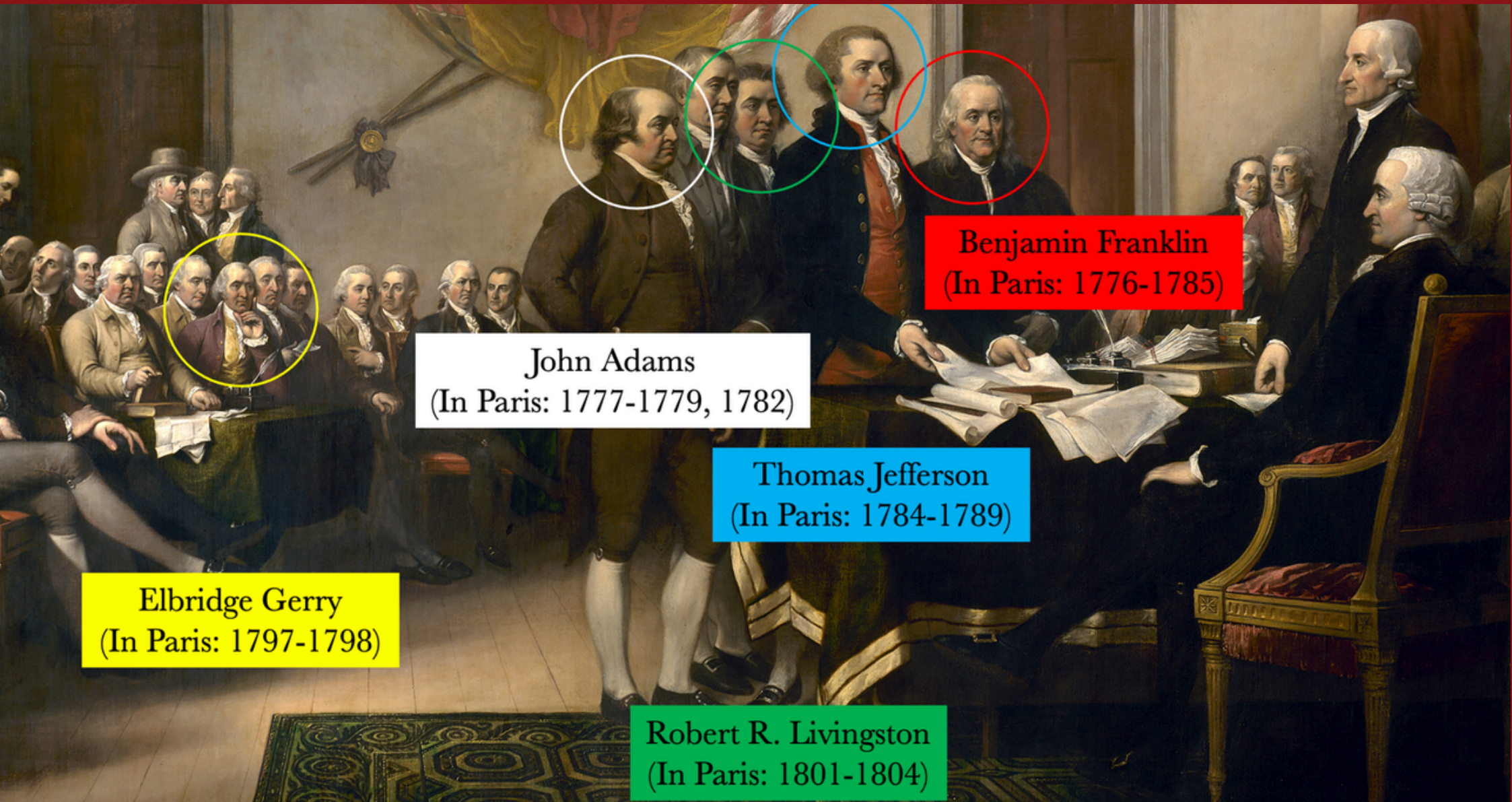


The Declaration of Independence in 1776 and Beyond:

A Roundtable
free & open to the public



Elbridge Gerry
(In Paris: 1797-1798)

John Adams
(In Paris: 1777-1779, 1782)

Thomas Jefferson
(In Paris: 1784-1789)

Benjamin Franklin
(In Paris: 1776-1785)

Robert R. Livingston
(In Paris: 1801-1804)

February 23, 2026 at 5:00pm - 6:00pm
University of Chicago John W Boyer Center in Paris
41 rue des Grands Moulins, 75013 Paris

In July 2026, the United States will commemorate 250 years of independence. Many today identify the Declaration of Independence with the “self-evident” claims that “all men are created equal” with rights to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” But what did the Declaration of Independence originally mean? How did political decisions and military and diplomatic challenges shape the document on July 4, 1776? How did its authors deploy history and natural law to reconcile their lofty views on equality and liberty with the inequalities they maintained in their time? And how did readers, from Philadelphia to Paris, convert the Declaration’s philosophical premises into political promises?

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Please join Steven Sarson, Eric Slauter, and Bertrand Van Ruymbeke for a discussion of the Declaration of Independence, its original meanings, and subsequent history at the University of Chicago John W. Boyer Center in Paris.



Steven Sarson is Professor of American Civilization at Jean Moulin University Lyon 3 and the author of *The Course of Human Events: The Declaration of Independence and the Historical Origins of the United States* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2025).



Eric Slauter is Deputy Dean of Arts and Humanities and the College at the University of Chicago and author of *The Promises of the Declaration of Independence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).



Bertrand Van Ruymbeke is Professor of American Civilization and History at University of Paris 8 and author of *1776. L'année américaine* (Paris: Tallandier, 2026).