

CALL FOR PAPERS

Feminist Theory & Economic Vulnerability

March 7-8, 2008

University of Colorado Law School

Boulder, Colorado

This workshop, co-sponsored by the Feminism and Legal Theory Project and the Colorado Law School, will explore a range of disciplinary perspectives on the concept of economic vulnerability.

The basic premise underlying the move toward vulnerability is that our current ways of defining who is entitled to legal protection and state subsidy and support are rapidly becoming inadequate, perhaps even irrelevant. Political alliances and analytical categories organized around race, gender, disability, sexuality, and class have proven limited and often divisive. Although post-modern fear of essentializing makes us wary of generalities, both theory and politics require some appeal to the universal. The concept of vulnerability has the potential to unite across differences. This workshop will focus specifically on the economic aspects of vulnerability and the role of the state and globalization in structuring economic vulnerability in the twenty-first century.

We are seeking to bring an international and comparative dimension to our consideration of vulnerability. We believe that this project will have important implications for legal and scholarly debates on rights, freedom, and the legacies of liberal humanism under the shadows of late-stage capitalism, globalization; multiculturalism and the rise of religious fundamentalisms.

WORKSHOP ORGANIZERS:

Martha L. A. Fineman, Emory University School of Law
Laura Spitz, University of Colorado Law School

SUBMISSIONS PROCEDURE:

Please email a paper proposal of several paragraphs length by December 15, 2007 to:

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Working paper drafts to be duplicated and distributed prior to the Workshop will be due February 21, 2008.

WORKSHOP DETAILS:

The Workshop begins on Friday afternoon at 3 PM with a panel discussion to be held in the University of Colorado Law School's Wittermyer Courtroom, Wolf Law Building, Boulder CO.

There will be a reception and dinner that evening at the Law School. All interested participants are welcome.

Saturday there will be three panel presentations convening at 9 AM in the Wittermyer Courtroom.

Possible paper topics include:

- What does it mean to be "economically vulnerable?"
- Is vulnerability inevitable within a capitalist society?
- How does vulnerability help us understand the organization of specific economic and societal institutions?
- Is vulnerability experienced differently in developing, as compared with developed countries?
- What is the relationship between economic vulnerability and (i) class, (ii) race, (iii) gender; (iv) capitalism; or (v) globalization?
- What is the relationship between vulnerability and privilege?
- How does the nation state participate in the creation and maintenance of vulnerability?
- What is the state's responsibility for the vulnerable? Is there any responsibility for vulnerable persons outside their borders?
- Can we imagine a distinct feminist approach to economic vulnerability?
- How can vulnerability be integrated with or build upon existing economic theories?
- How should we conceive of equality in light of the pervasiveness of economic vulnerability?
- How does vulnerability call into contest ideas about the public, the private, and the state?
- What would a critical analysis of comparative anti-poverty policies look like?
- Has the feminization of poverty been detrimental to other vulnerable populations?