

# MITALI NAGRECHA

## EXPERIENCE

**Justice Collective**, Berlin, Germany

Founder

June 2021 – Present

Coordinating research and advocacy organization to challenge punishment, policing, and prisons across Europe.

**Fair Trials**, Brussels, Belgium

Head of European Networks

June 2020 – April 2021

Led team to launch campaign targeting racial injustices in Europe's criminal legal systems.

Headed work of coalition of over 200 defense attorneys across Europe on issues such as pretrial detention, trial waivers, and more. Strategized and executed coalition's advocacy before European Union bodies.

**Harvard Law School**, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Director, Debt Initiative, Criminal Justice Policy Program

August 2016 – August 2020

Launched policy research initiative at Harvard Law School focused on criminal law, economic inequality, and racial justice.

Developed vision for initiative, including identifying gaps in the field, strategizing organization's strengths and contributions, and aligning opportunity with values.

Supervised team of attorneys to research and advocate on these issues.

Supported and built coalitions with grassroots and other movement actors, as well as with advocates and academics.

Engaged as leading expert on issue of money and inequality in criminal legal systems. Serve as spokesperson for initiative.

Published research, including popular media pieces, comparative criminal law and sociology academic work, and policy reports.

Co-lectured for Harvard Law seminar about race and poverty in criminal legal systems.

Raised \$575,000 for two years of research and advocacy.

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**Institute for Advanced Study**, Princeton, New Jersey  
Visitor  
January 2020 – May 2020

**University of Cologne**, Cologne, Germany  
Visitor  
June 2018 – August 2019

EDUCATION

**University of Pennsylvania Law School**, Philadelphia, PA  
J.D., *cum laude* (May 2007)

**Cornell University**, Ithaca, NY  
B.A., Government and South Asian Studies, *Phi Beta Kappa/Dean's List*  
(January 2003)

**Fulbright Scholar**, India  
(October 2003-July 2004)

PUBLICATIONS  
(SELECTED)

*Eine Chance für weniger Haft? Die Berücksichtigung des Existenzminimums bei der Festsetzung von Tagessätzen* (*A chance for less imprisonment? Taking the minimum subsistence level into account when setting fines*), Report Chapter, Grundrechte-Report 2024 (Germany Fundamental Rights Report 2024) (forthcoming)

*Für wen Buzatz legal? Warum der Gesetzentwurf zur Cannabis-Legalisierung Zweiklassensystem vorsieht*, (*Who is cannabis legal for? Why Germany's legalization plan will create two-tiered cannabis justice*), with Paula Benedict, analyse & kritik (December 2023)

*In Haft wegen Armut* (*In Prison for Poverty*) Republikanischer Anwältinnen-und Anwälteverein e.V. Infobrief (December 2023)

*“Clankriminalität, “Sozialbetrug”, und die Massenkriminalisierung von Sozialleistungsberechtigten* (“Gang crime”, “social benefits fraud” and the mass criminalization of people entitled to social benefits”), Book Chapter in: Generalverdacht: Wie mit dem Mythos Clankriminalität Politik gemacht wird, Nautilus (October 2023)

*OHCHR Joint Submission by the (RE)Claim/MCDS (France), Justice Collective (Germany), and the Hungarian Helsinki Committee (Hungary) for the joint report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing and of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty*, Written Testimony (September 2023)

*Reflections on Fees and Fines as Stategraft*, with Rebekah Diller and Alicia Bannon, New York University Law Review Online (April 2023)

*Kritische Analyse des Berichts der Justizminister zur Ersatzfreiheitsstrafe* (*Critical Analysis of German Justice Ministers' Report on Germany's Debtors' Prisons*), Report, Justice Collective (November 2022)

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*Wenn Armut strafbar wird, herrscht Klassenjustiz*, (*Criminalizing Poverty as Class Justice*) Jacobin (April 2022)

*Money as Punishment: A Review of “Day Fines in Europe”*,  
Criminology – The Online Journal (December 2021)

*Disparities and Discrimination in the European Union’s Criminal Legal Systems*, Briefing, Fair Trials (January 2021)

*The need to end structural racism in criminal legal systems in Europe*,  
Briefing, Fair Trials (September 2020)

*The Limits of Fairer Fines: Lessons from Germany*, Report, Harvard Law School Criminal Justice Policy Program (June 2020)

*Paying on Probation: How Financial Sanctions Intersect with Probation to Target, Trap, and Punish People Who Cannot Pay*, Report with Sharon Brett and Neda Khoshkhoo, Harvard Law School Criminal Justice Policy Program (June 2020)

*Introduction to Special Issue: Reflections from this Issue for Advancing Structural Change in Monetary Sanctions Policy*, with Brook Hopkins, UCLA Journal of Criminal Law (Volume 4, Issue 1, 2020)

*Court Culture and Criminal Law Reform*, with Sharon Brett and Colin Doyle, Duke Law Journal (April 2020)

*Criminal-Legal System Actors’ Practices and Views on Day Fines*, with Nicole Bögelein, Criminology – The Online Journal (December 2019)

*Proportionate Financial Sanctions: Policy Prescriptions for Judicial Reform*, Report with Sharon Brett, Harvard Law School Criminal Justice Policy Program (September 2019)

*Criminalization of Poverty as a Driver of Poverty in the United States*, Testimony to U.N. Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty, with Human Rights Watch (October 2017)

*When All Else Fails, Fining the Family: First Person Accounts of Criminal Justice Debt*, Report with Mary Katzenstein, Center for Community Alternatives (2015)

*Institutionalizing Debt: Child Support and the Fines and Fees Regime*, with Mary Katzenstein, Criminology and Public Policy (August 2011)

*Criminal Justice Debt: A Barrier to Reentry*, Report with Alicia Bannon and Rebekah Diller, Brennan Center for Justice (2009)

MEDIA  
(SELECTED)

Interviewed for full-page article, “*Es droht eine Zweiklassenjustiz*”, Taz Newspaper (February 2024)

Quoted in *In Kampf gegen die Klassenjustiz*, Taz Newspaper (January 2023)

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*Profiled in Für Armut bestraft*, Taz Newspaper (May 2022)

*Documenting police violence is a form of resistance*, Al Jazeera (December 2020)

*Why no EU progress on Black Lives Matter*, EU Observer (September 2020)

*Announcing the Debt Justice Collective*, Progressive International (July 2020)

Interviewed on *Stateside*, Michigan Public Radio (September 2019)

*Flush with Revenue, MTA Must Stop Punishing Farebeaters*, Crain's New York Business (April 2019)

Quoted in *How Cities Make Money Fining the Poor*, New York Times Magazine (January 2019)

Cited to in *Cities Shouldn't Get a Cut of Defendants' Cash Bail Fees*, by the Editorial Board of the Philadelphia Inquirer (August 2018)

Cited to in *A Judicial Pact to Cut Court Costs for the Poor*, Atlantic Magazine (December 2017)

INVITED  
CONFERENCE  
TALKS  
(SELECTED)

*Sixty-Seventh session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs* (March 2024)

*Amsterdam Mayor's Conference: Exploring the past, present and future of drug regulation* (January 2024)

*Regional Conference on COVID-19 and the Decriminalization of Petty Offenses in Africa* (March 2021)

*Effects and Experiences of Legal System Debt*, The Association of Public Policy and Management Annual Fall Research Conference (2020)

*Courting Poverty: Fines, Fees, and the Judiciary*, Duke Law School Symposium (September 2019)

*Poverty and Criminal Justice: A Ground for Discrimination*, Fair Trials (March 2019)

*Liman Colloquium*, Yale Law School (March 2018)

*Change the Conversation to Change Justice: Activism, Lawyering, and Storytelling*, Harvard Law School (March 2018)

*Revenue v. Justice: The Effects of Criminal Justice Debt on Courts, Policing, and Communities*, The Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Annual Fall Research Conference (2016)

*Criminal Justice Debt: Causes, Costs, & Consequences*, The American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting (November 2015)

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CONFERENCES  
ORGANIZED

*Power and Punishment in Europe*, Fair Trials (March 2021)  
*Protecting People’s Criminal Justice Rights in the European Union*  
(September 2020)  
*Court Debt and Public Finance*, with Yale Law School (April 2020)  
*Fees and Fines Policy in California: Current Research & Pathways to  
Change*, with UCLA School of Law, UCLA Labor Center, and Let’s Get  
Free LA (January 2020)  
*Progressing Reform of Monetary Sanctions: Towards A Research and  
Policy Agenda*, with Alexes Harris (University of Washington)  
(September 2019)  
*Maintaining Momentum for Criminal Justice Debt Reform*, Harvard Law  
School (April 2017)  
*Criminalization of Poverty in the Trump Era*, Harvard Law School  
(February 2017)

INVITED  
PRESENTATIONS  
(SELECTED)

Guest Lecturer, Free University Berlin School of Law (December 2023)  
Invited Expert Testimony, German Bundestag Hearing (April 2023)  
Guest Lecturer, Technische Universität Darmstadt (July 2023)  
Expert Testimony, Hearing, Law Committee, German Parliament (April  
2023)  
Guest Lecturer, HFBK Hamburg (December 2022)  
Guest Lecturer, Free University Berlin School of Law (January 2022)  
Guest Lecturer, American University of Paris (October 2018)  
Invited Testimony, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (March 2017)  
Invited Testimony, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (March 2016)  
Invitee, *A Cycle of Incarceration*, White House Convening (December  
2015)  
Keynote, *When All Else Fails, Fining the Family*, John Jay (February  
2015)

OTHER  
EXPERIENCE  
(SELECTED)

**Progressive International**, Berlin, Germany  
Blueprint Coordinator  
April 2020 – August 2020  
Helped build new initiative to unite, organize, and mobilize progressive  
forces around the world.  
Served as inaugural Blueprint Coordinator. Developed model for  
progressive actors—academics, activists, union leaders, and others—to  
work together to develop internationalist policy blueprints.

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**The Fortune Society**, Long Island City, New York  
Senior Director, Policy Advocacy  
September 2011 – November 2013

Developed and managed policy campaigns on sentencing reform, housing, and financial security.

**Mayor Cory A. Booker's Office of Reentry**, Newark, New Jersey  
Senior Policy Advisor  
September 2010 – September 2011

Served as policy advisor on criminal legal system.

**Brennan Center for Justice at NYU**, New York, New York  
Fellow  
August 2009 – July 2010

Published groundbreaking report on issues of monetary sanctions in criminal legal systems. Report remains the go-to primer on the topic.