and professional relationships with their advisor. The semi-structured interviews were completed separately and took place in person. They were audio-recorded and transcribed to provide primary data regarding Castañeda's career trajectory as shaped by his ever-evolving ethnic identity situated within shifting sociopolitical environmental contexts. Content across the interviews, combined with biographical data and examination of Castañeda's research program, revealed a transformational career trajectory that highlights his foray from the experimental pursuit of human universals to an emphasis on diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice advocacy. In the current project, liberation psychology tenets are applied to his career trajectory to highlight the underlying parallel process of psychological liberation. In other words, this project seeks to explore psychological, cultural, and sociopolitical forces relevant to Castañeda's career development.

Liberation Psychology

Liberation psychology was developed in El Salvador during the Civil War of the 1980s out of a critique of North American psychology and its emphasis on individualism and an absence of historical context (Martin Baró, 1994). The field's roots were influenced by liberation theologies of 1960s Latin America that emphasized social responsibility to address poverty and oppression (Martin Baró, 1989). Proponents of liberation psychology argued that existing psychological frameworks seeking to explain human behavior did not take into account the experiences of oppressed and marginalized members of society and were therefore poised to further increase social disparities by the maintenance of the status quo (Greenleaf & Bryant, 2012). For example, a way in which mainstream psychology might perpetuate the status quo includes a clinician encouraging a racially Black-identifying client to reframe their "negative thought" that the police may pose a threat to Black communities.

Liberation psychology frameworks suggest that within oppressive sociopolitical structures, it is challenging for marginalized group members to develop and maintain positive identities, given negative messages, such as stereotypes, about their groups. As such, members of marginalized groups may be pathologized for their response to oppression (e.g., a clinician may label a client as non-compliant for not disclosing personal information in therapy, when the client may struggle to trust professionals who operate within traditionally oppressive social structures, such as health care).

Liberation Psychology in Practice

Liberation psychology theory suggests that, in response to the internalization of negative social messages, there are specific processes underlying an individual's psychological liberation toward achieving a healthy identity and promoting well-being. For example, *conscientizacion* refers to the raising of sociopolitical consciousness so that individuals may become aware of the influences of structural oppression in their lives and their communities, thereby challenging pathological explanations for issues such as poverty or mental illness (Martín-Baró, 1989).

From a practical application standpoint, clinicians implementing liberation psychology interventions might work with clients toward psychological liberation through the following processes: helping to raise a client's critical consciousness for structural contributors to their individual experience; promoting safe environments in which to process oppressive experiences and provide opportunities for catharsis; identifying opportunities for empowerment within the oppressive sociopolitical structures; and mobilizing for social action to promote liberation at a community level (Comas-Díaz, 2006; Prochaska & Norcross, 2007). One example of a developmental trajectory of intrapsychic processes underlying psychological liberation may be conceptualized as consciousness-raising, catharsis, and empowerment, leading to action toward social justice.

Liberation psychology as a field was not developed until after Castañeda's death in 1981. Yet, the spirit of psychological liberation is a thread throughout his career as evidenced by the presence of various liberation psychology principles to be discussed further. Specifically, we present Latino ethnic identity development as a framework within liberation psychology from which we can understand Castañeda's changing emphases during different stages of his career.

Latinx Ethnic Identity Development

Within the realm of liberation psychology, various models of identity development provide conceptual frameworks for stages that an individual from a marginalized group progresses through to achieve a healthy, or integrated, identity. More advanced stages of identity development are consistently correlated with better psychological outcomes (Ruiz, 1990; Sue & Sue, 2013). Ruiz (1990) proposed a model of identity development for Latinx individuals grounded in the assumptions that marginality strongly correlates with maladjustment (LeVine & Padilla, 1980); that both marginality and pressure to assimilate to the dominant culture negatively impact an individual (LeVine & Padilla, 1980); that a strong ethnic identity is associated with mental health (Bernal et al., 1983); and that a strong ethnic identity increases empowerment (Bernal et al., 1983).

Ruiz's model is characterized by five stages of progressive awareness toward a resolution regarding ethnic identity conflicts. During the first, or causal, stage, there is a failure to identify with Latinx culture due to a lack of affirmation of one's ethnic identity often due to awareness of negative messages regarding one's group. During the second, or cognitive stage, individuals have internalized false negative beliefs about Latinx culture, prompting a desire to assimilate as the sole means to achieving success and acceptance. The third, or consequence, stage, is characterized by further assimilation and rejection of Latinx culture due to shame and embarrassment regarding ethnic markers, such as name, language, or cultural customs. When an individual becomes unable to cope with the psychological distress associated with ethnic identity conflict, and can no longer identify with their assimilated self, the fourth, or working through, stage emerges. This stage is characterized by healing processes such as critical consciousness-raising in which the individual re-examines their erroneous belief systems and seeks to reclaim and reconnect to the disowned elements of their ethnic identity. The final stage, successful resolution, is marked by further acceptance of oneself, culture, and ethnicity resulting in increased self-esteem and appraisal of ethnic identity as a personal resource and strength (Ruiz, 1990).

Ruiz's stage model is just one of the ways in which liberation psychology tenets may be applied to Castañeda's career trajectory as the first Ph.D. psychologist of Latin American descent. Thus, we utilize Ruiz's stage model to demonstrate the processes of liberation in Castañeda's work and posit that his career development displays the stages of the model.

Latino Cultural Strengths

Consistent with other frameworks within the psychologies of oppression and liberation, Ruiz's (1990) model of Latinx ethnic identity development suggests that it is challenging for members of marginalized communities to develop and maintain positive identities, given negative social messages about their groups. Research has suggested that the process of psychological liberation for members of marginalized groups is facilitated by empowerment to self-identify and reconnect with one's traditional cultural values to manifest inherent psychological strengths (Sue & Sue, 2013).

Latinx culture draws from a history of sociopolitical oppression dating back to Latin American colonization by the Spanish conquistadores in the 1600s. The rich resilience of Latin American communities is evidenced by the survival and perpetuation of traditional values characteristic of the cultures (Comas-Díaz, 2006). Latinx cultural strengths, some of which may also apply to the experiences of other marginalized racial, ethnic, or cultural groups, include a gallows sense of humor to draw resilience and common ground through shared experiences of oppression;

reliance on multiple ways of knowing to describe and explain phenomena (i.e., incorporating multimodal information, such as storytelling and *dichos* [i.e., quotes or adages emphasizing folk knowledge], to science-based explanations); and *personalismo*, or the valuing of warm, close personal relationships (Sue & Sue, 2013). The way in which Castañeda employed Latinx cultural strengths to make meaning of and draw resiliency from his experiences of oppression will be referred to throughout the paper.

Historical Sociopolitical Influences

From a liberation psychology lens, we would be remiss if we did not consider the historic sociopolitical context throughout the time period in which Castañeda's career developed. All psychological processes within an individual are situated within a specific historical context and in the 1950s, "melting pot" ideology prevailed (Castañeda, 1973). Therefore, it was largely the norm that members of non-dominant social groups would strive for inclusion through assimilation.

However, in the 1960s, with the onset of the Civil Rights Movement, and specifically the Chicano Movement for Social Justice, there was an emergent openness to consideration of racial, ethnic, and cultural differences on the national stage. In fact, this cultural shift in perspective saw university campuses implementing Chicano Studies programs, Chicano student organizations, and high school walk-out demonstrations in California and Texas to raise awareness of educational disparities (Navarro, 1995). Importantly, Castañeda's positionality as a male may have facilitated his career development within this context, given contentions within the movement over how much attention should be placed on gender and sexuality as well as women's roles in the movement (Blackwell, 2016). These coordinated undertakings toward social justice in pockets across the U.S. paralleled, and likely contributed to, Castañeda's intrapsychic processes toward liberation. To elaborate, had the larger sociopolitical context of the United States continued to trend toward valuing assimilation, it is unknown what the impact on Castañeda's personal growth and career focus may have been.

Moreover, following Castañeda's death in 1981, there was also a decline in the Chicano Movement for Social Justice given significant reductions in social programs characterized by the Reagan and Bush administrations. Subsequently, funding for ethnic studies programs across the country was scaled back resulting in decreased recruitment and enrollment of students from ethnically marginalized groups (Ramirez, 1999). These examples shed light on the ways in which shifting historical contexts reciprocally influence individual, community, and national perspectives that shape the dynamic nature of the prevailing sociopolitical context.

Castañeda's Early Life and Education

Alfredo Castañeda was born in San Francisco, California in 1923 to Manuela "Nellie" Avila and Salvador Castañeda, both of Jalisco, Mexico, and grew up in the city's culturally diverse Mission District (Ramirez, 1981). He was the oldest of nine children, five of whom died in infancy or very early adolescence (Banchieri, 2012). His parents had a reportedly "difficult" marriage and ultimately divorced (Banchieri, 2012). His father went on to die from cirrhosis of the liver (Ramirez, 2016) and Nellie married Carlos "Charlie" Gonzalez who reportedly helped raise Nellie's children as his own (Banchieri, 2012).

Castañeda served in the United States Army for the duration of World War II (Banchieri, 2012). Between assistance from the GI Bill and a swimming scholarship, he overcame financial barriers to attend San Francisco State University earning his B.A. in psychology in 1948 (L. Lipsitt, personal communication, May 15, 2016). His academic interests were encouraged by his aunt who had been a teacher in Mexico (Ramirez, 1981). He was "found" by Boyd McCandless at San Francisco State, who urged him to attend Ohio State University to study under Julian Rotter (L. Lipsitt, personal communication, May 15, 2016), earning his master's and doctorate degrees in psychology in 1951 and 1952, respectively (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009). Regarding his personal life, Castañeda met and married Alberta Mondor and they had a daughter, Kedron Marie, in 1954, and a son, Alfred Andrew "Drew," in 1956.

Early Career Experiences and the Intersection of Ethnic Identity

Upon earning his doctorate in 1952, Castañeda began his academic career as an assistant professor at the State University of Iowa where he embarked on a research program at the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station (Ramirez, 1981). His work was comprised of elegant laboratory experiments designed to elucidate learning processes in children. Specifically, he and his colleagues studied the effects of stress, anxiety, and delayed reward on complex learning, psychomotor performance, school achievement, and intelligence.

Manual Ramirez, III, was a graduate student who began studying under Castañeda in 1960 at the University of Texas, Austin. Ramirez speculated that Castañeda's interests in child psychology may have been a result of his observations of his own children's development. Ramirez described how Castañeda would often bring his children to the classroom with him and have his 6-year-old daughter demonstrate aspects of development for the class when teaching his undergraduate child development course (M. Ramirez, personal communication, April 14, 2016)

According to Ramirez (1981), Castañeda's studies involving the application of stimulus-response theory to children's learning dominated the field of developmental psychology in the mid to late 1950s. Major achievements in the field that emerged out of his research at the Iowa Child Welfare Station included building equipment for children's developmental research, such as the Hunter Card Master, which was widely used to study verbal learning in children, and co-authoring the Child Manifest Anxiety Scale, which has been translated into several languages for use worldwide (Ramirez, 1981).

Although Castañeda enjoyed early career success in terms of his research productivity, the work's experimental emphasis did not allow for exploration of the unique influences of culture on children's learning. Lewis Lipsitt was a graduate student studying under Castañeda at the University of Iowa beginning in 1954 and experienced first-hand Castañeda's internal struggle as a member of a marginalized ethnic group. Lipsitt discussed how Castañeda talked privately about his experiences as an ethnic minority and referred to himself as a Chicano. Lipsitt explained that although Castañeda had a lighter skin tone and spoke English without an accent, "It was evident from his name, of course, that he was a Chicano. And I think that for a period in his life, he sort of hoped to leave that in back of him" due to "aspects of being a minority that were not really very pleasant."

> He was the most soft-spoken person you could imagine, and he taught, you might say, gently. He spoke… in a very well-considered way. And I sometimes wondered whether that was due to his biculturalism -- if he was trying to be as Anglicized as possible as he spoke (L. Lipsitt, personal communication, May 15, 2016)

Applying a Model of Latinx Ethnic Identity Development – Causal, Cognitive, and Consequence Stages

Ruiz (1990) suggested that during the first, or causal, stage of Latinx ethnic identity development, an individual rejects Latinx culture due to a lack of affirmation of ethnic identity. This rejection is often due to awareness of negative messages about one's group. During the second, or cognitive stage, individuals buy into false negative beliefs about Latinx culture, leading to assimilation as a means for success. The third, or consequence, stage, is characterized by a rejection of Latinx culture due to shame and embarrassment regarding cultural signifiers such as name, language, or cultural customs (Ruiz, 1990).

In terms of Castañeda's identity development, during his early career, he went by the Anglicized version of his first name, "Alfred," rather than his given name Alfredo. This identification approach is similar to his parents, Manuela, who went by "Nellie," and Carlos, who was referred to as "Charlie" (Banchieri, 2012).

Although we do not know for certain, it could be that Castañeda spoke softly, adopted an Anglicized version of his name, and avoided making pronouncements about his cultural group, given his stage of Latinx ethnic identity development as striving toward assimilation.

Ruiz (1990) also posited that early messages one encounters about one's group, particularly from one's parents, are influential in Latinx ethnic identity development. It is possible that, given the sociopolitical context, assimilation was a strategy for survival and acceptance for the first-generation American family within the dominant society. Regarding Castañeda's multifaceted relationship with his Mexican cultural heritage within the United States context, Ramirez (1981, p. 108) shared that "his parents gave him an undying love of Mexico and a respect for cultural differences." It could be that, as with many ethnically marginalized families during the era, Castañeda's parents struggled to balance pride in their cultural heritage with the protection of their children from discrimination through a more assimilative approach.

Although we do not have direct accounts of Castañeda's experiences with discrimination in Iowa, we speculate that despite likely encounters, several factors may have contributed to the trajectory of his ethnic identity development at this stage in his career. It is possible that given the lack of a sizeable population of Chicano and Latinx individuals in Iowa he may have had fewer opportunities for *conscientizacion* around experiences of oppression with mentors, colleagues, or mentees. In this context, assimilative strategies may have buffered some of his experiences with discrimination in a location where a mostly White population had less exposure to Latinos. This is in contrast with his later experiences in Texas, where a large population of Mexican and Mexican American individuals had long undergone racist policies and discrimination (e.g., see Wolfe-Rocca, 2019).

Turning Point: Encountering Discrimination

In 1959, Castañeda left the University of Iowa to accept a full professorship position at the University of Texas, Austin to chair both the Child Development and Clinical Psychology programs (Ramirez, 1981). There, he continued his studies on children's learning and anxiety. Despite enjoying research productivity and professional success, Ramirez explained that his time in Texas was difficult due to discrimination being "extreme for Mexican Americans" in contrast to Castañeda's upbringing in the culturally diverse Mission District of San Francisco (M. Ramirez, personal communication, April 14, 2016). Ramirez elaborated that Austin was generally segregated by race and ethnicity with Latinx and Black families living separately from Whites. "He must have had difficulties. He never told me, but I could sense that he was unhappy here" (M. Ramirez, personal communication, April 14, 2016).

Nonetheless, Castañeda built a small community of friends, colleagues, and students who affectionately referred to him as "*el profe*" (or, the teacher) due to his embodying of the professorial prototype, from his insightful musings to the tweed jackets he donned (M. Ramirez, personal communication, April 14, 2016). Ramirez explained that although it was not the emphasis of their work at UT Austin, they had frequent discussions centered on cultural oppression and social injustice.

> We always talked about culture. We were talking primarily those high dropout rates for Mexican American children… about how their culture was never recognized, and we went and visited one of the schools and we talked to students and they would say, 'well, you know, teachers don't care about me, my parents don't understand what's going on in the school. They never get invited. They don't speak English.' (M. Ramirez, personal communication, April 14, 2016).

Ramirez explained that those conversations were the impetus for his and Castañeda's pioneering work conceptualizing and emphasizing the benefits of cultural democracy, cultural pluralism, and biculturalism. Cultural democracy refers to an environment in which individuals of all cultures are able to fully participate in society despite a potential lack of alignment with the dominant society's western cultural values. For example, Mexican American students of U.S. History courses should have access to content that reflects their ethnic community's unique historical perspectives. Ramirez and Castañeda argued that a lack of culturally representative pedagogy for ethnically marginalized students further perpetuated inequality and social injustice.

The related concept of cultural pluralism reflects an environment in which the diversity of cultures is celebrated for its various unique perspectives – rather than melting pot ideology calling for marginalized cultural communities to give up traditional ways of being to conform to the mainstream standard. Castañeda and Ramirez questioned why, if the United States embraced a political democracy, the country did not then also emphasize cultural democracy valuing cultural pluralism. Based on their observations of classroom settings seeking to enculturate ethnic minority children into western ways of being, they wondered how they could work to help students keep their cultures along with learning a new one so they could become bicultural individuals.

Perhaps invigorated by his intellectual pursuits, and despite the oppressive political climate of the region, Castañeda remained at UT Austin until 1962 before relocating to culturally diverse New York City where he held various teaching and research positions including at the Jewish Board of Guardians New York City, Hunter College, Queens College, and the Graduate School of the City University of New York (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009; Ramirez, 1981). Little is known about the

details of his career during this era other than that he also held positions in the late 1960s at the University of Waterloo and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, the latter where he served in dual roles as a professor of psychology as well as a faculty member for the Institute for Child Study (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009; Ramirez, 1981).

Consistent with Ruiz's (1990) model of Latinx ethnic identity development, when an individual becomes unable to cope with the psychological distress associated with ethnic identity conflict, and can no longer identify with their assimilated self, the fourth, or working through, stage emerges. This stage is characterized by healing processes such as critical consciousness-raising in which the individual re-examines their erroneous belief systems and seeks to reclaim and reconnect to the disowned elements of their ethnic identity.

Given his encounters with ethnic discrimination while at UT Austin in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the seeds for Castañeda's shift to a multicultural and social justice-based program of research were planted early on. Yet Castañeda and Ramirez did not have the institutional support to see their ideas to fruition until years later while working as colleagues in the Mexican American studies program at the University of California, Riverside, where, according to Ramirez, Castañeda was much more comfortable (personal communication, April 14, 2016).

Empowerment: A Shift toward Embracing Culture

Upon having the opportunity to chair the Mexican American studies program at UC California, where he was also appointed professor of education, Castañeda was empowered to split from his more traditional experimental work. He had become increasingly interested in culture and personality in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and his work, to be detailed further in the next sections, reflects this dramatic shift (Ramirez, 1981). Little is known about how he came to chair the ethnic studies program at UC Riverside, but the rise of such programs during this era suggests an openness to, and demand for, academics with passion and expertise in areas related to culture. When asked about this professional shift, Lipsitt speculated about the importance of shared culture as an impetus for professional collaboration with Ramirez regarding topics of bicultural identity, cultural pluralism, and educational equity. He noted that Castañeda's shift from experimental to cross-cultural psychology took place during his time at UT Austin alongside Manuel Ramirez, where together they became interested in bicultural democracy (L. Lipsitt, personal communication, May 15, 2016).

Consistent with the process of psychological liberation, critical consciousness and opportunities for catharsis and connection regarding experiences of oppression can lead to personal empowerment. In this case, Castañeda and Ramirez were able to collaborate to identify areas in which they could be

empowered to focus their energies in order to enact positive change within oppressive sociopolitical structures. This empowerment for change on behalf of marginalized populations is a theme throughout his work during this era.

Cultural Pluralism in Children's Education

Whereas the first decade of Castañeda's research career emphasized lab studies focusing on the effects of anxiety on children's learning, his subsequent work was characterized by advocacy for diverse children's education. One such influential work during this time included his contribution to a volume on new approaches to educating children including those from low-income and ethnic minority families. Castañeda (1973) argued for "cultural pluralism" as a much-needed alternative to the "melting pot" ideology of forced assimilation. As such, he advocated for the promotion of biculturalism within schools.

Ramirez (1981) summarized the sociopolitical relevance of Castañeda's work marked by a dramatic shift from mainly laboratory studies on children and learning to projects emphasizing the practical needs of marginalized children: "He focused on the learning styles in children and the role that societal and governmental institutions could play in giving children of minority groups the opportunity to achieve bicultural identities" (Ramirez, 1981, p. 108). For example, in a manuscript advocating for affirmation of bicultural identity development in multicultural education, Castañeda and Gray (1974) argued that American social history has been characterized by political and economic democracy, in absence of regard for a cultural democracy and the value it could bring in terms of educational equity for children from marginalized groups. Castañeda's empowerment to act with and for marginalized populations exemplifies a key principle of liberation psychology.

Cultural Pluralism in Psychological Training, Research, and Practice

Castañeda's advocacy for cultural democracy in education extended beyond children. He and Ramirez also enacted coordinated efforts to increase Latinx representation within the profession of psychology and research in the field. During this era, Castañeda was instrumental to the development of the discipline of Chicano studies and pivotal in creating the first professional networks for the advancement of Latinx individuals in psychology (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009).

In 1973, he and Ramirez secured funding from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to hold the first conference of Chicano psychologists emphasizing "Increasing Educational Opportunities for Chicanos in Psychology" (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009). There, Chicano psychologists developed recommendations to be presented to departments of psychology, APA, and NIMH

to facilitate psychology education and training opportunities for interested Chicano undergraduate and graduate students (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009; Ramirez, 1999). For reference, in 1971, there were a total of 13 Latinx psychologists in the United States (Ramirez, 2009).

In 1972, Castañeda was appointed professor of education at Stanford University where he was instrumental in developing the bilingual-multicultural education program (Ramirez, 1981). Given the breadth of his professional experience (e.g., experimental research, teaching, psychotherapy, personality assessment), he was able to provide unique insights regarding issues related to culture facing diverse groups, particularly Mexican Americans. "This marked an intense and productive period in which he concentrated his talents on bilingual and multicultural education" (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009, p. 364). Padilla and Olmero (2009) indicated that he taught two very popular graduate seminars on topics that were of a personal passion to him: Cultural Pluralism and Educational Policy and Bicultural Practices in Education. "Today, courses with similar titles are commonplace, but in the mid-1970s, this was a bold step in the direction of multicultural instruction, especially at an elite private university" (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009, p. 364).

Applying Latinx Ethnic Identity Development – Working Through

In terms of Castañeda's identity development, while he had encountered ethnic discrimination at UT Austin, he was now celebrated within the field as a multicultural expert. His emergent emphasis on the strengths inherent in biculturalism is consistent with his embracing of his cultural heritage in 1973 which marked the first time he used his given name, "Alfredo Castañeda," in a publication. Up until this point, he had used "Alfred," or the "Anglicized" version of his first name. Moreover, it was during this period that the tilde over the 'n' in his surname, "Castañeda," was also introduced into publication for the first time in his career. It is unknown what specifically prompted this shift in professional identity and could have been influenced by the larger sociopolitical culture of the time. According to Lipsitt,

> At Iowa [in the 1950s], he was never called Alfredo. That happened after he left Iowa. And maybe he was probably called Alfredo as a kid. But once he assimilated into the academic community as an adult, he was Alfred. And then reverted to Alfredo when he took up bicultural studies (L. Lipsitt, personal communication, May 15, 2016)

Consistent with Ruiz's (1990) model of Latinx identity development, Castañeda may have experienced psychological distress associated with ethnic

identity conflict earlier in his career during which he had adopted an assimilation approach, perhaps, to be accepted into mainstream academia. Ruiz (1990) posited that individuals enter the "working through" stage of identity development when they are no longer able to identify with their assimilated self. Consistent with Ruiz's (1990) model, Castañeda sought to reconnect with previously rejected elements of his ethnic identity.

Coping with Oppression through Liberation Psychology Principles

In terms of "working through" ethnic identity conflict, research has suggested that the process of psychological liberation for members of marginalized groups is facilitated through interventions such as *conscientizacion*, or consciousness-raising as to the role of oppressive forces in one's life and community (Martin Baró, 1989); catharsis to process and release difficult emotions associated with oppression; empowerment to self-identify and reconnect with one's culture (Comas-Díaz, 2006); and social action engagement to disrupt oppressive sociopolitical structures that perpetuate social disparities (Greenleaf & Bryant, 2012; Prochaska & Norcross, 2007). The way in which Castañeda employed Latinx cultural strengths to make meaning of and draw resiliency from his experiences of oppression are discussed in the following sections. Castañeda exemplified how members of marginalized groups can utilize principles of psychological liberation in coping with oppression; namely through his use of a gallows sense of humor, engaging with multiple ways of knowing, demonstrating a preferential option for the oppressed, and emphasizing Latino cultural strengths in his professional relationships.

Gallows Sense of Humor

Castañeda's use of Latinx cultural strengths as mechanisms to cope with oppressive sociopolitical forces are evidenced in, among other strategies to be discussed, his sense of humor. Obrdlik (1942) has suggested that members of oppressed groups employ a gallows sense of humor to manage the difficult emotions associated with marginalized social status. According to Ramirez (1981, p. 109), "He had a subtle, pervasive sense of humor which, he maintained, kept life in perspective." The following quote from Ramirez illustrates the gallows sense of humor used to grapple with the fact that Latinx psychologists continued to remain in the minority:

> I remember his good sense of humor and back in those days, I would think maybe 8 or 10 Latina/Latino psychologists and PhDs in psychology would be on a trip to Washington and New York because we… were getting quite a few grants. And every time we'd get to board a plane, he'd say 'there are

only 10 Latina/Latino psychologists that have their doctorate in psychology. Should we fly in the same plane? If this plane crashes, you know…' (M. Ramirez, personal communication, April 14, 2016).

Multiple Ways of Knowing

Also, in alignment with a liberation psychology perspective is Castañeda's application of multimodal, "non-scientific" methods to explore and describe, through multiple ways of knowing, his experiences as a member of an ethnic minority group. As a critique of North American psychology for ignoring social, political, and environmental contexts, Castañeda explained that "Despite aspirations to objectivity, these ideological strains continue to pervade the social sciences in one form or another" (Castañeda, 1973, p. 83). As such, he branched out toward non-academic writing, including poetry, to illustrate personal challenges related to ethnic marginalization. "He wrote many short stories, and his letters to his close friends were frequently short essays on his perceptions of life and the world. His fiction was philosophical and reflective of his struggle to understand life and his place in it" (Ramirez, 1981, p. 109).

He also penned a 12-step program for professionals and academicians. As is sometimes the case for members of marginalized groups, Castañeda may have responded to his experiences of oppression by seeking to numb his painful emotions through alcohol, given a lack of other opportunities for catharsis and healing. Ramirez shared that Castañeda did not hide the difficulties in his life, nor his alcohol use, and both Ramirez and Lipsitt emphasized that there was never any concern that alcohol impacted his professionalism or functioning otherwise.

Preferential Option for the Oppressed

Given liberation psychology's "preferential option for the oppressed" (Martín-Baró, 1985), Castañeda sought to mentor students who might not have otherwise had opportunities for academic advancement due to being overlooked by other faculty. "He was always attracted to students who he knew were very bright but were different in some way. But other professors kind of shut them (out). He said he was always drawn to students nobody else would want" Ramirez (personal communication, April 14, 2016). Ramirez indicated that Castañeda's experience as an ethnic minority drew him to connect with individuals who were somehow different, or devalued, by the mainstream.

Ramirez indicated that one of Castañeda's proudest achievements was having chaired the dissertations of 15 people of color in clinical, counseling, and school psychology. Castañeda personally emphasized to him the importance of professional mentorship on diversifying the field of psychology: "Mentoring other

people of color is the most important thing we can do as Latinx academicians" (Ruvalcaba & LaForett, no date).

Personalismo

Castañeda's warm collegial relationships within his professional network exemplify the Latinx cultural value of "*personalismo*," or the preference for personal contact in interactions (e.g., Comas-Díaz). Ramirez (1981, p. 108) explained that Castañeda "marveled at the individuality of all the people he met and had a great interest in every person's unique view of life. For him, every person held a part of the answer to the meaning of life." This interpersonal democracy, as it were, is also evidenced in his relationships with his students. Ramirez indicated that "it wasn't a master-student type of relationship. We were colleagues" (personal communication, April 14, 2016). Both Ramirez and Lipsitt recalled times of being invited over to their professor's home to spend time with his wife and children. Both also noted that they had the opportunity to meet his parents, whom he sometimes invited to participate in conference proceedings to gain exposure to his work.

Incidentally, Castañeda's close relationships with his students also resulted in their exposure to some minor value clashes in the context of traditional gender roles within Castañeda's bicultural family of origin. Per Lipsitt, Castañeda's mother had asked him what he did for a living, being a professor, and he indicated that he worked with children to study and document their behavior. "His mother interrupted him and said, 'Is that any kind of work for a man to do?'" Lipsitt explained that Castañeda's mother responded with pride and relief, however, when he told her that he also teaches his methods to others: "Oh, well that's good" (L. Lipsitt, personal communication, May 15, 2016).

Although the current project is focused on ethnic identity, we would be remiss if we did not address Castañeda's intersecting identity as a male in the realm of academia. Within Latinx culture, in which traditional gender roles prevail, particularly during the era in which Castañeda was pursuing graduate studies in psychology, there were likely not as many opportunities for Latinx women to pursue higher education. As such, even though Castañeda's mother questioned whether his work with children adhered to traditional gender roles, it was likely his male identity that contributed to his becoming the first Latinx Ph.D. psychologist and first Mexican American to hold a professorship in the United States.

Likewise, Castañeda's emphasis on *personalismo* may have provided him with reciprocal support within his professional networks to buffer experiences of discrimination and promote psychological liberation in the context of his career development. Regarding his emphasis on nurturing close personal relationships, "He thrived in the diversity reflected in the different people he met, and the places

he visited, and the alleys and streets of San Francisco in which he saw reflected the reality of the multicultural society whose spokesperson he became" (Ramirez, 1981, p. 108).

Summary: Latinx Ethnic Identity Development

Ruiz's (1990) model suggesting that marginality is associated with maladjustment, and that more advanced stages of identity development correlate with better psychological outcomes (LeVine & Padilla, 1980), which theoretically parallels Castañeda's career trajectory. To elaborate, when an individual becomes unable to cope with the psychological distress associated with ethnic identity conflict, healing begins through individual challenging of erroneous belief systems (e.g., need for assimilation) and reclaiming and reconnecting to the disowned elements of ethnic identity (Ruiz, 1990).

There is evidence Castañeda sought to assimilate into the dominant White non-Latinx culture while facing discrimination during his early career in Texas and then pivoted to embrace and reconnect with his Mexican culture of origin. Ruiz's (1990) most advanced identity stage is marked by acceptance of oneself, culture, and ethnicity resulting in increased self-esteem and appraisal of ethnic identity as a personal resource and strength (Ruiz, 1990). We cannot ascertain from Castañeda directly the connection between his ethnic identity and career trajectory, nor the influence of liberation psychology principles in his personal and professional life. However, it is likely that his career dedication to cultural democracy and pluralism to enhance the lives of Latinx students was driven by his appraisal of ethnic identity and culture as personal resources and cultural strengths.

A Legacy of Social Action

Castañeda died from two consecutive heart attacks in early January of 1981 at age 57 (Ramirez, 2004). Although his shortened life prevented him from completing the work about which he was so personally and professionally passionate, his legacy of social action is observed in the wake of his prolific accomplishments as the first Latinx to earn a Ph.D. in psychology and the first Mexican American to hold a full professorship in the United States (Ramirez, 1981; American Psychological Association, 2005).

Development of Multicultural Education and Chicano Studies

The culmination of Ramirez and Castañeda's groundbreaking work in the 1974 book titled, "Cultural Democracy, Bicognitive Development, and Education" represented an emerging field recognizable as multiculturalism in education

(Padilla & Olmedo, 2009). Moving beyond theoretical approaches to promoting multiculturalism, Castañeda engaged in social justice action through advocacy efforts toward a more inclusive and just world – starting with parity in education. His work was not only aimed at scientific validity but sociopolitical validity; he ensured his findings would benefit the communities for whom it was designed.

> We recognize Castañeda for his groundbreaking work in showing the need for cultural pluralism in education, for Latino biculturalism as a viable alternative to cultural assimilation, and for leading the way in advocating classroom instructional strategies that could enhance the learning potential of Latino students (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009, p. 364)

As the foremost proponent of cultural democracy in the United States education system, Castañeda developed actionable strategies for designing more inclusive classrooms "to make it possible for all children to be adaptable to the diversity reflected in American society" (Ramirez, 1981, p. 109). This value was seen in his commitment to justice in multicultural education from the elementary school level through his dedication to the development of Chicano studies programs in higher education.

His personal collection of papers at Stanford University reflects a career culminating in a variety of grassroots efforts aimed at transforming social and educational settings to celebrate diversity. These efforts included involvement in affirmative action policies on campus, the Bilingual Association of Students, and an inter-ethnic relations research group. Much of Castañeda's advocacy work in his role as a multicultural education expert earned him influence and recognition on the national political stage. For example, Ramirez reflected on the excitement of their endeavors testifying in support of California's Bilingual Education Act in the early 1970s (personal communication, April 14, 2016).

Founding and Participation in Professional Networks

Throughout his shortened but prolific career, Castañeda held various professional associations including the American Psychological Association, Canadian Psychological Association, the New York Academy of Sciences, Sigma Xi, and the Society for Research in Child Development (Ramirez, 1981). He served on the editorial board of Child Development and was the first Latinx to do so (Padilla & Olmedo, 2009). He was the first clinical psychologist to be named to the editorial board of the Journal of Experimental Psychology, the prestigious research journal for APA at that time (Ramirez, 2004). Castañeda provided an avenue for professional networking and camaraderie through his founding of the National Latina/o Psychological Association (APA, 2006).

A Professional Legacy of Mentoring

Castañeda chaired more than 20 dissertations, many of which were completed by students of color. As discussed earlier in the paper, Castañeda tended to select and mentor students who did not necessarily fit the demographics characteristic of the resources and social capital conducive to the pursuit of higher education. His professional legacy of mentoring continues to make a positive contribution toward social justice as many of the students he trained are now represented in major institutions throughout the country in academic, research, policy, and administrative posts (Ramirez, 1981). For example, Manuel Ramirez III enjoyed a 40-year career in research and teaching at several universities including UC Riverside, UC Santa Cruz, and UT Austin. A comment by one of Ramirez's students exemplifies the proverbial passing of the torch from Castañeda to Ramirez in the quest to illuminate issues facing Latinx and other marginalized communities: "He (Ramirez) was publishing his empirical studies in the best psychology journals at a time in which ethnicity and culture were given very little attention" (UT Austin Department of Psychology, 2020). Lipsitt remarked that Castañeda was always "monitoring the presence of Chicanos in the field" and sought to advance diversification and inclusivity regarding the discipline (L. Lipsitt, personal communication, May 15, 2016).

Conclusion and Further Considerations

The current project used interviews, biographical data, and published and unpublished works to apply liberation psychology tenets to Alfredo Castañeda's career trajectory. We traced the interests of the first Chicano psychologist from traditional experimental research to multimodal, multiculturally focused efforts toward social justice, particularly within the domain of educational equity.

A limitation of this work is that we cannot ascertain from Castañeda himself what his motivations were within his unique historic sociopolitical context. Although we provided evidence for his psychological liberation corresponding with his career progression (i.e., based on the topics he researched, the causes to which he dedicated his time, and the input of former students) we do not actually know how he identified ethnically and culturally during each stage of his career development nor what prompted him to take stances such as reclaiming his given name in a publication. For example, there is evidence to suggest that Castañeda had always been interested in studying culture but felt that early in his career he had to compromise by focusing on traditional experimental research in order to gain influence and respect before pursuing a program of research in alignment with his personal values. It is likely this relationship was bidirectional in that the

sociopolitical context of the time influenced, or provided Castañeda validity, to be able to study the topics that were of value to him. His work on multicultural education, then, in turn, had an impact on policies that further shaped the national context, reinforcing his values.

Given the tumultuous sociopolitical context of 2020, it is interesting to consider what Castañeda might think about ongoing discourse regarding the merits of assimilative "melting pot" ideology versus multicultural pluralistic approaches. For example, what would Castañeda, in all his efforts to institutionalize multicultural curricula, from elementary school through higher education, make of efforts to ban Mexican American studies in Arizona, or, conversely, laws in certain states that mandate ethnic studies curricula for all students (Depenbrock, 2017)?

While there are many unknowns regarding the impetus around Castañeda's professional values and endeavors, there is no question that he worked tirelessly to promote equitable learning environments and opportunities for Latinx students. One of his ultimate goals was to increase the representation of PhDs of Latinx descent in psychology. During the era when he founded the National Latino Psychological Association, in the early 1970s, there were a total of 13 Latinx psychologists (i.e., PhDs) in the United States. Recent data from the American Psychological Association (2019) reflected a total of 8,203 "Hispanic" psychologists in the United States (i.e., having professional or doctorate degrees [e.g., Ph.D., PsyD, EdD] and employed as psychologists). Although the number of Latinx psychologists has increased, the proportion remains relatively low, at just 8% of all psychologists in the United States. One of our hopes is that elevating his story will help further his goal and encourage continued efforts to increase the number of Latino and Chicano students in psychology, particularly at the doctoral level.

Castañeda's career trajectory may also offer insights into career development processes relevant for Latino students both within and outside of psychology. As we noted in this manuscript, tenets of liberation psychology can be seen both in his ethnic identity development through stages in his career as well as the implementation of liberatory principles as an educator. For instance, contemporary researchers studying career development in Latina/o students have underscored the importance of positive ethnic identity development and the use of liberation pedagogy for promoting their educational success and countering oppressive educational systems and practices (Casanova & Cammarota, 2019).

Despite a continued need for growth and development in the area of Latinx psychological training, research, and practice, Ramirez (personal communication, April 14, 2016) reflected on the cultural shift in education made since the onset of his pioneering work with Castañeda, and the importance of non-Latinx allies who hold influential power:

I think some schools have done a good job of accepting the idea (of cultural democracy), putting it into practice, and some heavily just ignored it. I'm glad to see in some ways that Austin (Texas) has grown to the point that sometimes parents who are not Latino/Latina demand that they have bilingual education because they want their children to learn Spanish. That's pretty good, but I think that's unusual.

Ramirez (1981) added that he looks forward to a time when locales within the United States would unanimously adopt the value of cultural democracy and other concepts promoting social justice that was proliferated by his beloved professor and continue to impact modern educational practices. "The impact of '*el profe's*' ideas and views of life will continue to be felt in psychology and education for many years to come" (Ramirez, 1981, p. 109).

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