

CIPL DISCUSSION GROUP

Contradictions in Constitutional Construction: Executive Power in Australia and the US

Professor Kenneth Mayer

The ANU Fulbright Distinguished Visiting Chair in Political Science

Tuesday 24 October 2006, 1pm (Sandwiches from 12.45pm)

Staff Library Level 1, ANU College of Law, (Bldg 5), cnr Fellows & East Roads, The ANU

RSVP to: cipl@law.anu.edu.au by cob 23 October 2006

This event is free and open to the public.

Constitutional doctrine in Australia has collided with itself, strung up on internal contradictions and irresolvable interpretive dead-ends. While Justices and scholars argue over textualism, originalism or some other interpretive theory, none of these approaches can explain why some constitutional provisions are simply ignored altogether. These problems make it nearly impossible for judges to craft a consistent body of judicial law. Professor Mayer's seminar will evaluate the problems and prospects of using conventions as a substitute for constitutional language, and will try to answer the question: What happens when a constitution does not mean what it says?

Kenneth Mayer is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin and the inaugural Fulbright Australian National University Distinguished Chair in American Political Science. Professor Mayer is a leading American political scientist with a research background focusing on campaign finance; legislative behaviour and executive power. He received the 2002 Neustadt Award (from the American Political Science Association) for his book *With the Stroke of a Pen: Executive Orders and Presidential Power*.