

## THE JUDGE, THE JUDICIARY AND THE COURT

The Judge, the Judiciary and the Court is aimed at anyone interested in the Australian judiciary today. It examines the impact of the individual on the judicial role, while exploring the collegiate environment in which judges must operate. This professional community can provide support but may also present its own challenges within the context of a particular court's relational dynamic and culture. The judge and the judiciary form the 'court', an institution grounded in a set of constitutional values that will influence how judges and the judiciary perform their functions. This collection brings together analysis of the judicial role that highlights these unique aspects, particularly in the Australian setting. Through the lenses of judicial leadership, diversity, collegiality, dissent, style, technology, the media and popular culture, it analyses how judges work individually and as a collective to protect and promote the institutional values of the court.

Gabrielle Appleby is a professor at the Faculty of Law & Justice at UNSW in Sydney, Australia. She is the Director of The Judiciary Project at the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law and her books include *Judicial Federalism in Australia* (2021), *Australian Public Law* (3rd ed., 2018), *The Role of the Solicitor-General: Negotiating Law, Politics and the Public Interest* (2016); and *The Tim Carmody Affair* (2016).

Andrew Lynch is a professor at the Faculty of Law & Justice at UNSW in Sydney, Australia. He researches constitutional law, judicial dissent and judicial appointments. A Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law, his books include *Blackshield & Williams' Australian Constitutional Law and Theory* (2014, 2018), *Australia's Greatest Judicial Crisis: The Tim Carmody Affair* (2016) and *Great Australian Dissents* (2016).



# THE JUDGE, THE JUDICIARY AND THE COURT

Individual, Collegial and Institutional Judicial Dynamics in Australia

Edited by

GABRIELLE APPLEBY

University of New South Wales, Sydney

ANDREW LYNCH

University of New South Wales, Sydney





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#### CONTRIBUTORS

#### PROFESSOR GABRIELLE APPLEBY

Dr. Gabrielle Appleby is a professor at the Faculty of Law & Justice, UNSW Sydney. She researches and teaches in public law, with her areas of expertise including the role, powers and accountability of the executive, the role of government lawyers and the integrity of the judicial branch. She is the Director of The Judiciary Project at the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law and was the founding editor of Australia's national public law blog, AUSPUBLAW. She is currently the constitutional consultant to the clerk of the Commonwealth House of Representatives. In 2016-2017, she worked as a pro bono constitutional adviser to the Regional Dialogues and the First Nations Constitutional Convention that led to the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Her books include Judicial Federalism in Australia; History, Theory, Doctrine and Practice (Federation Press, 2021), Australian Public Law (Oxford University Press, 3rd ed, 2018), The Role of the Solicitor-General: Negotiating Law, Politics and the Public Interest (Hart Publishing, 2016); and The Tim Carmody Affair (NewSouth Publishing, 2016). Gabrielle has also spent time working for the Oueensland Crown Solicitor and the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office.

#### DR. FELICITY BELL

Felicity Bell, PhD, is the research fellow for the Future of Law and Innovation in the Profession (FLIP) research stream at the Faculty of Law & Justice at UNSW Sydney, supported by the Law Society of NSW. As the principal researcher for FLIP, Felicity's current research is focused on change and innovation affecting the legal profession. She is the author (with Professor Michael Legg) of *Artificial Intelligence and the Legal Profession* (Hart, 2020). She has examined new technologies in legal practice, lawyers' identities, professionalism and ethics, and family law and children's law and has published extensively in these areas.



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#### DR. RACHEL CAHILL-O'CALLAGHAN

Rachel Cahill-O'Callaghan, PhD (Law), PhD (Science), is currently a reader at Cardiff School of Law and Politics (Cardiff University, Wales). She moved into the study of law from a successful career in academic science and her research combines both specialities, drawing on theories and techniques from psychology to understand judicial decision-making. This chapter was supported by a research visitor fellowship (UNSW) and research leave fellowship (Cardiff University) and builds on the work developed in her monograph *Values in the Supreme Court: Divisions, Decisions and Diversity* (Hart Publishing, 2020).

#### PROFESSOR PENNY CROFTS

Dr. Penny Crofts is a professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Technology Sydney. She is an expert on criminal law and models of culpability. Her research is cross-disciplinary, drawing upon a range of historical, philosophical, empirical and literary materials to enrich her analysis of the law. Her research is in the area of socio-legal studies, coalescing around issues of justice in criminal law in practice and theory, and makes a distinctive contribution to critical evaluations of criminal legal models of culpability and enforcement. Penny is currently analysing criminal legal conceptions of organisational culpability through horror film and philosophies of wickedness.

#### PROFESSOR MATTHEW GROVES

Matthew Groves is the Alfred Deakin Professor of Law and Director of Research in the Law School of Deakin University, Australia. Matthew conducts research in public law, most notably administrative law and human rights. He has published and edited many books including Aronson, Groves and Weeks, *Judicial Review of Administrative Action and Government Liability* (Thomson Reuters, 6th ed, 2017) and Groves, Meagher and Boughey (eds), *The Legal Protection of Rights in Australia* (Hart Publishing, 2019). Matthew is general editor of the *Australian Journal of Administrative Law* and a fellow of the Australian Academy of Law.

#### DR. TANYA JOSEV

Dr. Tanya Josev is a senior lecturer in the Melbourne Law School. She researches twentieth century Australian and United States legal and political history, with particular interests in judicial biography, the history of legalism and the politics of the culture wars as they relate to the



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judiciary. Tanya's recent award-winning book, *The Campaign Against the Courts: A History of the Judicial Activism Debate* (Federation Press, 2017), explored the intellectual and political history of the bifurcated understanding of the judicial role as involving activism versus restraint.

#### PROFESSOR ANDREW LYNCH

Andrew Lynch teaches and conducts research in the field of Australian constitutional law in the Faculty of Law & Justice at UNSW Sydney. His research concentrates on the topics of federalism, judicial dissent, judicial appointments reform and legal responses to terrorism. He is the author of books including *Blackshield & Williams' Australian Constitutional Law and Theory* (Federation Press, 6th ed, 2014; 7th ed, 2018) and *Australia's Greatest Judicial Crisis – The Tim Carmody Affair* (NewSouth Publishing, 2016). Andrew is also an editor of *Tomorrow's Federation: Reforming Australian Government* (Federation Press, 2012) and of *Great Australian Dissents* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).

#### PROFESSOR KATHY MACK

Kathy Mack (BA magna cum laude, Rice University; JD Stanford Law School; LLM University of Adelaide) is Emerita Professor, Flinders University. She is the author of a monograph, book chapters and articles on alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and articles on legal education and evidence. Since 1994, with Matthew Flinders Distinguished Professor Sharyn Roach Anleu, Kathy has been engaged in socio-legal research into the Australian courts and judiciary, including an investigation of the production of guilty pleas and research into the everyday work of the judiciary. Their latest books are *Performing Judicial Authority in the Lower Courts* (Palgrave, 2017) and *Judging and Emotion: A Socio-Legal Analysis* (Routledge, 2021).

#### DR. JOE MCINTYRE

Dr. Joe McIntyre is a senior lecturer in law at the University of South Australia, having previously taught in Canada and the UK. He undertook his PhD thesis at the University of Cambridge where he explored the nature and implications of the judicial function. His subsequent research specialises in pure and applied judicial theory. Joe is the author of *The Judicial Function: Fundamental Principles of Contemporary Judging* (Springer, 2019).

#### DR. SARAH MURRAY

Professor Sarah Murray is a professor at the University of Western Australia Law School and researches in the areas of constitutional law



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and court innovation. She has published across a range of Australian and international journals and is the author of *The Remaking of the Courts: Less-Adversarial Practice and the Constitutional Role of the Judiciary in Australia* (Federation Press, 2014). Sarah is also a co-author of *The Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia: History, Principle and Interpretation* (Cambridge University Press, 2015) and *Winterton's Australian Federal Constitutional Law: Commentary & Materials* (Thomson Reuters, 3rd ed, 2014); (Thomson Reuters, 4th ed, 2017).

#### PROFESSOR BRIAN OPESKIN

Brian Opeskin is a professor of law and former associate dean (research) at the University of Technology Sydney. He previously held positions as professor of legal governance at Macquarie University; head of the law school at the University of the South Pacific in Vanuatu; deputy president of the Australian Law Reform Commission; associate professor at Sydney University; and associate to Justice Mason at the High Court of Australia. He researches in the broad field of public law and has written widely on constitutional law; courts, judges and jurisdiction; and international migration law. Brian is a fellow of the Australian Academy of Law.

#### PROFESSOR SHARYN ROACH ANLEU

Sharyn Roach Anleu is Matthew Flinders Distinguished Professor of Sociology at Flinders University and Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Social Sciences. She is the author of *Law and Social Change* and four editions of *Deviance*, *Conformity and Control*. With Emerita Professor Kathy Mack, Sharyn leads the Judicial Research Project, undertaking empirical socio-legal research into the Australian judiciary and its courts. Their latest books are *Performing Judicial Authority in the Lower Courts* (Palgrave, 2017) and *Judging and Emotion: A Socio-Legal Analysis* (Routledge, 2021). In 2018 Sharyn and Jessica Milner Davis co-edited *Judges, Judging and Humour* (Palgrave).

#### DR. HEATHER ROBERTS

Dr. Heather Roberts is an associate professor at ANU Law. She researches in constitutional law, property law and the history and biography of superior courts and is internationally recognised as a leading expert on court ceremonies. In her current research, funded by a fellowship from the Australian Research Council, she is examining how ceremonies in Australian Supreme Courts portray changing perceptions of the essential attributes of judges and judging. She is the founding



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convenor of the ANU Law School's Visiting Judges Program, and codirector for the Australian Network of Japanese Law. Prior to entering academia, Heather was a solicitor at one of Australia's largest commercial law firms.

#### DR. MONIKA ZALNIERUTE

Dr. Monika Zalnieriute is a senior lecturer and Australian Research Council DECRA Fellow (2021–23) at the Faculty of Law & Justice at UNSW Sydney, where she leads a research stream on 'Technologies and Rule of Law' which explores the interplay between law, technology and politics in the digital age. Monika has published in leading law journals, including Modern Law Review, American Journal of International Law, Yale Journal of Law & Technology, Harvard International Law Journal, Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law and Justice, and the Stanford Journal of International Law. She is currently working on a monograph on the geopolitics of data privacy law. These days Monika spends a lot of her time thinking and writing about the rule of law and political economy of technology.



#### **FOREWORD**

Judicial life is perhaps one of the most individual – and lonely – of professional callings.

The opening line of this volume immediately signals its distinctiveness of purpose and perspective. Acknowledging the vital public and governmental functions which courts perform, the authors want to understand – want their readers to understand – the realities of judicial life, the nature of the judicial role and of judicial leadership, and the relationship between the work of the individual judge and the institutional framework of the court

The questions addressed here are of central importance. Do institutional and personal values influence a judge's decisions? Can a chief justice satisfy the demands of efficiency and accountability while respecting the independence of the individual judge? How do judges on a multimember bench manage disagreement while preserving collegiality? Why have we been so slow to remedy the 'diversity deficit' in Australian courts?

The assumption on which the collection rests is that, in the oftenheated debate about individual court decisions, these critical issues are rarely acknowledged. If judicial work is to be fairly evaluated, the authors would argue, it is necessary to understand the complexity of the 'relational dynamics' between judges, between judges and courtroom participants, between courts and the media, and between courts and the wider community.

The informing notion is that of the court as a human institution, of the judge as an individual called upon to exercise the power of the State, who must learn how to discharge the responsibility of making decisions which affect people's lives. The chapters of this book explore, from a range of different perspectives, how individuals – and courts – respond to the high expectations properly placed on them.

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The emotional dimension of judging, for example, is rarely spoken of. Every day, in every court, judges are having to manage their own human responses to the circumstances playing out before them, while at the same time dealing with the emotions of others involved in the proceeding. Conscious of her public duty, the judge strives to be objective and dispassionate, while giving expression to her essential humanity.

This is a very important book precisely because it is not written by judges. The elucidation of the judicial role is at once scrupulously independent – probing, challenging and questioning – and strikingly insightful. Importantly, there is a spirit of generosity in the writing, an implicit acceptance that Australian courts and judges go about their work conscientiously and thoughtfully, with a proper appreciation of both the responsibility and the privilege of judicial office.

The development of legal scholarship in this field is greatly to be welcomed. Its further development will, no doubt, be enhanced by collaborative engagement with judges and retired judges, of the kind which took place so productively at the 2018 UNSW workshop from which this publication originated.

The Honourable Justice Chris Maxwell AC, President of the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court of Victoria

August 2020



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