

# Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice Special Event

**April 20, 2009**

**Boalt - 140**

**12:45 - 1:45 p.m.**

**Lunch provided,  
please bring  
your own  
beverage.**

## Parents, the State, and Prop 8



**Melissa Murray**

Assistant Professor of Law  
UC Berkeley School of Law

Why did Prop 8 succeed? The Obama Effect? Racial and ethnic minorities? Faith communities? The No on 8 campaign? In Melissa Murray's recent paper, *Marriage Rights and Parental Rights: Parents, the State, and Proposition 8*, she argues that Prop 8's success largely was the result of a canny rhetorical strategy. By analyzing commercials aired on behalf of Prop 8, Professor Murray shows that instead of combating the view that same-sex marriage is a civil rights issue, the Yes on 8 campaign re-framed the debate to focus on individual rights, and specifically, parental rights. How did they do it, and what does this rights rhetoric mean for future efforts to secure marriage equality? Professor Murray's talk will include clips of "Yes on Prop 8" TV ads.

Professor Murray's paper is available upon request. Please email [aceja@law.berkeley.edu](mailto:aceja@law.berkeley.edu) to request a copy.