

Fragile Democracies

Sam Issacharoff

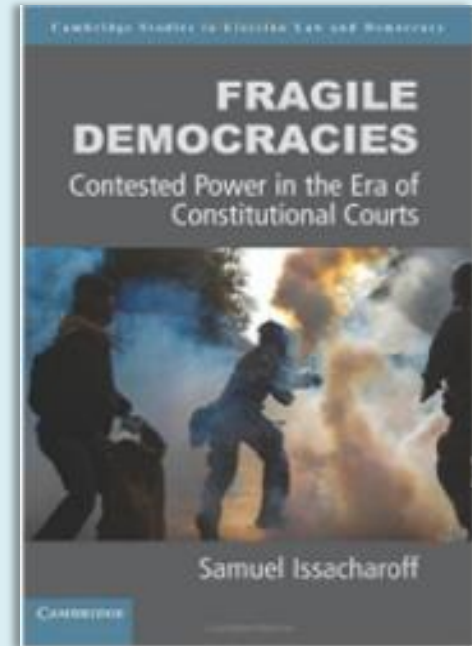
Reiss Professor of Constitutional Law, New York University School of Law

Thursday 9 February 2017, 17:30-18:30

Academic Conference Room, 11/F

Cheng Yu Tung Tower, Centennial Campus

The University of Hong Kong



Twenty-five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the democratic ascendancy of the post-Soviet era is under severe challenge. While fragile democracies in Eastern Europe, Africa, and East Asia face renewed threats, the world has witnessed the failed democratic promises of the Arab Spring. What lessons can be drawn from these struggles? What conditions or institutions are needed to prevent the collapse of democracy? This book argues that the most significant antidote to authoritarianism is the presence of strong constitutional courts. Distinct in the third wave of democratization, these courts serve as a bulwark against vulnerability to external threats as well as internal consolidation of power. Particular attention is given to societies riven by deep divisions of race, religion, or national background, for which the courts have become pivotal actors in allowing democracy to take root.

Samuel Issacharoff is the Bonnie and Richard Reiss Professor of Constitutional Law at New York University School of Law. A pioneer in the field of law of the political process, he is the author of more than 100 articles, books, and other academic works, including the seminal *The Law of Democracy*, 5th edition (with Pamela S. Karlan, Nathaniel Persily, and Richard H. Pildes, 2016) and *Fragile Democracies* (Cambridge University Press 2015). Professor Issacharoff is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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