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ACS Releases New Books Offering Vision of the Constitution and How to Interpret It

Authors Present Alternative to “Originalism” and “Strict Construction”

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Washington, D.C. -- The American Constitution Society for Law and Policy (ACS) today released two books on the Constitution that will shape the ongoing debate over how to interpret our nation’s founding document. The lead book, *Keeping Faith with the Constitution*, articulates a vision of the Constitution and an approach to interpretation that is faithful to the words of the document and at the same time has enabled the Constitution to retain its relevance for each new generation of Americans.

Keeping Faith with the Constitution was written by Goodwin Liu, Pamela S. Karlan and Christopher H. Schroeder. A companion volume called *It Is a Constitution We Are Expounding: Collected Writings on Interpreting Our Founding Document*, was edited by Pamela Harris and Karl Thompson, with a foreword by Professor Laurence H. Tribe. The books provide an accessible and compelling approach to constitutional interpretation and explain why the U.S. Constitution is the world’s most enduring written constitution.

“These books offer a fresh, affirmative vision of what the Constitution means and how to interpret it,” said Acting ACS Executive Director David Lyle. “They lay bare the flaws and inconsistencies that plague originalism, and provide a clear and rigorously argued alternative approach. These works are an important contribution to the debates that shape our nation, debates in which members of the American Constitution Society play a vital role.”

Keeping Faith examines the text and history of the Constitution to show how the Framers inscribed the fundamental values of liberty, equality and democracy into the document. The authors describe what they call “constitutional fidelity,” a principle that “serves not only to preserve the Constitution’s meaning over time, but also to maintain its authority and legitimacy. The words and principles of the Constitution endure as our fundamental

law because they have been made relevant to the conditions and challenges of each generation through an ongoing process of interpretation.”

“Overall, the Constitution is a profoundly visionary document,” write the authors. “It advanced a new model of effective governance and democratic rule. Its text and structure express general principles that further the guiding purposes stated in the Preamble. And the amendment process has enlarged our basic commitments to liberty, equality, and democracy. Our Constitution thus reflects, in a spare outline, the moral trajectory of a nation continually striving for greater justice.”

Authors Liu and Karlan and editor Harris were joined by Charles J. Cooper, a former assistant attorney general in the Reagan administration, in a discussion of *Keeping Faith* moderated by *Slate* Senior Editor Dahlia Lithwick at the National Press Club.

More information about the books is [available here](#). Contact the ACS Communications Department to arrange interviews with the authors.

The American Constitution Society for Law and Policy is one of the nation’s leading progressive legal organizations, comprised of lawyers, judges, students and policy makers committed to promoting the vitality of the Constitution and the fundamental values it expresses. The views of the authors and speakers are their own and should not be attributed to ACS. For more information about ACS, visit www.ACSLAW.org.