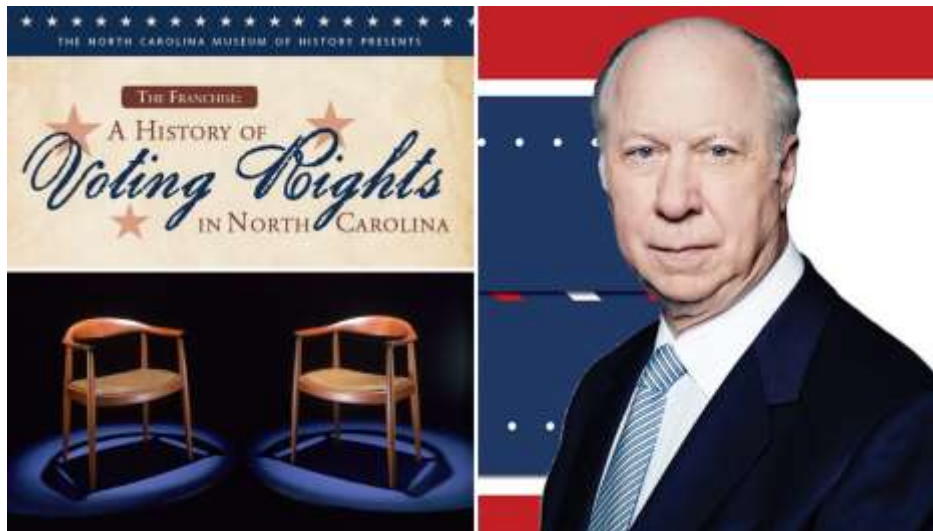




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Get Ready for Election Year!: Three Free Programs to Prepare for November



IMAGES: [Dropbox link](#), see below for captions and credits

October 21, 2020 (RALEIGH, N.C.) — November marks another national election contest, so why not learn about the history of America’s democracy? Join the North Carolina Museum of History this October for **three free digital programs** and learn about the past, present, and future of voting and the election process!

Read on for more information on these programs. All are **FREE** and presented as **online** events.

[Community Class: The Franchise: A History of Voting Rights in North Carolina](#)

Thursday, Oct. 22, 7 p.m. via Zoom

Presenters: James L. Leloudis, Professor, Department of History, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill, and Robert R. Korstad, Professor Emeritus, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University

Voting is the cornerstone of American democracy. The ability to participate in civic life—to have a voice in choosing the elected officials whose decisions impact our lives, families, and communities—is at the core of what it means to be an American. Yet, across this nation, people are struggling over the question of who gets to exercise that right and under what circumstances. North Carolina is a battleground for this debate, and its history can help us understand why, a century and a half after ratification of the 15th Amendment, we remain a nation divided over the right to vote.

Join the Museum of History in presenting this inaugural program of a new series, Community Class, for educators, students, and community members at large. This evening’s “class” will begin with a short video showcasing the museum’s current lobby exhibit on female suffrage in North Carolina—“*You Have to Start a Thing*”—then jump into a facilitated conversation with Leloudis and Korstard.

Leloudis, who is also associate dean for honors at UNC–CH and director of the James M. Johnston Center for Undergraduate Excellence, UNC–CH, has long investigated the history of the modern South, with emphases on labor, education, race, and reform. Korstard also sits on the Faculty Advisory Board for the Duke Human Rights Center at Franklin Humanities Institute; his research interests include 20th-century US history, labor history, African American history, and contemporary social policy. Together, they have just published a book, *Fragile Democracy: The Struggle over Race and Voting Rights in North Carolina*. Get your copy, which includes a bookplate signed by the authors, through our [Museum Shop](#) and help support programs and other efforts of the museum.

David Gergen: [*Eyewitness to Power: The Essence of Leadership, Nixon to Clinton*](#)

Monday, Oct. 26, 7 p.m. via Zoom

Presenter: David Gergen, Senior Political Analyst, CNN, and Best-Selling Author

The North Carolina Museum of History is proud to present a conversation with Gergen as he presents a bipartisan examination of recent political history and what the current election may mean as a roadmap to key events in our nation’s history and its course for the future. A Q&A session will follow the discussion.

With an extensive career in the political field, both in the White House and as a political observer and commentator, Gergen has worked the front lines of America’s political scene—serving the administrations of Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, and Bill Clinton—and has proven to have an unsurpassed knowledge of the diplomatic world. Born in Durham, he taught at Duke University, worked with *The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* (PBS), and was once an editor for *US News & World Report*; he has twice been a member of election-coverage teams that won Peabody Awards, and he has contributed to two Emmy-winning political analysis teams. As founding director of the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School, the public policy school of Harvard University, Gergen continues to share his knowledge for governance. As noted above, he is a longtime political analyst for CNN and author of the *New York Times* best seller, *Eyewitness to Power: The Essence of Leadership, Nixon to Clinton*.

[Collecting American Elections, A Smithsonian Affiliations Virtual Scholar Talk](#)

Tuesday, Oct. 27, 8 p.m. via Zoom

Presenters: Lisa Kathleen Graddy, Jon Grinspan, and Claire Jerry, Division of Political and Military History, National Museum of American History

The biggest moment in our American democracy? When voters head to the polls to exercise their rights to appoint new leadership. During this panel discussion, three curators—whose mandate is to collect, record, and preserve objects that capture the presidential election every four years—will discuss the years of experience they bring to gathering and curating objects and documents from presidential campaigns for the national collection. The scholars, and their difficult choices, will introduce a unique perspective to how Americans elect leaders, how they have had to adapt to this year’s unprecedented virtual campaign events, and what changes we may see in a post-COVID future. A moderated conversation will allow audience members to ask questions and contribute thoughts.

Smithsonian Affiliations Virtual Scholar Talks are presented, at no charge, by Smithsonian Affiliations, in collaboration with the National Museum of African American History and Culture and other Smithsonian Affiliate organizations across the country.

IMAGES: [Dropbox link](#), caption and credits

Image – Press release image

Courtesy of National Museum of American History

Image – Collecting American Elections logo

Courtesy of National Museum of American History and Smithsonian Affiliations

Image – A History of Voting Rights in North Carolina logo

Courtesy of North Carolina Museum of History

Image – David Gergen lecture logo

Courtesy of North Carolina Museum of History and David Gergen

For information about the NC Museum of History, a Smithsonian Affiliate museum, call 919-814-7000 or access ncmuseumofhistory.org or follow the museum on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or [YouTube](#).

About the NC Museum of History

The North Carolina Museum of History, a Smithsonian Affiliate, fosters a passion for North Carolina history. This museum collects and preserves artifacts of state history and educates the public on the history of the state and the nation through exhibits and educational programs. **Admission is free.** Last year, more than 465,000 people visited the museum to see some of the 150,000 artifacts in the museum collection. The Museum of History, within the Division of State History Museums, is part of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

About the Smithsonian Affiliations Network

Since 2006, the North Carolina Museum of History has been a Smithsonian Affiliate, part of a select group of museums, cultural, educational, and arts organizations that share Smithsonian resources with the nation. The Smithsonian Affiliations network is a national outreach program that develops long-term collaborative partnerships with museums, educational, and cultural organizations to enrich communities with Smithsonian resources. More information is available at affiliations.si.edu.

About the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

The North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDNCR) is the state agency with a vision to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational, and economic future of North Carolina. NCDNCR's mission is to improve the quality of life in our state by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries, and natural assets in North Carolina by stimulating learning, inspiring creativity, preserving the state's history, conserving the state's natural heritage, encouraging recreation and cultural tourism, and promoting economic development.

NCDNCR includes 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, two science museums, three aquariums, and Jennette's Pier, as well as 39 state parks and recreation areas, the North Carolina Zoo, the nation's first state-supported symphonic orchestra, the State Library of North Carolina, the State Archives of North Carolina, the North Carolina Arts Council, the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, and the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology, along with the state Division of Land and Water Stewardship. For more information, call 919-814-6800 or visit DNCR.nc.gov.

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