



Winter 1-21-2009

## Famed Historian James Horton to Speak on Abraham Lincoln for Founders' Day ; News Release

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### Recommended Citation

Hatch, Rachel, "Famed Historian James Horton to Speak on Abraham Lincoln for Founders' Day ; News Release" (2009). *News and Events*. 5533.  
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January 21, 2009

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## **Famed Historian James Horton to Speak on Abraham Lincoln for Founders' Day**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – James Horton has lent his expertise to museums across the nation, but has spent his career bringing history directly to people as an advisor, Pulitzer Prize-nominated writer and consultant for The History Channel.

An historian emeritus with the National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian Institution, Horton will deliver an address titled “Abraham Lincoln: Slavery and the Civil War” for Illinois Wesleyan University’s annual Founders’ Day Convocation at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 18 in Westbrook Auditorium in Presser Hall (1210 Park St., Bloomington). Horton’s visit is supported in part by the David and Ann Lawrence Speaker’s Series. The event, which is free and open to the public, honors the 30 founders who signed the charter for the University in 1850.

Receiving a doctorate in 1973 from Brandeis University (Massachusetts), Horton has been on the national and international stage for decades, working toward the preservation and understanding of history. He served on the White House Millennium Council from 1998 to 2000, acting as an historical expert for First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. In the fall of 2000, he was one of two historians appointed by President Bill Clinton to serve on the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission.

In 2003, Horton held the John Adams Distinguished Fulbright Chair in American History at the University of Leiden in The Netherlands. The following year, he served as president of the Organization of American Historians. He was the director of the Afro-American Communities Project of the National Museum of American History. The Benjamin Banneker Professor Emeritus of American Studies and History at George Washington University, D.C., Horton has served as historical advisor to several museums in the United States and abroad, including the Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio; the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tenn.; Colonial Williamsburg; and Thomas Jefferson’s home of Monticello. He is currently the visiting professor of American Studies at the University of Hawaii.

An advocate of public history, he has been an historical consultant to numerous film and video productions including those seen on ABC, PBS, the Discovery Channel, C-Span TV and The History Channel. He was also an historical consultant to and appeared in several PBS series, including, "Africans in America," "New England and the Civil War" and *The American Experience Series* "John Brown's Holy War." Horton appears regularly on The History Channel, and was the subject of an episode in the series, "Great Minds in American History," hosted by Roger Mudd.

An avid writer, Dr. Horton has written ten books, including eight he wrote with Lois Horton. In 1997 the couple was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in History for *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Protest, and Community Among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (Oxford University Press, 1997). Other publications by the Hortons include *Hard Road to Freedom: The Story of African America* (Rutgers University Press, 2001) and *Slavery and the Making of America*, (Oxford University Press, 2006).

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