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## American Inspiration—a New, Best-Selling Author Series—to Premiere in Boston’s Back Bay

### NPR’s Scott Simon, Gail Collins of the *New York Times*, Susan Ronald, and Others to Discuss Their Latest Books at American Ancestors

August 21, 2019—*Boston, Massachusetts*—Today’s top writers are coming to Boston for a new series of author talks called American Inspiration. The series is produced by American Ancestors, the country’s oldest genealogical institution, headquartered in Boston’s Back Bay. American Inspiration presents best-selling authors and their latest books exploring themes of personal identity, families and immigration, and social and cultural history. Tickets for the fall season are on sale now.

Tickets For Fall Events On Sale Now

Among those headlining the series’ first season are British-American biographer Susan Ronald with *Conde Nast: The Man and His Empire*, an in-depth portrait of the life and legacy of the publisher of *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* (September 17 at 6:00 p.m.); author Gail Collins, columnist with the *New York Times*, with her book *No Stopping Us Now: A History of Older Women in America* (October 18 at 2:00 p.m.); and NPR’s Scott Simon with his book *Sunnyside Plaza*, a story of empowerment and mystery (January 30, 2020).

Brenton Simons, President and CEO of American Ancestors and New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS), announced the creation of the new series of author presentations, calling it a “thought-provoking program that greatly broadens our scope of offerings to serve readers as well as researchers. As one of Boston’s leading cultural institutions, we are opening our doors even wider, welcoming everyone who seeks a better understanding of the past and the present, through the study, enjoyment, and discussion of today’s greatest literature.”

American Ancestors has carved a niche in this genre in recent years by honoring many outstanding prize-winning authors at the organization’s special events: among them Doris Kearns Goodwin, David McCullough, Stacy Schiff, Douglas Brinkley, and Nathaniel Philbrick. The popularity of these author appearances and their impact upon local audiences gave genesis to the creation of the American Inspiration series.

Margaret Talcott, Director of Signature and Literary Events at American Ancestors, produces the new American Inspiration series and stated “There is so much to learn from the works and wisdom of today’s great writers. Presenting them and their work is very much in line with our mission to educate, inspire, and connect people. We are uniquely positioned to build a community of thinkers and learners right here in the Back Bay.

“I am very excited to present this inaugural series featuring a wide range of authors and topics, from the biographies of inspirational Americans to the history of women, the specifics of the Civil War Battle of Vicksburg to the turmoil of the 1960s on the campus and in the stadium at Harvard University,” she added. Talcott formerly served as Producer of Literary Programs at the Music Hall, Portsmouth, N.H., where, since 2006, she worked to build out three literary series and presented more than 180 authors of fiction and nonfiction books, including John Irving, Margaret Atwood, Dan Brown, Sonia Sotomayor, Amor Towles, Lesley Stahl, and Salman Rushdie.

According to Talcott, each writer’s event will include a talk by the author plus a moderated question and answer session. All attendees are invited afterwards to meet the author at a book signing. Most programs will take place at 99-101 Newbury Street in the historic rotunda of American Ancestors’s headquarters in Boston’s Back Bay, only steps from the Public Garden. A few presentations will take place at other venues as part of special events hosted by the organization.

Joining with American Ancestors as partners in the series are Boston public radio station WGBH, a member station of National Public Radio and an affiliate of Public RadioInternational, and Porter Square Books, an independent bookstore located in Cambridge, Mass.

The fall 2019 line-up for the American Inspiration series includes the following:

Biographer Susan Ronald with *Condé Nast: The Man and His Empire*, September 17

Biographer Brian Jay Jones with *Becoming Dr. Seuss*, September 26

NY Times columnist Gail Collins with *No Stopping Us Now: A History of Older Women in America*, October 18

Historian Joseph J. Ellis with *American Dialogue* at the NEHGS Family History Benefit Dinner, October 24

Literary Historian Stephen Greenblatt with *Tyrant* at the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center Dinner, November 6

Historian Donald L. Miller with *Vicksburg: Grant's Campaign That Broke the Confederacy*, November 12

The Big House author George Howe Colt with *The Game: Harvard, Yale, and America in 1968*, November 21

NPR's Scott Simon with *Sunnyside Plaza* at the NEHGS Family History Benefit Dinner, January 30

Tickets are now on sale for all fall events including the September 17th appearance by biographer Susan Ronald. Tickets for the best seats and discounted books can be purchased starting at \$12.50 at [AmericanAncestors.org/InspirationSeries](https://AmericanAncestors.org/InspirationSeries) or by calling 617-226-1215 or 888-296-3447. Complete details on the American Inspiration series can be found on the website of American Ancestors at [AmericanAncestors.org/InspirationSeries](https://AmericanAncestors.org/InspirationSeries), where one can also register to receive e-news as series events are announced.

Note: High-resolution images of authors and books are available for your use in coverage related to this story. Please visit [photogallery.americanancestors.org/AmericanInspiration](https://photogallery.americanancestors.org/AmericanInspiration) to view and download images or contact us for more information.

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