

PRIVATE LAW RESEARCH GROUP PUBLIC SEMINAR

The Coronation Cases: The Development of the Doctrine of Frustration

Professor Catharine MacMillan

Dickson Poon School of Law, King's College London

Wednesday 15 March 2023, 6.00pm to 7.30pm (SGT) via Zoom

The postponement of Edward VII's coronation in June 1902 caused numerous parties to litigate over the contractual arrangements they had made in anticipation of coronation celebrations. These cases have long been recognised as important in the development of the doctrine of frustration in the common law; they also stand at the boundary between contract and unjust enrichment. And yet these are troublesome cases: they appear contradictory; they turn on fine distinctions; and they produced consequences so unjust as to attract later judicial criticism and legislative intervention. This article situates the coronation cases in their historical setting. It is argued that not only is the modern understanding of these cases flawed but also that their seminal role in the development of the modern doctrine of frustration, with all its attendant problems, has been misunderstood. A legal history of these cases informs our understanding in a manner which allows reforms to the modern law.



ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Catharine MacMillan is Professor of Private Law at the Dickson Poon School of Law, King's College London. Her research is concerned with contemporary contract law and with modern legal history. She is particularly interested in understanding the processes – historical, doctrinal and theoretical – which have shaped modern private law.

Register at: <https://tinyurl.com/plrg15mar23>
or scan the QR Code

For enquiries, email: plrg@nus.edu.sg

