

Professor Celene Reynolds, Indiana University, Bloomington

“Imperfect Gains and Unintended Consequences: The Trajectory of Title IX in US Higher Education”



Description: The application of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to sexual harassment remains enormously controversial. But when this US civil rights law was passed, no one understood sexual harassment as a problem that schools ought to address. In this talk, I argue that the women claiming protection under Title IX redefined sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination barred by the law, fundamentally changing the right to equal opportunity in education. The civil rights project they initiated is now facing strong opposition, however, amid a broader refusal of the liberal model of sociopolitical organization in America and throughout the world. I briefly discuss how feminist advocates unintentionally created an opening for this opposition, helping place Title IX on a new trajectory.

Celene Reynolds is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Indiana University, Bloomington. She is the author of *Unlawful Advances: How Feminists Transformed Title IX* (Princeton University Press, August 2025). Her award-winning work has also appeared in the *American Journal of Sociology* and *Social Problems*, among other outlets, and received support from the National Science Foundation and the Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy.

Thursday
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12:30-1:50pm

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