Date
Thurs 02 May
Time
12.30pm - 1.45pm
Includes a light lunch
Venue
Room 165 | Bloomberg Center
Cornell Tech | Roosevelt Island

Speaker
Ifeoma Ajunwa
School of Industrial and Labor Relations
Cornell University

Title
The Paradox of Automation as Anti-Bias Intervention

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Biography
Professor Ajunwa is an Assistant Professor of Labor & Employment Law in the Labor Relations, Law, and History Department of Cornell’s Industrial and Labor Relations School. She is also an Associate Faculty Member at Cornell Law School and a Faculty Associate at the Berkman Klein Center at Harvard University. Her research focus is on law and technology in the workplace. Her research interests are at the intersection of law and technology with a particular focus on the ethical governance of workplace technologies. Her research also concerns diversity and inclusion in the labor market and the workplace. Professor Ajunwa is the winner of the American Association of Law Schools (AALS) Derrick Bell Award for 2018.

Dr. Ajunwa’s articles have been published or are forthcoming in both top law review and peer review publications including the Fordham Law Review, the California Law Review, the Northwestern Law Review, the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review, The Berkeley Journal of Employment and Labor Law, the Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics, and in Research in the Sociology of Work, among others. Dr. Ajunwa has been invited to present her work before governmental agencies such as the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (the CFPB), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (the EEOC), as well as, many national and international conferences. Dr. Ajunwa’s research paper, Limitless Worker Surveillance, (with Kate Crawford and Jason Schultz) has been downloaded more than 2,700 times on SSRN and was endorsed by the NY Times Editorial Board. Dr. Ajunwa’s forthcoming book, The Quantified Worker, which examines the role of technology in the workplace and its effects on management practices as moderated by employment and anti-discrimination laws will be published by Cambridge University Press in 2019.

Abstract
A received wisdom is that automated decision-making serves as an anti-bias intervention. The conceit is that removing humans from the decision-making process will also eliminate human bias. The paradox, however, is that in some instances, automated decision-making has served to replicate and amplify bias. In this presentation, Dr. Ajunwa will use the case study of algorithmic capture of hiring as a heuristic device to provide a taxonomy of problematic features associated with algorithmic decision-making as an anti-bias intervention, arguing that those features are at odds with the fundamental principle of equal opportunity employment. To examine these features and explore potential legal approaches for rectifying them, Dr. Ajunwa brings together two streams of legal scholarship: law and technology studies and employment & labor law.