

Black Entrepreneurs

of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

The Public & Community Affairs Department of the
Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
is pleased to invite you to a Breakfast Talk
Friday, September 25, 2009, 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

“The Inconceivable Harriet Wilson: Writer, Speaker, Entrepreneur”

Harriet E. Wilson compared her childhood as an indentured servant in New Hampshire to the degradation and drudgery of slavery. Yet, against all odds, she accomplished the inconceivable. She wrote a book she called *Our Nig* to mock what the white family she served called her. Then, on the eve of the Civil War, her hair products were advertised in newspapers all across the Northeast at a time when few women or African Americans could claim such popularity. Wilson spent the last forty years of her life living in Boston. As a religious speaker, she addressed thousands of people who gathered at events held all over New England. Though her now famous book was rediscovered twenty years ago, her adult life was a mystery until recently. The speakers will tell the story of how they unraveled much of Wilson’s surprising and inspiring life story.

DR. P. GABRIELLE FOREMAN is Distinguished Visiting Professor of Africana Studies at Bowdoin College and Professor of English and American Studies at Occidental College in Los Angeles. She is a co-editor the 150th anniversary Penguin edition of *Our Nig* and the author, most recently, of *Activist Sentiments: Reading Black Women in the Nineteenth Century*.

DR. KATHERINE FLYNN’s work and publications on nineteenth-century women writers have gained her a reputation as one of the most respected independent researchers in the field. She is a research manager at Procter & Gamble and a board-certified genealogist.

A tour of the Black Entrepreneurs of the 18th and 19th Centuries Exhibit in the Bank’s Gallery will follow the Talk. Included in the Bank’s Exhibit are three of Harriet Wilson’s bottles, courtesy of Dr. Foreman and Dr. Flynn, and two models for the Harriet Wilson sculpture in Milford, New Hampshire, courtesy of artist Fern Cunningham.

Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
600 Atlantic Avenue
Boston, MA 02110

New England Room, 4th Floor

RSVP by September 18, 2009
Melita Podesta email:
melita.v.podesta@bos.frb.org
Tel: 617.973.3197

Please bring a drivers license or another government issued I.D.