

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER ANNOUNCES NEW *AMERICA'S TOWN HALL*
PROGRAMS FOR SPRING 2021**

Speakers include NAACP Legal Defense Fund's Sherrilyn Ifill, Harvard Law School's Martha Minow, Judge Jed Rakoff, author Jonathan Rauch, and The New Yorker's Dorothy Wickenden

Topics include criminal justice reform, abolition and women's rights, American literature and the Constitution, Reconstruction, great justices, and free speech today

Philadelphia, PA (March 5, 2021) – Today, the National Constitution Center released a lineup of new programs as part of its *America's Town Hall* series of constitutional conversations and debates. Programs are free to the public and will be held online.

On March 17, as part of an ongoing partnership of conversations about how to restore the guardrails of American democracy, the National Constitution Center and the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University present a new panel on: Compromise and the Constitution in a Polarized America. Political scientist **Steven Teles** of Johns Hopkins University, **Sarah Binder** of the George Washington University and Brookings, **Reihan Salam** of the Manhattan Institute, and others will discuss the possibilities for compromise and deliberation in a polarized time.

Additional programs will be added. See below for a full list of programming. Up-to-date program information is available at constitutioncenter.org/debate.

Upcoming *America's Town Hall* programming:

Does American Criminal Justice Need Reform?

Wednesday, March 10, 7 – 8 p.m. ET

Judge **Jed Rakoff**, author of the new book *Why the Innocent Plead Guilty and the Guilty Go Free*; former Judge **Paul Cassell** of the University of Utah College of Law; and **Carissa Byrne Hessick** of the University of North Carolina Law School join the Center for a timely conversation about current challenges in American criminal justice today and proposals for reform. **Jeffrey Rosen**, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center, moderates.

Compromise and the Constitution in a Polarized America

Wednesday, March 17, 12 – 1 p.m. ET

The National Constitution Center and the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University present a new panel in their ongoing partnership of conversations about how to restore the guardrails of American democracy. Political scientist **Steven Teles** of Johns Hopkins University, **Sarah Binder** of the George Washington University and Brookings, **Reihan Salam** of the Manhattan Institute, and others join the Center for an important discussion on the possibilities for compromise and deliberation in a polarized time. **Jeffrey Rosen**, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center, moderates. *This program is presented in partnership with the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University.*

The Agitators and the Women's Fight

Tuesday, March 30, 7 – 8 p.m. ET

Dorothy Wickenden, executive editor at *The New Yorker* and author of the new book *The Agitators: Three Friends Who Fought for Abolition and Women's Rights*, and **Thavolia Glymph**, Duke University historian and author of the book *The Women's Fight: The Civil War's Battles for Home, Freedom, and Nation*, discuss the early days of the abolition movement and the fight for women's rights, the complicated relationship between the two movements, and heroes like Harriet Tubman who emerged through both. **Jeffrey Rosen**, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center, moderates.

Do We Need a Third Reconstruction?

Thursday, April 29, 12:30 – 1:45 p.m. ET

In light of the critical events and national debates that have happened over the past year and beyond regarding race, rights, and equality, the National Constitution Center is hosting an online discussion exploring the question: "Do we need a third Reconstruction?" **Sherrilyn Ifill**, president and counselor-director of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund; professor **Wilfred Codrington III** of Brooklyn Law School; political scientist **William Allen**; and professor **Kurt Lash** of the University of Richmond School of Law and author of a new two-volume series, *The Reconstruction Amendments*, join for a discussion on the history of Reconstruction and its legacy, the civil rights movement and constitutional change, and whether or not America needs a third era of Reconstruction. *This program is presented with support from Citizens.*

Free Speech, Media, Truth and Lies

Tuesday, June 15, 12 – 1 p.m. ET

Should the government or private companies identify and regulate truth and lies? **Martha Minow**, professor at Harvard Law School and author of the new book, *Saving the News: Why the Constitution Calls for Government Action to Preserve Freedom of Speech*, and **Jonathan Rauch**, author of the new book, *The Constitution of Knowledge: A Defense of Truth*, discuss the history of American protection for free speech values and how they are challenged by the social media landscape today. They will also discuss current debates about the regulation of online speech, from content regulation to algorithmic disinformation, and what reforms, if any, might promote the free trade in ideas and expression in the future.

Coming soon:

American Literature and the Constitution

Bernadette Meyler of Stanford University, **Stephen Cushman** of University of Virginia, and others participate in a conversation exploring the relationship between American literature, law, and politics—focusing on authors and works from James Fenimore Cooper, Walt Whitman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and others. The discussion will highlight how American literature influenced the Constitution and constitutional law since America's founding, through the Civil War, and beyond; and how studying it might help us better understand the Constitution and our democracy today. **Jeffrey Rosen**, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center, moderates.

The Great Justices: Founders, Dissenters, Prophets

Chief Justice John Marshall and Justice John Marshall Harlan are two of the most influential Supreme Court justices in American history. **Robert Strauss**, author of the new book *John Marshall: The Final Founder*; **Peter Canellos**, author of the new book *The Great Dissenter: The Story of John Marshall Harlan, America's Judicial Hero*; and others participate in a wide-ranging discussion on what made

Marshall, Harlan, and other justices influential, and what their legacy is today. **Jeffrey Rosen**, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center and author of *William Howard Taft* and *Louis D. Brandeis: American Prophet*, moderates.

The National Constitution Center's *America's Town Hall* series features distinguished leaders, scholars, authors, and journalists who speak on the most significant constitutional topics of our time. The Center's online *America's Town Hall* programs are free. Viewers can register for the Zoom sessions at constitutioncenter.org/debate or watch from youtube.com/ConstitutionCenter. Archived *America's Town Hall* programs can be found on the *Interactive Constitution* at constitutioncenter.com/interactive-constitution/media-library.

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About the National Constitution Center

The [National Constitution Center](https://constitutioncenter.org) in Philadelphia brings together people of all ages and perspectives, across America and around the world, to learn about, debate, and celebrate the greatest vision of human freedom in history, the U.S. Constitution. A private, nonprofit organization, the Center serves as America's leading platform for constitutional education and debate, fulfilling its congressional charter "to disseminate information about the U.S. Constitution on a nonpartisan basis." As the **Museum of We the People**, the Center brings the Constitution to life for visitors of all ages through interactive programs and exhibits. As **America's Town Hall**, the Center brings the leading conservative and liberal thought leaders together to debate the Constitution on all media platforms. As a **Headquarters for Civic Education**, the Center delivers the best educational programs and online resources that inspire citizens and engage all Americans in learning about the U.S. Constitution. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit constitutioncenter.org.