



empowering women since 1881

Ithaca Insights

March 2021

President

Jeanette Knapp
jdk454@gmail.com

Program V.P.

Kathy Earnest-Koons
kael@cornell.edu

Membership V.P.

Norma Goldberg
ncg@twcnv.nyrr.com

Treasurer

Margaret Nichols
mnr1@cornell.edu

Communications

Alene Wyatt
alene@lightlink.com

Recorder

Sharon Turecek
sturecek416@gmail.com

Action Fund Chair

Kim Edgar
kimberlysedgar@gmail.com

Public Policy Chair

Madeline Hemmings
madeleine.hemmings@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Sharon Barrie
spibarrie@hotmail.com



March is here and so are the first signs of Spring! Hooray! I am enjoying the longer days and slightly warmer temps.

For our meeting this month we have quite a powerhouse. **Lisa Maatz** is the former National AAUW Vice President of Government Relations and Advocacy. Her title is "Washington Update". She

will speak about her 15 years of work with AAUW and what we as members and as a branch can do to support the national organization. The meeting will be on **Wednesday, March 24th at 4 pm**. Hope you can join us for this dynamic speaker.

Next month, on **Monday, April 19th at 4 pm**, **Stephen Calco**, who is the Research Archivist at the Kheel Center at the ILR School, will speak on "Remembering the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire through Historical Artifacts at Cornell". It promises to be a fascinating look at a horrible disaster.

Finally, for May, we are very fortunate to have **Corey Earle** who will speak to us about the history of women at Cornell, including our own Alice Cook, Jennie Farley, and the Cornell 11. No one knows more about Cornell's history than Corey. For the past 10 years, he has taught an American Studies course, AMST2001, "The First American University" which explores Cornell's history from the early days to the present. He is an engaging speaker and I know we will come away with new insights. Date and time to be announced.

So plan to attend all of these great programs and tell your friends. The programs are on Zoom, the more the merrier.

Kathy Earnest-Koons
Program V.P.



AAUW MISSION:

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy.

VISION:
Equity for all.

The AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination.

The AAUW Educational Opportunities Fund provides funds to advance education, research and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive societal change.

The AAUW Fund allows AAUW to put resources where they are most needed.

Dates to Remember

Monday, March 15: Book Group will discuss *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent* by Isabel Wilkerson at 7 pm

Wednesday, March 24: Lisa Maatz to speak 4pm

Wednesday, April 7: AAUW membership requirement voting starts at AAUW.org

Monday, April 12: Book Group will discuss *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee at 7 pm

Monday, April 19: Stephen, Calco to speak on "Remembering the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire through Historical Artifacts at Cornell" at 4 pm

May Program: Corey Earle will speak to us about the history of women at Cornell. Time and date TBA.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Celebrate Women's History Month

anyway you can. My fallback is to read more about remarkable women, starting with New York's own Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. For a real treat, check out The History Center's Women's History website: <https://thehistorycenter.net/Womens-History/> These stories of local heroines begin with "A Girl's Essay," which you can find below.

New Officers for 2021-22

Heartfelt thanks to Norma Goldberg and Bobbie Kohut for their creative work as our nominating committee and to our generous members who said "Yes" when they called (see Membership News p. 3). The strength of any organization is the willingness of its members to do what they can when needed.

I believe in guilt-free membership, but I also know that I get out of an organization what I am able to put in. Shortly after I joined the Ithaca Branch, Joey Aplin asked me if I was willing to join the board as treasurer. Surprised, I thought, why not? My daughters had grown beyond my need to be a La Leche League or Girl Scout leader. And I knew of the Ithaca Branch's support of the Cornell 11. What I did not know was how many interesting people I would meet, how much I would learn and how many friends I would make over the years. My advice? Say yes!

Creative Programs

In January Pat Wynn, assistant vice president for student and campus life at Cornell, described how Cornell reimaged campus dining to keep everyone safe from Covid. I was particularly impressed with how the event planners—with no events to plan—were reassigned to solve this huge logistics challenge. In February, Bobbie Kohut provided insights to "Women in the Military." The career paths were fascinating, reminding us that for some adventurous young women staying home and doing what everyone expects is not the answer. Thank you to our speakers and to Kathy Earnest-Koons for creative programming. I am looking forward to our spring programs (see p. 1) Who would have thought we could do all this via computer.

Vote on Membership Requirement

Have you invited a friend to join AAUW only to realize she was not a college graduate? You can vote yes or no on changing this requirement beginning April 7 at AAUW.org. Details are at AAUW Election: Prep Your Vote, but briefly, it involves equity and inclusion. The Association's board explains it this way: "AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity, yet the requirement for membership explicitly denies access to membership to those without college degrees. AAUW does not promote equity for all women and girls if the organization maintains exclusionary membership requirements. . . . By eliminating this requirement, AAUW can become a more diverse and inclusive organization, better aligned with the needs of women today."

Questions? Comments? Contact me at 607 272-3367 or jdk454@gmail.org

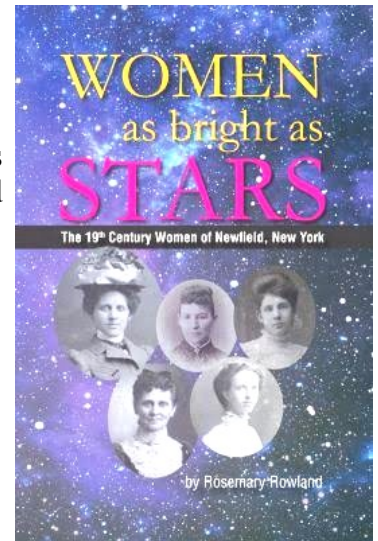
Jeanette Knapp

P.S. Our branch members gave \$1,801 to AAUW scholarships and other funds in 2020. Thank you!

A GIRL'S ESSAY

"Boys are men that have not got as big as their papas, and girls are women that will be ladies by and by. Man was made before woman. When God looked at Adam, he said to himself: "Well, I think I can do better if I try again." And he made Eve. God liked Eve so much better than Adam that there have been more women than men. Boys are a trouble. They wear out everything but soap. If I had my way half the world would be girls, and the rest dolls. My papa is so nice that I think he must have been a little girl when he was a little boy. Man was made, and on the seventh he rested. Woman was then made, and she has never rested since."

- Mary Alexander's Scrapbook, Newfield, N.Y. (excerpted from "Women as Bright as Stars: The 19th Century Women of Newfield, New York" pg. x)

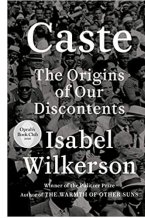


AAUW BOOK GROUP NEWS

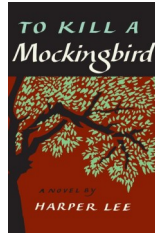
Spring into March and April with the Book Group



Spring begins in March. “As we go about our daily lives, caste is the wordless usher in a darkened theater, flashlight cast down in the aisles, guiding us to our assigned seats for a performance. The hierarchy of caste is not about feelings or morality. It is about power—which groups have it and which do not.” (from the book jacket) Isabel Wilkerson explores this culture in America today and throughout the history of the country in her book *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*.



Jeanette Knapp will lead our discussion of the Wilkerson book on Monday, March 15. Alene Wyatt will send out the Zoom link to the Book Group email list. We will begin at 7:00 with virtual coffee/tea and group conversation about the titles from which we will be selecting the books for our discussions in May and June. The list of titles will be sent to the group in early March and the ballot will be sent out by email after the March 15 discussion. The discussion of *Caste* will start about 7:30.



Spring continues in April - come showers or sunshine. We will still be meeting on Zoom! Sharon Turecek will lead the Book Group discussion of the modern classic *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. The Zoom link to the meeting on Monday, April 12 will be sent in advance.

If you would like to receive AAUW emails concerning the Book Group, please contact Betta Hedlund at <bhedlund@mindspring.com>. It has recently been wonderful to have readers and friends able to join our discussions from out-of-state, perhaps while on travel, and from other AAUW branches with the connection made possible by Zoom. Please share the invitation.

THE FUTURE OF WOMEN'S HISTORY...

Amanda Gorman, is making history. She was the first National Youth Poet Laureate (2017), the youngest inaugural poet, and the first poet to recite at a Super Bowl. At age 22 she is an inspiring woman and a national treasure.



2020- 2021 Book Group Selections

Looking for a good read? Here are the books the Book Group is reading this year:

October: *The Nightingale*
by Kristin Hannah

November: *How To Be An Anti-Racist*
by Ibram Kendi

December: *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*
by Kim Richardson
and/or

The Giver of Stars
by JoJo Moyes

January: *The Book of Joy*
by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Desmond Tutu and Douglas Abrams

February: *The Jane Austen Society*
by Natalie Jenner

March: *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent*
by Isabel Wilkerson

April: *To Kill a Mockingbird*
by Harper Lee

May: *TBA*

June: *TBA*

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

NOMINATIONS MADE FOR BOARD POSITIONS



The nominating committee has completed the nominations for the following positions:

President: Kimberly Edgar

Recorder: Lin Tollefson

Program V.P.: Mary Carol Lindbloom

Phyllis Rappaport

Barbara Stewart

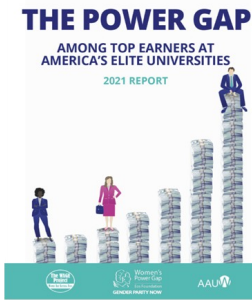
The President and Recorder positions are 2 year terms. The Program V.P. is a 1 year term. The election of our new officers will be held at our annual meeting in May.

EMAIL ADDRESS CORRECTION NEEDED

The email address in our Membership Directory 2020-2021 for Wendy Sthokal has a typo. It should read: wsthokal@yahoo.com (Not wsthokul@yahoo.com). Please correct the spelling that should have an "a", not a "u" in it.

Norma Goldberg - Membership V.P.

AAUW FUNDS NEWS



In late February, *AAUW*, *Women's Power Gap Initiative* at the *Eos Foundation*, and *The Wage Project* released their collaborative research report "*The Power Gap Among Top Earners At America's Elite Universities 20 21 Report*" (aauw.org/resources/research/power-gap-top-earners-elite-universities/).

131 private and public high research activity or R1 institutions were asked to provide employee compensation, gender, racial and ethnic data. Only 48 universities (37%) provided full reports compared with 12 universities (9%) providing partial data and 70 (54%) declining to provide and verify data. The report identified 4 key findings regarding the status of top earners at the universities despite women earning 54% of the PhD degrees and 60% of the master's degrees.

Key Finding #1: Less than a quarter of all of the top earners are women and women's representation varies greatly by category.

Key Finding #2: Women of color are virtually nonexistent among top earners.

Key Finding #3: Faculty and deans in traditionally male-dominated disciplines score the highest pay.

Key Finding #4: Lack of data transparency impedes accountability and progress.

The authors conclude that making more data publicly available on the gender, race, and compensation of R1 institutions administrative and faculty is one way to achieving equity through accountability and transparency. Each institution should conduct their own equity audits and eliminate any bias in the recruitment of new faculty and administrators.

Bottom Line: Women's Educational Attainment Doesn't Translate to \$\$\$



Please consider donating to the AAUW Fund of your choice so that AAUW can continue its important work to improve workplace equity for all and to provide scholarship awards to our future leaders.

Kim Edgar - Action Funds Chair

PUBLIC POLICY NEWS

The Board met on March 1st via Zoom to discuss AAUW- Ithaca's future. We decided to send a letter to the new Secretary of Education, Dr. Miguel Cardona, about the same issues Jeanette sent in a letter to President Biden: extending the pause on federal and private student loan repayment. We added: to extend the pause long enough to have those holding the loans to have time to get a job after the corona virus economic downturn ends. We also said we fully support reducing student loans by \$10,000. We explained who the AAUW is and how much the student loan problem affects women.

A discussion among the Board called for us to support subsidies for child care so women can keep their jobs, increasing the size of SNAP to help with food insecurity, increasing the minimum wage and supporting help for schools and colleges trying to adjust for Covid safety and to improve the quality of the education offered including teacher pay.

Are we interested in making our voices heard on climate change, energy, and so on?

Are you prepared to vote on the AAUW membership requirement to have a higher education degree? I was told last night the national office has wanted to eliminate that requirement for multiple years. If that happens, they want to hire a public relations firm to come up with a new name for the organization. Interesting! As you know, there is a state wide discussion of this over zoom.

As always, I welcome your thoughts on this and other issues – send ideas to madeleine.hemmings@gmail.com - anytime. I received my first corona virus shot this morning – amazing to see how well Cayuga Medical Center has organized the former Sears location for this enterprise. I hope you all are on your way to get these shots.

Madeleine Hemmings - Public Policy Chair