



June 14, 2011

To all Maine Librarians,

Funding is tight for everyone right now, and the Maine Humanities Council is no exception. We are anticipating funding cuts that will affect each of our programs over the next year, including our library-based *Let's Talk About It* program. Over the years we have heard from both librarians and *Let's Talk About It* attendees that the program is important in supporting libraries' missions and enriching the lives of community members. This was at the forefront of our thinking as we determined how best to make needed cuts to the program's already lean budget. In order to maintain our commitment to offering FACILITATED series for FREE to AS MANY LIBRARIES ACROSS THE STATE AS POSSIBLE, we have decided to reduce the number of sessions in a series from the standard 5 to 4 sessions in our upcoming fiscal year (Fall, 2011; Winter/Spring 2012; and Summer 2012).

There are some exceptions to this new policy:

- In an effort to help libraries that have never hosted a full *Let's Talk About It* program build support and momentum for their public programming, we will try to offer new *LTAI* libraries the full 5 sessions of a series.
- We have received special funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a new 5 session Civil War series they have developed in conjunction with the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War and Emancipation. This series will be available starting in 2012, and sites hosting this series while the special NEH funding is available will host all 5 sessions.
- And, of course, libraries opting to host a "books only" program, where a series is borrowed without MHC providing a facilitator, will still be able to offer 5 sessions.

Maine Humanities Council has been partnering with Maine libraries through our *Let's Talk About It* program since 1985. It was one of the first programs that the Council offered, and it is one that we remain committed to. We hope, and expect, that this change will be temporary, and we thank you in advance for your understanding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Lizz Sinclair".

Lizz Sinclair  
Program Officer