



RevolutionNJ

ENGAGE THE PAST. SHAPE THE FUTURE.

**“A Bundle of Silences: Reimagining Interpretive Approaches to the Past”
A Revolution NJ Professional Development Webinar Series**

Overview of the webinar series:

A Bundles of Silence: Reimagining Interpretive Approaches to the Past is a professional development webinar series that pulls together seven scholars from across the nation to explore each of the key Revolution NJ [interpretive themes](#). In these seven webinars, viewers will be introduced to the broader context and discussions surrounding each of our interpretive themes. Each webinar will also have a couple of case studies that demonstrates how using a particular theme can help develop a nuanced interpretation to the past. Additionally, each video has a FAQ and additional resources document that will allow you to dive deeper into the topic and start your own research. The series will be of special interest to educators, interpretive specialists, and members of the public interested in understanding and engaging both the past and present. Revolution NJ is proud to make this series free to the public as part of our broader professional development efforts to help prepare for the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America.

[View the webinar playlist on YouTube](#)

WEBINAR OVERVIEWS

Interpretive Theme: New Jersey as a “Battleground”



Title: [Political Participation and the Battlegrounds of the American Revolution](#)

Scholar: Dr. James Gigantino, University of Arkansas, Department of History

Overview of Webinar:

In *Political Participation and the Battlegrounds of the American Revolution*, Dr. James Gigantino explores the key theme of New Jersey as a “Battleground” by diving into the various considerations and decisions facing people at the outset of the American Revolution. Specifically focusing on the causes of the American Revolution, how different members of the population understood their role in it, and ultimately how they experienced the moment, Gigantino calls attention to the “multiplicities of Revolution”. These multiplicities remind us that there was no uniform experience of the American Revolution and that many considerations were weighed when someone identified as a patriot, loyalist, or a passivist. Viewers of this webinar will walk away with a better familiarity of how these divergent interests and viewpoints were navigated.

Biography:

Jim Gigantino became an Associate Dean of the University of Arkansas Graduate School & International Education in January 2021. He joined the University in August 2010 as an Assistant Professor. He was promoted to Associate Professor in July 2015 and Full Professor in July 2019. He has served as History Department Chair (2018-2021), Associate Chair/Director of Graduate Studies (2015-2018), and in numerous faculty governance roles across campus.

Gigantino is an early American historian. His first book, *The Ragged Road to Abolition: Slavery and Freedom in New Jersey, 1775-1865* (University of Pennsylvania Press, October 2014) focuses on how northerners successfully extended slavery in the aftermath of the American Revolution. He reveals how the slow death of slavery in the North complicated the formation of black communities and influenced how northerners understood the sectional crisis.

His second book, *William Livingston’s American Revolution* (University of Pennsylvania Press, October 2018) uses the life and experiences of William Livingston, New Jersey’s first governor, to explore the role of revolutionary government under fire and the dynamic relationship between mid-level administrators like Livingston, the national government, and average Americans. He is also the editor of *Slavery and Secession in Arkansas: A Documentary History* (University of Arkansas Press,

August 2015) which explores the connection between slavery and secession through the voices of Arkansas political leaders in 1860 and 1861.

[FAQ and Additional Reading](#)

[Webinar Transcript](#)

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Interpretive Theme: Movement of People



Title: [Movement of People](#)

Scholar: Dr. Kathleen Lopez, Rutgers University, Department of Latino and Caribbean Studies and History

Overview of Webinar:

New Jersey is one of the most diverse and densely populated states in our nation, but how did it get there? In the *Movement of People* webinar, Dr. Lopez explores the migration of people in and out of the state throughout its history. Exploring the factors that pushed and pulled people to New Jersey, this webinar will provide viewers the necessary tools and perspectives to understand the “causes of our emigration”. Specifically diving into two case studies, the history of Puerto Rican and South Asian immigration, Lopez demonstrates how a number of concerns surrounding education, economics, and community shaped the diverse landscape of New Jersey. Viewers of this webinar will walk away with a greater understanding of how New Jersey became a melting pot of diverse cultures and how this shaped the culture of the state.

Biography:

Kathleen López is Associate Professor in the Department of Latino and Caribbean Studies and Department of History at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. She researches and teaches on the historical intersections between Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, post-emancipation Caribbean societies, race and ethnicity in the Americas, and international migration. She is the author of *Chinese Cubans: A Transnational History* (North Carolina 2013), which received the Gordon K. and Sybil Lewis Prize of the Caribbean Studies Association, and numerous articles and book chapters. Her current research projects focus on Asian migrants, gender, and citizenship across the Anglophone and Spanish Caribbean in the twentieth century and on the diversity of the Cuban diaspora in the United States. She is also part of the Rutgers Latino Memory Project, which aims to recover the history of Puerto Rican Studies and Latinx people at the university.

[FAQ and Additional Reading](#)

[Webinar Transcript](#)

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Interpretive Theme: Property and Sovereignty



Title: [Property and Sovereignty: Native Americans and the United States](#)

Scholar: Dr. Jimmy Sweet, Rutgers University, Department of American Studies

Overview of Webinar:

In *Property and Sovereignty: Native Americans and the United States*, Dr. Jimmy Sweet explores the how the concepts of property and Native American sovereignty were grappled with in the formation of the United States and New Jersey more locally. He specifically explores the complicated relationship between Indigenous people and the United States government, tracing landmark decisions that shaped the displacement and dispossession of Indigenous people from their traditional lands. Viewers of this webinar will walk away with a broader understanding of how the displacement and dispossession of Native Americans was morally and legally justified by the policies of the U.S. government. Looking both at the national and local level (specifically concentrating on the Lenape people), viewers will get a better understanding of how property and sovereignty is navigated and experienced by Indigenous nations both in the past and in contemporary struggles.

Biography:

Jimmy Sweet (Lakota/Dakota) specializes in Native American and Indigenous studies with a concentration on interactions between American Indians and Euro-Americans. His current book project, “The ‘Mixed-Blood’ Moment: Race, Law, and Mixed-Ancestry Dakota Indians in the Nineteenth-Century Midwest,” analyzes the legal and racial complexities of American Indians of mixed Indian and European ancestry with a focus on kinship, family history, land dispossession, and citizenship. Sweet is dedicated to Indigenous language revitalization and preservation. His research is driven by a need to understand the full effects of American colonialism on Indigenous Americans and how those consequences influence Native people today, doing so with the hope of contributing to the continued fight for Indigenous sovereignty and the healing of Indigenous communities.

Before joining the faculty at Rutgers, Sweet was a Henry Roe Cloud Postdoctoral Fellow at Yale University and served as managing editor of *NAIS: The Journal of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association* from 2012 to 2017. He received his B.A. from the University of Tennessee, his M.A. from Montana State University, and his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota, all in history.

[FAQ and Additional Reading](#)

[Webinar Transcript](#)

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Interpretive Theme: Political Participation



Title: [The Puzzle of Citizenship: Black Americans and the Birthright Principle](#)

Scholar: Dr. Martha Jones, John Hopkins University, Department of History and SNF Agora Institute

Overview of Webinar:

Who gets to partake in the political process of the United States and to what extent? How has the institution of voting been differentially applied and experienced? Who is considered a citizen and by extension what rights do they have? In *The Puzzle of Citizenship: Black Americans and the Birthright Principle*, viewers will join Dr. Martha Jones in exploring how the complicated question of personhood and political participation are engaged with throughout the history of the United States. Specifically focusing on the question of citizenship, Dr. Jones traces the legal debates surrounding the ability of Black freemen to take part in the broader political process of the United States. Calling attention to the ways in which legal decisions both grant and limit rights for certain people, viewers of this webinar will come to a greater understanding of how the political process can bring people in or exclude them.

Biography:

Professor Martha S. Jones is the Society of Black Alumni Presidential Professor, Professor of History, and a Professor at the SNF Agora Institute at The Johns Hopkins University. She is a legal and cultural historian whose work examines how black Americans have shaped the story of American democracy. Professor Jones is the author of *Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All* (2020), selected as one of Time's 100 must-read books for 2020. Her 2018 book, *Birthright Citizens: A History of Race and Rights in Antebellum America* (2018), was winner of the Organization of American Historians Liberty Legacy Award (best book in civil rights history), the American Historical Association Littleton-Griswold Prize (best book in American legal history), the American Society for Legal History John Phillip Reid book award (best book in Anglo-American legal history) and the Baltimore City Historical Society Scholars honor for 2020. Professor Jones is also author of *All Bound Up Together: The Woman Question in African American Public Culture 1830-1900* (2007) and a coeditor of *Toward an Intellectual History of Black Women* (University of North Carolina Press (2015), together with many articles and essay.

Professor Jones is a public historian, writing for broader audiences at the New York Times, Washington Post, the Atlantic, USA Today, Public Books, Talking Points Memo, Politico, the Chronicle of Higher Education, and Time. She is an exhibition curator for "Reframing the Color Line" and "Proclaiming

Emancipation” at the William L. Clements Library, and an expert consultant for museum, film and video productions with the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery, the Charles Wright Museum of African American History, PBS American Experience, the Southern Poverty Law Center, Netflix, and Arte (France.)

Professor Jones holds a Ph.D. in history from Columbia University and a J.D. from the CUNY School of Law which bestowed upon her the degree of Doctor of Laws honoris causa in 2019. Prior to her academic career, she was a public interest litigator in New York City, recognized for her work a Charles H. Revson Fellow on the Future of the City of New York at Columbia University. Professor Jones is an immediate past co-president of the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians, and today serves on the boards of the Society of American Historians, the National Women’s History Museum, the US Capitol Historical Society, the Johns Hopkins University Press, the Journal of African American History and Slavery & Abolition.

[FAQ and Additional Reading](#)

[Webinar Transcript](#)

Interpretive Theme: Exclusion and Inclusion



Title: [Exclusion and Inclusion](#)

Scholar: Dr. Alaina E. Roberts, University of Pittsburgh, Department of History

Overview of Webinar:

Who was excluded and included in our nation's history? In what way? How did this shape the way people experienced day to day life? In *Exclusion and Inclusion*, Dr. Roberts explores how the American experience was defined by processes of exclusion and inclusion. Viewers of this webinar will get a nuanced approach towards understanding how the dehumanizing aspect of racism influenced the ability of people to be included as full citizens. Using the case study of Native American slave ownership, Roberts provides a detailed account exploring how the institution of slavery was endemic to the American experience and what this means in regard to how we view and understand both the past and present.

Biography:

Alaina E. Roberts is an award-winning historian who studies the intersection of Black and Native American life from the Civil War to the modern day. She is currently an Assistant Professor of History at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Roberts holds a Doctorate in History from Indiana University and a Bachelor of Arts in History, with honors, from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She writes, teaches, and presents public talks about Black and Native history in the West, family history, slavery in the Five Tribes (the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole Indian Nations), Native American enrollment politics, and Indigeneity in North America and across the globe. In addition to multiple academic articles, her writing has appeared in news outlets like the Washington Post, High Country News, and TIME magazine, and she has been profiled by CNN, Smithsonian Magazine, and the Boston Globe.

Her book, *I've Been Here All the While: Black Freedom on Native Land* is available for purchase at Amazon as well as at a variety of bookstores and websites.

[FAQ and Additional Reading](#)

[Webinar Transcript](#)

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Interpretive Theme: Historical Process



Title: [Historical Process](#)

Scholar: Dr. Edward Gonzalez-Tennant, University of Central Florida, Department of Anthropology

Overview of Webinar:

How do we know what we know? A simple question with a complicated answer. In the webinar *Historical Process*, Dr. Gonzalez-Tennant explores the way historians, archaeologists, and archivists make sense of the past and how the fragmentary nature of evidence shapes the stories they are able to tell. Diving into the different types of evidence available, Dr. Gonzalez-Tennant explores ways in which we can fill in the gaps of traditional historical records, pushing against dominant narratives that emphasized famous individuals and events in favor of a more complex, inclusive history of everyday people. Viewers of this webinar will walk away with a critical approach to the process of doing and understanding history, seeing it as a process rather than a stagnant record.

Biography:

Dr. González-Tennant's research focuses on the history of social inequality as a global phenomenon through a transdisciplinary approach drawing on archaeology, ethnography, history, and social theory. Black feminist thought and intersectionality are central his analysis of the ways interpersonal, structural, and symbolic violence connect historical events like race riots and lynching to modern forms of social inequality. A firm commitment to digital methodologies is central to his teaching and scholarship, and he is an enthusiastic supporter of open source software. Learn more at his [website](#).

He is the author of dozens of articles, chapters, and papers on a variety of topics. His book [The Rosewood Massacre: An Archaeology and History of Intersectional Violence](#) is available from the University Press of Florida, Amazon, and other online bookstores as a hardcover, paperback, or e-book. Dr. González-Tennant's courses include African American Archaeology, Digital Methods in Anthropology, Disaster Anthropology, Historical Archaeology, and Mortuary Archaeology. He mentors students on these and other topics. Students wishing to work with Dr. González-Tennant as either an honors or MA student should contact him to set up a time to talk.

Dr. González-Tennant holds a BA in Anthropology from the University of Arkansas (2004), an MS in Industrial Archaeology from Michigan Tech (2005), and MA and PhD degrees in Anthropology from the University of Florida (2008 and 2011, respectively). He serves as Chair of the Technologies Committee with the Society for Historical Archaeology and President of the Central Florida chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America.

[FAQ and Additional Reading](#)
[Webinar Transcript](#)

Interpretive Theme: Revolutionary Ideals



Title: [The Fundamental Ideas and Values of the American Revolution](#)

Scholar: Dr. Andrew Shankman, Rutgers University (Camden), Department of History

Overview of Webinar:

What is a democracy? How are the ideas of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness defined and for who? In *The Fundamental Ideas and Values of the American Revolution*, Dr. Shankman provides an overview of the “American Political Experiment”, exploring how the notion of democracy was wrestled with during the founding of the United States. Exploring the history of the term and how it was differentially conceived and enacted upon, the webinar will introduce viewers to the complexity of “Revolutionary Ideals” and the broader context in which they originally developed in. Viewers of this webinar will walk away with a better understanding of the radical political experiment that was the American Revolution and the political philosophy behind it.

Biography:

Andrew Shankman is a historian of early modern England, colonial North America, and the American Revolution and Early American Republic. He is the author of [Original Intent: Hamilton, Jefferson, Madison, and the American Founding](#) and [Crucible of American Democracy: The Struggle to Fuse Egalitarianism and Capitalism in Jeffersonian Pennsylvania](#), and the editor of [Rethinking America: From Empire to Republic](#), [Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic](#), and [The World of the Revolutionary American Republic: Land, Labor, and the Conflict for a Continent](#) as well as over 20 essays on early North American and early United States history.

Professor Shankman is the editor of the [Journal of the Early Republic](#) and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century Britain, the British Empire, and colonial North America and the United States.

[FAQ and Additional Reading](#)

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