



COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTE



Northeastern University
School of Law

NATIONAL LAW CENTER
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy

*The Bringing Human Rights Home Lawyers' Network
Annual Human Rights in the U.S. Symposium & CLE Training*

BRINGING ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RIGHTS HOME: THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING IN THE U.S.

Friday April 26, 2013

SPONSORED BY:

COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTE

NATIONAL LAW CENTER ON HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY

NORTHEASTERN LAW SCHOOL'S PROGRAM ON HUMAN RIGHTS & THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW REVIEW

HOSTED BY:

SKADDEN, ARPS, SLATE, MEAGHER & FLOM LLP

AGENDA

U.S. lawyers are increasingly engaging international human rights law and strategies in their domestic social justice advocacy efforts. A strength of the human rights framework is its ability to address the intersection of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. Yet pursuit of economic and social rights presents special challenges in the U.S. legal context. This symposium explores strategies for advancing economic and social rights advocacy in the U.S. focusing in particular on the right to housing. Participants will examine legal developments pertaining to the right to housing and related rights, both internationally and in the U.S. And, drawing on international human rights, participants will explore promising approaches to establishing the right to housing in U.S. courts and through other advocacy efforts.

8:45 – 9:15 A.M. REGISTRATION & COFFEE

9:15 – 9:30 A.M. WELCOME REMARKS

Risa Kaufman, Executive Director, Human Rights Institute, Columbia Law School

9:15 – 9:30 A.M. INTRODUCTORY KEYNOTE REMARKS

Rob Robinson, Take Back the Land

Maria Foscarinis, Executive Director, National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty

10:00 – 11:15 A.M. SESSION I. THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF RIGHTS

This panel will evaluate the connection between the right to housing and other rights along two discrete axes. On the one hand, panelists will discuss housing's centrality to other ESRs, including health and education; on the other hand, panelists will explore to what extent the right can—and should—be formulated in terms of more widely accepted civil and political rights.

Panelists:

- Philip Alston, Professor of Law & Faculty Director and Co-Chair, Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, NYU School of Law
- Martha Davis, Professor of Law & Faculty Co-Director, Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy, Northeastern Law School
- Tara Melish, Adjunct Professor of Law & Director, Buffalo Human Rights Center, SUNY Buffalo Law School, The State University of New York

Moderator: Cathy Albisa, Executive Director, National Economic and Social Rights Initiative

11:30 – 12:45 P.M. SESSION II. COMPARATIVE APPROACHES TO THE RIGHT TO HOUSING

This panel will look at international comparative approaches to the right to housing and related ESCRs and examine factors contributing to the varying approaches.

Panelists:

- Lucy Williams, Professor of Law & Faculty Co-Director, Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy, Northeastern Law School
- Bret Theile, Co-Director, Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Bruce Porter, Director, Social Rights Advocacy Centre

Moderator: Sarah Cleveland, Professor of Law & Faculty Co-Director, Human Rights Institute, Columbia Law School

12:45 – 1:15 P.M. BREAK

1:15 – 2:00 P.M. LUNCH & KEYNOTE: LEARNING FROM THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE FREEDOM TO MARRY

Evan Wolfson, Founder and Executive director, Freedom to Marry

Moderator: Olatunde Johnson, Professor of Law, Columbia Law School

2:00 – 2:15 P.M. BREAK

2:15 – 3:30 P.M. SESSION III. BUILDING A RECORD ON THE HUMAN RIGHT TO HOUSING IN THE U.S.

Panelists will discuss efforts to develop an international record promoting the human right to housing in the United States through engagement with U.N. mechanisms and grassroots advocacy and explore ways to integrate the outcomes of these efforts into litigation in U.S. courts.

Panelists:

- Eric Tars, Director of Human Rights and Children's Rights Programs, National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
- Reena Shah, Director, Human Rights Project, Maryland Legal Aid Bureau
- Tanuka Loha, Human Right to Housing Program Director, National Economic and Social Rights Initiative
- Pete White, Founder & Co-Director, LA Community Action Network

Moderator: Risa Kaufman, Executive Director, Human Rights Institute, Columbia Law School

3:30 – 4:45 P.M. SESSION IV. ROUNDTABLE: OPPORTUNITIES FOR & CHALLENGES TO ESTABLISHING A HUMAN RIGHT TO HOUSING IN THE U.S.

Participants in this interactive exchange will explore issues including: the justiciability of ESCRs; the efficacy of judicial remedies in enforcing ESCRs; and the impact of language and culture on efforts to establish a right to housing in the U.S.

Panelists:

- The Hon. Cathy H. Serrette, Judge, Maryland Circuit Court
- Heidi Wegleitner, Staff Attorney, Legal Action of Wisconsin; District 2 Supervisor, Dane County Board of Supervisors
- Dan Manning, Associate Director/Litigation Director, Greater Boston Legal Services
- Andrew Scherer, Legal Consultant

Moderator: Maria Foscarnis, Executive Director, National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty

4:45 – 5:00 P.M. CLOSING REMARKS

Ejim Dike, Executive Director, U.S. Human Rights Network