

NEWSROOM

[Home](#) / [News](#) / [2020](#) / [October](#) / Professor Edits, Co-Authors Book on History Education

PROFESSOR EDITS, CO-AUTHORS BOOK ON HISTORY EDUCATION

PROFESSOR LISA HEUVEL'S WORK TO HELP EDUCATORS BRING HISTORY TO LIFE.

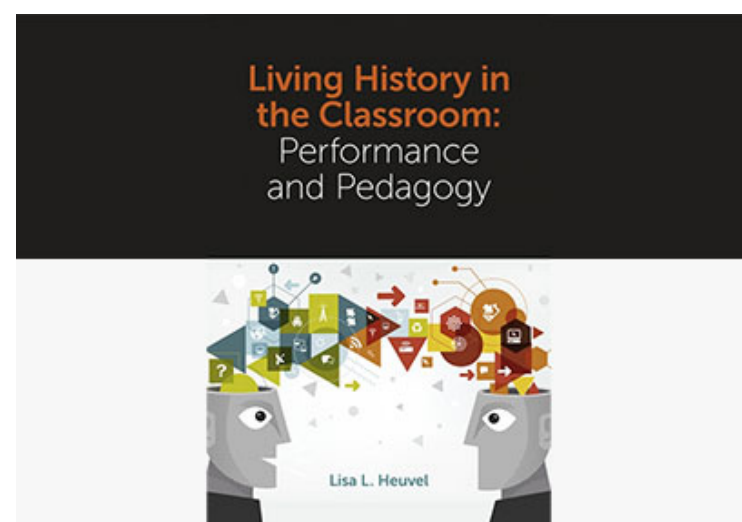
by [Jane Heeter](#) | October 28, 2020*Above: Lisa Heuvel**Read time: about 1 min*

To teach about George Washington, it helps to dress and speak like George Washington, even if you don't have wooden teeth.

[Leadership and American studies](#) Professor Lisa Heuvel knows the power of performance well. She is the editor and co-author of a new book designed to help K-12 history teachers make history “come alive” for their students.

Living History in the Classroom: Performance and Pedagogy gives readers practical insights into classroom performance, public history and education. The book offers teachers resources for using historical character portrayals to better teach students about the past. A compelling portrayal of Washington, for example, can be used to analyze the first president's intent and actions in a way that is more memorable than a traditional textbook.

Performance pedagogy – the concept of performing to model and teach – is familiar in arts education and at living history sites such as Colonial Williamsburg. Heuvel's expertise and research into education and museum



interpretation led her to see the potential of bringing living history into the classroom.

“For years, I’ve seen teachers seek out living history professionals and performances, asking questions in the hope of learning new skills,” Heuvel said. “That led me to a question a decade ago: Why not write a book that enables teachers to blend their educational expertise with the skills that historical interpreters and storytellers use? And better yet, what if a group of exceptional educators and public historians each contribute a chapter based on their experience and skills? This group could share their experience in teaching, performing and related topics.

“Fortunately colleagues across the nation committed to this project. Our joint hope is to support 21st-century teachers and students, which is even more important now as we cope with massive shifts in teaching and technology.”

Heuvel and her 13 co-authors contributed detailed chapters with images, techniques, resources and lesson plans which apply to both in-person and virtual instruction. American studies alum Lydia Davis ’20 provided research support to Heuvel during the book’s development.

Heuvel teaches classes in leadership and American studies and is the former director of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation’s Teacher Institute. She is the author of numerous articles on colonial history and a book on the Civil War.
