

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Antebellum Echoes

Sunday lecture explores the history and enduring legacy of Gullah

The Gullah Language of the South Carolina Lowcountry will be featured during a free presentation at the Georgetown Library at 405 Cleland Street in Georgetown this Sunday, September 21, at 2 p.m. In a program entitled *The Place of Gullah in the African American Language Continuum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, Dr. Tracey L. Weldon, Professor in the English Department and Linguistics Program of the University of South Carolina (USC), will reflect on Gullah's origins, on its historical development, and on its current role in people's lives.

The afternoon event will also offer Gullah-inspired desserts, a beautiful quilt exploring Gullah's past, and antebellum tools used by former slaves. Even a giant centerpiece celebrating local crops has been designed by Kevin Jayroe of Bienvenue Home on Front Street.

Gullah, also known as Geechee or Sea Island Creole, is an African American Language spoken along the coast and Sea Islands of our state and Georgia. While theories on its origins vary, it dates back to the Atlantic slave-trading era. This was a time when massive numbers of Africans speaking different languages were brought together under extreme conditions that required the formation of a common means of communication. After the Civil War, Gullah continued to be used by local speakers.

This lecture is the first of six that are part of a library project entitled: "*Out of the Rice Fields: Vestiges of Gullah Culture in Modern Society.*" These programs are made possible by a major grant from the Humanities Council SC, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Its mission is to enrich the cultural and intellectual lives of South Carolinians. For more information on *Out of the Rice Fields*, please contact the Georgetown County Library at (843) 545-3300.