



Fetal Rights, Women s Rights: Gender Equality in the Workplace (Paperback)

By Suzanne Samuels

University of Wisconsin Press, United States, 1995. Paperback. Condition: New. New. Language: English . Brand New Book. In the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, many US private employers enacted foetal protection policies that barred women - that is, women who had not been surgically sterilised - from working in jobs that might expose foetuses to toxins. This text analyses these policies and the ambiguous responses to them by federal and state courts, legislatures, administrative agencies, litigants and interest groups. It poses provocative questions about the implicit links between social welfare concerns and paternalism in the workplace: are women workers or wombs? Placing the foetal protection controversy within the larger societal debate about gender roles, this text argues that government decision-makers confuse sex, which is based solely on biological characteristics, with gender, which is based on societal conceptions. It contends that the debate about foetal protection policies brought this ambiguity into stark relief, and that the response of policy-makers was rooted in assumptions about gender roles. Judges, legislators and regulators used gender as a proxy, it argues, to sidestep the question of whether the foetal protection policies could be justified by the biological differences between men and women. The foetal...



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