

THE RISE OF THE IMPERIAL SUPREME COURT

Symposium Schedule

Friday, January 31, 2025

9:00 am- 9:20 am WELCOME REMARKS

9:20 am – 10:45 am THE IMPERIAL SUPREME COURT TODAY

Victoria Nourse / Ralph V. Whitworth Professor in Law, Georgetown Law
Rachel Bayefsky / Associate Professor of Law, UVA Law
Fred Smith, Jr / Charles Howard Candler Professor of Law, Emory University
Amanda Hollis-Brusky / Professor of Politics, Pomona College

MODERATOR

Stuart Banner / Norman Abrams Distinguished Professor of Law, UCLA School of Law

We begin with an exploration of how the Supreme Court is presently exercising its immense power in our legal and political system. How is the court using the power it has to choose its own docket, set its own agenda, and define the terrain on which constitutional conflict takes place?

11:00 am – 12:20 pm THE RISE OF THE COURT

Robert Post / Sterling Professor of Law, Former dean of Yale Law School
Aziz Rana / Professor of Law and Government, Boston College Law School
Willy Forbath / Lloyd M. Bentsen Chair in Law & Professor of History, UT Austin

moderator

Ariela Gross / Distinguished Professor of Law and History, UCLA School of Law

This panel asks the historical question: how did the Supreme Court acquire the immense power it now has? Concentrating in particular on the twentieth century, this panel explores the question of how a Supreme Court that once played a more secondary role in our constitutional system took on a preeminent role in constitutional interpretation.

12:20 pm – 1:00 pm LUNCH

1:10 pm – 2:00 pm Lunchtime Chat: REFLECTIONS ON COVERING THE COURT

Linda Greenhouse / Senior Research Scholar in Law, Yale Law School

MODERATOR

Cary Franklin / McDonald/Wright Chair of Law, Faculty Director of the Center on Reproductive Health, Law, and Policy
Faculty Director of the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law

Linda Greenhouse has covered the Supreme Court as a journalist from 1978 to the present, formerly as the New York Times' Supreme Court correspondent. During the time she has covered the court, it has changed immensely and so has its relationship with the public and public opinion—a relationship that was once mediated largely by the media. In this conversation, Franklin and Greenhouse will discuss these changes and the changing way the court relates to the public.

2:15 pm – 3:35 pm THE COURT VS PUBLIC OPINION

Maya Sen / Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School

Tom Schmidt / Associate Professor of Law, Columbia Law School

Lee Epstein / Shepley Distinguished University Professor, Washington University

MODERATOR

Rick Hasen / Gary T. Schwartz Endowed Chair in Law Professor of Political Science (by courtesy) Director, Safeguarding Democracy Project, UCLA School of Law

This panel examines the complex relationship between the Supreme Court and public opinion, and the extent to which the present court has diverged from the views of the American public. Is this genuinely new—and if so, what exactly has changed? We will also discuss the relationship between the pace of legal change and the way the court exercises its agenda-setting power.

3:50 pm – 5:10 pm WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Ryan Doerfler / Professor of Law, Harvard Law School

Steve Vladeck / Agnes Williams Sesquicentennial Professor of Federal Courts, Georgetown Law

Erwin Chemerinsky / Dean of UC Berkeley School of Law

MODERATOR

Cheryl Harris / Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Professor in Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, UCLA School of Law

This panel turns to the future. The present Supreme Court appears deeply entrenched, yet there has rarely been more discussion of potential future reforms. What are the realistic possibilities by which any form of court reform might occur—or any other change that would jolt us out of our present situation?

5:10 pm – 5:20 pm Closing Remarks

5:20 pm – 7:00 pm Reception / Plateia Patio