



**CELEBRATING AMERICA  
AT 250 | 1776-2026**



Florida Atlantic Observes the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Declaration of Independence

**FESTIVAL FOR AMERICA'S 250<sup>TH</sup>**

Presented by The Family of  
Marvin & Sybil Weiner



**FLORIDA  
ATLANTIC**

| DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

| DOROTHY F. SCHMIDT

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS

| FLORIDA ATLANTIC LIBRARIES



## CELEBRATING AMERICA AT 250 | 1776-2026

As we mark the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, Florida Atlantic University's Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters and the Florida Atlantic Libraries invite the community to reflect on the lasting significance of this founding document. Join us in celebrating both the revolutionary origins of our nation and the democratic ideals that continue to shape our world.

The Declaration of Independence is the philosophical foundation of the United States, declaring that all individuals are created equal and endowed with unalienable rights. Its bold assertion that government derives legitimacy from the consent of the governed continues to inspire democratic movements worldwide. Today, these founding ideals remain deeply relevant.

"Celebrating America at 250" is more than a commemoration – it's a call to thoughtful engagement. Through a vibrant series of exhibitions, concerts, and lectures that will move you and spark insight, we invite you to explore the past in conversation with the present.

At the heart of this experience is the Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection, housed in the Florida Atlantic Libraries. This remarkable archive of original 18th-century books, pamphlets, and political writings offers a unique window into the ideas that shaped the American founding and its enduring legacy. We hope this milestone year inspires reflection, connection, and a renewed dedication to the promise of the Declaration – for our campus, our community, and the generations to come.

**Michael J. Horswell, Dean**  
Dorothy F. Schmidt  
College of Arts and Letters

**Linda Marie Golian-Lui, Dean**  
Florida Atlantic Libraries and  
University Professor



### -CONCERT-

## AMERICAS IN HARMONY

Florida Atlantic Chamber Singers, Vocalis,  
and ¡Cantemos!

**7 PM, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11,  
UNIVERSITY THEATRE**

Choral music from the Americas that exhibits the influence of nationalism and patriotism in North and South America. Texts by notable Americans who shaped this country are explored in an assortment of choral settings. Conducted by Patricia P. Fleitas, DMA, and Stacie Lee Rossow, DMA. Tickets \$10 at [fauevents.com](http://fauevents.com) or 561-297-6124.

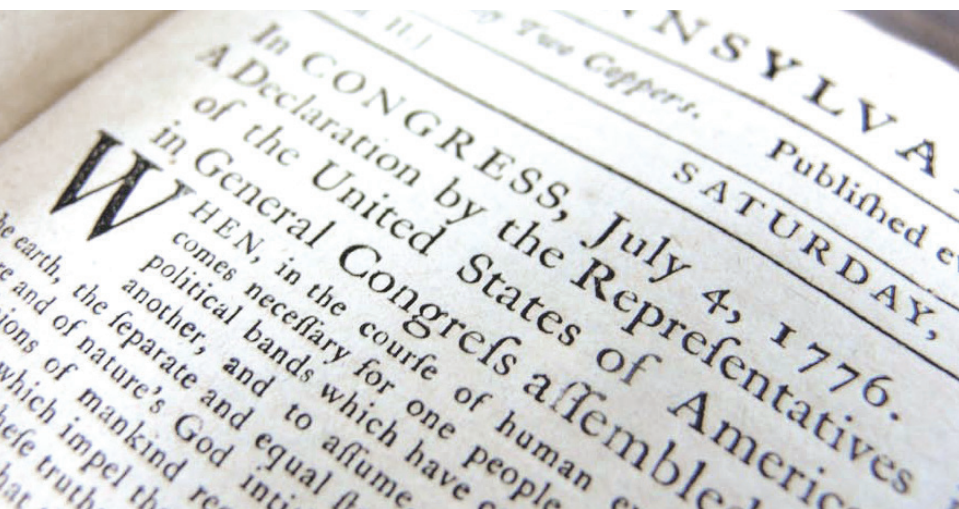


Image (left): First printing of the Declaration of Independence in a newspaper. Held in the Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection at Florida Atlantic Libraries.

All performances, artists, dates, and times are subject to change. If special accommodation of a disability is needed, please contact the appropriate office five working days in advance: for events at the S.E. Wimberly Library, email [libevents@fau.edu](mailto:libevents@fau.edu), and for events ticketed by the Box Office, call 561-297-6124 for special accommodation of a disability.



#### -EXHIBITION-

### THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION: CROSSROADS OF DEMOCRACY

Florida Atlantic Libraries

**ON VIEW: SEPTEMBER 16 – NOVEMBER 20**

**5TH FLOOR, S.E. WIMBERLY LIBRARY**

Tuesdays - Thursdays, 10 am – 2 pm

An exhibit of original 18th-century documents from the Florida Atlantic Libraries' Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection illustrates how the American Revolution was the culmination of years of tension, debate, and resistance. From contested taxes and boycotts to powerful words and acts of defiance, the colonies found themselves drawn into an escalating struggle with Britain. This exhibition traces the twisting trail of events that transformed loyal subjects into revolutionaries and set the stage for the birth of a new nation. Free and open to the public. For more information, visit [library.fau.edu/upcoming-events](http://library.fau.edu/upcoming-events)



#### -SYMPOSIUM-

### SPIRIT OF AMERICA RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM: HOW SCHOLARS ARE USING THE WEINER COLLECTION

Department of History and Florida Atlantic Libraries

**4 PM, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30**

**5TH FLOOR, S.E. WIMBERLY LIBRARY**

Scholars from across the U.S. are visiting to conduct research in the Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection! This collection of rare books reflects the personal libraries of such founders as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. In this symposium, the Visiting Fellows will present their research and discuss how it relies on examining the treasures of the Spirit of America Collection. This event is made possible by the generous underwriting of Dr. Howard and Judith Weiner in conjunction with the support of the FAU Libraries and the Department of History. Free and open to the public. To register for free tickets, visit [library.fau.edu/upcoming-events](http://library.fau.edu/upcoming-events)



**Indigenous People's Movement  
through "La Florida" and the  
Maritime World of Early America,  
1720-1784**

**Charlotte Biggs,**  
University of California,  
Riverside



**The Other Irish America:  
Immigrant Imperialists in  
the Colonial South**

**Collin Bonnell,**  
Concordia University



**The Bank of North America and  
the Creation of Early American  
Financial Systems**

**Arya Martinez,**  
University of New Hampshire

Image (left): Patrons viewing the Weiner Spirit of America Collection after a lecture by two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Alan Taylor (2019).



#### -TEA PARTY AND LECTURE-

### READING THE LEAVES: MATERIALITY OF EARLY AMERICAN TEA

Florida Atlantic Libraries

**3 PM, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16**  
**5TH FLOOR, S.E. WIMBERLY LIBRARY**

Enjoy afternoon tea in honor of the Boston Tea Party and in support of the Florida Atlantic Libraries. During the tea service, complete with clotted cream, Sandra Norman, PhD (Department of History) will provide an illustrated look at how tea entered the colonies and became a must-have for the socially conscious. She will also reveal how the tea craze stimulated British manufacturers to design full tea sets at every price point and ship them to the colonies, glutting the pages of local newspapers with tea-related advertisements. Plus, why and how did the teacup eventually get its handle? This is a ticketed fundraiser. Request ticket information at [libevents@fau.edu](mailto:libevents@fau.edu)

#### -CONCERT-

### THE AMERICAS SPEAK IN SONG

Choral Groups, Department of Music

**7 PM, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21**  
**UNIVERSITY THEATRE**

Schola Cantorum of Florida, Ensemble in Residence, Florida Atlantic University Chorus and Chamber Singers present the musical cultures of the Americas. The program presents several choral styles, including arrangements of popular dance and folk tunes from Latin America, and André Thomas' "Mass: Celebration of Peace and Joy," a gospel setting of the traditional Latin mass. Randall Thompson's "Testament of Freedom" is the featured work. Tickets at [fauevents.com](http://fauevents.com) or 561-297-6124

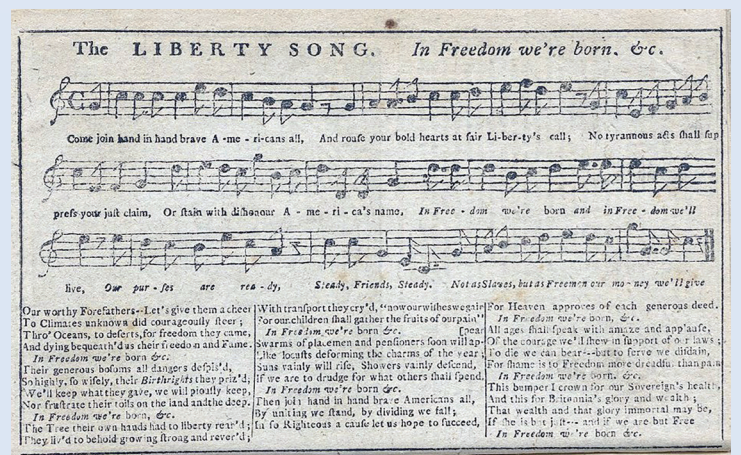


Image (right): "The Liberty Song" by John Dickinson, from Bickerstaff's Boston Almanac (1769) in the Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection at Florida Atlantic



#### -EXHIBITION-

### **WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS: WE WALK THESE GROUNDS**

University Galleries

**ON VIEW: JANUARY 22 – MARCH 29**

Reception: January 22, 4:30–8:30 pm

Schmidt Center Gallery and Public Space

On the eve of the United States' 250th anniversary, "We Hold These Truths: We Walk These Grounds" brings together contemporary artists whose works examine the layered meanings of American identity, land and legacy. Through photography, fine craft and installation, artists re-imagine familiar symbols – apple trees, wild horses, longhorn steer, presidential portraits and family heirlooms – as portals into personal and collective memory. Award-winning artists featured in the exhibition include, among others, Pulitzer Prize-winning presidential photographer Doug Mills, Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Artistic Innovation grantee John Hitchcock, and NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow Daesha Devón Harris. Learn more at [fau.edu/galleries](http://fau.edu/galleries)

#### -LECTURE-

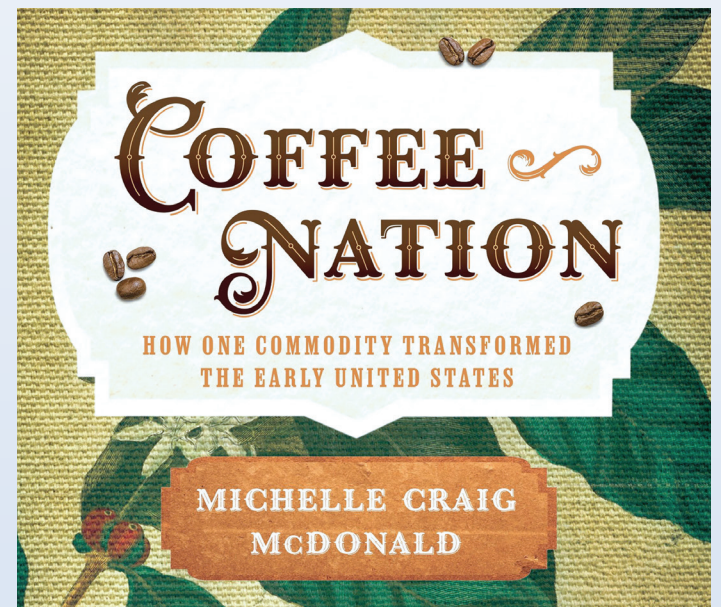
### **BREWING A REVOLUTION: THE ROLE OF COFFEEHOUSES IN COLONIAL PROTEST**

Department of History

**4 PM, WED., JANUARY 28  
ZOOM WEBINAR**



Michelle McDonald, Ph.D., Director of the Library and Museum at the American Philosophical Society, examines the 18th-century origins of coffee's place in daily American life. Her lecture will examine how colonists used coffeehouses to organize themselves politically in anticipation of the coming revolution, demonstrating that the Colonial Era was an indispensable prelude to the creation of a new nation. This program is made possible by the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Florida. Free and open to the public. To register for ZOOM Webinar access, visit [fau.edu/history/lavoy](http://fau.edu/history/lavoy)



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## FESTIVAL FOR AMERICA'S 250<sup>TH</sup> | 1776-2026

Come together to patriotically celebrate the nation's founding and reflect on its meanings and lessons. Linger to admire the Florida Atlantic Libraries' awe-inspiring Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection of original documents from the American Revolution.



### About the Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection

The Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection at the Florida Atlantic Libraries preserves more than 13,000 items of original 18th-century material and is nationally recognized as one of the most important collections of its kind. It was first modeled on the libraries of Jefferson, Adams, and Franklin. It grew to hold

so much more. It includes literature, philosophy, sermons, and pamphlet essays such as Common Sense; Continental officer letters; notes kept by Revolutionary committees; first copies of the Declaration of Independence and the Federalist Papers; and an early copy of the Constitution. The Festival helps to achieve Marvin Weiner's vision of making the Spirit of America Collection accessible to students and the community.

*Image: Mr. Marvin Weiner, Collector & Benefactor*

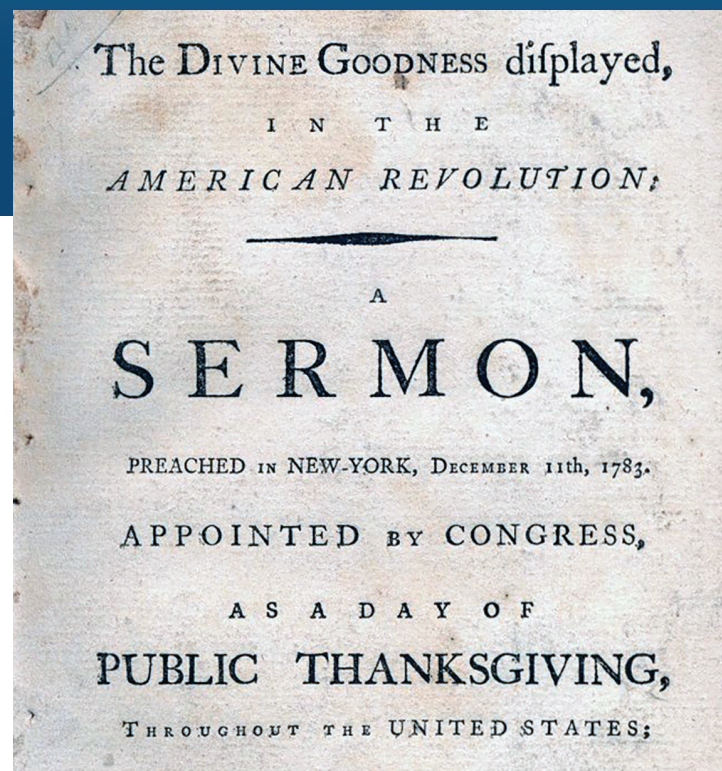
### About the Organizers

The Festival for America's 250th is proudly organized by the Department of History and Florida Atlantic Libraries. With notable strength in Early American History, the Department is a member of the Consortium of the McNeil Center for Early American Studies. It also advances research on Colonial America with the Society of Colonial Wars Fellowship in Memory of Kenneth R. LaVoy Jr. The Department and the Libraries partner with the prestigious Huntington Library in a Collaborative Fellowship, underwritten by Dr. Howard and Judith Weiner, that assembles a community of scholars for research in the Spirit of America Collection.

### For more information, contact:

Jason T. Sharples, Associate Professor of History,  
[jsharples@fau.edu](mailto:jsharples@fau.edu) | 561-297-4928

Victoria Thur, Assistant Dean for Special Collections, Archives,  
and Distinctive Collections at Florida Atlantic Libraries.  
[vthur@fau.edu](mailto:vthur@fau.edu) | 561-297-3787



### -EXHIBITION-

## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: CELEBRATING THE 250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S.

Florida Atlantic Libraries

### ON VIEW: FEBRUARY 2 – MARCH 20

Weekdays, 10 am – 2 pm, 5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library

Inspirational documents, such as an original July 1776 printing of the Declaration of Independence, are on display with other original artifacts of the American Revolution. These treasures from the Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection, with others on loan from Seth Kaller Inc. Historical Documents & Legacy Collections, inspire visitors to contemplate the sacrifices, values, and legacies of the American Revolution. Enjoy display panels and interactive digital kiosks that use storytelling, illustration, technology and unique artifacts and primary accounts to connect modern audiences with the people and places that shaped the birth of our nation. This traveling component, the "American Revolution Experience," is a collaborative project of the American Battlefield Trust and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Visitors will have interactive opportunities to pause and reflect on their patriotism, what liberty means to them, and what they will do to remain civically engaged. Free and open to the public.

For more information, visit [library.fau.edu/upcoming-events](http://library.fau.edu/upcoming-events)

*Image: From the Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection at the Florida Atlantic Libraries*



## -SCREENING AND LECTURE-

## DRUNK HISTORY, SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE, AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

### • 7 PM, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Culture and Society Bldg. (CU),  
Movie Theatres

Screening and Panel Discussion led by Matthew Elfenbein, PhD, Florida Atlantic. Enjoy clips from Comedy Central's Drunk History and Saturday Night Live with a panel discussion that examines comedians' takes on the American Revolution. Presented by the School of Communication and Multimedia Studies and the Department of History.



### • 4 PM, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library

Lecture and Q&A Richard Bell, PhD, University of Maryland. What is the history behind the comedy? Renowned speaker Dr. Richard Bell gives an award-winning historian's view on iconic sketches from SNL and Comedy Central's Drunk History. Winner of the NEH Public Scholar Award, finalist for the George Washington Prize, and recipient of Maryland's highest accolade for teaching. Presented by the Department of History and Florida Atlantic Libraries, and co-sponsored by the School of Communication and Multimedia Studies.



For free admission, register at [fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250)



## -SCREENING AND LECTURE-

## SPIES! ESPIONAGE IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

### • 3 PM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2

5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library

View an episode of the espionage thriller AMC's Turn: Washington's Spies in preparation for a historical lecture on the true spy stories of the American Revolution.



### • 4 PM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2

5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library

Lecture and Q&A: Jeffrey Rogg, PhD, University of South Florida: Even before the "shot heard round the world," the spy game was afoot. Discover how the British could have ended the American Revolution before it even began and how leading Founders, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay, had to learn the hard lessons of espionage and intelligence to win the shadow war for independence. Dr. Jeffrey Rogg is passionate about educating a more informed citizenry as it makes decisions about how to balance liberty and security. Presented by the Department of History and Florida Atlantic Libraries, and co-sponsored by FAU's International Espionage Studies Network.

For free admission, register at [fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250)

Image (above): The capture of Major John André, British spymaster, after a secret meeting with U.S. Major General Benedict Arnold, the traitorous commander of West Point.





#### -STUDENT DANCE-

### GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BALL

Led by Jeanette Watts, MA,  
Historian and Dance Instructor

**EVENING OF FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13**

5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library



An unforgettable night for our students. Come in costume (optional) with our ideas and guidance posted at [fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250). Students will learn the period's dance steps, try their new moves accompanied by FAU student musicians, and occasionally pick up the tempo with a DJ's modern beats. Along the way, the dance instructor will share lessons about social graces, polite conversation, marriage matching, and other Revolutionary-era history connected to dance. Refreshments served throughout the three-hour event. Presented by the Department of History and Florida Atlantic Libraries. For free admission, register at [fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250). Students only; must have a valid FAU student email address.

**FESTIVAL FOR AMERICA'S 250<sup>TH</sup> | 1776-2026**

[fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250)



#### -LECTURE AND Q&A-

### FLORIDA IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Judith Bense, PhD,  
University of West Florida:



**4 PM, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19**

5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library

Florida was a battlefield in the American Revolutionary War when Spain, a U.S. ally, invaded Britain's loyal "fourteenth colony." Dr. Judith Bense shares this forgotten story with historical and archaeological expertise. Recipient of multiple lifetime achievement awards. Presented by the Department of History and Florida Atlantic Libraries, sponsored by FAU's Study of the Americas Initiative, and co-sponsored by the Department of Anthropology. For free admission, register at [fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250)

#### -LECTURE AND Q&A-

### ALEXANDER HAMILTON: BLOOD, HONOR, AND POLITICS IN EARLY AMERICA

Adrian Finucane, PhD, Florida Atlantic



**4 PM, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24**

5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library

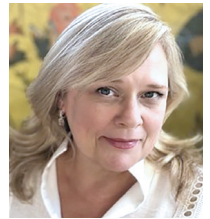
Explore the scandal, turmoil, and violence that characterized political culture in the first decades of American government. What drove U.S. Vice President Aaron Burr to fatally shoot his fellow revolutionary, Alexander Hamilton, on the banks of the Hudson River in 1804? You'll have to come to find out. Presented by the Department of History and Florida Atlantic Libraries. For free admission, register at [fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250)



**-LECTURE AND Q&A-**

**THE PAINTER'S FIRE: THE ARTISTS WHO CHAMPIONED THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

Zara Anishanslin, PhD,  
University of Delaware



**4PM, TUESDAY, MARCH 10**

5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library

Paint, canvas, wax; not muskets or bayonets. These were the weapons that artists used to inspire rebellion and define American patriotism. Dr. Zara Anishanslin is a public-facing, prize-winning historian with expertise in art and material culture – the “things” of the past. Includes art activities provided by FAU's University Galleries. Presented by the Department of History and Florida Atlantic Libraries, and co-sponsored by the University Galleries.

For free admission, register at [fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250)



**-LECTURE AND Q&A-**

**THE BOSTON MASSACRE: A FAMILY STORY**

Serena Zabin, PhD, Carleton College

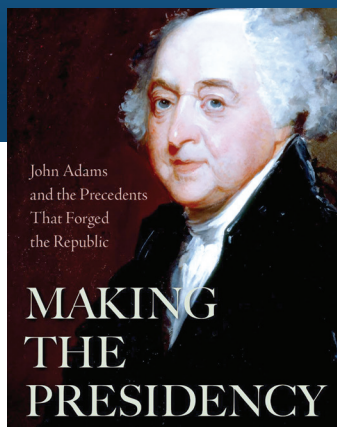
**4 PM, THURSDAY, MARCH 5  
(ANNIVERSARY)**

5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library



On this day in History, British soldiers shot five local men to death. Discover how the Boston Massacre arose from conflicts that were as personal as they were political, and how the tragedy fueled what quickly became the American Revolution. Dr. Serena Zabin is a celebrated historian and acclaimed teacher with a prize-winning book. Presented by the Department of History and Florida Atlantic Libraries. Made possible by the generous sponsorship of the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Florida.

For free admission, register at [fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250)



### JOHN O'SULLIVAN MEMORIAL LECTURE: INHERITING THE REVOLUTION: THE MODERN LEGACY OF 1776

Lindsay Chervinsky, PhD, George Washington  
Presidential Library

**4PM, THURSDAY, MARCH 19**

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

Americans revere the Constitution and the Founding generation that forged the nation, but what would the Founders think about the United States today? We will consider how the Founders conceptualized politics, government institutions, and political culture and their expectations for the nation. Dr. Chervinsky will then explore how society has evolved or remained the same. Sponsored by the Department of History's John O'Sullivan Memorial Lecture and the Florida Atlantic Libraries, co-sponsored by the Department of Political Science. Tickets \$25; Faculty, staff, and students FREE; Groups of 8 or more \$15. Tickets at [fauevents.com](http://fauevents.com) or 561-297-6124

#### CEREMONY

Dedication of the America 250 Patriots Marker  
Seminole Chapter, National Society Daughters of the  
American Revolution  
5th Floor, S.E. Wimberly Library

The Daughters of the American Revolution proudly presents this commemorative marker to Florida Atlantic University in recognition of its ongoing commitment to honoring the memory of the men and women who sacrificed to establish the United States as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. This marker honors the courageous Patriots who founded our nation and serves as a reminder to value their sacrifice and to embody their conviction, bravery, and spirit of unity in pursuit of liberty and justice for all.

### PARTNERS IN PRESENTING THE FESTIVAL FOR AMERICA'S 250<sup>TH</sup>

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The Family of Marvin & Sybil Weiner

#### WEEK SPONSOR

Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Florida

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#### EXHIBITION CONTRIBUTORS

Seth Kaller Inc. Historical Documents  
& Legacy Collections  
American Battlefield Trust and the  
Daughters of the American Revolution





## FESTIVAL FOR AMERICA'S 250<sup>TH</sup> | 1776-2026

### SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

If you find these program valuable, we invite you to become a sponsor of the Festival for America's 250th. Your support will help fund an exciting array of activities to engage students and the community in celebrating this special time in our country's history.

- Receptions Sponsor: \$10,000
- Week Sponsor: \$5,000 Events available for Week Sponsorship at the time of printing (check [fauf.fau.edu/events/ffa250](http://fauf.fau.edu/events/ffa250) or scan the QR code below for up-to-date availability):
  - Spies! Espionage in the American Revolution (2/2)
  - Drunk History, Saturday Night Live, and the American Revolution (2/10–2/11)
  - George Washington's Ball (2/13)
  - Florida in the American Revolution (2/19)
  - Alexander Hamilton: Blood, Honor, and Politics in Early America (2/24)
  - The Painter's Fire: The Artists Who Championed the American Revolution (3/10)
  - Reception after Inheriting the Revolution: The Modern Legacy of 1776 (3/19)
- Promotion Sponsor: \$2,500
- Friends of the Festival: \$1,000
- Festival Patron: \$100 - \$999



To donate, visit  
**[fauf.fau.edu/events/ffa250](http://fauf.fau.edu/events/ffa250)**  
or scan the QR code.

Your contribution may be tax-deductible based on IRS regulations regarding goods or services received in exchange for your donation.

For more information please contact:  
Doug Kanter, History Department Chair  
(561) 297-3841 | [dkanter1@fau.edu](mailto:dkanter1@fau.edu)



### -CONCERT-

## A MORE PERFECT UNION: AMERICA AT 250

Florida Atlantic Wind Ensemble  
Department of Music

**7 PM, FRIDAY, MARCH 27**  
**UNIVERSITY THEATRE**

Kyle Prescott directs as we celebrate 250 years of our great nation and the semiquincentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Join us for patriotic favorites alongside evocative and meaningful works inspired by our collective journey toward a "more perfect union."  
Tickets at [fauevents.com](http://fauevents.com) or 561-297-6124

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#### -CONCERT-

### ICONIC AMERICAN VOICES: CELEBRATING AMERICA AT 250!

Florida Atlantic Symphony Orchestra  
Department of Music

**7 PM, THURSDAY, APRIL 16**  
**UNIVERSITY THEATRE**

Under the direction of Laura Joella, the concert features a collection of American works, from Sousa's "The Liberty Bell," to Leonard Bernstein's "Divertimento for Orchestra," and Florence Price's Symphony No. 3 in C Minor. Aaron Copland's "Lincoln Portrait," with narration by Kevin Wilt, brings to life the words of Abraham Lincoln in a piece that resonates with profound dignity and hope. Adding a cinematic touch to the celebration, the concert also includes a suite of music by film composer John Williams, whose music captures the originality and heart of the American story. Tickets at [fauevents.com](http://fauevents.com) or 561-297-6124

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Credits for historical images that appear in this pamphlet are posted at [fau.edu/america250](http://fau.edu/america250).

#### -RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM-

### AMERICAN REVOLUTIONS: THE REVERBERATIONS OF REBELLION ACROSS THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

Study of the Americas Initiative, Department of History,  
and Florida Atlantic Libraries

Save the Dates:

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2026**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2026**

Florida Atlantic faculty and students will present research that results from their year of sustained attention to the 250th anniversary of the U.S. founding. Under the signature Study of the Americas Initiative, presenters will collaborate across disciplines and with a hemisphere-wide perspective that capitalizes on South Florida's centrality to the Americas. This event is an extension of the annual Spirit of America Symposium at which three visiting scholars will share the results of their own research in the Marvin & Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection at the Florida Atlantic Libraries. These visiting researchers hold FAU-Huntington Collaborative Fellowships through the generosity of Dr. Howard and Judith Weiner, the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, and the Florida Atlantic Libraries, in partnership with the prestigious Huntington Library of San Marino, CA.





## CELEBRATING AMERICA AT 250 | 1776-2026



For tickets to free events in the Festival for America's  
250th, visit [fau.edu/america250](https://fau.edu/america250)

For associated concerts and the John O'Sullivan  
Memorial Lecture, get tickets at  
[fauevents.com](https://fauevents.com) | 561-297-6124

Parking information for each event is posted  
on its corresponding website



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