

VANESSA VILLANUEVA COLLAO

+1(929) 229-8784 ♦ Urbana, IL
vav4@illinois.edu ♦ [GitHub](#) ♦ [SSRN](#)

EDUCATION

Juris Science Doctor (J.S.D.) candidate, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Expected 2023

Thesis: Conflicts of Interests in Decentralized Finance: Duties of Crypto-Intermediaries

Chair: [Dean Verity Winship](#). Committee: [Dr. Amitai Aviram](#), [Prof. Jeremy McClane](#), [Dr. Thomas Ulen](#).

Partial tuition scholarship recipient

Activities: JSD representative, 2019–2022;

Memberships: Black Law Students Assn', American Assn' of University Women

Relevant Coursework: Securities Regulation, Securities Litigation, Secured Transactions, Empirical Methods in law, Genomics and the Law, Machine Learning.

Adjunct Instructor

Legal Writing Course - Law 500 (Profs. Moritz and McDade).

Fall 2022

Teaching Assistant

Contracts (Prof. Ralph Brubaker)

Spring 2020

Civil Procedure (Prof. Verity Winship)

Spring and Fall 2019

Research Assistant

College of Law

Prof. Verity Winship

2020-ongoing

Unicorn Shareholders Suit, Small Business Surveys NSF-project, Lay Perceptions of Settlement

Prof. Jeremy McClane

Summer 2021

Special Purpose Acquisition Companies and Business Development Companies

Women in Gender and Global Perspectives

Prof. Colleen Murphy, Asst. Dir. Anita Kaiser

2018-2021

Playful by Design Project

Senior Editor

Comparative Labor Law and Policy Journal

2020—ongoing

University of Michigan, Ann-Arbor

ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research

2021

Workshops: Structural Equation Models for Latent Variables, Causal Inference

Lectures: Introduction to R, Introduction to Computing

ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research

2020

Workshops: Data Science and Text Analysis, Categorical Data Analysis

Lectures: Matrix Algebra, Python, LaTeX

Uniforma – Interuniversity Consortium for Legal Continuing Education

Milan, Italy

Master of Trusts (M.A.)

2017

Honors/Awards: Full tuition scholarship and stipend

University of California at Berkeley, School of Law (Boalt Hall)

Berkeley, CA

Master of Laws (LL.M.)

2016

Relevant Coursework: Privacy Law, Cybersecurity

Università degli Studi di Genova, School of Economics

Genoa, Italy

Master in Maritime and Transportation Insurance (M.A.)

2013

Honors/Awards: European Social Fund Scholarship

Università degli Studi di Genova, School of Law

Genoa, Italy

Juris Doctor (J.D.)

2011

Thesis: The Floating Lien: A Legal Flow – under the supervision of Prof. M. Lupoi

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Data Governance Firms in Corporate Boardrooms

In this paper, I plan to argue that algorithms should be integrated into the board structure of data-driven enterprises because of the unmanageable volumes of data they generate. Thus, data governance frameworks are crucial for management but especially for board decision-making. How to include data governance in the boardroom? This article illustrates how data governance can be implemented in the boardroom by creating a hybrid model: an “algorithm” next to the human board composition. This boardroom model includes a legal entity (a Data Governance Firm—DGF) for designing an algorithmic board member consistent with the corporation’s purpose. The DGF’s role in developing an algorithmic seat is to transform the corporation and its constituencies into complex intersectional relationships based on data. Therefore, rather than being a nexus of contracts, modern corporations and their constituencies can be included in datasets showing a nexus of data.

The New Frontier of Data Privacy and Ownership Structure: Tokenizing Genomics

Biotech companies have resorted to blockchain and unregulated vehicles, such as initial coin offerings, as a cheap way of monetizing DNA while funding the company. This paper explains how biotech blockchain companies have promised investors control over genetic data but obscured other dynamics within the company ownership structure. Not only do token holders lack voting rights, but they are in a new vulnerable position: the company has possession of their genetic data. At the same time, traditional shareholders surreptitiously gain more power and control. This paper’s analysis will shed light on the relationship between shareholders who invested capital and token holders whose interests depend on the human genetic capital shared with the company and the emerging implications from this scenario.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

DeFi—A Framework of the Automated Financial Open System, *in* THE TECH BOOK (E. S. Ustun, V. Villanueva Collao, C. Humbel, V. Dipla eds., 2023) *forthcoming*.

DeFi, or Decentralized Finance, is the technological distribution of financial services empowered by blockchain. This alternative market deals with the same processes of traditional finance involving the creation, management, and investment of money and financial assets. However, the fundamental difference in DeFi gravitates around the multiple financial intermediaries substituted with applications in permissionless systems that automatize cryptoassets trade (a kind of digital asset). This article explores the characteristics of DeFi and the relevant players, evidencing how decentralization and disintermediation are misnomers in innovation technology in Web 3.0, the transactions, and the legal issues (and regulatory gaps) from the US perspective.

Empirical Methods in Comparative Law: Data Talks, COMP. L. REV. (2023) *forthcoming*

This article illustrates how comparative law would benefit from the scientific method to bolster its reliability when comparing legal systems. It proposes to improve the method of comparison by creating a testable hypothesis that can help theorize and substantiate the functionalist or differentialist analysis. Empirical research would not obscure current comparative methodologies and tools but would enhance them by mapping a concrete interaction between theory and human activity. To this end, I introduce a comparative analysis example of traditional markets and cryptomarkets to uncover the elements of a successful cryptoassets sale. Finally, the paper focuses on different types of quantitative empirical legal research and methods used in legal studies and how they can be connected to comparative law. It concludes by identifying the limitations of this methodology as applied to comparative law and previewing a future of combined methods.

Protecting Privacy with Blockchain: When Genomics Meets DTC, EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF PRIVACY & TECHNOLOGY (2022) *forthcoming*

The technology around genomics has moved at a swift pace while reducing the entire sequencing costs. Biotech advancement increased the demand for gene sequencing services and data storage, creating privacy risks and making de-identification difficult. To mitigate those risks, genomic startups have turned to cryptographic technologies like Blockchain. However, Blockchain is not a panacea, and privacy issues in genomics are a concern that is hardly addressed from a bioethical or philosophical perspective. The most challenging obstacle plaintiffs face in privacy lawsuits is assessing the injury—the connection between privacy threats and concrete harms. This paper explains why genomic companies that use Blockchain expose their users to specific harms that fall outside agencies and regulations radars by providing some examples of injuries-in-fact.

[Le offerte iniziali e gli scambi di crypto-attività \(Initial Offers and Exchanges of Crypto-Assets\)](#), CONSOB (Italian Securities and Exchange Commission), Comment published on Final Report (2020).

[New ICO Intermediaries](#), 5 ITALIAN LAW JOURNAL 731 (2019), University of Illinois College of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 20-12 (with Verity Winship).

[El fideicomiso en América Latina, reflexiones para la comparación jurídica \[Latin-American Trusts, reflections on Comparative Law\]](#), 45 ACTUALIDAD CIVIL [ACT. CIV.] 315 (2018) (Peru).

[Diritto Marittimo ed Economia \[Maritime and Navigation Law\]](#) 2015 (It.). (with Patrizia Cremonese).

[I contratti conclusi in internet](#), in IL RISARCIMENTO DEL DANNO AL CONSUMATORE [Contracts via the Internet, INDEMNIFIABLE DAMAGES ON CONSUMER CASES] TRATTATI 165 (Paolo Cendon, ed., 2014) (It.).

[Il Waqf: Charitable Trust dei modelli Islamici \[Waqf: Islamic model of Charitable Trusts\]](#), 1 TRUSTS E ATTIVITÀ FIDUCIARIE [T&AF] 148 (2013) (It.).

[Gli obblighi del trustee nel sistema Statunitense: Issue e Children nel Testamentary Trust \[Trustee's duties in the American system: Issue and Children on Testamentary Trusts\]](#), 1 T&AF 37 (2012) (It.).

TRANSLATIONS

MAURO GRONDONA, La responsabilidad de los preponentes y el nexo de ocasionalidad necesaria: función del instituto y problemas operativos, 11 ACT. CIV. 174 (2015) (Peru). Italian to Spanish.

NICOLAS MALUMIÁN, Il fideicomiso di garanzia, 4 T&AF 361 (2012) (It.). English to Italian.

Book X “Trusts” of the Common Frame of Reference. Universität Osnabrück, Prof. Dr. Sculte-Nölke, European Legal Studies Institute. Translation from English to Italian, under the European Commission project: B-Brussels: Translation of legislative models with regard to contract law. (2011) (EUR.) (with Matteo Patrone).

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

Data Governance Firms in Corporate Boardrooms

[WINIR—Polycentric Governance and the Challenges of the 21st Century](#) (Sept. 2022—from call for papers).

[Law & Society—Global Meeting](#), Iscte—University Institute of Lisbon (July 2022—from call for papers).

The New Frontier in Data Privacy and Ownership Structure: Tokenizing Genomics

[Legal Design for Transparency in Consumer Contracts operating online and offline](#). A New Chance for the Interaction Between Academics and Stakeholders—Jean Monnet Chair PROTECH: European Protection Law of Individuals in Relation to New Technologies, Roundtable (October 2021) (paper selected from call for papers).

[National Business Law Scholars Conference](#)—University of Tennessee at Knoxville (June 2021).

[Law & Soc’y—Chicago Annual Meeting](#) (May 2021, selected from call for papers).

[Machine Lawyering Conference: Human Sovereignty and Machine Efficiency in the Law](#)—The Chinese University of Hong Kong (January 2021) (paper selected from call for papers).

Conflicts of Interest in DeFi: The Duties of Crypto-Intermediaries (Thesis proposal)

[Rijeka Doctoral Conference 2021](#)—University of Rijeka (December 2021).

10th National SJD Roundtable—Georgetown University Law Center (April 2021).

Empirical Methods in Law: Data Talks

[17th Annual Conference of the Italian Soc’y of Law and Economics \(SIDE\)](#)—Comparative L&E (December 2021) (paper selected from call for papers).

[American Soc’y of Comparative Law “Annual Conference”—YCC panel](#), Law and Methodology (October 2020) (paper selected from call for papers).

[AIDC/YCC Conference “New Topics and Methods in Comparative Law Research”](#) (June 2020) (paper selected from call for papers).

New ICO Intermediaries

Exploring cryptocurrencies and other related markets-roundtable. Law & Soc’y Nat’l Conference (May 2020). University of Luxembourg (November 2019).

GUEST LECTURES

Introduction to Cryptomarkets—University of Roma Tre—Department of Law

Guest lecturer within the course “Comparative Law of Digital Markets”

Instructor Prof. Noah Vardi (Spring 2023).

AI and its impact in businesses [IA—L’impatto nelle aziende]—University of Roma Tre—Department of Law

Guest lecturer within the course “Diritto comparato dei dati e dell’intelligenza artificiale” [Comparative Law of Data and Artificial Intelligence]. Instructor Dr. Sirio Zolea (Fall 2022).

Smart Contracts: Legal Issues and Restitutionary Solutions—University of Illinois, College of Law

Guest lecturer within the course “Fintech Law and Policy.” Instructor Paul Kayrouz (Fall 2022)

Blockchain and the Development of Web 3.0—University of Roma Tre—Department of Law

Guest Lecturer in the course “Digital Technologies and the Law.” Prof. Giorgio Resta (May 2022).

Blockchain and IP—University of Salerno

Guest Lecturer at the European Law Students’ Ass’n—ELSA Webinar Academy (EWA) on Artificial Intelligence and Intellectual Property (June 2021).

OTHER PRESENTATIONS

Decentralized Finance, Berkeley Global Society–Paris (Sept. 2022).

Invited Moderator, *Ninth Annual Corporate and Securities Litigation Workshop*, University of Illinois, College of Law (September 2022).

Invited Moderator, *Revista Facultad de Jurisprudencia (RFJ) 75th Anniversary*, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador–PUCE (November 2021).

Invited Moderator, *25th Annual Conference: Economic Analysis of the Law and Institutional Change*, Latin American, Caribbean and Iberic Law and Economics Association–ALACDE (October 2021).

BLOG POSTS

Rodolfo Sacco: The professor, the partisan, the man, ASCL Blog (April, 2022).

Auditing Crypto-Financing, Duke Law, The FinReg Blog (Mar. 10, 2020) (with Verity Winship).

Auditing Initial Coin Offerings and Smart-Contracts, CUHK, Center for Financial Regulation and Economic Development, Machine Lawyering (Mar. 3, 2020) (with Verity Winship).

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Research Fellow

Jan 2022 - Jan 2024

University of Roma Tre–Department of Law

Project: [South EU Google Data Governance Chair](#). Supervisor: Prof. Vincenzo Zeno-Zencovich

- Convenor: *“The Future of Data Protection”* & *“Data Protection and Consumer Protection”*
- Developed reports
- Built an EU Network of Researchers

Adjunct Instructor (Legal writing)

July 2022 - Aug. 2022

University of Illinois–College of Law

Champaign, IL

- Held daily sessions within the intensive legal writing course “Law 500” for foreign trained attorneys (main instructors Shannon Moritz and Travis McDade).
- Drafted materials for small class sections, held office hours, and graded students.

Teaching Assistant (Contracts and Civil Procedure)

Spring and Fall 2019— Spring 2020

University of Illinois–College of Law

Champaign, IL

- Held weekly office hours, weekly and by-weekly review sessions for LLM and JD students.
- Assisted the in-class discussion. Drafted additional learning material.

Research Assistant

University of Illinois–College of Law
Prof. Verity Winship

Champaign, IL
2020 –2021

- Collected, digested, and summarized small business surveys for a National Science Foundation funded project.
- Conducted legal research, digested and summarized law articles on Unicorns' Shareholders Lawsuits.
- Collected and organized empirical qualitative literature for an article project centered on settlement rates and people's perception of settlements.

Prof. Jeremy McClane

Summer 2021

- Conducted legal research on new forms of capital raising.
- Drafted memos on Business Development Companies (BDCs) and Special Purpose Acquisition Vehicles (SPACs).

University of Illinois–Women and Gender in Global Perspectives

Prof. Dr. Colleen Murphy - Migration Game Design Working Group

2019–21

- Collected relevant content readings to create a syllabus on design game in which participants will develop a project aimed to foster empathy towards Central American migrants and refugees.
- Assessed copyright aspects.
- [Developed Migration and Research Design Literature review and bibliography.](#)

Adjunct Professor

Università degli Studi di Genova

Master's in Legal Translations - Department of Linguistics

English Legal History, Sale of Goods, Family Law, Contracts and Torts

Genoa, Italy
2012–2021

Lecturer

Comparative Law Course - Department of Law

- Seminars: US legal system, Contracts: Promissory Estoppel, Defenses to Contracts. Prof. A. Fusaro, 2017–2018
- Modules: Common Law—US legal System
Prof. E. Grasso, Imperia 2016–2018
Prof. F. Brunetta d'Usseaux 2014–2017
- Peru, Andean Regions Prof. E. Grasso, Imperia 2016
- Guest Lect. 'Legal Education' in the US. Prof. E. Ceccherini, 2016–2017

Graduate Teaching Assistant - Comparative Law

2012–2018

Bar Exam Tutor - Post Graduate School of Legal Professions

2011–2015

Researcher

Uniforma – Interuniversity Consortium for Legal Continuing Education

Genoa, Italy

- Editor Trusts Law Review–Giurisprudenza Estera, peer-reviewed law journal 2011–2013
- Tutor/Mentor, Master in Trusts and Fiduciary Entrustments 2013, 2017

EXPERIENCE

Law Office of Paolo Ghiara. Associate. Genoa, Italy, 2017–2018

SUNIA – Syndicate of Tenants and Assignees. Regional Project Coordinator, EU Project EnerSHIFT, quality of social housing buildings initiative. Genoa, Italy, 2015–2016

ClaimsConsult s.a.s. Claims Handling—Average Adjuster, marine and cargo claims specialist. Genoa, Italy, 2015

Kuehne and Nagel S.R.L. Intern. Genoa, Italy, 2012

Private practice Mediator, Labor Law, Immigration Law, tertiary sector. Genoa, Italy, 2001–2011.

SERVICE

- WINIR. Convenor - Inaugural Young Scholars Workshop. [Call for Abstracts: “Technology and Society”](#)
- Law as Science. Coordinator. [Organized Events and Workshops on Methodology](#) and Editor ([Method Blog](#)).
- Berkeley Global Society Journal. Editor of [blog posts](#) and social media posts ([Twitter](#)).
- Legal Clinic, Community of Legal Services in East Palo Alto—CLSEPA, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Clinic—volunteer. East Palo Alto, CA, 2016
- UNAR (National Office Against Racial Discrimination), Towards a Regional Center of Racial Anti-Discrimination. Project participant. Genoa, Italy, 2011.
- CGIL, Immigration Amnesty, Mediator and Coordinator. Genoa, Italy, 2009

MEMBERSHIPS

- [AALS—Association of American Law Schools](#)
- [AIDC—Associazione Italiana di Diritto Comparato](#)
- [American Society of Comparative Law](#)
- ALACDE—Latin American and Caribbean Law and Economics Association
- [Berkeley Global Society](#) - Board Member and Editor
- [European Law Institute](#)
- [Law and Society Association](#)
- [Law as Science Project](#) - Coordinator and Editor ([Method Blog](#))
- [SIRDC—Società Italiana per la Ricerca nel Diritto Comparato](#)
- [WINIR—World Interdisciplinary Network of Institutional Research](#) - Working Group for WINIR Young Scholars Committee

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models, certification. Dec. 2020.
Shipbroker license, National Qualification, Dec. 2009 (inactive).

LANGUAGES

Spanish (native), English (fluent), Italian (fluent), French (basic knowledge).