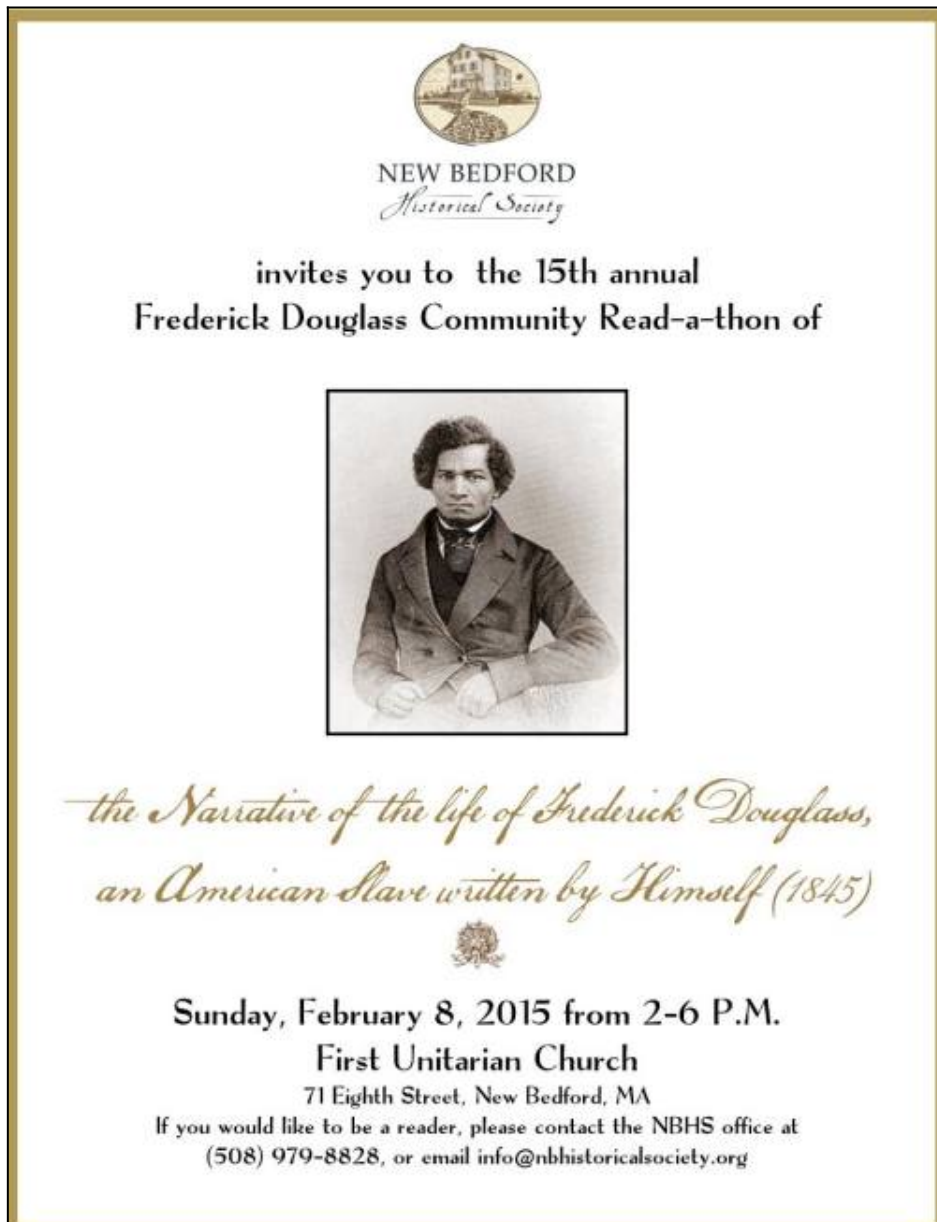


# Historical Society Hosts the 15th Annual Frederick Douglass Community Read-a- thon



*The Read-a-thon will be held on Sunday, February 8th, from 2:00 – 6 p.m., at the First Unitarian Church, 71 Eighth Street in New Bedford, MA.*

The New Bedford Historical Society is hosting the Fifteenth Annual Community Read-a-thon of the first autobiography of Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave written by Himself* (1845). This event is being held in celebration of African American History Month and honors Douglass as one of the great men of the 19th century, an early advocate for African American civil rights and the rights of women. This year we will celebrate the 15th anniversary of the community read-a-thon. Our chairperson for the event this year is Carl Cruz.

The Annual Read-a-thon is a celebration of the historical connection between the people of New Bedford and the young Frederick Douglass. Douglass found his way to New Bedford through the Underground Railroad as a 20-year old freedom seeker in the fall of 1838. He earned his first paid wages as a free man gathering and putting away coal for the minister of the First Unitarian Church, Ephraim Peabody. Douglass cast his first vote as a free man in elections in the city. Douglass and his wife, Anna Murray Douglass were city residents for 5 years, during which time they began their married life and started their family. New Bedford provided the environment and stimulation of ideas that afforded Douglass the opportunity to develop his skills as an abolitionist and civil rights activist for those in bondage.

We invite members of the New Bedford community to join the event as readers in this celebration of the life and legacy of one of New Bedford's great men. The Read-a-thon will be held on Sunday, February 8th, from 2:00 – 6 p.m., at the First Unitarian Church, 71 Eighth Street in New Bedford, MA. Refreshments will be available. For additional information you may contact the Society at (508) 979-8828.

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