

YIRAN ZHANG

Proskauer Labor and Employment Law Assistant Professor
Cornell University Industrial and Labor Relations School
359 Ives Faculty Wing, Ithaca, NY 14853

Email: yiranzhang@cornell.edu
Office: (607) 255-9539
Website: <https://www.ilr.cornell.edu/people/yiran-zhang>
SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/author=2985000>

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

CORNELL UNIVERSITY INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR RELATIONS SCHOOL

Ithaca, New York

Proskauer Labor and Employment Law Assistant Professor, September 2023-

Assistant Professor of Labor and Employment Law, July 2022-

Faculty Affiliate, Workplace Inclusion and Diversity Education (WIDE) Center; Center for Applied Research on Work (CAROW); Cornell Center for Social Sciences (CCSS).

CORNELL LAW SCHOOL

Associated Faculty Member, September 2022-

EDUCATION

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

Cambridge, Massachusetts

S.J.D., May 2022; LL.M., May 2016 (degree waived)

Thesis: “Informality, Migration, and the Economic Household: Childcare and Related Work in China and the United States”

Committee: Janet Halley, William Alford, and Duncan Kennedy

TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

Beijing, China

LL.B., July 2015

JOURNAL ARTICLES

[*Workification*](#), 73 UCLA L.REV. ___ *forthcoming* (2026).

[*Home as Non-Workplace*](#), 103 B. U. L.REV. ___ *forthcoming* (2025).

Response by Katharine B. Silbaugh, “Home and Work”

Reviewed by The Journal of Things We Like (Lots)(JOTWELL)—Work Law, Deepa Das Acevedo, “[This Place is My Workplace...This Place is Your Workplace...](#)”

[*The Paradox of Upgrading: Standards of Social Reproduction and the Gendered Precarization of Garment Work in China*](#), 50 CRITICAL SOCIOLOGY ___ *forthcoming* (2025).

Featured in Julie Greco, “[Upgrading Skills, Downgrading Women’s Work in China](#),” Cornell Chronicle (February 24, 2025)

[*Gender, Value-Chain Upgrading, and The Costs of Human Capital: The Case of a Garment Supply Chain in China*](#), 57 CORNELL INT’L L.J. 235 (symposium on transnational labor rights) (2024).

[*The Care Bureaucracy*](#), 99 IND. L.J. 1241 (2024).

Reviewed by The Journal of Things We Like (Lots)(JOTWELL)—Family Law, Albertina Antognini, “[The Persistent Failure To Value Care](#)”

Reviewed by The Journal of Things We Like (Lots)(JOTWELL)—Health Law, Medha Makhlof, “[Addressing the Harms of Bureaucratization in the Public Home Care System](#)”

[*Subsidizing the Childcare Economy*](#), 34 STAN. L. & POL. REV. 67 (2023).

[*Rethinking the Global Governance of Migrant Domestic Workers: The Heterodox Case of Informal Filipina Workers in China*](#), 36 GEO. IMMIGR. L.J. 963 (2022)

[*Marriage and Money Entangled: Commodification, Agency, and Distributional Analysis in Chinese Marriage Payment Lawsuits*](#), 27 UCLA WOMEN'S L. J. 159 (2020)

“*Job as a Petitioner: The Book of Job and the Petition System in Contemporary China*,” 15 LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCE, PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS (2017) (in Chinese)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Caring like a State: Publicizing Family Caregiving Through Medicalization (under review at LAW AND SOCIAL INQUIRY)

Through qualitative analysis of fair hearing records from New York's Consumer-Directed Personal Care Program, this article examines how the medicalization of disability care provides a crucial yet limited mechanism that expands public responsibility and paid employment to the often-invisible labor of family caregiving.

Redistributing Care: A Gender and Political Economy Framework (law review article, in progress)

This paper draws from feminist writing on care and my case study of New York's public home care programs to construct a gender and political economy framework to assess the distributional tensions within the public actions in response to the “care crisis.”

Turning Care into Employment (law review article, in progress)

This paper compares the legal arrangements of home care workers and foster parents to analyze the policy stakes, including but not limited to workplace protections, that the state utilizes the legal institution of “employment” to achieve.

EMPIRICAL DATA COLLECTION

Interviews, “The Boundary between Paid and Unpaid Care Work in CDPAP” (in collaboration with Zoë West, data collection in progress)

Qualitative Analysis, Fair Hearing decisions related to home care authorization in New York and California (under analysis)

OTHER ACADEMIC WRITINGS

“*Gender and Political Economy Roundtable: Revisiting Distributive Analysis*,” SIGNS: JOURNAL OF WOMEN IN CULTURE AND SOCIETY (2024) (with Libby Adler, Deborah Dinner, Kerry Rittich, Nicole Stybnarova, and Chantal Thomas)

“*The Care Bureaucracy*,” Law and Political Economy Blog (Sep. 21, 2023) (invited post)

“*Formalizing Childcare Through Subsidies: A Distributional Critique*,” Law and Political Economy Blog (Jun. 20, 2022) (invited post)

“*The Social Reproduction of Informal Migrant Workforce in China*,” Critical Legal Thinking Blog (Oct. 20, 2021) (invited post)

APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECTS

Research Consultant, “Financialization and Structural Racism in Home-Based Care: The Intersection of Quality Work and Quality Care” (primary researcher: Anne Mary Brady, Zoë West, and Michael Lenmark, RWFJ Grant project)

Research Advisor, “Interventions to Support Care Workers' Holistic Wellbeing” (primary researcher: Arianna Schindle and Zoë West, CAROW Grant project).

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND HONORS

Cornell ILR Workplace Inclusion and Diversity Education (WIDE) Fast Grant, 2023-24.

Cornell Center for Social Sciences Research Grant, 2022-24.

Yong K. Kim '95 Memorial Prize in East Asian Legal Studies, 2022.

F.Y. Chang Scholar, 2017-22.

John M. Olin Student Writing Prize in Law and Economics, 2020.

Colin B. Picker Graduate Prize in Comparative Law, 2020.

Victor and William Fung Scholar, 2019-20.

Harvard University Asia Center Summer Research Grant, 2019.

Weatherhead Initiative on Gender Inequality Small Grant, 2018.

Harvard University Fairbank Center Graduate Research Grant, 2018.

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

“*The Legal Boundary of Work*”

Association for International and Comparative Studies in Labour and Industrial Relations (ADAPT), Bergamo, Italy, keynote speaker, “Work and Non-Work Today: Reframing the Issue Through an Interdisciplinary Perspective” International Conference (invited, scheduled)

“Turning Care into Employment”

Drexel University Thomas R. Kline School of Law, Family Law Teachers and Scholars Conference, 2025 (scheduled)

“Workification”

Law and Society Annual Meeting (CRN 55-Law and Political Economy), 2025 (scheduled)

Cornell Law School Faculty Workshop, 2025

Cornell Work Law Junior Scholars Workshop, 2024

San Diego Law School/California Western Law School, Colloquium on Scholarship in Employment and Labor Law (COSELL), 2024

“The Boundaries of Paid and Unpaid Care Work in Consumer-Directed Home Care” (with Zoë West)

Labor and Employment Relations Association Annual Meeting, 2025 (scheduled)

“The Gender and Political Economy of Care Work”

Law and Society Annual Meeting (IRC 51-Gender and Political Economy), 2025 (roundtable, scheduled)

Harvard Law School, Gender, Law, and Political Economy Workshop, 2025 (invited, scheduled)

Columbia Gender & Sexuality Law Center, LPE Gender Working Group Convening, 2024 (invited)

The University of Richmond Law Review Symposium, “Economies of Extraction: Labor, Care, and the Carceral State,” 2024 (invited)

“Home as Non-Workplace”

Law and Society Annual Meeting (CRN 08-Labor Rights), 2024

Northeastern University School of Law, Junior Scholars Conference, 2024

University of Minnesota Law School, Colloquium on Scholarship in Employment and Labor Law (COSELL), 2023

“Caring Like a State: Publicizing Family Caregiving Through Medicalization”

Seton Hall University School of Law Health Law Seminar, 2024 (invited)

AALS Disability Law Work-in-Progress Virtual Workshop, 2024

University of Baltimore School of Law, Family Law Teachers and Scholars Conference, 2024

Temple University Beasley School of Law, ALSME Health Law Professors Conference, 2024

AALS New Voices in Poverty Law Section, 2024

Rutgers University School of Law, 5th Roundtable on Nonmarriage and the Law, 2023

Cornell University Industrial and Labor Relations School Faculty Workshop, 2023

“Gender, Value-Chain Upgrading, and The Costs of Human Capital: The Case of a Garment Supply Chain in China”

Cornell Law School, “Conference on Transnational Labor Rights in a Globalized Economy” 2024 (invited)

“The Gender and Political Economy of the US Public Care System”

Harvard Law School, panelist, “Gender, Law, and the Political Economy of Social Reproduction” (by LPE @ HLS), 2024 (invited)

“Redistributing Care: A Gender and Political Economy Framework”

SciencesPo Law School, Paris, France, Gender and Political Economy Workshop, 2023

“Caring Like a State”

Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia, Keynote Speaker, “2nd International Congress, Caregiving: Law, Economics and Public Policy,” 2023 (invited)

“The Care Bureaucracy”

Boston College Law School, Family Law Scholars and Teachers Conference, 2023

University of Maryland Carey Law School, Health Law Professors Conference, 2023

Law and Society Association Annual Meeting, 2023

Cardozo Law School, New York Area Family Law Scholars Workshop, 2023

“Calculating the Labor of Love: Public Compensation for Family Caregivers”

Family Law Scholars and Teachers Conference, 2022

“Social-Reproduction-Structured Informalization of Manufacturing Work among Migrants in China”

Harvard Law School, Gender and Political Economy course 2024 (invited)

Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, 2023 (invited)

Cornell University, Migration, Ethnicity/Race, Gender, and Labor Market Inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa & the Asia-Pacific Region Conference, 2022 (invited)

Law and Society Association Annual Meeting (CRN 23- International Law and Politics), 2022

Harvard University, Cambridge China Politics Research Workshop (CCPRW), 2022

Asian Century Foundation, 2021 (invited)

Harvard Law School, Feminist Legal Theory course 2020 (invited)

“Subsidizing the Childcare Economy”

Vanderbilt Law School, Colloquium on Scholarship in Employment and Labor Law (COSELL), 2022

University of Alabama School of Law Faculty Workshop, 2021 (invited)

University of Oklahoma College of Law Faculty Workshop, 2021 (invited)

California Western School of Law Faculty Workshop, 2021 (invited)

Family Law Scholars and Teachers Conference, 2021

Law and Society Association Annual Meeting (CRN 07- Feminist Legal Theory), 2021

Emory Law School, The Vulnerability and Human Condition Workshop, 2021

“Rethinking the Global Governance of Migrant Domestic Workers: A Heterodox Case of Informal Filipina Workers in China”

Cornell University Industrial and Labor Relations School Faculty Workshop, 2021 (invited)

Labor Law Research Network (LLRN-05), 2021

University of Texas School of Law, Inequality, Labor, and Human Rights: The Future of Work in the Age of Pandemic Seminar, 2021 (invited)

Harvard Law School, Law and Economics Seminar, 2020 (invited)

The American Society of Comparative Law Annual Meeting, Young Comparativist Committee Conference, 2020

Colloquium on Scholarship in Employment and Labor Law (COSELL), 2020

McGill University Faculty of Law, Dean Maxwell and Isle Cohen Doctoral Seminar Series in International Law, 2020

Jurisprudence of Distribution Workshop, 2020 (invited)

Feminist Legal Theory Summer Series, 2020

Family Law Scholars and Teachers Conference, 2020

Law and Society Association Annual Meeting (CRN 08 – Labor Rights), 2020

Emory Law School, The Vulnerability and Human Condition Workshop, 2020

“Marriage and Money Entangled: Commodification, Agency, and Economic Analysis in Chinese Marriage Payment Lawsuits”

Harvard University Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Gender and Sexuality Studies Graduate Workshop, 2018

Stanford Law School, Law and Society Conference for Junior Researchers, 2018

On the gender and family implications of China’s rural housing reform

MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Urban China Workshop, 2019

TEACHING AND ADVISING

CORNELL UNIVERSITY INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR RELATIONS SCHOOL

Teaching:

2010 Labor and Employment Law

5010 Labor and Employment Law (for MILRs)

2060 The Law of Care Work: A Writing Seminar

4842/6840 Employment Discrimination and the Law

Mentoring:

MS Committee Chair, Ariana Shapiro (2023-25).

Honors Thesis Advisor, Riya Mahtani (2024-25).

Credit Internship Advisor, Hazel Rak (2023), Ashna Aziz (2024), Elizabeth Martzloff (2024), Robert Farbman (2025), Jacob McCoy (2025).

Faculty Advisor, ILR Undergrad Research Fellow (2024-); Worker Institute Undergraduate Research Fellowship (2023-); Undergrad Research Assistant (2023-); Graduate Research Assistant (2022).

CORNELL LAW SCHOOL/CORNELL ILR SCHOOL

Teaching:

6554 Gender, Race, and the Law in Global Political Economy (co-teaching with Chantal Thomas and Deborah Dinner)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

CORNELL UNIVERSITY INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR RELATIONS SCHOOL

Undergraduate Admission Committee (2023-26)

Co-organizer, "[Cornell Work Law Junior Scholars Workshop](#)" (2024)

Co-host, "Between ILR and Law School" Student Event (2024)

Advisory Planning Committee Member, [Cornell Worker Institute Future of Care Work Annual Convening](#) (2023-)

Panelist, "From Research to Practice: Immigration, Migration, and the NYS Workforce"

Cornell ILR School Center for Applied Research on Work, 2023

Panelist, "What is the Cost of Not Taking Care of Care Workers?"

Cornell ILR School Worker Institute, "Taking Care of Care Workers" convening, 2023

EXTERNAL

LAW AND SOCIETY ASSOCIATION

CRN08-Labor Rights, Co-organizer (2023-26); CRN07-Feminist Legal Thoughts, Organizing Committee member (2022-23).

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF COMPARATIVE LAW

The Younger Comparativists Committee (YCC), Member of the Scholarship Advisory Group.

AS REFEREE

Third World Quarterly; Journal of Homosexuality; Russell Sage Foundation "Future of Work" Grant.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

Teaching Fellow and Research Assistant

Cambridge, Massachusetts

2015-2016, 2018-2022

WOMEN IN INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT: GLOBALIZING AND ORGANIZING (WIEGO)

Policy Consultant

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Summer 2020

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

"Bureaumania," (audio documentary in production) *CBC Ideas*, 2024 [informal interview].

"[The 'curse of 35': In China, millennials are already too old for some employers](#)," *CNN World*, August 26 2023 [quoted].

BAR ADMISSION

New York State (2018); People's Republic of China (exam passed 2014, inactive).

LANGUAGE

English (fluent); Mandarin (native).

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Association of American Law Schools; The Law and Society Association; American Society of Law, Medicine & Ethics; Labor and Employment Relations Association; American Association of University Professors.