JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA’S CONTRIBUTION TO LEGAL INTERPRETATION

A Roundtable Featuring:

Matthew J. Franck
Director, William E. and Carol G. Simon Center on Religion and the Constitution,
The Witherspoon Institute

Stanley Katz
Lecturer with rank of Professor in Public and International Affairs; Director, Princeton University Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies

Keith Whittington
William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Politics, Princeton University

Moderated by Robert P. George
McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence; Director, James Madison Program, Princeton University

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2016
4:30 – 6:00 p.m.
Dodds Auditorium, Robertson Hall
Matthew J. Franck is the Director of the William E. and Carol G. Simon Center on Religion and the Constitution at the Witherspoon Institute in Princeton, NJ. He is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Radford University, in Virginia, where he taught constitutional law, American politics, and political philosophy from 1989 to 2010, and was Chairman of the Department of Political Science from 1995 to 2010. He is also a Visiting Lecturer in Politics at Princeton University. He has taught at Marquette University and Southern Illinois University, and was a Fulbright Professor of American Studies at the Graduate School of International Studies, Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea, in 1998, and a Visiting Fellow in the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University, in 2008-09. He is the author, editor of, or contributor to several books on religious freedom, constitutional law, the Supreme Court, and American politics, and has published essays and reviews in numerous academic journals, as well as many general-interest articles and commentaries in newspapers, magazines, and online, including the Washington Post, First Things, National Review, and Public Discourse, the daily online essay publication of the Witherspoon Institute. He is a regular blogger on National Review Online’s “Bench Memos” page and the “First Thoughts” page at First Things magazine, and has appeared numerous times on Bill Bennett’s “Morning in America” radio show, as well as on CNN, Fox News Channel, EWTN, NPR, and Relevant Radio. He earned his B.A. in political science from Virginia Wesleyan College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from Northern Illinois University.

Stanley N. Katz is Director of the Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies, and Lecturer with rank of Professor, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. He is President Emeritus of the American Council of Learned Societies, the leading organization in humanistic scholarship and education in the United States. His recent research focuses upon the relationship of civil society and constitutionalism to democracy, and upon the relationship of the United States to the international human rights regime. Formerly Class of 1921 Bicentennial Professor of the History of American Law and Liberty at Princeton University, Mr. Katz is a leading expert on American legal and constitutional history, and on philanthropy and non-profit institutions. The author and editor of numerous books and articles, Mr. Katz has served as President of the Organization of American Historians and the American Society for Legal History and as Vice President of the Research Division of the American Historical Association. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Newberry Library, the Social Science Research Council, the Copyright Clearance Center and numerous other institutions. He also currently serves as Chair of the American Council of Learned Societies/Social Science Research Council Working Group on Cuba. Katz is a member of the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, the American Antiquarian Society, the American Philosophical Society; a Fellow of the American Society for Legal History, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Society of American Historians; and a Corresponding Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society. He has honorary degrees from several universities. He graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University in 1955 with a major in English History and Literature. He received his M.A. from Harvard in American History in 1959 and his Ph.D. in the same field from Harvard in 1961. He attended Harvard Law School in 1969-70.

Keith E. Whittington is William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Politics at Princeton University and currently director of graduate studies in the Department of Politics. He is the author of Constitutional Construction: Divided Powers and Constitutional Meaning, and Constitutional Interpretation: Textual Meaning, Original Intent, and Judicial Review, and Political Foundations of Judicial Supremacy: The Presidency, the Supreme Court, and Constitutional Leadership in U.S. History (which won the C. Herman Pritchett Award for best book in law and courts and the J. David Greenstone Award for best book in politics and history), and Judicial Review and Constitutional Politics, and American Political Thought: Readings and Materials. He is the editor (with Neal Devins) of Congress and the Constitution and editor (with R. Daniel Kelemen and Gregory A. Caldeira) of The Oxford Handbook of Law and Politics and editor of Law and Politics: Critical Concepts in Political Science. He is also the author (with Howard Gillman and Mark A. Graber) of American Constitutionalism, vol. 1: Structures of Government and American Constitutionalism, vol. 2: Rights and Liberties (which together won the Teaching and Mentoring Award for innovative instructional materials in law and courts), and American Constitutionalism: Powers, Rights and Liberties (a one-volume abridgement). He has published widely on American constitutional theory and development, federalism, judicial politics, and the presidency. He has been a John M. Olin Foundation Faculty Fellow and American Council of Learned Societies Junior Faculty Fellow, and a Visiting Scholar at the Social Philosophy and Policy Center, and a Visiting Professor at the University of Texas School of Law. He is a member of the American Academy of the Arts and Sciences. He is editor (with Gerald Leonard) of the New Essays on American Constitutional History and editor (with Maeva Marcus, Melvin Urofsky, and Mark Tushnet) of the Cambridge Studies on the American Constitution. He is completing Repugnant Laws: Judicial Review of Acts of Congress from the Founding to the Present.

Robert P. George holds Princeton’s celebrated McCormick Chair in Jurisprudence and is the founding director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions. He is chairman of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). He has served on the President’s Council on Bioethics and as a presidential appointee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. He has also served on UNESCO’s World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST), of which he continues to be a corresponding member. He is a former Judicial Fellow at the Supreme Court of the United States, where he received the Justice Tom C. Clark Award. He is the author of In Defense of Natural Law, Making Men Moral: Civil Liberties and Public Morality, The Clash of Orthodoxies: Law, Religion and Morality in Crisis, Conscience and Its Enemies: Confronting the Dogmas of Liberal Secularism, and co-author of Embryo: A Defense of Human Life, Body-Self Dualism in Contemporary Ethics and Politics, What is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense, and Conjugal Union: What Marriage Is and Why It Matters. His scholarly articles and reviews have appeared in such journals as the Harvard Law Review, the Yale Law Journal, the Columbia Law Review, the American Journal of Jurisprudence, and the Review of Politics. Professor George is a recipient of many honors and awards, including the Presidential Citizens Medal, the Honorific Medal for the Defense of Human Rights of the Republic of Poland, the Canterbury Medal of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, the Sidney Hook Memorial Award of the National Association of Scholars, the Philip Merrill Award of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, the Bradley Prize for Intellectual and Civic Achievement, and the Stanley Kelley, Jr. Teaching Award from Princeton’s Department of Politics. He has given honorary lectures at Harvard, Yale, University of St. Andrews, and Cornell University. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and holds honorary doctorates of law, ethics, science, letters, divinity, civil law, humane letters, and juridical science. A graduate of Swarthmore College and Harvard Law School, he also received a master’s degree in theology from Harvard and a doctorate in philosophy of law from Oxford University.
Justice Scalia was never at a loss for words on the bench. He asked many questions and was sometimes brutally forceful in persuading both petitioner and respondent attorneys to fall in line with his legal conclusions. Justice Scalia’s questioning was meticulous, exploring the nuances of legal text, while his comments were often bludgeoning. He also possessed a sense of humor that caused the courtroom to erupt in laughter on a regular basis. This legal philosophy is the ideological opposite to a "living Constitution" (an interpretation endorsed by Justices Breyer and Ginsburg) that evolves by incorporating the contemporary meanings and intentions of society-at-large. Which player’s contribution to baseball best matches Antonin Scalia’s contribution to law? Justice Scalia’s experience and background are well known. Perhaps more so now that he has had the extensive tributes following his recent death. Bryan Garner, the co-author, is also well credentialed and quite well thought of due to his role as the lead editor for "Black’s Law Dictionary" of legal terms. The two men masterfully break down statutory application principles and explain their analysis. This is by far the best contribution of Justice Antonin Scalia. This book has answers to questions about interpretation. If you don't know how to read a text, because there may be more than one possible logical meaning, this book will provide the answer. Nobody teaches you this at law school.