

Gender and Labor: What's Working?

Eidman Courtroom, UT Law School
October 19th – 20th, 2006



This conference will critically examine labor governance (broadly conceived) in the U.S. and its impact on women. Our panelists will examine legislation and other governance structures adopted at the federal level to address specific issues affecting women and work. We will address factors that make these challenging times for working women, the labor movement, and women's advocacy groups. We will also consider emerging reforms, innovations, and alternatives to federal governance structures.

Co-organized by:

William Wayne Justice 
Center for Public Interest Law

[William Wayne Justice Center for Public Interest Law](#)

The Justice Center is dedicated to promoting equal justice for all. The Center works toward this goal by educating students and attorneys about public interest issues through conferences, research projects, and clinical courses; by encouraging all students to participate in pro bono and public interest law throughout their careers; and by creating public service opportunities for students and graduates.



[Center for Women's and Gender Studies University of Texas at Austin](#)

The Center's mission is to advance knowledge and understanding about women's lives and the role that gender plays in structuring society, via courses, degree programs, interdisciplinary research, faculty development opportunities, achievement awards, research workshops, and community outreach.

Co-sponsored by:

[Bernard and Audre Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice](#), UT Law
[Humanities Institute](#), UT Austin
[University of Texas School of Law](#)

Thursday, Oct. 19th

Keynote Address: Eidman Courtroom **4:00 – 5:30**
Judith Scott, General Counsel, Service Employees International Union

Judith Scott has been a union-side labor lawyer for over three decades, has served as General Counsel for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) since 1997, and is recognized as one of the country's leading labor lawyers. Over her career, she has given special attention to issues affecting women workers. As an attorney for the UAW, Scott was instrumental in implementing the Pregnancy Discrimination Act in 1979. She serves on the Board of the National Partnership for Women and Families, and is the co-author of *Organizing and the Law*.

Reception: Jamail Pavilion **5:30 – 6:30**

Friday, October 20th

Continental Breakfast: Jamail Pavilion **8:00 – 8:30**

Welcome **8:15 – 8:30**
Mechele Dickerson, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, UT Law School

Morning Panels: Eidman Courtroom

Panel 1 - Women in the Labor Movement **8:30 – 10:10**

Chair: Dr. Laurie Green, History, UT Austin

Legislative Response/Governance Structure: National Labor Relations Board

Alternatives: different forms of labor organizing for women; efforts to form coalitions between labor, civil rights, women's rights, and disability rights groups; and efforts to reform the labor movement and labor agreements in a more woman friendly direction

Panelists:

- Judith Scott, General Counsel, Service Employees International Union
- Julius Getman, Professor, UT Law
- Cynthia Estlund, Professor, New York University School of Law
- Jaribu Hill, Executive Director, Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights

Panel 2 - Workplace Discrimination **10:25 – 12:05**

Chair: Dr. Christine Williams, Sociology, UT Austin

Legislative Response/Governance Structure: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Alternatives: private tort actions, reconceptualizations of sexual harassment

Panelists:

- Vicki Schultz, Professor, Yale Law School
- Nancy MacLean, History and African American Studies, Northwestern University
- Irma Herrera, Executive Director, Equal Rights Advocates
- Brad Seligman, Executive Director, Impact Fund

Lunch, *By Invitation*

12:15 – 1:15

Sheffield Room

Presentation - Dr. Eileen Boris, Professor of Women's Studies, UC Santa Barbara
"The Carework Economy: Old Labor, New Rights, and the Struggle for Social Justice"

Afternoon Panels: Eidman Courtroom

Panel 3 - Work and Family

1:30 – 3:10

Chair: Dr. Gretchen Ritter, Government, Director of Center for Women's and Gender Studies, UT Austin

Legislative Response/Governance Structure: Family and Medical Leave Act

Alternatives: state efforts to fund paid leave; reconceptualizations of work (care allowances, etc.)

Panelists:

- Joel Handler, Professor, UCLA Law, and UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research
- Julie Nelson, Senior Research Associate, Global Development and Environment Institute, Tufts University
- Netsy Firestein, Director, Labor Project for Working Families
- Kathie Lingle, Director, Alliance for Work-Life Progress

Panel 4 - Trade Governance as a Labor Issue

3:20 – 5:00

Chair: Professor Karen Engle, Director of Bernard and Audre Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice, UT Law School

Legislative Response/Governance Structure: North American Free Trade Agreement

Alternatives: efforts to regulate Walmart (to pay medical benefits, etc.); Fair Trade campaigns; Living Wage campaigns that connect the plight of American women workers to globalization issues

Panelists:

- Dana Frank, History, UC Santa Cruz
- Natacha Thys, Project Director, Rights for Working Women Campaign, International Labor Rights Fund
- Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, Asian American Studies, UC Davis
- Lisa McGowan, Senior Program Specialist, AFL-CIO Solidarity Center

Closing Wrap-up

5:00 - 5:30

Conference Speakers and Panelists

Eileen Boris is the Hull Professor of Women's Studies and the Director of the Center for Research on Women and Social Justice at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her areas of study include women's and gender history, social politics, labor studies and feminist theory. She is the author of several books, including *Home to Work: Motherhood and the Politics of Industrial Homework in the United States* (Winner of the 1995 Philip Taft Prize in Labor History), and the co-editor of *Major Problems in the History of American Workers, Second Edition*. Her upcoming book is tentatively titled, *Citizens at Work, Bodies on the Job: Gender, Race, and Rights in Modern America*.

Karen Engle is the W.H. Francis, Jr. Professor of Law and the Director of the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice at the University of Texas School of Law. She writes and lectures on identity politics, international law, human rights, and employment discrimination. Her recent articles include "Liberal Internationalism, Feminism and the Suppression of Critique: Contemporary Approaches to Global Order in the United States" and "International Human Rights and Feminisms: When Discourses Keep Meeting."

Cynthia Estlund recently became the Catherine A. Rein Professor of Law at the New York University School of Law. She studies labor and employment law, and has written extensively on the role of the workplace in a democratic society and the shortcomings of U.S. labor laws. She is the author of *Working Together: How Workplace Bonds Strengthen a Diverse Democracy*.

Netsy Firestein is the founder and Director of the Labor Project for Working Families based in Berkeley, a nonprofit organization that works with unions to develop better workplace policies for families. The Project provides technical assistance and resources to unions nationwide on issues such as childcare, eldercare, family leave and flexible work schedules. Firestein is a social worker with a background in community organizing.

Dana Frank is a Professor and the Graduate Program Director for the Department of History at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She specializes in U.S. social and cultural history, labor history, gender studies, working-class culture, comparative ethnic studies, and contemporary political economy. Her publications include *Bananeras: Women Transforming the Banana Unions of Latin America* and *Three Strikes: Miners, Musicians, Salesgirls and the Fighting Spirit of Labor's Last Century*.

Julius Getman holds the Earl E. Sheffield Regents Chair at the University of Texas School of Law. His area of focus is labor law. His writings include *The Betrayal of Local 14: Paperworkers, Politics and Permanent Replacements* and *In the Company of Scholars: The Struggle for the Soul of Higher Education*. He is a former President of the American Association of University Professors and is currently writing a book with former Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall (a faculty member at the L.B.J. School of Public Affairs) on the future of the labor union movement.

Laurie Green is an Assistant Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research areas include the politics of race and gender, social movements and cultural studies. She is the author of *Battling the 'Plantation Mentality': Race, Gender and Freedom in Memphis during the Civil Rights Era*.

Joel Handler is the Richard C. Maxwell Professor of Law at the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law and a Professor of Policy Studies at UCLA's School of Public Policy and Social Research. His research interests include poverty, social welfare reform, and the European conception of social citizenship. He is the author of many books, including *Social Citizenship in Workfare in the United States and Western Europe - The Paradox of Inclusion*, and is the co-author of the upcoming *Blame Welfare, Ignore Poverty and Inequality*.

Irma Herrera is the Executive Director of Equal Rights Advocates based in San Francisco, a civil rights organization dedicated to advancing equal opportunity for women and girls through impact litigation and advocacy. Ms. Herrera has also worked as a public interest lawyer representing migrant farm workers and as a freelance journalist.

Jaribu Hill, a civil rights attorney, is the Executive Director of The Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights in Greenville, MS. The Center provides education, legal representation and organizing support to low-wage, non-union workers and victims of civil and human rights violations in Mississippi.

Kathie Lingle is the Director of the Alliance for Work-Life Progress in Scottsdale, Arizona, a professional association of work-life practitioners and other professionals who specialize in creating strategies and providing services to help people navigate work-life conflict. She served in the Peace Corps and has worked as a management consultant.

Nancy MacLean is a Professor of History and African American Studies and the Chair of the History Department at Northwestern University. Her particular focus is the history of U.S. social movements and public policy. Her most recent book is *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace*.

Lisa McGowan, an economist, is a Senior Program Specialist in the Middle East and North Africa Office (MENA) of the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center based in Washington, D.C. McGowan has over 20 years of experience in working to empower women and citizens to shape development, labor, and global economic policies that affect them. McGowan managed a working women's empowerment educational and networking program in Algeria, Jordan and Bahrain.

Julie Nelson is a Senior Research Associate for the Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts University. Her interests include gender and economics and feminist theory. She is the author of *Economics for Humans* and *Feminism, Objectivity, and Economics*.

Rhacel Salazar Parreñas is an Associate Professor of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Davis. Her teaching interests include immigration, gender, the family, and diasporic communities. She is the author of *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration, and Domestic Work* and *Children of Global Migration: Transnational Families and Gendered Woes*.

Gretchen Ritter is an Associate Professor of Government and the Director of the Center for Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. She studies American politics, constitutional development, and gender politics from a historical and theoretical perspective. She is the author of two books, most recently *The Constitution as Social Design: Gender and Civic Membership in the American Constitutional Order*. Her current research examines the impact of work-family issues on gender equity in the U.S.

Vicki Schultz is the Ford Foundation Professor of Law at Yale Law School. Her subject areas are employment discrimination law, civil procedure, feminism and law, and gender and work. Her publications include *The Need for a Reduced Workweek in the United States* and *The Sanitized Workplace*.

Judith Scott has been a union-side labor lawyer for over three decades, has served as General Counsel for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) since 1997, and is recognized as one of the country's leading labor lawyers. Over her career, she has given special attention to issues affecting women workers. As an attorney for the UAW, Scott was instrumental in implementing the Pregnancy Discrimination Act in 1979. She serves on the Board of the National Partnership for Women and Families, and is the co-author of the book *Organizing and the Law*.

Brad Seligman has been a civil rights attorney specializing in class action and individual employment and civil rights litigation for 26 years and serves as Executive Director of The Impact Fund located in Berkeley. He is lead counsel in the nationwide class action sex discrimination case against Wal-Mart Stores (*Dukes v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*), the largest civil rights class action ever certified. He is also lead counsel in a nationwide glass ceiling gender discrimination case against Costco.

Natacha Thys, a labor and employment attorney, is the Project Director for the International Labor Rights Fund's Rights for Working Women Campaign in Washington, D.C. She has written studies of sexual harassment in Kenya and the Dominican Republic. Recently Thys worked with trade union partners to hold the first African regional conference on workplace gender violence.

Christine Williams is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research focuses on gender and sexuality in the workplace. She is the editor of *Gender and Society*, a top rated journal in the sociology of gender, and the author of several books, including *Gender Differences at Work; Still a Man's World*; and, most recently, *Inside Toyland: Working, Shopping, and Social Inequality*.

Planning Committee:

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