

BOOK LAUNCH

Probable Justice: Risk, Insurance, and the Welfare State

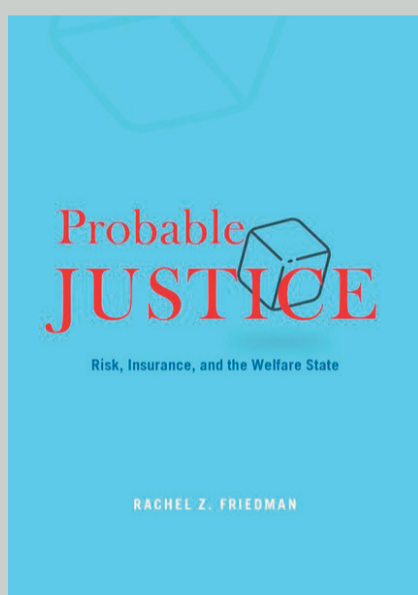
The University of Chicago Press

Dr. Rachel Z. Friedman

The Buchmann Faculty of Law and The Edmond J.
Safra Center for Ethics, Tel Aviv University

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 18:00

The Buchmann Faculty of Law
(via Zoom)



Decades into its existence as a foundational aspect of modern political and economic life, the welfare state has become a political cudgel, used to assign blame for ballooning national debt and tout the need for personal responsibility. At the same time, it affects nearly every citizen and permeates daily life—in the form of pension, disability, and unemployment benefits, healthcare and parental leave policies, and more. At its core is the idea of social insurance, which provides event-conditioned benefits through a publicly orchestrated system of contributions and distribution. First proposed around the time of the French Revolution, such policies began to spread throughout Western Europe toward the end of the nineteenth century, and today constitute one of the largest budgetary items in wealthy democracies.

Probable Justice offers an account of how and why social insurance became one of the central distributive mechanisms in liberal democratic states. Focusing on mathematical probability theory, it argues that social insurance is a distributive regime that by its nature combines distinct principles and aims, including individual liberty, social equality, and solidarity. Through a historical and conceptual analysis of this practice, from its earliest articulations through the advanced welfare state, *Probable Justice* highlights the ambiguity and the plasticity—the theoretical challenges as well as the practical strengths—of a defining feature of modern politics.

Chair:

Prof. Roy Kreitner, Law, Tel Aviv University

Discussants:

Prof. Theodore Porter, History, UCLA

Prof. David Miller, Political Theory, Nuffield College, University of Oxford

Prof. Guy Mundlak, Law, Tel Aviv University

Prof. Penelope Ismay, History, Boston College

Dr. Yiftah Elazar, Political Science, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Concluding Remarks:

Dr. Rachel Friedman, Law, Tel Aviv University

The event will be held online, please see Zoom link here >>