



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF LAW AND SOCIETY BERKELEY LAW

CSLS SPEAKER SERIES

Monday, September 24, 2018

CHRISTOPHER MULLER

Assistant Professor of Sociology, U.C. Berkeley

“Freedom and Convict Leasing in the Postbellum South”

In 1868, the state of Georgia began punishing convicts by leasing them to private companies. Georgia's transition from penitentiary confinement to convict leasing coincided with a shift in the composition of its inmates. Fifteen years after the Civil War, African-Americans in Georgia were imprisoned at a rate more than 12 times that of whites. This research finds that black men were most likely to be imprisoned in the convict lease system where they overcame whites' efforts to preserve their position as dependent agricultural laborers. Where elite white landowners were able to reconstitute a dependent agricultural labor force, they had little reason to use the convict lease system to punish their workers. But in urban counties and in counties where African-Americans had acquired considerable landholdings, black men faced comparatively high rates of imprisonment for property crimes.

PLACE

Selznick Seminar Room, 2240 Piedmont Avenue

TIME

12:45 – 2:00pm. Coffee and water provided. Bag lunches welcome.

INFO

<https://www.law.berkeley.edu/centers/center-for-the-study-of-law-society/>

EMAIL

csls@law.berkeley.edu