

ADVOCATE

<https://aauwbuffalo.org>

NYS District 1

November 2021

Vol. CXXX, No. 3



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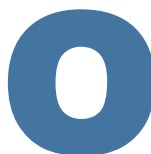
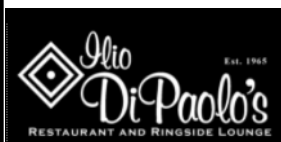
DECEMBER ADVOCATE

The deadline for each issue of the Advocate is the 10th of the previous month. Submit articles to the editor: (NEWSLETTER@AAUWBUFFALO.ORG) via email by November 10. Please be sure to put "AAUW Buffalo Advocate" in the subject line.



Critical Race Theory: What It Is and What It Is Not

November Branch Program



On Tuesday, November 9, we will gather at 5:30 p.m. for dinner at Ilio DiPaolo's Restaurant at 3785 South Park Ave. in Blasdell. We will be joined by our co-sponsor, the League of Women Voters of Buffalo-Niagara.

Our program on this controversial topic will feature **Peter Yacobucci, PhD**, associate professor in Political Science & Public Administration at SUNY Buffalo State. He will be joined by **Crystal J. Rodriguez-Dabney, Esq.**, chief diversity officer at SUNY Buffalo State College and chief of staff to President Katherine Conway-Turner, as well as her husband, **Judge Phillip Dabney Jr.**, associate judge on the Buffalo City Court.

Critical Race Theory: What it is and what it is not. Is America a white supremacist nation or is racism mostly part of America's past? Do we all have a fair opportunity to attain the American dream?

Dinner will consist of salad, warm rolls, penne pasta, choice of beef roulades or chicken piccata with baby red potatoes & mixed vegetables, plus spumoni. The vegetarian choices are ravioli and eggplant parm. *Guests may order drinks from the waitress.*



Please send the form below with a check for \$25 to AAUW Buffalo to: Betty Preble, One Fox Run Lane #622, Orchard Park, NY 14127. Deadline Oct. 29.

Name _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Dinner choice (please check one):

Beef Roulades

Chicken Piccata

Ravioli (v)

Eggplant Parm (v)

**AAUW BUFFALO BRANCH
ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS
2021-22**

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Lilyen Mascellino

VP PROGRAM

Dr. Marian Deutschman

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VP MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

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Rosaleen Nogle

President's Message

Lilyen Mascellino

*"Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless,
but because they're priceless."*

~Sherry Anderson

Greetings AAUW Buffalo Branch Members!

This time of year family traditions come to the forefront of our minds, as we pull puffy cardigans out of storage and snuggle into our plushiest blankets. Autumn's kitchens welcome us with hints of cinnamon, apples, and pumpkin, while transporting our hearts to joyous times gone by. During the next two months families will gather and then gather again, fulfilling traditions which define them. Traditions matter. They connect us to our past and keep us focused on the important things in life. With that said, let me be one of the first to wish you and your loved ones a Happy Thanksgiving!

Groups have traditions, too. AAUW Buffalo Branch programs are in full swing by this time of year. We welcome old friends and celebrate new ones. Committees and interest groups are established and well underway. Our branch traditions define us as a group. They help us to feel part of the organization, give us something to look forward to and nourish our need to enhance the lives of others. That's what AAUW traditions do for us.

Our Branch has traditionally been successful because we operate like a well-planned Thanksgiving dinner. Members have either brought their specialties to the table or have labored to learn new skills needed by the group. Why? Because our members persevere when challenges arise! We stay the course and work to make a difference. The efforts of members are what enrich our Branch. They make sure we can offer a little something on the table to please everyone. All contributions are important.

Even the person without culinary skills is vital to a successful Thanksgiving dinner, as they can bring the ice! It is the collaborative efforts of members that produce the "lift" to ensure our success as a Branch. It is the "lift" that counteracts the weight of a job. Success takes effort. . .group effort. No one should be in the kitchen alone!

As you know, the Advocate is published 10 times a year, September - June. It has been our tradition to have one person ultimately responsible for the newsletter's publication and distribution. It's time for us to start a new tradition. . .the tradition of having five people from our membership commit to the Advocate each year, publisher and editors.

Five members who would accept the job while adding and thus helping to make it continue. If you're wowed, consider what Elizabeth



From the Editor

stated, "Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart." As a group we are ready for you to share your heart with us. There's a seat at the table waiting for you! Are you ready to fill that seat by assisting with the Advocate? If so, please contact me by December 1st! We need you!



NOVEMBER 2021 INTEREST GROUPS

THE HAPPY WANDERERS

Due to continued concerns for COVID, we have decided to take a hiatus for a time.

WNY CULINARY DELIGHTS

When: Wed., Nov. 10 at 6:00 p.m.

Where: Kostas Restaurant, 1561 Hertel Ave.

What: AAUW interest group for members to share dinner and conversation.

RSVP: by Nov. 8 to Barbara Libby at 836-8303, or bpilibby1@verizon.net

DINNER BY THE BOOK

When: Wed., Nov. 17 at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Family Tree Restaurant, 4346 Bailey Ave.

Book: *The Rose Code*, by Kate Quinn

Facilitator: Judy Huber

Discussion Leader: Mary Bashore

RSVP: Frances Witnauer 716-688-5708 or grandmafran4547@gmail.com



CLUELESS MYSTERY BOOK CLUB

When: Wed., Dec. 1 at noon

Where: Family Tree Restaurant, 4346 Bailey Ave.

Book: *Devil in a Blue Dress*, by William Mosley

Discussion Leader: Paula Salamone

RSVP: Barbara Libby at 836-8303 or bpilibby1@verizon.net

THE BUFFALO BRANCH ADVOCATE

is published monthly, September to June, as a bulletin of events for members and as an update on AAUW issues and programs.

The opinions expressed within the newsletter are those of the individual writers and may or may not reflect those of the Branch.

November 2021
Vol. CXXX, No. 3
Circulation 205

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recruitment@aauwbuffalo.org

Send address changes to:

Mary Crocker

375 Parkhurst Blvd.

Buffalo, NY 14223

database@aauwbuffalo.org

A NIGHT ON THE TOWN:

History of Entertainment in Buffalo

LUNCH AND FUN as we Explore Buffalo!

Saturday, Dec. 11 at 11:30 a.m. Banchetti by Rizzo's, 550 N. French Rd.



Explore Buffalo revives the exciting history of the entertainment industry in Buffalo. Are you a movie buff? We will talk about the variety of theaters that would have shown everyone from Charlie Chaplin to Cary Grant to the original *Star Wars*. Is music more your speed? We will help you imagine where you would have sat to listen to the likes of Sinatra, Elvis, the Stones, and the Goo Goo Dolls.

From vaudeville to live stage productions, Buffalo has been home to wondrous theaters and other venues which are no longer physically with us but, through this talk, can once again be part of our collective memory. **Lunch at noon** will be a buffet consisting of turkey breast or sliced Virginia ham, chef salad, dinner rolls, vegetable medley, baked pasta with Mozzarella, baby red & white potatoes, plus brownies. The presentation will follow.

Please send the following information plus a check for \$26 per person to Diane O'Brien, 81 Ponderosa Dr., Williamsville, NY 14221-2409 by Dec. 1. Please include the names of any guests so we can have nametags ready for them.

Name _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Membership Matters

Welcome to our newest member!

Sandra Massung
143 High St., Apt. 5
Lockport, NY 14094
Gr8ful1yy@gmail.com
716-463-9003
AAS, ECC 2006
Humanities/Liberal Arts & Sciences
BS, SNHU 2020
Criminal Justice/Advocacy

Your Board Heard YOU!

Last month the board asked you for input on a controversial policy that had been implemented in April—the requirement that our local scholarships, loans, and grants be awarded to only U.S. citizens, permanent residents, or DACA recipients. Your input, mostly against this policy, was compiled and discussed thoroughly at the October board meeting, resulting in the policy being reversed. All scholarship applications are now posted on the website without that provision.



About Our November Speakers. . .



Dr. Peter Yacobucci is an associate professor of political science and public administration at SUNY Buffalo. His research includes constitutional law, administrative law, discrimination law, and American government. His publication focus is on the U.S. Supreme Court and on the 14th Amendment of the Constitution. He did graduate work at Georgetown University, University of Arizona, and the University of Akron Law School. Before becoming an academic, Dr. Yacobucci worked for the U.S. Department of Justice as a federal law enforcement officer, criminal investigator, and policy analyst.

Crystal J. Rodriguez-Dabney, Esq. is the chief diversity officer at SUNY Buffalo State and chief of staff to President Katherine Conway-Turner. Ms. Rodriguez-Dabney is an equity and inclusion professional, change catalyst, influencer, thought leader, strategist, and author. She's known for her high-energy leadership, get-it-done attitude, captivating tenacity, and her ability to help people from diverse backgrounds connect more purposefully. Crystal believes it is not enough to have a seat at the table if you're not allowed a voice in what happens there. Her mantra is not to call people out, but invite them in. Ms. Rodriguez-Dabney holds a Bachelor of Arts in social sciences with concentrations in sociology, political science, and history from California State University San Marcos, and both a Juris Doctor and Master of Laws degrees from the University at Buffalo School of Law.



Judge Phillip Dabney Jr. serves our community as a Buffalo City Court judge. He is an established trial practitioner and advocate with more than 15 years of experience in federal and state courts, as both a prosecutor and a defense attorney.

His successful legal career includes serving as assistant district attorney in Niagara County, a hearing administrator for government agencies, including the NYS Liquor Authority and Small Claims Court in Buffalo. In his private practice he specialized in civil litigation, employment discrimination, and criminal law. Judge Dabney understands how the legal system works and he is committed to delivering justice in a fair and equitable manner.

BIG, BIG LIES - Why They Stick

Dr. Marian Deutschman

Is global warming a hoax? Do childhood vaccines cause autism? Was the last presidential election filled with fraudulent votes? Why are some of us accepting lies and using them in our decision-making?

We are led to believe that some people accept lies because they think it will help them in the primary elections, but what about the rest of us who are not running for office? Some researchers claim that misinformation is especially likely to stick when it conforms to our pre-existing political, religious, or social point of view. When you try to retract and correct the misinformation, it often simply reinforces the belief. Professor Stephan Lewandowsky, PhD, is an Australian psychologist who says that “This persistence of misinformation has fairly alarming implications in a democracy because people may base decisions on information that, on some level, they know to be false.”

Most of the time we believe other people. We have a bias towards believing that what we hear is true, especially when it’s repeated frequently. Sometimes it’s the gut telling us what to think and the brain is trying to figure out how to think it. *That’s not critical thinking.* We don’t pay enough attention to clear evidence. Do you still believe that if you’re under 50 you don’t have to be concerned about COVID transmission? At one point, that’s what we were told but even now, when it’s no longer true, many hold on to that primary belief.

Negative information isn’t easily removed from memory. Your rational calculations fail to account for irrationality of others. We need to constantly inspect our thought processes for faults. Even though advertising works, we don’t give it the same credibility that we give messages from our friends. If we hear something online or on television or read it in a newspaper, we often ignore or give too little weight to clear signals that it might be false.

Most of us cannot tell from someone’s facial expressions or body movements whether or not they are telling the truth, says Paul Ekman, PhD, a psychologist and researcher on lying. Ekman also found that we want to believe that someone is telling us the truth, especially when that

person is emotionally or psychologically important to us. Malcolm Gladwell’s book, *Talking to Strangers*, provides many famous examples of how we’ve been misled with Bernie Madoff, Jerry Sandusky, and Adolph Hitler, among many others. It may be difficult to accept that a trusted colleague is doing something underhanded, until the damage is done and undeniable. This denial of truth has hurt people and destroyed businesses.



There are social media platforms like Facebook that make use of these behaviors when they decide how to target ads and rank content based on hundreds, maybe thousands, of algorithms. Algorithms identify a user’s preferences and boost that kind of content up the user’s news feed. Other algorithms detect specific types of content, like clickbait headlines, and

push them down the feed.

Not only can they personalize what each user sees, content can evolve with a user’s shifting preferences, continually showing each person what will keep them most engaged. Keeping people engaged creates advertising revenue. During her recent testimony, whistleblower Frances Haugen repeatedly came back to the idea that Facebook’s algorithm incites misinformation, hate speech, and even ethnic violence.

Another former Facebook researcher says he and his team conducted “study after study” confirming the same basic idea: models that maximize engagement increase polarization. They could easily track how strongly users agreed or disagreed on different issues, what content they liked to engage with, and how their positions changed as a result. Regardless of the issue, the models learned to feed users increasingly extreme viewpoints so they measurably become more polarized. Anger increases engagement as well as advertising revenue for Facebook and Instagram, which is also owned by Facebook.

Remember to listen carefully, recognize your own faulty behavior, and be aware of the difference between biased opinions, professional news sources, what some call fake news, and the big lies.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please note: All events are subject to change or cancellation. Please check our website for last minute information.

Wednesday, November 3, 6:30 p.m.: Board Meeting at Christ United Methodist Church in Snyder

Tuesday, November 9, 5:30 p.m.: Branch Program
"Critical Race Theory: What It Is and What It Is Not"
Illo DiPaolo's in Blasdell (see pg. 1)

Wednesday, December 1, 6:30 p.m.: Board Meeting at Ebenezer Church of Christ in West Seneca

Saturday, December 11, 11:30 a.m.: Branch Program
"A Night on the Town: History of Entertainment in Buffalo", Banchetti by Rizzo's in Amherst (see pg. 3)

BOOKSALE WORK ON HOLD UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!

NO DONATIONS ACCEPTED AT THIS TIME!

Next sale PLANNED for June 1-5, 2022.

AAUW has been empowering women as individuals and as a community since 1881. For over 140 years, we have worked together as a national grassroots organization to improve the lives of millions of women and their families.

Mission: *To advance equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.*

Vision: *Equity for all.*

Values : *Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and intersectionality.*

In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.



Moving? Please contact Mary Crocker 716-838-2796



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University Women
Buffalo Branch Inc
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