

Lesley University

DigitalCommons@Lesley

---

Lesley University Community of Scholars Day

Community of Scholars Day 2018

---

Mar 28th, 10:10 AM - 11:00 AM

## Watering Black Roots (Reconnecting Human+Nature)

Stormy Saint-Val

Lesley University, bsaintval11@gmail.com

Angelica Pinna-Perez

Lesley University, apinnape@lesley.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/community\\_of\\_scholars](https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/community_of_scholars)



Part of the [Counseling Psychology Commons](#), [Environmental Studies Commons](#), [Multicultural Psychology Commons](#), and the [Transpersonal Psychology Commons](#)

---

Saint-Val, Stormy and Pinna-Perez, Angelica, "Watering Black Roots (Reconnecting Human+Nature)" (2018). *Lesley University Community of Scholars Day. 2.*

[https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/community\\_of\\_scholars/2018/session\\_b/2](https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/community_of_scholars/2018/session_b/2)

This Creative Performance is brought to you for free and open access by the Symposia and Conferences at DigitalCommons@Lesley. It has been accepted for inclusion in Lesley University Community of Scholars Day by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Lesley. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@lesley.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@lesley.edu), [cvrattos@lesley.edu](mailto:cvrattos@lesley.edu).

Black Nature: An Invitation to Connect with Ourselves by Connecting with Nature

Stormy Saint-Val and Angelica Pinna-Perez

Lesley University

## Abstract

“I understood at a very early age that in nature, I felt everything I should feel in church but never did. Walking in the woods, I felt in touch with the universe and with the spirit of the universe”. -Alice Walker

Growing up with a strong connection to nature, I struggled balancing the joys and sorrows of being the only black person in my environment engaging in outdoor activities. It took 26 years for me to find spaces where people of color were either centered or inclusively involved in the strong connection with the natural world. Interacting with wildlife in these spaces has stimulated a profound relationship with nature and myself.

Research and dialogue have provided a rich understanding of why engaging with the natural is stigmatized in black communities in America. This discussion will explore how historical and current systems of oppressions perpetuated by patriarchal colonialism influence collective disconnect between the black identity and the natural world.

Literature, music, and visual art by black artists who express the importance of their relationship to the natural world will also be shared to illustrate the power of embracing innate desire that humanity shares.

Additionally, we'll discuss various studies that highlight the positive outcomes of

interacting with natural landscapes, ways I integrate nature and Expressive Arts Therapy as I work with marginalized communities, and tools that promote intersectional ecological spaces.

### Proposal Description

Human interaction with the natural world is an innately essential. Why don't we commonly see black people engaging with nature? This creative discussion will explore benefits of interacting with the natural world, the historical and present context to provide insight about the lack of inclusivity within wildlife spaces, and ways to advocate for intersectional ecological environments. Music, literature, and visual art by black artists will be shared to illustrate and honor the legacy of the black body's profound connection nature.