Welcome

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Symposium:

Gender & Migration

Welcome

As our nation grapples with issues of globalization and migratory change, there is no better time to approach this subject from a gendered perspective. The Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law & Justice chose Gender & Migration as the topic of its fourth bi-annual symposium. The symposium explored many of the manifestations of abuse and inequality in the realm of women and migration, while also striving to formulate appropriate responses, identify avenues for resistance, and discover means through which migrant and immigrant women might be empowered through the process of migration. To accomplish this goal, the Journal developed four panels, each exploring distinct areas linked to migration.

Panel One, Empowering Survivors with Legal-Status Challenges, discussed how women with legal status challenges might be empowered through the use of legal relief such as VAWA, U-visas, gender-based asylum, and sexual orientation asylum. This panel also considered legal challenges that hinder the full potential of this relief.

Panel Two, Women In the Global Economy, focused on migrant women in the global economy and explored the multitude of challenges and the consequential abuse that often results when a woman chooses to migrate for employment in low-wage sectors of the economy. This panel explored successful legal responses to these challenges and devised other possible legal means through which to combat the discrimination and substandard working conditions which all-too-often accompany the opportunity for employment.

Panel Three, Categories of Migration, considered how trafficking, asylum, and refugee law have carved out different categories of migration. Panelists evaluated the utility of these categories, specifically discussing whether these categories are appropriate, considering who is left out of these categories and suggesting what more effective, inclusive categories would look like. The panel also considered how varying degrees of ‘agency’ inform these legal categories.
Panel Four, *In Search of a Gendered Approach to Immigration Law*, explored current and pending U.S. legislation that could have deleterious effects upon migrant and immigrant women. The panel discussed the difficult question of what a “good immigration system,” specifically one modeled upon a feminist-guided belief system, would look like.

At this critical time, the *Journal* is proud to publish the transcripts from this symposium. It was through the lens of our mandate that BGLJ explored, critiqued, and analyzed the gendered realities of global migration.