



Welcoming Remarks for LatCrit IV

*Dean Rex Perschbacher**

I was asked to welcome you to this important event, but this event belongs to all of you, and I appreciate your willingness to welcome me here. U.C. Davis is proud to be one of the sponsors of LatCritIV. Thanks to Frank Valdes for asking us. I want to thank the hardworking organizing committee for putting this conference together, allowing the *U.C. Davis Law Review* to publish the proceedings, and giving me the opportunity to speak briefly with you this evening.

The several LatCrit symposia have attacked some of the most-pressing, and intractable, social issues of our times. This work includes some of the most important scholarship being done today. Your thinking is a much needed antidote to Propositions 187 and 209, to the *Hopwoods*, to the English-Only laws, to the deaths resulting from increased border enforcement, and to the anti-immigration hysteria currently in political fashion. These are difficult times for minorities in the United States. Your voices must be heard.

During my short time at this conference, I have been struck by two themes that run through the papers and commentary. First, the remarkable ability of LatCritIV scholars to blend academic theory — much of it from outside traditional legal doctrine — with one of the law's most positive attributes — its link with people's day-to-day lives and their communities. Second, your embrace of many perspectives from "other" groups, as stated in your introduction, "a legal discourse that centers Latinas/os but also

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relates the Latina/o condition to that of other groups.” This openness and even embrace of “the other,” especially in the face of a persistently exclusive society and history of subordination, is a remarkable step forward.

Without in any way ignoring the richness, complexity, and diversity of the LatCrit scholarship, I suggest it holds out a most optimistic vision — to act as a bridge in crossing the racial/ethnic gap of the Americas of the last five hundred years to perhaps a twenty-first century society in which we are all minorities — all the “other” — perhaps a glimpse into a society in which minoritiness and otherness disappears, altogether.

In any case, as the Latina/o population grows in this country, these questions will likely become all the more pressing. You, as pioneers, have made, and will make, an important contribution to our understanding of the Latina/o condition and, as we reflect, on the condition of all of us in the United States. We are all indebted to you.

Thank you.