

TWEET IT Esteemed Judge's Panel discusses #JoelCohen's new book
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CONTACTS: Tanaya Neal
National Programs Manager
National Constitution Center
215-409-6716
tneal@constitutioncenter.org

Amy Kelchner
Administrative Office of PA Courts
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
717-231-3328
Amy.Kelchner@pacourts.us

**JUDGE'S PANEL TO DISCUSS
JOEL COHEN'S THOUGHT-PROVOKING NEW BOOK
AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER**

Philadelphia, PA (October 16, 2014) – A distinguished panel of former and current judges will join attorney Joel Cohen at the National Constitution Center on **Wednesday, November 12, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.** for a discussion drawing inspiration from Cohen's new book, *Blindfolds Off: Judges on How They Decide*. The conversation will also focus on the importance of an independent judiciary. The judges serving as panelists include John Cleland, John Jones, Nathaniel Jones, Jed Rakoff, and Marjorie Rendell, two of which are among the judges featured in Cohen's book. This program is presented in partnership with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Commission on Judicial Independence.

Admission to this program is FREE, but reservations are recommended and can be made by calling 215-409-6700 or visiting constitutioncenter.org.

About the Book

Remarkably little is known about judges—how they decide cases, how they allocate work between staff and themselves, their work ethic, their psychology, and other outside influences. [Blindfolds Off](#) aims to penetrate that veil of secrecy with thirteen eye-opening interviews that shed light on the decision-making processes of America's judges. The book features selected, well-known cases from the featured judges' dockets. These selected cases raised critical questions about justice, policy, precedent and the law. Noted legal mind Alan Dershowitz says that Cohen's book "is an essential tool of democracy, visibility and accountability."

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About the Author

Joel Cohen is a criminal defense lawyer in New York. He has practiced in that field as well as in complex civil litigation at Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP for nearly 30 years. Previously, he was a prosecutor with the New York State Special Prosecutor's Office and then with the U.S. Justice Department's Organized Crime & Racketeering Section in the Eastern District of New York. Cohen writes regularly for the *New York Law Journal*, Law.com and the Huffington Post and frequently lectures on multiple subjects. He teaches Professional Responsibility at Fordham Law School, and has co-created a seminar based on this book to be given at the law school. *Blindfolds Off* is Cohen's first non-fiction book.

About the Judges

John M. Cleland received his undergraduate degree from Denison University and his J.D. from The National Law Center of The George Washington University. Cleland began his legal career as a law clerk for United States District Judge Barron P. McCune. He was president judge of the McKean County Court of Common Pleas and also served an 18-month appointment to the Pennsylvania Superior Court in 2008. He is currently a senior judge. Recently, Judge Cleland chaired the commission which investigated the "Kids for Cash" scandal in Luzerne County, and he presided over the Jerry Sandusky child abuse trial in Centre County. Cleland has earned the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges President's Distinguished Service Award, its Golden Crowbar Award, the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford's Presidential Medal of Distinction, and the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Clarity in Writing Award.

Judge John E. Jones III is a graduate of Dickinson College and The Dickinson School of Law of The Pennsylvania State University. He served as a law clerk, was in private practice, and was chair of the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board before being appointed to his current position on the United States District Court. In that capacity, Judge Jones heard arguments and ruled in *Kitzmiller v. Dover*, commonly referred to as the case of "Intelligent Design." In 2006 Judge Jones received the Outstanding Alumni Award from the Dickinson School of Law, as well as an honorary doctorate in law and public policy from Dickinson College, where he was recognized as one of the twenty five most influential graduates in the College's over two hundred and twenty year history. In 2006 Judge Jones was named by *Time* magazine as one of its Time 100, the one hundred most influential people in the world. That same year, he was the recipient of the first

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John Marshall Judicial Independence Award, given by the Pennsylvania Bar Association. Nathaniel R. Jones received his A.B. from Youngstown State University, in 1951 and his LL.B in 1955. Jones was a federal judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Jones was nominated to the Sixth Circuit by President Jimmy Carter on August 28, 1979, he was confirmed by the Senate on October 4, 1979, and received his commission the next day. He assumed senior status on May 13, 1995, and retired on March 30, 2002. In his professional career he has been an Editor at *Buckeye Review*, Executive Director of Fair Employment Practices Commission in Youngstown, Ohio, an assistant U.S. attorney and in the U.S. Army Air Corps.

Jed S. Rakoff graduated from Swarthmore with his bachelor's degree in 1964 and from Oxford University with his Masters of Philosophy degree in 1966. Rakoff received a J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1969. He is currently a federal judge for the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. He was nominated to join the court by President Bill Clinton in 1996. Rakoff entered private practice in New York City before serving as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Southern District of New York from 1973 to 1980. Rakoff worked as Chief Prosecutor of the Business and Securities Fraud Prosecutions Unit from 1978 to 1980 before resuming private practice work until 1995.

Marjorie O. Rendell graduated from Pennsylvania with her bachelor's degree in 1969 and later received her J.D. degree from Villanova Law School in Philadelphia in 1973. She is currently a federal judge with the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia. She joined the court in 1997 after being nominated by President Bill Clinton. On the recommendation of Pennsylvania U.S. Senator Harris Wofford, Rendell was nominated to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania by President Bill Clinton on November 19, 1993. Rendell also served as the First Lady of the State of Pennsylvania during her husband Ed Rendell's tenure as governor, from 2003 to 2011.

About the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Commission on Judicial Independence

Formed by the Supreme Court, the Judicial Independence Commission is dedicated to fostering a better understanding of the role of the courts. Created in response to a nationwide pattern of attacks on the courts and judicial rulings, the commission raises public awareness of the importance of a strong, independent judiciary in a free society. It

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promotes the teaching of civics and monitors threats on judicial independence in Pennsylvania and around the nation. The commission is comprised of 11 members who are appointed by the Supreme Court. Members include state and federal judges, law professors and lawyers.

About the National Constitution Center

The [National Constitution Center](#) in Philadelphia is the Museum of We the People, America's Town Hall, and a Headquarters for Civic Education. As the **Museum of We the People**, the National Constitution Center brings the United States Constitution to life for visitors of all ages and inspires active citizenship by celebrating the American constitutional tradition. The museum features interactive exhibits, engaging theatrical performances, and original documents of freedom. As the only institution established by Congress to "disseminate information about the United States Constitution on a non-partisan basis," the National Constitution Center serves as a **Headquarters for Civic Education**—offering cutting-edge learning resources including the premier online Interactive Constitution. As **America's Town Hall**, the National Constitution Center hosts timely constitutional conversations uniting distinguished leaders, scholars, authors, and journalists from across the political spectrum. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit constitutioncenter.org.

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