

Dear _____,

RE: Theory as Location: The Case of Critical and Outsider Jurisprudence

I am writing hoping to entice you to join us in Miami in early October 2007 for the commencement of a very special project. Not only will we have some serious fun with the many folks who will be here for the Twelfth Annual LatCrit Conference and Related Events, but we will be doing so at the fabulous (and oceanfront!) Alexander Hotel in Miami Beach. I hope the project and location combine to make this an opportunity you don't want to miss.

This year, we are planning to prepare an area in the mezzanine lobby of the hotel as a kind of "set" (with whatever lighting and video/sound equipment may be necessary) to begin recording "impressions, recollections and projections" regarding the history, present status and future prospects of LatCrit theory specifically, and critical or outsider jurisprudence more generally. Our hope is to launch an "oral-video history" project that captures at least some of our varying impressions about the times we have lived, struggled and survived together as critical and/or outsider academics. Your work and example have inspired me, and many others following similar scholarly paths. We write to you, then, in the hope you will take this opportunity to help us create a record of these times, as you have seen them.

During the past two decades, we have witnessed and enacted the diversification of the legal academy along multiple axes of identity. In the process we also have diversified the scope and content of legal scholarship, legal education, and legal consciousness. We have learned many lessons, some still unwritten, unspoken. I hope you will agree that recording/preserving these impressions and recollections, while still relatively fresh, has its own historical value. In addition, however, we hope this kind of historical and substantive information will be helpful as a pedagogical tool to teachers and students in law and other disciplines studying areas germane to critical (legal) theory and outsider jurisprudence.

The project is simple. The idea is to create a basic "set" and then make the space available to anyone during the conference, say in increments or sessions of about 15-25 minutes or so each, for the purpose of recording thoughts, memories, ideas or other points pertaining to the work we do, and have done. As the time for the LatCrit XII conference approaches, we will create some sort of scheduling and operating system to organize and conduct these informal sessions, but the sessions themselves can take many forms, including informal individual ruminations, small-group conversations with 2-3 folks, mini-one-on-one interviews, etc. The aim is simply to begin recording this jurisprudential history, and to post the material, *unedited*, to the LatCrit website, where anyone can access it for substantive, pedagogical or historical purposes. From time to time, we can repeat this exercise to accumulate an informational resource with diverse viewpoints that will grow with time and be helpful to different folks with different needs/objectives.

I hope you will seriously consider this invitation, and "save the date" on your calendar for next October 5-7. To accept this invitation, simply send me a quick confirming email at fvaldes@law.miami.edu as soon as you can, and I will add you to the list of participants. When we turn to preparing the session schedule, I will help you with any advance preparations you request. If you have thoughts or questions, please feel free to send those along as well.

Even if you are not entirely sure you want to participate in this round of recordings, I hope you will join us for the exciting substantive program and fabulous location of LatCrit XII. Just in case, I have enclosed a copy of the Call for Papers. As you will see, the LatCrit XII Conference Theme on “critical localities” helps set the stage for the tentative naming of this initial round in our oral history project: *Theory as Location: The Case of Critical and Outsider Jurisprudence*.

In addition, I have included a copy of the LatCrit Informational CD, which can update you on our community Portfolio of Project and other upcoming events. We update this LatCrit Informational CD annually and, as you’ll see, it is chock full of substantive information. Hope you enjoy it!

Abrazos from Miami,
Frank Valdes