Invisible Labor Colloquium
February 7-8, 2013

Arlie Hochschild Lecture
The Outsourced Self: Intimate Life in Market Times
Noon - 1:00 pm | Location: Bryan Cave Moot Courtroom, Room 310

Held in conjunction with Public Interest Law & Policy Speakers Series, this lecture officially kicks off the Invisible Labor Colloquium, which will begin immediately following this public lecture.

This colloquium brings together an interdisciplinary group of scholars to pose two fundamental questions: what counts as work, and why are some workers invisible? We focus on the many forms of labor that are not conceptualized as work and so remain hidden from public view. In the process, we highlight the shifting boundaries between market work and leisure, economic coercion and choice, embodied and disembodied labor, commercial and social labor, and virtual and material work.

Our aim is to elaborate on the central concept of invisible labor as housework, and consider the impact of modern economic, legal, and social trends: outsourcing and marketization of services; degradation and fragmentation of employment structures; waning state protections of work; rising consumption, aesthetics, and appearance industries; expanding platforms of technology, communication and networks; and growth of globalization, offshoring, and multinational firms.

In particular, we consider how the following dynamics structure the invisibility of labor: when work is unpaid; when work falls outside legal or state parameters; when work is seen as a voluntary or chosen activity; when it occurs within a social interaction that has not historically been deemed economically valuable, when work is performed by women, people of color, and/or members of vulnerable and marginalized groups; and alternatively, when dominant gender, sexual, and racial/ethnic organizational imperatives motivate employees to perform additional tasks; when the bodies doing the work are hidden through the physical organization of work time and space; when the work occurs in a technological platform that splits or masks their tasks. Crossing the occupational hierarchy and spectrum, from high to low, professional to manual, we hope to engage a discussion that broadens our understanding of labor in the contemporary era.
PRESENTERS:

Productive Publics: How Knowledge Work Re-Organizes After Neoliberalism
Adam Arvidsson - University of Milan

Breast as Brand
Dianne Avery - SUNY Buffalo Law School

What is Work?
John Budd - University of Minnesota

Acting White
Devon Carbado - UCLA School of Law

Virtual Work
Miriam Cherry - Saint Louis University School of Law

Consuming Work
Marion Crain - Washington University School of Law

Regulating Sex Work
Adrienne Davis - Washington University School of Law

Towards a New Theoretical Framework of Invisible Work
Erin Hatton - University of Buffalo-SUNY

The Mirror of Production: Digital Media Workers and Vanishing Women of Color
Lisa Nakamura - University of Michigan

Producing Service: Managing Fresh Produce in the Backstage of a Retail Giant in China
Eileen Otis - University of Oregon

The Virtual Receptionist with a Human Touch: Opposing Pressures of Digital Automation and Outsourcing in Interactive Services
Winnie Poster - Washington University

Gender Work
Laura Rosenbury - Washington University School of Law

The Internet as Playground and Factory
Trebor Scholz - The New School

Love and Money: Compensating Family Members to Care for Elderly Relatives
Peggie Smith - Washington University School of Law

It’s What You Are Rather Than What You Have That Counts: Aesthetic Labour and the New Invisibilities of Interactive Service Work
Chris Warhurst - University of Sydney

Aesthetic Labor and the Fetishism of Commodities
Christine Williams - University of Texas-Austin

MODERATORS:

Matt Bodie - Saint Louis University School of Law
Rafael Gely - University of Missouri, Columbia, School of Law
Pauline Kim - Washington University School of Law
Marcia McCormick - Saint Louis University School of Law
Karen Tokarz - Washington University School of Law

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