Matthew Pettway (Bates College) presented on “Reading the Invisibility of Race” during Winter Weekend 2016 (see page 5). PHOTO: DAN D’IPPOLITO
The Maine Humanities Council, a statewide non-profit organization, uses the humanities—literature, history, philosophy, and culture—as a tool for positive change in Maine communities. Our programs and grants encourage critical thinking and conversations across social, economic, and cultural boundaries.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Maine Humanities Council seeks to expand its list of potential nominees to fill future openings on its Board of Directors. The Council looks for a wide geographic representation and range of civic and/or academic experience. To notify the Council of your interest, please send a letter and a résumé to:

Governance Committee Chair
Maine Humanities Council
674 Brighton Avenue
Portland, ME 04102-1012

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The Maine Humanities Council is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Editor: Diane Magras
Design: Lori Harley
The National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities are again under fire in Washington, reportedly targeted for elimination in the Trump administration’s upcoming budget proposal.

Let’s be clear: this move has nothing to do with saving money. Together the NEH and NEA account for about 0.01% of federal spending. (Imagine a household earning $50,000 annually. The proportionate cost for NEH’s share would be $2.50 for the entire year.) No serious argument can be made for the elimination of NEH on the basis of saving money for the United States treasury. The numbers don’t add up.

The attack on NEH is symbolic. And it’s an attack that strikes at the root of fundamental American values and seeks to undermine important practical foundations of American democracy. As citizens, we need to get this one right.

Since the Founding, public support for the humanities has played a key role in American public life. James Madison is credited with having suggested the creation of the Library of Congress in 1783, and ever since, government leaders have understood that support for the humanities is crucial to the ongoing work of protecting and defending our shared ideals of liberty and justice for all. Yet somehow you will hear opponents of NEH claim there is nothing here in the public interest.

We practice a form of government that asks us all to look beyond immediate individual self-interest, to cultivate empathy, develop wisdom, and endeavor to learn from the successes and failures of our past. We practice a form of government that has engagement with the humanities at its very heart.

Here’s how Congress put it more than 50 years ago in the legislation creating NEH: “To fulfill its educational mission, achieve an orderly continuation of free society, and provide models of excellence to the American people, the Federal Government must transmit the achievement and values of civilization from the past via the present to the future, and make widely available the greatest achievements of art.”

This is what’s happening in Maine. Through the programs of the Maine Humanities Council, this year low-literacy adults around the state will experience the power and pleasure of participating in conversations about books and ideas; combat Veterans will gather together to reflect on their military service through the communal experience of classic literature; staff members at domestic violence agencies from Sanford to Presque Isle will gain new perspective on their work through reading and discussing poetry and fiction. Here in Maine, the humanities do not live in the ivory tower. Here in Maine, the humanities are part of the rough and tumble of our shared human experience. Yet somehow opponents will try to tell you the humanities are solely for the enjoyment of cultural elites. They couldn’t be more wrong.

The efficient deployment of federal dollars for the benefit of communities large and small has long been a hallmark of the NEH. Across the U.S., organizations like the Maine Humanities Council see to it that every federal dollar awarded by NEH in grants leverages an additional five dollars or more. Because the funding mechanism works so well, Mainers in towns from Jackman to Lubec to St. Agatha benefit from humanities opportunities that promote critical thinking and civic discourse. It’s difficult to imagine a delivery system better designed to create the conditions necessary for democracy to flourish. Yet you’ll hear opponents falsely singling out the NEH as an example of waste, trying to tell you it’s not worth it.

Democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens. What’s at stake in this debate is not the exceedingly modest budget funding for a handful of small federal agencies. No, what’s at stake for us as a nation is how we are to live out our shared national values. This is the core question: With all our diversity, with all our deeply held views on different sides of every important issue, with all our varied backgrounds and the multitude of our different dreams for the future, how do we talk with one another about what matters most? If there has ever been a humanities question, surely this is it. And wrestling with this question is, in part, how you do the fundamental work of sustaining a vigorous democracy. Don’t let anyone tell you it’s not worth it.

Hayden Anderson
Executive Director

This letter appeared as a March 4, 2017 Op-Ed in the Portland Press Herald.

The Maine Humanities Council is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that serves as the Maine affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress Center for the Book. To sign up and receive action alerts to support the NEH, visit mainehumanities.org.
THE 14TH AMENDMENT
IN AMERICAN
LIFE AND IMAGINATION

In 2016, in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the passage of the U.S. Constitution’s 14th Amendment, the MHC presented statewide programming exploring the amendment’s history, evolution, and contemporary significance. Events included a public forum, speaker series, panel discussions, facilitated reading and discussion groups for the general public and for special audiences, curricular materials, and a grants program supporting community organizations such as libraries, historical societies, cultural nonprofits, and schools. The statewide impact occurred throughout each program involved.

“I was] just more aware of cultural differences and the challenges others face.”
“It made me] realize that I need to do more to help alleviate the injustices in our society.”
And series gave participants... “more interest in activism,” “more effort to respect others’ points of view and feelings,” “[the goal to] keep on trying.”
- 2016 PARTICIPANTS

LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

In the MHC’s examination of the legacies of the 14th Amendment, our library-based and scholar-led book group, Let’s Talk About It, created a reading and discussion series with books addressing issues of diversity, identity, and inequality—exploring how, for many Americans, the promise of citizenship falls short of their reality.

We are still living out the reverberations of the transformative moment that gave rise to the 14th Amendment. Its 150th anniversary in 2016 coincided with a year in which the nature and meaning of race and the significance of the nation’s history of slavery were of urgent popular concern.

BOOKS IN THIS SERIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between the World and Me</td>
<td>Ta Nehisi Coates</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Map of Home</td>
<td>Randa Jarrar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marrow of Tradition</td>
<td>Charles Chestnut</td>
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<tr>
<td>Once in a Promised Land</td>
<td>Laila Halaby</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Round House</td>
<td>Louise Erdrich</td>
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Read together, these works remind us that the more expansive version of American citizenship brought about by the 14th Amendment was formed in the wake of searing violence and historical traumas.

South Berwick and Lewiston hosted this new series in 2016. Nearly half of participants were attending Let’s Talk About It for the first time.
National Humanities Medal winning artist David Driskell and renowned civil rights attorney Melvyn Zarr (University of Maine School of Law) reflected together on their work in activism and education in August 2016. In an intimate conversation facilitated by Dean Danielle Conway (University of Maine School of Law), Driskell and Zarr discussed art and law as filtered through the lens of civil rights. This event was held at Portland Museum of Art in partnership with the University of Maine School of Law. | PHOTO: ALEX STEED/KNACK FACTORY

CIVIL RIGHTS THROUGH ART & LAW

What does freedom mean to us? Is equality essential? Why is it important?

These are just a few of the questions asked in “Pioneers and Frontiers,” 2016’s new series of New Books, New Readers. The series, with session titles like “Yearning to Breathe Free” and “Moving Mountains,” was developed as part of the MHC’s statewide emphasis on the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and allows new readers the opportunity to explore concepts of equality, citizenship, and liberty.

In the introductory session, the group read Lillian’s Right to Vote: A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by Jonah Winter. Students traveled to Augusta from as far north as Presque Isle and as far south as Biddeford; as far east as Calais and as far west as Dixfield. They participated in three 45-minute workshops, including: “Cartoons, Superheroes, and Telling Our Stories” with our keynote speaker Vishavjit Singh, creator of the Sikh-themed cartoon Sikhtoons. Singh used his work to tell his own story before an interactive cartooning session where students used art to explore issues of identity. The session “Spotlight Schools” featured five civil rights teams who presented on their own activities that had prompted students at their schools to think and talk about issues related to race and skin color, national origin and ancestry, religion, disabilities, gender (including gender identity and expression), and/or sexual orientation. The Lewiston High School civil rights team led the third session, “White Privilege: A Facilitated Dialogue,” and explored issues of racial identity and racism specifically related to white privilege, doing so in a safe and structured environment.

All participants then heard from Vishavjit Singh. In his keynote, he extended the message from his workshop, challenging attendees to not just examine their own identities but their own biases, too. He shared his short film—Red, White, and Beard—which documents his work dressing up as Captain America and challenging people to think about what makes someone an American and what makes someone a superhero. Singh emerged in his full Sikh Captain America costume in a safe and structured environment.

PIONEERS AND FRONTIERS SERIES BOOKS

Lillian’s Right to Vote: A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by Jonah Winter

A Picnic in October by Eve Bunting

Emma’s Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty by Linda Glaser

Coming to America: The Story of Immigration by Betsy Maestro

Granddaddy’s Gift by Margaree King Mitchell

Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-Ins by Carole Boston Weatherford

Rosa by Nikki Giovanni

Ballots for Belva: The True Story of a Woman’s Race for the Presidency by Sudipta Bardham-Quallen

Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family’s Fight for Desegregation by Duncan Tonatiuh

My Diary from Here to There by Amanda Irma Pérez

NEW BOOKS, NEW READERS

Held in bars and popular performance spaces, Think & Drink took discussions about “the citizen” to Portland, Bangor, Biddeford, and Rockland throughout 2016. Portland’s SPACE Gallery partnered with us in the early part of the year to offer: “Sex and the Citizen,” “Citizenship and Dissent,” “Unequal Citizens,” and “Citizenship and the Climate,” drawing a total of nearly 250 people. Bangor’s Nocturnem Draft Haus was a powerful new partner this autumn, working with us to present “Citizenship and the Climate,” “Unequal Citizens,” and “Citizens and the Election” with over 100 people attending. And to close the year, in Biddeford, we partnered with Engine (a gallery and performance space) for a powerful discussion on “Unequal Citizens”; then in Rockland with Rock City Coffee for “The Many Nations of the Midcoast.” These two pilots drew nearly 100 people together. In each session, we heard impassioned conversations, often between people with differing opinions. We were proud to offer these communities a forum for open conversation and true civic dialogue. | PHOTO: DAN D’IPPOLITO

THINK & DRINK
In 2016, the MHC began exploring the links between our programs for people who work in organizations that serve the public need: Literature & Medicine, Lit & Med: Hospice, Domestic Violence Prevention Programming, and Literature & Education. By recognizing the commonalities between health care facilities, domestic violence prevention organizations, and public schools, we began to build an infrastructure that would support all of them while serving the specific needs of their communities.

This new way of thinking—we’re calling it Literature & Public Life—aims to increase the sense of community felt by participants in these programs and their feeling of value within their communities, resulting in greater job satisfaction, stronger work relationships, higher levels of empathy, and more positive and effective interactions with colleagues and patients, clients, or students. New book series will serve each of these groups: offering the same books and broad themes to prompt variations of the same conversations.

In 2016, MHC Veterans Book Group programming brought Veterans in three different communities together to reflect on their service. Scholars and Veterans co-facilitated discussions of novels, plays, short stories, film, poetry, and essays selected to raise issues Veterans identified as important to them. In Portland, Sophocles’s play Antigone offered opportunities for Combat Veterans to look at life on the home front and talk about honor, duty, choices, homecoming, and the tensions between authority and responsibility. Veterans in the Brunswick women’s group identified with The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter, a documentary revealing some of the challenges faced by women who moved into previously male-dominated workplaces during the Second World War. Military Veterans held at the Kennebec County Correctional Facility discussed issues related to transitioning back into civilian society through discussion of Brian Mockenhaupt’s essay “I Miss Iraq, I Miss My Gun, I Miss My War” (which acknowledges the complex, sometimes conflicted feelings Veterans may experience about war) and the film, Gran Torino (which opened opportunities to talk about race, sexism, Veteran’s experiences, connection, and honor).

One facilitator told us after the program, “This program demonstrates that through the humanities we learn not historical truth but truths about the nature of human experience in the context of war.”

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ANNUAL REPORT 16

HUMANITIES

DOROTHY SCHWARTZ
FORUM ON ART, SCIENCE,
AND THE HUMANITIES

What if one of our memories is an event shared by an entire society—does that change our relationship to it? This was the question asked at the third annual Dorothy Schwartz Forum, “9/11 and the Creation of Collective Memory,” which explored the formation of collective memory by using 9/11 as a case study for how a society remembers—or forgets—together.

FIRST PLACE, LEVEL I (GRADES 4 – 6)
Excerpt: Austen Turner (Bangor) to Lisa Fiedler, Mouseheart

I never, ever will forget this book. Mouseheart taught me the world will not let you always win, so make the most of life while it’s still here. People die, people move on, the world changes. Since I read this book, I’ve made the most of everything I have.

FIRST PLACE, LEVEL II (GRADES 7 – 8)
Excerpt: Jeffrey David Fosgate (Lyman) to Michael Rosen, The Hypnotiser

I have been inspired by your literature, and because of this, even in the most random and uninteresting parts of my day, I always spot something from the corner of my eye and in some way connect it to your poetry. None of the poetry I’ve ever heard of throughout my fourteen years of enjoying literature has made me look at life so differently.

FIRST PLACE, LEVEL III (GRADES 9 – 12)
Excerpt: Mei Tian (Bangor) to Carolyn Marsden and Virginia Shin-Mui Loh, The Jade Dragon

Your book has taught me that being bilingual doesn’t just mean being able to speak two different languages or that I’ll find a job easier, but it means that I have more than my appearance to add to my Chinese American identity, and it means that I have the ability to communicate with those that I love most.

WINTER WEEKEND

In 2016, the MHC’s annual big-book gala examined Gabriel García Márquez’s One Hundred Years of Solitude, a classic of Latin American literature that uses magical-realism to weave a multi-generational story of the Buendía family and their hometown of Macondo. Exploring this influential work, Winter Weekend 2016 featured keynote speaker Ilan Stavans, (Amherst College). Additional speakers included Allen Wells (Bowdoin College); Matthew Pettway (Bates College); and Isabel Alvarez-Borland (College of the Holy Cross). Continuing its interdisciplinary approach, Winter Weekend 2016 also featured a performance of traditional Colombian music by the band Sudacas. | PHOTOS: DAN D’IPPOLITO

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

Letters About Literature, which asks students between grades 4 and 12 to write to an author whose book has had an impact on the students’ life or way of thinking, is a U.S. Library of Congress program supported in Maine by the David Royte Fund. In 2016, 791 Maine students submitted letters to this contest. Enjoy the following excerpts from Maine’s winning letters.

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The MHC awarded a total of $102,389 for 57 grants in 2016; grants fell into the following categories and are featured below:

- **14th Amendment programming**
- **Arts & Humanities programming**
- **MHC Mini or Major grants**
- **Pulitzer Prize Centennial Campfires Initiative programming** (As part of the Pulitzer Prize's centennial celebration, the MHC offered a special grant round that enabled Maine nonprofits to: inspire new generations to value high-quality arts, letters, and/or journalism; use Pulitzer Prize-winning writing, journalism, or music composition to explore questions and issues relevant to our times; and use social media and other interactive technology to deepen the impact that Pulitzer Prize works could have on our state’s cultural landscape.)

### AUGUSTA

#### ★ $1,000 | Created Equal

UMA students and community members formed a writing collaborative on the UMA campus to explore the topic of equality in America and to create a theater piece on the theme of protection under the 14th Amendment. The resulting theater piece was performed in December 2016 as a staged reading at the Holocaust and Human Rights Center.

*Figures of Speech Theatre*

### BAR HARBOR

#### ➤ $1,000 | Bar Harbor: Birthplace of the Pulitzer Prize

Pulitzer biographer James McGrath Morris and Pulitzer’s Gold author and journalist Roy Harris visited Jesup Memorial Library for a discussion on Bar Harbor as the birthplace of the Pulitzer Prize. In the last years of his life, Joseph Pulitzer spent time at his Bar Harbor estate, Chatwold, where it is believed he came up with the idea for the prize. Together they spoke about Joseph Pulitzer and the eponymous prize from its Bar Harbor birth to today.

*Jesup Memorial Library*

### BANGOR

#### ➤ $1,250 | Bangor High School World Geography Symposium

On April 15, 2016, Bangor High School held a World Geography Symposium for their freshmen students, involving research on how geographic features can affect local communities. Pulitzer-Prize-winning photojournalist Larry Price was the keynote speaker and shared his work on refugees, child labor, and pollution conditions around the Citarum River of Jakarta.

*Bangor High School*

#### ★ $5,000 | Transformer Tales: Origin Stories of the Penobscot Nation

Working with five Penobscot playwrights, the Penobscot Theater produced and toured a new play based on five traditional Wabanaki “transformation stories” used to illuminate and celebrate the tribe's rich history and culture in Northern Maine. This was part of the Theater’s 2016 summer educational program for youths, and the performances featured youth of native and non-native descent.

*Penobscot Theater Company*

### FREEPORT

#### ➤ $4,000 | little match girl passion

David Lang’s Pulitzer Prize-winning little match girl passion combined interwoven parts of Bach’s St. Matthew Passion with text from Hans Christian Andersen’s story, The Little Match Girl. The performance at Figures of Speech Theatre included Bunraku-style puppets, masked dance, and projected shadows and film in a wordless tapestry of images that extended and deepened Lang’s synthesis of the two original works.

*Figures of Speech Theatre*

### NEWCASTLE

#### ★ $3,500 | Frances Perkins Center Travel Exhibit and Videography Project

The Frances Perkins Center designed and produced a travel exhibit and video about Frances Perkins’s work to share with middle and high schools in Maine. Frances Perkins, who had strong ties to Maine, was Secretary of Labor during the entire presidency of Franklin Roosevelt and the person most responsible for implementing the economic safety net known as the New Deal.

*Frances Perkins Center*

### PORTLAND

#### ★ ★ $1,000 | Anything Helps God Bless

This original theater piece, Anything Helps God Bless, explored the panhandler/median-strip controversy in Portland through actual interviews with sign-bearers, research into court rulings, documented public reaction to the controversy, and the “due process” aspect of the 14th Amendment.

*Snowlion Repertory Company*

### ROCKPORT

#### ★ ★ $1,000 | Election Night Specials

Last October, the Everyman Repertory Theatre presented two staged readings of political dramas from both sides of the political spectrum. The first, Rich Orloff’s Chatting with the Tea Party, is a 2016 drama that tells the story of one liberal playwright’s journey around America. The second, Gore Vidal’s The Best Man, tells the story of the 1960 Democratic National Convention.

*Everyman Repertory Theatre*
MAINE Humanities Council donors make a difference for people across Maine. They inspire the exchange of perspectives that lead Mainers to a better understanding of themselves, one another, and the world. They enrich the state by supporting the programs described in this report. We are grateful for their generosity.

If you feel inspired to contribute:
• fill out the enclosed envelope;
• go to mainehumanities.org; or
• contact Diane Magras, Director of Development, at 207-773-5051 or diane@mainehumanities.org.

We are proud to devote the space in this report to thank all of our donors at all levels of giving. Whether your gift was $10 or $10,000, you’ve helped us to make a difference in Maine.

The list that follows represents gifts received in the 2016 Fiscal Year (11.1.15 – 10.31.16).

Asterisks denote
Maine Humanities Council
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SPECIAL FUNDS

Dorothy Schwartz Opportunity Fund
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"Rendering the Unthinkable: Artists Respond to 9/11" during the 2016 Dorothy Schwartz Forum.
PHOTO: DIANE HUDSON
DURING Fiscal Year 2016, the Maine Humanities Council had operating income of $1,330,879 and operating expenses of $1,447,407. Grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, including highly competitive grants, made up an important component of the budget. This support was supplemented by a diverse range of other income streams, from the Pulitzer Centennial Committee, the Library of Congress, the State of Maine, generous support from private foundations, the individual contributions highlighted in this report, and program income. Both the income and the expense figures reported in these charts and in the Council’s audited financial statements include in-kind contributions of time, mileage and materials, valued at $213,801.
Join us for a fourth season of *Think & Drink* as we tackle policing in Maine, its intersection with race, and how our local experience connects with what we see across the rest of the United States.

How does society define criminal behavior, and who is a criminal? What do we want from our police, and how are they trained? What powers do we place in the hands of the state (police, legal system, prisons), and how do we monitor the use of those powers? Do communities suffer collateral damage from being policed, and do those who do the policing face emotional challenges of their own?

Go to mainehumanities.org for information on additional venues and times as they are scheduled throughout the state in 2017.

2017 HAPPY HOUR PANEL & DISCUSSION SERIES

**Policing, Protection, Community, and Trust in the 21st Century**

[was Feb 8] **What is a criminal?**
Definitions of criminal behavior and who is defined as a criminal

Apr 5 **What makes a police officer?**
Training and expectations of law enforcement

May 3 **Who’s watching whom?**
Video surveillance by and of the police

Jun 7 **What’s the harm?**
Emotional challenges of policing and being policed

Portland commenced this new series, in partnership with and hosted at SPACE Gallery, 538 Congress St, Portland 6:30–8:00pm [Doors open: 6:00pm]

FREE | All Ages | Open to the Public

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