



INNOVATION IN HISTORY: IMPACT, INFLUENCE, CHANGE 2026—2027

LINKS TO GEORGIA ARCHIVES' RESOURCES

[Georgia Archives Website](#)

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RESOURCES AT THE GEORGIA ARCHIVES

The 2027 National History Day theme invites students to examine innovations in technology, law, government, medicine, science, activism, and social organization. The resources below can help students identify what changed, who or what influenced that change, and the short- and long-term impact of innovation.

Students are encouraged to submit research questions to the Georgia Archives staff through the [Ask an Archivist webform](#).

1. Innovation in Civil Rights, Education, and Activism:

Documents and materials that may support projects on new legal strategies, student-led activism, public debate, and institutional change include:

Finding Aids:

- [RCB-14225](#), Hamilton Holmes, Jr., and Charlayne A. Hunter Application to University of Georgia: These records document the applications of two African American students, Hamilton Holmes, Jr., and Charlayne A. Hunter, to the University of Georgia, the repeated denial of their admission, the federal lawsuit that followed, and the January 1961 court order requiring their admission. The file also includes Governor Vandiver's January 11, 1961, Executive Order concerning violence on the University of Georgia campus, a GBI surveillance report on Hamilton Holmes, and correspondence to and from Donald Hollowell.

Virtual Vault:

- Sibley Commission Report ([ah00787](#))
- Governor Ernest Vandiver's Public Education Address, January 18, 1961 ([ah00784](#))
- Citizenship Test, 1949 ([ah00120](#))
- Citizenship Test, 1958 ([ah00114](#))
- African Case, Deposition of William S. Mitchell, 1820 ([ah00865](#))
- African Slave Non-Importation Act Violation, 1818 ([ah01389](#))

Reference Library:

- [Books on desegregation](#)

Online Exhibits:

- [Examples of Primary Sources that Document Enslaved and Free Persons of Color in Antebellum Georgia](#)

Videos:

- ["I'm Here to Demand My Rights!": The Life of Henry McNeal Turner](#) by Velma Maia Thomas Fann
- [Prose to the People](#) by Katie Mitchell
- [Voices Across the Color Line: An Oral History of the Atlanta Student Movement](#) by Paul Crater
- [Education: Resistance and Activism: Steps toward Integration in Georgia](#) by Tamika Strong
- [Segregated Schools in Georgia: Separate but Not Equal](#) by Tamika Strong

2. Innovation in Land Policy, Mapping, and Indigenous Dispossession:

Documents and materials that may support projects on new systems of surveying, land distribution, diplomacy, and state administration include:

Virtual Vault:

- Act to Authorize Georgia Governor George R. Gilmer to take possession of Cherokee lands, 1830 ([ah00773](#))
- Articles of Agreement and Cession Regarding Georgia's western lands, 1802 ([ah00777](#))
- Cherokee Women Write Governor Gilmer Concerning Ferry Operation, 1832 ([ah00874](#))
- Creek and Cherokee Land Cession, 1773 ([ah00103](#))
- Treaty of Shoulderbone ([ah00889](#))
- Letter to Governor George Gilmer regarding Creek Indian Removal, 1834 ([ah00741](#))
- Journal at the Conference at Coleraine, 1796 ([ah00892](#))

Reference Library:

- [Indian Depredations Claims](#)

Videos:

- [Georgia's Land Lotteries and Native Americans](#) by Hendry Miller

3. Innovation in Women's Political Participation and Organizing:

Documents and materials that may support projects on voting rights, civic education, constitutional reform, lobbying, and organized political influence include:

Finding Aids:

- ["Equal Rights Amendment"](#) (search results)
 - o [RCB-43412](#), Commission on the Status of Women: This folder includes letters written to Labor Commissioner Sam Caldwell about the defunding of a commission on the status of women. Labor, Commissioner, Commissioner's Subject Files, RG-16-1-7.
 - o [RCB-859](#), [RCB-28040](#), [RCB-507](#), Equal Rights Amendment: These boxes include letters to Governor Busbee from women's organizations, churches, and individual Georgians supporting or opposing the amendment.
 - o [RCB-16562](#), Equal Rights Amendment: Includes letters, newspaper clippings, and publications related to the amendment.
 - o [RCB-38315](#), Equal Rights Amendment: Includes letters to Lieutenant Governor Zell Miller from organizations, churches, and individuals concerning the amendment.

Manuscript Collections:

- [National League of Women Voters, 1923—1962](#)

Reference Library:

- [Books on Women's Rights](#)

Virtual Vault:

- Divorce Case Heard by Georgia Supreme Court, 1844 ([ah00688](#))
- Women's Suffrage Act of Georgia, 1921 ([ah00782](#))

4. Innovation in Public Health, Medicine, and Agricultural Science:

Documents and materials that may support projects on disease prevention, public health administration, medical treatment, laboratory work, and scientific responses to agricultural problems include:

Finding Aids:

- University System of Georgia ([RG 33](#))
- Department of Health ([RG 26](#))
- Department of Agriculture ([RG 13](#))
- [DOC-2297](#): This box includes publications from the State Board of Entomology on the boll weevil, fire ant, and other agricultural problems. It also includes Department of Agriculture analyses of insecticides and fungicides.

Virtual Vault:

- [Mines, Mining, and Geology](#)
- [Soil Survey Maps](#)
- Smallpox Inoculation Proclamation, 1786 ([ah00885](#))
- Spanish Influenza Epidemic in Georgia, 1919 ([ah00413](#))

On-Site Services:

- Visual Materials Database, including photographs of:
 - o University buildings
 - o Administrators
 - o Public health laboratories
 - o Polio patients
 - o Arrival of the Salk vaccine in Atlanta
- Microfilm from the Department of Public Health (see index on Virtual Vault – [State33](#))

Videos:

- [Central State Hospital: An Oral History; Atlanta's Healthcare History](#) by Joe Windish

5. Innovation in Environmental Science, Regulation, and Public Policy:

Documents and materials that may support projects on environmental monitoring, scientific evidence, public hearings, and government regulation include:

Finding Aids:

- Environmental Protection Division ([RG 88](#))
- Natural Resources – Commissioner's Office – American Cyanamid EPD Plant Hearing Files ([086-01-021](#)): This series documents a major water pollution case involving the Georgia Environmental Protection Division and the American Cyanamid plant in Savannah. It includes hearing transcripts, expert depositions, briefs, company and state exhibits, water-quality analyses of the Savannah River, maps, charts, and environmental-impact projections.

Manuscript Collections:

- [Audubon Society: Atlanta records, 1926—1980](#)

Virtual Vault:

- [Soil Survey Maps](#)

Videos:

- [Georgia's Agricultural and Environmental Past through the Records since 1874](#) by John Whitehurst
- [Archives, Ancestry, and Agriculture](#) by John Whitehurst
- [Keeping the Chattahoochee](#) by Sally Bethea
- [The Political Movement That Saved Georgia's Coast and Rivers](#) by Paul Bolster

6. Innovation in Law, Identity, and Social Change:

Documents and materials that may support projects on changing legal arguments, constitutional interpretation, political messaging, and public perceptions include:

Finding Aids:

- Michael J. Bowers Subject Files ([009-01-021](#))
- [RCB-859](#), [RCB-28040](#), [RCB-507](#), Equal Rights Amendment: Although primarily concerned with the Equal Rights Amendment, these records also contain references to LGBTQ+ issues and perceptions of the amendment.
- [RCB-16562](#), Equal Rights Amendment: Includes letters, newspaper clippings, and publications related to changing language, political messaging, and the relationship between gender equality debates and LGBTQ+ issues.
- [RCB-38315](#), Equal Rights Amendment: Includes correspondence to Lieutenant Governor Zell Miller from organizations, churches, and individuals.

7. Innovation in Disability Services, Rehabilitation, and Polio Response:

Documents and materials that may support projects on rehabilitation programs, disability services, vaccine distribution, public education, and fundraising include:

Finding Aids:

- Vocational Rehabilitation ([RG 75](#))

Manuscript Collections:

- [Georgia Warm Springs Foundation Papers, 1974](#)

On-Site Services:

- Visual Materials Database, including photographs of:
 - o Polio patients

- Arrival of the Salk vaccine in Atlanta
- Polio rodeos

8. Innovation in Government, Transportation, and Political Administration:

Documents and materials that may support projects on constitutional government, state-sponsored transportation, diplomacy, voting systems, and political administration include:

Finding Aids:

- Western and Atlantic Railroad ([RG 18](#))

Virtual Vault:

- Ordinances appointing Benjamin Franklin agent for Georgia, 1768, 1771, and 1773 ([bf01](#), [bf03](#), [bf06](#))
- Georgia Constitutions ([Ad Hoc Collection](#))
- Royal Charter, 1732 ([ah00774](#))
- Treaty of Paris, 1784 ([ah00884](#))
- Numbered list of voters from Telfair County ([ah00125](#))