

Coming in March

Dr. Jessica Sims, AAUW Fellow (scholarship recipient) discusses her dissertation:

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

March 14, 2024

7:00 pm

IN PERSON

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

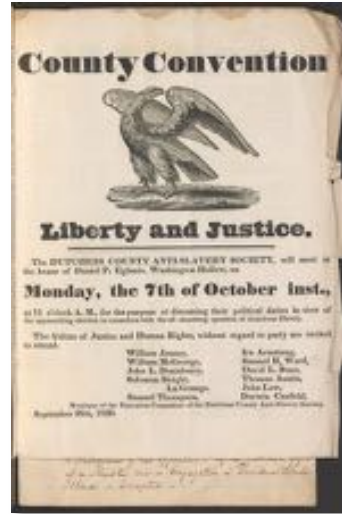


This talk discusses the traditional concept of Stockholm Syndrome in the context of a type of domestic violence known as “coercive control.” By framing this strange phenomenon in terms of a prevalent type of abuse, we will begin to comprehend the strong psychological attachment that victims have for their captors - an attachment that cannot be explained

by the common assumption that victims refuse to leave due to fear. The discussion 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.

In recognition of Black History Month



Slavery, Antislavery and the Underground Railroad: A Dutchess County Primer

**February 8, 2024
7:00 PM on Zoom**

Registration is required

Register now:

<https://bit.ly/3SuPDpD>

Presenter: Peter A. Bunten, Executive Director, Mid-Hudson Antislavery History Project

In his presentation, Peter Bunten will examine the history of slavery and antislavery in Dutchess County, focusing on its key players and events. He will place this local history within the broader national context of slavery and antislavery.



Peter Bunten is Executive Director of the Mid-Hudson Antislavery History Project (MHAHP), located in Dutchess County. He represents the MHAHP with the Underground Railroad Consortium of New York State and is a Trustee of the Dutchess County Historical Society. Before his retirement in 2018, Peter was the Education Manager for Historic Hudson Valley. He has a Master's degree in Historical Studies, with an emphasis on Public History, from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. He is a native of Poughkeepsie. Peter is also a member of AAUW Poughkeepsie.



FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Online Calendar: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

Calendar listing: Philippa Goodman,
communications.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

To contact interest groups: interest.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

- 1 **Intermediate Bridge Instruction:** 1:00 - 2:00 pm on Zoom
Coordinator: Cathy Kinn
- 1 **Board Meeting:** 7:00 pm on Zoom
- 5 **Word Games:** 1:30 - 4:00 pm
Coordinator: Sharon Fleury
- 7 **Gourmet: Out & About:** 6:30 pm
PC's Paddock Restaurant, 273 Titusville Rd, Poughkeepsie
Coordinator: Jo Anne Abraskin
- 8 **Monthly Program:** 7:00 pm on Zoom; see page 1
- 10 **Days for Girls Poughkeepsie NY Team**
Work session: 1:30-4:30 pm, Zion Church Parish Hall, 12 Satterlee Place, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
Coordinators: Judy Longacre and Sabashnee Govender
- 12 **All those books...:** 2:30 pm on Zoom
A Tale of Two Cities, by Charles Dickens
Hostess: Peggy
Coordinator: Carol Loizides
- 13 **Reely Together:** 2:00 pm on Zoom
Discussion of the film *Burial*
Coordinator: Jackie Vierno
- 13 **World Travelers:** 7-9 pm on Zoom and live at Kathy Martin's house; Kathy will present her trip to Ireland
Coordinator: Bonnie Auchincloss
- 16 **Poetry & Play Readings:** 1:00 pm
Theme: related to Black History Month
Coordinator: Maria DeWald
- 19 **Manderley Literary Society:** 4:30 pm
Our Missing Hearts, by Celeste Ng
Reviewer: Carol Gray
Coordinator: Shelly Friedman
- 20 **Cuisine:** details TBD
Coordinators: Jo Anne Abraskin and Blanche Bergman
- 21 **Bridge I:** 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Coordinator: Susan Fink
- 22 **Bridge II:** 12:00-4:00 pm
Red Lobster, Route 9, Poughkeepsie
Coordinator: Sandy Goldberg
- 23 **Art on the Go:** Time and Place TBD
Printmaking workshop
Coordinator: Mary Coiteux
- 26 **Movie Mavens:** details TBD
Coordinator: Linnea Mason
- 26 **Craft 'n' Create:** 1:30 pm
Details TBD
Coordinators: Pat Luczai and Mary Ann Williams
- 27 **Contemporary Literature:** 7:30pm on Zoom
The Maid by Anita Prose
Coordinators: Linda Freisitzer & Betty Harrel

- 28 **Mah Jongg:** Noon - 4:00 pm
Lunch from 12-1. Play from 1 to 3:30/4:00 pm
TGI Fridays Restaurant in the Poughkeepsie Plaza
Contact: Blanche Bergman

Pedal Pushers: See you in the spring!

Coordinator: Patricia Luczai



POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH OFFICERS 2023-2024

President	Celia Serotsky
Program Co-VPs	Kay Saderholm Gail Sisti
Membership VP	Bonnie Auchincloss
Development VP	Betty Harrel
Communications VP	Barbara Durniak
Secretary	Beth DeFiglio
Treasurer	Diane Jablonski
Membership Treasurer	Kathy Friedman

President: president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Board members: board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Association: www.aauw.org NY State: www.aauw-nys.org

Poughkeepsie Branch: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

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

VISION: Equity for all.

VALUES: Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality.

AAUW Poughkeepsie 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.

THE BRANCH is published ten times a year, September through June, by the Poughkeepsie Branch of the AAUW, Inc. Submit articles to Cyd Averill, editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Celia Serotsky president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

I'm sitting here at my desk in front of my laptop and glancing out the window at approximately a foot of snow that fell here in Poughkeepsie from Saturday evening through Sunday afternoon. It was so pristine and peaceful when I looked out on Sunday morning, but unfortunately, that pristine nature doesn't last very long. Maybe that's the metaphor for this year: 12:01 PM January 1st was pristine and full of promise, but within a short time the real world comes back into play. Fortunately, AAUW Poughkeepsie is a strong and supportive group of women and man (!) who are vibrant and resilient.

Traditionally, our Board of Directors does not meet the first Thursday of January unless there is urgent business. This gives our hard-working Board members a chance to take a breather after the holidays. There was no urgent business this year, so we did not meet. We'll be back in business on the first Thursday of February. Consequently, I do not have much to report this month.

As I have mentioned in previous messages, the Strategic Plan Review Committee will have met in January, and the Annual Meeting Planning Committee will have met as well. Plans for organizing a committee to celebrate our 100th anniversary as a branch will be coming together soon. Our branch was started in 1925, so, 2025 will be our 100th year in existence. So exciting!

You will be receiving an e-blast message either this month or in March describing a donation event we have generally held in December. This event involves our donating new items to the women at Grace Smith House. Unfortunately, this year, we just didn't get it together to have this happen in December. (Although, one of our members was right on the ball and had brought a donation item to our December program meeting ready to donate.) The Board decided at our December meeting to hold this effort in the Spring, and sometime around Mother's Day has been suggested. We'll have more details about the date and how to donate in the coming months. In the past we have asked members to purchase personal items for the Grace Smith residents, such as hand cream, pajamas, socks, etc. A more extensive list will be provided in the e-blast. We will ask you to bring your item(s) to a program meeting where they will be collected and given to Grace Smith House. Again, more details will follow. The snow will melt, the year will progress, and we have much to look forward to in AAUW.

MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

Bonnie Auchincloss and Linda Eagleton
membership.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

During the past two weeks the membership committee has been hand delivering and mailing the directories. If you have not yet received yours, please contact Bonnie Auchincloss at 845-625-4925 or at bauchincloss@gmail.com.

New Member Glimpses – Meet the following new members:

Jewel Ratzlaff - Many of you may remember Jewel as our recent Woman of the Year. As a result of that honor, she was gifted a one-year membership in AAUW. Jewel retired from the Poughkeepsie Public Library, but keeps busy with volunteer work, reading, choir, and family.

Amy Matts - Amy is a retired Spackenkill High School science teacher, current Regional Coordinator for Mid Hudson Science Olympiad, and a liaison for SUNY Albany's Science Research in the High School program. She enjoys hiking, travel, and reading.

Maggie Flynn - Maggie is a Medicare Specialist. She is interested in politics, reading groups and volunteering. She has spent the past 6 months helping her parents through a health emergency and their move into assisted living. Now that things are more settled, she plans to start attending events soon.

Please keep an eye out for these new members and help us to welcome them to our Poughkeepsie Branch.



February Birthdays: Carol Barman, Diane Closs, Linda Eagleton, Claudette Hennessy, Susan Holland, Muriel Horowitz, Ruth Kava, Linnea Masson, Marta Newkirk, Eileen Nye, Gail Sisti.

Members supporting members

There are times when one of our members is dealing with an illness, a loss, or another personal crisis. If you know of a member who should receive our well wishes or support, please send the information to our Assistant Secretary, Paula Greenspan. Her contact information is in our Directory.

PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo

board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

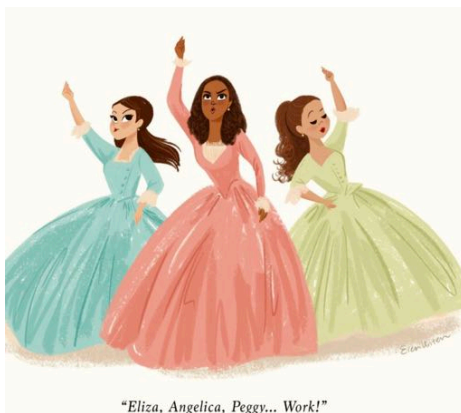
African American artists, “infused with African, Caribbean, and Black lived experiences,” have gloriously emerged to record the experience of their lives in many cultural outlets, but the performing arts has struggled for ethnic representations. While more producers, directors and writers are presenting original multicultural works, the theater world has not offered equal opportunities for non-white performers, especially ethnic women.

New York Shakespeare Festival founder and director Joseph Papp began a systematic practice of non-traditional or “color blind” casting, the practice of casting without considering the actor's ethnicity or race. This first attempt to integrate has morphed to include a disregard for appearance, body shape, sex, or gender. Although color-blind casting has been practiced for more than half a century and is engraved into hiring practices, it still inspires “vehement controversy and debate.”

Esther Rolle, Dorothy Dandridge, Pearl Bailey (recipient of the Medal of Freedom), **Isabel Sanford** and **Gail Fisher** (first Black woman in a detergent commercial) were in the forefront of defying the stereotype of black women and transcended typecasting. Their refusal to portray domestics, stereotypes and passionate woman of “easy virtue” (Dandridge) pressured writers to develop fully rounded characters who were representative of modern society and story settings. The writers of *Good Times* envisioned Florida Evans as a single mother. However, Rolle, concerned about the lack of black fathers on television, insisted that the show depict a two-parent family. In 1990, Rolle's work in front of and behind the camera earned her the NAACP's Civil Rights Leadership Award for helping to raise the image of African Americans in popular culture.

Joseph Papp introduced us to emerging stars such as **James Earl Jones, Gloria Foster, Rosalind Cash, Denzel Washington, Ruby Dee, and Raul Julia** in leading Shakespearean roles. Playwright **August Wilson** was in quiet opposition. Wilson called not for color blind casting, but for “institutions that invite art by and for people of color, to tell their own stories and not simply ones adapted for them.” He believed in color conscious casting, deliberate attention to race and ethnicity. Wilson was vehemently opposed to “whitewashing,” the casting of white actors to play non-white characters. Both Papp's and Wilson's points of view remain in harmonious discord as the performing arts strives to present works representative of today's society and its people.

Television and film show a marked increase in opportunities, but theater appears more limited. Watershed moments have been catalysts for change. **Pearl Bailey** appeared as Dolly Levi with an all Black cast (1967). **Stephanie Mills** played Dorothy in *The Wiz* (1974). **Halle Bailey** is Ariel in the most



recent *Little Mermaid* (2023). **Brandy** rode the pumpkin coach in Rogers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* (1997) with **Whitney Houston** as her Fairy Godmother.

Audra McDonald appeared as Carrie Pipperidge in *Carousel* (1993) and Grace in *Annie* (1999), despite network fears that the public would not accept a white man's proposal to a black woman, and Mother Abbess in *The Sound of Music* (2013 and 2022). She

was the 2024 Grand Marshall of the Rose Bowl Parade where “The 2024 theme brings us together through music. In a world of different cultures, beliefs, hopes, and dreams, one language unites us all — music.” It was just announced that she will star as Mama Rose in a new revival of *Gypsy* for the ‘24-‘25 season. **Brittney Johnson** debuted as Glinda in *Wicked* (2022) and **Ariana Grande** and **Cynthia Erivo** are Glinda and Elphaba in the soon to be released movie version of *Wicked*.

Severely critiqued was the casting of **Jodie Turner Smith** in the *Anne Boleyn* miniseries. The show's creators defended the issue with the following: “It was all about this being the right person for the job, rather than what we as a society might perceive as the ‘right look’ for the job. Anne Boleyn was beautiful, witty, vibrant, intelligent and Jodie is all of those things.” They defined their casting strategy as identity-conscious. The Broadway show *Six* (2021) has no men in the cast, featuring only people who identify as women or non-binary in both the cast and the band. “Significantly, the show's color-blind casting has meant that each of the queens has been represented as a woman of color.”

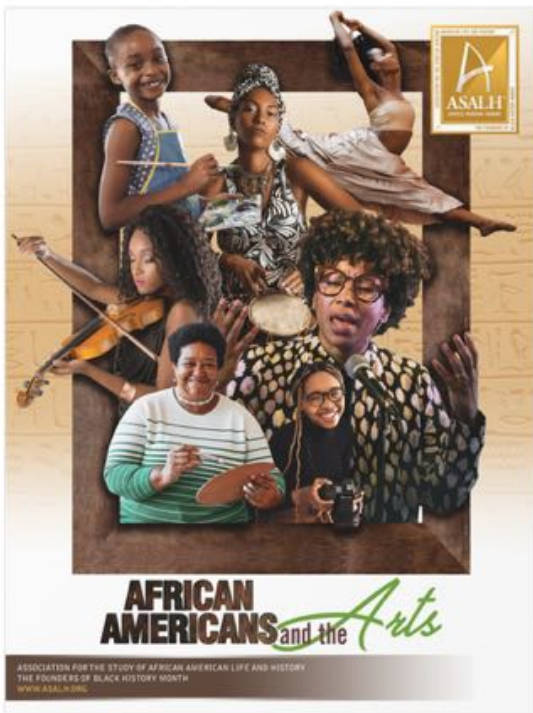
Most notably, there is *Hamilton*. Conceived by Lin-Manuel-Miranda, his vision advanced, challenged and set a new dimension for casting. Somewhat color blind, color conscious, inclusive and identity conscious, the company revolutionized casting. Although heavily favorable to male casting, three non-white women scored major roles representing historical white women: **Philippa Soo** as Eliza Schuyler Hamilton, **Renee Elise Goldsberry** as Angelica Schuyler and **Jasmine Cephad Jones** as Peggy Schuyler and Maria Reynolds. Twelve non-white male performers recreated founding fathers Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, Burr, Laurens and Mulligan and inhabit characters of racial backgrounds that are different from their own. “The Black and brown founding fathers of *Hamilton* make the story of America something that can finally be owned by people of color, as opposed to the reality, which so often refutes the relevancy of their lives and contributions,” says Lin-Manuel. “Furthermore, this show acts as the base message of cultural and political revolution and speaks to today's political climate like never before. Aside from the color conscious casting, its deliberate use of hip hop and rap battles, and the overall message praising the contributions of the immigrant population in search of the American Dream, it serves as a celebration of the prospect of

multiculturalism.” It is consciously aware of who and what America is.

Currently on Broadway, *How To Dance in Ohio* features seven actors diagnosed on the autism spectrum portraying young autistic characters of different groups navigating change and preparing for a spring formal. The casting is said to bring authenticity and insight into the performances by presenting multi-dimensional characters who are not stereotypically handicapped or ethnically assigned. Ali Stroker became the first actor in a wheelchair to win a Tony for her portrayal of Ado Annie in the 2019 revival of *Oklahoma*. “This award is for every kid watching tonight who has a disability, who has a limitation or a challenge, who has been waiting to see themselves represented in this arena,” she said. “You are.” Inclusive casting is the casting philosophy.

Proponents and critics of color blind, color conscious, identity conscious, inclusive and non-traditional casting are not on the same page, but they are part of an emerging narrative. The story is developing, experiments occurring and casting practices evolving. Issues and discussions being pursued include casting white performers in roles that are “historically African, Caribbean, and Black American lived experiences,” the importance/unimportance of physical appearance, the need for cultural identity and its associations and importance along with the complexities of race and ethnicity in society, the literary world and performing arts.

“All the world is a stage and the men and women merely players.” It is just a matter of who will get a casting call.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Jackie Vierno



March 10-22, 2024

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

Registration for the NGO CSW68 Forum is open!

Registration is now open for the NGO CSW68 Forum, which will take place March 10-22, 2024.

You can register now to start exploring the new and improved virtual portal using this link. <https://ngoosw.org/ngoosw68/> When you register, you will receive a confirmation email with pertinent information and a link to login to the virtual portal. If you'd like more information about registration, read the FAQs on that webpage.

What is the NGO CSW Forum?

The NGO CSW Forum is organized by and for global civil society, non-governmental organizations, and feminists to connect them with the official United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW) process. With over 750 events, the NGO CSW Forum informs, engages, and inspires grassroots efforts and gender equality advocacy around the world. While the NGO CSW Forum runs parallel to and complements the UN CSW, it is a separate process with separate organizers.

CSW68 Priority Theme: Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective

DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION

What it takes to defend diversity

There is a backlash against diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts in American societyand these efforts are part of a larger strategy to roll back attempts to make our country more free and fair for women and people of color.

An editorial by Errin Haines, Editor-at-Large of The 19th <https://19thnews.org/2023/10/dei-diversity-lawsuits-equity/>

2024 NCCWSL Registration Now Open!

AAUW's **National Conference for Collegiate Women Leaders** (NCCWSL) will be held at the University of Maryland, College Park, May 30 through June 1, 2024. Registration is now open!

Our branch is once again searching for a college woman to apply for a **scholarship** to attend this year's conference. The **Irene Keyes Memorial Scholarship** was established to honor our past president, long time member, and good friend. How wonderful to honor her in this way. This fund has enabled 9 young women to attend this powerful conference. We fund the tuition (which covers all expenses) and offer a travel stipend. Women are required to fill out an application, provide letters of recommendation and agree to write about their experience.

This year's theme is **"Dare to Be"** — NCCWSL is challenging young women to be bold, be engaged, and be a leader! The conference begins Thursday afternoon with a welcome address and networking event. Workshops and panels begin Friday, May 31, ending with the Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony and reception that evening. NCCWSL closes with a Saturday morning session guaranteed to delight! New for 2024, NCCWSL features a STEM track of sessions, designed to engage young women interested in STEM throughout the conference.

The conference is an inspiring, transformative experience. Our website has the application form and testimonials from previous attendees. <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net> Please share this information!

Questions? Contact committee chair
Marcine.humphrey@gmail.com. or call 914-474-1392.

POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH 100TH ANNIVERSARY: 1925 to 2025

What an exciting milestone for our AAUW Poughkeepsie Branch. Marge Barton, our Historian, has already published several items from the minutes of those early years here in *The Branch*. The founding members were clearly forward-looking women who joined together to face the issues of the day.

We are organizing a committee to celebrate this historic event. It will begin meeting in the near future to plan a variety of activities honoring this anniversary and reminding us of the strength of our branch. If you would like to be a part of this committee, please email Celia Serotsky at president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com.

LEADING TO READING

Betty Harrel board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Beautiful New Books!

Thanks to a Holiday Helping Hand grant, our Leading to Reading project was able to give new books to over 90 children residing at Hudson River Lodging. The grants, provided by the United Way of Dutchess-Orange Region and the Poughkeepsie Journal, help to brighten the holidays for local children. Funds must be spent locally and be used for holiday gifts, parties or food, or utilities for needy families.



Hudson River Lodging, operated by Hudson River Housing, provides shelter for up to two years for local families. Children attend local schools while parents take part in counseling, job training, or continuing education programs. The grant provided two new books for each child which were wrapped by AAUW members and distributed at a Christmas Eve party. With the help of Kathy MacCarthy and staff members at Barnes and Noble, age-appropriate books with multi-ethnic characters were selected.

Thanks to our many supporters

The Barnes and Noble holiday book drive was a great success! Thanks to many of our members, as well as others in the community, over 7 boxes of new books were donated to Leading to Reading. Members of Leading to Reading have started to sort and package the books and they'll be distributed over the next few months.

Thank you to Barnes and Noble for selecting AAUW's Leading to Reading as the recipient and to the many generous shoppers who purchased an extra book when they were in the store. Holiday joy will continue to spread throughout the year because of your thoughtfulness.

SUPPORTERS OF ^{THE}BRANCH

Many thanks to our newsletter Patrons (\$25 or more) and Sponsors (\$10 or more). Their annual contributions help defray the expense of publishing ^{THE}BRANCH and other communication expenses. To add your name, send a check, payable to: **"Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc."** to Cyd Averill, editor.

Patrons: Ruth Aldrich Gau, Sandra Goldberg, Shaileen Kopec, Margaret Nijhuis