

## **Yes or No in November? Discussing a Constitutional Convention for New York**

March 15, 2017

### **About the Speakers**

**Dick Dadey** is the executive director of Citizens Union, a citywide good government organization founded in 1897. Since he took the helm in 2004, he has reinvigorated the group's focus and work, raised its profile, and led the organization to notable achievements in the areas of state redistricting reform, state ethics reform, greater public oversight of police misconduct, city campaign finance reform, local lobbying reform, and election reform, among other issues. Dadey served from 2001-2004 as the executive director of two parks-related organizations: City Parks Alliance, a national organization that works to strengthen city parks throughout the country and New Yorkers for Parks, a citywide parks advocacy organization. For seven years beginning in 1991, he served as the first executive director of the Empire State Pride Agenda, New York's statewide gay and lesbian political organization which he helped found and build into one of the most powerful and effective organizations in New York's political landscape. Before joining the Pride Agenda, Dadey served as the Development Director for the Human Rights Campaign in Washington, D.C. He has served on a number of nonprofit boards and currently serves on the boards of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy and Friends of Hudson River Park. A native of Syracuse, New York, Dadey graduated from Syracuse University with a B.A. in American Studies and lives in Brooklyn Heights.

**Adriene Holder** serves as Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice of The Legal Aid Society since 2005, and has devoted her entire professional career to addressing income inequality, and advancing equal rights and social justice. Prior to her appointment to Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice, Adriene served as Attorney-in-Charge of the Harlem Office; practiced law as a staff attorney in the Law Reform Unit of the Civil Practice; and began her career in 1991 as a staff attorney in the Harlem Office Housing Law Unit. She is responsible for managing the provision of comprehensive civil legal services through a network of 16 neighborhood offices, courthouse based offices, and specialized city-wide units serving all five boroughs of New York City. Civil legal assistance includes: housing and neighborhood preservation, homelessness prevention, foreclosure prevention, family and domestic violence, public benefits, employment, disability, health, HIV/AIDS, elder law, prisoners' rights, law reform, re-entry and re-integration, education, community development, tax, consumer and immigration. In addition to her formal duties, Adriene also serves as an executive member on several boards, is actively involved with not-for-profits, and previously served as a Tenant Representative on the New York City Rent Guidelines Board for ten years. Often called upon to work on the Society's legislative agenda, Adriene frequently testifies before legislative bodies on the local and State levels. She also is consulted on various legal and policy matters impacting low-income communities by the media, law schools, and policy or governmental agencies. Adriene graduated from Spelman College, and Columbia Law School. While practicing law at The Legal Aid Society, Adriene has also served as an adjunct professor at The New School University and Interboro Institute, and as a volunteer instructor at Columbia Law School. She is the recipient of numerous honors and awards including the Thurgood Marshall Award - recognition of service as pro bono counsel to an individual under a sentence of death; The Legal Aid

Society Pro Bono Award for work on the Alabama Pro Bono Death Penalty Project; New York Moves Magazine – Power Woman; Earl Warren Legal Scholar and a Reginald L. Lewis Fellow by her law school and a Melvin C. Steen Fellow by The Legal Aid Society when she started her employment.

**Helen Hershkoff** is the Herbert M. and Svetlana Wachtell Professor of Constitutional Law and Civil Liberties at New York University School of Law, where she also co-directs the Arthur Garfield Hays Civil Liberties Program. Hershkoff joined the faculty in 1995, having previously served as an associate legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union, as a staff attorney at The Legal Aid Society (Civil Appeals and Law Reform Unit), and as a litigation associate at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison in New York. As a lawyer, Hershkoff litigated numerous cases seeking to enforce state constitutional rights, including rights under the New York Constitution. Hershkoff is a co-author of the leading casebook on civil procedure, a co-editor of an admired book on comparative civil procedure, and a member of the author team of the major treatise on federal practice and federal jurisdiction, focusing on the United States as a party. Hershkoff's articles about state constitutions have been published in Harvard, Stanford, NYU, Albany, Fordham, and other leading law reviews. Hershkoff also is a highly respected teacher; she was honored with the NYU 2014-2015 Distinguished Teaching Award, recognized by the Association of American Law Schools as a 2013 Teacher of the Year, and received the Law School's 2013 Podell Distinguished Teaching Award.

**Michael A. Cardozo** is a partner in Proskauer's Litigation Department and the former Corporation Counsel for the City of New York. As the City's 77th and longest serving Corporation Counsel, he was the City's chief legal officer, headed the city's Law Department of more than 700 lawyers, and served from 2002 through 2013 as legal counsel to Mayor Michael Bloomberg, elected officials, the city and its agencies. Michael represents a wide range of clients on general commercial litigation and arbitration matters. He also helps to oversee the firm's pro bono practice and its diversity programs. Michael has long been active in court reform efforts. In the mid-1970s he served as counsel to Governor Hugh Carey's Task Force on Court Reform. He subsequently was appointed by Governor Mario Cuomo as chair of a Task Force on Judicial Administration and later the Appellate Divisions. He is a past chair (and present Board member) of the Committee for Modern Courts, a non-partisan citizen organization devoted to improving New York State courts, and former president of the New York City Bar Association. He is presently a member of the Chief Judge's Constitutional Convention Task Force and the Committee for a Constitutional Convention. Michael's experience in representing virtually every city agency, as well as his extensive dealings with the federal and state governments, has given him a unique insight on the ways in which the government operates. Michael earned his J.D. at Columbia Law School and is the former Chair of its Board of Visitors. Among the numerous honors Michael has received are the Citizens Union Public Service Award, the Emory Buckner Award from the Federal Bar Council for outstanding public service, the Fund for Modern Courts Cyrus R. Vance Tribute for dedicated work towards judicial reform, the Columbia Law School Lawrence A. Wien Prize for Social Responsibility, the American Lawyer's Lifetime Achievement Award, the New York Urban League's Frederick Douglas Medallion for Leadership and Service, the Fund for Modern Courts' Career Public Service Award and the *New York Law Journal's* Impact Award.

**Evan Davis**, a Senior Counsel at Cleary Gottlieb Steen and Hamilton LLP, has broad experience across levels and branches of Government. Following his clerkship for Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, he went to work for almost four years in the administration of Mayor John Lindsay ending as Chief of the Law Department's Consumer Protection Division. He then worked for the U.S. House Judiciary Committee on the President Nixon Impeachment Staff headed by John Doar. He went to work at Cleary Gottlieb in 1975 becoming a partner in 1979. He served as Counsel to the New York State Clapp Commission which investigated the 1977 blackout in the Con Edison service territory. He served as a Vice President of the Legal Aid Society until he moved to Albany to serve as Counsel Governor Mario Cuomo for five years from 1985 to 1991. Following his return to Cleary Gottlieb he was appointed by Governor Mario Cuomo to head a Commission investigating judicial selection. The Commission recommended that diversity be considered a positive factor in judicial selection. He also served for 12 years as a Trustee of Columbia University becoming a Vice Chair and Chair of the Finance Committee and as President of the New York City Bar Association from 2000 to 2002. He is currently the manager of the Committee for a Constitutional Convention, a group of people from around the State who support a Constitutional Convention. Evan is married to Mary Rothwell Davis and has three daughters.