



A monthly publication of AAUW, San Francisco, est. in 1886

February 2021

President's Message

Hello All,

I hope everyone is managing our continued physical isolation and is staying in touch via phone, text, and zoom. We all need to stay involved and in touch. Here is some AAUW news:

Proposed Membership Changes

The National Board of AAUW has proposed a change in the bylaws to eliminate the degree requirement. There will be an online election on the proposed bylaws changes April 7-May 17. Paper ballots will be provided only upon request. Elimination of the degree requirement has been discussed off and on for the past 20 years, but this time the national board has taken a strong position in favor of it. They state: "This important change is a critical step in bringing AAUW's bylaws and membership requirement in line with our mission of advancing equity for women and girls. While AAUW is fiercely committed to the educational attainment of all women, given our commitment to inclusion, this is simply the right thing to do."

Various studies and focus groups have shown the necessity of this change if AAUW is to continue as a leading organization promoting gender equity. The degree requirement is seen by many young feminists as exclusionary or elitist. AAUW needs to include members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives to meet our vision of Equity for All.

You may find much more information and discussion about the proposed bylaws changes on the national website www.aauw.org.

In the past, our branch members have expressed strong views on both sides about eliminating the degree requirement. I think we should have a branch zoom discussion on the subject.

Tech Trek Alumnae Group

Rosaura Valle is at work developing a plan to establish a Tech Trek alumnae group. We have had zoom meetings with other California branches who have such groups and have gained a number of ideas on how to proceed. Please contact Rosaura if you would like to be involved. We are very enthusiastic about this endeavor.

Zoom

We will continue life with Zoom for the foreseeable future. It seems that most members have been able to participate, but if there are members who have difficulties we would like to know. Please contact any member of the board if you have issues. Stay well!

Barbara Spencer, Co-President

Happy 2021! There's much for look to and much to be thankful for. 2020 allowed us to rethink and reimagine our lives.

As our Inaugural Poet, Amanda Gorman wrote:

"We will rebuild, reconcile and recover and every known nook of our nation and every corner called our country, our people diverse and beautiful will emerge, battered and beautiful"

Our branch hosted the second meeting for discussing the book *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent*, by Isabel Wilkerson. The 3rd and 4th part of this book was hard to read due to the reality of the violating Indian, Jewish and Africa Americans. There is so much to learn and an opportunity to self-reflect. We had wonderful participation from our branch and neighboring branches. It is very powerful for us to share and gain a different perspective or perhaps validate one's perspective.

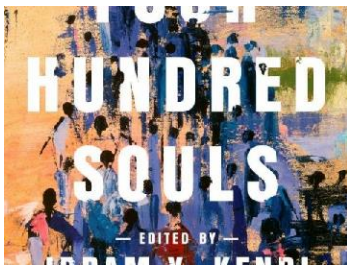
During our discussion, Mary Graves shared information on a podcast interviewing Isabel Wilkerson. Here is the link:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/21/opinion/s-way-kara-swisher-isabel-wilkerson.html>

We look forward to meeting again via Zoom, to discuss the last part of the book on February 24th at 7:30 p.m. There's time to read the book and join us in our conversation. At that meeting we will determine the next book for us to read.

During Black history month check the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture's website to enroll in these upcoming events.

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/>



[Historically Speaking: Four Hundred Souls – A Conversation with Ibram Kendi and Keisha N. Blain](#)

Tuesday, February 2, 2021 | 7:00pm to 8:30pm



[A Seat at the Table: Prison Reform and Restorative Justice](#)

Thursday, February 4, 2021 | 7:00pm to 9:15pm



I'd personally like to share information regarding a Tech Trek Aluma, camp of '99. My daughter, Danielle P. Joseph, passed the California State Bar Exam in October of 2020, on her first try. The pandemic allowed her to be home and be focused. She studied 10 hours a day, 7 days a week. Her perseverance paid off and my husband, son and I are so proud of her. We all thank AAUW-SF for assisting in her education, as she was a Silver Jubilee recipient.

Kelly Joseph, Co-President

Board Meeting

The next board meeting is scheduled for **February 10, 2021 at 7 P.M. via Zoom**. All members are welcome to attend. Contact Barbara at 415-221-6690 or barbaracspencer@gmail.com

Afternoons With Books

When: Friday, February 19, at 2:00 pm
Where: On Zoom
Book/Author: *Born a Crime*, by Trevor Noah
Presenter: Joanne Mandell

International Book Group

Date: Monday, February 15, at 7:00 p.m.
Book/Author: *The Color of Air*, by Gail Tsukiyama
Hostess/Zoom Coordinator: Barbara Spencer
 Please RSVP to Barbara at 415-221-6690 or barbaracspencer@gmail.com

Mystery/Adventure

Date: February 25, 7:30 pm
Book and Author: *Inspector Singh Investigates a Frightfully English Execution*, by Shamini Flint
Reviewer: Harriet Sollod
Location: Zoom. Call Elaine Butler for link at 415-305-2220 or elainebutler124@comcast.net

Lunch Bunch

When: Wednesday, February 17, at noon
Where: On Zoom. Bring your favorite lunch, and eat with us.

Who: All SF AAUW members and friends, are invited to both eat, and chat with others during these days of sheltering at home.
 If you would like to join us, please contact Mary at marsuter@yahoo.com or 415-665-1185.

One Branch, One Book

We will be holding our final discussion on **Caste**, on **February 24 at 7:30 PM**. Everyone is welcome to join us. Contact Kelly at Kelly.wysinger@sbcglobal.net to be sent the Zoom link.

Sign up for these exciting events coming up!

A webinar titled *She Who Thrives Survives* organized by Sharyn Siebert is an opportunity to learn what other successful branches have to teach us.

When: Wednesday, February 24, 7:00 PM

Registration: Link will be available [HERE](#) soon.

This year AAUW California is organizing a virtual **Lobby Day** on Equal Pay Day 2021, which is **March 24**. Lobby Day will give us a chance to talk to our legislators about public policy issues identified by AAUW California, and a **training session will be held on March 22**. I attended a Lobby Day in Washington DC at the AAUW national convention in 2017, and found it a very worthwhile experience. If you are interested, please sign up soon by sending email to: publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org

Finally, AAUW California will be holding a virtual **Annual Meeting** this year on **Saturday, April 17, 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM**. There is a great program planned. Please mark your calendar! Registration

information will be available as we come closer to the date.

Roli Wendorf

Pat Camarena

FORWARD IN THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM



Born into a poor sharecropping family, the youngest of twenty children, Fannie Lou Hamer began to work at the age of six picking cotton on a Mississippi plantation. Education for her was a hit or miss affair at the local segregated school. She could only attend when there was no farm work to be done. It was not until she was 45, did she attend her first civil rights meeting. She

had still been working and living on the plantation, raising two adopted children with her sharecropper husband. After that eye opening meeting, Fannie's entire life took a radically life changing turn.

Fannie Lou joined the mostly youthful local group of activists organizing voter registration drives. With some support from President Kennedy and the US Department of Justice, over the next fifteen years, she became one of the most influential and hardworking black leaders in the Deep South.

When her boss found out what activities she was involved in, he fired her. Her entire family lost their plantation housing. Due to her increasing involvement as a voter activist, the rest of her life was marked by serious retaliation. At one time, her husband and daughter were arrested on trumped up charges. Harassment continued, when, after becoming a member of SNCC, she traveled through the South encouraging voter registration. As one of the founders of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party she was shot at, subjected to death threats, and jailed. In one instance, while in jail, she was so badly beaten that she suffered severe kidney damage. However nothing broke her spirit to push on.

In the spring of 1964 as one of the founders of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, Fannie ran unsuccessfully for Congress from her predominantly black district where registering to vote remained difficult. After a questionable vote count for the Presidential convention delegates, she and other members of her party did attend the Atlantic City Democratic convention to protest voter registration rules that had prevented so many people of color from even attempting to register. Even though her group of delegates was refused seating, Fannie Lou was allowed to address the convention. Thanks to the national television broadcast of her speech, Fannie was able reach a huge viewing audience and reveal the racial injustice still plaguing black citizens.

Once after recovering from a bad beating by police officers as they were arresting her, Fannie said, "I feel sorry for anybody that could let hate wrap them up. "Ain't no such thing as I can hate anybody and hope to see God's face." Before cancer claimed her life in 1977, in her plainspoken but highly convincing way, Fannie Lou Hamer, continued her work to bring about a united set of delegates to future national conventions so that it would truly represent all of the Mississippi citizens. Her effort was continued by other like minded citizens for years after her death.

Just over three years ago, on the occasion of what would have been Fannie's 100th birthday, Texas Congresswoman, Sheila Jackson Lee read a long essay into the Congressional Record in Fannie's honor. "A courageous and tireless fighter for voting rights and social justice Fannie Lou Hamer spoke truth to power and touched the conscience of a nation."

Here are some more of Fannie's words that still seem so relevant today: "Sometimes it seem like to tell the truth today is to run the risk of being killed. But if I fell, I'll fall five feet four inches forward in the fight for freedom. I'm not backing down."

www.americanradioworks.publicradio.org
www.tolerance.org
www.washingtonpost.com

February Birthdays

Corrine Sacks

February 25

Birthday Not Announced?

If your birthday is not here and you'd like to have it included (or corrected), contact the Membership VP.

February is Black History Month

As we look at the events of the past three months, we can only wonder at how things are changing, and yet they still stay the same. The late poet Langston Hughes wrote this in 1935, and it is still true today. It is the story of all of us!

Let America Be America Again

[Langston Hughes](#) - 1902-1967

Let America be America again.
 Let it be the dream it used to be.
 Let it be the pioneer on the plain
 Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers
 dreamed—
 Let it be that great strong land of love
 Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme
 That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty
 Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,
 But opportunity is real, and life is free,
 Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There's never been equality for me,
 Nor freedom in this "homeland of the free.")

*Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?
 And who are you that draws your veil across the
 stars?*

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,
 I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.
 I am the red man driven from the land,
 I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek—

And finding only the same old stupid plan
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

I am the young man, full of strength and hope,
Tangled in that ancient endless chain
Of profit, power, gain, of grab the land!
Of grab the gold! Of grab the ways of satisfying
need!
Of work the men! Of take the pay!
Of owning everything for one's own greed!

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.
I am the worker sold to the machine.
I am the Negro, servant to you all.
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean—
Hungry yet today despite the dream.
Beaten yet today—O, Pioneers!
I am the man who never got ahead,
The poorest worker bartered through the years.

Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic dream
In the Old World while still a serf of kings,
Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true,
That even yet its mighty daring sings
In every brick and stone, in every furrow turned
That's made America the land it has become.
O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas
In search of what I meant to be my home—
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's shore,
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy lea,
And torn from Black Africa's strand I came
To build a "homeland of the free."

The free?

Who said the free? Not me?
Surely not me? The millions on relief today?
The millions shot down when we strike?
The millions who have nothing for our pay?
For all the dreams we've dreamed
And all the songs we've sung
And all the hopes we've held
And all the flags we've hung,

The millions who have nothing for our pay—
Except the dream that's almost dead today.

O, let America be America again—
The land that never has been yet—
And yet must be—the land where *every* man is
free.
The land that's mine—the poor man's, Indian's,
Negro's, ME—
Who made America,
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the
rain,
Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose—
The steel of freedom does not stain.
From those who live like leeches on the people's
lives,
We must take back our land again,
America!

O, yes,
I say it plain,
America never was America to me,
And yet I swear this oath—
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster death,
The rape and rot of graft, and stealth, and lies,
We, the people, must redeem
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.
The mountains and the endless plain—
All, all the stretch of these great green states—
And make America again!

AAUWSF Board

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aauwsfbranch@gmail.com

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February 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 Int'l Books 7:00 PM	16	17 Lunch Bunch 12 Noon	18	19 Afternoon With Books 2PM	20
21	22	23	24 One Branch, One Book 7:30 PM	25 Mystery/Adv 7:30PM	26	27
28						

The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Avanti Editor

AAUW
 San Francisco Branch
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 San Francisco, CA 94131-0405
 Address Correction Requested

The American Association of University Women (AAUW), founded in 1881, is the nation’s leading organization advocating equity for women and girls. It has a national membership of 150,000. People of every race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, and level of physical ability are invited to join.

AAUW California was launched in San Francisco in 1886 and began lobbying immediately. Check out our website www.aauwsf.org



AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research

Marie Curie & AAUW

The year was 1919. Europe had been ravaged by World War I and radium was far too expensive for a scientist of modest means to afford for experiments. This was true even for one as famous as Madame Marie Curie. As a result, her groundbreaking research had reached a virtual standstill.

Then the AAUW came to the rescue. Members from Maine to California helped raise an astonishing \$156,413, enabling Madame Curie to purchase one gram of radium and continue her experiments that helped her create the field of nuclear chemistry and forever change the course of science. Madame Curie received the Nobel Prize for her work, but was not admitted to the French *Academie des Sciences* until she won an incredible second Nobel Prize...all because she was a woman. More than 75 years later, there are still only three women members.

Pay Equity

AAUW has been on the front lines fighting for Pay Equity for over a hundred years.

AAUW was there in the Oval Office in 1963 when President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law.

AAUW was there in 2009 when President Barack Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act into law.

AAUW continues the fight for the passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act to ensure women have further equal pay protections. The pay gap is real.

AAUW will continue the fight to achieve pay equity; the economic security of American families depends on it.

Legal Advocacy Fund

Founded in 1981, the Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) works to achieve equity for women in higher education by recognizing indicative efforts to improve the climate for women on campus; by offering assistance to women faculty, staff, and students who have grievances against colleges and universities; and by supporting sex discrimination lawsuits.

The LAF Board only approves support of cases which are currently involved in litigation, and that have the potential to set legal precedent.

The Legal Advocacy Fund’s annual Progress in Equity Award recognizes indicative and replicable college and university programs.