



## ***Envisioning a Just Future for All: Nurturing and Sustaining Justice Movements***

**Note taker:** Jillian Jin

### **Speakers:**

#### **Panelists:**

- Meena Jagannath, Director of Global Programs, [Movement Law Lab](#); Co-Founder, [Community Justice Project, Inc.](#)
- Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan, Senior Counsel, [LatinoJustice PRLDEF](#)
- Marbre Stahly-Butts, Executive Director, [Law for Black Lives](#)

#### **Moderator:**

- Ariadna Godreau Aubert, Founder and Executive Director, [Ayuda Legal Puerto Rico, Inc.](#)

### **Number of participants:**

### **Notes:**

***Ariadna Aubert, AYUDA - Moderator***

***Meena Jagannath, Movement Law Lab***

- Decolonizing Justice
  - Justice is the definition of the legal system - colonial understanding
  - Legal institutions are formed by western ideas
- Legal Empowerment
  - Being careful of not over emphasizing
  - Important, but not the whole piece
  - Cultivating other complementary methods of decolonizing the law

- Leveraging the media, cultural work, etc.
- What is our role?
  - Understanding that the law is a lever of power
    - How can we use the law and/or legal tactics to advance us to an objective?
    - New tactics and ways to find access to power
    - Taking the law to write demands in our language - doesn't have to stay in its oppressive form
- New tactics
  - Using poetry to have a conversation with broader audiences
    - Using artistic pieces to touches people in a different way
  - Engineering spaces to allow other people to tell their stories
- Role of legal and community workers
  - Imperative to translating the system
  - The lawyer must break down the gate between them and the legal workers
    - Getting rid of the hierarchy
    - How to work together to get the same goal
- Solidarity
  - We will not be free if we don't see how our struggles are bound with others
  - Fighting alongside people who are also struggling for justice
  - Will never understand what everyone has gone through, but can still fight for them
- What does winning look like?
  - Slow roll of process
  - Connecting with and supporting movements all around the world
  - Come to a better understanding of what a decolonized future looks like

### ***Natasha Bannan, LatinoJustice***

- Decolonizing Justice
  - Legal system preserves capitalism, privilege, wealth, etc.
    - Tools of colonial process
    - What has made this sustainable?
- Reimagining a legal system
  - Moving beyond a reformist approach
  - What we need, not what we are given
  - Radically different approach - what do we need in order to continue to live and coexist?
    - Have to unravel the law to do so, when the profession is complicit
    - What does self-determination look like and how can we define justice?
    - Deconstructing the facade that makes it easy to be complicit
- What is our role?
  - Demystifying the law
    - The attorney decides chargers and gives advice is seen as legitimate

- This design results in others staying in the legal boundaries
  - Not just imparting knowledge, but relinquishing power
    - Letting people feel like they have agency to make decisions
    - Not limiting them by the law - limits their struggle
- Burnout
  - Reversing the notion that we must produce constantly to be worthy
  - People who are burnt out, burn out others
    - Perpetuating systems rather than fixing it
  - What lawyers do is the engine of capitalism and colonialism
    - Devours us - we must center and infuse joy in our lives
      - Gives permission to others to do the same
      - Transforms the spaces you are trying too
- Freedom - Individual ways of how we allow yourself to be free
  - From expectations, from trauma, and etc.
  - Reclaiming our collective freedom in subtle ways
  - Not just in this for public recognition of freedom, but to actually feel free
- What does winning look like?
  - Being able to walk through the streets without violence
  - Having uncomfortable conversations brings us closer to winning
  - Transformative moment - a shift and possibility for us to sit with people in this discomfort

### ***Marbre Stahly-Butts, Law for Black Lives***

- What law has to do with justice
  - Legitimized slavery and other forms of oppression
  - The language keeps the status quo
  - Law cannot be the only tool in dismantling oppression
- Reimagining a legal system
  - The law as a defense tool to create more space for and imagine something different
  - Violence of the law - inclusive and inability for specific groups to participate in it
  - Legal empowerment - how can we decenter the law in this?
- What is our role?
  - Getting rid of power hierarchy - when you finish law school, you gain privilege and authority
    - Showing up to the movement - not an observer, but a comrade and listener
    - Using tools from law school to build power in this movement
    - Checking your privilege and if you are closing space
- Role of legal and community workers
  - Need a community with a diverse skill set
  - Relationships give her support
- Dignity

- Our systems should reflect this, instead it rejects the dignity of people
- End of colonialism, which takes away the dignity from people
- What does winning look like?
  - This will take a while to dismantle, must be patient
  - Winning is more possibilities
  - Winning is having more people in the fight

## **Resources Shared:**

- Slack Channel:  
[https://decolonizingjustice.slack.com/join/shared\\_invite/zt-j41huvtg-dQjFnejoXKKAnem3Nhd4FQ#/](https://decolonizingjustice.slack.com/join/shared_invite/zt-j41huvtg-dQjFnejoXKKAnem3Nhd4FQ#/)
- More information (under the job description) about Community Justice Project's artist-in-residency program that Meena mentioned:  
<http://communityjusticeproject.com/jobs>
- Decolonizing Justice Resource Guide: <https://www.probono.net/decolonizingjustice/>