

Trina Grillo

1948 – 1996



The Retreat is named in honor of University of San Francisco Law Professor Trina Grillo who died in 1996 from Hodgkin's disease, a few days before what would have been her 48th birthday. Professor Grillo was well known for her role in academic support work. She also made an impact as a law teacher, and scholar; her influence was extraordinary. She received the 1995 Achievement Award for Contributions to Legal Education awarded by the Society of American Law Teachers (SALT).

Professor Grillo had a vision of pedagogy that recognized and celebrated difference when that notion was minimized or discarded. Using student collaboration, active learning, and student voices, she created a learning community where students who differed from other law students because of class, race, gender, sexual orientation, or physical and cognitive processing abilities could thrive. Her approach has been emulated by colleagues across the country. Trina Grillo's work incorporating diversity into the curriculum of the classroom and clinic continues to be at the cutting edge of legal education.

Professor Grillo graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of California at Berkeley after also attending Radcliffe College. She attended the University of Minnesota Law School, where she was a member of Order of the Coif and served as Note Editor of the Minnesota Law Review. In 1977, after a clerkship with the Honorable James E. Doyle, United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin, Professor Grillo joined the faculty at University of California Hastings College of Law, where she stayed until 1981. She entered private practice with Altschuler and Berzon and became a mediator in Oakland, California, from 1984-86. She returned to teaching at the University of San Francisco in 1986.

One of her most important scholarly works, *The Mediation Alternative: Process Dangers for Women*, published in the Yale Law Review, grew out of reflections drawn from her private practice. Another piece, *Obscuring the Importance of Race: The Implications of Making Comparisons Between Racism and Sexism (Or Other Isms)* (with Stephanie M. Wildman) in *PRIVILEGE REVEALED* (1996), has received attention for demonstrating how racism may be perpetuated by well-intentioned feminists.

Trina Grillo's warmth, energy, and commitment to promoting equality have produced a wide-ranging network of friends and supporters. A founding member of the Critical Race Theory Workshop, Professor Grillo was also active among feminist critical legal scholars and Latina/o law professors. Yale Professor Harlan Dalton described Professor Grillo as "one of the most straight-forward, fair-minded, spiritually open people, inclined to hide her brilliance."