

AAUW FALLS CHURCH FLASH

Volume 71, Number 3

March 1, 2021



Co- Presidents' Message

Dear Members:

First, a very big thank you to Sara Fitzgerald, our guest speaker at our February 14 branch meeting, and Susan and Becky for organizing the program. Sara spoke to us regarding *Conquering Heroines*, which chronicles a pivotal period in the history of the women's movement at the University of Michigan.

Meeting on March 8, 2021. March is our business meeting. We will elect two officers, and we must have a quorum to do so. We will also discuss AAUW's proposal to delete the requirement that members have a university (or associate) degree. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Nominating Committee. At our March 8, 2021 branch business meeting, the branch will elect a new Treasurer and Membership – VP. The Nominating Committee is Shannon LaBarbera, Bunny Jarrett and Martha Trunk.

The branch also needs a webmaster to maintain our website up to date. Also, please consider volunteering to serve as the branch's webmaster.

Women Make the Difference! The AAUW-VA state conference, Women Make the Difference!, is March 13 through March 15 via Zoom. We urge you to attend the conference. The state officers have put together a vibrant program. You will learn about several initiatives in which AAUW is involved. More detailed information, including registration information, is found [HERE](#).

AAUW Proposed Bylaw Change. This spring AAUW members will vote on proposed changes recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee that would eliminate the degree requirement for membership.

The rationale for the change is found at AAUW's website. The AAUW Board feels very strongly that while the degree requirement made perfect sense at AAUW's inception, this requirement is now counter to AAUW's mission. The long-standing requirement creates a barrier to women who do not hold a college degree and limits AAUW's ability to build the capacity needed to increase AAUW's impact as an organization. By eliminating this requirement, AAUW can become a more diverse and inclusive organization, better aligned with the needs of women today. Further, AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity, yet if AAUW excludes those without a college degree, AAUW does not promote equity for all women and girls. In the AAUW Board's view, eliminating the degree requirement is the right thing to do.

Voting will open on April 7, 2021 and close May 17, 2021 5:00 PM ET. More information is contained in a separate article within.

We look forward to seeing you at the March 8, 2021 meeting on Zoom.

Sharon Zackula and Elizabeth Kessel
Co-Presidents

Next Branch Zoom Meeting

On March 8, following the business meeting, we'll discuss the proposed elimination of the AAUW degree requirement. Every member will be able to cast their vote on this important issue beginning on April 7th. Please join us to think about the future of AAUW! We'll share a three minute video from National Board Malinda Gaul and consider talking points provided on the national website. If you'd like to review this information before our meeting, here's a link - <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/>.

Planning ahead, mark **Tuesday, April 13, at 7 pm** for our April meeting. (Please notice the unusual date/time.) We'll join McLean Branch via Zoom to hear from two recent national Fellowship & Grant recipients funded by both Falls Church & McLean branches.

Falls Church AAUW Elections

The Nominating Committee of the Falls Church Area Branch of AAUW, Shannon La Barbera, Martha Trunk and Bunny Jarrett, submits the following nominations for officers for 2021-2023:

Vice President for Membership: Shannon LaBarbera
Treasurer: Linda Lawrence

These nominations will be voted upon at the March 8 meeting. It is important for YOU, a member of the Falls Church AAUW branch, to attend this meeting! A quorum is needed to hold the election.

Virginia State Convention



LINKS FOR CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

REGISTER FOR DAY 1: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TveFAYLQROO_WQuBgfzSgQ

REGISTER FOR DAY 2: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nreRC7-HQ--eVNndZzz58w

REGISTER FOR DAY 3: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_69wqwPnSQDy67ks-yacJfg

Women Make the Difference!

The 15th cargo resupply mission to the International Space Station successfully launched 2/20/21 at 12:36 p.m. from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport Pad 0A located on Wallops Island. The mission, designated NG-15, is a partnership of the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority, NASA Wallops Flight Facility, and Northrop Grumman.



Northrop Grumman's unmanned Cygnus spacecraft launched on the company's Antares rocket, carrying approximately 8,200 pounds of cargo that included scientific investigations, crew supplies, and hardware. A secondary payload of thirty ThinSats, which are small satellites that carry scientific experiments into space and are capable of transmitting data from low earth orbit, was integrated on the second stage of the Antares as part of a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) student outreach program.

The Cygnus spacecraft has been named in honor of longtime Virginia resident and pioneering Black NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson and in celebration of Black History Month. Northrop Grumman traditionally names each spacecraft after an individual who has played a pivotal role in the legacy of human spaceflight. Johnson's hand-written calculations were critical to the success of America's early human spaceflight missions. She was among the group of Black women mathematicians at NASA who were celebrated in the 2016 film 'Hidden Figures,' based on the nonfiction book by Margot Lee Shetterly with the same title.



For more information, please go to- <https://www.vaspace.org/>

GOTV postcard writing in partnership with Reclaim our Vote (ROV)



The FC AAUW board has endorsed our support of Reclaim Our Vote (ROV) in their new postcard writing campaign to "get out the vote" (GOTV) in Virginia in 2021. The GOTV campaign will encourage Virginians to check their registration status and register (or re-register) prior to the Virginia primary elections. The postcard campaign is aimed at re-registering voters of color who have been purged from the Virginia Voter rolls. The postcards will alert voters that they have been removed from the voter files and will give them guidance to take immediate action. Outreach also may include potential first time voters.

ROV hopes to complete the spring campaign in time for the Virginia primary elections. The voter registration deadline for the Virginia primary is May 18, so, if you are interested, get out your pens and white-out and get ready to write!

The GOTV effort is a state and area-wide campaign organized by ROV, a project of the Center for Common Ground of Virginia, a registered non-partisan 501 (c)3 organization. National partners include NAACP, Black Voters Matter, Mi Familia Vote, VoteRiders and DemLabs.

If you are interested in participating in this project, contact Mollie Jewell, [MollieJewell2 at gmail.com](mailto:MollieJewell2@gmail.com), 703-941-5643.

Voting on AAUW By-Laws

Voting Period: April 7 – May 17, 2021

How to vote: All eligible voters are encouraged to vote online.

A link to voting (as well as many reminders) will be sent via email to all eligible voters beginning on April 7, 2021. All voters without a valid email on file with the national office will be sent a reminder via snail mail. Paper ballots can be requested from connect at aauw.org on or before April 16, 2021. Paper ballots must be postmarked by April 30, 2021.

See: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/open-membership-toolkit/>.

See webinar site: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/webinars/>

In 2018, AAUW put forth a bold vision for our future with a [new strategic plan](#). The plan included actionable goals and tactics towards achieving equity, along with the values, mission and vision for the organization. We updated the plan in 2020 with a [2.0 version](#). But words are only as good as the paper they are printed on if they are not embodied in all we do. Our values include being fiercely nonpartisan, always fact-based and with the utmost of integrity, and a commitment to inclusion and intersectionality. As the Inclusion & Equity Committee — made up of member leaders dedicated to our mission, vision and values — launches this updated [set of resources](#) on diversity, equity and inclusion in Fall 2020, I'm reminded of one of our key goals within the plan: **Embody the goals and spirit of inclusion, diversity and intersectionality across all AAUW activities and participants.**



We need to not only *value* the importance of intersectionality, diversity and equity, we must *do* the work — and it is lifelong work, core to our mission and vision. Systemic racism is firmly rooted in the U.S. and the injustices of today mirror our shameful history, from police brutality to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color.

AAUW must commit and continuously recommit to fighting for justice, long-term and lasting change, and we stand in solidarity against racism. But, as AAUW is nearing 140 years old, we also acknowledge that as an organization we have a lot of our own work to do in diversity, equity and inclusion.

Our commitment to diversity is not just among the staff at the national office, or with the nationally elected board — this must be a commitment from all of our 170,000 members and advocates around the nation who believe in our vision of equity for all. That means we must hold each other accountable, we must set bold goals and be transparent about where we are and where we are going, we must be lifelong learners in reading, listening and understanding. This is work we must all embrace, and I'm grateful to the Inclusion & Equity Committee for putting forth a roadmap to help guide your individual and group work ahead.

You'll continue to hear more from me, the staff and the Board about additional efforts in embracing diversity and inclusion in all that we do at AAUW, but for now, I invite you to open your heart, your mind, your ears and your eyes and dive into this work with us.

Finally, I want to extend my personal appreciation to past and present members of the Inclusion & Equity Committee and to express my deep gratitude for all their thoughtful work that went into creating this toolkit.

In solidarity,

Kim Churches CEO, AAUW

Key Talking Points

- The reasons we should drop the education requirement are simply:
 - Because it is the right thing to do
 - Because it is in keeping with our mission to advance gender equity
- AAUW needs to include members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives to meet our mission of advancing gender equity and society's needs today.
- Simply put, this is about inclusion. AAUW's vision is Equity for All. Our membership practices should align with this vision.
- The educational requirement is counterproductive to recruiting diverse members as well as younger members.
- There are many paths to education beyond colleges and universities. As important as the P12 and four-year college system is, education comes in many forms, including Career Technical Education, on-the-job training, and similar education routes.
- Those who do not have degrees can be strong advocates for our mission.
- We are an organization that promotes equity, yet we do not treat non-degree individuals as equal. This is simply unacceptable.
- Times have changed. Younger feminists care about our mission but don't join us because they see us as an exclusionary or elitist organization, one that hasn't evolved into modern thinking about equity and inclusion.
- Corporations and foundations prefer to work with and/or fund organizations that adhere to their diversity, inclusion, and equity policies and practices. We lose out on dollars that could help us move forward with our mission and vision which puts a bigger burden on our members to contribute to AAUW.



QUESTIONS

Question: If we drop the degree requirement, how can we say that we still care about education?

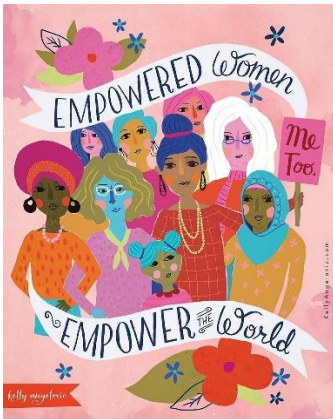


- Education and educational initiatives are foundational to our mission and work – it's always been and always will be a focus for AAUW. Our mission has also evolved to include promoting women's economic security and leadership as well as education—yet we (of course) don't require members to meet a certain income level or leadership status; similarly, requiring a degree is in no way necessary for our continued work to promote education and training.
- Our current endowment (which provides permanent, annual funds for fellowships and grants) ensures that AAUW will continue to be a national leader in funding women's graduate education. Eliminating the degree requirement will not change this now or in the future.

Question: Don't we need to honor the legacy of our founding mothers by retaining the degree requirement?

• Remember the context of the times when the degree requirement was set. When Marion Talbot and the other founding mothers began the Association of Collegiate Alumnae (ACA), it was uncommon for women to have college degrees, and women who tried to attain them were actively discriminated against. They formed the ACA to remove the roadblocks to getting an education and subsequent work for women of their generation and beyond. Times have certainly changed since then, and today women outpace men in earning degrees at all levels. In 2019, women earned approximately:

- 61% of associate degrees
- 57% of bachelor's degrees
- 58% of master's degrees
- 53% of advanced degrees, including doctorate and professional degrees.



• If Marion Talbot—a woman who believed deeply in equality—formed AAUW today, we have no doubt she would allow all women to fight to achieve our expanded vision of attaining equity for all. We do not honor AAUW's legacy with the degree requirement, quite the opposite. Being open to new ideas and adapting to change are the very essence of what it means to embrace education in our mission. Non-degreed women should be able to work for their own equity alongside the rest of us.

• Just like our founding mothers, we can be role models for positive change in the world. But we cannot have the impact we seek when our membership criteria don't match our mission and values.

• AAUW seeks to empower women, why does one need a college education to do that? Don't we aim to serve all who care about advancing equity?

Question: The only reason members support dropping the degree requirement to gain more members for the organization, isn't it?

- Eliminating the degree requirement will bring AAUW membership criteria in line with our mission – to advance gender equity.
- Eliminating the degree requirement will not substantially increase membership.
- Expanding membership to include men in 1987 and those with an Associate's degree in 2005 did not have a major impact on membership. These actions were taken because they were the right thing to do. Now it's the right thing to do to fully open our membership.

Question: Won't dropping the degree requirement end what is unique about our organization?

• AAUW is unique due to our breadth of programming, research, policy and advocacy, fellowships & grants, and most importantly, a grassroots membership that can be mobilized to fight for what we believe in: full equity, including fair pay and equal opportunity in education and the workplace. We should open this powerful grassroots network up to all who want to join the fight as we know the work ahead is at the municipal, state and federal levels.

• Unfortunately, AAUW is also unique for its exclusionary practices that hold us back. Many diverse voices are stronger than a few insular ones.

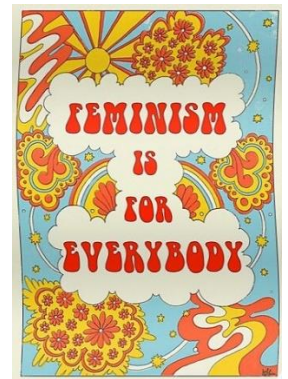
Question: Won't we have to change our name if we drop the educational requirement?

Why would we? The American Association of University Women name has not represented who we are and what we do in a very long time. While we do not have plans to change our name today, AAUW has gone through different naming iterations over the decades. Consider the following:

- A is for American – we have been working internationally for over 100 years, so we are actually I for International
- A is for Association – our member dues constitute only 15-20% of our total revenues so we are more than an Association
- U is for University – outdated since 2005 when we allowed Associate degree and higher to be members, meaning the U should at the least be a C for College
- W is for Women – we voted to include men into the organization in 1987 and currently have women, men and non-binary members. We are about gender equity for all, and we need all in the fight.

Question: I joined AAUW to be with like-minded women – won't allowing non-degreed members change that?

• Greater diversity can only strengthen AAUW and our ability to advance equity. But the educational requirement disproportionately prevents people of color and young people from becoming members. According to the US Census, in 2016 46% of non-Hispanic white women aged 25-29 years completed four years of college. For African American and Hispanic women, the numbers drop to 25% and 31%, respectively. This eliminates 54% of non-Hispanic white women, 75% of African American women, and 69% of Hispanic women from becoming AAUW members. Generation Z is the most diverse generation in history. This cohort and millennials view the educational degree requirement as elitist and out of sync with today's feminism.



- AAUW membership is comprised of nearly 60,000 members who have diverse attitudes and opinions.
- A college degree does not and cannot make us all like-minded, nor is having an entire membership who think the same way conducive to our own continued education and growth as people. If we were all like-minded, we would not be debating the issue of dropping the degree requirement, we would already all agree.
- We should not deny membership to those who seek us out because they wish to work for women's equity but they lack a required degree. Requiring a college degree for membership mistakenly implies that only those with degrees could possibly value or advocate for equity and education for girls and women. Shared values do not come with a college degree.
- We recognize the hard work of our members who hold educational degrees and they should not think that working with women without degrees will demean or diminish their accomplishment in any way.

Question: It's not that hard to get a degree these days. Why can't they just get one?



- Barriers to education still exist.
- While college is an option for many, others face significant barriers, like skyrocketing educational costs, childcare, elder care, transportation, working multiple jobs, and language barriers. And some may simply opt to pursue careers that do not require a college degree. This doesn't make

them less interested in equity or less susceptible to the bias and discrimination that women face.

- Why should they have to? Shifts in the workplace have led to many more opportunities for skills-based jobs that do not require formal degrees—positions that policymakers and politicians from all political parties point to as critical to our country’s economic growth. At AAUW’s founding, women who lacked a degree had limited career options. In the 21st century, that’s no longer true. Women today are firefighters, pilots, entrepreneurs, artists, politicians, manufacturers, and so much more; these jobs don’t technically require a four-year degree, but they still necessitate a commitment to learning.
- Having a degree does not exempt women from discrimination, just as not having a degree does not make women unqualified to advocate for equity and fair treatment. Those on the receiving end of discriminatory treatment often make the strongest and most convincing advocates for the change we need.

Question: AAUW has been this way for a long time. Why do we need to change now?

- Times have changed and society has changed. Look at all that is happening in the world right now that would have seemed impossible 30 years ago.
- AAUW is also in a much different place than 30 years ago. If we truly want to preserve AAUW’s long legacy, we must reinvent ourselves.



- AAUW empowers women. This is a time to consider all of your past objections to eliminating the degree requirement and ask yourself – what am I doing to help empower all women? How does keeping the membership requirement help me do this work?
- We’re all reexamining our world and it is time to reexamine our assumptions about AAUW’s work. Fundamentally, AAUW fights for equity. How can we do that to the fullest extent while keeping an unequal membership system?
- We need non-degreed women to fight with us and serve as role models to the next generation.

Question: Haven’t we voted on this many times before? Why is this coming up again?

- It is never too late to do the right thing.
- While the degree requirement made sense when AAUW was created, it is now counter to our mission.
- AAUW has not always been on the right side of history and while we’ll never be able to change the past, we can learn and grow as individuals and in our beloved organization.
- This is an opportunity to do the right thing, so that when future generations look back they can be inspired by our actions.

Voting Period: April 7 – May 17, 2021

How to vote: All eligible voters are encouraged to vote online.

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Public Policy

Update on Paid Sick Leave for Essential Workers



In early February, HB 2137, Delegate Guzman's bill to require paid sick leave for all essential workers, passed the House of Delegates by a vote of 54-46. The bill then went to the Senate where it was amended in the Commerce and Labor Committee to limit the bill's coverage to home health care workers serving patients enrolled in Medicaid. On February 25, the amended bill was passed in the Senate by a vote of 21-18 and in the House by a vote of 54-44. The Governor has supported the concept and will review the measure.

Under this bill, about 30,000 workers in Virginia would receive up to five paid sick days per year starting July 1. Delegate Guzman has noted that these jobs are overwhelmingly held by women, particularly women of color. This is an important step forward, and the Coalition for Paid Sick Leave, of which AAUW-VA is a member, intends to continue its advocacy for paid sick leave for all workers.

Women's History Walk

Mark your calendars for The Falls Church Women's History Walk scheduled for Sunday, May 2. The Falls Church Branch of AAUW has participated in past Walks and last year donated a sign in honor of Leah Porzel to be used at all future Walks. As plans for the Walk are developed, more information will be forthcoming.

Edison!



Shannon and her son, Edison, are home! Welcome back to Falls Church. Here's a picture of Edison enjoying his return.

Edison is still recovering from his surgery but is as cheerful as ever. Shannon says that cards and meals for the family are welcome. You can deliver meals to the LaBarbea's at 2094 Hutchinson Grove Ct, Falls Church VA 22043, just off Rt. 7 near Tyson's Corners. Just call or text Shannon before delivery. Things change! (571) 882-3869, [smodell3 at hotmail.com](mailto:smodell3@hotmail.com)

VIRTUAL TOWN HALL OF AAUW OF VIRGINIA

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR A TOWN HALL ON AAUW OF VIRGINIA, March 9, 2021 – 7 p.m. with Leslie Tourigny and Suzanne Rothwell AAUW of Virginia Co-Presidents Join us for a virtual town hall on Tuesday, March 9, 2021, at 7 p.m. for a briefing on the activities of your state board and to answer questions. This event is especially for new members (those who have joined AAUW in the past three years) and those who feel like they are new members. Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7TCVMvEESO6-AKuKrZ0INA

Movies, anyone?

Who knew that the law would be a theme in the film group's most recently discussed films? Last month, we watched and discussed **What the Constitution Means to Me**. It weaved the relationship between four generations of women and the founding document that shaped their lives. In March, the film group will be discussing the 2016 film **Loving**. It is the story of Richard and Mildred Loving, the plaintiffs in the 1967 Supreme Court decision which invalidated state laws prohibiting interracial marriage

Loving can be watched through Netflix Streaming. The group will meet virtually to discuss the film on Wednesday, March 10th at 7:00 PM. All are invited to join us. **No ticket required**. For more details, call or text Aida Loomis at 703 966 8050.



March is Women's History Month or in my case women and film month. I reached out to my daughters and asked them what film that stars a woman and/or is about a woman resonated with them. This is what they said:

Daniele: **Terminator 2** (1991) had a strong female lead and was one of the first films with a female who was physically, mentally and emotionally tough. She was not so in Terminator 1 but through adversity became strong and independent. Very few female roles depicted women as strong. That is a much more recent development.



Coleen: **Whale Rider** (2003) tells the story of a 12-year old girl in New Zealand who is discounted as being the future leader of the Ngati Konohi people because she is a girl. Coleen connects to stories that celebrate people who are determined to exceed other people's expectations of them.

Julie: **Hidden Figures** (2016) pays tribute to three pioneering Black women who played a central role at NASA in the early 1960s during the "space race" between the United States and the Soviet Union. Hidden Figures presented three brilliant black women who just wanted to do their jobs.

My choice was **The Trouble With Angels** (1966) starring Rosalind Russel as the Mother Superior, and Haley Mills as the rebellious student. Outside of my immediate family, nuns were the first women that I saw as teachers, servants and leaders. What I found more interesting was that Ida Lupino directed the film. Known primarily as an actress, Ida Lupino started directing in the 1950s and tackled controversial subjects such as out-of-wedlock pregnancy, bigamy, and rape.

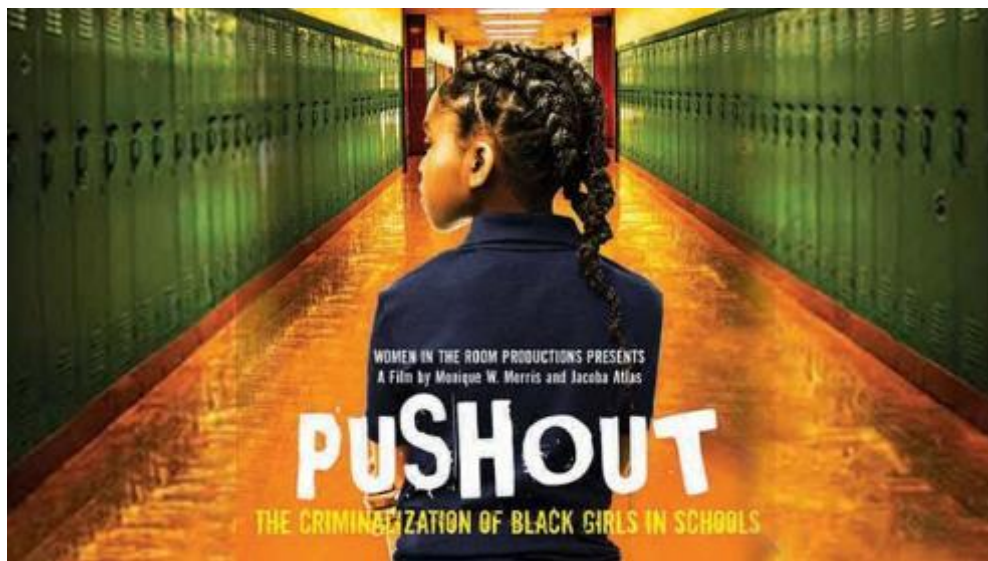
These are just a few told women stories. What are the untold women and girl stories out there? Have you told your story?

And other viewing...

Join MPT on March 10 at 7pm for
a virtual screening and discussion of

PUSHOUT: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools

We invite you to watch the documentary ***PUSHOUT: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools***. Afterwards, stay with us for an interactive conversation about the film.



Panelists include:

- **Jacoba Atlas** - Director, Writer & Executive Producer, *PUSHOUT*
- **Denise Pines** - Executive Producer, *PUSHOUT*
- **Kimberly Haven** - Director of Policy, Advocacy & Outreach, From Prison Cells to PhD
- **Tenaj Moody** - Director of Programming, From Prison Cells to PhD

This screening is online, so you can watch and engage from wherever you are.

[RSVP here](#)

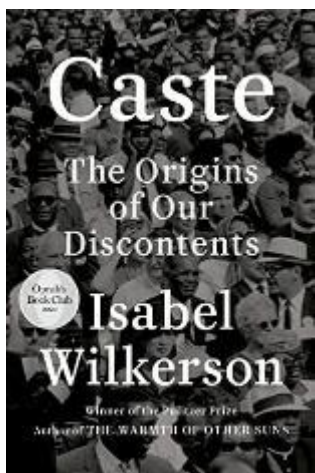
Debbie Pawlak passed the link below and thought it would be of interest. It is free lecture on movie viewing and analysis might be of interest to those of us who like to spend time in front of a movie screen.

Here are some details:

Join AARP and attendees from across the U.S. for a **FREE One Day University Virtual Lecture and live Q&A on March 24 at 6:30 pm ET | 5:30 pm CT | 4:30 pm MT | 3:30 pm PT** with Professor Marc Lapadula of Yale University - AARP Membership not required.

<https://local.aarp.org/vcc-event/one-day-university-lecture-series-presented-by-aarp-what-makes-great-movies-great-fbnthkfz5n.html>

Book Club News



The book group meets virtually for the foreseeable future on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 P.M. You can find the schedule of upcoming meetings in the newsletter, on the events calendar on our branch website as well as an email sent out to the branch. All are welcome to attend whether or not you've read the book. A Zoom meeting invitation is sent out to all members the day before the meeting. Below is our schedule for Winter/Spring 2021.

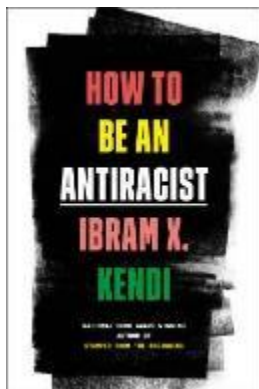
NEXT UP: Diversity: Tuesday MARCH 16, 2021

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents

by [Isabel Wilkerson](#)

The Pulitzer Prize–winning, bestselling author of *The Warmth of Other Suns* examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped America and shows how our lives today are still defined by a hierarchy of human divisions. 496 pages

FUTURE EVENTS:



APR. 20, 2021: Diversity: “How to Be an Antiracist” by Ibram X. Kendi, 305 pages

MAY 18, 2021: Contemporary Fiction: “The Vanishing Half” by Brit Bennett, 343 pages

We hope you will join us for a lively discussion.

Polly Rosenstein for FC AAUW Book Group

Editors' Note: In order to protect our members' email addresses from being hacked, we should remove the "@" in email addresses and substitute the word "at." Whenever an email address appears in the newsletter, it will be written as follows: pammartinov at gmail.com. Apparently, it is the "@" sign that enables hackers to access email accounts. Simply copy the phrase into an email "To" line, replace the word "at" with the "@" sign, and remove all spaces to re-construct a usable email address.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 8	7:30pm	Branch meeting via Zoom
March 9	7:00pm	Virtual Town Hall of AAUW of Virginia
March 10	7:00pm	Movie Group via Zoom
March 10	7:00pm	"Pushout" MPT
March 13-15		AAUW of Virginia Conference
March 16	7:30pm	Book Club via Zoom- <i>Caste</i>
March 22	7:30pm	FC AAUW Board Meeting
March 24	6:30pm	Lecture on movie viewing and analysis
April 7-May 17		Voting on AAUW By-Laws
April 13	7:00pm	Branch meeting with McLean branch via Zoom
April 20	7:30pm	Book Club via Zoom- "How to Be an Antiracist"

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.





Conference Schedule and Registration Information

Please join us virtually for the annual AAUW of Virginia State Conference, which also includes our 96th Annual Business Meeting. In addition to conducting important business of our organization, over the course of three days, you'll hear from and be able to question an exciting variety of speakers on the AAUW mission-related topics described below.

On Saturday, March 13, there will be morning and afternoon sessions, while on Sunday, March 14, and Monday, March 15, there will only be afternoon programs.

The conference and business meeting are free, but **please register in advance for each day you want to attend by using the registration links below.** You will be sent Zoom links for each day. Even though there will be two sessions on March 13, there will only be one Zoom link for that day.

Contact us at [AAUWofVA at gmail.com](mailto:AAUWofVA@gmail.com) if you have any questions or problems with the registration links.

Day 1: Saturday, March 13

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. [REGISTER NOW FOR DAY 1](#)



Women Make the Difference! The 2020 AAUW of Virginia Woman of Achievement Awardees

Biennially, AAUW-VA presents our prestigious Woman of Achievement Award to Virginia women who have made outstanding educational, civic, and cultural contributions; demonstrated excellent leadership skills; and contributed to the advancement of women with a positive impact in our state and/or nation. We selected two outstanding awardees in 2020, but the covid pandemic prevented us from honoring them last year.

Join us in honoring our 2020 Woman of Achievement Awardees: **State Senator Janet Howell** and **Scientist Ana Humphrey**:

- As the second in seniority in the Virginia Senate, **Senator Howell** is one of Virginia's most influential state senators. She has been representing parts of Fairfax and Arlington Counties since 1992. She is credited with major legal reforms, and her legislative priorities have focused on education, children and families, and equal rights for women.
- **Ana Humphrey** is a scientist who has won multiple national, international, and state awards for her research, and who mentors young students in STEM. In 2019, she was the first-place winner surpassing more than 2,000 student entries in the prestigious Regeneron (formerly the Westinghouse) Science Talent Search. Ms. Humphrey is currently a sophomore majoring in astrophysics at Harvard College.



Keynote Address: Women Make a Difference! in U.S. Elections: Assessing Gender and Intersectional Dynamics in Election 2020 and Beyond

2020 was a record-breaking year for women in American politics from the presidential level down. However, understanding the success and influence of women in elections and representation requires attention to

diversity *among* women, including along lines of race/ethnicity and party. **Dr. Kelly Dittmar, PhD**, Associate Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University–Camden, and Director of Research and Scholar at the renowned Center for American Women and Politics at the Eagleton Institute of Politics, will assess the gender and intersectional dynamics in election 2020, with particular attention to women candidates, voters, and activists, and discuss what election outcomes reveal and mean for women's representation and policymaking in 2021 and beyond.



Winter/Spring 2021 Virginia Vision Page 1 What Difference! Does Poverty Make in the Lives of Women?

Economic security, *i.e.*, ensuring livelihoods for women, is one of the focal areas in the AAUW Strategic Plan. It plays a prominent role in our research, advocacy, and program planning. No discussion of economic security is complete without considering poverty and what difference it makes in the lives of women.

Poverty is indeed a complex and thought-provoking term. For women, it entails more than just a lack of income and resources. It impedes their ability to make decisions regarding every aspect of their lives. In this session, we will hear from two experts: **Dr. Diane Hodge, PhD**, Director of the School of Social Work in Radford University's Waldron College of Health and Human Services; and **Susheela Varky, Esq.**, Director of the Center for Family Advocacy and Legal Assistance for Victim/Immigrants of Domestic Abuse (LA VIDA) at the Virginia Poverty Law Center. They'll discuss poverty's impact on our society, especially on women.



AAUW of Virginia Women Make the Difference!

Kim Churches, AAUW's chief executive officer since 2017, joins us for a special presentation to recognize AAUW of

Virginia as the very first state to achieve all five stars in the AAUW Five-Star National Recognition Program. She will present an overview of what AAUW national has been working on and achieved, an update on national priorities for 2021, and a description of what is next on the gender agenda, and then entertain questions from the audience. Thanks to our state board and members for the collective hard work that resulted in this recognition.



AAUW of Virginia Annual Business Meeting

Please join us at our 96th Annual Business Meeting so that we can conduct important business of our organization, including hearing the financial report, considering a bylaws amendment, and meeting the candidates for AAUW-VA officer positions. You'll be on hand as we unveil AAUW of Virginia's first State Named Honorees. And, if it is your lucky day, you may even win a door prize!

Day 2: Sunday, March 14 3:00 p.m.

– 5:30 p.m.

[REGISTER NOW FOR DAY 2](#)



Women Make A Difference! in Military Service to Our Country

Women have been making a difference in military service as far back as the Revolutionary War when a number of women disguised themselves as men and fought in the Continental Army. Women did the same thing during the Civil War for both the Union and Confederate armies. During World War I, women served as U.S. Army nurses at military hospitals in the United States and overseas. In World War II, the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) was established, and the Navy Women's Reserve Act created the WAVES. Fast forward: According to the Council on Foreign Relations, "when the draft ended in 1973, women represented just 2 percent of the enlisted forces and 8 percent of the officer corps. Today, those numbers are 16 percent and 19 percent, respectively..."

To help us learn about the history of women in military service to our country, there is no one better than **Lieutenant Colonel Marilla Cushman, USA, Retired**. After almost 25 years of active duty in the U.S. Army, in 1997 she went to work for the Military Women's Memorial Foundation, where she is now vice president of development.



Equity in Education Makes the Difference!

"...high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and the key to improving economic prosperity and gender equality." (2019-2021 AAUW Public Policy Priorities)

It is not news to any AAUW member how integral equity in education is to our mission and our Public Policy Priorities. **Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., EdD**, Superintendent of the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), will join us to talk about the courageous and bold equity work being done by ACPS. Tasked with a mission to ensure that every student succeeds, the ACPS serves 15,000 plus students who hail from more than 145 countries and speak 132 languages.



Women Make the Difference! As Elected Officials in Virginia

Each successive election more and more women have been elected to serve at various levels of government in Virginia. Hear what our three panelists have to say about what motivated them to seek elective office, challenges they

have faced as women elected officials, what unique skills women bring to governing, their personal successes, what lessons they have learned, and advice for those following in their footsteps, plus more.

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- **State Senator Jen Kiggans**, a former Navy helicopter pilot and the first female military veteran to serve in the Virginia General Assembly, was elected in 2019 to represent Virginia's 7th Senate District, which covers parts of Norfolk and Virginia Beach. She was one of those voting aye for ratification of the ERA in 2020. Senator Kiggans also works as an adult geriatric nurse practitioner.
- **Chair Phyllis J. Randall**, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Chair-at-Large, is the first person of color in Virginia's history to be elected chair of a county board. By profession, Chair Randall is a mental health therapist, working with substance abuse offenders in an incarcerated setting.
- **Mayor Deanna Reed** of Harrisonburg was first elected to the Harrisonburg City Council in 2016 and was recently selected by her fellow council members for her third consecutive term as mayor. She is the first African American female mayor in Harrisonburg's history and also works as the Director of Community and School Partnerships at the On the Road Collaborative, a nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the learning gap and empowering youth.

Day 3: Monday, March 15 3:00 p.m.

– 5:30 p.m.

[REGISTER NOW FOR DAY 3](#)



Alexandria's Social Justice Initiatives

Anyone who has visited Alexandria undoubtedly has spent time in Old Town enjoying the historical sights, quaint shops, and the amazing restaurants. However, "a horrific part of Alexandria's history is that, prior to America's Civil War, Alexandria served as one of the largest domestic slave trading ports in America. Most of Alexandria's leading businesses and properties could not have operated without the unpaid labor of the enslaved men, women, and children who lived and worked here."

This session, presented by **Audrey Davis**, the renowned Director of the Alexandria Black History Museum, explores some of Alexandria's social justice initiatives. Learn about the city's partnership with the Equal Justice Institute in Montgomery, Alabama, "to memorialize documented victims of racial violence throughout history and foster meaningful dialogue about race and justice today." The Alexandria Community Remembrance Project is "dedicated to helping Alexandria understand its history of racial terror hate crimes and to work toward creating a welcoming community

bound by equity and inclusion.” Also, find out about new social justice initiatives during the pandemic, including *The Legacy of George Floyd: Documenting Alexandria’s Response*.



What a Difference! A Virtual Trip to the Booker T. Washington National Monument Makes

Nestled in the Smith Mountain Lake region in Franklin County, Virginia, is one of our country’s treasures, the National Park Service’s Booker T. Washington National Monument. Accompany us on a virtual trip to the birthplace of Dr. Washington, who was born a plantation slave in 1856 and gained freedom when he was 9 years old. He went on to become a renowned orator, author, educator, advisor to U.S. Presidents, and founder of the Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) in Alabama.

Join us for a presentation about the park, the man, and his legacy by **Park Ranger Brittany Webb-Lane**. Ms. Webb-Lane, who became the park’s newest ranger in 2018, was born and raised in Rocky Mount, Virginia, in Franklin County, not many miles from the park. She is one of the small percentage of national park rangers who are minorities, and the even smaller percentage who are women of color.



Gender-Based Violence, Institutional Betrayal and the Carceral State

Once again, **Dr. Angela J. Hattery, PhD**, Professor of Women & Gender Studies and Co-Director of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence at the University of Delaware; and **Dr. Earl Smith, PhD**, Emeritus Professor of American Ethnic Studies and Sociology at Wake Forest University, who teaches classes in sociology, African and African-American studies, and women gender studies at George Mason University and the University of Delaware, will help us better understand the complexities of a horrendous societal problem.

In this session, they will explore the ways in which gender-based violence is much more than violence perpetrated by one individual on another; and the ways in which institutions, including college campuses and the military, reinforce and amplify this violence through a series of policies and practices that produces experiences of institutional betrayal for victims/ survivors. Finally, Drs. Hattery and Smith will consider the ways in which mass incarceration, which ensnares millions of Black men in the criminal legal system, exposes their partners to state surveillance and violence.