

CALL FOR PAPERS & PARTICIPATION

ClassCrits VII

Poverty, Precarity, and Work: Struggle and Solidarity in an Era of Permanent(?) Crisis

Sponsored by
U.C. Davis School of Law

Davis, CA * November 14-15, 2014

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, President Johnson's declaration of a "War on Poverty," and the establishment of the first Neighborhood Legal Services Program pilot in Washington, D.C. Each of these initiatives attempted to address problems of structural economic inequality—problems that remain with us nationally and internationally. The seventh meeting of ClassCrits will focus on work, poverty, and resistance in an age of increasing economic insecurity.

In law, it is generally easier to discuss "poverty" than to look deeply into its causes and incidents—including income and wealth inequality, the close interaction of class and race in America, and the connections between gender and economic hardship. It is also easier to discuss "poverty" than what some scholars call "precarity"—the increasing vulnerability of workers, even those above the official poverty line, to disaster. Precarity has both economic and political roots. Its economic sources include the casualization of labor, low wages, persistently high unemployment rates, inadequate social safety nets, and constant vulnerability to personal financial catastrophes. Its political sources include the success of neoliberal ideology, upward redistribution of wealth, increasing polarization and dysfunction in Congress, and the dependence of both political parties on a steady stream of big money. Precarity is also not limited to the United States, but is reshaping space around the globe. While the aftermath of the housing bubble and subsequent foreclosures drain home values across America and strip equity disproportionately from minority neighborhoods, in developing-country "megacities," millions of slum-dwellers are displaced to make way for high-end residential and commercial real estate developments.

Finally, this conference focuses on challenging structural forms of inequality from a place of compassion and creating possibilities for resilience. In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., "True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice that produces beggars needs restructuring." In this spirit, ClassCrits VII will explore the risks, uncertainty, and structural challenges of this period and discuss possibilities for shared goals and new forms of resistance.

We invite panel proposals and paper presentations that speak to this year's theme as well as to general ClassCrits themes. See the following page for details.

In addition, we extend a special invitation to junior scholars (i.e., graduate students or any non-tenured faculty member) to submit proposals for *works in progress*. A senior scholar as well as other scholars will comment upon each work in progress in a small, supportive working session.

Proposal Submission Procedure and Deadline

Please submit your proposal by email to classcrits@gmail.com by **May 23, 2014**. Proposals should include the author's name, institutional affiliation and contact information, the title of the paper to be presented, and an abstract of the paper to be presented of no more than 750 words. Junior scholar submissions for works in progress should be clearly marked as "**JUNIOR SCHOLAR WORK IN PROGRESS PROPOSAL**."

Possible Topics: Poverty, Precarity, and Work: Struggle and Solidarity in an Era of Permanent(?) Crisis

- Minimum wages, living wages, and wage theft
- Creditor and debtor classes, including work on student debt, bankruptcies, and foreclosures
- New legal challenges to neoliberalism and the "new normal" (?) of economic insecurity
- Movement lawyering, poverty lawyering, and the need for lawyers in social justice movements focused on inequality
- Economic insecurity and the family, including income security and old age
- Conceptualizing the rhetoric and reality of the right to work, the right not to work, and post-work imaginaries
- Poverty, taxation, and the progressive and redistributive possibilities of law
- The criminalization of poverty, immigration status, and motherhood
- Neoliberal education reforms, including wider reliance on testing, privatizing public schools, and the school-to-prison pipelines
- Precarity and the sexual state
- Poverty in place: rurality, exurbia, and "the right to the city"
- New public action (such as innovative uses of eminent domain by cities)
- The various faces of financialization, including International development finance and social financeThe globalization of under-development
- Class, race, climate change, and the environment
- Local, national, and international resistance—coalitions, social movements, strategies, and options
- The legal dimensions of precarity and the precariat

In addition, we invite panel proposals that speak to the general themes of ClassCrits, including:

- * The legal and cultural project of constructing inequalities of all kinds as natural, normal, and necessary.
- *The relationships among economic, racial, and gender inequality.
- * The development of new methods (including the interdisciplinary study and development of such methods) with which to analyze and criticize economics and law (beyond traditional "law and economics").
- * The relationship between material systems and institutions and cultural systems and institutions.
- * The concept and reality of class within the international legal community, within international development studies and welfare strategies, and within a "flattening" world of globalized economics and geopolitical relations.

Logistics & Fees

The venue for the gathering is King Hall, U.C. Davis, School of Law. The workshop will begin with continental breakfast on Friday, November 14 and continue through the afternoon of Saturday, November 15. Arrangements are being made for conference hotels. Please check our website, www.classcrits.org, for further updates.

The registration fee is \$199.00 for accepted presenters who are full-time faculty members. Registration is free for students and activists. Participants who do not fit into these categories, and/or who for individual reasons cannot afford the registration fee, should contact us at classcrits@gmail.com. Workshop attendees are responsible for their own travel and lodging expenses.

Conference Planning Committee

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About ClassCrits

ClassCrits is a network of scholars and activists interested in the critical, interdisciplinary and international analysis of law and economic relations. The global economic crisis, along with growing economic inequality and insecurity, suggests it is time to explore alternatives to the neoclassical or “free market” economic paradigm, often identified with the U.S.-origin “Law and Economics” movement. We aim to revive discussions of questions of class pushed to the margins or relegated to the shadowy past, considering the possible meaning and relevance of economic class to the contemporary context. We also hope to better integrate the rich diversity of economic and social sciences methods and theories into law by exploring and engaging non-neoclassical and heterodox economics. The name “ClassCrits” reflects our interest in focusing on economics through the lens of critical legal scholarship movements, such as critical legal studies, critical feminist theory, critical race theory, LatCrit, queer theory, and critical law and development theory. That is, we start with the assumption that economics in law is inextricably political and fundamentally tied to questions of systemic status-based subordination. www.classcrits.org