



**BEDFORD-LEXINGTON AREA BRANCH  
MARCH 2010**

**Breaking Through Barriers for Women and Girls**

**MARCH PROGRAM: BOTANY AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE—NOT YOUR TYPICAL FLOWER GARDEN!**

**SPEAKER: KRISTINA NIOVI JONES**

**MARCH 3, 7:00 PM**

**BEDFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY**

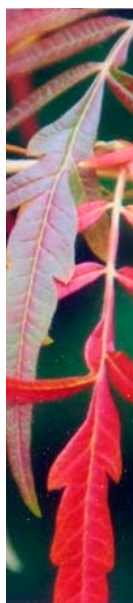


The Wellesley College Botanic Gardens include thousands of plants representing over 1500 taxa from more than 150 plant families, a remarkably diverse collection for a college or university. The Margaret C. Ferguson Greenhouses have the most diverse collection of plants under glass in the Greater Boston area. The outdoor gardens provide an abundance of habitats and horticultural conditions for a broad range of plants hardy to this climate.

Included in the notable botanists who helped develop Wellesley's botanical resources are four women:

Susan Hallowell, Margaret Ferguson, Helen Davis, and Harriet Creighton. All emphasized the educational value of diverse plant collections which built on the vision of the founder of Wellesley, Henry Durant.

Interest in botany is surging again, with students particularly interested in sustainable agriculture, biodiversity, biofuels, and medicinal plants. This talk will provide an overview of the Wellesley College Botanic Gardens, both indoors and out, and include some of the many exciting projects and new initiative underway.



Our speaker, Kristina Niovi Jones, is Director of the Wellesley College Botanic Gardens and Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences. She holds a B.S. in Biology from Stamford University and a Ph.D. in Ecology from UC-Davis. Her primary research and teaching interests are plant ecology, particularly plant-animal interactions and rare plant conservation. As Director, Dr. Jones' interests have broadened to include invasive species management, wetland restoration, green roof systems, and management of greenhouse collections.



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## CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Sue Giurleo and Dot Hart Rand

Our branch enjoyed another excellent program at our February meeting. Good weather brought out many members to hear authors Marion Kilson and Florence Ladd discuss their book "Is that Your Child?, Mothers Talk About Rearing Biracial Children." The research was based on many interviews with women in the Boston area. The stories they chose to read covered many different situations based on what years the women were raising their children, the views of the grandparents, and whether they were living in urban or suburban locations. We were fortunate to have women in the audience who were also raising biracial children. They shared their own perspectives.

Personally, the programs I like best allow plenty of time for questions and dialogue. If you had read the book or if you were hearing the mothers' stories the first time, you could participate.

### May Dinner

Maybe you haven't thought about the May dinner but the board met in late January and decided the dinner will be held Wednesday, May 5 in the Bedford Town Center. This building is located across the street from the Bedford Library. We decided to change the venue because the Unitarian Church is not available on Wednesday evenings. The menu this year will be Italian and the food will be provided by the board. The cost will be \$20 for those not bringing food. We are looking forward to hearing the Madrigal Singers from the Bedford High School.

Please save the date.

CHECK OUT THE



## SAVE THE DATE: AAUW-MA SPRING CONVENTION

**Friday, April 9, noon-4:30 pm**

**LAUNCH!**

**Bristol Community College, Attleboro campus**

**Saturday, April 10**

**AAUW-MA Convention and Annual Meeting  
Bristol Community College, Attleboro campus**

This is not limited to AAUW members so it is a great opportunity to introduce friends to AAUW.  
Let's have the best turnout ever for Bed-Lex Branch!

## GENDER GAP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Washington, DC (Jan. 26, 2010) - It appears the gender gap in higher education has reached a plateau for most groups except Hispanics, where the gap between men and women is on the rise, according to a new analysis by the American Council on Education (ACE).

*Gender Equity in Higher Education: 2010* is a follow-up to ACE's original 2000 study and 2006 update. For the first time, several indicators suggest that the size of the gender gap in higher education may have stabilized. The distribution of enrollment and undergraduate degrees by gender has remained consistent since about 2000, with men representing 43 percent of enrollment and earning 43 percent of bachelor's degrees.

The only group in which the size of the female majority does not yet appear to have stabilized is Hispanics: The percentage of Hispanic undergraduates aged 24 or younger who are male has declined from 45 percent in 1999–2000 to 42 percent in 2007–08. Hispanic young men also have the lowest bachelor's degree attainment level of any group studied, at only 10 percent. Hispanic women appear to have pulled away from their male peers since the late 1980s, increasing their bachelor's degree attainment rate while the male rate has remained flat.

The study's author cites immigration as a key factor in the low educational performance among Hispanics, with significant differences in educational attainment rates between Hispanics born outside the United States compared with their U.S.-born peers. For example, only 51 percent of Hispanic young adults born outside the United States have completed high school, compared with 81 percent of U.S.-born Hispanics. Male immigrants, who represent one out of every three Hispanic young adults, are at a particular disadvantage. Less than half of these young men have completed high school, and only 6 percent have earned a bachelor's degree. In contrast, Hispanic women born in the U.S. now attain a bachelor's degree at the same rate as African-American women (18 percent).

“Raising the attainment rate of Hispanic men—and women—looms as one of the most significant challenges facing American education,” said Jacqueline E. King, assistant vice president of ACE's Center for Policy Analysis and author of the study. “In order for the attainment rate of Hispanic young men to rise, degree production will have to outpace population growth or immigration will have to slow.”

*Gender Equity in Higher Education: 2010* analyzes data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education.

### Other Enrollment Findings:

- Men aged 25 or older represent just 14 percent of all undergraduates and are outnumbered two to one by women in the same age group.
- African Americans still have the largest gender gap in enrollment; 63 percent of all African American undergraduates are women.
- Among African Americans and American Indians, female undergraduates aged 25 or older outnumber women aged 24 or younger.
- Among traditional-age students who are financially dependent on their parents, multiple years of data consistently show that for each racial/ethnic group, the gender gap in enrollment disappears as family income rises.
- Women's share of graduate enrollment continues to increase, now reaching 60 percent overall, with tremendous variation by race/ethnicity, degree program and field of study.

Use AAUW's FREE e-student affiliate initiative <<http://listsrv.aauw.org/t/38758/540487/254/0/11/>> to recruit undergraduate students who do not already have a bachelor's degree and who currently attend an AAUW college/university partner institution. Branches and states can use the Member Services Database to encourage local e-student affiliates to become branch and state members. State and branch college/university relations officers, membership vice presidents, and presidents now have access to the information they need to offer students the opportunity to join AAUW.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS AND LECTURES AT THE BRANDEIS WOMEN'S STUDIES RESEARCH CENTER

WSRC • EPSTEIN BUILDING • BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY • 515 SOUTH STREET •  
WALTHAM, MA

### **The Discourse on Veiling in Islam** By Elinor Gadon Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 p.m.

The veiled woman has become the symbol of Islam in the contemporary world. Since the beginning of the twentieth century the veil has emerged as a potent signifier, connoting not merely the social meaning of gender but also matters of far broader political and cultural import.

Contact Elinor Gadon  
([egadon@brandeis.edu](mailto:egadon@brandeis.edu))

### **The Personal is Political: Feminist Activism Over Time** Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

This day-long event is the 2nd biennial Women's History

Symposium at the Women's Studies Research Center of Brandeis University. Panels and performances illuminate the impact of activist feminists nationally and internationally from recent history to the present. Topics include women's roles in international conflict resolution and governance; the continuing struggle to combat violence against women; and four decades of Our Bodies, Ourselves (OBOS). A performance by the Prometheus Elders Dance Group will culminate the program. Featured speakers include international peace workers, social and political activists, researchers and founding mothers.

Contact Paula Doress-Worters  
([pdoress@brandeis.edu](mailto:pdoress@brandeis.edu))

### **That Moment Of Creating: Women Artists Report** Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 p.m.

What is the experience of creating and how does an artist describe this unique process? Scholars from the Women's Studies Research Center offer in-depth analyses of that moment in various fields. This is the WSRC's 11th annual panel participating in Brandeis' Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Arts. Panelists include: Alexandra Borrie, performance artist and director; Ornit Barkai, documentary film-maker; Georgia Sassen, psychologist, poet, and writer; with respondent, Elinor Gadon, art historian; with moderator, Rosie Rosenzweig, writer  
Contact Rosie Rosenzweig  
([jewmomro@brandeis.edu](mailto:jewmomro@brandeis.edu))



### **DID YOU KNOW...**

...that our branch is sponsoring a student (sophomore or junior in local college) to attend the 2010 National Conference for College Women Student Leaders conference at the University of Maryland on June 3-5, 2010? We are paying for the registration, which includes room and board, and a portion of the travel expenses. If you know of a student who might be interested, have them check out the website for the conference and contact Ruth Ladd at [wetlandmom@aol.com](mailto:wetlandmom@aol.com) for information on applying for the grant.

## LAUNCH!

LAUNCH! ... moving ideas to the next level - **April 9, 2010**

Goal: Bringing together inventors and innovative thinkers who want to find out how to protect and develop their ideas and individuals and organizations that promote literacy and expertise in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Through workshops, exhibits and networking, attendees will explore three themes: managing successes and failures, protecting and developing intellectual property, and promoting STEM literacy and expertise.

### MANAGING SUCCESSES & FAILURES

**Meet:** Inventive and innovative individuals who have launched businesses and/or initiatives.

**Learn:** Factors that move an idea to profitable production. How you build a team to meet the needs of a business as it moves through different stages of development. How entrepreneurs manage challenges.

### PROTECTING & DEVELOPING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

**Meet:** Professionals specializing in protecting intellectual property and product development.

**Learn:** Ways to protect your ideas as you move through the various stages of development.

### PROMOTING STEM LITERACY & INVENTION

**Meet:** Leaders from the public and private sector who promote

STEM literacy and invention. **Learn:** What are the elements of STEM Literacy. Why STEM literacy is important to life and work in the 21st Century. How STEM literacy impacts business development and supports creative endeavors.

AAUW is one of the collaborators in this effort.

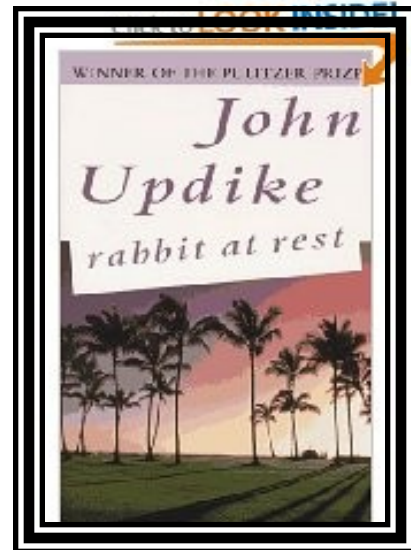
For more information, or to find out about future planning meeting dates, please contact Katherine Honey at the Museum at the Mill, 508-215-7958.

Museum at the Mill  
453 South Main Street  
Attleboro, MA 02703  
(508) 215-7958

## BOOK GROUP

We will be meeting on Wednesday, March 17 at 1:00 pm at the Concord Library in the Trustee Room. Parking is available in a lot on a side street across from the library. We will be discussing John Updike's "Rabbit at Rest" and other books in the series. We will watch a video with Charlie Rose interviewing John Updike.

For more information, call Joan Zinderman at 978-371-5647.



Bedford-Lexington Area Branch  
Ruth Ladd, Editor  
15 Pine Knoll Road  
Lexington, MA 02420-1206

### AAUW's Value Promise

By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

## APRIL NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: March 19

### MAY DINNER

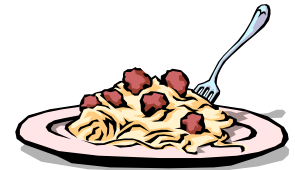
WHEN? Wednesday, May 5

WHERE? Bedford Town Center (across the street from the Bedford Library)

WHAT? The menu this year will be Italian and the food will be provided by the board.

HOW MUCH? \$20 for those who are not bringing food

WHAT ELSE? We will be hearing the Madrigal Singers from Bedford High School.



### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND

Many thanks to everyone who came to the December Holiday Dinner and supported EF through purchasing raffle tickets and/or making an individual donation. We collected \$1,005 that night!

We are now in a new year. No need to wait for December to support AAUW's Educational Opportunities Fund (formerly Educational Foundation). I encourage donating early and often! I'll accept checks at meetings or through the mail. Please send them to me at:  
11 Pierce Road  
Belmont, MA 02478

Thanks!  
Janet Khattab, EF Chair

### LOIS PULLIAM'S PUBLIC POLICY POINTS

Have you had your flu shot? March is still considered "flu season" and a new briefing paper by the Institute for Women's Policy Research reports that in 2009 nearly 8 million employees took no time off work while infected with the H1N1 flu. The study relied on data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, ultimately suggesting that a lack of paid sick days permitted the spread of H1N1 in the workplace.

AAUW supports "The Healthy Families Act (H.R. 2460/S.1152), which would provide fulltime employees with seven paid sick days a year to be used for their own medical needs or to tend to the medical needs of a family member.

Title IX has been in effect 40 years, but there are still some notable inequalities. AAUW strongly supports Title IX and opposes any efforts that would weaken its effectiveness or undermine its enforcement. AAUW's 2009-10 public policy program "advocates a rigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws pertaining to education." Urge your members of Congress to enforce Title IX in our high schools with the "High School Athletics Accountability Act (H.R.2882) and the "High School Information Collection Act" (S471).

One Senate confirmation actually got through the Senate in February: President Obama nominated Sara Manzano-Diaz to be the director of the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau. The Women's Bureau was established by Congress in 1920 and is the only federal agency exclusively devoted to the concerns of women in the workplace. This office has played a critical role in helping reduce the gender pay gap and advocating of such landmark laws as the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.