



ENLUND LECTURE AND SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE

# Pregnancy, Poverty, & The State

**Michele Goodwin**

CHANCELLOR PROFESSOR OF LAW & DIRECTOR OF  
THE CENTER FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY & GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY  
University of California, Irvine

**April 4, 2018**



# **Pregnancy, Poverty, & The State**

This talk evokes Dr. King and his advocacy for women's reproductive rights as a moral concern on the 50th anniversary of his passing. The talk points to Dr. King's legacy in this regard and problematizes the intersection of privacy and morality. Notably, the state has become a fallible and problematic arbiter of women's morality. As such, Professor Goodwin argues that the state acts immorally when it deprives poor women of privacy, bodily autonomy, and threatens to rob them of life itself. Bounded in the state's immoral actions toward poor women of color are its historical struggles and campaigns against their personhood and citizenship as well as conscription of their bodies in service to malevolent state agendas such as eugenics and forced sterilization. This is more than mere indifference, but an historic pattern. In this talk, Professor Goodwin illustrates how the continued effects of more than a century of negative state interventions in the reproductive lives of poor women of color is actually deadly.

In addition, Professor Goodwin predicts that the continued interference to the reproductive lives of poor women creates cultural norms and precedents in medicine, society, law enforcement, legislatures, and courts that will spill over and constrain the rights of all classes of women, regardless of race. That is, historical disregard for the lives and rights of Black women inscribed by judicial doctrine and court opinions as well as state and federal legislation serve as vehicles for contemporary and future disparagement of all women.

Professor Goodwin argues that the core bundle of rights contained in reproductive privacy have been hollowed out through new legislation and court decisions, affecting the actual practice of reproductive privacy. She shows how increasingly, even judicial opinions affirming reproductive rights fail to constrain state governments seeking to eviscerate those rights through new legislation. As the policies that substantially burden women's reproductive rights become normalized, these norms will affect broader segments of the population, placing greater numbers of women at risk.

**Wednesday, April 4, 2018**

**3 to 4 p.m.**

DePaul University

DePaul Center, Room 8005

1 E. Jackson Blvd.

Chicago, IL 60604

Reception to follow public lecture.

Seating is limited. Please register by **April 2 at**  
**2018enlundlecturegoodwin.eventbrite.com.**

DePaul University College of Law is an accredited Illinois MCLE provider.  
This event has been approved for up to one hour of CLE credit.

## **Enlund Scholar-in-Residence Program**

Established in 1988, thanks to a gift from the late E. Stanley Enlund (JD '42), the Enlund Scholar-in-Residence Program attracts the nation's foremost legal minds. Enlund scholars provide the College of Law community of students, faculty, alumni and friends with differing perspectives on law, lawyers and social justice.

### **2018 ENLUND SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE**



**Professor Michele Goodwin** holds the Chancellor's Professorship at the University of California, Irvine with appointments at the School of Law, School of Public Health, and Department of Gender and Sexuality Studies. She is the founder and director of the Center for Biotechnology and Global Health Policy and its Reproductive Justice Initiative. She researches and writes about legal concerns with regard to the human body. She is an acclaimed bioethicist and prolific author. Professor Goodwin has published with Forbes, Salon.com, the L.A. Times, Chicago Sun Times, Houston Chronicle, Christian Science Monitor, and the NY Times among others. She is the author of several highly acclaimed books, including the much anticipated, *Policing The Womb*, which chronicles how women's reproduction has become the political scapegoat in Congress and legislatures across the U.S., resulting in the rise of personhood measures, practices that force women to undergo cesarean births under threat of court order, abuse of prosecutorial discretion that results in the criminalization and punishment of pregnant women for falling down steps, refusing bed rest or attempting suicide, and policies that dramatically erode reproductive liberty.

Professor Goodwin's scholarly work appears in the Harvard Law Review, Yale Law Journal, Northwestern Law Review, California Law Review and many other esteemed journals. Her media appearances include documentary films, such as *Birthright*, and featured appearances on episodes of Vice, To The Contrary, Point Taken, and various newscasts on NPR, PBS, NBC, CBS, and others. She is the recipient of numerous awards recognizing excellence in teaching, scholarship, and human rights advocacy.

Professor Goodwin frequently lectures world-wide.



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