

New Development in *Mestizo* Psychology: Theory, Research, and Application

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ABSTRACT

The present conference on Chicano Psychology marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of Chicano/Mestizo Psychology. I introduced the term “mestizo psychology” in my book entitled *Psychology of the Americas: Mestizo Perspectives in Personality and Mental Health* in 1983, but the birth of Chicano Psychology dates back to 1973, when the first conference on Chicano Psychology was held at the University of California at Riverside (Ramirez and Castaneda, 1973). I am frequently asked by my White colleagues: “Why propose a psychology specific to one group of people? After all, psychology is a science and as such should be universal and applicable to everyone.” My answer is that there is a need for a Chicano/Mestizo Psychology for three reasons: (a) Mainstream psychology does not reflect the psychological reality of Latinos and other peoples of color; (b) mainstream psychology does not embody the spirit of the movement for social justice characterized by the African American, Chicano, and Native American-Indian civil rights movements; and (c) Mexican psychology and established Latin American psychology are not based on the socio-historico-political realities of Latinos in the Americas, but are mere translations of Anglo/Western European Psychology from English into Spanish. This paper presents the historical origins, the tenets, and a summary of recent developments in Chicano/Mestizo psychology. It argues for the need to continue the struggle to ensure that a psychological science that is truly Mestizo and multicultural at its core continues to evolve and to survive.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born and raised Texas along the United State-Mexico border. He received a BA in Psychology and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Texas. He has taught at California State University-Sacramento, Rice University, Pitzer College of the Claremont Colleges, the University of California-Riverside, and the University of California-Santa Cruz. He is currently a professor of psychology at the University of Texas-Austin and Clinical Professor of Psychology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center-Dallas. His current research interests are in multicultural psychotherapy, the relationship of acculturation to mental health and family dynamics, and the relationship of multicultural orientations to life and cognitive flexibility to success in university environments. He was named distinguished minority researcher by the American Educational Research Association and the Texas Psychological Association.