

## CALL FOR PAPERS

The Feminism and Legal Theory Project at 30:

### A Workshop on Labor and Employment

April 25-26, 2014

Emory University School of Law, Atlanta, Georgia

The year 2014 continues the 30th anniversary of operations for the Feminism and Legal Theory Project. During the 2013-2014 academic year we have canvassed the history and impact of feminist legal theory in three key areas of concern to those interested in the institutionalization, construction, and maintenance of gender and gender differences, as well as broader issues of social and economic justice. Following in the footsteps of our workshops on sex and reproduction; the family; and violence as areas of early feminist legal scholarship, we will conclude this retrospective series by considering the issue of work.

Thirty years ago, FLT discussions of work revolved around gender equality and antidiscrimination measures in regard to pay and access to and conditions of employment. This workshop will look at the issues more broadly, reflecting the fact now we live in a "post-egalitarian" and "intersectional" world in which claims and analyses based solely on gender differences are often viewed with suspicion. What is and should be the role of gender analysis when it comes to labor and employment issues in 2014 and beyond? How have changes in the nature of work altered issues of gender? In particular, we are interested in exploring the advantages and disadvantages of moving beyond a discrimination paradigm that focuses on gender and other identity markers toward a more universal and inclusive social justice paradigm for considering issues of labor and employment. One such approach is found in the identification of "labor rights" with "human rights," but such a rights-based analysis is itself problematic. It allows the power of capital and neoliberal ideology to constrain the development of social and economic rights, too often resulting in severe cutbacks on social welfare programs and policies internationally. This workshop will ask whether there are other, more effective ways to bring the state and state regulatory responsibility into the picture.

Are there ways to revitalize unions and other social justice organizations, and demand that a more responsive state address the changing position of workers and the vulnerabilities inherent in the workplace?

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#### Submissions Procedure:

Email a proposal as a Word or PDF document by February 10, 2014 to *Yvana Mols,* [ymols@emory.edu](mailto:ymols@emory.edu).

Decisions will be made by February 20 and working paper drafts will be due April 11 so they can be duplicated and distributed prior to the Workshop.

#### Workshop Details:

The Workshop begins Friday at 3 PM in the Hunter Atrium of Emory Law School (1301 Clifton Rd, Atlanta, GA). Panels continue on Saturday from 9 AM to 5PM; breakfast and lunch will be provided.

#### Issues For Discussion May Include:

- How has work and employment changed? And how does that affect critical perspectives and theories about gender, labor, and employment?
- In view of the diversification of the labor market in a "post-fordist" era (the transformation from mass production to flexible production), how have our lives as workers and consumers been transformed, both locally and on a transnational scale?
- Can we still talk about "employees" as a generality? Or should we distinguish between categories and groups of workers? If so, how should the distinctions be drawn?
- How are globalization, changes in the nature of production, and transformations in the workplace undermining regulatory state capitalism in Western societies? What alternative economic systems are emerging in other countries to address the social consequences of these dynamics?
- What are the practical and theoretical implications of the identification of labor rights with human rights across nations?
- What laws or regulations are needed to even out the playing field, giving employees more leverage individually and collective, in their dealing with employers? Are there models outside of the US that could be transplanted here?
- What kinds of legal protections for employees as a group or class are needed to address the new vulnerabilities and risks imposed on workers? What legal protection is possible?
- In a society such as the US, in which corporations and pro-corporate politics greatly influence rules that govern employer/employee relations, how can employees be empowered and their vulnerabilities addressed?
- How might public policies and/or social action redefine the idea of the union or social collective?
- What are the specific vulnerabilities of employees? Employers? How do their distinct vulnerabilities interrelate?