

CALL FOR PAPERS: “Other Voices in Feminist Legal Theory”

The Section on Women in Legal Education is pleased to announce a Call for Papers from which presenters will be selected to participate in the Section’s main program at the AALS 2022 Annual Meeting in New York, NY. The program, titled “Other Voices in Feminist Legal Theory,” will discuss views from scholars whose work marks them as feminist legal theorists even if they have not traditionally been labeled as such.

The adoption of a feminist legal theory (and they are plural) perspective, that is, an explicitly feminist consciousness, is the choice of many legal scholars. Though feminist legal theories frequently promote change to existing legal norms, they do so not only for the sake of change, but in order to mediate legal, political, social and economic barriers that limit women’s advancement. Moreover, feminist legal theory often confronts the political and moral issues that have all too often remain unaddressed, all while, within this silence, these issues work to narrow women’s possibilities. However, not all legal scholars who adopt a feminist legal theoretical perspective are acknowledged for doing so, nor have they always characterized their own work in this way.

One frequent reason for the hesitance to make connections between feminism and law and legal institutions is the belief by some that creating explicitly feminist work (or work that is intersectionally feminist, such as in the case of work implicating race and gender) means situating oneself outside of the center of the legal scholarly enterprise . However, if we widen and deepen the view of the legal scholarship typically produced, the connections of feminism to the law in scholarly work appear much more frequently, and more complexly, than is typically acknowledged.

While some scholars use feminist legal theory to explicitly consider the equality of formal rights (in legal and political matters, for example) and to influence the work of production of law in dominant institutional arenas, work from other voices (not only or at all just new voices), is more muted in nature, and often takes a feminist legal theoretical pose that appears in deed if not in word. Recent work that, for example, addresses the disparate economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, or demographic wage or productivity differentials in other contexts, is often characterized as a discussion of labor law without plumbing the explicitly feminist implications of such work.

This call for papers seeks participant authors whose scholarly work falls into the category of unacknowledged or more muted feminist legal theoretical outings. This session will be guided by three key inquiries:

- (1) What is the feminist legal theory program in law and legal scholarship, and how do we know it when we see it?
- (2) What is the importance and value of less explicit feminist legal theoretical work to the broader enterprise of legal scholarship?
- (3) What theoretical perspectives have been less acknowledged in feminist legal theoretical work? Might these approaches offer new and more inclusive perspectives?

We welcome proposals from scholars at all career stages for presentations that engage with any or all of

these questions. Especially welcome are proposals that address intersectional analyses implicating feminist legal theory, and work that takes a broad view of the nature of the feminist legal scholarly enterprise.

Papers proposed need not directly engage the inquiries above. We also invite proposals from authors willing to query the feminist legal theoretical aspects of their work when other readers (or even authors themselves) have not previously viewed the work in this light.

Submission Guidelines: We welcome proposals for 15-20-minute presentations on these topics. Proposals for presentations should be sent as an e-mail file attachment in MS Word to Lolita Buckner Inniss, linniss@colorado.edu<<mailto:linniss@colorado.edu>> with the heading "WILE OTHER VOICES SUBMISSION". Proposals for presentations should be 500-1000 words long, should clearly state the topic to be addressed, any special technological needs for the session, along with the presenter's background, years of teaching, institutional affiliation, and contact information. All abstracts will be reviewed by members of the WILE Program Committee. Selected professors will present their work at the January 2022 AALS Annual Meeting.

The due date for submissions is June 18, 2021.

*No publication venue has yet been finalized, however, publication may be possible for selected papers.

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