Symposium sponsored by

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Center for Criminology & Socio-Legal Studies

Judicial and Prosecutorial Discretion in Criminal Adjudication:
Race, Ethnicity and Gender Effects

September 10-11, 2009
Levitt Auditorium, Boyd Law Building
University of Iowa

Organizers: Celesta Albonetti and Robert Baller,
Department of Sociology, University of Iowa

Parking Lots 14 and 6

College of Law, Boyd Law Building (319)-335-9034

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Parking Lots 14 and 6

Housing: Hotel rooms are available at the Iowa House in the Iowa Memorial Union.

Parking is available: Lots 14 and 6

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Thursday, September 10, 2009

9:00-9:15 Coffee/Tea
9:15-9:30 Welcome & Introductory Remarks
9:30-10:15 Sentencing Women
Margareth Etienne, Professor of Law, University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign

10:15-10:30 Q & A Session
10:30-10:45 Coffee/Tea Break
10:45-11:30 The Role of Court Characteristics and Social Context in Explaining Persistent Gender Disparities in Federal Sentencing
Amy Farrell, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice, Northeastern University

11:30-11:45 Q & A Session
11:45-1:00 Lunch Break

1:00-2:30 Black and Latino Representation among Federal Court Authorities: Implications for Racial Equity in Sentencing
Jeffery T. Ulmer, Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice and the Associate Director of the Institute on Race and Justice at Northeastern University. His research focuses on the administration of justice with primary emphasis on measuring the effect of race and gender in police, prosecution and sentencing practices. He has also conducted research on law enforcement responses to human trafficking and is overseeing a national human trafficking data collection program for the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Dr. Farrell has testified about law enforcement identification of human trafficking before the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee. Dr. Farrell is a recipient of the W.E.B. DuBois Fellowship on crime justice and culture. Dr. Farrell received her Ph.D. in Law, Policy and Society from Northeastern University in 2001.

1:30-2:00 Follow-up Q & A Session
2:00-2:15 Carissa Byrne Hessick
2:15-2:30 Q & A Session
2:30-2:45 Coffee/Tea Break
2:45-3:30 Sentencing under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines: The Role of Defendant’s Race/Ethnicity, Gender and a History of Vigilantism
Celesta Albonetti, Professor & Chair, Sociology, University of Iowa

3:30-3:45 Q & A Session
3:45-4:15 Follow-up Q & A Session (4 speakers)
4:15 Adjourn
4:15-5:00 Community Presentations-Iowa City Public Library, Ren. D

Friday, September 11, 2009

8:30 Coffee/Tea
8:45-9:30 Race and Gender as Explicit Sentencing Factors
Carissa Byrne Hessick, Assistant Professor of Law, Arizona State University

9:30-9:45 Q & A Session
9:45-10:30 Federal Case Processing and Sentencing Before and After the Booker/Fanfan Decision: Little Has Changed
Jeffery T. Ulmer, Associate Professor of Sociology & Criminal Justice, Pennsylvania State University

10:30-10:45 Q & A Session
10:45-11:00 Follow-up Q & A Session
11:00 Closing Remarks & Adjourn

Speaker Biography

Celesta Albonetti is Professor and Chair in the Department of Sociology at the University of Iowa. She received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1984. She is former director of the Center for Criminology and Socio-legal Studies. Her research examines the relationship between defendant’s race/ethnicity, gender and judicial and prosecutorial discretion in the criminal adjudication. Her research on federal sentencing prior to the federal guidelines developed a legal-bureaucratic model of sentencing that revealed the interplay between pleading guilty and case complexity in relation to defendant’s extra-legal characteristics and sentencing severity in white-collar convictions. More recently, her research seeks to expand theory development to incorporate measures of legal environment created by circuit court splits on legal issues central to the Federal Sentencing Guidelines. Her work has appeared in Social Forces, American Sociological Review, Law & Society Review, the Journal of Quantitative Criminal Justice, Social Problems, Criminology, the Journal of Gender, Race, and Justice and the Iowa Law Review.

Margareth Etienne is a Professor of Law at the College of Law at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Professor Etienne’s research and teaching interests focus on criminal law and procedure, sentencing, and juvenile law. Her scholarship seeks to advance our empirical and theoretical understanding of how various stakeholders in the criminal justice system interact with one another and with the law. Some of her recent publications include “Understanding Parity As A First Principle of Sentencing” (Stanford Law Rev.), “The Ethics of Cause Lawyering: An Empirical Examination of Criminal Defense Lawyers as Cause Lawyers” (J Crim. L. & Criminology), “The Declining Utility of the Right to Counsel in Federal Court: An Empirical Study on the Role of Defense Attorney Advocacy Under the Sentencing Guidelines” (California Law Review), “Innocence, Responsibility, and Regulating Advocacy: Making Defendants Pay for the Sins of Their Lawyers” (New York University Law Review). She has presented her work before a wide range of audiences spanning three continents. She recently served as a Fulbright Senior Specialist in Senegal, where she helped train judges on issues of white collar crime. Professor Etienne received her bachelor's and law degrees Yale University. She has served as Associate Provost Fellow in the Office of the Provost since 2008. Her work there focuses on university conflicts of interest, faculty development and diversity, and unit review and assessment.

Amy Farrell is an Assistant Professor in the College of Criminal Justice and the Associate Director of the Institute on Race and Justice at Northeastern University. Her research focuses on the administration of justice with primary emphasis on measuring the effect of race and gender in police, prosecution and sentencing practices. She has also conducted research on law enforcement responses to human trafficking and is overseeing a national human trafficking data collection program for the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Dr. Farrell has testified about law enforcement identification of human trafficking before the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee. Dr. Farrell is a recipient of the W.E.B. DuBois Fellowship on crime justice and culture. Dr. Farrell received her Ph.D. in Law, Policy and Society from Northeastern University in 2001.

Carissa Byrne Hessick is an Associate Professor of Law at Arizona State University’s Sandra Day O’Conner College of Law. Her research focuses on aggravation and mitigation in criminal sentencing, relative crime severity, and other political and doctrinal issues associated with sentencing. She graduated from Yale Law School and received her undergraduate degree from Columbia University. Professor Hessick joined the Arizona State faculty in 2007 after spending two years teaching at Harvard Law School as a Clinmenko Fellow. She served as a law clerk for Judge A. Raymond Randolph on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit and for Judge Barbara S. Jones on the District Court for the Southern District of New York. Professor Hessick also served as a litigator associate at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz.

Jeffery T. Ulmer is Associate Professor of Sociology and Crime, Law, and Justice at Penn State University. He received his Ph.D. in sociology from Penn State University in 1993. He was previously a postdoctoral research associate for the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing, and an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Purdue University. He has published nineteen social science journal articles and two books on topics related to state and federal courts and sentencing, as well as articles on other topics in criminology and sociology. He is the author of Worlds of Sentencing: Court Communities Under Sentencing Guidelines (1997, State University of New York Press), and coauthor (with Darrell Steffensmeier) of Confessions of a Dying Theft: Understanding Criminal Code Violation and Illegal Enterprise (2005, Aldine DeGruyter), which won the 2006 Hindelang Award from the American Society of Criminology. His newest book (with John Kramer), Sentencing Guidelines: Lessons from Pennsylvania was published in 2009 by Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Geoff Ward is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminology, Law and Society at the University of California, Irvine. His research examines the racial politics of criminal social control in historical and contemporary contexts. He has published articles in various edited volumes and academic journals and is author of the forthcoming book, The Black Child Savers: Racial Democracy and American Juvenile Justice (University of Chicago Press).