

Elmhurst Area Branch News

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January 9th Branch Meeting

This January our program centers around Henrietta Lacks and her immortal life. Author Roberta Skloots, weaves her investigation into social, medical, ethical and familial dynamics to ask, "Why did doctors take her cells without asking?" This is Skloots first nonfiction book. Amazingly, it was the winner of nineteen awards.

The following five questions are listed to tease you into thinking about your replies. More questions will be handed out at the January 9 meeting.

Discussion Questions

1. The passage in which the initial fated cells were removed from Henrietta Lacks's body reads as follows (see page 33):

"With Henrietta unconscious on the operating table in the center of the room, her feet in stirrups, the surgeon on duty, Dr. Lawrence Wharton, Jr., sat on a stool between her legs. He peered inside Henrietta, dilated her cervix, and prepared to treat her tumor. But first – though no one had told Henrietta that TeLinde was collecting samples or asked if she wanted to be a donor – Wharton picked up a sharp knife and shaved two dime-sized pieces of tissue from Henrietta's cervix: one from her tumor, and one from the healthy cervical tissue nearby. Then he placed the samples in a glass dish."

Bearing in mind that those two tis-

sue samples removed from Henrietta were *not* removed in an attempt to treat her cancer, but rather purely for purposes of research, was it wrong for the doctor to remove the sample tissue in the first place?

Was it wrong for Dr. Gey to collect those samples for the purpose of trying to grow them in controlled conditions? Does the end – i.e., the immeasurable benefit to humankind resulting from those tissue samples – justify the means – i.e., removing tissue from a person without their consent or knowledge?

2. Discuss the process of taking these cancerous cells and growing them in the "auger" or medium that allowed them to continue to multiply. Was it her human cell line?

Note: As genetic knowledge has increased HeLa is: not really a human cell line at all because it involves a genetic fusion of a papilloma virus and Henrietta's cervical cells. The hybrid has its own genome and attempts have been made to have the cell line recognized as a species in its own right. Of course this cell line also contaminated other cell lines in labs around the world. In a Feb. 2010 paper, HeLa was found as a contaminant of 106 out of 306 cell lines tested.

3. Did you get the impression that Henrietta was treated any differently than a rich, white woman would have



Branch Calendar

January 8 - 7:30 pm
Half the Sky Group
Anne Klein's House

January 9 - 7:00 pm
Branch Meeting
"The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" by Roberta Skloots
Elmhurst Public Library

January 24 - 1:00 pm
Book Discussion Group
Silas Marner by George Eliot
Hostess: Jeanne Reagan

February 4 - 1:00 pm
Noontime Potpourri
100 South
We will continue to discuss the mayoral and school Board elections



AAUW Hotline 1-800-326-2289

Mission Statement

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

AAUW Value Promise

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

Membership

The American Association of University Women is open to any graduate holding an associate or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution.

AAUW FUNDS

The AAUW Funds support educational fellowships and grants, legal advocacy, public policy, leadership programs and research reports.

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Financial Report

*Director of Finance
Darlene Van Meir*

Savings Account	\$ 1,746.45
General Account	3,875.42
Book Sale Account	<u>3,386.05</u>
Total	\$ 8,983.92

been (assuming the hospital was also collecting cell samples)?

4. How do you feel about knowing that you still do not have total control over your body once you go to see a doctor?

If you discovered that tissue routinely removed from your body at some point in the past went on to significantly benefit science and research, would you feel that you should somehow be compensated?

What do you think is more important – a person’s personal rights over their own tissue, or contributing to science and research for the benefit of all humankind?

5. Was it a good thing for the members of the Lacks family that the author wrote this book? Was this attempt different from previous attempts to write about the Lacks family and Henrietta in particular?

A Thank You to Les Caltvedt

If you attended our December meeting, you were able to enjoy the delightful music of Les Caltvedt. His music added another dimension to the lovely evening. Les is available as a cocktail pianist, accompanist (e.g. for impromptu sing-a-longs). He can also provide a combo, including a vocalist, if desired. He plays at private parties, senior residences, wine bar events and coffee shops. His combo “Swing” was a regular act at area Borders locations. For more information you can contact Les Caltvedt 630-833-0381 lesc@elmhurst.edu.

Half Year Discount

This is a perfect time for you to invite a friend or neighbor to join AAUW. Dues for this ½ year period beginning January 15th are only \$44. Spread the word to those who might be interested. A check can be mailed to Darlene Van Meir, 131 W. Adelaide, Unit 201, Elmhurst, 60126.

Half the Sky Group

Thank you to the following branch members for participating in the December Barnes & Noble Holiday Gift-Wrap Program: Betsy Aldred, Rita Andreuccetti, Peggy Babyar, Janice Caudy, Roe Dressander, Azra Haque, Carolyn Heiney, Bronwyn Sill, Rebecca Sill, Jan Summers, and Marilyn Thompson.

Even during this busy time of year, it’s nice that so many branch members enjoy taking part in this traditional branch holiday gifting project.

From wrapping gifts on a Saturday evening and a Sunday morning, our branch received \$316.57 in donations. Our Half the Sky Group will be able to use this money towards supporting women in developing countries through both donations and microloans.

The next Half the Sky meeting will be Tuesday, January 8 at 7:30 pm. We will meet at the home of Anne Klein and will discuss various types of microloans.

New Member



Kathy Maxwell is the Assistant Director of Financial Aid Administration at Elmhurst College. She and her husband have

three grown children; two girls in graduate school and a son who works in the banking industry.

Kathy has lived in Elmhurst for about 30 years and grew up in Villa Park. A life-long and active member of St. Peter’s United Church of Christ, Kathy came to AAUW through her friend Betsy Aldred. Her mother, Elizabeth Postula, was once a member as well.

In her spare time Kathy likes reading, gardening and walking. Welcome to AAUW Kathy!



Spotlight on You

By Carolyn Heiney

The perfect hostess, the perfect home, the perfect music, the perfect people, forty-nine branch members were so blessed to celebrate the holidays together at our December meeting in the beautiful home of **Anne Klein**. What a gift Anne gave to our branch by inviting us into her home! Anne's contributions to our branch do not stop with a lovely party. Last year Anne graciously accepted not only the Diversity and International Affairs position on the board, but added the responsibilities of chair of our Half the Sky study group too. In addition, she has worked with Barnes and Nobel for the last two years to ensure that our branch projects for women benefit during the B&N holiday community book wrapping days. Anne is definitely one more amazing Elmhurst Area AAUW woman. Thank you, Anne. We really appreciate your contributions to our branch.

Readers Needed for the March Program

Lights! Camera! Action! OK Elmhurst members, don't hold back. This is a chance to be a part of a women's history reader's theater.

Your part will be read and given your own lively interpretation under the direction of Betsy Aldred.

Please let Betsy know what part you would like to read and she will give you some direction. We think two rehearsals should be plenty. We can work this out at the January meeting.

For now, please pick a part and join the fun as we prepare an original play with 16 raps of women in American history. The parts to fill include:

- Pocahontas
- Susan B. Anthony
- Harriet Tubman
- Helen Keller

- Anne Sullivan
- Mary M. Bethune
- Sally Ride
- Antonia Novello
- Rosa Parks
- Shirley Chisolm
- Sandra Day O'Connor
- Clara Barton
- C.J. Walker
- Emily Dickinson
- Edith Wharton
- Eleanor Roosevelt.

Note: There are also three male parts. Do we have any males who could fill the roles? This will not be televised for cable TV! Contact Betsy Aldred or Alice Smith.

Coming Your Way

Mark your 2013 calendars for the Branch Programs that are scheduled for later this year. All programs begin at 7:00 pm at Elmhurst Public Library unless otherwise noted.

February 13

Cyber-bullying: Social Media & Harassment. In 2011 AAUW published "Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School," which presents new evidence on sexual harassment and the problem of cyber-bullying. The program will look at how today's girls and young women face bullying and what we can do as a community to help our children navigate the pitfalls of social media.

March 13

Interactive Performance -- Women's History "Rap". Women's history month brings us together to perform an original production of "Rap" songs by sixteen great American women. (See article at left for further details.)

April 10

Women Make Movies -- Voices Unveiled: Turkish Women who Dare. Join us for an AAUW presentation of this independent documentary film by Binnur Karaevli. "Can Islamic values co-exist with full equality for women? Voices Unveiled examines this timely issue through portraits of three women pursuing life paths and careers of their own choosing in present day Turkey." The film is distributed and supported by Women Make Movies, a non-profit independent media distributor.

May 8

Dinner and Program, "The Little Black Dress". This program brings us together to wrap up the year with good friends, good food and a little fashion fun. Ruth Thomas of Decades of Dresses, models the little black dress as she describes its history and shows us how the little black dress has changed across the years.

Carolyn's Corner

What's on Your New Year's Resolution List?

You really don't need to submit your list of hopes and dreams for 2013, but maybe like me, your list (if you make it) would include losing 10 pounds, exercising more regularly, and visiting acquaintances you know in nursing homes more frequently.

Over the years I've learned that to accomplish any of my goals, they have to be short and specific. Every year my cleaning goal begins with cleaning a shelf, a drawer, or a closet every day. I feel really good about myself until somewhere around March 2, when I have cleaned or at least rearranged my drawers, shelves, and closets, and am left with the big job of cleaning my basement. It becomes overwhelming. I can't throw away my daughter's architectural models or her sister's special boxes of high school treasures. One year I was very proud of tossing my husband's fifth grade notes, after convincing him that our daughters were in college and didn't need them. The basement is more than cleaning. It is sorting through life. I realized that I need a goal that I can really do, because when I accomplish a goal, I feel wonderful!!

What does any of this have to do with AAUW? Well, I thought that after hearing about my struggles with resolutions, I would offer you the opportunity to add an AAUW resolution to your list, a short and specific one that you can really accomplish and thus feel good about. For example, you could commit to:

- ✓ Attending a branch meeting even on a cold or rainy night
- ✓ Sorting books every Saturday morning in July
- ✓ Inviting a friend or neighbor to a meeting or study group
- ✓ Browsing the website aauw.org for 15 minutes to see what's happening on the national scene.
- ✓ Calling a representative or senator and urging him or her to vote to support an important women's issue.

Choose one of mine or add your own. Each is short and specific and you can do any one and feel great about your accomplishment.

As we begin a new year, I wish you a healthy, happy 2013 filled with love and joy. Good luck with any resolution you might make. Here's hoping you lose two pounds and have fun browsing aauw.org. Hope to see you before we sort books together in July.

Look What We Did Together

AAUW Action Network Report

Thanks to the work and generosity of AAUW members, we can be proud of some impressive advocacy and programmatic achievements. This year, AAUW received top ratings once again from [Charity Navigator](#), [GreatNonprofits](#), [GuideStar](#), and America's Charities for our excellent financial management, transparency, and accountability. AAUW was also recognized by [NerdWallet](#) as a top women's equity group. In addition, AAUW friend and pay equity champion Lilly Ledbetter named AAUW as her charity of choice in her [Makers profile](#).

In 2012 AAUW grew to a nationwide community of more than 150,000 members and supporters who work on AAUW priority issues such as fair pay, access to contraception, sexual harassment at work and school, student debt, and the lack of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields and in public office.

This year we launched the nationwide voter education and turnout campaign, [It's My Vote: I Will Be Heard](#), through the AAUW Action Fund. This campaign, targeted at millennial women, engaged members and branches in nearly every state and used cutting-edge social media tactics, including memes and micro-targeted advertising. The campaign registered tens of thousands of voters, received hundreds of media hits, hosted hundreds of candidate and issue forums, and provided hundreds of thousands of voters with the information they needed to vote.

AAUW also released [Graduating to a Pay Gap: The Earnings of Women and Men One Year after College Graduation](#), which uses the latest nationally representative data to explore the salary difference between women and men college graduates working full time one year after graduation and examines the effect of the pay gap on the burden of student loan debt.

2012 AAUW Holiday Party



