



Declaring Freedom Conference, Day 3

Schedule of Events

- 9:00 AM Keynote by Governor Ned Lamont
Commission Introduction
- 10:00 AM Coffee Break
- 10:15 AM Panel Discussion: *Hidden in Plain Sight:
Telling Inclusive Stories*
- 11:15 AM Panel Discussion: *Sacred Ground: Our
History & the Power of Place*
- 12:15 PM Lunch Break
- 1:00 PM Panel Discussion: *Doing History: Hands-on
Strategies to Bring History Alive*
- 2:00 PM Panel Discussion: *We Hold Some Truths to
Be Self-Evident: For the Common Good*
- 3:00 PM Coffee Break
- 3:15 PM Panel Discussion: *Marketing Your America
250 | CT Story*
- 4:15 PM Closing Remarks



March 15, 2024
9:00 AM to 4:30 PM

CThumanities

AMERICA 250
CONNECTICUT

Commission & Resources

Commission Website – CT250.org

Find all public information about the commission, including:

- Commission members
- Mission, vision, guiding values
- America 250 | CT themes
- Meeting dates, agendas, and minutes
- Links to statewide resources

Learn more about the themes and how they apply to CT history at the **Planning Guide**:



Receive **National Guidance** from the American Assn. for State & Local History:



Find resources to support your research in the **Resource Database**:



America 250 is a funding priority for **CT Humanities grants**. Learn what that means:



Hidden in Plain Sight: Telling Inclusive Stories

Tell Inclusive Stories

The 250th serves as inspiration for CTH, its grantees, and the people of Connecticut to deal with and share stories that represent all of its people, past and present. For much of our history, the United States has excluded people—women, free and enslaved African Americans, Indigenous people, immigrants, people with disabilities, the poor, and many others—from full participation and representation in the nation's political, economic, and cultural life. This commemoration is an opportunity to continue the nation's reckoning with the past, both its glory and its missteps and flaws. By telling previously untold stories we will enable everyone to find a place in our nation's narrative.

MODERATOR

Frank Mitchell
Author and Consultant

PANELISTS

Philippe Halbert
Wadsworth Atheneum

Mike Keo
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

Steven Peters
Smoke Sygnals

**Learn more
about the
presenters:**



How can we best tell stories about all of the people who have contributed to our Nation, especially those in and from Connecticut?

How do we make sure no one's stories are omitted?

What is gained when we create space for more inclusive storytelling about our history as a nation?

Sacred Ground: Our History & the Power of Place

Power of Place

Connecticut is comprised of eight counties, 169 towns and cities, five recognized tribes, and countless communities with unique identities and contributions. The creation of a community-based structure will allow each of Connecticut's towns and cities to define their own programs and ideas about how they can engage their citizens. The building of an understanding of our American past will begin in the public spaces dedicated to learning: libraries, community centers, local museums, and historic sites. CTH will ensure the alignment between Connecticut's 250th activities and those of the greater region and nation, building relevance and aligning the state with other areas.

MODERATOR

Kolton Harris
CT Office of the Arts

PANELISTS

Jason Mancini
CT Humanities

Nakai Northup
Mashantucket Pequot
Museum & Research Center

Nicole Thomas
CT Landmarks

**Learn more
about the
presenters:**



How does place shape our understanding of history?

How can we better understand and unpack places with a layered history?

How does erasure distort our understanding of history and historical sites?

Doing History: Hands-on Strategies to Bring History Alive

Doing History

To renew public engagement with history, the public must be invited to participate in the process of doing history. Inviting audiences to engage with the historical method can help them become more comfortable with the ambiguous, contested, and always-evolving nature of history. The commission's work will focus on the role of Connecticut, its people, sites, and historic context of the time. It can boost tourism in the state by amplifying the story at historic sites, trails, and buildings, and by constructing programs around notable events.

Learn more about the presenters:



MODERATOR

Andy Horowitz
State Historian

PANELISTS

Rhonan Mokriski
Teacher of Coloring Our Past at Salisbury School

Valerie Tutson
Rhode Island Black Storytellers

Fiona Vernal
University of Connecticut

Why are experiential approaches to exploring history so powerful?

How do we engage the public in the historical method and make it easier to understand the always-evolving nature of history?

What experiential strategies can be used to ignite excitement about our collective histories?

If the past is alive in the present, what lessons can be taught from doing history?

We Hold Some Truths to Be Self-Evident: For the Common Good

For the Common Good

As we reckon with what the nation's 250th means in Connecticut, we will encourage civic engagement to continue to build our communities, state, and nation using the democratic ideals outlined in our founding documents. The 250th anniversary offers an opportunity to reconsider the origins of our government, democratic institutions, and broader civic life, and a chance to reflect on the ways we have changed them over time. Discussions about our democracy and civic intuitions can help strengthen understanding, inspire action, and reveal ways that all of us can participate in and shape our democracy.

PARTICIPANTS

Merle McGee
Everyday Democracy

Ramin Ganeshram
Westport Museum for
History and Culture

**Learn more
about the
presenters:**



What foundational beliefs shaped our founders' actions?

How do we hold the incongruence of founders' beliefs and the realities of settler colonialism?

How does a failure to reckon with our history create stumbling blocks to an inclusive future?

What are actions that historians and educators can take to advance understanding and engagement with those contradictions?

Marketing Your America 250 | CT Story

Make It Here

We are a state of creators, makers, innovators, and entrepreneurs — a powerful force for good in our country.

MODERATORS

Anthony Anthony
Chief Marketing Officer

Ellen Woolf
Brand Director

PANELISTS

Liz Salvatore
Fox61

Alex Taylor
Alex P. Taylor 1 Media

How can the media help share Connecticut stories related to America 250?

What are the most effective ways to share your stories?

How can we get the public more invested in the important work that we are doing?

Learn more about the presenters:



Sign-up for the mailing list:



Join Us @ 4:30 PM

After the conference, continue the conversation:
5 Churches Brewing
193 Arch Street, New Britain, CT

Please note: Any attendees under 21 years of age **must** be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.



Support the Commission:

