



LatCrit XXI Biennial Conference & Related Events
Orlando, Florida

LATCRIT/SALT FACULTY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP SEP. 28, 2017
BIENNIAL CONFERENCE: SEP. 29 – 30

2016 Elections: What Next?

Outsider Jurisprudence and Progressive Formations at a Crossroad

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Given the moment and trends, it is time to ask hard questions and think of new answers. LatCrit and other critical outsider formations in the legal academy face a new crossroad. After twenty-one years of critical scholarship and progressive community building, LatCrit, like many organizations that focus on liberation, anti-subordination, and social justice, faces ever-morphing challenges and hurdles. In recent years, the “crisis” in legal academia—in which private actors like law firms, nonprofits, and government agencies have divested their roles in training young lawyers while shifting these costs to law schools and students—has meant the increasing adoption of selective austerity measures, the vilification of the professoriate, and attacks on critical scholarship. Access to education, like access to justice, increasingly erodes. The values exemplified by social justice oriented movements in legal scholarship, movements which have as their objective the demystification of the status quo and the dismantling of power hierarchies, are the first targets of this crisis-driven rush to selective austerity. In their place, neoliberal values like rent-seeking and concentration of wealth, and the accompanying mythologies of meritocracy and U.S. exceptionalism, have filled the void. And in the law school environment, the historically most vulnerable continue to suffer the most. Increasingly, students, support staff, adjunct professors, clinical faculty, and writing faculty join the youngest without tenure (and many of the oldest)—all without clout, and pushed into a new class of disposable workers within legal academia. As all this happens, private financial actors and the federal government continue to profit from an all-loan based approach to financial aid, and those with the richest endowments and the most resources continue deploying them to re-inscribe inequality across the profession. Nonetheless, everyone hopes that things will improve . . . somehow, eventually.

And then November 8th changed all paradigms; seemingly suddenly, entrenched notions of slow-but-steady progress through true-and-patient struggle made little sense.

In the wake of the 2016 election, with its surreal outcome, our political process (finally) has confirmed beyond deniability how hyper-nationalism, white supremacy, misogyny, homophobia, xenophobia, oligarchy, and hate are essential to contemporary “conservative” movements. The masking of these trends behind such double-speak as the “alt-right movement” has also emboldened those who seek to promote violent forms of intolerance to step out of the shadows and into the light. The poor and economically marginalized struggle with increasingly exploitative neoliberal forms of welfare, privatized for the profit and protection of the powerful financial class. The fight against these powerful forces, in the classroom, in the courtroom, and

in our daily lives, has poured into the streets as we struggle to navigate the onslaught of executive orders, legislation, and appointments designed to divide and conquer democracy itself. If any doubt remained previously, the post-2016 world makes plain every day that unbridled power trumps even fundamental principles with growing impunity. This extreme zeitgeist demands correspondingly fresh critical thinking – and action.

Fortunately, critical and outsider communities in legal academia have been planning strategically for the long term. LatCrit, for example, developed a strategic plan to prioritize generational transition, acquire a physical campus, Campo Sano, to host programs and workshops, and develop a critical justice course book for the varied classrooms and uses. This approach enables veteran and rising generations to emphasize these strategic priorities while maintaining other cornerstones of our established Portfolio of community projects—such as the biennial South-North Exchange (Antigua, Guatemala 2018), the annual Junior Faculty Development Workshop, our periodic Study Space projects, and upcoming programs at Campo Sano. But inter-national events since November 8th have made increasingly plain that our ongoing efforts to remain nimble are no match for the intensified perfidies of the post-2016 world.

This year, then, we consider another strategic transition, from the anchor event we began in 1996 with the LatCrit I annual conference in La Jolla to the next generation and phase of our ongoing programmatic collective work. Responding directly to the moment, the LatCrit community will focus and decide, together, how we will respond programmatically to this moment. Rather than flinch or crouch, we instead choose to re-group, re-think, and re-affirm our commitment to long-term work that transcends moments, persons, or events. Determined to match the exigency of this moment, critical and outsider networks will gather at the Twenty-First Biennial LatCrit Conference in Orlando, Florida, to mobilize our resources and address innovatively the intensified challenges facing our diverse networks and communities.

At this historically urgent juncture, we invite papers, panels, roundtables, workshops and works in progress across disciplinary boundaries and from all constituencies that center the key, basic questions: What next? How do we reverse the forces that triumphed last November? What does critical solidarity require now of *us* in terms of organizing and mobilizing? How do lawyers, organizers, academics, students, and allies move forward communally, centering systematic patterns of group injustice, preserving hard-fought gains from our ancestors, and forging ahead into a freer future? How can each of us best use our respective training and talents for this common struggle? What is the role of identity and education moving forward? What part will critical outsider jurisprudence and pedagogy have to play in formal and public education in the future? How do we make a difference now, and going forward, through personal and collective action?

If we do not answer these urgent questions now, the forces of regression will do so for us. Join us in Orlando for this forward-looking, action-focused, cross-disciplinary exchange. Join us in helping to envision and secure the future we aim to live.

Paper, Panel, Roundtable, Workshop proposals and Works In Progress (WIPS) on all topics related to systemic subordination and organizing resistance are welcome.

DEADLINE: Please submit an abstract and your contact information by ~~June~~May 15, 2017.
Please make your submission at <http://www.latcrit.org/latcrit2017-online-submission-form/>.
For general information and questions about the event please email Saru Matambanadzo at smatamba@tulane.edu.