Corruption flouts rules of fairness and gives some people advantages that others don’t have. Corruption is persistent; there is little evidence that countries can escape the curse of corruption easily—or at all. Instead of focusing on institutional reform, Uslaner suggests that the roots of corruption lie in economic and legal inequality and low levels of generalized trust (which are not readily changed) and poor policy choices (which may be more likely to change). Economic inequality provides a fertile breeding ground for corruption—and, in turn, it leads to further inequalities. Just as corruption is persistent, inequality and trust do not change much over time in my cross-national aggregate analyses. Uslaner argues that high inequality leads to low trust and high corruption, and then to more inequality—an inequality trap and identifies direct linkages between inequality and trust in surveys of the mass public and elites in transition countries.

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Professor Uslaner’s *Corruption, Inequality, and the Rule of Law: The Bulging Pocket Makes the Easy Life*, was published in 2008 by Cambridge University Press.

*The Transnational Research Institute on Corruption (TRIC) is being established in 2010 as a cross disciplinary Centre to bring together ANU expertise in the study of corruption. Its prime focus is research, though it will develop capacity in teaching about corruption and corruption prevention, as well as undertake technical assistance. This seminar is the first to be hosted by TRIC.*