

**MAINE
HUMANITIES
COUNCIL**

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@MaineHumanities
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**WINTER
2022**

JOIN THE DISCUSSION



Statement on Equity and Inclusion

For the past few years, the Maine Humanities Council has been diversifying our partnerships in order to become more inclusive of all Maine communities in our texts, discussions, and programming. In late October, the Maine Humanities Council board adopted the first-ever Equity and Inclusion Statement for MHC. We are proud to stand behind this statement and we recognize that there remains a lot of work to do in order to fully engage with the diversity of Maine people and communities. We look forward to this work.

Samaa Abdurraqib
Greg Fahy
Co-chairs of MHC's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force

The Maine Humanities Council acknowledges that the humanities often privilege some groups over others, reflect our society's structural racism, and define the contours of humanity in exclusionary ways. We recognize that the culture we work and live within continues to perpetuate racism, classism, sexism, ableism, transphobia, homophobia, and other forms of oppression. We also recognize the Council's practices often reinforce exclusionary systems and limit participation from historically marginalized people.

"The Maine Humanities Council has shifted our priorities in an effort to acknowledge and address the marginalization that exists in our culture and within the humanities. It is our hope that our shifts can begin to make amends for the ways we have knowingly or unknowingly reinforced oppressive systems and exclusion."

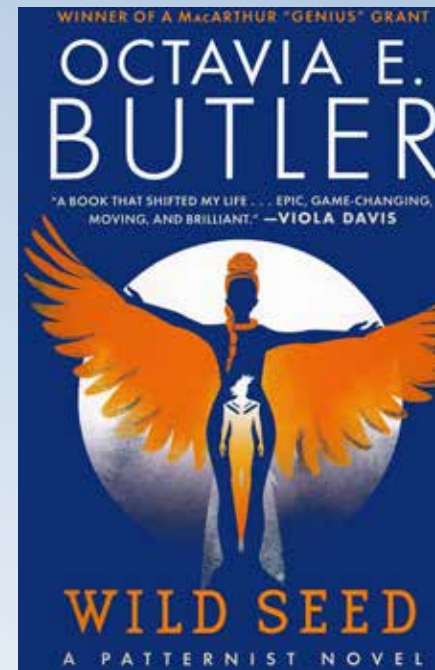
The Maine Humanities Council has shifted our priorities in an effort to acknowledge and address the marginalization that exists in our culture and within the humanities. It is our hope that our shifts can begin to make amends for the ways we have knowingly or unknowingly reinforced oppressive systems and exclusion. In our outreach and partnerships, we are now focusing on groups that have been pushed to the margins by dominant cultures. We are intentional in the programs we co-create and support in communities, and we are extending these opportunities to communities that are impoverished or traditionally under-resourced, including communities in rural areas.

We deliberately choose texts that feature diverse voices that fully reflect all Maine people. We are committed to making space for people from all communities across Maine to serve as leaders who help carry the mission of the Maine Humanities Council forward. We will strive to honor the many different forms of knowledge, experience, and expertise that exist here in Maine. We recognize our evolution is a process. We will continue to evolve in our understanding of the diversity and equity of Maine's ever-changing population.

We continue to be convinced of the power of humanities-based discussion with a robust and diverse set of texts to be a force for positive social change and to bring people together. We strive to create barrier-free environments for these discussions, building more inclusive communities with stories that affirm every individual's humanity and capacity to contribute to our community, our democracy, and our life together.

Afrofuturism & Africanfuturism

WHAT IF...?



We couldn't be more excited to ask *What if...?* at this year's Big Question and feature Octavia E. Butler's brilliant novel *Wild Seed* across our Discussion Projects and at Readers Retreat 2022!

Big Question | January 18 - February 3, 2022

This year's event will jump start our multi-year engagement with Afrofuturism and Africanfuturism with two weeks of invitations, prompts, and curiosity-sparks delivered to your email inbox, all springing from the question: *What if...?* Registration opens December 18.

Readers Retreat | May 20-21, 2022

Octavia E. Butler's brilliant novel *Wild Seed* will be the focus of our spring Readers Retreat. With the future as uncertain as it always was, what if we could turn to Afrofuturist and Africanfuturist literature to show us a way forward?

Learn more at mainehumanities.org

BOOK FUND

Through the MHC Book Fund, anyone in Maine can put books into the hands of people who are participating in reading and discussion programs all across Maine.

Books play a vital role in our programming. Whether it's novels, poetry, nonfiction, or picture books, books provide the grounding for our discussion programming.

BOOKS ARE:

- A shared experience for people like you, even when you don't have lived experience in common with other people in your group
- A way to talk about things that you feel are important – events, emotions, ideas – without being obliged to divulge what feels too personal
- A chance for you to really hear voices that are new to you
- A chance for you to see your own concerns and insights reflected back to you in new and unexpected ways

BOOKS IN HANDS

- Giving to the MHC Book Fund, in any amount, directly supports one of the most important aspects of the MHC's work: putting books into people's hands all across Maine.
- Everyone who gives to the MHC Book Fund will hear about the books that people in our programs are reading, and what kinds of topics they're discussing.

MAKE A GIFT at mainehumanities.org