

## **Composition Guidelines for LatCrit Forewords, Afterwords and Cluster Introductions**

Perhaps the principal purpose of the Annual LatCrit Symposium is to make the substance of the conference proceedings accessible to interested scholars who were unable to participate in the “live” program. In addition to creating an enduring and accessible written record of our flagship academic event, the Annual Symposia also are intended to provide publishing opportunities for critical scholars and quality content for journals focused on social justice and critical theory. To accomplish these aims, we invite all conference attendees to submit short and lightly-footnoted essays for publication, and supplement these essays with three kinds of texts that recur in every Annual Symposium: (1) a “Foreword” intended to contextualize the symposium AS A WHOLE within the larger body of work we have collectively produced and published in previous symposia; (2) the “Cluster Introductions” intended to discuss SPECIFICALLY the handful of interdisciplinary essays included in any given clustering of the symposium; (3) an “Afterword” intended to elaborate on theoretical or jurisprudential issues implicated in our work, though not necessarily limited to the contents of that particular symposium as a whole, or any sub-part/s within it. As a set, these three kinds of basic or recurring texts are intended to provide a conceptual structure for the essays of each symposium – to anchor the publication as a whole, to provide an interdisciplinary context and commentary, and to facilitate a sense of cohesion in otherwise extremely diverse contents. However, each of these three basic anchors is designed to serve a distinct function within each Annual Symposium, which the respective author/s of each should keep uppermost in mind while composing any of these texts.

1. The *Foreword* generally should focus on how the symposium as a whole fits within the ongoing evolution of LatCrit theory specifically and outsider jurisprudence generally, as well as interdisciplinary contributions. Foreword authors should consider questions like: How does the conference theme and program, as reflected in the symposium essays, contribute on the elucidation of ongoing lines of critical inquiry? How do the essays as a whole illustrate our strengths? How do they point to challenges and shortcomings? What do they suggest about the paths we collectively are taking in our ongoing effort to make antiracism theory and praxis ever sharper and more socially relevant? What do they suggest about the next step/s in our collective enterprise? In the Foreword, references to specific essays of the symposium should be to help illustrate the broad or overarching themes being developed in the Foreword, rather than as a substantive discussion of the essays themselves.

2. The *Cluster Introductions*, on the other hand, should delve more substantially into the specifics of the essays in that cluster to discuss their methodological and/or substantive contributions to the specific topics they address. Authors of Cluster Introductions should consider questions like: How does each of these essays contribute to our understanding of race, or class, or gender, or sexuality, or ... whatever the topic. How do individual essay authors open up new, cross-disciplinary approaches, or point to specific substantive gaps in our ongoing work on particular topics? How does that cluster, as a whole, reflect the status of our work on that particular topic? In the Cluster Introductions, references to the specific essays should be in the nature of a review that will facilitate readers’ appreciation of the essays themselves, while also helping to link the contents of these essays to previous LatCrit works or Symposia on the same topic, both through footnote references as well as substantive discussions.

3. Finally, *the Afterword* should focus on jurisprudential or theoretical debates or points that are percolating in the background but may not be explicitly addressed in the conference program or theme, or the essays of the symposium. Unlike the Foreword, the Afterword need not be tied to the conference

theme or program, much less to the specifics of any essay of cluster. Rather, the Afterword provides an annual opportunity to situate the LatCrit experiment in the broader interdisciplinary context of academic culture and the context of our own efforts to create a distinctive, diverse and coherent discourse. Rather than being an effort to situate a particular symposium or theme within our ongoing elaboration of LatCrit theory, it is an effort to situate the LatCrit project as a whole within the larger landscape of current affairs, politics, critical scholarship and social justice activism. Authors of Afterwords should consider how they might help to explain (or “translate”) our various kinds of collective efforts and projects (not necessarily the contents of that symposium) to help generate greater comprehension of LatCrit as a cohesive yet sprawling enterprise.

These Guidelines are provided to help authors understand and fulfill the distinctive functions of each anchor of the Annual LatCrit Symposium, and to minimize the danger of redundancy among these texts due to misunderstandings about their substantive differences. However, each author also is encouraged to approach the composition of these texts creatively; while these Guidelines aim to provide focus and purpose to each author of these anchors, we hope they do not inhibit innovative efforts. To help us collectively ensure the best finished product each year, please take a moment to review past Forewords, Afterwords and Cluster Introductions – and please contact one of the co-chairs to timely clarify any questions you may have about your particular text. Thanks!