

LIVING

McElreath Hall
Atlanta History Center
130 West Paces Ferry Rd NW
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ROOM

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HISTORY
CENTER



Back for its 57th year, Living Room Learning was started by alumnae of Sweet Briar College and is designed for those who seek university level education without academic credit.

We hope you will join us for our next series which will continue our exploration of the American Revolution. In honor of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, lectures will focus on the conflict itself, its leaders, and the many complicated questions raised by the struggle for independence and founding a new country.

The series will begin on January 26, 2026 and will continue each Monday until March 9, 2026. All lectures will take place in McElreath Hall. Doors open at 1:30pm and lectures begin promptly at 2pm with a brief intermission. Parking is free.

Registration: \$130 for Atlanta History Center Members/\$140 for non-members. Please purchase online or make checks payable to Atlanta History Center.

Weekly Lecture Schedule

January 26, 2026

King George III and the British View of the American Revolution

Lecturer: Dr. Patrick Allitt

- Was George III really a vicious tyrant, or a “crowned ass,” as Thomas Paine claimed in *Common Sense*? No; he made mistakes and could be stubborn, but he was also a conscientious ruler who simply was not able to accept the idea of American independence. In this lecture, we'll see how the Revolution looked from the British point of view, including the experience of soldiers, politicians, writers, and common people on both sides of the Atlantic.
- Dr. Patrick Allitt is the Cahoon Family Professor of American History at Emory University. He was born and raised in England, was an undergraduate at Oxford, a PhD student at the University of California, Berkeley, and has taught at Emory since 1988. He is the author of seven books, most recently *A Climate of Crisis: America in the Age of Environmentalism* (Penguin, 2014). He is also the presenter of twelve video and audio lecture series with “The Great Courses,” most recently *How Railways Transformed the World* (2024).

February 2, 2026

Pierce Butler and the Revolution in the American South

Lecturer: Dr. Jeffrey Young

- Pierce Butler was a British military officer who dramatically switched his allegiance to America prior to the Revolution. His military and political leadership in the cause of American liberty helped to launch the United States as an enduring republic. Yet, in an age defined by American freedom, Butler invested his wealth in plantation slavery, a decision that would lead to scandals that bedeviled his family across subsequent generations. Butler's family story illustrates the ways in which the American Revolution turned slavery into a moral problem that the Revolutionaries themselves struggled to resolve.
- Dr. Jeffrey Young teaches history at Georgia State University, where he offers classes on early American history and Georgia history. His research has focused on slavery in America and on the intersections between American political culture and American family life. His book, *Domesticating Slavery: The Master Class in Georgia and South Carolina*, was published by the University of North Carolina Press and his articles have appeared in the *Journal of Southern History* and the *Georgia Historical Quarterly*.

February 9, 2026

Why George Washington Matters

Lecturer: Dr. Douglas Bradburn

- At a time of decreasing civic knowledge, assaults on democracy around the world, hyper-partisanship at home, and anxiety about the character of the American experiment, the stories and values that we can learn from the example of George Washington are as significant as ever.
- Dr. Douglas Bradburn is President and CEO of George Washington's Mount Vernon and the former Founding Director of the George Washington Presidential Library. A well-known scholar of early American history, he has written *The Citizenship Revolution: Politics and the Creation of the American Union, 1774-1804*, and three anthologies, including *Early Modern Virginia: Reconsidering the Old Dominion*. He co-founded and is the editor of a book series, *Early American Histories*, and is the winner of numerous awards, grants, and fellowships, including the Gilder Lehrman Research Fellowship at the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies at Monticello, five Telly awards, and a “Thea” award. He has been featured on CSPAN, Good Morning America, CBS Sunday Morning, and the History Channel docudrama *WASHINGTON*.

February 16, 2026

Women in the American Revolution

Lecturer: Dr. Melissa Blair

- Dr. Blair will introduce the audience to a range of American women who helped shape the coming of the American Revolution and the course of the war. From well-known women like Abigail Adams and Deborah Sampson to lesser-known figures like Esther Reed and Shawnee leader Nonhelema, we'll meet women who fought and spied for both sides, who argued for or against independence, and who pushed the new nation to “consider the ladies” as the United States began to take shape.
- Dr. Melissa Estes Blair is Professor of History and department chair at Auburn University in Auburn, AL, where she has taught since 2015. Prior to arriving at Auburn, she taught for six years at Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, NC. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, and her B.A. from the University of Kentucky. Her research focuses on women and politics in the twentieth-century United States. She is the author of co-author of three books, most recently *American Women's History: A New Narrative History* (Wiley-Blackwell 2023) co-authored with Vanessa Holden and Maeve Kane.

February 23, 2026

A Founding Friendship and its Discontents: John Adams and Thomas Jefferson

Lecturer: Dr. Jane Kamensky

- What is civic friendship, and why does it matter? Thomas Jefferson and John Adams were founding friends in the 1770s who became factional foes in the 1790s, and distant enemies for over a decade thereafter. The remarkable reknitting of their relationship in the 1810s offers a model of frank disagreement navigated through shared commitment to the American project. Dr. Kamensky will show how Monticello is sharing their complex history. She will also explain how museums, historic sites, and other community learning partners can help revitalize the ties that bind Americans as a people.
- Dr. Jane Kamensky is President and CEO of Monticello/The Thomas Jefferson Foundation. She earned her BA (1985) and PhD (1993) in history from Yale University. She was the Jonathan Trumbull Professor of American History at Harvard University before moving to Monticello. Her most recent book, *Candida Royale and the Sexual Revolution* (2023) was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award for Biography. She is a former Commissioner of the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery and past Trustee of the Museum of the American Revolution.

March 2, 2026

“A Raging Whirlwind”: The Revolutionary War and Native Americans

Lecturer: Dr. David Preston

- The Revolutionary War for Native Americans was like “a raging whirlwind which tears up the trees,” as a Seneca leader named Honayawas described it in 1798. Although Americans have typically focused on the more conventional clashes among American, British, French, and Spanish armies along North America’s seaboard, there was a more destructive and brutal theater of the Revolutionary War that unfolded along America’s western frontier. There, Native Americans remained both independent and crucial players in the war, as both the British and Americans competed for the alliance and military strength of Indian peoples. The outcome of the Revolutionary War on the frontier shaped the future of North America for generations to follow.
- Dr. David Preston is the General Mark W. Clark Distinguished Chair of History at The Citadel and specializes in early American history and American Indian history. He is the author of several books, including *The Texture of Contact: European and Indian Settler Communities on the Frontiers of Iroquoia, 1667-1783* (2009) and *Braddock’s Defeat: The Battle of the Monongahela and the Road to Revolution* (2015), winner of the Guggenheim-Lehrman Prize in Military History and several literary awards as well as a finalist for the George Washington Book Prize.

March 9, 2026

The Constitution and the Federalist Papers

Lecturer: Dr. Patrick Allitt

- The thirteen little republics that replaced the thirteen colonies were so vulnerable that a group of influential Americans worked to create a viable national government in the late 1780s. James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, with the full support of George Washington, drafted and defended the Constitution, then sent it to the states for ratification. Their Federalist articles aimed to persuade citizens of the states that the republic would be strong enough to defend them without becoming another alien imposition of the British type.
- Dr. Patrick Allitt is the Cahoon Family Professor of American History at Emory University. He was born and raised in England, was an undergraduate at Oxford, a PhD student at the University of California, Berkeley, and has taught at Emory since 1988. He is the author of seven books, most recently *A Climate of Crisis: America in the Age of Environmentalism* (Penguin, 2014). He is also the presenter of twelve video and audio lecture series with “The Great Courses,” most recently *How Railways Transformed the World* (2024).

Registration Form

Name

Email Address

Phone Number

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Registration Selection (Required)

☐ AHC Member & Insider Registration: \$130 x ____ (number of registrations)

☐ Non-member Registration: \$140 x ____ (number of registrations)

Total Registration Amount: \$ _____

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All registrations must be postmarked by December 20, 2025. After that date, any remaining registration slots will be available via online sales only. If you wish to purchase individual lecture tickets and cannot make it to the full 7-week series, please contact Claire Haley, Vice President of Special Projects, at chaley@atlantahistorycenter.com or call (404) 814-4129.

Questions? Please email Claire Haley, Vice President of Special Projects, at chaley@atlantahistorycenter.com or call 404.814.4129.



