

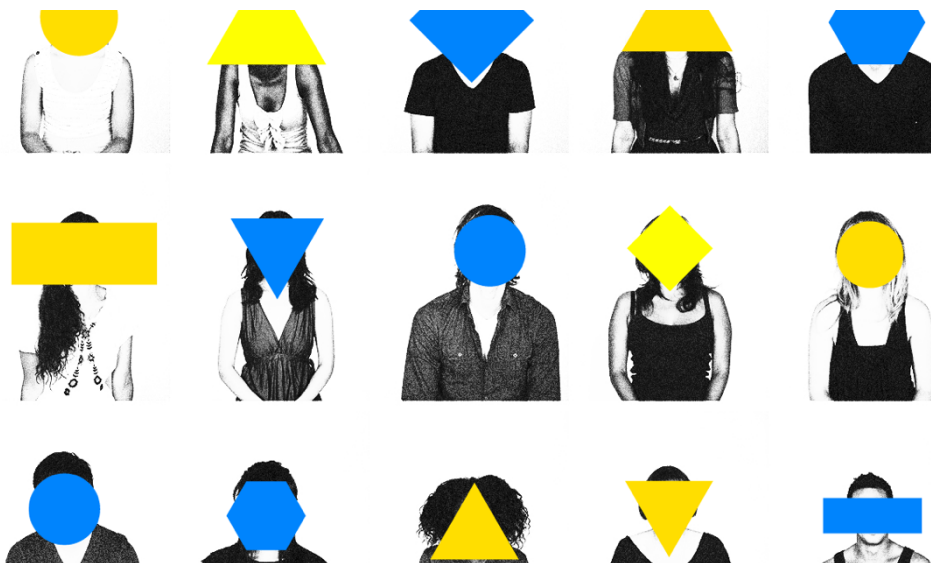
IMPLANTED

By Lilia Cabrera

In these times, society tells us to study, get a degree, be more literate than our ancestors, you will have better job opportunities and there are minorities in important positions.

However, by the simple fact of coming from marginalized peoples we have implanted that our strength is in the body but not in our brains. We forget that before Christopher Columbus arrived in America there were astronomers, architects, people who knew how to govern themselves.

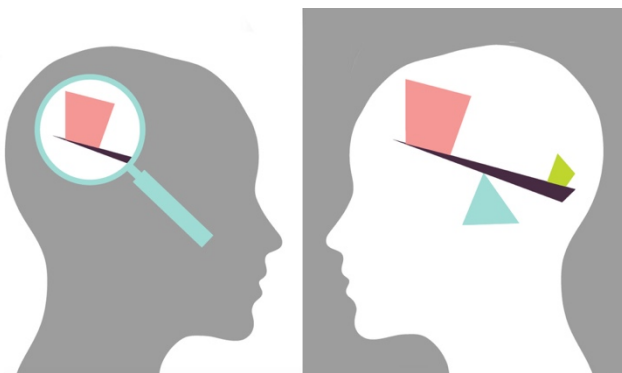
Then, why do we allow ourselves to be governed in exchange for a handful of dollars? Do we question when they say, "you are a hard worker" or "nice job"? In fact, we are quite surrendering; most of us, who immigrate from South America and Central America to the United States –as illegal-- are employed to clean, work in construction or hotels. Now, since we are physically strong, we can surely be in a position in the government or as leaders of a minority, only that we will no longer be "hard workers" because the strength of the intellect questions and doesn't answers "yes" to everything.



This writer is an example of someone who is still embedded in the idea that it is easier to get a job at a gas station rather than pursuing my university degree obtained in the United States. For that reason, I agreed to work at night at Shell for

the last two months. They all tell me, what else are you going to do if you do not have documents? And I understand that they do not say it with bad intentions, so I keep myself as busy as possible to not think about anything. Even Ali, one of the bosses pays me \$20 extra and says, "you are hardworking lady." Meanwhile I'm sleepy all the time, I do not write, I do not read and never hear about the news. I talk to my brother and he says, it's good that you have a job! And I answer him -- yeah!

I only realized that I was underestimating my own intellectual knowledge when they humiliated me by not wanting to pay me my salary of two weeks. Then I asked myself, when was this allowed to happen, that some have permission to use us as work machines and that "workforce" even sounds sophisticated? Since when do we unconsciously repress our ability to perform intellectual works, such as educators or counselors? Has this been happening since the Europeans arrived in an unknown continent and suppressed knowledge of the natives who lived there? Consequently, we, like our ancestors, let ourselves be subordinated to our boss or authority.



From all this, some will say that it is a personal decision if we decide to be governed or rulers. But, to this I must say that the fear embedded for hundreds of years takes another hundreds of years to be descale.

In conclusion, for our intellectual capacity to be visible we must counteract the way they formed us. Therefore, the more aware we are of our environment today, we will be planting intellectual and physical power for generations to come.