



ACCIDENTAL FEMINISM

GENDER PARITY AND
SELECTIVE MOBILITY
AMONG INDIA'S
PROFESSIONAL
ELITE

SWETHAA S.
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Accidental Feminism

Gender Parity and Selective Mobility Among India's Professional Elite

Friday, 8. April 2022, 16.00-17.30

University of Zurich, Room RAA-E-27, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zürich

Guest lecture by Prof. Dr. Swethaa S. Ballakrishnen (University of California, Irvine)

In India, elite law firms offer a surprising oasis for women within a hostile, predominantly male industry. Less than 10 percent of the country's lawyers are female, but women in the most prestigious firms are significantly represented both at entry and partnership. Elite workspaces are notorious for being unfriendly to new actors, so what allows for aberration in certain workspaces?

Juxtaposing findings on the legal profession with those on elite consulting firms, Swethaa Ballakrishnen reveals that parity arises not from a commitment to create feminist organizations, but from structural factors that incidentally come together to do gender differently. Simultaneously, their research offers notes of caution: while conditional convergence may create equality in ways that more targeted endeavors fail to achieve, "accidental" developments are hard to replicate, and are, in this case, buttressed by embedded inequalities. Ballakrishnen examines whether gender parity produced without institutional sanction should still be considered feminist.

In offering new ways to think about equality movements and outcomes, **Accidental Feminism** forces readers to critically consider the work of intention in progress narratives.

To participate in the event online, please register at <https://www.aoi.uzh.ch/en/institut/events/registration.html>

Students, staff and everyone interested is cordially invited.

Prof. Dr. Nicolas Martin