



The Meanings of Independence: The American Declaration in Global Context, 1776-1826

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Speaker Biographies



Christopher Brown is a historian of Britain and the British empire, principally in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with special emphasis on the comparative history of slavery and abolition, and with secondary interests in the Atlantic Slave Trade and the Age of Revolutions. His current research centers on the history of European experience on the African coast at the height of the Atlantic slave trade, and continues early commitments to the rise and fall of slavery in the British Empire. Published work has received prizes in four distinct fields of study – American History, British History, Atlantic History, and the history of Slavery, Abolition, and Resistance. Completed projects include *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (University of North Carolina Press) and, with Philip D. Morgan, *Arming Slaves: Classical Times to the Modern Age* (Yale University Press). He has written as well for *The Nation*, *The New York Times*, and the *London Review of Books*, among other outlets

Frank Cogliano is Professor of American History at the University of Edinburgh. He is the editor of *The American Revolution at 250: Twenty-Four Historians Reflect on the Founding* (University of Virginia Press, 2026). Liveright will publish his next book *Thomas Jefferson Survives: American Independence in His Time and Ours* (with Peter S. Onuf) in June 2026. Along with Patrick Griffin, Christa Dierksheide and Eliga Gould, he edits the [Revolutionary Age](#) series for the University of Virginia Press.



Christa Dierksheide is the Brockman Foundation Jefferson Scholars Foundation Professor of History at the University of Virginia, where she directs the Center for the Study of the Age of Jefferson. Her most recent book, co-authored with Nicholas Guyatt, is *Jefferson's Wolf: A Founding Father's Troubling Answer to the Problem of Slavery* (Harvard, 2026).

Andrew Edwards, I am a historian of Early America, capitalism, and money. My first book, *Money and the Making of the American Revolution*, was published by Princeton University Press in December 2025. I received my doctorate from Princeton University in 2018 to become the inaugural Career Development Fellow in the Global History of Capitalism at Brasenose College, Oxford. Before joining the School of History, I was a Sawyer Fellow at the New School for Social Research in New York City, working on the project *Currency and Empire: Race, Monetary Policy and Power*. My research has appeared in *Past & Present*, *The Journal of American History*, *Law & Social Inquiry*, and *L'Atelier du Centre de recherches historiques*.



James R. Fichter is the author of *So Great a Proffit: How the East Indies Transformed Anglo-American Capitalism* (Harvard: 2010) and of *Tea: Consumption, Politics, and Revolution, 1773-1776* (Cornell, 2023). He is writing a book on the slave trade during the American Revolutionary War. He is an associate professor at the University of Hong Kong.

Lisa Ford is Endowed Professor of Modern British Imperial History at George Washington University. A graduate of Columbia University in New York, her work centres on ideas and practices of order in the post-1763 British Empire and the early national United States. She is the author of four monographs: *Settler Sovereignty* (Harvard UP, 2010); *Rage for Order* (Harvard UP, 2016), co-authored with Professor Lauren Benton; *The King's Peace*: (Harvard UP, 2021); and *Inquiring into Empire* (Cambridge, 2025), co-authored with Professor Kirsten McKenzie, Dr. Naomi Parkinson and Professor David Andrew Roberts. Professor Ford is currently working on a history of emergency law and executive power in the English-speaking world from the eighteenth century onwards.





Annette Gordon-Reed is the Carl M. Loeb University Professor at Harvard. Gordon-Reed won sixteen book prizes, including the Pulitzer Prize in History in 2009 and the National Book Award in 2008, for *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family* (W.W. Norton, 2008). In addition to articles and reviews, her other works include *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy* (UVA Press, 1997), *Vernon Can Read! A Memoir*, a collaboration with Vernon Jordan (PublicAffairs, 2001), *Race on Trial: Law and Justice in American History* (Oxford University Press, 2002), a volume of essays that she edited, *Andrew Johnson* (Times Books/Henry Holt, 2010) and, with Peter S. Onuf, *“Most Blessed of the Patriarchs”:* *Thomas Jefferson and the Empire of the Imagination* (Liveright Publishing, 2016). Her most recent book is *On Juneteenth* (Liveright Publishing, 2021). Gordon-Reed was the Vyvyan Harmsworth Visiting Professor of American History at the University of Oxford (Queens College) 2014-2015.

Eliga Gould’s scholarship focuses on the American Revolution, with an emphasis on the entangled history that Americans shared with the rest of the Americas, as well as with Africa, Europe, and the wider world. His current book project, *Peace and Independence* (Oxford University Press), examines the least studied of the United States’ founding documents: the Treaty of 1783 that ended the American Revolutionary War. He is interested how the American quest to be accepted as a “treaty worthy” empire by Europe’s colonial powers shaped thinking about federalism, Native American treaty rights, and slavery and anti-slavery.



Patrick Griffin's work explores the intersection of colonial American and early modern Irish and British history. As such, it focuses on Atlantic-wide themes and dynamics. He has published work on the movement of peoples and cultures across the Atlantic Ocean, as well as the process of adaptation. He also examines the ways in which Ireland, Britain, and America were linked—and differed—during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He has looked at revolution and rebellion, movement and migration, and colonization and violence in each society in comparative perspective. Prof. Griffin currently serves as director of the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies.

Nicholas Guyatt is Professor of North American History at the University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of Jesus College. My work focuses on questions of race, empire and citizenship in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I'm particularly interested in the construction of racial categories and in the relationship between universalist ideas (especially ideas of equality) and the management of racial diversity in the early American republic. I'm also interested in how Americans thought about the world beyond the United States, and in the role of American thinkers and politics in shaping ideas about world order in the long nineteenth century.



William Anthony Hay is the associate director for public programs and professor in the School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership at Arizona State University. A historian specializing in Britain and the Atlantic World, his strategic history of the American Revolution "King George's Generals: The British Struggle for North America, 1763-1781" will be published by Basic Books. Hay taught in the History Department at Mississippi State University for 20 years, and earlier books include "Lord Liverpool" (2018) and "The Whig Revival" (2005).

Eric Hinderaker. This presentation is drawn from a forthcoming book by Eric Hinderaker and Rebecca Horn entitled *The Americas After 1492: A New Interpretive History*, which will be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press. Hinderaker and Horn have been colleagues at the University of Utah for 35 years, and this project is the product of a long series of conversations and collaborations. Hinderaker is author of *Elusive Empires*, *The Two Hendricks*, and *Boston's Massacre* and co-author with Peter C. Mancall of *At the Edge of Empire*. Horn is author of *Postconquest Coyoacan* and co-author with John Kicza of *Resilient Cultures*.





Joanna Innes is professor emeritus of modern history at the University of Oxford, and a senior research fellow at Somerville College. Her work explores the history of political culture. She has researched various topics around government, policy and society in eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Britain, partially collected in her monograph *Inferior Politics* (2009). For twenty years, she has also co-organised an international collaborative project looking at how ‘democracy’ shed its primarily ancient reference to become a key concept in modern politics, between the mid eighteenth and later nineteenth century, in Europe and both Americas. She is currently working towards the fourth and final volume in the related series, focussing on ‘central and northern Europe’.

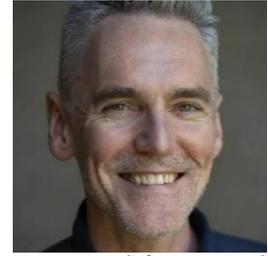
Carine Lounissi is an Associate Professor of American history at the University of Rouen. Her research interests are mainly focused on transatlantic intellectual cooperations and debates during the Age of Revolutions. She has published two books on one of the major figures of these transatlantic circulations, Thomas Paine, including *Thomas Paine and the French Revolution* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, paperback 2020). She is also an associate editor of the 6-volume *Thomas Paine : Collected Works* to be published in 2026 by Princeton University Press. Her current project is devoted to the intellectual reception of the American Revolution in France and in the French Atlantic from 1776 onward.

Grace Mallon is the Clive Holmes Fellow in History at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. Her research focuses on law, politics, and the administrative state in the postrevolutionary United States. Her first book, provisionally entitled *Practical Federalism: Intergovernmental Relations in the Early American Republic*, is under contract with the University of Chicago Press, in their ‘American Beginnings’ series. Her 2024 William and Mary Quarterly article, ‘Negotiated Federalism,’ was co-winner of the 2025 Cromwell Article Prize from the American Society for Legal History



Peter C. Mancall is Distinguished Professor and Andrew W. Mellon Professor of the Humanities at the University of Southern California, where he also directs the USC-Huntington Early Modern Studies Institute. His books include *Hakluyt’s Promise: An Elizabethan’s Obsession for an English America* (Yale, 2007); *Fatal Journey: The Final Expedition of Henry Hudson—A Tale of Mutiny and Murder in the Arctic* (Basic Books, 2009); and *The Trials of Thomas Morton: An Anglican Lawyer, His Puritan Foes, and the Making of a New England* (Yale, 2019). His next book, *Contested Continent: The Struggle for North America, c. 1000-1680*, which is volume one of the Oxford History of the United States, will be published on June 1. He was the Harmsworth Professor at Oxford in the 2019-2020 academic year.

Ian McBride joined Hertford College in 2016 as the Foster Professor of Irish History. The Foster chair is the only endowed chair of Irish History in Britain, and is attached to Hertford, the Oxford college with the strongest Irish associations. He has broad interests in Ireland between the seventeenth and twenty-first centuries, especially its politics, culture and intellectual life. He currently holds a Leverhulme Major Research Award which will enable him to spend two years researching and writing a study of the impact of the penal laws on eighteenth-century Ireland.



Brendan McConville's research focuses on the intersection of politics and social developments in Early America. He is the author of *These Daring Disturbers of the Public Peace* (Cornell, 1999, paperback University of Pennsylvania, 2003), *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (OIEAHC-UNC Press, 2006), and *The American Revolution* (forthcoming). Professor McConville taught at SUNY-Binghamton from 1992 to 2004 and was chair of the department there in 2003-04.

Andrew O'Shaughnessy is Professor of History at the University of Virginia. Between 2003 and 2022, he served as Vice President of The Thomas Jefferson Foundation (Monticello), and the Saunders Director of the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies. His book *The Men Who Lost America. British Leadership, the American Revolution and the Fate of the Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013) received eight national awards including the New York Historical Society American History Book Prize, the George Washington Book Prize, The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Excellence in American History Book Award and The Society of Military History Book Prize.



Mark Peterson is the Edmund S. Morgan Professor of History at Yale University, and faculty director of Yale's Lewis Walpole Library. His books include *The Price of Redemption: The Spiritual Economy of Puritan New England* (1997); *The City-State of Boston: The Rise and Fall of an Atlantic Power, 1630-1865* (2019); and most recently, *The Making and Breaking of the American Constitution: A Thousand-Year History* (Princeton, 2026). He is currently at work on a new history of the American Revolution. He teaches courses on Climate and Environment in Early America, The American Revolution, and the US Constitution, and co-edits the book series, *American Beginnings*, for the University of Chicago Press.

Eduardo Posada-Carbó is Professor of the History and Politics of Latin America in Oxford, and William Golding Senior Research Fellow at Brasenose College. He has published extensively on the history of democracy and elections – most recently, co-edited (with Joanna Innes and Mark Philp, eds.) *Re-Imagining Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1770s-1870s* (OUP, 2023), and co-edited (with Andrew Robertson), *The Oxford Handbook of Revolutionary Elections in the Americas, 1810-1910* (2026). With Iván Jaksic, he just co-edited *The Political Thought of Nineteenth-Century Spanish America* (Cambridge, 2026). His work on the history of democracy and elections includes publications in *Past&Present*, the *Historical Journal*, the *Hispanic American Historical Review*, and the *Journal of Latin American Studies*.



Steve Sarson is Professor of American Civilization at Jean Moulin University, Lyon. He is the author of *The Tobacco Plantation South and the Early American Atlantic World*; *British America: Creating Colonies, Imagining an Empire*; *Barack Obama: American Historian*, numerous book chapters and journal articles, and co-editor with Jack Greene of an eight-volume documents collection on *The American Colonies and the British Empire*. His latest book is *The Course of Human Events: The Declaration of Independence and the Historical*

Origins of the United States, published by University of Virginia Press and winner of the Walker Cowen Memorial Prize in Eighteenth-Century Studies.

Adam Smith is the Edward Orsborn Professor of United States Politics & Political History and a Professorial Fellow at University College and Director of the RAI. His specialism is the political history of the United States in the nineteenth century. In 2025, Oxford University Press published his latest book, *Gettysburg*. In 2017, the University of North Carolina Press published, *The Stormy Present: Conservatism and the Problem of Slavery in Northern Politics, 1846-1865*, which won the Jefferson Davis Award and was a finalist for the Lincoln Prize. His previous books include *No Party Now: Politics in the Civil War North* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).



Bertrand Van Ruymbeke is professor of American history and civilization at Université Paris 8, France. He is the author of *From New Babylon to Eden. The Huguenots and Their Migration to Co-lonial South Carolina* (2006), *L'Amérique avant les États-Unis. Une histoire de l'Amérique anglaise, 1497-1776* (2013), *Histoire des États-Unis* (2 vols., 2021), and *1776. L'année américaine* (2026). He currently heads the consortium *America2026* (www.america2026.eu)

Emily West (FRHistS, SFHEA) is Professor of Early American History in Oxford's History Faculty and Supernumerary Fellow in History at Brasenose College. She is broadly interested in issues of race and gender in American history, and her research focuses on slavery in the US South, especially the lives of enslaved women, the relationships between enslaved spouses, family life under enslavement, and affective ties between enslaved people and free people of colour. She is also interested in motherhood and the history of infant and child feeding, including wet nursing. Emily West is an associate editor for *Slavery and Abolition* and sits on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Southern History*, the *Journal of American Studies*, and *Civil War History*. She is currently chair of British American Nineteenth Century Historians (BrANCH).



Ashli White is Professor of History at the University of Miami (FL, USA), where she specializes in early North America's interactions with the wider world. Her recent book is *Revolutionary Things: Material Culture and Politics in the Late Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Yale UP, 2023), which analyzes political impact of the transnational circulation of objects associated with revolutions. White's first book, *Encountering Revolution: Haiti and the Making of the Early Republic* (Johns Hopkins UP, 2010), demonstrates the far-reaching impact of the Haitian Revolution on the early United States.

Rosemarie Zagarri is Distinguished University Professor and Professor of History at George Mason University. She received her Ph.D. from Yale University. A specialist in Early American political and women's history, she is the author of a numerous articles and four books, including *The Politics of Size: Representation in the United States, 1776-1850*, *A Woman's Dilemma: Mercy Otis Warren and the American Revolution*, and *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic*. She has received national fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Philosophical Society, and George Washington's Mount Vernon, among others. She is a member of the Brennan Center's Historians Council on the Constitution, a past president of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR), a Distinguished Lecturer for the Organization of American Historians, and an elected member of the Society of American Historians. She is finishing a new book, *Intimacies and Ambitions: Thomas Law in British India and the Early American Republic*.

