

“The Meaning of the Fourth of July for the Negro”

Reading Frederick Douglass during the Presidency of Barack Obama

By Pleun Bouricius

“Fellow citizens, why am I called upon to speak here to-day? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak today? What, to the American slave, is your Fourth of July?” Thus began Frederick Douglass’s fiery July 5, 1852, speech, *The Meaning of the Fourth of July for the Negro*, in which the great orator famously took exception to being asked to commemorate the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

This Fourth of July season, community groups, libraries, towns, organizations, families, and individuals are invited to read the speech communally. Mass Humanities has developed a Web resource with everything you need to organize your own shared reading: the speech, discussion materials, supporting articles, and PR guidelines, which you can download at www.masshumanities.org. This statewide project will kick off on Tuesday, June 2 at noon. You are invited to join us in front of the State House, where Massachusetts politicians and residents together will read and discuss the speech. Partnering with Mass Humanities in this project are Community Change Inc. (where the idea originated), the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, the Ella Baker House, Boston African American National Historic Site, the New Bedford Historical Society, and others.

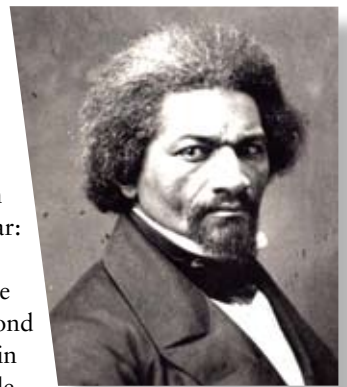
With this program, we mark the bicentennial year of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator, by taking up the

challenge leveled by Barack Obama at Constitution Hall in Philadelphia last year: “I have never been so naïve as to believe that we can get beyond our racial divisions in a single election cycle.

Race is an issue this nation cannot afford to ignore right now. To work for ‘a more perfect union’ we need to start to understand complexities that we’ve never really worked through. [This] requires a reminder of how we arrived at this point.”

“What better way to remind ourselves that we aren’t there yet,” asks David Harris of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, “than with the speech of a man who was as eloquent as our president on the issue of race and a source of inspiration for Lincoln himself?”

Douglass gave his address in 1852, a galvanizing year in the history of slavery and abolition. That March, Boston’s Jewett & Company published *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* to national acclaim, outrage, and general sensation. The book had been serialized in 1851 and 1852 in the antislavery weekly, the *National Era*, which had 15,000 subscribers when it started and 19,000 at the conclusion of the novel.¹ As historian David Blight puts it, “If *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is the fictional masterpiece of American abolitionism ... then Douglass’s Fourth of July address is abolition’s rhetorical masterpiece



Reserve seats early!

Benefit Dinner Featuring Rachel Maddow

Following our annual public symposium on November 7, Rachel Maddow, host of MSNBC’s “The Rachel Maddow Show,” will speak at our annual benefit dinner on the symposium’s theme of “Soldiers & Citizens: Military and Civic Culture in America,” at Boston College’s Gasson Hall. Individual seats and sponsorships—which include group seating and public recognition—are available. Reserve seats at our Web site, www.masshumanities.org. To enquire about sponsorships, contact John Sieracki at jsieracki@masshumanities.org. A reception with symposium panelists will take place at BC’s McMullen Museum between the symposium and the dinner.



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In March we welcomed Deepika Fernandes to our staff as the new fiscal officer. A native of Goa, India, Deepika came to us from the Massachusetts Association of Portuguese Speakers in Cambridge, where she was staff accountant and then manager of finance and operations.

Deepika has a bachelor's degree in accounting from Mangalore University and a master's degree in commerce from Karnatak University, both in India. She also has a master's in business studies from Dublin City University in Dublin, Ireland. Deepika lives in Longmeadow with her husband, an anesthesiologist at Baystate Medical Center, and two children.

We fondly bid farewell to Susan Mikula, who has done outstanding work as the Mass Humanities fiscal officer for eight years. Susan plans to devote full attention to her art, photography. We will miss Susan's humor and camaraderie in the office, and also her faithful Labrador retriever, Poppy.

Correction: In the winter 2009 edition of *Mass Humanities*, in the article entitled, "FAIR Launches with a Jingle Jangle," the song that John Porcino played to the families participating in this reading program is actually called "All God's Critters," not "All Life's Critters," as we printed it. Mr. Porcino altered the lyrics of this well-known folk song by Bill Staines in this way when he performed in an effort to be inclusive, not knowing the religious beliefs of his audience members. Thanks go to reader Joan Sullivan Gray for pointing out the error.

Please contact John Sieracki, editor of *Mass Humanities*, with any questions or comments about this newsletter: jsieracki@masshumanities.org.

Mass Humanities Executive Director David Tebaldi elected a member of the American Antiquarian Society

One of the nation's four premier independent research libraries, the American Antiquarian Society (AAS) was founded in 1812 in Worcester, Massachusetts (www.americanantiquarian.org). AAS members, who now number more than 800 persons from every region of the country and from thirty-three foreign countries, are elected by their colleagues in recognition of scholarship, for support of cultural institutions, for manifest interest in bibliographical matters, or for distinction as community or national leaders in humanistic affairs. Thirteen presidents of the United States have been members, and AAS members have been awarded seventy-five Pulitzer Prizes and over fifty Bancroft Prizes for their work.

Kudos for Mass Moments

From a recent e-mail:
"Dear Mass Humanities: I teach English and history at Eliot Girls' Detention Center in Worcester, MA... Every morning, I print out that day's eMoment on brightly colored paper. Each history class, we read and briefly discuss the historic moment. Every Friday, when we play Jeopardy, it is included as one of our categories. I love your Mass Moments, since it's a fun and informative way to begin each history class. Keep up the good work!"

Sign up for "eMoments" and eNews at our Web site: www.masshumanities.org.



AAS President Ellen Dunlap, former First Lady Laura Bush, and David Tebaldi



Voices from the Port

By Hayley Wood



Above: Amanda Wright, sternman on a lobster boat in Narragansett Bay.

Below: Galon "Skip" Barlow, inshore coastal fisherman from Buzzard's Bay.

Photos by Jon Robson



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This June, radio listeners in and around New Bedford will be able to tune in to Bristol County's WBSM AM to hear a new series of firsthand accounts of life in the fishing community of New Bedford Harbor. The series, "Voices from the Port," will consist of four-minute segments, narrated by WCAI's Naomi Arenberg, based on recorded oral histories of people involved in the commercial fishing industry and related shoreside businesses. The project received a Mass Humanities Cultural Economic Development grant in 2008.

The voices of men and women who fish, fishing family members and others were recorded over the past five years at the Working Waterfront Festival, a project of the Community Economic Development Center of Southeastern Massachusetts. The free festival, a family-friendly, educational celebration of New England's commercial fishing industry, features live maritime and ethnic music, fishermen's contests, fresh seafood, vessel tours, author readings, cooking demonstrations, kids' activities, and more. It has taken place in New Bedford, Massachusetts, America's highest-earning fishing port, on the fourth full weekend of September since 2004; an estimated 15,000 people attend the festival annually. The festival features a "narrative stage," from which authors give readings, musicians perform, and panelists discuss festival themes. In rooms on site, festival volunteers record accounts of fishing life from anyone who would like to contribute to their archive of interviews which capture details of this occupational culture.

Laura Orleans, the festival's founder and director and a co-producer of the radio series, is a trained folklorist. She has used her

knowledge of cultural anthropology to create a variety of opportunities for people outside of the waterfront community to have access to what she calls "authentic experiences learning about the workings of a commercial fishing port." Recording oral histories at the festival emerged as a way to "give the fishing industry a chance to tell its own story in its own way."

The fact that the commercial fishing industry in the United States faces uncertain prospects underlies the zeal of festival organizers. Laura observes that in spite of a significant rebound in the populations of groundfish (which include such bottom-feeding species as cod, halibut, yellowtail flounder, and ocean perch) and scallops in the waters off the coast of Massachusetts, economic indicators for the future of the industry are "not encouraging with the current management system." She elaborates:

Because of the restrictive regulations, many small family fishermen will [not be able to stay in the business]. There is a ripple effect as a community loses fishing vessels; it cannot sustain its shoreside industries (things like ice, fuel, gear, clothing). This has made New Bedford strong in some respects: because of its size it has become a "hub" port, and many fishermen from smaller ports in the region come to New Bedford for services they can no longer get in their own ports. And the economic web is vast. For example, the average vessel spends \$1,700 at a supermarket each time it leaves port just to feed its crew.

Regulations—and the threats to the livelihood of fishing that they impose—have emerged as major themes in the interviews collected so far. On the other hand, it's important to be aware that commercial fishermen (and women) act as harbor stewards and conservationists, particularly since it's in their best interest that species thrive. Regulations that have been designed by scientists and fishermen have had huge positive impacts on the fishery. According to the Working Waterfront Web site, fish populations have tripled since 1995, and scallop stocks are at 450 million pounds. Concurrent with this undeniably positive trend, fishing parents are discouraging their children from entering the trade because making a living at it is increasing difficult.

A related theme that has emerged in the interviews is the role that constantly evolving technologies have played in the industry, the lives of fishermen, and the health of the catch. In the beginning of the twentieth century, England's steam-powered trawlers replaced

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Detail, *Shipwreck Chart of Boston Harbor* by Robert Sullivan

The three-masted schooner Mattie Eaton aground on Nantasket Beach, 1888, Courtesy of Mackay Thurston



Right: Dressing the part of a crew member.

Below: Taking a break in the hammocks to experience how a sailor slept.

Courtesy USS Constitution Museum



Boston

\$5,000 to The Actors' Shakespeare Project of Somerville for the Roxbury K-12 Education Residency to support a partnership centered on a production of *Much Ado About Nothing* at Hibernian Hall involving eight Roxbury schools and organizations serving at-risk youth

\$3,000 to the Forest Hills Educational Trust to identify and research African Americans buried at Forest Hills and incorporate the findings into a walking tour ▲ SIR

\$5,000 to the Hull Lifesaving Museum to create a Web site based on its Boston Harbor Shipwreck Chart and companion book, *Shipwrecks and Nautical Lore of Boston Harbor*, including primary-source documents and images for each wreck

\$4,000 to the Massachusetts Lafayette Society to support public humanities programming on Lafayette Day, including a reenactment of the 1824 welcoming speech honoring the Revolutionary War hero Gilbert du Motier, marquis de Lafayette, in the Senate chamber, and other ceremonies and reenactments involving D-Day veterans

\$5,000 to Save the Harbor/Save the Bay for Sail Massachusetts 2009 Tall Ships Youth Initiative for educator stipends and printed program materials for Massachusetts youth visiting the Boston waterfront to view the tall ships festival this summer

\$5,000 to the USS Constitution Museum of Boston for Sailors Speak Promotional Campaign package to support the launch of the museum's new identity and permanent core exhibit, which will use the words of "Old Ironsides" crew members to convey life at sea during the War of 1812

\$5,000 to the WGBH Educational Foundation for Vietnam: A Television History Symposium to support a public symposium centered on part of a PBS series on the Vietnam War. The discussion will be filmed and made available on the Web.

Central Massachusetts

\$5,000 to the Worcester Hibernian Cultural Foundation, Inc. for *Karski, A Man Who Stood Up to Evil* in support of Marc P. Smith's new play about Polish resistance hero Jan Karski, who tried to stop the Holocaust by reporting to world leaders on the Warsaw Ghetto and the Belzec extermination camp

Cape Cod and the Islands

\$5,000 to the Aquinnah Cultural Center to support the installation of Oral Histories of Aquinnah, a multimedia exhibit featuring a changing selection of oral histories of Wampanoag elders taped during the past twenty years

\$5,000 to the Falmouth Historical Society for development of Understanding Daily Life in Early Falmouth, third- and fifth-grade curriculum units that use local history materials on colonial life, maritime industry, the War of 1812, and the life of Katherine Lee Bates

\$5,000 to the Harwich Jr. Theatre of West Harwich for the creation of *The Minister and Mrs. Satan*, and for the creation of an original play about the life of women's suffrage activist Victoria Woodhull, focusing in part on the adultery scandal referred to as the Beecher-Tilton Affair ■ LJA

\$2,750 to the Truro Historical Society to research a collection of Native American artifacts from the Rose Farm area of Corn Hill in Truro, and provide interpretive material for scholars and visitors ▲ SIR

Save the Date:
Saturday,
November 7

Pioneer Valley

\$10,000 to Sons and Daughters of Hawley to create a historic site at the location of the old town common by adding paths and signage as well as stabilizing cellar holes and dug wells that surrounded the old meetinghouse ▼CED

\$9,950 to the Springfield Library & Museum Association to support *John Brown, Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War* an exhibit about the fight over slavery as it played out in Springfield, including the roles of the African-American community, John Brown, and the arms industry ■ LJA

\$2,862 to the Sunderland Historical Commission to support research on North Sunderland's relation to the natural resources of the Connecticut River, and to incorporate insights from natural and environmental history in a historic tour ▲ SIR

\$5,000 to the Veterans Education Project of Amherst for *100 Faces of War Experience*, an exhibition of oil portraits of American soldiers and civilians who have returned from the theaters of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, at the Springfield Armory Museum, and for related programming and materials

Southeast

\$10,000 to the Robbins Museum/Massachusetts Archaeological Society for *We, the Peoples*, a hands-on, primary-source teacher education program on Native-American history that utilizes artifacts from the Robbins Museum, and allows participants to design their own curricula ■ LJA

\$5,000 to the Scituate Historical Society for a pair of traveling exhibits on the history of the Minot Ledge Lighthouse and the story of the underwater archaeological search for its remains

\$3,000 to the Westport Historical Society to support interpretive planning focused on the Society's collection of clothes used by women in the rural community of Westport during the nineteenth century ▲ SIR

An artist's interpretation of John Brown meeting with the League of Gileadites. In response to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, John Brown established the League of Gileadites, which worked to protect escaped slaves from slave catchers.



Connecticut veteran Phil Goreman having his portrait painted by Matthew Mitchell as part of 100 Faces of War Experience.



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In style and substance, no 19th-century American ever offered a more poignant critique of America's racial condition than Douglass."²

Douglass, in fact, had become so radicalized by the 1850 passage of the Fugitive Slave Act—which made it illegal for anyone to harbor a person who was technically a slave in states that recognized slavery—that in this speech, he took to referring to the United States as “your” nation and the Founding Fathers as “your” fathers. Douglass himself had escaped from slavery in 1838, and upon publication of his autobiography in 1845, had been urged to leave his new home in New Bedford for England to avoid capture. While he was abroad, supporters ensured his

safety from slave catchers by paying off his former master. Upon his return to the United States two years later, Douglass settled in Rochester, N.Y.

In Massachusetts, communities became galvanized against the Fugitive Slave Law on June 2, 1854, when a Boston federal court ordered escaped slave Anthony Burns to be returned to his owner. An estimated 50,000 outraged citizens lined the streets of Boston as an army of soldiers escorted Burns to the waterfront. “Plenty to chew on during Lincoln’s bicentennial year,” opines Paul Marcus of *Community Change*.

Join us this June 2nd at noon in front of the State House for the public reading, or organize an event in your own community.

Soldiers & Citizens: Military and Civic Culture in America

Our annual fall symposium again will take place at the Robsham Theater at Boston College in Chestnut Hill, 12:30–5 pm. The symposium will examine the ways in which military culture and civil society interact over time in the United States. Don't miss it!

¹ Stephen Railton, ed. *Uncle Tom's Cabin and American Culture*. (www.iath.virginia.edu/utc/uncletom/utcp.html)

² David W. Blight, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” *Time*, Sunday, June 26, 2005. (www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1077058,00.html)

Boston Area

Much Ado About Nothing Performance and Post-Play Discussion

A deliciously funny conspiracy brings about a truce in the “merry war” between Benedick and the witty Beatrice, but a more serious plot threatens her cousin’s happiness. Followed by a post-play discussion with the company, moderated by Artistic Director Benjamin Evett.

When: Sundays, May 17, 24, 31 and June 7, 14, Performance: 2:00 pm, Discussion: 4:30 pm
Where: Hibernian Hall, 182-186 Dudley St., Roxbury
Web: www.actorsshakespeareproject.org
Phone: (413) 545-2511
Cost: Play: \$24–\$48; discussion free
 An open rehearsal, free and open to the public, will take place Saturday, May 2, at 11:00 am, followed by a discussion with the company.



The Life of Galileo

Four hundred years ago, Galileo Galilei turned his telescope to the heavens, changing forever our way of seeing our place in the universe.

The Mass Humanities community can get \$20 tickets (regularly \$32) to Bertolt Brecht’s master-work of science theater *The Life of Galileo* through May 17. Use the discount code MASSHUMANITIES when purchasing tickets at www.centalsquaretheater.org or by calling (866) 811-4111.

Central Massachusetts

H.M. Francis Walking Tour and Lecture

Join Fitchburg State College faculty members to explore a section of Main Street that encompasses some of H.M. Francis’s finest buildings. Discover the stories that buildings tell us about the city, its people, and its history, and find architectural details on buildings using the architectural primer. Then, enjoy a lecture entitled, “Delightful by Design: Living in an H.M. Francis.” Francis’s buildings, residential and commercial, are still wonderful to live in; historical buildings are also challenging to live in. This conversation with Fitchburg State faculty scholars will explore these aspects with the community.

When: Thursday, May 7, 5:50 pm (tour) and 6:45 pm (lecture)
Where: Rollstone Studios, 633 Main Street, Fitchburg
Web: www.discoverfitchburg.com
Phone: (978) 655-3709

Share Your Collection, Share Your Story, Sustain Your Mission

Primer for Small Museums and Historical Societies—Part 2

Topics will include: increasing visitors and volunteers; raising money through activities, appeals and grants; Massachusetts non-profit reporting requirements; and the board’s basic responsibilities.

When: Saturday, May 9,
9:30 am–3:30 pm
Where: Historic Whitin Mill,
54 Douglas Road, Whitinsville
Web: [www.nemanet.org/workshops/
PrimerMA.htm](http://www.nemanet.org/workshops/PrimerMA.htm)
Phone: (781) 641-0013
Cost: \$35 for two workshops,
lunch included

Northeastern Massachusetts

Gorton’s Seafood Gallery Opening with the Exhibit, *Fitting Out*

Experience Gloucester’s turn-of-the-century waterfront and industries that supported fishing, including skills demonstrations such as net-stripping and sail-making. There will also be storytelling, music, and other family activities.

When: Saturday, May 9,
10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Where: Gloucester Maritime
Heritage Center, 23 Harbor Loop,
Gloucester
Web: www.gloucestermaritimecenter.org
Phone: (978) 281-0470
Cost: \$5 adults, \$2 children, \$10 family, members free

Southeast, Cape Cod and Islands

Craft in America: Expanding Traditions

A multi-faceted journey into the origin and continuation of American craft traditions, from the Industrial Revolution through the Arts and Crafts Movement, Depression-era WPA works, post-World War II studio craft pioneers, and contemporary studio craft artists. The exhibition features over 185 works that celebrate three fundamental themes: memory, landscape, and community.

When: Through May 25
Where: Fuller Craft Museum,
455 Oak St., Brockton
Web: www.fullercraft.org
Phone: (508) 588-6000
Cost: \$8 adults, \$5 seniors
and students
 Free for members and children
under 12. Free admission every
Wednesday 5:00–9:00 pm

Oral Histories of Aquinnah Exhibit Opening

Opening celebration for the multimedia exhibit of American Indian oral histories describing Aquinnah Wampanoag lifeways, history and culture over the past one hundred years on the island of Martha’s Vineyard.

When: July 18
Where: Aquinnah Cultural Center,
35 Aquinnah Circle
Web: www.wampanoagtribe.net
Phone: (508) 645-7900

Women Protecting US

This new permanent exhibit highlights women’s contributions in history, and creates a place of honor as a memorial to their service. *Women Protecting US* is located onboard the *USS Massachusetts*, a World War II battleship and site of the official veterans’ memorial for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

When: Ongoing
Where: Battleship Cove, 5 Water Street, Fall River
Web: www.battleshipcove.org
Phone: (508) 678-1100
Cost: Admission to the museum: adults \$14; seniors and AAA members \$12; veterans (with proof of honorable discharge) \$12; children aged 6–12 \$8; children under 6 FREE; active military \$6; military in uniform FREE

Western Massachusetts

100 Faces of War Experience Exhibition

An exhibition of portraits of Americans who have gone to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Each portrait is accompanied by the words the person chose to say to the public about the experience of war.

When: Through June 12
Where: Springfield Armory
Museum, One Armory Square,
Springfield
Web: www.nps.gov/spar/
Phone: (413) 734-8551

The Story as a Pathway Home

Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan pictured in the *100 Faces of War Experience* project discuss the role that telling their story has played in their return from war and how their understanding of their experience of war changes when they are able to talk candidly about it. Speakers will include veterans who grew up in the Springfield area and several veterans who now live locally.

When: Saturday, May 2,
3:00 pm

Where: Springfield Armory Museum,
One Armory Square, Springfield

Web: www.nps.gov/spar/

Phone: (413) 734-8551

Share Your Collection, Share Your Story, Sustain Your Mission

Primer for Small Museums and Historical Societies—Part 2

Topics will include: increasing visitors and volunteers; raising money through activities, appeals and grants; Massachusetts non-profit reporting requirements; and the board's basic responsibilities.

When: Saturday, May 9,
9:30 am–3:30 pm

Where: Berkshire Athenaeum,
1 Wendell Ave., Pittsfield

Web: [www.nemanet.org/workshops/
PrimerMA.htm](http://www.nemanet.org/workshops/PrimerMA.htm)

With Power for All: Energy and Social Change in Massachusetts

Join us at a conference for Massachusetts history organizations. A daylong exploration of the harnessing and uses of energy in the history of Massachusetts—how our forbears used it, how we can save it, how we can use and save energy simultaneously, how we might exhibit our collections to address today's issues.

When: Monday, June 8, 2009, 9:00 am–4:00 pm

Where: Hogan Campus Center, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester

Web: www.masshumanities.org

Phone: (413) 588-1606

Cost: \$55 including lunch (\$25 for students with copy of student ID)

Phone: (781) 641-0013

Cost: \$35 for two workshops,
lunch included

Broken Hearts and Inner Darkness: Confronting the Spiritual Wounds of War, Ancient and Modern

This lecture by Dr. Robert Meagher will examine both arts-based and spiritual responses to war and its aftermath. Two veterans, including Christ Church's Rev. James Munroe, will reflect on their wartime experiences. Several of artist Matt Mitchell's *100 Faces of War Experience* paintings will be exhibited.

When: Saturday, May 9,
3:00 pm

Where: Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral on the Springfield
Museum Quad

Web: www.nps.gov/spar/

Phone: (413) 734-8551



Aerial view of Working Waterfront Festival, photo by Jennifer Gonsalves

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schooner fleets and changed the methods for catching groundfish, increasing efficiency dramatically—too dramatically, it turns out. By the 1960s the endangerment of the targeted fish stock was evident, as international fishing fleets (using nets with small mesh sizes) had begun to utilize the waters near George's Bank, an elevated portion of the sea floor between Cape Cod and Nova Scotia, depleting the groundfish stock. As a result, in 1976 the U.S. Congress enacted the Magnuson Act, asserting control and regulatory power over waters 200 miles from shore. While this act eliminated or reduced the threats posed by the international “factory trawlers,” new federal incentives for investors to enter the trade resulted in a large increase in the U.S. fleet of fishing vessels using the same waters. The groundfish stock did not rebound until 2002, when a fisheries rebuilding process that included fishermen and scientists initiated a series of regulations, such as catch limits and increased mesh size in fishing nets.

And of course—in addition to pressing concerns about the future of the industry—the stories that will be featured in “Voices from the Port” include tales of adventure: close calls, frightening storms, and days at sea waiting for calmer waters. The transcripts and recordings that Laura and her colleagues have been working with reveal something poetic and powerful, too: the call of the sea to many people involved with the trade. These are people who desire contact with water and wind and who develop a unique understanding of the oceanic world, not merely the business side of fishing.

Another industry central to “Voices from the Port” is tourism. The radio broadcasts will be available as MP3 audio files on a variety of New Bedford-based Web sites including those of the *Standard Times* newspaper, the city of New Bedford, the Ocean Explorium at New Bedford Seaport, and the Southeast Massachusetts Convention and Visitors' Bureau. Series producers hope that “Voices from the Port” will attract visitors—families on vacation and others seeking a maritime experience—to New Bedford. You don't need to be within broadcast range to listen! Tune in or click on when June arrives for a whiff of sea air and the cadences of those who know the port, its vessels, and its rhythms of daily life.

Act Now to Save the Clemente Course



*Scenes from the
2008 Boston
Clemente Course
graduation*



*2008 graduate
Grace Ejiwale*

*Photos by
Glenn Kulbako*



We anticipate that thirty-two Massachusetts residents will graduate from the Bard College Clemente Course in the Humanities this spring. Mass Humanities presents the program in partnership with community agencies in Boston, Holyoke, and New Bedford. The graduation ceremonies, which will take place in late May and June, are heartening and jubilant events where family, friends, and supporters gather to share in the success of the students. After a year taking introductory courses in American history, art history, literature, moral philosophy, and writing, the graduates will receive six transferable credits from Bard College.

For more information about the graduation ceremonies, contact Kristin O'Connell at koconnell@masshumanities.org.

There are two ways to support this work, which touches and transforms lives throughout these communities. For starters, we accept tax-deductible donations by mail and at our Web site: www.masshumanities.org. (Click the Donate tab.)

Also, Mass Humanities has received earmarked funding through the MA Department of Education for the program in recent years. But the promise of an earmark-free state budget could spell peril for Clemente. At the Web site, you will find a letter that you can mail or e-mail to your local legislators in support of continued funding. Please do so, and encourage others to do so as well!