

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VETERAN SUPREME COURT REPORTER JOAN BISKUPIC SPEAKS ON SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR *Dwight Evans to Present Introduction on Rosa Parks*

PHILADELPHIA, PA (November 16, 2005) — As the first woman to sit on the United States High Court, Sandra Day O'Connor has become one of the best-known Supreme Court Justices in recent history and one of the most influential women in the history of the United States. *USA Today* Supreme Court Reporter Joan Biskupic's new biography, *Sandra Day O'Connor: How the First Woman on the Supreme Court Became Its Most Influential Justice* highlights O'Connor's career climb through a legal profession dominated by men. Biskupic presents a vivid, astute depiction of the justice and of the woman beneath the black robe. She will discuss her new book at the National Constitution Center on December 1 at 6:30 p.m. with a book signing to follow.

Drawing on information from once-private papers of the Justices, hundreds of interviews with legal and political insiders, and the insight gained from nearly two decades of covering the Supreme Court, Joan Biskupic examines O'Connor's remarkable career, providing an in-depth account of her transformation from tentative jurist to confident architect of American law. The portrait that emerges is of a complex and multifaceted woman: lawyer, politician, legislator, and Justice, as well as wife, mother, A-list society hostess, and competitive athlete. O'Connor was the feminist who, rather than rebel against the male-dominated system, worked from within -- and succeeded.

As Biskupic demonstrates, Justice O'Connor became much more than a "first." During her twenty-four-year tenure, she wrote the decisions on some of the most controversial social battles of our time.

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ADD ONE/BISKUPIC EVENT

O'Connor's tie-breaking opinions on issues such as abortion rights, affirmative action, the death penalty, and religious freedom will have a lasting effect far into the future. With an eye to the American people and a keen sense of public attitudes, she worked behind the scenes to shape the law and transform the legal standards by which future cases will be decided.

Joan Biskupic has worked extensively with the Supreme Court since 1989. With a law degree from Georgetown University, Biskupic was formerly the Supreme Court reporter for the *Washington Post* and legal affairs writer for *Congressional Quarterly*. She currently covers the Supreme Court for *USA Today* and is a frequent guest on PBS' "Washington Week in Review."

At the program, the National Constitution Center will be honoring another extraordinary American woman. December 1st is the 50th anniversary of the day when the late Rosa Parks was arrested in 1955 for refusing to give up her seat in the front of a public bus. Representative Dwight Evans will pay tribute to Rosa Parks, her life and legacy, in an introductory speech.

The event is free for members, \$12 for non-members, and \$6 for students and teachers. A book sale and signing after the discussion is presented by The Joseph Fox Bookshop. Reservations are required and can be made by calling 215-409-6700 or visiting www.constitutioncenter.org.

Located at 525 Arch Street on Philadelphia's historic Independence Mall, the National Constitution Center is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and its relevance to Americans' daily lives. Opened on July 4, 2003, the museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". For more information, visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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ADD TWO/BISKUPIC EVENT

Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World, a blockbuster exhibition celebrating Franklin's 300th birthday, makes its world premiere at the National Constitution Center from December 15, 2005, through April 30, 2006. Created by the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary, this exhibition is being hosted locally by CBS 3. Tickets for the exhibition, which also include regular museum admission, are \$14 for adults; \$12 for children ages 4-12, seniors, and college students; and \$8.50 for groups of 20 or more. For advance tickets, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.gophila.com/ben.

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