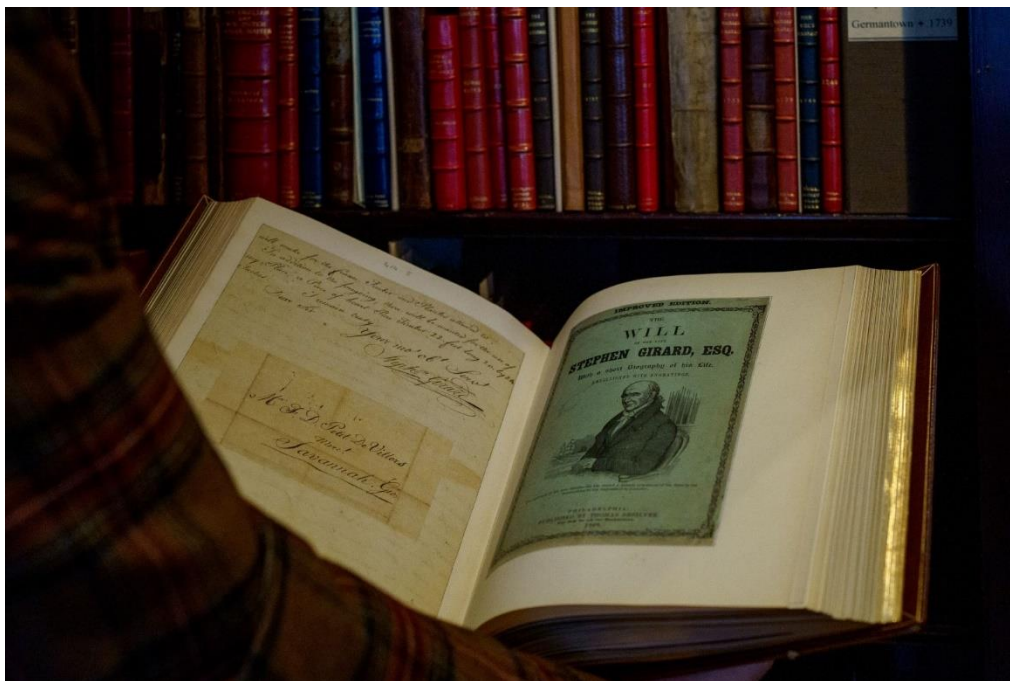


Course Syllabus

Stephen Girard: Finding a Forgotten Founding Father



Cover of *The Will of the Late Stephen Girard, Esq. with a Short Biography of His Life* (Philadelphia: Thomas Deliver, 1849). Bound in Henry Simpson, *The Lives of Eminent Philadelphians, Now Deceased...* (Philadelphia: William Brotherhead, 1859). Call no. A 859liv v.5. Courtesy of the Rosenbach Museum & Library. Photo by Rasheena Wilson.

Course Goal

This course will introduce you to a pivotally important, yet little-known, figure in early American history who left an indelible mark on Philadelphia: Stephen Girard. By studying a posthumous portrait of Girard held in the Rosenbach's collection, reading early biographies of Girard, and discussing the merchant and banker's life and impact, students

will situate Girard in the context of Revolutionary and early national Philadelphia, paying special attention to issues of gender, family, race/enslavement, and emerging American commercial capitalism.

Following these initial studies, students will take a deep dive into the archival and museum collections of Girard College to come face-to-face with early Philadelphian history. This course provides a unique opportunity not only to learn about an important Philadelphian, but to become immersed in rare books, manuscripts, archival material, and artifacts from Girard's life, including clothing, furniture, and other materials.

Course Schedule

Session 1. Portrait of a Citizen: Stephen Girard, in Myth & Memory

Sunday, November 10, 2024 | 2:00 – 4:00 pm | Meets at the Rosenbach

2008-2010 Delancey St, Philadelphia, PA 19103

The first course session will be held at the Rosenbach Museum & Library, where students will look closely at the portrait of Stephen Girard hanging in the historic house before viewing historical documentation related to the artwork. Following a presentation outlining Girard's life and legacy, the class will engage in a discussion in the Rosenbach's dining room about how Girard has been remembered through history. Finally, the class will discuss plans for our field trip to Girard College for the next class session.

Session 2. The Long Shadow of Stephen Girard: Investigating Philanthropy, Race, Gender, and Civil Rights Through the Material Culture at Girard College

Sunday, November 17, 2024 | 2:00 – 4:00 pm | Meets at Girard College

2101 S College Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19121

The second session of the course brings us to the Girard College Historical Collection in monumental Founder's Hall at Girard College. During this session, Brenna Holland will share her research about Girard, his family, and his larger social and economic network. Then, Kathy Haas will lead a hands-on tour of the remarkable rare books, manuscripts, and museum objects preserved at the college, bringing participants as close to Girard as is possible by means of the surviving artifacts of his life.

Instructors

Katherine Haas is Director of Historical Resources at Girard College, where she manages museum, archival, and library resources documenting the life and legacy of Stephen Girard. She recently completed a reinstallation of the Founder's Hall galleries. Haas formerly served as Associate Curator at the Rosenbach.

Dr. Brenna Holland wrote her Ph.D. dissertation at Temple University on the subject of Stephen Girard and is currently completing a book project focused on merchant's family life. She works as Assistant Director of Library & Museum Programs at the American Philosophical Society.

Dr. Alexander Lawrence Ames is Director of Outreach & Engagement at the Rosenbach Museum & Library. He is completing a book manuscript titled *Ships of Reason: The Atlantic Enlightenment of Stephen Girard, Mariner, Merchant, Banker, & Philanthropist of the Early American Republic*.

Assigned Readings

Readings for the course are optional! We will structure the experience to ensure that all students can participate regardless of how much homework they have completed. That said, we've provided a good number of readings for you to complete prior to the first class session.

Secondary Sources – Please read as many as you can

Instructors will provide PDFs of the readings to students upon registration.

David J. Cowen, "Financing the War of 1812," *Financial History* (Fall 2012).

Dorinda Evans, "Survival and Transformation: The Colonial Portrait in the Federal Era," in Ellen G. Miles, ed., *The Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America*, 123-137.

Paul A. Gilje, "The Rise of Capitalism in the Early Republic," in Paul A. Gilje, ed., *Wages of Independence: Capitalism in the Early American Republic* (Madison, WI: Madison House, 1997), 1 – 22.

Brenna O'Rourke Holland, "Girard's Bequest," *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*, <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/essays/girards-bequest/>.

Cathy Matson, "Accounting for War and Revolution: Philadelphia Merchants and Commercial Trade, 1774-1811," in Margaret C. Jacob and Catherine Secretan, *The Self Perception of Early Modern Capitalists*, 183-202.

Early Biographies and Reminiscences of Stephen Girard – Please read one!

Instructors will be in touch prior to the first class about which students should focus on which publication, so that we can discuss the early biographies as a group.

Arey, Henry W. *The Girard College and Its Founder: Containing the Biography of Mr. Girard, the History of the Institution, its Organization and Plan of Discipline, with the Course of Education, Forms of Admission of Pupils, Description of the Buildings, &c. &c. and the Will of Mr. Girard.* Philadelphia: C. Sherman, printer, 1853.

Carey, Mathew. *A Short Account of the Malignant Fever Lately Prevalent in Philadelphia: With a Statement of the Proceedings that Took Place on the Subject, in Different Parts of the United States. To Which are Added, Accounts of the Plague in London and Marseilles; and a List of the Dead, from August 1, to the Middle of December, 1793.* 4th edition, improved. Philadelphia: Printed by the author, January 16, 1794.

Herrick, Cheesman A. *Stephen Girard, Founder.* Philadelphia: Girard College, 1923.

Ingram, Henry Atlee. *The Life and Character of Stephen Girard, of the City of Philadelphia, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Mariner and Merchant. With an Appendix Descriptive of Girard College.* Philadelphia: E. Stanley Hart, 1884.

Simpson, Stephen. *Biography of Stephen Girard, with His Will Affixed...* Philadelphia: Thomas L. Bonsal, 1832.