

Working Mothers and the Limits of the Law: A Review

In her book, *Working Mothers and the Limits of the Law*, Sarah Waldeck provides a comprehensive and nuanced analysis of the legal and social challenges facing working mothers in the United States. Drawing on extensive research, including interviews with working mothers, lawyers, and policymakers, Waldeck argues that the law has failed to adequately address the unique needs of working mothers and that this failure has had a devastating impact on their families and careers.



The Balance Gap: Working Mothers and the Limits of the Law

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported
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Print length : 186 pages



Waldeck begins by examining the history of discrimination against working mothers. She shows how, from the early days of the women's rights movement, working mothers have been seen as a threat to the traditional family and to the male-dominated workplace. This bias has been reflected in the law, which has long provided less protection for working mothers than for other workers.

For example, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) of 1978 prohibits employers from discriminating against pregnant workers, but it does not require employers to provide any accommodations for pregnant workers, such as light duty or unpaid leave. This means that pregnant workers are often forced to choose between their jobs and their health.

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for employees who need to care for a new child or a sick family member. However, the FMLA is only available to employees who have worked for their employer for at least 12 months, and it does not cover all employers. This means that many working mothers are not eligible for FMLA leave.

Waldeck also examines the impact of the law on working mothers' families. She shows how the lack of affordable childcare and paid leave makes it difficult for working mothers to balance their work and family responsibilities. This can lead to stress, burnout, and relationship problems.

In addition, Waldeck argues that the law has failed to keep pace with the changing realities of the workplace. The traditional model of the male breadwinner and the stay-at-home mother is no longer the norm. Today, most mothers work outside the home, and many fathers are taking on more responsibility for childcare.

Waldeck concludes by calling for a new approach to the law that takes into account the unique needs of working mothers. She argues that the law should provide more protection for pregnant workers, working mothers, and working families.

Working Mothers and the Limits of the Law is a must-read for anyone interested in the challenges facing working mothers. Waldeck's research is thorough and her analysis is sharp. This book is a valuable contribution to the literature on gender and employment law.

About the Author

Sarah Waldeck is a Professor of Law at the University of California, Davis. She is a leading expert on gender and employment law. Her research has been published in top law journals, and she has testified before Congress on issues related to working mothers.

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