



Coming in February
In recognition of Black History Month

CRITICAL RACE THEORY: Its Meaning And Implications For Education

7pm on Zoom
Pre-registration link to follow

PRESENTER: Dr. Jacqueline Goffe-McNish



Critical race theory (CRT), is an academic and legal concept that is more than 40 years old. CRT is based on the idea that race is a social construct, and that racism is not merely the product of individual bias or prejudice, but also something embedded in legal systems and policies.

Dr. Goffe-McNish will facilitate an active discussion of the elements of this theory and its implications for education. Five elements addressed by CRT are: the centrality of race, racism, intersectionality; the challenge of the dominant ideology; a commitment to social justice; the centrality of experiential knowledge; and a transdisciplinary perspective.

This is also connected to education by addressing education inequities and the need to actively engage in a process to set equity and equality focuses for learning.

Dr. Jacqueline Goffe-McNish was a professor of English and Humanities at Dutchess Community College for thirty-two years. She has taught Composition, Introduction to Literature, African American Literature, Caribbean Literature, Technical Writing, and Bible as Literature. She received her Doctorate in Education from St. John Fisher University. Dr. Goffe-McNish is an active member and past president of Poughkeepsie AAUW, where she was Chair of the Diversity Committee for five years.

Let's Give Credit Where Credit is Due!



Great 20th Century Women of Science Who Did Not Receive Appropriate Credit for Their Contributions and Discoveries

January 9, 2025
7 pm on Zoom

This meeting is free and open to the public.

Pre-registration required: <https://shorturl.at/HcdJA>

Presenter: Arnie Serotsky

Arnie's career in science began in 1964 as a Biology/Pre Med student at Hunter College in New York City, which became a coeducational institution that year. Attending college with excellent women scientists and educators, Arnie became interested in the history and role of women in science, especially as the understanding of the structure and function of DNA was becoming the foundation of the Biological Sciences.



Arnie's education and career progressed from Doctoral studies in Neurophysiology, to Science Education, to teaching in, and administering, science education programs in school districts and colleges for more than forty years.

Arnie has served science education beyond the classroom as a consultant to the New York State Education Department and as President of the Science Teachers Association of New York State. He currently serves as an active member of the STANYS Conference and Legislative Committees. In 2012 Arnie was elected a Fellow of STANYS and in 2023 selected as a member of the Hunter College Alumni Association Hall of Fame.

CONTACTS: Gail Sisti or Kay Saderholm at program.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

JANUARY CALENDAR

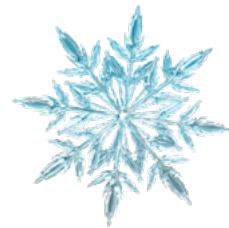
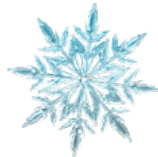
Online Calendar: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>
Calendar listing: Philippa Goodman,
communications.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com
To contact interest groups:
interest.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com



- 2 Intermediate Bridge Instruction: 1:00 - 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Coordinator: Cathy Kinn
- 2 Board Meeting: 7:00 pm on Zoom**
- 3 Movie Mavens: details TBD**
Coordinator: Linnea Masson
- 5 Gourmet: Out & About: 12:30pm; Sunday brunch**
Florie Kaye's Tearoom, 69 Gleneida Ave., Carmel, NY
Coordinator: Michelle Miller
- 6 Word Games: 1:30 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Sharon Fleury
- 7 World Travelers: 7-9 pm on Zoom and live**
Presentation on trip to Alaska
Presenter: Tori Smith
Coordinator: Bonnie Auchincloss
- 9 Monthly Program: 7:00 pm on Zoom; see p.1**
- 11 Days for Girls Poughkeepsie NY Team**
Work session: 1:30-4:30 pm
Zion Church Parish Hall
12 Satterlee Place, Wappingers Falls , NY
Coordinators: Judy Longacre and Sabashnee Govender
- 13 All those books...: 2:30 pm**
Gulliver's Travels, by Jonathan Swift
Presenter: Peggy Kelland
Coordinator: Carol Loizides
- 14 Reely Together: 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Discussion of the film *The Worst Person in the World*
Coordinator: Jackie Vierno
- 15 Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Susan Fink
- 16 Aventures en Soleil: Time TBD**
Trip to the Teddy Bear Museum
Coordinator: Linnea Masson
- 17 Poetry & Play Readings: 1:30 pm**
Planning meeting and *prix fixe* lunch at the Culinary
Coordinator: Maria DeWald
- 18 Cadette "A-Maze" Journey in a Day: 8:30 am-3:30pm**
Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls
Coordinator: Peggy Kelland
- 20 Manderley Literary Society: 4:30 pm**
Details TBD
Coordinator: Shelly Friedman
- 21 Cuisine: Details TBD**
Coordinators: Barbara Van Italie and Blanche Bergman
- 22 Mah Jongg: Noon - 4:00 pm**
Lunch from 12-1. Play from 1 to 3:30/4:00 pm
Location TBD
Contact: Blanche Bergman
- 23 Bridge II: 12:00 pm**
Meet at a local restaurant for lunch; play at 1:00 pm,
Collegeview Apts Community Room, 141 Fulton Ave.
Coordinator: Sandy Goldberg

- 24 Art on the Go: Time and location TBD**
Visit to a local artist. Contact Mary for details
Coordinator: Mary Coiteux
- 27 Craft 'n' Create: 1:30 pm**
Making beeswax candles
Host: Mary Ann Williams
Coordinators: Pat Luczai and Mary Ann Williams
- 28 Contemporary Literature: 2:00 pm**
Details TBD
Coordinator: Linda Freisitzer

Pedal Pushers: See you in the Spring!



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	Pat Luczai
Secretary	Cindy Emmer
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. Inclusive. Intersectional. Empowering.

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 by the 10th of the month preceding publication. Cyd Averill, editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Celia Serotsky president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Happy New Year! 2025 will be a unique year for our branch – our 100th Anniversary year! But more about that from the Centennial Committee as the year progresses. On behalf of our Board of Directors we hope that 2025 will be a healthy and joyful year for you.

On a more serious note, I want to inform you of an issue that arose right before the Thanksgiving holiday and that the Board dealt with at our December meeting. It involves our two scholarship offerings through the Foundation at Dutchess Community College (DCC). I was informed by Diana Pollard, the Executive CEO for the foundation, that a challenge had been brought against the language in our scholarship description as well as that of a few other scholarships. Our description reads as follows:

“As part of its goal to advance the continuing education of women, the Poughkeepsie branch of AAUW awards these scholarships to full-time graduating female students (or graduating female students who were enrolled in 12 or more credits last semester AND are currently enrolled in 6 or more credits) in any discipline who are continuing their education at a four-year institution. Preference is given to post-traditional female students.”

According to Diana, the challenge stated that the word *female* is discriminatory. When I explained that our mission statement is “Advancing equity for women and girls through education, advocacy, and research,” she agreed that this challenge seemed to violate our intent, but their lawyers were not confident our rationale would hold up in court. Below is the statement of the lawyers:

“The answer is that there is a disconnect between the ability of individuals to discriminate based on gender (and in other ways) in their charitable giving under state law, on the one hand, and the inability of institutions such as the College to discriminate based on gender, on the other hand. This inability precludes the College from holding and administering gender-restricted scholarship funds, whether directly or through a related foundation, even though a donor can lawfully make the restricted gift in the first instance.

This has been an evolving area of the law for the past couple of decades which is likely to become increasingly hot in the near term. Reading the political tea leaves, it appears that restrictions currently being imposed on colleges with regard to remedial or restorative discrimination will spread to the entire nonprofit sector.”

Diana and the attorneys suggested the following changes to our wording:

“As part of its goal to advance the continuing education of women, the Poughkeepsie branch of AAUW awards these scholarships to full-time graduating students (or graduating students who were enrolled in 12 or more credits last semester AND are currently enrolled in 6 or more credits) in any discipline who are continuing their education at a four-year institution. Preference is given to post-traditional students who are committed to the continuing education of women.”

The issue and the suggested changes to our scholarship description were brought to the Board on December 5, 2024, discussed and voted on. The vote was unanimous to change the language to the suggested one. This change involves only our two already established scholarships. Our Matching Fund challenge will continue with the desired result to establish another scholarship and provide money to increase the amounts in our current scholarships. The language of the new scholarship will be determined at another time.

This whole matter came as a shock to me, but as the lawyer states, it is one that has been evolving over time. Our mission does not change, and I have advised the Board to be vigilant in watching and learning about legislation and policies that could affect that mission. I ask you, our members, to also be vigilant and let any Board member know if you hear or read of something that could negatively affect our mission. We do not promote political candidates, nor do we take sides in a political campaign, but we advocate for policies that promote our mission. And we will be watchful for policies that could negatively affect our mission.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Mary Scalise-Annis, Chair

The Nominating Committee is working to find candidates for the following offices for the June 2025 - June 2027 term:

- Development VP
- Program VPs - 2 positions to Co-Chair
- Membership VP
- Membership Treasurer

If you know anyone who may be interested in one of these leadership positions, please contact Mary Scalise-Annis, Committee Chair.

DEVELOPMENT

Betty Harrel board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

A Great Giving Tuesday!

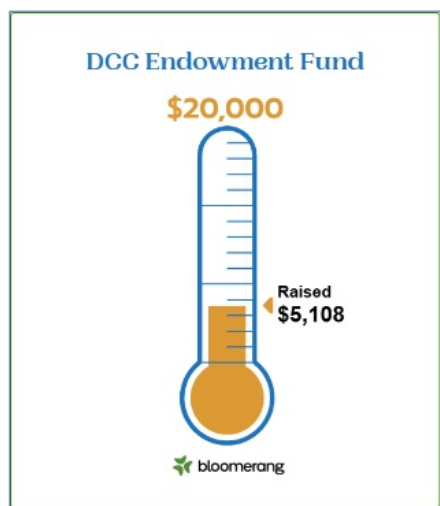
Once again, our members came through! Following notices about Giving Tuesday, our generous members once again helped to support the Centennial Endowment for Dutchess Community College. We have collected \$5,108 – which translates to over \$10,200 with our anonymous matching grant. Our goal is to provide a \$1000 scholarship annually to an incoming student preparing for a STEM (science, technology, engineering or math) career.



In addition to donations for our Centennial Endowment, members have also provided support for our branch greatest needs or have sent funds to support our national organization. The local greatest needs fund provides needed funding for our community initiatives and local scholarships. Consider adding your support – and keep watching this space throughout 2025!

Donations are accepted at AAUW membership meetings each month. In addition, you may send checks payable to Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc. PO Box 1908, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

Online donations can be made by clicking on <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net/about-us/donations>.



MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

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

Membership Directories are on the way!

In order to be more environmentally friendly, we are no longer printing the directory, but emailing them to you instead, along with a summary sheet containing names, phone numbers and email addresses of all members. You can then store it on your computer for easy reference and/or print the summary to have a handy copy near your phone, in your car, etc. The directory will be sent by the end of December, and if you don't receive it by the first week in January, please contact me, Bonnie Auchincloss at bauchincloss@gmail.com. We are planning to email any updates quarterly, if necessary.

New member Glimpses:

Two friends have joined us recently. **Suzanne Colao** is a new member and **Lea Bishop** is a returning member. If you meet them at any of our events, please introduce yourselves and welcome them:

Suzanne Colao describes herself as a Jackie of all trades! A retired Realtor & Mortgage Banker, a former President/Owner of Training Design Associates Inc., a NYS gov't contractor specializing in programs for at-risk youth, women's self-improvement and office skills. She co-owned Figaro Jewelry in Woodstock, NY for a couple of years as well (long story). She is a cooking enthusiast and cookbook maniac and loves exploring and traveling often.

Lea Bishop retired in 2020 from leading her organization, the WPN (Women's Professional Network), a group which the AAUW leadership had approved joining until she disbanded the group. As an AAUW member, Lea served as the Publicity Chair for the highly successful Diversity Conference led by Geeta Desai. She joined Irene Keyes in volunteering at the New Paltz fair to raise funds for the AAUW, and stood with Diane Jablonski to declare Equal Pay Day with the DC Legislature. She also volunteered for Court Watch and the Girls Leadership Conference. Lea has always regarded the AAUW as a wonderful group that empowers women, which has been her personal goal at the WPN and other women's groups with whom she has been associated.



January Birthdays:

Geraldine Allen, Susan Davis, Pat DeLeo, Sharon Fleury, Pat Gullick, Bev

Hanna, Mary Anne Hogarty, Julia Kessler, Susan Kinney, Pat Luczai, Linda Lurie, Kathleen Montaro, Barbara Mindel, Kathy Prisco, Christine Romano, Marilyn Walsh, Mary Therese Yamamoto.

PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Currently Out of the Office

Beginning January 1, 2025, New York will become the first state in the nation to offer **paid time off** for **prenatal care** or any medical care related to pregnancy. Under this new policy, any privately-employed pregnant New Yorker will be able to receive an **additional 20 hours of paid sick leave** for prenatal care in addition to their existing sick leave. This ensures they can receive the care they need without putting their employment at risk. Federal, state, or local government employees **are not covered** by New York State's Paid Prenatal Leave Law. Private Sector employees are defined to exclude federal, state and local government employees but include persons, corporations, limited liability companies or associations employing an individual in any occupation, industry, trade, business, charter school, private school and not-for-profit.



This is a new legal requirement that provides a **separate benefit** from other leave policies and laws. Employees are entitled to 20 hours of paid prenatal leave **in addition to** any other available maternity/sick/leave options. All private-sector employees are covered regardless of number of employees or size of business. Paid Prenatal Leave may only be used by the employee directly receiving prenatal health care services.

Paid Prenatal Leave covers health care services received by an employee during their pregnancy or related to such pregnancy, including physical examinations, medical procedures, monitoring and testing, and discussions with a health care provider related to the pregnancy.

This law applies to fertility treatment or care appointments including in-vitro fertilization and end-of-pregnancy care appointments.. This paid prenatal leave program in New York State does not cover abortion; it is specifically designed to be used for healthcare services related to pregnancy, such as prenatal appointments, but excludes abortion procedures. However, it appears that it would apply to after care for loss of an embryo or fetus.

Employers cannot ask employees to disclose confidential information about their health condition(s) as a condition of requesting to use Paid Prenatal Leave **or** to disclose confidential information about their health condition(s). An employee has the option to use NYS Sick Leave, Paid Prenatal Leave, or an existing employer leave policy to attend prenatal

health care appointments. However, an employer **cannot** require an employee to use one leave type over another. Paid Prenatal Leave is an **additional** tool available.

Postpartum leave under the New York State Paid Family Leave provides eligible employees with up to 12 weeks of job protected, paid time off to bond with a new child, care for a family member with a serious health condition, or to assist loved ones when a family member is deployed abroad on active military service. This time can be taken all at once, or in increments of full days. Benefits are improved for 2025.

For more information visit <https://www.ny.gov/programs/new-york-state-paid-prenatal-leave>

LEADING TO READING

Betty Harrel
board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com



Leading to Reading Grants

Each year, the United Way of Dutchess Orange Region joins with the Poughkeepsie Journal to provide **Holiday Helping Hand** grants. These grants must be used to brighten the holidays for local families.



Leading to Reading received a grant to purchase books at Barnes and Noble for children residing at Hudson River Lodging. Families stay in this shelter for up to two years. There are currently 97 children residing there. During our gift-wrapping sessions, the books were decked out in bright holiday paper to be given to the children at their holiday party.

Another regular supporter, the **Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers**, also provided a generous grant. A number of their members serve as Leading to Reading volunteers and help us throughout the year. The funds will be used to purchase additional books with multi-ethnic characters, as well as books for our Books for Babies program. Their belief in our project is truly appreciated!

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, Mary Ann Boylan, Sandra Goldberg, Shaileen Kopec, Margaret Nijhuis

EXTENDING GIRLS' HORIZONS

Peggy Kelland



On January 18, and again on February 1, we will be offering our **Cadette "A-Maze"**

Journey in a Day for Girl Scouts in grades 6-8 at Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. The girls will explore first impressions, friendships, peer pressure, cliques vs. circles of belonging, and bullying through interactive games, small group discussions, and journaling.

Then on Friday, March 28, we will present **"New Cuisines"** from 5:00 to 8:30. The girls will prepare a variety of international, historical, and regional recipes and then enjoy sampling all their creations. It will again take place at Zion Church.

All Poughkeepsie AAUW members are welcome to assist or just come for a look.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Jackie Vierno

International Women's Day

Step forward in solidarity for International Women's Day (IWD) 2025 on March 8 to help #AccelerateAction.

At the current rate of progress, it will take 134 years, which is roughly five generations from now, to reach full gender parity in 2158, according to data from the World Economic Forum.

Focusing on the need to **Accelerate Action** emphasizes the importance of taking swift and decisive steps to achieve gender equality. It calls for increased momentum and urgency in addressing the systemic barriers and biases that women face, both in personal and professional spheres.

International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality.

IWD has occurred for well over a century, with the first IWD gathering in 1911 supported by over a million people. Today,

IWD belongs to all groups collectively everywhere. IWD is not country, group or organization specific.

More detailed information can be found on their website <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/Theme>

COMMISSION on the
STATUS OF WOMEN



UN Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), an official Commission of the United Nations, focuses on the rights and empowerment of women and global gender equality.

Mark your calendars ... the NGO CSW69 Forum will be taking place from March 10 – 21, 2025!
CSW69 Theme - Beijing Platform Review

The main focus of the sixty-ninth session will be the review and appraisal of the implementation of the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** and the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly. The review will include an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and its contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

More detailed information can be found on their website <https://ngocsw.org/ngocsw69/>

NCCWSL and Irene Keyes Memorial Scholarship News

Marcine Humphrey

“AAUW was home to the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) for 39 years. Starting in 2025, NCCWSL will move to our trusted friends at NASPA, the professional home for student affairs administrators in higher education.

“AAUW will have a presence at the conference as a speaker, exhibitor, presenter and promotional supporter. However, NASPA will be responsible for the planning and execution of the conference moving forward.” We are awaiting updates with information about **NCCWSL 2025** when it becomes available from NASPA. At this time, we have no information.

The **Irene Keyes Memorial Scholarship** was established in honor of our friend and Poughkeepsie AAUW member and past president. This scholarship is dedicated to empowering girls and women. We have sent young women to the NCCWSL conference except for the “Pandemic years,” when we selected a local conference. The committee endeavors to continue the legacy and eagerly awaits the announcements from NASPA. We hope a conference will be developed matching the excellent caliber of the past years.