FRAIL PROFESSIONALISM?

Bad lawyering has come under increasing focus though NDAs, SLAPPs, the banking crisis, and latterly the UK's Post Office scandal, an extraordinary legal scandal spanning more than 20 years that ruined thousands of lives. This book examines the commercial, cultural, legal, and psychological drivers of ethical failure weaving them together with case studies in a compelling account of what is wrong with lawyers' ethics. Rather than concentrating on a few bad apples, it shows how deep-seated traditions, psychological frailties, the complacency and aggression of well-paid lawyers, and the pragmatism, cynicism, and hubris of organisations combines to pollute decision-making and weaken the rule of law. Be it through awful orthodoxies or legality illusions, it shows how a lawyer's naturally uncomfortable relationship with truth and justice can become improper or even criminal. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

RICHARD MOORHEAD is Professor of Law and Professional Ethics at the University of Exeter and Professor of Law at Monash University. He sits on the UK Government's Horizon Compensation Advisory Board advising on Post Office compensation schemes. In 2024, he led the Post Office Project Team to the ESRC's Outstanding Societal Impact Prize for work on the Post Office scandal. He was awarded an OBE for services to legal ethics in the Birthday Honours list 2026.

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Lawyers' Ethics after the Post Office and Other Cases

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