



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 10, 2021

Contact: Jay Joyce
Phone: 704-526-9548
Email: jayjoyce1776@gmail.com

A Black Descendant of Thomas Jefferson & Enslaved Sally Hemings To Speak At Mecklenburg Chapter Sons of the American Revolution

(CHARLOTTE, NC) One of the most important people and authors in modern history, Gayle Jessup White, will be speaking on November 11, 2021, at the Mecklenburg Chapter Sons of the American Revolution in Charlotte during a dinner event at the Hilton Charlotte Executive Park Hotel, 5624 Westpark Drive off I-77.

“An integral part of our Society’s charter is to present unique and interesting community programs on all aspects about the people, places and events of the Revolutionary War,” said Tom Phlegar, Mecklenburg SAR chapter program chairman. “When Ms. White accepted our speaking invitation, we were thrilled at the opportunity to bring such an influential and important American Patriot to Charlotte.”

Currently Gayle is the public relations and community engagement officer at the Thomas Jefferson Foundation that owns and operates Monticello in Charlottesville, VA. She is a former award-winning TV reporter and anchor, a journalist with The New York Times and a show host and producer at her undergraduate alma matter, Howard University. She holds the profound honor to be the first African American employed at the Thomas Jefferson Foundation.

“Ms. White is a descendant from our third President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, and one of his enslaved mistresses, Sally Hemings,” added Phlegar. “It is a distinct honor to welcome her and to hear her story about her search for her family’s lasting legacy from Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings.”

- M O R E -



Gayle had long heard the stories passed down from her father's family, that they were direct descendants of Thomas Jefferson—lore she firmly believed, though others did not. For four decades the acclaimed journalist and genealogy enthusiast researched her connection to Thomas Jefferson, to confirm its truth once and for all.

She is the author of the upcoming book, *Reclamation: Sally Hemings, Thomas Jefferson and a Descendant's Search for Her Family's Lasting Legacy*, to be released by HarperCollins on November 16, 2021. In *Reclamation* she chronicles her remarkable journey to definitively understand her heritage and reclaim it and offers a compelling portrait of what it means to be a black woman in America, to pursue the American dream, to reconcile the legacy of racism, and to ensure the nation lives up to the ideals advocated by her legendary ancestor.

Reservations are \$34.00 per person and can be purchased on the chapter website via PayPal at www.MecklenburgSAR.org.

For more information, please contact Tom Phlegar at 704-776-8166 or email btphlegar@aol.com.

#

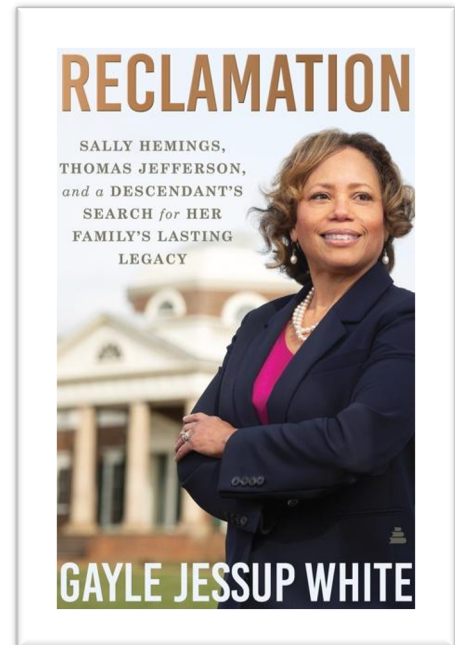
About the Sons of the American Revolution

The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution was founded in 1889 and is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history and promoting education to our future generation.



About Gayle Jessup White

Writer and communications specialist with a passion for U.S. history, research, writing, community outreach, public speaking, education, civic service, and social justice; former TV reporter and anchor with more than twenty years of professional experience, bringing a network of media contacts, community leaders, educators, and scholars into her sphere on influence; devoted community activist, serving as a trustee on several non-profit boards.



About Sally Hemings

Sally Hemings (1773-1835) is one of the most famous—and least known—African American women in U.S. history. For more than 200 years, her name has been linked to Thomas Jefferson as his “concubine,” obscuring the facts of her life and her identity.

Sally Hemings was able to negotiate with her owner, Thomas Jefferson. In Paris, where she was free, the 16-year-old agreed to return to enslavement at Monticello in exchange for “extraordinary privileges” for herself and freedom for her unborn children. Over the next 32 years Hemings raised four children fathered by Thomas Jefferson—Beverly, Harriet, Madison, and Eston—and prepared them for their eventual emancipation. She did not negotiate for, or ever receive, legal freedom in Virginia.

Sally Hemings was never legally emancipated. Instead, she was unofficially freed—or “given her time”—by Jefferson’s daughter Martha after Mr. Jefferson’s death.

#