



Interview

A Conversation with Dr Daniela Alaattinoglu The Nils Klim Laureate (2025)

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Daniela Alaattinoglu, an Assistant Professor of Law, a Doctor of Law (EUI), and a docent of Socio-legal Studies (UTU), has been honoured with this year's prestigious **Nils Klim Prize (2025)**, awarded by the Norwegian Government and administered by the University of Bergen under the oversight of the Holberg Prize Board. She is the first Finnish legal scholar and the first scholar from the University of Turku to receive the award. Her areas of expertise are socio-legal studies, gender and law, legal mobilisation, human rights, reparations, comparative public law, and criminal law.

In her research and teaching, she is interested in how societies and laws evolve in tandem, how groups mobilise to change their position, and how law intersectionally includes and excludes individuals and groups. Her research has been published in discipline-leading international journals, including *Modern Law Review*, *Feminist Legal Studies*, *Human Rights Law Review* and *International Journal of Constitutional Law*. Among her most prominent publications are her single-authored monograph *Grievance Formation, Rights and Remedies: Involuntary Sterilisation and Castration in the Nordics, 1930s–2020s* (Cambridge University Press 2023) and the co-edited (together with Dr Adrian Howe) volume *Contesting Femicide: Feminism and the Power of Law Revisited* (Routledge 2019).

Dr Alaattinoglu is the Principal Investigator of the project From the Margin to the Centre: Rights Development, Transitional Justice and Indigeneity in the Nordics (MARCEN), funded by the European Research Council (Starting Grant, 2025–2029). She received multiple research grants and held multiple international visiting fellowships. She is the co-editor of *Retfærd*, the Nordic Journal of Law and Justice. She is also, together with Dr Miriam Tedeschi, the co-founder of the research environment Law, Space, and Justice at the Turku Law Faculty. She is a multilingual scholar, and she regularly publishes her research in English and other languages. More information: <https://www.utu.fi/en/people/daniela-alaattinoglu>

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Publisher: Critical Gender Studies Network (CGSN)

First Published: 10 April, 2025.

Citation: Das, P. (2025). A Conversation with Dr Daniela Alaattinoglu, the Nils Klim Laureate (2025). *Critical Gender Studies Journal*, 2(1). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21659/cgsj.v2n1.02>



The Conversation

PD: We are privileged to feature you in the Critical Gender Studies Journal. First and foremost, congratulations on being awarded the prestigious 2025 Nils Klim Prize. This distinguished honour recognises your exceptional contributions to socio-legal studies and your tireless efforts to advance critical conversations on gender, law, and human rights.

The Nils Klim Committee Chair, Professor Ástráður Eysteinnsson, commended the future impact of your research on “a good number of relevant legal, social, and political spheres on the international scene.”¹ Similarly, the Norwegian Minister of Research and Higher Education, Sigrun Aasland, underlined the significance of your work in addressing “the rights and status of excluded groups in society.”² The whole world is celebrating your achievement and trying to grasp your thoughts.

At the Critical Gender Studies Journal, we are excited to engage with a pioneer of our time. Your scholarship holds immense potential for transcending disciplinary boundaries and making meaningful, global change. How do you feel about being recognised for your contribution? How will it inspire you to do new research?

DA: Thank you very much – this recognition means a great deal to me personally. In many ways, it feels like an affirmation that I am part of a global conversation on law and society, and law and gender. At the same time, it feels a little daunting, as I still consider myself a fairly junior scholar. I take this recognition more as an encouragement to continue my work, rather than an award for concluded research, because I still have much to learn and contribute. I also hope that my most interesting work is still ahead of me.

More broadly, in a time of growing backlash against human rights, the humanities, and gender studies in particular, I think it is especially important that research in these areas is recognised and valued. I hope this moment can contribute to keeping these fields visible, relevant and engaged with global concerns.

PD: We are very curious about your beginning, the budding of your interest in the field of law, and the progress of your interests toward socio-legal studies and gender issues. How did the journey start? Were there any defining moments? Did any mentor, teacher or family member significantly define your career path?

DA: I began studying law because I was interested in questions of social justice—and because law seemed to offer solid career prospects. However, during my first year of law school, I seriously considered quitting. The curriculum focused heavily on areas like contract and business law, which felt far removed from the issues that initially drew me to the field. At one point, I found myself wondering whether lawyers did anything other than help the rich get richer – and whether I really wanted to spend my working life doing that.

¹ University of Turku. (2025). *Assistant Professor Daniela Alaattinoglu awarded with the prestigious Nils Klim Prize for excellent research*. Retrieved April 10, 2025, from <https://sites.utu.fi/marcen/news/assistant-professor-daniela-alaattinoglu-awarded-with-the-prestigious-nils-klim-prize-for-excellent-research/>

² Holbergprize.org. (2025). *Holberg Prize to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*. Retrieved March 30, 2025, from <https://holbergprize.org/news/holbergprize-to-gayatri-chakravorty-spivak/>

Everything changed in my second year, when I encountered the sociology of law for the first time. The course was taught by my now long-time mentor, Johanna Niemi, who also introduced me to the field of law and gender. That was the moment I knew I had found my intellectual and professional 'home'.

Later, during my time as a PhD researcher at the European University Institute, I had the privilege of being supervised by Ruth Rubio-Marín. She became another key mentor, and her scholarship and our discussions have offered me important conceptual and methodological tools for studying gender and law. Both Johanna Niemi and Ruth Rubio-Marín have been central intellectual and inspirational figures for me—particularly in the way they bring feminist questions and concerns about gender and power into legal scholarship and, through that, broaden the field itself.

Having feminist legal trailblazers like these, whose scholarship demonstrates that gender is highly relevant to the law, has been very important for younger scholars such as myself. In addition, I think that representation matters: having seen leading scholarly figures and women professors in law – a traditionally male-dominated academic field – has been very inspirational for me.

PD: As a scholar whose work intersects socio-legal studies, gender, and human rights, how do you reflect on the intellectual environments and discussions that formed your critical vision? Were there particular academic or social debates, experiences, or collaborations that ignited your passion for this field? How do you recall the intellectual climate?

DA: My critical vision has been shaped through a combination of lived experience, transnational academic engagement and participation in both scholarly and activist conversations. Living, studying, visiting, working and participating in discussions in a range of countries—including Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Turkey, Italy, Australia, Estonia and Germany—has allowed me to engage with multiple legal and political contexts, and to reflect comparatively on the ways law intersects with structures of power, marginalisation and resistance.

A particularly formative influence has been my engagement with feminist movements and socio-legal scholars in Turkey. The vitality and persistence of feminist legal mobilisations there, especially in the face of increasing authoritarianism, have left a lasting impression on me—both politically and intellectually. These experiences challenged and deepened my understanding of how law and courtrooms can function as both a tool of domination and a site of contestation (for example through feminist sit-ins at trials),³ and underscored the importance of contextual, grounded approaches to legal critique.

More broadly, my thinking has been shaped by critical feminist, socio-legal and intersectional approaches to the law. I am very fortunate to be part of an academic community where I can continue learning through dialogue and collaboration, and where research can still be animated by a commitment to social justice and collective transformation.

³ I have written about this with Cemre Baytok in Daniela Alaattinoğlu and Cemre Baytok, 'Fighting femicide in Turkey - feminist legal challenges' in Howe and Alaattinoğlu, *Contesting Femicide: Feminism and the Power of Law Revisited* (Routledge 2019).

PD: Your work engages with the complex intersection of law and society and addresses their mutual influence and evolution. Could you share your strategies or frameworks to untangle these complex dynamics? How do you ensure that your research remains relevant to both academic discourse and the real-world challenges individuals and communities face?

DA: In practice, my research is often driven by real-world challenges and gaps in scholarly attention. I tend to begin with concrete problems that seem under-explored and I often do so in collaboration with others, since these are questions that benefit from multiple perspectives. For example, my work on trans legal parenthood emerged from a collaboration with Alice Margaria, an expert in legal parenthood and family law. She brought my attention to recent developments in Nordic legislation on trans parenthood—an area with surprisingly little academic commentary. At some point, we simply thought: *someone needs to write about this*, and decided that we would take it on.

In terms of method, I often start from the 'inner layers' of law—statutory frameworks, case law and doctrinal interpretation. But I aim to go beyond this, engaging with the 'outer layers' of law: the broader social, political and historical contexts in which law operates. This involves asking what drives legal change, how legal norms evolve over time, and why certain issues become the focus of legal mobilisation while others remain marginal.

By weaving together doctrinal and socio-legal methods and by remaining attuned to lived experiences and activist insights, I try to ensure that my work remains relevant both to academic debates and to the complex challenges faced by individuals and communities today.

PD: Your research tackles deeply sensitive and historically significant issues, such as involuntary sterilisation and castration. Could you elaborate on the methodologies you employ to deal with these topics with academic rigour and ethical sensitivity?

DA: As a human rights lawyer, a central task is to assess what constitutes a human rights violation, according to the legal standards and principles in place. However, as a contextual legal scholar, I aim to extend this inquiry. I ask not only *what* constitutes a human rights violation, but also *why* certain violations are framed as such, *why* some remain surrounded by impunity, and *how* concepts like state responsibility evolve in response to changing legal, social and cultural norms.

For example, in the case of historical sterilisation and castration laws—many of which were introduced in the context of eugenics—it is easy, with the benefit of hindsight, to dismiss these practices as products of ignorance or pseudoscience. However, this anachronistic perspective risks overlooking the historical, political, and legal contexts that shaped these laws. It is crucial to understand that scientific research practices evolve over time, and that many of the assumptions and dynamics from these earlier debates still resonate today. For example, contemporary discussions still grapple with issues of which groups are viewed as 'costly' to society versus those considered 'productive', and these categorisations continue to affect how we position and treat certain individuals or communities.

In approaching these topics, I strive to engage with them by exploring the legal and societal forces that shaped and continue to shape such practices. This means considering both historical contexts and contemporary implications with careful attention to power dynamics, social attitudes and evolving legal principles.

PD: Your research goes beyond the disciplinary limits in the legal, social, and cultural areas and engages with interconnected yet distinct aspects of human experiences. How do you handle the challenges in conducting interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research? Additionally, how do you address potential tensions or contradictions that may arise when combining diverse academic traditions and methodologies?

DA: Much of my work fits within the category of 'law in context' – and context is, of course, inherently complex. Disentangling it often requires drawing on multiple methodologies. Hilary Charlesworth has described feminist methodologies in international law as an 'archaeological dig', and I think that this metaphor captures how my approach works in practice—different challenges and sets of questions require different tools. Research, in other words, is often about finding the appropriate methods and conceptual tools to address the specific questions at hand.

Interdisciplinary research, in this sense, also requires ongoing dialogue. It's a reminder that research is ultimately a collaborative and social process. Engaging with scholars from different disciplines helps ensure that one not only understands the tools being used, but also considers the assumptions and limitations of various academic traditions. When tensions or contradictions arise, I find it crucial to engage with them openly, reflecting on how different methodologies can be productively combined and how potential contradictions might reveal deeper insights into the issues studied.

PD: Your doctoral studies at the European University Institute in Florence must have been an enriching experience. Could you take us through your PhD journey? How did you conceptualise and proceed with your research topic? What was the role of your supervisors in shaping your research and leading to the eventual conclusions? Looking back, how has this project influenced your intellectual trajectory and approach to socio-legal studies?

DA: My PhD journey was shaped by collaboration with my supervisor, Ruth Rubio-Marín. We spent a lot of time discussing possible approaches to researching the legal regulation of gender violence, with a particular focus on violence affecting marginalised groups and the dynamics between supranational and national legal frameworks. Ruth strongly encouraged me to venture into the unknown, to explore comparative legal analysis and to integrate insights from various legal fields and disciplines (also those I was initially quite unfamiliar with) in order to address my research question. This interdisciplinary approach was pivotal in my development as a legal scholar.

At the European University Institute, I also had the opportunity to engage in enriching discussions with my peers and participate in seminars and conferences, which helped me to refine my academic identity and broaden my intellectual horizons. Looking back, I recognise how fortunate I was to have five fully funded years to focus on research, supported by the Research Council of Finland. Without the pressures of teaching or administrative duties, I had the freedom to explore new avenues in my research and gather rich data.

Yet, witnessing the current academic climate in Finland—and beyond—where doctoral programs are being shortened and structured in ways that prioritise speed over depth, I am concerned that this may discourage riskier but potentially more rewarding approaches to research. The space and time I had during my PhD were crucial to the creative and intellectual freedom that allowed me to tackle such complex issues.

PD: During your tenure as an Icelandic Research Fund Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Iceland, what were the key findings and outputs of your project? How did this research allow you to expand or move beyond the foundations laid in your previous work? Did the project inspire you to develop new methodologies or innovative approaches to address its objectives?

DA: My postdoctoral project, generously funded by the Icelandic Research Fund (2020–2022), examined the regulation of non-therapeutic medical interventions on children with variations in sex characteristics. The project centred on the 2020 Icelandic ban on non-consensual, non-therapeutic interventions — a legal development that has received very limited scholarly attention. In a forthcoming article co-authored with Kári Hólmur Ragnarsson, we analyse the human rights-motivated establishment and the implementation challenges of the Icelandic ban, highlighting how these mirror difficulties seen in other jurisdictions (such as Malta). Our research discusses how such bans may struggle to traverse the legal-medical boundary they aim to regulate, revealing persistent tensions between formal legal change and medical practice.

This project enabled me to expand both thematically and geographically, moving beyond the focus of my earlier work by engaging a new national context and a distinct yet related field of rights-based regulation. Methodologically, I combined doctrinal legal analysis with insights from social movement studies and empirical approaches. The research also challenged my initial hypothesis — that legislative bans would have a direct and immediate impact on clinical practice — and taught me to stay responsive to the complexities revealed in the data. This openness has inspired me to think more critically about the role of law in shaping practice, and to explore more interdisciplinary and context-sensitive methods in future work.

*PD: Your monograph *Grievance Formation, Rights and Remedies: Involuntary Sterilisation and Castration in the Nordics, 1930s–2020s* (Cambridge University Press 2023) has received widespread acclaim for its groundbreaking exploration of involuntary sterilisation and castration in the Nordics. What inspired you to focus on this profoundly sensitive and historically significant topic? What are the implications of the key findings of the book for contemporary debates on human rights, reparations, and legal remedies?*

DA: What inspired me to focus on this topic was a deep concern with how certain harms, such as involuntary sterilisation and castration, have remained at the margins of legal and public recognition, particularly in the Nordic context. I was particularly interested in how individuals and groups who had experienced these interventions came to frame their experiences as injustices — and how, over time, their claims have been heard (or not heard) by legal and political institutions.

The book develops three key arguments. First, I argue that international human rights law has offered a weak *master frame* for conceptualising involuntary sterilisation and castration in the countries examined — both legally and in terms of reparations. Second, I show how rights have functioned not only as legal tools but also as ideas of sociocultural entitlements. This dual role has been crucial in shaping how victims form

individual and collective identities, and ultimately, how they gain public and institutional recognition. Finally, I introduce the concept of *grievance formation* to capture the processes through which states have responded — or failed to respond — to the demands for recognition and remedies made by different victim groups.

The findings have important implications for contemporary debates on human rights, reparations and transitional justice. They suggest the need to rethink how legal frameworks engage with historical harms and how recognition and remedy are shaped not only by law, but by social movements, collective memory and political will.

*PD: As a co-editor of *Contesting Femicide: Feminism and the Power of Law Revisited*, you have explored feminism and legal frameworks in addressing gender-based violence. How do you view the role of law in combating such violence? Are there particular legal approaches or reforms you believe are most promising in creating accountability and justice?*

DA: In *Contesting Femicide: Feminism and the Power of Law Revisited*, co-edited with Adrian Howe, we explore feminist engagements with law to challenge femicide across diverse geographical and legal contexts. A key theme throughout the book is Carol Smart's *Feminism and the Power of Law* (1989), in which she famously warned feminists against placing too much faith in legal reform as a path to gender justice. This critique has sometimes been misinterpreted as discouraging all legal engagement, but we wanted to revisit Smart's argument 30 years later and examine how contemporary feminist legal mobilisations — for example, around femicide laws and the abolition of provocation defences in intimate partner violence cases — continue to grapple with the tensions she identified.

I see law as playing an important, though ultimately limited, role in addressing gender-based violence. Instruments such as the 2011 Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention) demonstrate how legal frameworks can support coordinated action and establish important normative standards. At the same time, legal reforms alone cannot guarantee gender justice. Law can also be used in ways that entrench patriarchal norms or marginalise certain groups.

In my view, the most promising legal approaches are those that are accompanied by broader structural and institutional change — for example, reforms that centre survivor voices and address the systemic failures of law enforcement. Accountability and justice require more than legal tools; they require political will, intersectional analysis and sustained social movement pressure.

PD: You have published widely in scholarly journals. Are there specific publications that you feel have had the most profound impact on advancing the field of socio-legal studies or influencing public policy? Could you elaborate on how these works have influenced academic discussions or brought about tangible changes in societal or legal frameworks?

DA: I would like to highlight two examples of my work that have contributed to socio-legal scholarship and, in different ways, influenced policy discussions. One is my study on period-tracking applications and the meaning of 'explicit consent' under the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), where I combined feminist legal theory

with data protection scholarship.⁴ This research illuminated how seemingly neutral data practices can have gendered implications, especially in relation to reproductive autonomy and digital surveillance. The study contributed to emerging debates in data ethics and feminist technology studies and has become increasingly relevant in light of growing concerns about how menstrual and fertility data could be used in jurisdictions with restrictive abortion laws, such as the United States. While I am far from the only person who has influenced these discussions, the work adds to the socio-legal understanding of how rights and risks are distributed in digital health contexts.

The second example, which had a more direct policy impact, is a study I co-authored with Heini Kainulainen and Johanna Niemi for the Finnish Ministry of Justice in 2019–2020. We examined why a high proportion of reported rape cases in Finland were being closed during the criminal process. Our findings — including how the legal definition of rape was being very narrowly interpreted in legal practice — were discussed and cited in the public and political debate. They also fed into the legislative process which resulted in a major reform of the Finnish Criminal Code in 2022, which adopted a consent-based definition of rape and other sexual offences. This reform brought Finland into closer alignment with international human rights standards and signalled a broader cultural and legal shift in how sexual violence is understood and addressed.⁵

PD: You have received numerous research grants internationally. Looking back on your previous research grants and visiting fellowships, how have these experiences impacted the evolution of your scholarly focus and methodologies?

DA: As I mentioned earlier, the various encounters and experiences along my scholarly journey — supported through international research grants and visiting fellowships — have been deeply formative, and I hope there are still many more ahead. These opportunities have allowed me to explore new national contexts, engage with diverse scholarly communities, and refine my methodological approaches.

Grants and fellowships have enabled me to conduct interviews, collaborate with activists and legal practitioners and study legal mobilisations from the ground up. These experiences have strengthened my understanding that we risk missing important contextual insights if we are confined to desk-based research only — for example, why certain legal strategies are chosen over others, or how rights claims are framed and reinterpreted in practice.

⁴ See Daniela Alaattinoğlu, 'Rethinking Explicit Consent and Intimate Data: The Case of Menstruapps' *Feminist Legal Studies* 30 (2022) 157-179.

⁵ We discuss some of the findings of the study in English in the article Daniela Alaattinoğlu, Heini Kainulainen & Johanna Niemi, 'Rape in Finnish criminal law and process - A discussion on, and beyond, consent' *Bergen Journal of Criminal Law and Criminal Justice* 8 (2020) 33-53.

Rather than adopting new methodologies for their own sake, I have found that empirical engagement has deepened the analytical rigour of my work and helped bridge the gap between legal texts, civil society engagement and institutional practice.

*PD: Your new project *Margin to the Centre: Rights Development, Transitional Justice and Indigeneity in the Nordics (MARCEN)*, funded by the European Research Council (Starting Grant, 2025–2029), is going to be a very promising one as it explores rights development, transitional justice, and indigeneity in the Nordics. Could you share your vision for this project and its expected contributions to socio-legal studies and public policy?*

DA: With *MARCEN*, my aim is to establish a theory of legal inclusion and exclusion, with a specific focus on the legal governance of indigeneity in the Nordic countries. The project will analyse the three contemporary truth and reconciliation commissions in Norway, Sweden, and Finland, which examine historical (and, to some extent, also ongoing) discriminatory practices against the Sámi people. These commissions — and the potential for state recognition and redress of these wrongs — represent a crucial opportunity for advancing legal inclusion for Indigenous peoples.

A key aspect of the project will be to conduct a comparative and historical analysis of the evolving legal frameworks and governance of the Sámi people. The increasing legal mobilization by Sámi civil society and the recognition of Sámi rights in high-profile legal cases is an interesting example of how settler legal systems are used in Indigenous struggles for justice.

Through this project, I aim to push the boundaries of socio-legal theory by bringing Indigenous rights and the redress of colonialist practices to the forefront of legal research and teaching in the Nordics. Conceptually, the project will develop new frameworks for understanding legal inclusion and exclusion, with implications not only for legal theory but for practical policy debates on how states can acknowledge historical wrongs and facilitate meaningful redress.

*PD: As the co-founder of the research environment *Law, Space and Justice* at the Turku Law Faculty, your work connects scholarship with activism. How do you balance the demands of academic rigour with the call for social and legal activism?*

DA: I would characterise my own work as more scholarly than activist. My primary focus is on advancing academic knowledge, and I do not really have the resources to consider the best strategies to push for certain political goals, for example. This said, activism and social movements are a significant influence on my research. Much of my work is informed by the study of civil society mobilisation, and I make a concerted effort to acknowledge the contributions of activists in the field.

I also try to bridge the gap between scholarship and activism by publishing policy-oriented texts and blog posts, aimed at communicating my research to a broader audience. These efforts allow me to participate in contemporary public discussions, ensuring that my work reaches beyond academia and contributes to ongoing debates in society and law.

PD: You are a transnational scholar and have worked in many countries. How do such wide-ranging travels contribute to a greater understanding of the issues in broader contexts?

DA: Having the privilege of working in multiple countries and engaging with diverse academic contexts has been incredibly enriching. It provides new ways of thinking and gives you the distance needed to see beyond divisive national debates, understanding that there is rarely a singular 'right' approach to legal or social problems. Experiencing different academic environments and languages also offers fresh perspectives and new topics for exploration.

In my engagement with comparative legal studies, I have observed that issues viewed as legally fundamental in one legal context or jurisdiction may be considered irrelevant or less urgent in another. This diversity of perspectives is intellectually stimulating and, on a personal level, reassuring. Since my days as a law student, I have often grappled with the idea of finding the 'correct' legal answer to a problem, but through transnational work, I have come to appreciate that the answers – and, perhaps most importantly, the questions raised – are often context-dependent.

This notion reminds me of the tale of *Nils Klim*, from which the Nils Klim Prize takes its name. As Klim embarks on his subterranean travels, he gains a unique perspective on the social morals and virtues of his time. This theme of shifting perspectives, influenced by travel, resonates with my own experiences in legal scholarship: encountering different legal cultures opens up new ways of thinking and provides valuable insight into the forces that shape legal systems and practices in different places.

PD: As the co-editor of Retfærd, the Nordic Journal of Law and Justice, you have valuable professional experience and expertise in advancing the impact of a journal. Our journal, the Critical Gender Studies Journal, is a relatively new yet ambitious platform. Would you recommend your words of wisdom so that it can establish itself as a platform for impactful scholarship?

DA: In addition to maintaining rigorous standards for scientific research, open accessibility is crucial for establishing a journal as a platform for impactful scholarship, and I am glad to see that your journal already prioritises this. Open access publishing is not just about disseminating research findings; it is a more democratic approach that makes better use of (often public) research funds and ensures research reaches a broader audience, beyond the confines of wealthier institutions. This makes scholarly work more accessible to those who might not have institutional access, and it encourages wider participation in academic discussions.

From my experience with *Retfærd*, I have found that prioritising open access allows a journal to have a broader impact and greater visibility. It also aligns with the values of inclusivity and public engagement, which are especially important in fields like gender studies. Additionally, publishing in multiple languages adds significant value, as it enables the journal to reach even more diverse communities and perspectives. By

making your work accessible and encouraging open dialogue, you position your journal to make a lasting contribution to the scholarly community.

PD: You have been a passionate advocate for increasing representation and supporting underrepresented groups in academia. Based on your experience, what guidance would you offer to young scholars from marginalised backgrounds who are aspiring to build a career in socio-legal studies? How can they overcome structural barriers, find mentorship, and cultivate their unique voices in a field that often demands perseverance and resilience?

DA: It is essential to acknowledge that global inequality significantly influences whose voices are heard in academia. Personal resilience is of course important, but it cannot always overcome the structural barriers that many marginalised groups face. If we are to make academia more just and egalitarian, it is crucial to not only remove these obstacles but also ensure that new barriers aren't introduced.

For example, in Finland, tuition fees were introduced for certain non-EU/EAA students a few years ago, and the fees have increased since, with ongoing discussions about extending them to all students. These changes – in a country which takes pride in its education system – effectively make higher education less accessible, especially for people from working-class or poor backgrounds.

For young scholars from underrepresented groups in academia, I think it can be important to seek out mentors who are supportive and committed to supporting marginalised voices, to create a strong sense of community (through existing organisations or by establishing new networks), to leverage your own unique perspective (perhaps especially when it differs from dominant narratives!) and to render visible and challenge systems of inequality.

PD: We are deeply grateful for your time and insights. We hope your scholarly journey and insights will inspire many emerging scholars in the field. We look forward to more interactions with you in the future.



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