

**Lockdown: the Private Prison Industry and the Public  
Emory Public Interest Committee (“EPIC”) Conference 2017  
Event Agenda  
Emory University School of Law  
October 7, 2017  
9 am - 2:45 pm**

On May 15, 2017, Jean Jimenez-Joseph was the second ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) detainee to commit suicide in the last 2 months at Georgia’s Stewart Detention Facility. Stewart, a for-profit facility run by the private prison company, CoreCivic, has been featured in recent reports because of its maltreatment of detainees. This is not a recent trend.

Since 1980, the private prison industry has been profiting off of the incarceration of individuals. Currently, the federal government contracts with private corporations to house 12% of federal prisoners and 73% of detained immigrants. Corrections Corporation of America, the country’s biggest and most notorious private prison contractor, reported a revenue of \$1.9 billion dollars in 2015 alone. Law students, attorneys, and advocates have been actively voicing their opposition to such practices. However, with the current administration, these efforts might need to be heightened. How do we, as the legal community, stop these kinds of facilities from being utilized?

**Opening Remarks  
9:00 am - 9:30 am**

Lauren Schenkel  
*EPIC President*

Alexandria Pierce and Sophie Salcedo  
*EPIC Conference Co-Chairs*

James B. Hughes, Jr.  
*Interim Dean,  
Associate Professor of Law*

Rita Sheffey  
*Dean of Public Service*

**Keynote Speech  
9:30 am-10:15 am**

Fred Smith Jr.  
*Associate Professor of Law*

**Private Prisons and the Public Interest in Practice  
10:15 am - 11:00 am**

This panel will consist of speakers whose work heavily involves the private prison industry, whether they are an attorney representing clients in civil rights issues, a reporter writing about the effects of private phone companies contracting with prisons for prisoner phone calls, or a professor writing comments on the issue. This panel will broadly approach the effect of the private prison industry on legal practice and on the Atlanta, GA, community.

**Speakers**

**Chris Joyner**  
*Atlanta Journal Constitution  
Watchdog Blog Reporter*

**Courtney O’Donnell**  
*Georgia Federal  
Defender’s Office*

**Mario Williams**  
*Civil Rights Attorney*

**Alexander Volokh**  
*Associate Professor of Law  
Expert on the Law and Economics of Privatization*

Moderated by Seth Church, *Emory Law Class of 2018, Criminal Law Practice Society*

**Individual Presentation on Private Probation  
11:00 am - 11:30 am**

Sara Totonchi, *Executive Director, Southern Center for Human Rights*

**Break for Lunch  
11:30 am - 12:30 pm**

**Impact of Privatized Detention Centers on the Immigrant Community Panel  
12:30 pm - 1:15 pm**

In March of 2017, the President signed an Executive Order which blocked the citizens of 6 predominantly Muslim countries from entering the United States; widely known as the Muslim Ban. Attorneys from around the nation flooded airports to provide free legal services to those affected by the order and were applauded for their swift and dedicated efforts. The New York Times called the Order, “the most significant hardening of immigration policies in generations.” As a result, lawsuits have arisen, questioning the constitutionality of the Order. The political climate is potent with questions about immigration and legality. Immigration attorneys and public advocates alike are being referred to in order to answer such questions. These are massive challenges which are arising that the legal community must come together to face.

**Speakers**

**Azadeh Shahshahani**  
*Project South*

**Nora Benavidez**  
*Private Practice*

**Natalie Lyons**  
*Southern Poverty Law Center*

**Anton Flores**  
*Alternativa Community*

Moderated by Christina Zeidan  
*Emory Law Class of 2018, Immigration and Refugee Assistance Project, International Law Practice Society*

**The Political and Economic Determinants of the American States’ Reliance on Private Prisons  
1:15 pm - 1:45 pm**

**Abstract:**

Privatization of government industries began in full swing in the 1980s and touched dozens of policymaking areas, including corrections. In the last three decades, the share of the prison population under the control of private companies has increased from zero to nearly 9% today. This paper aims to explore the determinants of this particular policy choice by extending previous theories of prison privatization and arguing this process is a two-stage one in which states first decide whether to adopt private prisons at all, then determine the level of privatization in their corrections systems. The role of unions in slowing the growth of privatization is reaffirmed, while the effect of politics is contra to the one suggested by the literature. The results here prompt a reevaluation of the factors that lead a state to privatize, call into question a monolithic theory of privatization, and recommend a new theory be constructed of the privatization of force.

**Anna Gunderson**  
*Doctoral Candidate in Political Science, Emory University*

**Privatization of Prison Healthcare Providers  
1:45 pm - 2:30 pm**

This panel will delve into the issues surrounding the privatized healthcare provided to prisoners, whether they are placed within private or public facilities. Our panelists will discuss access and quality to care, issues of liability when dealing with private providers, and mental health treatment in prisons.

**Speakers**

**Danny Robbins**  
*Atlanta Journal Constitution  
Investigative Reporter*

**Brad Gardener**  
*Georgia Capital Defender*

**Latrice Latin**  
*Latin Law Group*

**Kem Kimbrough**  
*Former Sheriff of Clayton County  
and ool*

Moderated by Creighton McMurray, *Emory Law Class of 2018*

**Closing Remarks  
2:30 pm - 2:45 pm**

Rita Sheffey  
*Dean of Public Service*

Alexandria Pierce and Sophie Salcedo  
*EPIC Conference Co-chairs*