

# NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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## NEH Landmarks of American History Workshop

A Revolution in Government:

Philadelphia, American Independence and the Constitution, 1765-1791

July 12-16, 2010 and July 19-23, 2010

National Constitution Center

Philadelphia, PA

Dear Colleague:

Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshops are offered by the National Endowment for the Humanities to provide K-12 educators with the opportunity to engage in intensive study and discussion of important topics and issues in American history and culture, while providing them with direct experiences in the interpretation of significant historical and cultural sites and the use of archival and other primary evidence.

The National Constitution Center in Philadelphia invites you to join distinguished historians and other scholars for a weeklong seminar: "A Revolution in Government: Philadelphia, American Independence and the Constitution, 1765-1791." Philadelphia, the birthplace of American democracy, was the nation's leading metropolis in the era of the American Revolution. Because so many formative events in the Revolutionary era – including the First and Second Continental Congresses and the Constitutional Convention – occurred in Philadelphia, the city is the perfect vantage point from which to study the American founding. More than any other American city, Philadelphia celebrates its past through the preservation of many nationally significant historic sites while simultaneously embracing its present and future as a commercially and culturally vibrant, modern city.

### **Theme**

No city had a greater impact on the founding of the American republic than Philadelphia. This is the city where independence was declared, where a government was organized, and where a revolution in government – the framing of the U.S. Constitution – all took place. In the decade between 1790 and 1800, Philadelphia was the capital of the new nation. Accordingly, the city and its inhabitants left an indelible mark on the dramatic political events of the founding era. Of the six men who signed both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, four of them were Pennsylvanians. Philadelphia itself produced a remarkable generation of statesmen, legislators and lawyers, including Gouverneur Morris, Robert Morris, James Wilson, and of course, Benjamin Franklin. The impact that these men, and the city they inhabited, had on the nation's founding will be a special focus of the institute, and will be demonstrated in walking-tours of historic Philadelphia and visits to the city's many landmarks. Leading American historians will conduct the institute and present a tightly focused series of seminars on the origins of American conceptions of liberty and the titanic political conflicts of the founding era.

### **Content, Scholars and Classroom Material Development**

History in Philadelphia is something to be experienced and not simply read. During our five days in Philadelphia, we will participate in walking-tours and field trips throughout Independence National Historical Park. Carpenters' Hall, the site of the First Continental Congress, and Independence Hall, the birthplace of both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, are among the famous landmarks waiting for you to explore. So are less well-known sites, such as the Graff House, where Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of

Independence and the Market Street address where Benjamin Franklin's home and courtyard once stood. Seminars will be conducted by prominent American historians, including: Daniel K. Richter, director of the McNeil Center for Early American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania; and Richard Beeman and Michael Zuckerman, senior historians at the University of Pennsylvania. Morning seminars will be followed by field trips and walking-tours led by scholars and interpreters from the National Park Service. Professor Zuckerman, an expert on Benjamin Franklin, will lead a walking-tour of "Franklin's Philadelphia." Afternoons will be spent with a master teacher who will supplement the morning's content with methods of teaching the Constitution and assisting you in the development of classroom-ready materials.

### Topics for the five-day seminar will include

#### **Day One: The Anglo-American Heritage of Liberty (1215-1763)**

American concepts and practices of individual liberty are rooted in the English tradition but were expanded and transformed by 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century American life. For example, English "common law" and the 17th century struggle between Parliament and the King profoundly shaped American understandings of British liberty and the British Constitution. To help gauge the extent of the American transformation of British traditions, we will read Benjamin Franklin's *Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind* (1751). Franklin's text offers an American counter-example to the assigned English texts, that include Magna Carta (1215), the Declaration of Rights (1689) and excerpts from Locke's *Second Treatise on Government*. It will also serve as a gateway to the institute's Pennsylvania-based curriculum.

#### **Day Two: Declaring Independence (1763-1776)**

Despite having their personal liberty threatened, Americans struggled to forge a coherent response to the change in British imperial policy in 1763. From 1763 to 1774, American resistance mounted sporadically; but by 1774 the colonies were developing into a more united rebellion of British royal authority. Utilizing the landmarks of Carpenters Hall and the Pennsylvania State House, later to be called Independence Hall, this session will explore both the early American resistance to British authority and the climactic events of 1774-1776. We will begin the session by reading letters from British royal governors describing American resistance to the Stamp Act (July-November 1765). These will enliven our brief review of the "Resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress" (1765). To trace and discover how these resolutions fared over the next decade, we will read the "Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress" of 1774. James Wilson's pamphlet, "Considerations on the Nature and Extent of the Legislative Authority of the British Parliament," and Tom Paine's *Common Sense*, will then serve as an intellectual bridge to our consideration of the Declaration of Independence of 1776. The seminar will be led by Richard R. Beeman, University of Pennsylvania

#### **Day Three: To Begin the World Anew: Establishing Government in the Name of the People (1776-1781)**

Now separated from Britain, the states had to establish independent governments. "We have it in our power to begin the world over again," wrote Tom Paine. "The birthday of a new world is at hand." Most states adopted a new, republican constitution in an attempt to create a form of government that would extend the principles of liberty throughout America. This new government, however, did not solve the problem dividing authority between local and national governments, so in 1781, the states agreed to the Articles of Confederation. While the central government established by the Articles led a successful revolution, it proved ineffectual at home and abroad after the war. Many Americans blamed the general deterioration of their political life on its weakness. By reading the fundamentally libertarian Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776) and comparing it to the more conservative Virginia state constitution (1776), participants will see that colonial legislative efforts varied considerably. These, in turn, will be compared to the Pennsylvania state constitution (1776), the most explicitly democratic state constitution of its

era. Establishing new state governments in the name of the people did not solve the problem of how to divide power between local and central governments. We will examine the consequences of this deficit in detail. The seminar will be led by Daniel Richter, McNeil Center for Early American Studies and the University of Pennsylvania.

#### **Day Four: Creating a New Federal Constitution (1781-1787)**

In the mid-1780s, frustration with the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation (1781) came together with mounting concern over examples of legislative tyranny and other political and social conditions in the states. This produced a powerful momentum for constitutional change. The result was the Constitutional Convention that met in Philadelphia in 1787 to frame the new constitution. The delegates – including Pennsylvanians James Wilson and Gouverneur Morris, whose central roles will be explored in detail – gathered amidst uncertain chances of success. Yet the document they created was remarkable, both for the way it reconfigured ideas about republican government and federalism, and how it absorbed the precedents of state constitution-making, including Pennsylvania's. Its acceptance by the American people, however, would still require an epochal political struggle. Discussion in this session will be based primarily on the participants' reading of James Madison's *Notes on the Federal Convention*. Particular attention will be paid to the roles of James Wilson, Gouverneur Morris, John Dickinson, Charles C. Pinckney, and William Paterson. The seminar will be led by Richard R. Beeman, University of Pennsylvania.

#### **Day Five: Adding a Bill of Rights: The Federalist/Anti-Federalist Debate (1788-1791)**

The debates over ratification in the fall and winter of 1787-88 involved a fundamental contest over what kind of society and culture America was to have. Anti-Federalists focused on what they saw as violations of earlier Revolutionary assumptions about the nature of power and the needs of a small homogenous society in a republican state. Federalists saw themselves as saving the Revolution from its excesses. Ratification of a Bill of Rights in 1791 completed the framework of the American government that has endured to this day. This session will be based substantially on the participants' reading of the most important Federalist/Anti-Federalist papers, and will thus be primary-source rich. The session will be led by Michael Zuckerman, University of Pennsylvania.

#### **Development of Classroom Ready Materials**

Daily sessions will be devoted to methods of relating content presented in faculty workshops to your students. Working in small groups or independently, participants will be expected to develop a classroom ready document based on content covered in the institute and will develop a detailed outline of this resource before leaving Philadelphia. Participants will be given the opportunity to work side-by-side with faculty during breakout sessions each afternoon.

## Logistics

### **When**

Each five-day seminar begins on Monday morning and ends on Friday afternoon. On your application, please indicate your order of preference regarding the week that you would like to attend.

Week one: July 12-16, 2010

Week two: July 19-23, 2010

### **Where**

Seminars will be conducted at the National Constitution Center on Independence Mall in the heart of historic district of Philadelphia. We have reserved housing accommodations at the Holiday Inn Historic District, just two blocks from the National Constitution Center. Participants will be offered the choice of a private or shared room. The hotel provides free in-room internet access and workout facilities. The National Constitution Center provides daily access to its Education Resource Library, where participants will have access to public computers and a wealth of materials for resource development.

### **Who**

The program is open to public, private and home-school teachers as well as other school personnel. Teachers and administrators from all levels and disciplines may apply, but preference will be given to teachers who incorporate American history themes and civics in their classrooms.

Teachers at schools in the United States or its territorial possessions or Americans teaching in foreign schools where at least 50 percent of the students are American nationals are eligible for this program. Applicants must be United States citizens, residents of U.S. jurisdictions, or foreign nationals who have been residing in the United States or its territories for at least the three years immediately preceding the application deadline. Foreign nationals teaching abroad at non-U.S. chartered institutions are not eligible to apply. Individuals may not apply to participate in a workshop given by the same director on the same topic in which they have previously participated; in other words, they should not apply to attend the same workshop twice. Individuals may not apply to study with a Landmarks director who is a family member. Applicants must complete the NEH application cover sheet and provide all of the information requested below to be considered eligible.

**New this year:** An individual may apply to **up to three** NEH summer projects in any one year (Landmarks workshops, seminars, or institutes), but may participate in **only one**. Please note that eligibility criteria differ significantly between the Landmarks Workshops and the Seminars and Institutes Programs.

## Selection Criteria

A selection committee (consisting in most cases of the project director, one of the project scholars, and a veteran teacher) will read and evaluate all properly completed applications.

Special consideration is given to the likelihood that an applicant will benefit professionally and personally from the workshop experience. It is important, therefore, to address each of the following factors in the application essay:

1. your professional background;
2. your interest in the subject of the workshop;
3. your special perspectives, skills, or experiences that would contribute to the workshop; and
4. how the experience would enhance your teaching or school service.

**Preference is given to applicants who have not previously participated in an NEH Landmarks workshop, seminar or institute.**

## Stipend, Tenure, and Conditions of Award

Teachers selected to participate will receive a stipend of \$1,200 at the end of the residential workshop session. Stipends are intended to **help** cover travel expenses to and from the project location, books, and ordinary living expenses. Stipends are taxable.

**Workshop participants are required to attend all scheduled meetings and to engage fully in all project activities. Participants who do not complete the full tenure of the project will receive a reduced stipend.**

Participants will provide NEH with an assessment of their workshop experience, especially in terms of its value to their personal and professional development. You will be asked to provide a confidential online evaluation at the close of the workshop.

### **Cost**

Estimated housing costs are \$70 per night, for a shared room and approximately \$140 per night for a single room. Participants may arrive on the Sunday preceding the first seminar session on Monday.

## Application Checklist

A completed application consists of **three** copies of the following **collated** items:

- the completed application cover sheet,
- a résumé or short biography, and
- an application essay (no longer than one double-spaced page) as outlined below.

In addition, it must include one letter of recommendation as described below.

### **Application Cover Sheet**

The application cover sheet must be filled out online at this address:

<http://www.neh.gov/online/education/participants/>

Please fill it out online as directed by the prompts. **When you are finished, be sure to click on the “submit” button.** Print out the cover sheet and add it to your application package. At this point you will be asked if you want to fill out a cover sheet for another project. If you do,

follow the prompts and select another project and then print out the cover sheet for that project as well. Note that filling out a cover sheet is not the same as applying, so there is no penalty for changing your mind and filling out a cover sheet for several projects. A full application consists of the items listed above, as sent to the project director.

### **Résumé**

Please include a résumé or brief biography detailing your educational qualifications and professional experience.

### **Application Essay**

The application essay should be no more than one double spaced page. The essay should address your professional background; interest in the subject of the workshop; special perspectives, skills, or experiences that would contribute to the workshop; and how the experience would enhance your teaching or school service.

### **Reference Letter**

Applicants should provide a letter of recommendation from their school principal, department head, district administrator, or home-schooling association president as appropriate. It is helpful for referees to read the director's description of the project and your application essay. Please ask your referee to sign his/her name across the seal on the back of the envelope containing the letter, and enclose the letter with your application.

### **Submission of Applications and Notification Procedure**

Completed applications should be submitted to

**NEH Summer Teacher Institutes  
National Constitution Center  
525 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106**

and postmarked no later than **March 2, 2010**. Note: this date is two weeks earlier than in past years.

Successful applicants will be notified of their selection by **April 1, 2010**, and they will have until **April 5, 2010** to accept or decline the offer. Applicants who will not be home during the notification period should provide an address and phone number where they can be reached. No information concerning the status of an application will be available prior to the official notification period.

Questions should be addressed to [teacher@constitutioncenter.org](mailto:teacher@constitutioncenter.org).

We look forward to welcoming you to Philadelphia.

Sincerely,



Steve Frank, Program Director: "A Revolution in Government: Philadelphia, American Independence and the Constitution, 1765-1791," National Constitution Center