

2025-2026

WITTENBERG SERIES

Enlightening Campus and Community

William A. Kinnison Endowed Lecture in History

**“I Still Have an Independent Spirit:
Disabled Veterans and Pension
Assistance After the Revolutionary War”**

Benjamin H. Irvin, Ph.D.

**Social and Cultural Historian of Early
America and the U.S.**

**Monday, Feb. 23, 2026
7 p.m., Bayley Auditorium,
Barbara Deer Kuss Science Center**



Benjamin H. Irvin, Ph.D.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORIAN OF EARLY AMERICA AND THE U.S.

Benjamin H. Irvin, associate professor of history at Indiana University, is a historian of the American Revolution. He is the author of *Clothed in Robes of Sovereignty: The Continental Congress and the People Out of Doors* (Oxford, 2011). That book, which examined the fraught relationship between Congress and the American people, was named a 2011 Choice Outstanding Academic Title and a finalist for the 2012 George Washington Book Prize. Irvin's current project—tentatively entitled, *Independent Spirit: Revolutionary War Veterans and Disability in the Early United States*—reconstructs the efforts of sick and wounded soldiers to eke their subsistence from state and federal disability pensions.

Irvin's research has garnered support from the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience, the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, the New England Regional Research Consortium, the Newberry Library and Jack Miller Center, and the Virginia Historical Society. Irvin has taught at Brandeis University, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Arizona, and Washington College. He is the past executive editor of the *Journal of American History*.

PROGRAM

WELCOME

Christian M. M. Brady, DPhil (Oxon.)
President

INTRODUCTION OF THE SPEAKER

Thomas T. Taylor, Ph.D.
Professor of History

ADDRESS

"I Still Have an Independent Spirit: Disabled Veterans and Pension Assistance After the Revolutionary War"
Benjamin H. Irvin, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of History, Indiana University

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

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Benjamin H. Irvin, Ph.D. met with students and faculty during a class visit and lunch earlier today.

ABOUT THE WILLIAM A. KINNISON ENDOWED LECTURE

The William A. Kinnison Endowed Lecture in History was established under the auspices of the Board of Directors of Wittenberg University with the assistance of numerous benefactors to honor Dr. Kinnison on the occasion of his retirement as president of the University in 1995.

ABOUT THE WITTENBERG SERIES

The Wittenberg Series was created in 1982 during President William A. Kinnison's tenure. Now celebrating its 41st season, the series offers a selection of cultural activities available to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the community. For more information about the 2025-2026 schedule, please scan the QR code or visit www.wittenberg.edu/wittseries.

This event is part of Wittenberg University's celebration of America 250, a national commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.



PAST KINNISON ENDOWED LECTURERS

1996-1997

William S. McFeely,
University of Georgia

1998-1999

Kathryn Bernhardt '76,
University of California,
Los Angeles

2000-2001

Blanche Wiesen Cook,
City University of New York

2001-2002

Neil Levine, Harvard University

2002-2003

Edward W. Said,
Columbia University

2003-2004

Natalie Zemon Davis,
Princeton University

2004-2005

Jonathan D. Sarna,
Brandeis University

2005-2006

Charlayne Hunter-Gault,
Civil Rights Activist and Journalist

2006-2007

John W. Dower, Massachusetts
Institute of Technology

2008-2009

Ric Burns, Documentarian

2009-2010

William Chester Jordan,
Yale University

2010-2011

Claudia Koonz, Duke University

2011-2012

Ronald Grigor Suny,
University of Chicago

2012-2013

David Levering-Lewis,
New York University

2013-2014

Eric Foner, Columbia University

2014-2015

David Brakke,
The Ohio State University

2015-2016

Fredrik Logevall,
Harvard University

2016-2017

Michael Blakey,
College of William and Mary

2017-2018

Annette Gordon-Reed,
Harvard University

2018-2019

Elizabeth Fenn,
University of Colorado Boulder

2019-2020

Eric Cline,
George Washington University
(cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic)

2022-2023

Matthew Morse Booker,
National Humanities Center

2023-2024

Michael Gomez,
New York University