

Colonial Stockholm Syndrome

Navigating Identity, Loyalty, and Resistance in Puerto Rico

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Critical Perspectives on Social Science



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Para Mami y Uriel

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Acronyms

CNS	Colonial Narcissism Syndrome
COSOC	Colonial Social Conditioning
CPC	Colonial Psychological Complex
CSC	Colonial Savior Complex
CSS	Colonial Stockholm Syndrome
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
ICTS	Intergenerational Colonial Trauma Syndrome
IDS	Imperial Delusion Syndrome
MACPAC	Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission
NPP	New Progressive Party
PROMESA	Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
PTSS	Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
STR	Short-Term Rentals
VA	Veterans Affairs

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Chapter 1

Introduction

A starting point

"I do not seek from this legal step any personal rights as an individual, but as a freedom fighter who will defend the liberation of Puerto Rico as the only object before international law," Lolita Lebrón ¹

What does it mean to be Puerto Rican?

Puerto Rico is a place shaped by centuries of colonial rule. It remains a colony—let's call it what it is—under the shadow of the United States, without full sovereignty. To be Puerto Rican means bearing the weight of contradictions. It involves carrying both pride and pain. It's living at the intersection of resistance and inheritance. It's being both colonized and expected to be grateful for it.

Puerto Ricans don't all feel the same way about the United States—some see it as an extension of home, others see it as the reason we've been held back. Some fight for independence, others for statehood, and some are just trying to avoid it entirely. But behind every debate about Puerto Rico's political status is a more profound truth: colonialism doesn't just shape land—it rewires how we see ourselves. It creates confusion, loyalty, fear, and dependency. And we adapt, because we must. Coping has been part of our inheritance.

From our politics to our music, from our food to our language, our culture is undeniably rich—and undeniably shaped by the trauma of being told who we are by outsiders. We carry Indigenous, African, Spanish, and American influences, not by choice but by force—and yet, we've made it ours. That's what we do.

To be Puerto Rican is to walk with the ghosts of colonizers and still try to dream beyond them. It's figuring out how to build something free inside a system that was designed to keep you tethered.

Colonial Stockholm Syndrome occurs when love and loyalty are manipulated by power. When you find yourself defending the very thing that's been holding

¹ Lolita Lebrón, "Letter to the International Court of Justice," April 6, 1978.

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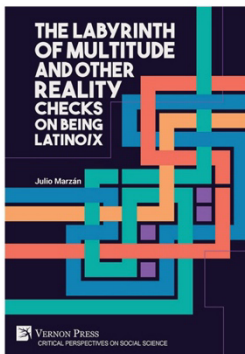
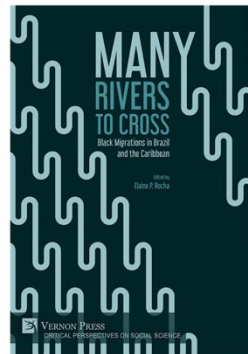
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