Judging the Constitution: The Theory and Practice of Constitutional Interpretation in Singapore
28 and 29 May 2015
Moot Court
Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore (Bukit Timah Campus)

Programme

Thursday, 28 May 2015 (Day 1)

9.00am – 9.20am   Registration and Coffee
Outside Moot Court

9.20am – 9.30am   Introductions

9.30am – 9.45am   Opening Remarks
Professor Andrew Harding, DIRECTOR
CENTRE FOR ASIAN LEGAL STUDIES AND ASIAN LAW INSTITUTE
FACULTY OF LAW, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

9.45am – 10.30am  Interpreting the Singapore Constitution
Opening Keynote Speech
The Honourable Attorney-General V K Rajah, SC
ATTORNEY-GENERAL’S CHAMBERS

10.30am – 11.00am Morning Tea Break
Outside Moot Court

11.00am – 12.30pm Session I: Foundations of Interpretation
Chairperson: Michael Hor, Dean, THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Speakers
Into the Matrix: Interpreting the Westminster Model Constitution
Kevin YL Tan, Adjunct Professor, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

Should Singapore’s Constitution be Interpreted in Line with the Basic Structure Doctrine?
Andrew Harding, Professor, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE
12.30pm – 1.30pm  Lunch
*Portico Staff Lounge, Federal Building*

1.30pm – 3.30pm  Session II: Principles of Interpretation
Chairperson: Maartje de Visser, Assistant Professor, *Singapore Management University*

**Speakers**
*Rethinking the Presumption of Constitutionality*
Jack Tsen-Ta Lee, Assistant Professor, *Singapore Management University*

*Balancing Act: Balancing Metaphor as Deference and Dialogue in Constitutional Cases in Singapore*
Jaclyn L. Neo, Assistant Professor, *National University of Singapore*

*Uncovering Originalism and Textualism in Singapore*
Yap Po Jen, Associate Professor, *The University of Hong Kong*

3.30pm – 4.00pm  Afternoon Tea Break
*Outside Moot Court*

4.30pm – 5.30pm  Session III: Legal Influences
Chairperson: Calvin Liang, Senior Associate, Tan Kok Quan Partnership

**Speakers**
*Whither the Autochthonous Narrative of Freedom of Speech in Singapore?*: A Guide to Defaming Politicians and Scandalising Judges in Singapore
David Tan, Associate Professor, *National University of Singapore*

*Resisting Foreign Law in Constitutional Interpretation in Singapore: Trends Across 50 years*
Arun K. Thiruvengadam, Assistant Professor, *National University of Singapore*

6.00pm  Group Photo

6.05pm – 8.00pm  Welcome Dinner *(For invited guests only)*
Friday, 29 May 2015 (Day 2)

9.00am – 9.15am  Registration and Coffee  
Outside Moot Court

9.15am – 11.15am  Session IV: Interrogating Constitutional Interpretation  
Chairperson: Chen Siyuan, Assistant Professor, SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

Speakers
Developing the Content of “Fundamental Rules of Natural Justice”
Swati Jhaveri, Assistant Professor, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE
Interpreting Constitutions and Statutes: Are Different Approaches Justified?
Goh Yihan, Associate Professor, SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

The Shifting Boundaries of Constitutional and Administrative Law in Singapore
Victor V. Ramraj, Professor UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA (VIA SKYPE)

11.15am – 11.45am  Morning Tea Break
Outside Moot Court

11.45am – 1.15pm  Session V: Theorizing Interpretation  
Chairperson: Nicole Roughan, Assistant Professor, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

Speakers
Principled Pragmatism as an Approach in Constitutional Interpretation
Thio Li-ann, Professor, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

Constitutional Evolution Through Interpretation: Is Law or Politics the Best Route for Singapore? A Dialogue
Michael Dowdle, Assistant Professor & Kevin YL Tan, Adjunct Professor  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

1.15pm – 1.25pm  Closing Remarks

1.30pm – 2.30pm  Lunch  
Portico Staff Lounge, Federal Building