

BAYNOTES

Empowering Women since 1881 – Through Advocacy, Education, Philanthropy and Research
Branch Website: greenbayarea-wi.aauw.net

April Branch Meeting Thursday, April 7, 2016

Village Grille 801 Hoffman Road, Allouez
Social time: 6:30pm Presentation 7:00 pm

WHY ARE WOMEN “SERVING TIME” FOR NON-CRIMES?

A presentation by Andrea L. Lewis and Sara L. Sommervold, researchers and authors of the article, *Death, But Is It Murder? The Role of Stereotypes and Cultural Perceptions in the Wrongful Convictions of Women*, published in the Albany Law Review. They will discuss their study and what can be done to prevent miscarriages of justice in the future. This is clearly another area where women need our help. Please come, bring a friend and learn.

Making a Murderer, the Manitowoc murder documentary brought to the public’s eye wrongful convictions. It created considerable disagreement regarding Steven Avery’s guilt or innocence. But, no one would argue that a person should “serve time” for a crime they didn’t commit.

How do you feel about spending “time” for no crime? Their research found that **63% of all exonerated women were convicted of non-crimes**, events proven to be accidents or illnesses. A number of factors explain these statistics. Women are likely to be convicted of crimes involving a loved one or family member. For this reason, DNA evidence is rarely a factor. Proving an accident or illness is difficult and usually involves technical and scientific evidence. Stereotypes and cultural perceptions of women as mothers and nurturers also contribute to the wrongful convictions of women. All of these issues make wrongfully convicted women’s cases more complicated and expensive to litigate.

It is sad to read how our societal stereotypes of what a perfect mother should be leads to innocent women being convicted of crimes that were accidents or illness. It is sad how we demonize these women in the press. We punish mothers for not keeping their children safe by convicting of murder. For example, a prosecutor found a mother’s casual comment to a friend that she was considering modeling the mother’s “motive” for murdering her child when it was actually an accident her mobile home burned. Another mother who was pursuing a degree was obviously not devoted enough to her child so she must have killed her child when it was later proven the child died of an illness. Both these women spent many years in jail. How many women are in jail do not have the resources to prove their innocence?

Please come and bring your friends.

INTEREST/STUDY GROUPS

TOUR THE WORLD THROUGH ART

Thursday, April 21, 9:30-11:30

At the home of Dotty Juengst

Co-hostess: Janice McCarthy

Artists: Bruegel, El Greco and Caravaggio

BOOK GROUP – meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Reader's Loft at 3:00pm.

The book for April is Clara and Mr. Tiffany by Susan Breeland. According to Minneapolis *Star Tribune* "A novel as sparkling and elegant as a Tiffany lampshade...a sensitive portrayal of women's struggles in the nineteenth century..."

OUT AND ABOUT – Events to find other AAUW members gathering for education, shared interests and FUN

A few seats remain for the **bus trip to Chicago to see the Van Gogh exhibit**. \$85 for the bus ride, Admission to the Art Institute, admission to special VanGogh exhibit and an audio headset tour. Sign up today online www.theartgarage.org or call 920-448-6800.

Community Stage at the Art Garage presents Gypsy Trip – Saturday, April 2nd, 7-9 pm. This group plays gypsy swing, a fast paced acoustic style of jazz made popular by Django Reinhardt and Stephanie Grappelli in the 1930's. 1429 Main St.

Uncork & Create: Poetry with Mary Ann rivers & Ruthie Knox Thursday, April 14th 6-8:30 pm
Celebrate National Poetry Month at the ARTgarage! Fast-paced, fun poetry prompts will let everyone produce spoken-word poetry to share over wine and hors d'oeuvres - think Mad Libs for poetry. Unleash your poetic creativity, learn a little, relax, and have fun! 1429 Main St.

BRANCH COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Maryl Hitchcock & Janice McCarthy

Thanks to all members who have been inviting guests to attend our branch meetings. This is one of the best ways of letting others know what we stand for as an organization and how we can actively be a part of shaping the future for all women. Our branch programs have been issue-oriented and timely. We enjoy sharing this information with others. Continue asking your friends to join us!

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Jill Lauritsen

Applications for our scholarships are available at UWGB, Bellin College, St Norberts, NWTC/ GB campus, and College of Menominee Nation/GB campus. Four \$1,000 scholarships one being the Pat Hinckley Scholarship available. Go to our web site www.greenbayarea-wi.aauw.net for application form and more information.



Remember – Your Vote Counts!

Tuesday, April 5

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Sara Ramaker

April Note from the President

March Meeting: Things can seem great, go wrong and be wonderful! That describes our March program. Sajida Shariff was to speak about changing roles of women in India. Then she had a conflict and suggested Shreemayee Kar as an alternate. Yipes, we did not have the equipment for Shreemayee's power point program to work. But it did not matter. The happy result is we had Shreemayee, Sajida and Pooja Agarwal as speakers. Each at a different stage in life and each had unique experiences to offer. We had a wonderful discussion, learned of growing up in India and of the many changes in India they have experienced. They discussed the difficulties of balancing the good and bad about changes and embracing the opportunities in the U.S, and the love of the place of your youth. What wonderful women we met tonight! Thank you, Dotty Juengst for organizing it. Thank you to all (especially Sue) for the lovely "buffet."

April Meeting: Note change in time and place than usual. Our April meeting began last August when I read an article describing a study of wrongfully convicted women and found that **63% of all wrongfully convicted women in the U.S. were convicted of crimes that were actually proven (years later) to be accidents or illnesses.** That is the women exonerated. Think of the number of women in jail who do not have the resources to prove their innocence! I made a few calls and Andrea Louise Lewis, one of the authors of the study, was willing to coming to speak! A few weeks ago I mentioned to her that I had read her law review article. She said, "You read my article? I will ask my colleague if she can attend." Her co-writer Sara Sommervold will join her! Their article is a law review article, *Death, But Is It Murder? The Role of Stereotypes and Cultural Perceptions in the Wrongful Convictions of Women* published by the Albany Law Review.

http://www.albanylawreview.org/Articles/Vol78_3/78.3.1035%20Lewis%20and%20Sommervold.PDF

If you have never read a law review article, you should know there is a standard (somewhat stilted) style. There are also LOTS of footnotes. Ignore the footnotes and the style and read it. It is horrifying to read how our societal stereotypes of what a perfect mother should be leads to innocent women being convicted of crimes that were accidents or illness. It is sad how we demonize these women in the press, making it difficult for them to find unbiased juries. Read how difficult and expensive it is to prove a non-crime, making it nearly impossible for low-income women to properly defend themselves.

For another read, try Mother Jones article, "Why Is It So Hard for Wrongfully Convicted Women to Get Justice?" Read how prosecutors find a mother's casual comment to a friend that she was considering modeling the mother's "motive" for murdering her child. Another mother who was pursuing a degree was obviously not devoted enough to her child so she must have killed her. We punish mothers for not keeping their children safe by convicting of murder. This is truly injustice. <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2015/05/wrongfully-convicted-women-exonerations-innocence-project>

Result: We have two wonderful speakers coming a long distance to talk to us about an area where women need our help. Please come, bring a friend. You will learn about these problems and what we can do to change this injustice.

Find out what is happening at the National AAUW. Sign up to receive the Mission & Action AAUW e-newsletter at ebulletin@aauw.org. The current issue highlights AAUW's new research on women's underrepresentation in engineering and technology; the AAUW Art Contest; AAUW National Election and more.

LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND

Stella Frigo

The following paragraphs about the Supreme Court are from *AAUW Washington Update*.

“The Supreme Court handed down its first 4-4 decision since the passing of Justice Antonin Scalia. With only eight justices currently serving on the Court, the deadlocked decision may be a preview of future rulings. *Hawkins v. Community Bank of Raymore* raised the issue of whether the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, which prohibits bias on the basis of sex (and marital status), applies to both the borrower and the spouses who are required to guarantee their husbands' business loans. Lower courts agreed with the banks that the law only applied to the borrowers, not the spouses who were required to guarantee to secure the debt. The one-sentence opinion upholds the lower court decision but does not set a national precedent and does not identify how each justice vote”.

Senate Republicans Beginning to Budge on Supreme Court Confirmation Hearings

Two Republican senators stated that they do not agree with their party's decision to block confirmation hearings for Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland. Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) claimed it was “not fair” to block consideration of the nominee. She clarified that she has not yet reached a position on how she would vote during the hearings, but reiterated that the vetting process should move forward. Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS) stated at a town hall that he believes it is his job to hold hearings for Garland, even if he does not plan to vote for confirmation. A recent poll found that self-identified Republicans from the public do not support a refusal of confirmation hearings.

Our Branch President Sara Ramaker adds:

Justice Antonin Scalia's death has left the court divided. AAUW urges Congress to undertake its constitutional duties to fill the seat. AAUW states: “AAUW members and supporters nationwide have

urged the president to move forward with a nominee, thereby beginning the critical constitutional process to fill the seat. The president believes that Garland, a seasoned appeals court jurist, meets the criteria for this lifetime appointment because of his ‘independent mind and unimpeachable credentials [and an] unquestionable mastery of the law.’...

http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/o/50796/p/dia/action3/commmon/public/?action_KEY=17923&killorg=True

In so doing, the American people will be reassured that all cases will receive the attention of a fully functioning court. To do anything less could undermine the proud tradition of our constitutional government transitioning peacefully and efficiently, especially election years... History tells us that there is more than enough time to select and confirm a qualified nominee. Every U.S. Supreme Court nominee since the 1980s has received a prompt hearing and vote within 100 days. The longest wait, Justice Clarence Thomas took only 99 days while Sandra Day O'Connor was confirmed in just 33 days. President Obama's two previous nominees received hearings and votes within 88 days.”

AAUW encourages you to contact your representatives. For additional information, go to the above site.

Here is one reason why we need nine on the bench.

Arguments for *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, perhaps the most significant reproductive case in years, will be presented before the Supreme Court this month. This case challenges the Texas “Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP) law. If the court upholds this law, a majority of reproductive health clinics in Texas would be forced to close. These regulations require the centers to have such things as unusually large hallways, the same as hospitals have to accommodate hospital beds, though the clinics never need such beds. (It is significant that clinics providing plastic surgery have none of these requirements) They also require women to take certain pills in this hospital setting. Women who

have a two-day regimen have to pay for a hotel room to stay two days just to take a pill! The closures will not just affect abortions, but all women's health care. AAUW states: "TRAP laws have been on the rise across the country, and the court's decision in (this case) could affect access to reproductive health care in many states." Having a divide court means the lower court's case holds. The cost, time and emotional stress must be endured again in order to get Supreme Court review.

TREASURER REPORT

Mary Schmidt

[Info revoked for web-version]

Total members: 53

STATE AND NATIONAL AAUW NEWS

AAUW Launches Report on Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership

Women in leadership are nothing new. Yet, women in paid leadership are few. Why do men outnumber women in positions of paid leadership?

AAUW newest research report: Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership "explores this question, drawing from scholarly research and paying special attention to stereotypes and biases. The report provides recommendations for individuals and those in the education, corporate, and political sectors to contribute to an environment in which gender is no longer a barrier to leadership."

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/153a07b1260dedf3>

The launch will be held March 30 and features executives from Rolls Royce, NASA, ABC News and more. The launch will be online from 3:30-5:30 p.m. ET. It is free. You can register to see it

at <http://www.aauw.org/event/2016/03/barriers-and-bias-webcast/>

AAUW STATE CONVENTION APRIL 22-23

I received the following email from Kathy McCarville, College/University Coordinator:

"Next month we will be gathering together in Madison for our annual Wisconsin State AAUW Convention. This year's attendees will include university women from around our state with several sessions and events for students from our many partnered colleges and universities. We anticipate students from Whitewater, Madison, Edgewood, LaCrosse, and we hope from several more of our partner institutions. Please encourage members to invite students to attend our convention. These university women help us to fulfill our mission of advancing equity for women and girls through education, philanthropy, advocacy and research.

Some students will be involved in the Friday night musical performance RESPECT. After the show, all students will gather in the hospitality suite to meet each other and socialize. On Saturday, Julie Underwood will present a session on Intergenerational Leadership. After lunch, a student panel will discuss Emerging Young Leaders with a University of Wisconsin, Madison senior and national Student Advisory Council member and a University of Wisconsin, LaCrosse student and NCCWSL graduate. They will share their AAUW leadership experiences.

Our partnerships with Wisconsin universities and colleges provide a path to carry out our mission."



2016 AAUW Green Bay Branch Schedule

- April 7** 6:30-8:00 pm Branch Meeting – Wrongfully Convicted Women
- April 21** 9:30-11:30am Art Study Group
- Apr 22-23** **AAUW State Convention, Madison**
- Apr 26** 3:00-5:00pm Book Discussion Group - Clara and Mr. Tiffany by Susan Vreeland
- May 14** Branch Spring Luncheon and Annual Meeting, KI Convention Center
- May 19** 9:30-11:30 Art Study Group – Poussin, Claude, Watteau
- May 24** 3:00-5:00pm Book Discussion Group – Enrique’s Journey: the Story of a Boy’s Dangerous Odyssey to reunite with His Mother by Sonia Nazario