

Emory University

Dept of Quantitative Theory & Methods

2024-25 Speaker Series



**Elora
Raymond**
City & Regional Planning
Georgia Tech

From Sharecropping to Eviction: Racial Regimes of Property in the US South

Drawing on critical property studies, we describe the rise of sharecropping and the crop lien system to institutional change in Southern courts during Reconstruction. We identify four Jim Crow-era attributes of state courts' — local control, efficiency, hierarchy of property rights, and the priority of landlords' rent debt—that have shaped and continue to influence tenant legal rights and contemporary practices of eviction in the US South.

In a series of regression models using the jurisdiction of county courts as the unit of analysis, we show that counties with high rates of sharecropping in the 20th century have a 4.6% higher eviction filing rate in the current day. In the second analysis, we focus on courts practices and ideology as persistent institutions that may have facilitated a link between a historically racialized property regime and contemporary housing instability. Drawing on a qualitative analysis of interviews with court personnel and a novel evictions dataset, we link the four themes identified in the historic literature to higher eviction rates and poorer case outcomes for tenants in the current day.

Co-authors: Lauren Sudeall, JD, Vanderbilt University; Phil Garboden, PhD, University of Chicago; Anton Tran, PhD Candidate, GA Tech.

November 4, 1 PM, PAIS 561