



Welcome to our Fall programs and our September book, *Historians!*

I am excited to start this new series of history books with you on Zoom this year. We had one Zoom meeting in May and, while it was definitely different, it was still the same chance for spirited discussion and warm fellowship centered on our book. You may have noticed that we are meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of the month this Fall. We made the move to avoid several conflicts on the 1st Tuesday, including Election Day which is the Superbowl for Historians. So please note the date change. You will find the meeting dates and the books for Fall in the Dallas Institute Catalog, and I am including them below for easy reference.

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| September 8 | <i>Bolívar: American Liberator</i> by Marie Arana |
| October 13 | <i>The Army at Dawn: The War in North Africa, 1942-1943</i> by Rick Atkinson |
| November 10 | <i>Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom</i> by David Blight |
| December 8 | <i>The Map of Knowledge: A Thousand Year History of How Classical Ideas Were Lost and Found</i> by Violet Moller |

I am looking forward to talking about these books with all of you. I hope you can join us each time.

When we meet on Zoom on **Tuesday, September 8 at 6:30**, we will be discussing *Bolívar: American Liberator* by Marie Arana. Born in Peru, Arana grew up in the United States and became a journalist and novelist. A former editor at *The Washington Post*, she currently serves as a Senior Consultant at the Library of Congress. She shows her skills as a researching journalist and as a novelist in *Bolívar*. Joseph J. Ellis describes the book best in his review in *The Washington Post*: “*Bolívar* is magisterial in scope, written with flair and an almost cinematic sense of history happening...we might call Arana’s style Bolívarian—colorful, passionate, daring verging on novelistic.”

While Americans may recognize Bolívar as the George Washington of Latin America, that is about all most people know. What do you learn about Bolívar as man and as general, diplomat, politician and lover? What do you learn about the rich tapestry of people and places that make up Latin America? As you read, you will see that many of the issues that Bolívar faced in newly independent Latin America are issues that are familiar to us today. Bolívar was a passionate abolitionist, standing firmly against slavery in a way that no American politician did at that time. And yet, racial divisions plagued his campaigns. What does that tell us about Bolívar’s time and our own? Passionate about democracy, as the rivalries, geographical differences, and racial differences split his coalitions, Bolívar came to believe that the firm hand of an authoritarian leader was needed to maintain stability. Was he right? Did he give up on democracy too soon? Was he, in the end, unable to let go of power? Again, these are pertinent questions for our own time.

Bolívar was a man of contradictions, both admired and loathed. His story reads like a really good novel, so enjoy! And such a fascinating larger than life figure will make for a lively discussion when we meet via Zoom on **Tuesday, September 8 at 6:30**. I look forward to seeing you!

Donna McBride