

40th ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM



The *Journal of Law & Inequality* presents its 40th Anniversary Symposium honoring local lawyers and their groundbreaking work at the intersection of law and inequality.

MOVEMENT LAWYERING IN MINNESOTA AND BEYOND

Friday, March 25, 2022 | 9:45 am – 4:30 pm

Walter F. Mondale Hall, Room 25 | University of Minnesota Law School

Opening Statements

9:45 AM– 10:00 AM

Creative Worker Organizing in the “Great Resignation” Era

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Professor Sameer Ashar

Abdirahman Muse

Local Organizers and Activists

Historical Perspective: Lessons for Today from the Framers of the Reconstruction Era Amendments

11:00 AM– 11:45 AM

Professor Susan Carle

Discussion on Criminal Justice Reform and the Role of Prosecutors

1:15 PM– 2:30 PM

Mary Moriarty

John Choi

Kevin Reese

The Future of Police Accountability and Public Safety

2:30 PM– 3:30 PM

Professor Maria Ponomarenko

Sheila Nezhad

Local Organizers and Activists

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

The Rights of Manoomin:

Novel Legal Theories Extending Legal Rights to Our Environment

3:30 PM– 4:30 PM

Winona LaDuke and Frank Bibeau



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MEET OUR SPEAKERS

Creative Worker Organizing in the “Great Resignation” Era

10:00 – 11:00 AM

Professor Sameer Ashar

Professor Sameer Ashar is a Clinical Professor of Law at the University of California, Irvine School of Law. He directs the Workers, Law, and Organizing Clinic and is an Associate Dean for Equity Initiatives. Professor Ashar has worked with students to defend immigrants in deportation proceedings and low-wage workers in litigation against exploitative employers in clinics at five law schools. He has also worked with students on numerous policy advocacy and community education projects, in collaboration with immigrant and labor organizations in California, New York, and Maryland. Professor Ashar was most recently published in *Clinical Law Review*, *Law & Contemporary Problems*, *Fordham Law Review*, *Daedalus*, and *UCLA Law Review*, and he is the inaugural recipient of the Stephen Ellmann Memorial Clinical Scholarship Award, given by the AALS Section on Clinical Education.

Abdirahman Muse

Abdirahman Muse serves as the Executive Director of Awood Center in Minneapolis, a community organization focused on advocating for and educating Minnesota’s growing East African communities about their labor rights. The Awood (the Somali word for “power”) Center also helps develop leadership and mobilize East African communities to improve the lives of all working people. Muse currently sits on the Metropolitan Council for District 8 and previously served as an organizer for Service Employees International Union, focused on improving employment conditions for workers in the home care and health care facility field. He was also a senior policy aide on housing, neighborhoods, and a liaison to the Somali community for Minneapolis Mayor Betsy Hodges.

Historical Perspective: Lessons for Today from the Framers of the Reconstruction Era Amendments

11:00 – 11:45 AM



Professor Susan Carle

Professor Susan Carle teaches and writes about civil rights legal history, employment discrimination, labor and employment law, legal ethics, and the history and sociology of the legal profession.

She is the author of *Defining the Struggle: National Organizing for Racial Justice, 1880-1915*, published by Oxford University Press in 2013 and is published in several journals, including *Cornell Law Review*, *Fordham Law Journal*, *Florida Law Review*, *Harvard Journal of Gender and the Law*, *American University Law Review*, and *Stanford Journal of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties*. Professor Carle is also an editor of *Lawyers’ Ethics and the Pursuit of Social Justice* (NYU Press Critical America Series 2005), which collects work in the emerging field of critical legal ethics scholarship.

In 2001, her paper entitled “*Race, Class and Legal Ethics in the Early NAACP*” received the Association of American Law Schools’ Best Scholarly Paper Award, and in 2006 she received the Jean and Edgar Kahn National Equal Justice Library Award for distinguished scholarship on the subject of access to justice. She has served as American University Washington College of Law’s first Associate Dean for Scholarship and as chair of the American Association of Law Schools Section on Professional Responsibility and its Professional Development Committee, and is a member of the legal ethics advisory committee of the National Disability Rights Network.



MEET OUR SPEAKERS

Discussion on Criminal Justice Reform and the Role of Prosecutors

1:15 – 2:30 PM



John Choi

In 2011, John Choi was sworn in as the first Korean-American chief prosecutor in the US. Since taking office, John has become a state and national leader in progressive justice reform, working with public officials and impacted communities to reimagine justice and the role of prosecutors. He has transformed the way government intervenes in domestic violence and sex trafficking in Minnesota by holding abusers accountable, while working collaboratively with advocacy agencies to help victims. John is determined to expand his work to aid victims of sexual assault.

Throughout his career, Choi has accomplished several incredible achievements: successfully advocated to reform state drug laws and to reinvest savings in community-based solutions; developed the use of lethality assessments and GPS technology to keep domestic violence victims safe; advanced legislation to reunite families, in the best interest of foster children; increased "second chances" by diverting individuals before they are charged; and established a Veterans Court. Choi also serves on the boards of the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault and the Mitchell Hamline School of Law, and was previously President of the the Minnesota County Attorneys Association and a trustee for the Women's Foundation of Minnesota.

Choi received the 2015 Minnesota County Attorneys Association Award of Excellence for his innovative leadership in better prosecuting sex traffickers and helping trafficked children. Previously, John served as Saint Paul City Attorney (2006–2010) and spent a decade in private practice. John holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology from Marquette University, a J.D. from Hamline University School of Law, and was a Humphrey Fellow at the University of Minnesota.

Mary Moriarty

After graduating from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1989, Mary Moriarty spent thirty-one years as a Hennepin County Public Defender. She became a renowned trial attorney, trying numerous cases in Hennepin County and arguing cases all the way to the United States Supreme Court. In 2014, she was appointed as the first female Chief Public Defender in Hennepin County. As Chief Public Defender, her office exposed that low-level marijuana stings and routine traffic stops in Hennepin County overwhelmingly affect Black residents. Moriarty served as a core faculty member of Gideon's Promise and was the 2015 recipient of the Steven B. Bright Award. She is on the faculty of public defender trial skills programs in Minnesota, Kentucky, Illinois, New Jersey, Wisconsin, and the Bronx. She taught at the Harvard Law School Trial Advocacy Workshop and the National Criminal Defense College, as well as the Criminal Defense Clinic at the University of Minnesota Law School. Moriarty is also a frequent contributor of webinars and blog posts for the National Association for Public Defense. Mary Moriarty is currently running for the office of Hennepin County Attorney.

Kevin Reese

Kevin Reese grew up in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He spent 14 years incarcerated within the criminal justice system. During that time he founded the BRIDGE, which is a grassroots group of directly impacted criminal justice experts whose mission is to abolish mass incarceration and find the answers to a true transformative criminal justice overhaul. Reese is currently the director of criminal justice at Voices For Racial Justice where he leads the work connecting the behind the walls urgency to the front lines of the criminal justice reform movement. He is an 2018 AWP intro Journals project award winner for poetry published in the Hayden Ferry Review. He can be found featured in Emily Baxter's internationally acclaimed book We Are All Criminals and has a running column " Bridging the Gap" in the Minnesota Spokesmen Recorder.



MEET OUR SPEAKERS

The Future of Police Accountability and Public Safety

2:30 – 3:30 PM

Professor Maria Ponomarenko

Professor Maria Ponomarenko is co-founder and counsel at the Policing Project, a non-profit based at the NYU School of Law that works in tandem with policing agencies and community groups to promote more effective police governance. She also is an Associate Reporter for the American Law Institute's Principles of the Law: Policing project.

Professor Ponomarenko is an Associate Professor of Law at the University of Minnesota Law School. She teaches and writes in areas like administrative law, local government law, constitutional law, and criminal procedure. Her work focuses in particular on government agencies—such as policing or other local administrative agencies—that operate in domains beyond the reach of traditional administrative law and scholarship. In 2021, she was named the Stanley V. Kinyon Tenure-Track Teacher of the Year.

Sheila Nezhad

Sheila Nezhad is a local community organizer and activist who has worked on several social justice issues. She works as a policy analyst with Reclaim the Block, a community based organization seeking to radically change the landscape of public safety in Minneapolis. Nezhad worked on Yes4Minneapolis's Public Safety Amendment and ran for Mayor of Minneapolis in 2021. She was also active in the fights for a \$15 minimum wage, worked as a research fellow for an LGBTQ think tank, and later ran her own small business doing community-based research. Nezhad holds a Master of Development Practice from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs.

JaNaé Bates

Minister JaNaé Bates is a womanist theologian and Fulbright scholar. She is a journalist-and-organizer-turned-minister, specializing in the integration of grassroots faith-based organizing and narrative strategy. Bates is the director of communications for ISALAH and Faith in Minnesota, affiliates of Faith in Action and the Faith in Action Fund. She also worked as the communications director for the Yes4Minneapolis Public Safety Amendment referendum campaign.



MEET OUR SPEAKERS

The Rights of Manoomin: Novel Legal Theories Extending Legal Rights to Our Environment

3:30 – 4:30 PM



Winona LaDuke

Winona LaDuke is an internationally renowned activist working on issues of sustainable development, renewable energy, and food systems. She lives and works on the White Earth reservation in northern Minnesota, and is a two time vice presidential candidate with Ralph Nader for the Green Party.

As Program Director of Honor the Earth, she works nationally and internationally on the issues of climate change, renewable energy, and environmental justice with Indigenous communities. In her own community, she is the founder of the White Earth Land Recovery Project, one of the largest reservation based non profit organizations in the country, and a leader in the issues of culturally based sustainable development strategies, renewable energy and food systems. In this work, she also continues national and international work to protect Indigenous plants and heritage foods from patenting and genetic engineering.

In 2007, LaDuke was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, recognizing her leadership and community commitment. In 1994, LaDuke was nominated by Time magazine as one of America's fifty most promising leaders under forty years of age. She has been awarded the Thomas Merton Award in 1996, Ms.Woman of the Year (with the Indigo Girls in 1997) , and the Reebok Human Rights Award, with which in part she began the White Earth Land Recovery Project. The White Earth Land Recovery Project has won many awards- including the prestigious 2003 International Slow Food Award for Biodiversity, recognizing the organization's work to protect wild rice from patenting and genetic engineering.

A graduate of Harvard and Antioch Universities, she has written extensively on Native American and environmental issues. She is a former board member of Greenpeace USA and is presently an advisory board member for the Trust for Public Lands Native Lands Program as well as a board member of the Christensen Fund. The Author of five books, including Recovering the Sacred, All our Relations and a novel- Last Standing Woman, she is widely recognized for her work on environmental and human rights issues.



Frank Bibeau

Frank Bibeau is an enrolled member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe who has been living on Leech Lake reservation in Ball Club, Minnesota most of his life, a half mile away from the Enbridge US Highway 2, Mainline corridor. (original Line 3, plus 5 more pipelines, 6 in total).

Bibeau works extensively with Chippewa treaty rights, civil rights and sovereignty, on and off reservation. Frank was recognized by Minnesota Lawyer's FISH FIGHT in February 2015 for his legal work with the treaty rights fishing case "Operation Squarehook." He serves as Executive Director for the 1855 Treaty Authority and currently represents Manoomin and the White Earth Band of Ojibwe in Manoomin v DNR and Honor the Earth, a native-led, non-profit environmental protection group led by Winona LaDuke, litigating to stop the proposed Line 3 crude oil pipeline in Minnesota. Frank has worked on various legal defense strategies for Water Protectors in Minnesota based on DAPL and KXL.

Frank has been working with Honor the Earth the past 8 years, a native-led, non-profit environmental protection group led by Winona LaDuke, litigating to stop Enbridge's Sandpiper and Line 3 Replacement crude oil pipeline in Minnesota. He is a 2000 graduate of the William Mitchell College of Law.