



Cemelli de Aztlan

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Education

Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA

Master of Divinity, 2009

Sample Courses: Religious Dimensions in Human Experience * Religion and Human Rights * Women's Studies in Religion * Native American Nation Building I & II * Gender, Sexuality and Human Rights * Borderlands * Latin American Women's Stories of Trauma and Healing * Ritualization * Native American Religions Issues * Religion, Reconciliation and Peacemaking * Trans-Feminista Theologizing * Gender, Cosmology and Ritual in Native American Society * Feminist Biblical Interpretation * Feminist Theology Theories and Methods

Thesis: "Resurrecting La Llorona in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico"

Concordia University, Austin, TX

Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies and English, 2005

OakHill Theological College, London, UK

Semester Abroad Program

Honor & Awards

Ellis Grant, Harvard University, 2007-2009

Hispanic Scholarship Fund, 2007-2008

Harvard Divinity School Grant, Harvard University, 2006-2009

Presidential Scholarship, Concordia University, 2000-2009

Honors Program, Concordia University, 2001-2003

Dean's List, Concordia University, 2001

Leader of Hope Award- WheatRidge Ministries, Concordia University, 2002

Heart's Bend Scholarship, Children of the Earth International Leadership Camp, 1993

Research Experience

Native American Nation Building, Cambridge, MA

Consultant, Jan-May 2007

In conjunction with Harvard Kennedy School, I researched the historical reality of Ysleta Pueblo Indians in El Paso, Texas, delving into tribal governance before and after colonization, and created an economic development plan that has a cultural match that is specific to the tribe.

The Pluralism Project, Cambridge, MA,

Research Associate, September 2006-June 2007

Conducted research in comparing the various religious/spiritual affiliations within the Native American communities in Boston and the greater New England arena. In this research I focused on the inter-weavings between Christianity, Islam and The Native American Church/traditions. Also, I updated the database of Native American gatherings, events and ceremonies in the United States.

Presentations & Major Class Papers

June 2009, at the **Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales Sede Ecuador** (FLASCO)- Gender Studies Department, I presented my research on Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

June 2009, At the **Universidad Nacional de Colombia**- Gender Studies Department, at a conference titled "Género, etnia y diversidad sexual" I presented my research on Indigenous Goddess' and Sexual/Reproductive Rights.

June 2009, At the **Pontificia Universidad Javeiana**- Gender Studies Department, I presented my research on Femicide in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

May 2009, At the Rockerfeller Center for the Study of International Relations, I presented my research concerning Femicide in Ciudad Juarez.

Spring 2009, in Monica Maher's **Trans-Feminista Theologizing**, I researched femicide and violence in Ciudad Juarez, traveling with Professor Maher to Juarez in January 2009 to interview women whose lives have been affected by violence and who are organizing for social justice in various ways.

Spring 2009, in Nimachia Hernandez' course on **Gender, Cosmology and Ritual in Native American Society**, I examined the role of adoption amongst indigenous communities from three different perspectives: pre-colonization, inter-tribal and federally regulated.

Spring 2009, in Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza's **Feminist Biblical Interpretation**, I presented on Womanist Theology, bringing to light the narratives of indigenous African peoples in today's churches.

In my independent research with Cheryl Giles in **Latin American Women's Stories of Trauma and Healing**, we collaborated in studying women's movements throughout Mexico, Central America and South America and traveled to Ecuador and Colombia in June 2009 to present our research at a conference with many other groups focusing on violence against women, theology and healing.

August 2008 & October 2008, I presented my research about the recently passed United Nations International Declaration of Indigenous Rights at the **Indigenous Cultures Institute's Texas Indians Conference** held at the Mexican American Cultural Center in Austin, Texas.

Fall 2008, in Maria Pilar Aquino's course: **Religion, Reconciliation and Peacemaking**, I studied how indigenous peoples in Guatemala have sought healing during the 1994 U.N Truth Commissions. This class grounded me in historical, theological/spiritual and social praxis.

Spring 2008, in Michael Jackson's course titled, **Ritualization**, is where I began my research in Oral History as a ritual of subversive means for the colonized and marginalized. From his research in Aboriginal tribes in Australia I was able to compare ritualized healing methods from other indigenous peoples in the Americas. This course became pertinent to the beginnings to my master's thesis as I was able to compare, from a phenomenological stance, the power, pertinence and persistence of storytelling within indigenous traditions.

Fall 2007, in Monica Maher's course titled: **Gender, Sexuality and Human Rights**, I studied the plight of indigenous migrant women on the border of Juarez/El Paso, researched femicide, and examined transitory and displaced

effects on women, physically and psychologically. I undertook research in indigenous history, theology (Meso-American and catholic gods/goddess') and practices (agency in ritual and human rights pursuits).

Fall 2007, in Michael Jackson's & David Carrasco's **Borderlands** course I wrote about the internal spiritual borderlands within women who live on the border between 1st and 3rd world countries, such as the USA and Mexico. Again, streaming off a historical reality and uplifting gods and goddess' of the indigenous motherland, and showing how some women gain agency living betwixt and between.

October 2007, at an event sponsored by *Native American Law School Association* and *Harvard University Native American Program* at **Harvard Law School** I presented on the indigenous perspective of Christopher Columbus, Manifest Destiny, and Papal Bulls.

Spring 2007, in David Little's course seminar, **Religion and Human Rights**, I undertook researching the (then) U.N. Draft Declaration of Indigenous Rights, outlining the struggle and necessity for adopting the declaration. The following semester, on September 13, 2007, the Declaration was finally adopted by the United Nations.

Spring 2007, in Leila Ahmed's & Ann Braude's course, **Women's Studies in Religion**, I compared 'feminist' movements and revolution theory within the Christian, Jewish and Islamic traditions.

In another independent study, titled **Native American Religious Issues** with Kimberly Patton, I researched The Peyote Path and in May 2007, I coordinated a panel of indigenous spiritual leaders to speak at Harvard Divinity School. This well attended event was the first of its kind and historically marked the beginning of Harvard Divinity School recognizing Indigenous Spiritually.

Professional Experience

Casa Nueva Vida, Jamaica Plain, MA

Feb - Aug 2008

Administrative Assistant

- Tutored at-risk children at homeless shelter for migrant women

- Assisted Director with grant writing, office organization, group meetings and presentations.
- Facilitated after-school reading program for women and their children

Historical House Caretaker, Milton, MA June
2006-Nov 2008

- Live-in house caretaker
- Coordinated maintenance

North American Indian Center of Boston, Jamaica Plain, MA
2007-2008

Administrative Assistant

- Conducted research on the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and The Child Welfare Act of 1978.
- Created a Summer Newsletter
- Filing, typing, and organizing

The Pluralism Project, Cambridge, MA Sept
2006- June2007

Research Associate

- Conducted research on New England Native Americans
- Updated Website Database

The Salvation Army Women's Shelter, Austin, TX
Jan- June 2006

Pre-School Teacher

- Taught at-risk homeless children at the shelter
- Created lesson plans
- Training in Early Childhood Development
- Communicated with Case Managers, Counselors and Parents

Great & Grand Oak Apartments, Austin, TX
Nov 2004-June 2006

On-Site Apartment Manager

- Maintained 60 units
- Coordinated move-in/move-out procedures
- Collected Rent and allocated bills on Excel spreadsheets
- Completed Leases
- Created Brochures

Xanterra Parks and Recreations, Yellowstone National Park,
MT Summer 2004

On-Site Resident Coordinator

- Maintained rules and regulations of National Park
- Conducted room inspections, dorm meetings and check-in/check-out procedures

Concordia University: Women's Dormitory, Austin, TX

Aug 2001-May2003

Resident Assistant

- Created a safe living environment for students
- Conducted dorm meetings, celebrations, and check-in/check-out procedures

Rosedale Program, Austin, TX

Aug

2000- May2004

Teaching Assistant

- Taught physically and mentally disabled teens
- Assist teens in transitioning to independent living

Leadership Experience

Vice President- Nuestra Voz, Harvard Divinity School

Latino/a Student Association, 2008-2009

Co-Founder/Vice President Native Voices- Harvard Divinity

School Native American Student Association, 2008-2009

Community Organizer/Board Member Native American Law

Students Association, Harvard University, 2007-2008

Media

June 2009- **Universidad Nacional De Colombia,** "*Reflexiones sobre genero, etnia y diversidad sexual*":

[http://www.agenciadenoticias.unal.edu.co/index.php?id=2&tx_ttnews\[cat\]=12&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=8374&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=33&tx_cegallery_pil\[album\]=1072&cHash=6c5793ea68](http://www.agenciadenoticias.unal.edu.co/index.php?id=2&tx_ttnews[cat]=12&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=8374&tx_ttnews[backPid]=33&tx_cegallery_pil[album]=1072&cHash=6c5793ea68)

June 2009- **Harvard Gazette:** "*Faces of the Future*" article:

<http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/2009/06.04/aztlan.html>

"Faces of the Future" video:

<http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid24890558001?bctid=24939588001>

Aug 2008- **Indigenous Cultures Institute:** *Original Texas*

Indians Conference:

<http://www.indigenoucultures.org/programsspeakers.html>

May 2008- **Harvard Divinity Bulletin:** "*Life, Death, and a Reservoir of Hope*" article:

http://www.hds.harvard.edu/news/article_archive/CommunityAltar.html

May 2008- **Harvard Divinity Bulletin:** Alumni Day event:

<http://www.hds.harvard.edu/alumni/events/ad08/booksigning.html>

Languages

Fluent in English, Conversational Spanish, Biblical Greek