

The Centre for Comparative and Public Law
Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong

Interdisciplinarity and Law Seminar Series

Public Opinion and the Court

Professor Barry Friedman

*Jacob D. Fuchsberg Professor of Law and Vice Dean
New York University School of Law*

Wednesday, 20 May 2009

1:00 – 2:00 pm

Room 303, 3/F KK Leung Building, HKU

The Supreme Court of the United States is beholden to public opinion and responsive to it. This simple fact runs contrary to most thinking about how judicial institutions are supposed to operate, especially in deciding constitutional cases. What does it mean for constitutional interpretation to be influenced by popular opinion, and is there a normatively attractive way to understand what judges are doing in this regard? This talk will focus on the ways public opinion influences judges, and why they are susceptible to such influence.

Barry Friedman is the Jacob D. Fuchsberg Professor of Law and Vice Dean at New York University School of Law. He has written and taught on constitutional and jurisdictional topics for over twenty-five years. His work draws heavily from history and political science; he has spoken at many interdisciplinary gatherings and published numerous articles in top journals in several fields. Friedman also is a constitutional lawyer who has litigated issues as diverse as abortion rights, death penalty and prisoner cases, federalism and commerce disputes. Friedman is co-author with Stephen Burbank of the edited volume *Judicial Independence at the Crossroads: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, and is author of the forthcoming book *The Will of the People: How Public Opinion Has Influenced the Supreme Court and Shaped the Meaning of the Constitution* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux; September 2009).

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Please register on-line via www.hku.hk/ccpl/ or email Flora Leung at fkleung@hku.hk to reserve a place.