

August 29, 2007

RE: Michelle Lopez Rios

To Whom It May Concern:

Professor Michelle Lopez Rios presented her paper entitled Non-Traditional Academic Casting: Issues and Questions at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education Conference in New Orleans on July 28, 2007. I had the pleasure of attending her presentation, and here offer my assessment.

Professor Rios began with an introduction of herself and how this paper came about from the production of West Side Story at University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. She gave an excellent introduction to the material with pertinent examples. Her knowledge of the subject came from experience. Each point flowed logically into the next. When presenting the results of her survey, the handout was extremely helpful. I doubt that we would have been able to follow the results without it. I know that she had initially planned to use a Power Point presentation. However, when there was no projector available, she was prepared with handouts.

Her manner of delivery was exceptionally honest, open, and natural. She developed a connection to the audience of academic theatre professionals through her use of eye contact and personal style. Her presentation raised a lot of questions, but did not offer pat answers. It created room for her audience to begin a dialogue on the topic. It gave us fodder to take to our home campuses for discussion and debate. In this way, Professor Rios truly succeeded in her goal of generating conversation on the topic of non-traditional casting.

Sincerely,



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