

# JESSICA DIXON WEAVER

3315 Daniel Avenue Dallas, Texas 75205 (214) 768-2641 (office) [jdweaver@smu.edu](mailto:jdweaver@smu.edu)

---

## ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

**SMU DEDMAN SCHOOL OF LAW**, Dallas, Texas

*Vinson & Elkins Faculty Fellow*, 2024 – present

*Professor of Law*, 2021 – present

*Associate Professor of Law*, promoted with tenure 2015 - 2021

*Assistant Professor of Law*, 2009 - 2015

*Senior Lecturer in Law & Director, W. W. Caruth, Jr. Child Advocacy Clinic*, 2002-2009

*Appointments:*

*Associate Dean for Research*, 2022-2025

*Chair, University-wide Task Force on Social Justice and Equity*,  
2021-2023

**EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**, Atlanta, Georgia

*Visiting Scholar*, Feminist Legal Theory Project and Vulnerability and Human Condition Initiative, Fall 2012

**DREXEL UNIVERSITY KLINE SCHOOL OF LAW**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Scholar-

**JESSICA DIXON WEAVER**

Page 2

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Books**

*The Principle of Subsidiarity Applied: Reforming the Legal Framework To Capture the Psychological Abuse of Children*, 18 VA. J. SOC. POL'Y & L. 247-318 (2011) (cited in *McClanahan v. Washington Cty. Dep't of Soc. Servs.*, 445 Md. 691, footnote 17, 129 A.3d 293, 302 (2015) and excerpted in KATHERINE HUNT FEDERLE, *CHILDREN AND THE LAW: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH WITH CASES, MATERIALS AND COMMENTS*, 553-54 (Oxford University Press 2012).

*The Texas Mis-step: Why the Largest Child Removal in Modern U.S. History Failed*, 16 WM. & MARY J. WOMEN & L. 449-535 (2010) (lead article).

*The African-American Child Welfare Act: A Legal Redress for African-American Disproportionality in Child Protection Cases*, 10 BERKELEY J. AFR.-AM. L. & POL'Y 109-145 (2008).

### **Book Chapters & Shorter Works**

- *Elusive Freedom: African American Families in the Reconstruction Era: CENTERING FAMILIES OF COLOR: IDENTIFYING SYSTEMIC INEQUALITIES AND SOCIAL CHANGE LEADERSHIP* (Nancy Dowd and Robin Lenhardt, eds., forthcoming 2025).
- *The Elder Catch: Engineering the Future of Caregiving in RE-CONCEIVING EQUALITY AND FREEDOM: VULNERABILITY, DEPENDENCY, AND THE RESPONSIVE STATE* (Martha Fineman and Laura Spitz, eds., 2023).
- *Tribute to Family Law Scholars Who Helped Us Find Our Path: Dorothy E. Roberts*, 55 FAM. L.Q. 381-386 (2022).
- *Intersectionality and Children's Rights in THE OXFORD HANDBOOK ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS* 181-202 (Jonathan Todres and Shani King, eds. 2020).
- *DeShaney v. Winnebago County Department of Social Services*, 489 U.S. 189 (1989) in *FEMINIST JUDGMENTS: FAMILY LAW OPINIONS REWRITTEN* 224 -242 (Rachel Rebouche, ed. 2020).

*Legislative Solutions to Address Disproportionality in RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY AND DISPARITIES IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM* 413-438 (A.J. Dettlaff, ed., 2020).

### **WORKS-IN-PROGRESS**

#### **Articles**

- *Uncovering Race in Family Law*
- *The Fluid Family Theory*

**JESSICA DIXON WEAVER**

Page 4

**Books**

- SLAVERY AND THE ORIGINS OF FAMILY LAW
- THE LIFE AND TIMES OF BASIL CAMPBELL

**LEADERSHIP  
& SERVICE  
AWARDS**

- 2025 ACC Academic Leaders Network, Inaugural SMU Cohort Member (1 of 5)
- 2021 Tom Tunks Distinguished University Citizenship Award, SMU
- 2020-21 Inaugural Member of the Stagen Leadership Academy Social Impact Leadership Program, Audre Lorde Class
- 2020 Fellow, Texas State Bar Foundation

2017 Dallas Public Voices Thought Leader, selected by The OpEd Project and The Boone Family Foundation to increase public impact of the nation's top and most diverse thinkers

2016 V. Alyce Foster Trailblazer Award Recipient, South Dallas Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc.

- 2015 Faculty Appreciation Award from Women in Law Association at SMU Dedman School of Law

2014 SMU Year of the Faculty, selected by Dean and Office of Public Affairs as faculty member who has been a newsmaker through achievements

2009 *Texas Lawyer* Extraordinary Minority in Texas Law

2006 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Equal Justice Award, Legal Aid of Northwest Texas, Inc. (as W.W. Caruth, Jr. Child Advocacy Clinic Director)

**SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**

*The Fluid Family Theory*

- 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Writing Workshop, Duke University School of Law (June 29, 2024)
- Invited Panelist, The Future of Families and Family Law, Brigham Young University School of Law (October 10, 2014)

*Slavery and the Origins of Family Law*

- Scholar-in-Residence Lecture, Drexel University Kline School of Law (April 4, 2024)

- Randall Parks Speaker Series, University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law, (March 26, 2024)
- Slavery Past Present and Future: 7<sup>th</sup> Global Meeting, Webster University, Accra, Ghana (July 4, 2023)
- 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Writing Workshop, Penn State Dickinson School of Law (June 24, 2023)
- Competitively Selected Panelist, *The Political Economy of Motherhood*, Yale Law and Political Economy Project Conference, Yale Law School (March 17, 2021)
- 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Writing Workshop, University of Wisconsin School of Law (June 27, 2014)
- Emerging Family Law Scholars and Teachers Conference, University of Minnesota Law School (May 28, 2014)

***Uncovering Race in Family Law***

- Advanced Family Law Seminar Guest Presenter, Ohio State University Moritz College of Law (February 13, 2024)
- Member Presentation, Family, Kinship and Relatedness Research Cluster, SMU Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute (September 30, 2021)
- The Southeastern Ojave

**JESSICA DIXON WEAVER**

Page 6

- 13<sup>th</sup> Annual









***FLDS Reconsidered: Establishing Substantial Psychological Abuse as Part of the Legal Standard for Emergency Child Removal***

Children and the Law Junior Faculty Workshop, Washington and Lee University  
School of Law (July 16, 2009)

***The African-American Child Welfare Act: A Legal Redress for African-American Disproportionality in Child Protection Cases***

“Setting the Agenda: Examining Critical Legal Issues Facing African-Americans and Minority Communities in the 2008 Election,”

- AALS Section on Family and Juvenile Law Joint Program Creator & Organizer, *Keeping Up with the Changing Face of the American Family*, 2018 AALS Annual Meeting, San Diego, California (January 5, 2018)
- Invited Panelist & Moderator, *Creating Your Academic Business Plan*, 2017 Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Writing Workshop, University of Michigan College of Law (July 8, 2017)
- SMU Dean's Council Presentation, National Center for Faculty Diversity and Development, February 9, 2017 (resulting in insq0.0Ma(tut)-3(ional membe)4(rship))] TJETQq0.00
- Invited Plenary Panelist "Making Criticism Constructive at all Phases," 2016 Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Writing Workshop, University of Iowa College of Law (July 9, 2016)
- Invited Panel Moderator, "On Being Black and Female in the Classroom," 2015 Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Writing Workshop, Vanderbilt Universiq0.y School of Law (July 11, 2015)
- Invited Plenary Panel Moderator, "Preparing Family Law for the Future," 2015 AALS Midyear Meeting, "Workshop on Shifting Foundations: Family Law's Response to Changing Families," Orlando, Florida (June 24, 2015)
- Invited Participant, Emerging Leaders Seminar Series, Southern Methodist University, (Spring 2015)
- Invited Respondent Speaker, *Can Feminism Be Resurrected?*, The Federalist Society, (September 8, 2014)
- Invited Panelist, Teaching Cultural Competence, Teaching Effectiveness Symposium, Center for Teaching Excellence, Southern Methodist University (August 21, 2014)
- Participant, Best Law Teacher's Conference 2014, Northwestern University School of Law (June 26-27, 2014)
- Invited Panel Moderator, Section on Civil Rights – "50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: Examining its Future (Part I)," American Association of Law Schools Annual Meeting, New York, New York (January 3, 2014)
- Panel Moderator, Section on Children and the Law – "Children and the Media," American Association of Law Schools Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C. (January 6, 2012)



What the Cosby and Sandusky Cases teach us about reporting sexual assault,” Garnett News, June 22, 2017.

Why Convicting Dr. Huxtable is so Hard,” Garnett News, June 21, 2017.

Police Training Should Start with a History on Slavery Laws,” The Root, June 10, 2017.

**MEDIA INTERVIEWS**

- Radio Interview, CBS Radio (Dallas, KLIF FM), December 18, 2013, <http://www.smu.edu/News/2013/jessica-weaver-ap-18dec2013> (regarding Affluenza case involving teen accused of drunk driving and manslaughter).
- Interview, *Texas Prosecutor seeks to put 'affluenza' teen behind bars*, REUTERS, December 18, 2013.
- Interview, *For Those Who Drink, Drive and Kill, "Affluenza" Outcome Isn't Uncommon, Especially if They Have Money*, Dallas Observer, December 17, 2013, [http://blogs.dallasobserver.com/unfairpark/2013/12/for\\_those\\_who\\_drink\\_drive\\_and.php](http://blogs.dallasobserver.com/unfairpark/2013/12/for_those_who_drink_drive_and.php).

Interview, *CPS actions in polygamist sect case puzzle some child welfare experts*, Dallas Morning News, June 18, 2008.

Television Interview, "High Court upholds polygamist sect case decision," NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams, May 29, 2008.

Live Television Interview, "Polygamy Ruling Raises Legal Debate on State Power," News Hour with Jim Lehrer, May 22, 2008.

Interview, *Sweep of Polygamists' Kids Raise Legal Questions*, Associated Press, April 25, 2008.

Television Interview, "Mothers Tell Their Side of the Story," NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams, April 16, 2008.

Radio Interview, "Child Advocacy and Options after Foster Care," KNON, KERA 90.1FM, Think! Radio show, November 20, 2006.

## **LAW SCHOOL SERVICE**

- Chair, Endowed Lectures and Faculty Forum Committee (2022-25)
- 1L Inns of Court Advisor (2021-22)
- Member, Appointments Committee, 2014-16, 2021-22
- Member, Honor Code Revision Committee, 2021-22
- Member, Law School Executive Committee, 2017-19
- Appointed Law School Representative, Faculty Senate, 2015-16, 2017-18
- Member, Diversity Issues Committee, 2007-08, 2017-18, 2020-22
- Chair, Diversity Issues Committee, 2015-16, 2018-19
- Law School Faculty Liaison, Women's & Gender Studies Certificate Program, 2014-16
- Member, Innovation Task Force Committee, 2015
- Member, Curriculum Committee, 2013-14, 2020
- Faculty Liaison, The Forensic Group, 2010-16
- Faculty Supervisor, Various Externships, 2012-16
- Faculty Advisor, Family Law Association, 2009-16
- Member, Public Service Committee, 2007-15, 2019
- Faculty Advisor, Black Law Students Association, 2003-16, 2017-18, 2020-23
- Member, Endowed Lecturers Committee, 2009-13
- Guest Speaker, Minority Pre-Law Symposium, 2003-10, 2013, 2015-16, 2018
- Faculty Secretary, Spring 2011
- Junior Faculty Workshop Organizer, 2009-10
- Judge, Law Related Education Program, 2005-08
- Judge, Regional Black Law Students Association Moot Court Competition, 2005
- Member, Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee, 2003-04, 2017-18



**UNIVERSITY SERVICE**

- Inaugural Member, ACC Academic Leaders Network, 2025
- Chair, Task Force on Social Justice and Equity, 2021-23
- Faculty Representative, Black Unity Forum, 2020-22
- Faculty Trainer, Hidden Scripts, Campus Cultural Intelligence Initiative, 2019-20
- Faculty Author, Campus Cultural Intelligence Initiative, 2016-18
- Appointed Law School Representative, President's Commission on the Status of Racial Minorities, 2015-16, 2017-18
- Invited member, Faculty Cultural Intelligence Innovation Work Group

- Society of American Law Teachers
  - SALT/LatCrit Faculty Development Workshop Planning Committee, 2010
- National Association of Counsel for Children
  - 2009-2010 Texas Advisory Board
- Children's Commission, Supreme Court of Texas Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families, Legal Representation Study Workgroup & CPS Bench Book Workgroup, 2009-10
- State of Texas Disproportionality Steering Committee, 2006-08
- Tex Protects Public Policy Committee, 2005-07, 2010-11
  - Drafted White Paper that resulted in changes to Texas Family Code §107.004 – Additional Duties of Attorney Ad Litem for Child

**LEGAL  
EXPERIENCE**

**THE LAW OFFICE OF JESSICA R. DIXON**

*Solo Practitioner*, Dallas, Texas, 1997-2002

Practice Areas: Labor and Employment Law, Small Business Law, Family Law, Child Welfare Law, and Juvenile Delinquency Law.

**THE MILESTONE GROUP, L.L.C.**

*Managing Partner*, Dallas, Texas, 1999-2001

Company Service: Employment Law and Human Resources Advisement for small to mid-size businesses, Employee Policy Manuals, Labor Audits, Management and Employee Training on Employment Policies & Sexual Harassment.

**SMITH & POLEWSKI**

*Associate*, Dallas, Texas, 1996-1997

Practice Areas: General Civil and Commercial Litigation

**LITTLER MENDELSON**

*Associate*, Dallas, Texas, 1995-1996

Practice Area: Labor and Employment Law

**BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS**

- Texas, 1996
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas, 1997

**BAR SERVICE**

- State Bar of Texas, Family Law Council, 2010-25

- Appointed Faculty Member of Family Law Council & Appellate Committee, 2010-24
- Invited Speaker, *The Little Voice: Recognizing Child Abuse and Your Duty to Report It – A Legal Responsibility*, Dallas Association of Young Lawyers, March 31, 2011.

American Bar Association

- Youth at Risk Roundtable, 2007-08

Dallas Bar Association

2006 Vice-Chair, Juvenile Justice Committee

2007 Co-Chair, Juvenile Justice Committee

J.L. Turner Legal Association – African-American Bar Association

2006 Co-Chair, Mentor Committee

- 2005 Chair, Mentor Committee
- 2005 Parliamentarian

**Honors:** • 2005 Outstanding Committee Chair – Mentor Committee

- 2006 President's Award

**PUBLIC SERVICE**

- Capita Think Tank, Board of Directors, 2021-25
- Lutie Legacy Society, Board of Directors, 2020-25
- Jack and Jill of America, Inc., Dallas Chapter, Beautillion Scholarship Chair, 2018-19; Beautillion Programming Co-Chair, 2021; Dallas Chapter, Historian (2021-23)
- Dallas Public Voices, Leadership and Advisory Committee, 2018-19
-