

Spring 2008

News from the Feminism and Legal Theory Project

Announcing the Vulnerability Studies Project (VSP).

On April 17 & 18, 2008, as part of the Race and Difference Initiative of Emory University, the FLT Project launched the Vulnerable Studies Project (VSP). This first event consisted of a speaker series featuring (i) Peadar Kirby, Professor of International Politics and Public Policy, University of Limerick, and author of *Vulnerability and Violence* and (ii) Bryan S. Turner, Professor of Sociology in the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, and author of *Vulnerability and Human Rights*. Martha's paper, "The Vulnerable Subject," was also distributed. It can be accessed on SSRN -- <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1131407>

The series was a wonderful kick off to what we hope will be many expanding conversations at Emory on the issue of vulnerability.



Left to Right: P. Kirby, M. Fineman and B. Turner

The VSP will have its first Post-Doctorate position this fall. Eunjung Kim will be with us for two years. We have also begun a blog on the issue of vulnerability, which can be found at <http://vulnerabilityproject.blogspot.com/>. We hope you will be a part of this important and ground breaking new project!

Exhibits on Class and Vulnerability.

The Race and Difference Initiative of Emory University, the Vulnerability Studies Project and the Feminism and Legal Theory Project have secured two of historian and curator Rickie Solinger's multi-media exhibits to be displayed at the Schatten Gallery from *January 15 – March 12, 2009*: (i) *Interrupted Life: Incarcerated Mothers in the United States* addresses the inequitable treatment of mothers in prison and (ii) *Beggars and Choosers: Motherhood is Not a Class Privilege in America* raises issues surrounding motherhood, poverty, and class privilege.

The presence of these powerful exhibits on the Emory campus for two months offers a unique opportunity to engage the University community in debates regarding gender, race, class and other indications of social and economic vulnerability. We hope through programming and publicity to create an Emory platform from which to engage the larger Atlanta community in discussions about these issues. We are in the process of fund-raising and planning numerous events around these exhibits, including a major workshop on Human Rights and Incarceration. Please check the website (www.emory.edu/flt) periodically for an update of events.

Visiting Scholars since the prior newsletter:

- **Dermot Feenan** – is a Lecturer at the University of Ulster School of Law, Northern Ireland. He was at Emory for the month of April 2008. Dermot's scholarship focuses on gender and judicial appointments.
- **Clare Huntington** - is an Associate Professor of Law at the University of Colorado Law School. She visited the Project for a week in April. Her areas of research include law and emotion, and social norm theory, both as applied to family law.
- **Sara Benson** - is a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois College of Law. She visited Emory for a week in March. Sara's areas of research include domestic violence and the law, and sexual orientation and the law.
- **In Seop Chung** – is a professor of international law at the College of Law, Seoul National University. He will be in residence until July 2008. During his visit, he will work on an international law textbook incorporating gender issues and perspectives.
- **Michele Alexandre** – is an Assistant Professor of Law at the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphries School of Law. She was with the project for the first two weeks of December 2007 enabling her to work on two projects (i) consent issues inherent in multi-partner rape cases and (ii) exploring the ways in which the First Amendment can be instrumental in dismantling the application of gender biases in attire policies in the workplace.
- **Laura Kessler** – is an Associate Professor of Law at S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah. She visited the project for one week in November 2007. Laura's work focuses on the intersection of discrimination and family law.
- **Richard Collier** – is a Professor of Law and Social Theory at Newcastle University School of Law. He was with the project for a week in October 2007. His scholarship lies primarily in the field of law and gender, with a particular focus on issues concerning the construction of men and masculinities.

If you're interested in being a Visiting Scholar with the FLT Project, please see our website at www.emory.edu/flt/Visiting%20Scholar.php.

FLT

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WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO . . .

The Feminism and Legal Theory Project held four major workshops since our last newsletter -

- *Working from the World Up: Equality's Future (March 14-15, 2008)*, this workshop, co-sponsored with the University of Wisconsin Law School, convened legal scholars from across the country to reflect on key concepts of sex and race and determine the best path for theorizing equality going forward.
- *Feminist Theory and Economic Vulnerability (March 7-8, 2008)*, Participants in this workshop, co-sponsored by the University of Colorado Law School and the Vulnerability Studies Project of Emory University's Race and Difference Initiative (VSP), focused on the economic aspects of vulnerability and the role of the state and globalization in structuring economic vulnerability in the twenty-first century.
- *Vulnerability and Dependency: Understanding Equality within the Inevitable Aspects of the Human Condition (November 30 - December 1, 2007)*, This workshop was the first in a series of four annual workshops, co-sponsored by the VSP, the series focuses on varying issues related to the concept of vulnerability and the search for a post-identity paradigm to address growing inequality worldwide. This inaugural workshop explored how understandings of dependency and vulnerability, as inevitable aspects of the human condition, do and should affect our understandings of and aspirations for equality in the 21st century.
- *New Legal Realism meets Feminism & Legal Theory II: Gendered Strategies for Combining Work and Family in Empirical Perspective (October 5-6, 2007)*, co-sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Law School, this conference was the continuation of a conversation started in 2005. The objective in this second conference was to continue to develop a set of empirically-based perspectives on women, work, and family and to generate methods for systematic translation between law and other disciplines. Both feminists and new legal realists stressed the need for sustained effort in attempting to understand differing perspectives, rejecting historically combative approaches.

Catherine Roraback, one of this nation's foremost civil rights attorneys, passed away on October 17, 2007. Among her landmark cases were *Griswold v. Connecticut* (establishing reproductive rights for women; a right to birth control and a Constitutional right to privacy) and *Women v. Connecticut* (striking down the state's anti-abortion law). In her will, Ms. Roraback bequeathed to Martha all of her personal and professional papers and files related to women's history and reproductive freedom. In addition to obtaining these remarkable documents, the FLT Project has hours of personal interviews that Martha conducted with Ms. Roraback. We will be planning a major conference on reproductive rights, highlighting the archiving of the papers and publicizing their availability to scholars of women's history, once the estate has been settled.

Mark Your Calendars 25th Anniversary Workshop

It is hard to believe that the FLT project begins its 25th year in 2008! To celebrate we are planning a major interdisciplinary conference on November 6-8, 2008 involving world renowned feminist scholars who presented papers at FLT events early in their careers, as well as their former students and many others who have made a significant impact to feminist theory throughout the first quarter century of the project. We have also secured Routledge as the publisher for an anthology of the papers from the conference entitled *Transcending the Boundaries of Law*. Routledge published the first ever anthology on feminist theory, *At the Boundaries of Law*, which was edited by Martha. Anticipated panels and speakers for the conference are:

Panel One – *From Women in Law to Feminist Legal Theory*, includes: Martha Albertson Fineman, Emory Law School, Mary Jane Mossman, Osgoode Hall Law School (Canada), Margaret Thornton, ANU College of Law (Australia), Robin West, Georgetown University Law Center, Lucie White, Harvard Law School, Patricia Williams, Columbia Law School

Panel Two – *Differences and Deviations*, includes Mary Anne Case, University of Chicago Law School, Isabel Karpin, University of Sydney (Australia), Linda McClain, Boston University Law School, Martha McCluskey, SUNY Buffalo Law School, Fionnuala NiAolain, University of Minnesota Law School, Michael Thomson, Keele University, UK

Panel Three – *Post-Feminist Feminisms*, includes Holning Lau, Hofstra University Law School, Laura Kessler, University of Utah Law School, Laura Spitz, University of Colorado Law School

Look for more information on the conference and registration materials soon!

Signing off ~

After two years serving as the Program Associate (and Editor of this newsletter), I am leaving the FLT Project to pursue other career goals. It has been a privilege to work with Martha and to contribute to such ground-breaking work. My official last day is May 30th, but I am sure I will remain a friend of the Project for years to come.

Thanks to Martha and all of you for making my experience at Emory great! All my best,

~Nancy