

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GORDON S. WOOD TO DISCUSS ARISTOCRACY AND THE FOUNDERS AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

In conjunction with the *Diana: A Celebration* exhibition

Philadelphia, PA (November 16, 2009) – **Gordon S. Wood**, Brown University Professor of History and Chairman of the National Constitution Center’s Distinguished Scholars Advisory Panel, will join the Center to discuss the Founders’ attitudes toward and beliefs about aristocracy in the United States, on Monday, December 7 at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free, but reservations are required and can be made by calling 215.409.6700. This is the final program in a series on the nature of aristocracy and America’s fascination with royalty, held in conjunction with the *Diana: A Celebration* exhibition.

Though “titles of nobility” are prohibited by the Constitution, aristocratic elements of privilege and power nevertheless survive in the United States. The men who espoused the radical idea that all are created equal lived at a time when aristocracy prevailed. Wood will examine how the new Americans’ beliefs differed from those held in England, which traditions have remained, and what the effects of those have been.

Gordon S. Wood, the Alva O. Way University Professor and Professor of History at Brown University, is the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* and the newly-released *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815*. A regular contributor to *The New Republic* and *The New York Review of Books*, he is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society.

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Carol Berkin, professor of American history at Baruch College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, will moderate. She is the author of *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution*, *First Generations*, and *Jonathan Sewall*.

A book sale and signing will follow the program, courtesy of Joseph Fox Bookshop.

Through December 31, 2009, the National Constitution Center is hosting the international traveling exhibition, *Diana: A Celebration*, providing an opportunity for visitors to learn more about the life and work of the Princess of Wales. The exhibition is on loan from the Althorp Estate, the Spencer Family's 500-year-old ancestral home in England.

Admission to *Diana: A Celebration* is \$23 for adults, \$21 for seniors ages 65 and up, and \$15 for children ages 4-12. Active military personnel and children ages 3 and under are free. Group rates are also available. Admission to the Center's main exhibition, *The Story of We the People*, including the award-winning theater production "Freedom Rising", is included. iPod audio tours cost an additional \$5. For ticket information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

Diana: A Celebration is produced by Arts and Exhibitions International, in association with the Althorp Estate, Cultural Networks International Inc. The exhibition is presented locally by Macy's, and CBS 3 and The CW Philly are the official media partners. CBS 3 (KYW-TV) and The CW Philly 57 (WPSG-TV) are part of CBS Television Stations, a division of CBS Corporation.

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. The Center serves as a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. The museum dramatically tells the story of the

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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”. The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education. Also, as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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