



This summer I have been focused on books. I made headway in my backyard "she shed" writing my second book. I also expanded my work at the *New York Times* to the Book Review. It feels good to weigh in in a new way.

My first review was of *CONDITIONAL CITIZENS: On Belonging in America* by Laila Lalami. The book argues that the nation's 22 million naturalized citizens are "conditional citizens"--in theory, equal to people born in the U.S., in practice they are treated as second-class citizens. Lalami, who often writes about being an outsider, faces barriers as an immigrant, woman, Arab, and Muslim.

I wish she would gone deeper into how she has personally been harmed by the inequality she describes. I also wish writers didn't solely write about problems, but spent time suggesting specific ways readers can act to solve these problems. I'm trying to do more of that in my writing. Read my book review [HERE](#).

Hispanic Heritage Month Kudos

We are in the middle of Hispanic Heritage Month, and there's no better salve for impostor syndrome than making Parade Magazine's list of 52 influential Latin-American women. I love this list of women who have brought Latinx stories to music, media, politics, and more, like journalist María Elena Salinas and Maria Hinojosa, actress and activist America Ferrera, and author and philanthropist

LIFE
50+ Most Influential Latin-American Women in History for Hispanic Heritage Month

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By LOLA MÉNDEZ



(Scott Paulsen/Getty Images)

In their New York Times opinion story, "How Latinos Can Win the Culture War," Elizabeth Méndez Berry and Mónica Ramírez argue that Latinx stories are silenced and distorted in media, museums, books, and Hollywood. The story mentions me as one of the journalists who has fought stereotypes by bringing underreported perspectives to the mainstream media.

At the *Los Angeles Times*, my last full-time employer, much change is needed: 13% of those in the newsroom are Latinx in a town that's half brown. We need more Latinx voices in entertainment, arts, and journalism, one of many proposals the authors suggest. Read [HERE](#).

Activism for Migrant Youth During the Pandemic



I have continued my advocacy for migrant children who come to the U.S. alone, but with COVID I took the fight online.

I was part of a discussion hosted by [Kids In Need of Defense \(KIND\)](#), "A Journey Towards Hope," about how the current administration since March has used a public health law to accomplish its long-sought goal of bouncing children who arrive at our border back to their home countries--without asking them if that would put their lives in danger.

The panel featured KIND Co-Founder and Microsoft President Brad Smith, journalist and author Jacob Soboroff, music artist Nova Payton, and me [I have been on the board of KIND since it was launched a decade ago.]

I detail how children can be tested at the border for coronavirus, and how they are normally processed through detention facilities where they spend weeks that serve as de facto quarantines. I discuss how our government has adopted a policy of cruelty towards children.

Click [HERE](#) to watch the panel and hear solutions.

I also mediated a panel to promote the documentary "Paper Children", the

story of four siblings from Honduras who sought asylum in the U.S. The film shows the crazy legal process children face to try and obtain asylum.

Watch the film free [HERE](#) and the panel [HERE](#).

Upcoming Events

Each year I speak across the country—from conferences to colleges to high schools and middle schools—to share my thoughts about immigration and how Enrique's story—and those of so many immigrant children—continues to change.

If your school or group would like to book Sonia, email her at: sonia@sonianazario.com

Webinar
October 2, 2020
Loyola Marymount University
Los Angeles, CA

Webinar
October 15, 2020
University of Tennessee Martin
Martin, TN

Webinar
November 18, 2020
California State University Long Beach
Long Beach, CA

New Orleans, LA
April 10, 2021
National School Board Association

Kansas City, MO
April 15, 2021
Metropolitan Community College

London, UK
May 4, 2021
American School in London

AND OTHERS near you... I hope to see you at one of my upcoming events.

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