

Join us as an AAUW Scholarship winner discusses her dissertation!



"Existential Captivation: On the (Im)Possibility of a Life Lived in Terror"

Dr. Jessica Sims

March 14, 2024

7:00 pm

IN PERSON

**The Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church*
1168 Route 55, Lagrangeville, NY 12540**

This talk discusses the traditional concept of Stockholm Syndrome in the context of a type of domestic violence known as "coercive control". By framing this strange phenomenon in terms of a prevalent type of abuse, we will begin to comprehend the strong psychological attachment that victims have for their captors - an attachment that cannot be explained by the common assumption that victims refuse to leave due to fear. During the discussion, we will touch upon the ancient Greek philosophical concepts of "possibility" and "habit" to explore how the human mind perceives opportunities for action in the environment. This philosophical approach reveals that specific patterns of abuse can reshape the mind such that a victim cannot perceive the world as a place where she can act in her own self-interest. The talk will conclude with some reflections on how enduring the effects of this psychological abuse can be for victims and what it might take to help them recover from their invisible wounds.

Dr. Jessica Sims completed her PhD in Continental Philosophy at Stony Brook University in 2017. She also holds degrees in Political Science and Philosophy from the University of Oregon. Jessica's doctoral research on Stockholm Syndrome in cases of domestic violence earned her a \$20,000 American Fellowship from the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in 2016. She has given lectures on her work to AAUW branches in NYC, Long Island, and Upstate New York. She currently serves as the Communications Director for the AAUW Empire State NYC branch. When she's not working with AAUW supporters and fellows, Jessica serves as the Development & Membership Manager for St. George's Society of New York (SGSNY) - a 254-year-old British charity - where she leads on fundraising and membership outreach. She also manages SGSNY's Scholarship Program, providing financial and professional development support to 30 undergraduate scholarship recipients annually.

***Directions:** <https://bit.ly/3T3D4jc>

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