



University at Buffalo

Baldy Center for Law
and Social Policy

School of Law

ANNUAL REPORT: 2024- 2025

The Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy

511 O'Brian Hall

School of Law

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I. Center Overview

a. History

Created in 1978 under a bequest from Buffalo attorney Christopher Baldy, The Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy supports interdisciplinary research on law, legal institutions and social policy throughout the University at Buffalo. The Center engages faculty and students campus-wide, and has national and international impact through the scholarly publications, conferences, workshops, online multimedia, and other activities described in this report. The Center is housed in the School of Law, University at Buffalo.

b. Organization and Staff

Baldy Center Advisory Council 2024-2025

Guyora Binder, Law

Michael Boucai, Law

Irus Braverman, Law

Trina Hamilton, Geography

Rachael Hinkle, Political Science

Joanne Song McLaughlin, Economics

Mateo Taussig-Rubbo, Law

Baldy Center Staff 2024-2025

Long term staff

Matthew Dimick, Director

Amanda M. Benzin, Associate Director

Short term student assistants

Claudia B. Villegas Ramos, Blog Producer

Tarun Gangadhar Vadaparthi, Podcast Producer

Rosie Matecko-Conti, Office Assistant

Ina Joseph, Office Assistant

Yarlin Duque Perez, Office Assistant

Baldy Center Technical Team

Debra Kolodczak, Website Managing Editor and UX Designer

II. Conference Grants, Research Grants, and Fellowships

a. Faculty Conference Grants

John Beatty (UB Charles B. Sears Law Library): Mapping Scholarly Communications in Law Libraries

Jorge Fabra-Zamora (UB School of Law): Truth Commissions and the Human Rights to Truth: 40 Years

Walter Hakala (UB Department of English and Asian Studies Program): 25th Biennial Meeting the Dictionary Society of North America

Shaun Irlam (UB Comparative Literature- Alison Des Forges Committee): Alison Des Forges Memorial Committee International Symposium

LaGarrett King (UB Department of Learning and Instruction Graduate School of Education; Center for K-12 Black History and Racial Literacy Education): 70th Anniversary of Brown vs. Board of Education

Athena Mutua (UB School of Law): Casebooks & Beyond: Understanding and Teaching U.S. Constitutional Law from a Critical Legal Theory Perspective- Part II

Xuanyi Nie (UB Department of Urban and Regional Planning): Social Transformations and Urban Planning Transitions in China

Mary Nell Trautner (UB Department of Sociology): Prison and Incarceration Research (PAIR): An Interdisciplinary Work-in-Progress and Speaker Series

b. Faculty and Graduate Student Research Grants

FACULTY RESEARCH

Irus Braverman (UB School of Law, Geography, and Department of Environment and Sustainability): Missiles, Oil, and Corals: Climate Changes in the Red Sea

Megan Iantosca (UB Department of Educational Leadership and Policy): Gender Categorization in American Law Schools

Errol Meidinger (UB School of Law)

Private Environmental Regulation and Resurging Authoritarianism

Xuanyi Nie (UB Department of Urban and Regional Planning)

With equity do we benefit? Investigating procedural equity in local public meetings and the public perception of equitable planning outcomes using machine-learning approaches

Anthony O'Rourke (UB School of Law):The Structure of Police Agencies in Settler States

Mateo Taussig-Rubbo (UB School of Law): Climate change and governance in the postcolony: an empirical study of carbon credits in Peru

Mary Nell Trautner (UB Department of Sociology): Why the Have-Nots Come Out Behind: Gender, Race, Class, and Embodiment in the "Litigation Lottery"

Lourdes Vera (UB Department of Sociology and Department of Environment and Sustainability): Community-Centered Development of Oil and Gas Industry Report Cards to Promote Corporate Accountability and the Democratization of Data

GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Carol Ramos-Gerena (UB Department of Urban and Regional Planning): Agroecological Strategies for Puerto Rico's Land Use Challenges

Amanda Waggoner (UB Department of Geography): The Gentrification of Black Nightlife in Brooklyn

Michelle Williams (UB Department of Sociology): Transmasculine and Nonbinary Online Sex Workers' Responses to Policies and Practices that Restrict Gender Expression and Sexually Explicit Content

C. Baldy Center Fellowships in Interdisciplinary Legal Studies

The Baldy Center continued its fellowship program for scholars pursuing important topics in law, legal institutions, and social policy during the 2024-2025 academic year and welcomes two new postdoctoral fellows. Fellows are expected to participate regularly in Baldy Center events, but otherwise have no obligations beyond vigorously pursuing their research. Fellows receive standard university research privileges (library, Internet, office space, computer, phone) and are encouraged to develop collaborative research projects with University at Buffalo faculty members where appropriate.

2025 Senior and Mid-Career Fellows



Jacob Eisler is The Baldy Center Mid-Career Fellow for the fall semester of 2024. During his time at The Baldy Center, he will pursue a set of projects at the intersection of legal doctrine and moral philosophy, examining the relationship between state institutions and the conditions of popular democratic autonomy.

These projects include 'Towards Populist Primacy', describing the alternative theory that the Roberts Court has promulgated regarding the legitimate role of the judiciary in shaping democracy; 'Anti-Corruption Abolition', identifying the Supreme Court's unique willingness to undermine the substance of criminal anti-corruption law, demonstrated in the 2024 term by *Fischer v. United States* and *Snyder v. United States*; and 'The Closing of the Open Society', an early stage book project drawing a connection between contemporary political crisis and loss of socio-economic mobility in Western society. He looks forward to the community and deep interdisciplinary expertise of the Baldy Center to develop these projects.

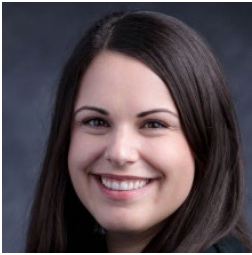
Eisler joined Florida State University College of Law in 2023 as the James Edmund and Margaret Elizabeth Hennessey Corry Professor. Professor Eisler researches in the areas of constitutional law, election law, criminal law (focused on anti-corruption law), legal theory, and law and technology. He applies moral and political theory to questions of judicial reasoning and institutional design, with a focus on the relationship between legal doctrine, democratic self-rule, and the conditions necessary for political liberty.

Eisler is the author of "The Law of Freedom: The Supreme Court and Democracy" (Cambridge University Press, 2023), and his scholarship is published or forthcoming leading law reviews and peer reviewed journals, including the Emory Law Journal, the UC Davis Law Review, the Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law, and the Election Law Journal. He is regularly interviewed or quoted in leading media outlets nationally and internationally on matters related to the law and politics.

At Florida State, Professor Eisler teaches Constitutional Law I (Structure), Constitutional Law II (Rights), and Criminal Law. He has past experience teaching subjects including tort law, jurisprudence, and EU law. Prior to joining Florida State,

Professor Eisler taught at Jesus College, University of Cambridge as the Yates Glazebrook Fellow and college lecturer in Law, and the University of Southampton as an associate professor (Reader) in Public Law. Before entering the legal academy, he clerked on the Second Circuit Court of Appeals for the Honorable Gerard E. Lynch in New York City, and practiced as an international capital markets attorney in London with Allen & Overy and Herbert Smith Freehills. He received his J.D. from Harvard Law School and his Ph.D. from the Harvard University Department of Government, his MPhil in political thought and intellectual history from the University of Cambridge, and his B.A. in political science and English from Williams College. Professor Eisler is New York bar qualified.

2024-2026 Postdoctoral Fellows



Meghan Dawe is a sociologist whose research investigates law and society through the lens of legal education and the legal profession, and particularly how social and economic inequalities are reproduced through lawyers' careers. As a postdoctoral fellow at The Baldy Center, Fall 2024, Dawe will draw on quantitative and qualitative data to analyze race and class-based differences in student loan borrowing and repayment, and how student debt shapes the careers of law school graduates;

Research topics include: how geography and markets shape lawyers' professional opportunities, experiences, and rewards; the role of national context in shaping lawyers' career aspirations in the United States and Canada; and the social structure and hierarchies of the American legal academy.

Dawe received her PhD from the University of Toronto. Prior to joining The Baldy Center, she was a Resident Research Fellow at Harvard Law School and a Research Social Scientist at the American Bar Foundation.



Walker Kahn joins The Baldy Center in Fall 2024 as a postdoctoral fellow. He studies court systems, financial markets, and debt collection processes. Kahn's research examines how mortgage foreclosure litigation links financial markets to the precarity experienced by everyday people.

Kahn focuses on how financialization has changed the social organization of mortgage foreclosure, how financial sector actors work to degrade legal rights and processes that protect borrowers, and how judges manage conflicts between new debt collection practices, courts' resource constraints, and the formal demands of legal procedure. He received his JD and PhD from The University of Wisconsin, and his work has been supported by the NSF Law and Science Program and the Center for Engaged Scholarship.

2024-2025 Research Fellows



Daniel Mazurek, PhD, (International Cultural Studies, University of Galway) is a research fellow at The Baldy Center, starting Fall 2024. Mazurek conducts research that foregrounds a cultural/arts practice approach to social and political phenomena.

Mazurek is the author of *Conspiracy Culture's Action and Aesthetic* (Palgrave-Macmillan, forthcoming), which challenges the current doxa of popular and institutional responses to the apparent surge in conspiracy theorizing in the 21st century. He is presently working on a monograph which traces the feedback loop between state funding of the tech sector, popular-science writing and science/tech coverage in the newspapers of record, and the tech sector's instrumentalization of millenarian cultural fantasies of neuroscience and digital media in the 1980s and 1990s. Mazurek's strong interest in media literacy and

ethics is an ongoing concern.



Daniel Brantes Ferreira is a professor at Universidade Cândido Mendes and Vice-President for Academic affairs at the Brazilian Center of Arbitration and Mediation (CBMA), where he is an arbitrator. Daniel is also President of the Brazilian Bar Association, Rio de Janeiro Section, Legislative Affairs Commission. Research topics: legal theory, legal history, legal education, comparative studies, and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Daniel is a partner at Bruno Freire Law Firm where he practices labor law and torts.

At The Baldy Center he is researching American Legal Realism. In January 2021, Brantes Ferreira was interviewed by Brazil's major newspaper, *Estadão*, about his perspective on Trump's call to Raffensperger and it's legal repercussions.



Jennifer L. Gaynor works on Southeast Asia and its surrounding seas from the seventeenth century to the present. The author of *Intertidal History in Island Southeast Asia: Submerged Genealogy and the Legacy of Coastal Capture* (Cornell University Press, 2016), she has contributed chapters to a number of books, including *Blue Legalities* (Duke University Press, 2020), edited by Irus Braverman and Elizabeth R. Johnson. Building on her previous research, her current book projects examine the history of capture, slavery, and piracy in maritime Asia, as well as the recent history of global land reclamation.



Charles J. Whalen, an economist with a career spanning three decades, has contributed to national economic policy discussions, equitable regional development, and business success. During his appointment at The Baldy Center, Whalen has been active—as president (2018), past president (2019), and trustee (2020)—in the Association for Evolutionary Economics. Last year, Whalen's AFEE presidential address—on reclaiming the right to work as a progressive cause—appeared (in versions of varying length) in Buffalo Legal Studies Research Paper Series, Journal of Economic Issues, and Challenge (an economics bimonthly).

Journal of Economic Issues, and Challenge (an economics bimonthly).

III. Multimedia

a. Podcast

The Baldy Center continued its podcast, produced by Tarun Gangadhar Vadaparthi, a graduate student in UB's School of Computer Science and Engineering. The podcast highlights UB faculty research and perspectives on current issues and events. We focus on interdisciplinary scholars of law, legal institutions, and social policy. 2024-2025 Podcast Episodes:

Episode 44: Judith Olin and Jahna Mott discuss the outcomes of the 2024 Domestic Violence Summit

Episode 45: Siwei Lyu, Mark Bartholomew and George Brown explore AI regulation, ethics, and legal challenges

Episode 46: Monica Miles discusses environmental justice, STEM education, and the nonprofit community

Episode 47 Part One and Part Two: "The Origins of 'The Rule of Law'" — Jeremy Kessler converses with Matthew Dimick, Paul Linden-Retek, and Matthew Steilen

Episode 48: Korydon Smith discusses inclusive design, refugee housing, and global health equity

b. Blog

The Baldy Center continued its blog, produced by Claudia B. Villegas Ramos, an LLM student in UB's School of Law. The blog features interdisciplinary perspectives on research and current events from interdisciplinary scholars whose work intersects with law, legal institutions, and social policy. 2024-2025 Blog posts:

Blog 43: Alexandra Oprea and Daniel Stephens: How to Vote Competently

Blog 44: Erin Hatton: Is Unpaid Labor Exploitation or "Therapy"? The Answer Depends on Stigma

Blog 45: Hannah Montgomery: Our Tomorrow, A Reason to Hope: Reflections on the 70th Anniversary of Brown v. BOE community forum

Blog 46: Tanya J. Monestier: What You Don't Know About Your Amazon Purchases

Blog 47: Claudia B. Villegas Ramos: Color, Race, and Employment Discrimination: Reflections on the presentation by Joni Hersch

Blog 48: Meghan Dawe: Examining SFFA's Impact on U.S. Law Schools

Blog 49: Claudia B. Villegas Ramos: Can Guaranteed Income help America be more innovative?: Reflections on the work of Stephanie Plamondon

Blog 50: Danielle Limbaugh and John Beverley: AI's Role in Law – Assistance, Not Replacement

iv. Events

a. Co-Sponsored Events

SEPTEMBER 6, 2024 CO-SPONSORED SPEAKER

Philip J. Stern (Duke University)

Empire, Incorporated: The Corporations That Built British Colonialism

Friday, 509 O'Brian Hall

3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Presentation

Hosted by the Department of History

FEBRUARY 26, 2025 PANEL DISCUSSION

[Climate Change and Gender in the Global South](#)

Wednesday, 509 O'Brian Hall

3:00 to 4:30pm Co-sponsored event.

MARCH 29, 2025 CO-SPONSORED CONFERENCE

[Social Transformations and Urban Planning Transitions in China](#)

Organizer: Xuanyi Nie, School of Architecture and Planning

APRIL 1, 2025 CO-SPONSORED SPEAKER

[Johnstone Distinguished Lecture Series](#)

Karen Mundy (University of Toronto) "Global Governance and Educational Change: A Look Towards the Future"

Tuesday, 509 O'Brian Hall; 4:30 to 6:00pm

b. Speakers

SEPTEMBER 6, 2024 DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER

Kate Cronin Furman (University College London)

Documentation and Denial: The Fight Over Evidence of Mass Atrocities

Friday, 509 O'Brian Hall

Noon Reception; 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Presentation

SEPTEMBER 9, 2024 INTERDISCIPLINARY SPEAKER SERIES

Prison and Incarceration Research (PAIR)

Monday, Noon; 509 O'Brian Hall

SEPTEMBER 20, 2024 DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER

David Pozen (Columbia Law School)

Disconsents by Daryl Levinson and David Pozen

Friday, 509 O'Brian Hall

Noon Reception; 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Presentation

SEPTEMBER 27, 2024

Jacob Eisler (Florida State University)

The Rise of Populist Primacy

Friday, 509 O'Brian Hall

Noon Reception; 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Presentation

OCTOBER 7, 2024 INTERDISCIPLINARY SPEAKER SERIES

Prison and Incarceration Research (PAIR)

Monday, Noon; 509 O'Brian Hall

OCTOBER 31, 2024 FEATURED SPEAKER

Pasha L. Hsieh (Yong Pung How School of Law)

U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy: Shaping Trade Agreements with ASEAN and Taiwan

Access the advance paper here.

Thursday, 509 O'Brian Hall

Noon Reception; 12:30 to 2:00, Presentation

Option to attend via Zoom.

NOVEMBER 1, 2024 FEATURED SPEAKER

Werner Reutter (Humboldt University)

The Baldy Center Fellow (2018)
Friday, 509 O'Brian Hall
Noon Reception; 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Presentation
Option to attend via Zoom registration.

NOVEMBER 4, 2024 INTERDISCIPLINARY SPEAKER SERIES
Prison and Incarceration Research (PAIR)
Access the advance paper.
Monday, Noon; 509 O'Brian Hall

DECEMBER 2, 2024 PAIR INTERDISCIPLINARY SPEAKER SERIES ([PAIR](#))
Monday, Noon; 509 O'Brian Hall
Andrea J. Pitts (Comparative Literature & Global Gender and Sexuality Studies) "Health Empires Behind Bars: Carceral Humanism and the Rise of Correctional Medicine"
ACCESS THE ADVANCE PAPER

FEBRUARY 3, 2025 INTERDISCIPLINARY SPEAKER SERIES
[Prison and Incarceration Research \(PAIR\)](#)

FEBRUARY 21, 2025 DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER
[Joni Hersch \(Vanderbilt University\)](#)
Color, Race, and Employment Discrimination
Friday, 509 O'Brian Hall
Noon Reception; 12:30 Presentation

MARCH 3, 2025 INTERDISCIPLINARY SPEAKER SERIES
[Prison and Incarceration Research \(PAIR\)](#)

APRIL 4, 2025 DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER
Stephanie Plamondon (BYU Law)
[How Poverty Leads to Under-Participation in Innovation](#)
Friday, 509 O'Brian Hall
Noon Reception; 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Presentation

APRIL 7, 2025 INTERDISCIPLINARY SPEAKER SERIES
[Prison and Incarceration Research \(PAIR\)](#)

APRIL 11, 2025 DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER
Jeremy Kessler (Columbia Law School)
[The Origins of "The Rule of Law"](#)
Friday, 509 O'Brian Hall
Noon Reception; 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Presentation

MAY 5, 2025 INTERDISCIPLINARY SPEAKER SERIES
[Prison and Incarceration Research \(PAIR\)](#)

C. Conferences

NOVEMBER 7, 2024 Panel Discussion
70th Anniversary of Brown vs. Board of Education
Thursday, 5:00-7:30 p.m.

Off-Campus: William-Emslie Family YMCA
585 William Street, Buffalo, NY, 14206

APRIL 3, 2025 SYMPOSIUM

[Alison L. Des Forges International Symposium](#)

Israel and Palestine: Human Rights and Configurations for the Future.

Thursday, 8:30am to 3:30pm

MAY 23, 2025 CONFERENCE

Mapping Scholarly Communications in Law Libraries

Friday, 9am-5pm

509 O'Brian Hall and via Zoom registration

MAY 30 and 31, 2025 CONFERENCE

Reclaiming Constitutional Law: Limiting Executive Power Overreach, Expanding Shields

Friday, 9am-5pm

Saturday, 9am-5pm

509 O'Brian Hall

JUNE 6 and 7, 2025 CONFERENCE

The Human Right to Truth and Truth Commissions

Friday, 1pm-6pm

Saturday, 9am-6pm

509 O'Brian Hall

V. Publications

Romana Afroze, *Reappraisal of Section 230 CDA for Tackling Unethical Corporate Use of Artificial Intelligence: Did Congress Surpass Its Time to Handle Intermediaries?* University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper

Erin E. Meyers and Clayton Masterman, *Buyer, Beware of Addiction*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper Forthcoming

Paul Linden-Retek, *Europe and the federal conceit*, *Jurisprudence*, Vol. 13, Issue 3, 2022; University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper

Manoj Mate, *Elections, Courts, and Democratic Crisis: Constitutional Structure and the 2020 Election Cases*, University of Chicago Legal Forum (forthcoming 2025); University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper Forthcoming

Paul Linden-Retek, *Neither Trumps nor Interests: Rights, Pluralism, and the Recovery of Constitutional Judgment*, *Cleveland State Law Review*, Volume 70, No. 3, Pp. 393-458; University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper

Paul Linden-Retek, *Law in the Fullness of Time*, *Journal of Law & Society*, forthcoming 2025; University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper

Paul Linden-Retek, *Whose Suffering Matters?*, Review; University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper

James A. Gardner, *My Right to Dominate You: The Populist Perversion of Human Rights*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-017

Seval Yildirim, *Populist Secularism*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-016; 33 Minnesota Journal of International Law 39 (2024)

James A. Gardner, *Democratic Backsliding in Federal States*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-015; Forthcoming in *The Rise of Autocracy: Its Threat to a Sustainable Future* (B. Wejnert, ed.)

Errol Meidinger, *Transnational Private Environmental Regulation: Are States Striking Back?*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-014; Forthcoming in *Research Handbook on Environmental Regulation*, David Williamson, Gary Lynch-Wood & Agne Prochorskaite, eds.

Guyora Binder, *Dissenting Authority*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-013; 35 Yale Journal of Law & Humanities 193 (2024)

Irus Braverman, *Coral Reef Protection is Fundamental to Human Rights*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-012; *Global Change Biology*, volume 30, issue 9, 2024[10.1111/gcb.17512]

Paul Linden-Retek, *The Postnational Aspirations of European Law*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper ; 73 Buffalo Law Review __ (2025)

Tanya J. Monestier, *Amazon's Dirty Little Secret*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-011; Villanova Law Review, Volume 69, p. 521 (2024)

James A. Gardner, *Election Law in the American Political System*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-010; Aspen Casebook Series, 'Election Law in the American Political System, Third edition', 2023

Matthew J. Steilen, *Magna Carta and the Origins of Legislative Power*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-018

Alexander Harrington and Guyora Binder, *Racially Disparate and Disproportionate Punishment of Felony Murder: Evidence from New York*, 110 Iowa L. Rev. 1055 (2025)

James A. Gardner, *Can Federalism Protect Subnational Liberal Democracy from Central Authoritarianism?*, University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-008

Errol Meidinger, *On Preparing the Soil for Rain*, 71 Buffalo Law Review 967 (2024); University at Buffalo School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2024-001

End.