

The theme of Eighth Annual LatCrit (Latina/o Critical Legal Studies) Conference in Cleveland, Ohio, May 1-4, 2003, will be "CITY & THE CITIZEN: Operations of Power, Strategies of Resistance."

A defining mark of modernity has been the use of two related concepts of association - citizenship and nationality - to establish the meaning of full membership in society. Citizenship defines the prerogatives and encumbrances of that membership, and the nation-state establishes its scope. This historical development has been both revolutionary and democratic, even as it has also been reactionary and exclusionary. For persons deemed eligible for citizenship, this status oftentimes subordinates all other identities in favor of national jurisdictions, a uniform body of law, and contractual relations based in principle on an equality of rights. Resistance by, and mobilization of, those who are excluded from the circle of citizenship can help expand democracies, generate new sources of law, and produce new modes of participation in collective life. The city is the primary site where the work of modern society gets done, and production of the citizen is the foundational task of modern society.

Cities are the strategic arenas for the development of citizenship. Inhabitants of the cities animate processes that expand and erode the rules, meanings, and practices of citizenship. In the cities, identities of territory and contract conflate with those of race, class, gender and culture to produce progressive and reactionary political movements. Cities are the lived spaces both of the uncertainties of citizenship and of its emergent forms and practices. In this era of mass migration, globalization of the economy, and rapid circulation of rights discourse, cities represent the localization of global forces as much as they do the articulation of national projects.

The city as this dense and heterogeneous lived space brings into sharp relief limits of formal citizenship and the disjunctions between formal and substantive aspects of citizenship. While many in the city remain excluded from even formal citizenship, such inclusion does not guarantee access to an array of civil, political, economic and cultural rights and opportunities. Historically entrenched exclusions and subordinations, based variously on race, gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, language and religion, continue to preclude meaningful participation of all in collective projects of modernity. The homogenizing imperatives of formal citizenship incessantly collide with the heterogeneity and difference that animate life of the city. Emerging trends in urban geography are accentuating these conflicts. The city is the terminus of accelerated immigration propelled by globalization; immigrants congregate in the city in response to labor demand and networks of affiliation. This sutures politics of immigration with politics of cities. Enclaves of marginalized groups, particularly racial, ethnic and sexual minorities, in cities dominated by white heterosexual imperatives are mushrooming. Such enclaves while serving as sites for practices of difference are also becoming targets of colonization and commodification by hegemonic cultural and economic forces.

Past LatCrit conferences have explored operations of the law upon ethnic, gender, religious, class and other differences within our communities, but we have never collectively focused on a particular space as the site of these operations. The proposed focus on the city offers the promise to focus our inquiries upon a concrete setting and affords the opportunity to strengthen coalitions between progressive academics and marginalized communities. Focusing on the city also fits well with our efforts to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue, to deepen our theoretical

understandings, and to strengthen LatCrit's ties with students, legal practitioners, and activists among communities of color. We particularly encourage you to consider addressing issues of labor, housing, transportation, schools, technology, political participation, criminal justice, environment, and culture as they relate to urban life.

As this will be the first LatCrit Conference in the Great Lakes Region, we also invite you to address questions that have particular salience for this region. This focus ensures that the geographic rotation of the conference helps to illuminate local and regional issues. This focus helps us incrementally to show and understand how local particularities produce inter/national patterns of privilege and subordination.

In addition, the year 2003 marks the fifteenth anniversary of the emergence of Critical Race Theory and Outsider Jurisprudence. Given the close relationship of CRT to LatCrit, this year's conference is an appropriate occasion to explore the evolution of Critical Race Theory, particularly its role in the emergence of LatCrit, Asian-Pacific American critical theory, and other critical genres in the legal academy. We thus invite papers, panels and proposals focused on this topic as well.

Every year, LatCrit conferences also seek to feature and balance four basic perspectives in organizing the substantive program. These four perspectives are listed as themes below. They have, thus far, served as useful lenses of LatCritical inquiry, enabling LatCrit scholars to develop an impressive body of work that is increasingly linking issues of identity to the substantive analysis of law, policy and process. This effort to link identity issues to substantive analyses has been particularly fruitful in revealing the way race and ethnicity are implicated precisely in those areas of law and policy that are ordinarily thought not to be about race and ethnicity: for example, in the operations and assumptions of international law and legal process, foreign affairs, liberal democracy, religion and sexuality, to name just a few areas of recent LatCrit attention.

To build on these accomplishments, everyone is encouraged to develop their proposals with a view to: (1) expanding our understanding of the impact of race and ethnicity in substantive areas of law and policy ordinarily thought to be about "something other than race" (e.g. issues of sovereignty, labor rights, globalization, intellectual property, antitrust law); and (2) deepening our analysis of the various ways in which identity issues intersect, conflate and conflict in our self-understandings and coalitional efforts. The following four themes are offered, therefore, as possible points of reference for thinking in new ways about familiar issues (like affirmative action and bilingual education), as well as for encouraging critical forays into new substantive areas (like communications or antitrust laws):

- 1) Papers or panels that focus on the multidimensionality of Latina/o identity and its relationship to current legal, political and cultural regimes or practices. The ideal is to explicate aspects of the Latina/o experience in legal discourse, both domestically and internationally. Nonetheless, you are free to address identity issues that do not specifically touch upon Latina/o identity or the law.

2) Papers or panels especially salient to this region (the Caribbean). Regional emphasis ensures that the Conference's geographic rotation will illuminate local issues, helping us understand how local particularities produce (inter)national patterns of privilege and subordination.

3) Papers or panels that elucidate cross-group histories or experiences with law and power, such as those based on the intersections of class, gender, race, sexuality and religion. In this way, each Conference aims to both elucidate intra-Latina/o diversities and contextualize Latina/o experience within inter-group frameworks and Euro-Heteropatriarchy. Accordingly, we constantly ask how we can create progressive movements, communities and coalitions that meaningfully recognize difference.

4) Papers or and panels that connect or contrast LatCrit theory to other genres of scholarship, both within and beyond law and legal theory, including but not limited to the various strands of critical outsider jurisprudence (critical race theory, feminist legal theory, queer legal theory) that critique class, gender, race, sexuality and other categories of social-legal identities and relations.

Everyone is encouraged to use these four guideposts, as well as the following considerations, to help draft a proposal, and then to complete the attached Program Proposal form and fax it back ASAP, and in any event no later than October 31, 2002.