



## Research Centers Newsletter, December 2019



### Program Spotlight: Human Rights Program

The **Human Rights Program (HRP)** is an interdisciplinary initiative that fosters dialogue and collaboration on human rights research, teaching and engagement across campus. It was established pursuant to a Mellon Foundation Area and International Studies Research Award in 2013. The HRP builds on the deep regional and global expertise of our faculty and students, to establish human rights as an important dimension of our international capabilities. In particular, the HRP aims to foster and support cross-regional and interdisciplinary research, and enrich the student experience by fomenting a human rights curriculum and providing opportunities for engagement. The Human Rights Program is supported by the International Division and coordinated by the Global Legal Studies Center. For the 2019-20 academic year, the program will focus on climate change and human rights.



Each year, HRP coordinates two distinguished lectures, the **Mildred Fish Harnack Human Rights and Democracy Lecture** and the **J. Jobe and Marguerite Jacqmin Soffa Lecture**. These lectures are intended to contribute to the "internationalization" of the campus, celebrate the achievements of the selected lecturers, educate the university community about

important international issues, and partner with the university and community groups dedicated to global education and international awareness.

**Professor Alexandra Huneus** is the Chair of the Human Rights Program and **Sumudu Atapattu** acts as its Executive Director. For more information about the Human Rights Program, please visit the **[Human Rights Program webpage](#)**.

## EALSC Scholar Spotlight: Bo-Shone Fu and Yingying Hu

**Bo-Shone Fu**, an Assistant Professor of Law and Director of the Labor and Employment Law Research Center at National Taipei University School of Law, is an alumnus of the Law School's LL.M. and S.J.D program. Professor Fu's primary research focus is comparative labor and employment law, with an emphasis on employment discrimination, white-collar labor and employment law, labor relations, and labor rights under the gig economy. He has published several articles and book chapters on topics related to U.S. and Taiwan employment discrimination law issues and contemporary wage hours issues in Taiwan. As a law and society scholar, Professor Fu is interested in looking at legislations and socio-economic backgrounds worldwide to learn how similar issues are handled. In the summer of 2019, Professor Fu returned to UW Law School as a visiting scholar to conduct two research projects. He appreciated having the opportunity to return to Madison and share ideas with UW Law faculty, in particular Carin Clauss, John Ohnesorge, and Stewart Macaulay.

**Yingying (Cathy) Hu** obtained her LL.M. and S.J.D. degrees from UW Law School in 2012 and 2017. After graduating from UW Law School, Cathy joined PricewaterhouseCoopers Legal in Taiwan (PwC Legal Taiwan). For the last three years, she has managed and participated in many cross-border merger and acquisition transactions, representing clients from multinational public companies, as well as medium and small privately held companies. She now is a senior associate at PwC Legal Taiwan. During her time at UW Law School, Cathy majored in international tax law. The knowledge she gained from courses at the law school plays an essential role in her present legal practice, particularly in cases involving U.S. target entities and assets.

Bo-Shone Fu and Yingying Hu met in Madison when they were both graduate students. They have wonderful memories of their years at UW Law School. They felt very supported by the law school's academic advisors and administrative staff, which allowed them to excel in their studies.



**Bo-Shone Fu**



**Yingying (Cathy) Hu**

They even enjoyed Madison's winters! Bo-Shone and Yingying loved their time here so much, that they named their daughter Madison.

## Selected Upcoming Events

- **December 2, 2019:** GLS Speaker Hans-Jörg Albrecht (GLS)
- **December 4, 2019:** EALSC Speaker Ed Reed (EALSC)
- **December 5, 2019:** "Agency and Race in the Criminal System" (Dean's Office)
- **January 28, 2020:** Spring Big Ideas Cafe (Dean's Office)
- **March 4, 2020:** Faculty Exchange Speaker Brian Larson (Dean's Office)
- **March 12, 2020:** GLS Speaker Maggie Gardner (GLS)

For a complete list of upcoming events, visit: <http://law.wisc.edu/researchcenters/events.html>

## Faculty Spotlight: Michele LaVigne

### Michele LaVigne

For the past decade, Michele LaVigne has been researching and writing about language impairments, a term that generally refers to underdeveloped language competency, or more specifically, to weaknesses in the expressive, receptive, or pragmatic aspects of spoken language. Despite the seemingly innocuous name, language impairments give rise to a host of potentially devastating cognitive, social, academic, behavioral, and emotional difficulties. Research dating back as far as the 1920s has consistently shown that language impairments are substantially overrepresented among individuals in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Not surprisingly, these impaired individuals frequently do not fare well when they are confronted with a legal system entirely dependent on language and communication. What is surprising is how little the legal system knows about language impairments and their effects, a situation that Professor LaVigne hopes to change.



**Professor Michele LaVigne**

In her articles on language impairments, Professor LaVigne has examined the effects of language impairment on the quality of justice. Her article, "He got in my face so I shot him': How Defendants' Language Impairments Impair Attorney-Client Relationships" focused on what happens when a criminal or juvenile client lacks the communication competency necessary to meet the demands of assisting counsel. Among the many problems that confront the attorney will be the impaired client's inability to provide a complete narrative, i.e. to describe what happened.

Prof. LaVigne's latest project centered on the case of Brendan Dassey, a linguistically-impaired 16 year-old, whose horrific treatment by law enforcement during interrogation was highlighted by the Netflix sensation "Making a Murderer." Professor LaVigne worked with Sally Miles, Ph.D, a speech-language pathologist who specializes in language development in children. Using language transcription software, Professor LaVigne and Dr. Miles compiled data on the amount of language used by law enforcement, the kinds of questions they asked, and the extreme dysfluency of their speaking style. They then compared this with Brendan's well-

documented language impairment and concluded that the way Brendan was interrogated made him perfect candidate for unwillingly and unwittingly confessing to a crime he did not commit. The results of this study were published in 2019 in Albany Law Review's annual Miscarriage of Justice issue with the title "Under the Hood: Brendan Dassey, Language Impairments, and Judicial Ignorance." Prof. LaVigne's and Dr. Miles' data and conclusions were included in Mr. Dassey's recent Petition for Clemency filed with Governor Evers. Professor LaVigne's articles can be accessed at:

[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/cf\\_dev/AbsByAuth.cfm?per\\_id=549803](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/cf_dev/AbsByAuth.cfm?per_id=549803)

## ILS Graduate Fellow Spotlight

### Maria Azocar

Maria Azocar is a PhD candidate in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Sociology and is an ILS Law and Society Graduate Fellow. She studies the role of experts and expertise in policymaking. In particular, she looks at how gender shapes the ways in which experts' authority is achieved and legitimized by state institution. She is advised by Myra Marx Ferree.



**Maria Azocar**

Maria enjoys her experience in the ILS Graduate Fellows program, and appreciates the opportunity to have excellent colleagues and mentors who give her insightful observations that help improve her work. She feels that the interdisciplinary character of the program has facilitated a collegial atmosphere and has encouraged the fellows to have constructive and challenging debates which has enriched her understanding of several research topics related to sociolegal studies. The Fellowship has been crucial to her professional development, providing her the opportunity to present work at four different conferences within and outside of the US. Current trends in academia have made it increasingly difficult to find spaces for interdisciplinary dialogue, making the ILS Graduate Fellows program all the more valuable.

## News and Announcements

- **Save the Date:** The **Wisconsin International Law Journal** will host the **2020 Wisconsin International Law Scholars Conference (WILSC)** on the theme "**Climate Change and Human Rights**" on **April 2-3, 2020**. The Keynote Speaker will be **Ambassador Dessima Williams**.
- **Save the Date:** The **Mildred Fish Harnack Lecture**, featuring **Professor David Kaye (UCI Law)** will take place on **Thursday, April 16th** at the Pyle Center.
- **Save the Date:** The **2020 ILS Midwest Law & Society Retreat** will take place **11/13 - 11/14** at the Pyle Center.

**Happy Holidays!**





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