

# HONORING WELLESLEY ALUMNAE



A Collection of Extraordinary Alumnae Stories  
Sponsored by the Wellesley College Alumnae Association



# Introduction

From Wellesley College's very beginning in 1875, our alumnae have been trailblazers in numerous fields. This booklet contains short biographies about the lives of twenty-eight such extraordinary Wellesley Alumnae. It was created in the spirit of honoring the legacies of alumnae who otherwise may not be very well known to the current Wellesley community, yet did much during their lifetimes. This booklet was produced by student interns Anmol Nagar '21, Emery Dutton '22, Meredith Youngblood '22, and Sara Lucas '22 during Wellesley's 2021 January Project initiative.

We hope you enjoy this booklet and draw inspiration from the stories contained within these pages!



# Featured Alumnae

Anne Revere (1926)

Annie Jump Cannon (1884)

Barbara Barnes Hauptfuhrer (1949)

Bing Xin (1926)

Brenda Ray Moryck (1916)

Carolyn Wilson (1910)

Chi Che Wang (1914)

Clarissa Scott Delany (1923)

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Katharine Lee Bates (1880)

Mabel Seagrave (1905)

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek (1917)

Margaret Clapp (1930)

Marilyn Silverstone (1950)

Marion Roe-Cloud (1938)

Miriam DeCosta-Willis (1956)

Nancy Friday (1955)

Rosario Ferré (Attended 1960)

Ruth Baker Pratt (1898)

Ruth Rowland Nichols (1924)

Tamaki Uemura (1915)

Wellesley Codebreakers (1942-44)

Yoshi Kasuya (1923)



# Anne Revere (1926)

Anne Revere, a direct descendent of Paul Revere, was a theatre and film actress of the '40s and '50s. After graduating from Wellesley, she made her Broadway debut in 1931 with *The Great Barrington*, and gained popularity with *The Children's Hour* in 1934. However, she received the most recognition for her work portraying working-class, motherly figures in 1940's films. She won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress for her role in *National Velvet* (1944), and was nominated for two others in 1943 and 1947.



In 1951, Anne became one of hundreds of actors who appeared on the Hollywood blacklist, and effectively lost her job. She testified a month later in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee but invoked the Fifth Amendment, refusing to say whether or not she was a member of the Communist Party and declining to name names out of fear of putting others in danger.

Soon after, she resigned from the Screen Actors Guild, the conservative labor union that she had been at odds with over their Red Scare policies for years. Anne wrote a stinging letter to the Guild in 1953, criticizing their aggressively anti-communist policies and their role in entertainers losing their livelihoods. With time, she was able to find work on Broadway once again, earning a Tony for Best Supporting Actress for her performance in *Toys in the Attic* (1960). She was one of the very few entertainers who was able to find work in the industry after being blacklisted and one of the most vehemently opposed to how Hollywood dealt with the blacklists.



# Annie Jump Cannon (1884)



Annie Jump Cannon was an American astronomer who specialized in classifying stellar spectra. Her interest in this field was first catalyzed at Wellesley, where she studied physics and astronomy. Unfortunately, during her time at Wellesley, Cannon fell ill with scarlet fever, which rendered her nearly deaf, greatly limiting her career options and ability to socialize. However, she did not let this stop her and returned to Wellesley after her illness to continue with her astronomy courses.

About a decade later, she joined a group called “Pickering’s Women” at the Harvard Observatory, where she worked on classifying stars according to their temperatures. Her method of classification came to be universally adopted and was published in the Henry Draper Catalogue. Additionally, over the course of her career, Cannon discovered 300 variable stars and five novae. Her research and theoretical and philosophical contributions continue to have a great influence on astronomy and science over a century later, and many have acknowledged her invaluable contributions to the field. In 1925, the University of Oxford awarded her an honorary doctorate—the first honorary doctorate to be presented to a woman—and she was also the first woman to become an officer in the American Astronomical Society.



# Barbara Barnes Hauptfuhrer (1949)

Barbara Barnes Hauptfuhrer was born in 1928 and graduated from Wellesley as the senior class president and with academic honors. She would go on to lead in many different capacities, both on and off Wellesley's campus. Barbara's career in corporate America, acting as a director and trustee for many different private companies and nonprofit organizations, was long, illustrious, and trailblazing. From 1958-1960, she was the youngest and first non-Philadelphian to be elected as the president of the Junior League of Philadelphia, and established two projects that are still in operation today. In 1977, she became the only woman director of J. Walter Thompson, and in 1979, she became the first woman director of Knight-Ridder Newspapers, Inc.



As well as excelling in corporate America, Barbara maintained very close connections with Wellesley throughout her life. She was a Wellesley College Alumnae Association president and a Wellesley Trustee for 15 years, and has become one of the most influential figures in shaping our athletic program into what it is today. The Barbara Barnes Hauptfuhrer Scholar-Athlete Fund is critical in helping Wellesley athletes and their coaches travel to post-season competitions, and the Barbara Barnes Hauptfuhrer Scholar-Athlete Award, established in 1985, is awarded every year to athletes that best reflect Barbara's dedication and love for athletics and Wellesley College.



# Bing Xin (1926)



Born Xie Wanying in Fuzhou, China in 1900, and better known by her pen name, Bing Xin, this alumna was one of the most influential Chinese writers of the 20th century. She earned her bachelor's degree at Yenching University in Beijing in 1923, where she began earning acclaim for the short stories and poems she published during her undergraduate years. She received a grant to study at Wellesley, where she graduated with a master's degree in literature in 1926.

After her time in the U.S., Bing Xin returned to China and soon published a collection of essays she had written while abroad. This collection, *Letters to Young Readers*, became swiftly and lastingly popular. Bing Xin was among the first Chinese writers, and was perhaps the first female Chinese writer, to write in the vernacular style, a rhetorical choice which has shaped the trajectory of Chinese literature ever since.

Bing Xin's unique writing style—which effortlessly blended traditional Chinese and Western stylistic elements along with personal details and a humanistic bent—became so influential that it gave birth to a movement called the “Bing Xin Style.” In testament to her lasting cultural influence, the Bing Xin Literature Museum in Changle, Fujian, was established in 1997, presenting the author's literary works, photographs, and personal items. It was the first literature museum in China to be named after a single individual.



# Brenda Ray Moryck (1916)

Brenda Ray Moryck, graduate of the class of 1916 and one of the first Black students to attend Wellesley, was a writer and activist associated with the Harlem Renaissance. She was born in New Jersey, where she returned after graduation to volunteer with the Newark Bureau of Charities. She taught English at Armstrong Technical School in Washington, D.C, one of two high schools for African Americans in the



area. In 1925, her essay on Black social politics, “A Point of View,” was published in *Opportunity*, an academic journal funded by the National Urban League. Three years later, her short story “Day” was released in the NAACP’s journal, *Crisis*. The story focused on a Black family purchasing a home in a segregated district. In 1926, she earned her M.A. in English Literature from Howard University.

Moryck was also a member of reform organizations including the Harlem Young Women’s Christian Association, the Urban League, and the New York NAACP Women’s Auxiliary. She lectured on social reform and contributed to Black literary magazines and newspapers throughout her life, often commentating on the Harlem Renaissance and social politics. She frequently corresponded with W. E. B. Du Bois and her writing was greatly influential in the Harlem Renaissance.



# Carolyn Wilson (1910)

Carolyn Wilson was a skilled journalist, successful businesswoman, and founder of the Wilson Fund. Born in 1890, Carolyn graduated from Wellesley before studying at the University of Germany for two years. When she returned, she took a job at *The Chicago Tribune*, quickly landing in Paris as the paper's first fashion correspondent in France before becoming a war correspondent with the outbreak of WWI.

Wilson spent the war years based in France but traveling and reporting all over Europe. In early 1915, she was arrested and held in solitary confinement by German officials for “indiscreet curiosity” and was released only after direct intervention from the U.S. ambassador. She promptly left the country and later wrote a piece on the experience, calling German officials “stupid.” Carolyn was also onboard Henry Ford's legendary, and doomed, “Peace Ship” in 1915, a journey she called “the most fantastic, nightmarish, and yet unbelievably ridiculous and humorous experience imaginable.”

After returning home from Europe, Carolyn spent several years reporting for the *Tribune* on political conditions in East Asia before falling in love with Chinese art. In the mid-1920s, she quit the *Tribune* to open an import business with locations in Shanghai and Chicago. She traveled to China every year to purchase pieces and sold them out of her shop in Chicago until WWII forced her to retire. Carolyn spent the years after her retirement in the sun, by the sea, reading, cooking, and welcoming friends. When she passed, Carolyn started the Wilson Fund, her way of paying forward what her own Wellesley scholarship and professors had given to her.



# Chi Che Wang (1914)



Chi Che Wang  
291 Zih Zien St.,  
Soochow, China

Chi Che Wang was a biochemist and educator who focused on chemistry and nutrition. She has also been credited for her major participation in Chicago's civic life throughout her adulthood. Born in 1894 in Suzhou, China, she came to the United States as a young girl to attend Walnut Hill, a preparatory school for girls. After graduating from Wellesley in 1914, Wang received a Master's degree and Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Chicago. Dr. Wang worked at various institutions over the course of her career, starting at University of Chicago, where she taught for several years before heading a medical research team in the blood department at Michael Reese Hospital.

Among other positions, she later served as a children's metabolism researcher in Cincinnati and a chemist at the Northwestern Yeast Company. From 1943-1953 she served in various professorial positions at Northwestern University. In addition to her professional positions, Dr. Wang was an active participant in the development of the medical field.

Dr. Wang also made significant contributions to civic life in Chicago, such as providing clinical laboratory demonstrations for the Woman's World Fair and co-founding the Chicago Chinese Women's Club. The Chi Che Wang Playlot Park in Chicago is named after Dr. Wang in honor of her scientific work and her contributions to society.



# Clarissa Scott Delany (1923)

Clarissa Scott Delany was a writer, educator, and social worker associated with the Harlem Renaissance movement. During her time at Wellesley, Delany distinguished herself through her participation in many extracurriculars: she played on the field hockey team, becoming the first Black student to earn a varsity letter at Wellesley; she was also a member of the debate team, the Christian Association, and the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Delany's serious interest in literary and social work began during her college years, as she met poets and writers at the Boston Literary Guild who influenced her personal writing style and political interests.

After graduating from Wellesley as a member of Phi Beta Kappa in 1923, Delany travelled through Europe before moving to Washington, D.C. In D.C., she taught at a local high school while continuing to pursue her intellectual interests as a member of fellow poet Georgia Douglas Johnson's literary salon and the "Saturday Nighters Club," a society for the city's Black intellectuals. In 1926, she married Hubert T. Delany, and they moved to New York City together. There, Delany undertook a social work project compiling statistics for a study which aimed to address the institutional failures of urban environments to ensure the well-being of Black children.

As a poet, Delany was admired for her use of metaphor and allegory in her published works, along with nature imagery and powerful descriptions of her emotional experiences. Although she published just four poems in her short career before her untimely death at twenty-six, Delany and her poems are remembered for their beauty and profound influence in the Harlem Renaissance.





# Connie Guion (1906)



Courtesy of the Medical Center Archives of NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medicine.

Connie Guion was a skilled doctor, professor, and early champion of women in medicine. She was born in 1883 and attended Cornell University Medical College after Wellesley, graduating first in her class in 1917. From then on, she worked to improve the experiences of both doctors and patients in New York City. She spent her internship and residency at Bellevue Hospital, where she reportedly ended the century-old tradition of interns working 24-hour ambulance shifts.

In 1929, Connie became chief of the Cornell Pay Clinic, a revolutionary clinic that sought to improve medical care for poor and working class people; the model was later implemented across the U.S.

In 1932, Connie became the Chief of the Outpatient Department of the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, where she worked until her retirement in 1953. She became the first woman to be a member of the New York Hospital Medical Board in 1947, was elected an Honorary Governor of the Society of the New York Hospital in 1952, and in 1963, became the first living woman doctor to have a building named after her.

As well as practicing medicine in formal settings and through her private practice, Connie also taught at Cornell. In 1946, she became the first American woman to be promoted to Professor in Clinical Medicine. She worked towards improving the opportunities and training for new doctors, and is remembered for her good humor and common sense.





# Ellen Fitz Pendleton (1886)

After earning her B.A. in 1886 and M.A. in 1891, both from Wellesley, Ellen Fitz Pendleton stayed on at the school as a tutor and later an associate professor. She became the first alumna to be elected College President in 1911. Lovingly dubbed “Pres. Pen” by students, Pendleton led the College through twenty-five formative years marked by determined institutional growth.

Pendleton’s leadership was tested early in her tenure after the March 1914 College Hall fire destroyed the campus’s main building, which contained the College library, dormitories, and most of the classrooms and offices. She sent students on an early spring vacation and had them back to class in makeshift structures within three weeks. She then oversaw a vast fundraising and construction campaign; numerous buildings were put up on campus before Pendleton’s retirement, and the endowment increased nearly eightfold under her leadership. Pendleton guided the College through crisis yet again during the 1918-1919 flu pandemic, when she oversaw quarantine protocols and the creation of makeshift infirmaries on campus.

“Pres. Pen” was also well-known as a strong supporter of academic freedom. She helped to liberalize exam structures, called for a relaxation of the College’s entrance requirements, and instituted a broader curriculum. Pendleton dedicated her life to Wellesley: she died just a month after her retirement in June 1936 and left her entire estate to the College.



# Grace Zia Chu (1924)

It would be difficult to overstate how much impact Grace Zia Chu's cookbooks and culinary teachings have had on popular American appreciation of Chinese cooking. Born in 1899 in Shanghai, Chu received a full scholarship to study at Wellesley, where she graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Physical Education in 1924. She returned to China after graduation, where she worked as a teacher at various schools.



GRACE ZIA

During her Wellesley years, Grace met Chu Shih-Ming, a student at MIT. The Chus married in 1928, and when Shih-Ming was posted as a military attaché to the Chinese Embassy in Washington, Grace returned to America with him. The Chus returned to China after WWII, but came back to America not long after. They settled in Manhattan, where Grace hosted cooking classes for thirty years in various locations, including the Mandarin House restaurant, the China Institute, and her apartment. Her two cookbooks are said to have arisen out of these classes: she published *The Pleasures of Chinese Cooking* in 1962 and *Madame Chu's Chinese Cooking School* in 1975. In her books, Chu struck a thoughtful balance between teaching her readers about authentic Chinese cooking and appealing to American tastes and the realities of the mid-century American kitchen. Chu's work can best be seen not just as a culinary endeavor but as a fundamentally cultural one, and her books are credited with bringing Chinese cuisine to generations of Americans.



# Harriet Alleyne Rice (1887)

Harriet Alleyne Rice was the first Black woman to graduate from Wellesley, and was among the second generation of Black women doctors in the United States. Despite the discrimination she faced as a Black female physician, Dr. Rice dedicated herself to helping others however she could. After earning her M.D. in 1891, Dr. Rice interned in Boston and Philadelphia before joining Jane Addams at Hull House in Chicago, where she provided medical treatment to families who could not afford it. Although Rice was prevented from practicing medicine at any American hospital because she was a Black woman, she continued to persevere, opening her own private medical practice for a time before spending three years in France during World War I as a military physician. She stayed in France after the war had ended to ensure all soldiers received proper treatment and was awarded a Medal of French Gratitude for her efforts. After the war, Dr. Rice worked as a laboratory researcher at the Columbia University Medical Center in New York.

Dr. Rice spoke honestly and openly about the barriers she faced as a Black female doctor. An exhibit from the Davis Museum notes that in January 1935, Dr. Rice responded to an Alumnae Association biographical sheet question asking about whether she had any handicap by saying, “Yes! I’m colored which is worse than any crime in this God blessed Christian country!” In the face of racism and discrimination, Harriet Alleyne Rice forged a remarkable career for herself in the medical field—blazing a path for others to follow and providing care to so many along the way.



# Henrietta Wells Livermore (1887)

Henrietta Wells Livermore was a suffragist and political activist of the early 1900s. She was born in 1864 and received both her Bachelor's and Master's at Wellesley, in 1887 and 1893 respectively. She moved with her husband to Yonkers soon after graduation, where she worked extensively in civic and political spheres, including the New York Wellesley College Club.

In 1910, she established and led the Yonkers Suffrage Association, a local group that was instrumental in organizing and mobilizing New York women for state-wide suffrage. During this time period, Henrietta also held leadership positions within the National American Woman Suffrage

Association (NAWSA) at both state and national levels, including leading the NAWSA Literature Committee and sitting on the Board of Directors.

Following the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, Henrietta turned her attention to educating newly enfranchised women and founded the Women's National Republican Club, which is now the longest-operating private club for Republican women in the country. She was also the Chairman of the State Republican Women's Executive Committee, and was responsible for organizing all women in the Northeast for the campaigns of Harding, Hoover, and Coolidge. Mrs. Livermore brought energy, brilliance, and passion to all of her positions, and many of the advancements of the suffrage movement in New York can be credited to her dedicated leadership.







# Jane Bolin (1928)

Jane Bolin was the first Black woman judge in the United States, an activist, and an advocate for children's rights and protection. The discrimination and microaggressions she experienced during her youth, as well as pictures and articles of lynchings in the south, affected Jane profoundly, and she became determined to follow in her father's footsteps as a lawyer.

During her years at Wellesley, Jane was ostracized by the white student body and experienced racism and apathy from professors and counselors. Despite many adversities, she graduated Wellesley among the

top twenty in her class, was accepted into Yale Law School in 1928, and in 1931 became the first Black woman to graduate from Yale Law.

Jane passed the bar exam in 1932 and moved to New York City, where she would work and live for the rest of her life. In 1937, she began working as Assistant Corporation Counsel for the New York City Corporation Counsel's Office, and in 1939, she was appointed to the Domestic Relations Court of the city, becoming the first Black woman judge ever in the U.S.

Jane retired reluctantly after forty years of presiding over Family Court cases with sensibility and grace. During her four terms, she ended the assigning of probation officers based on race, required all private child-care agencies accepting public funds to accept children regardless of ethnic background, and hired the first Black law assistants in the court. As a judge, she was hard-working and courageous, and found great fulfillment in working to improve the lives of women and children.



# Katharine Lee Bates (1880)

Katharine Lee Bates was a leading Wellesley professor and nationally influential poet-scholar of the early 1900s. Born in 1859, Katharine received her Bachelor's from Wellesley in 1880 and her Master's in 1891. She began teaching at Wellesley in 1885 and became professor and head of the English department in 1901; under her leadership, the department became one of the most popular and successful at the school.

Wellesley was a springboard into academia, world travels, and activism for Katharine. She helped organize a settlement house in Boston for immigrants and college women and worked for labor reform, including co-planning the College Settlements Association. In 1899, she took a sabbatical to work as a Spanish-American War correspondent for *The New York Times*, working to dispel negative stereotypes around Spaniards in her publications.

She wrote hymns, poetry, and books, and much of her work features the living conditions of poor and working-class urban communities. She published one of the earliest books on American Literature, the first to be written by a woman, and worked to bring to light less popular writers (at the time), such as Robert Frost, Amy Lowell, and Henry David Thoreau.

Her most popular literary work came from one of her travels. In 1893, Katherine and fellow Wellesley professor, Katherine Coman, took a trip to the Colorado mountains, where Katherine first penned the poem "America the Beautiful." A recognition of her country's beauty as well as a plea for change, the song lives on as a memorial to the quietly charismatic, deeply empathetic woman who gave so much to Wellesley and to academia.





# Mabel Seagrave (1905)

After graduating from Wellesley in 1905, Mabel Seagrave (fondly known by her patients and friends as “Dr. Mabel”) earned her medical degree from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine as one of seven women in the class of 1911. After practicing medicine in New York and Seattle, Dr. Seagrave was sent to France in 1918 by the National American Woman Suffrage Association.



There, Dr. Seagrave joined the staff of Women’s Overseas Hospitals and was posted to a refugee hospital in the South of France, where she worked eighteen-hour days with her all-female unit. Dr. Seagrave elected to stay in France after the 1918 armistice, working at a Red Cross hospital in the northeastern part of the country at a time when typhoid, dysentery, and influenza were raging. In 1919 she was presented with a Médaille d’honneur from the French government for her selfless dedication to alleviating others’ suffering. “Dr. Mabel” later returned to the United States, where she focused on obstetric and gynecological surgery. Dr. Seagrave was one of two women elected to the American College of Surgeons in 1928, and she later served as Chief of Staff at Seattle General Hospital. In addition to her medical efforts, Dr. Seagrave oversaw dental clinics for underprivileged children and maintained active membership in the Wellesley Club, the Women’s Medical Club of Seattle, the Women’s University Club, and the Soroptimist Club, an association focused on improving the lives of women and girls around the world. “Dr. Mabel” was esteemed by her friends and peers for her intelligence, tenacity, enthusiasm, warmth, and boundless generosity.



# Madame Chiang Kai-Shek (1917)

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, born Soong Mei-ling, was a notable figure in Chinese politics, and was the second wife of former Chinese President Chiang Kai-Shek. She co-launched the New Life Movement in 1934 with her husband, an education movement that sought to curtail the spread of communism by teaching citizens traditional Chinese values. In 1936, her husband was captured and held captive by warlord Chang Hsueh-liang because he believed that the nationalist government (which President Chiang Kai-Shek represented) should stop curtailing the spread of communism and instead shift their attention to the increasing Japanese aggression. Madame Chiang Kai-Shek played an instrumental role in the negotiation that led to his eventual release.

Outside of her work with Chiang Kai-Shek, Soong Mei-ling wrote many articles and essays about China and Chinese affairs for American publications. In 1943, she also became the first Chinese person and second woman ever to address a joint session of the U.S. Congress. Her political efforts increased American aid to China in the war against Japan and her effectiveness was greatly admired by the American public.





# Margaret Clapp (1930)



Margaret Clapp was an educator, scholar, writer, college president, and Nobel Prize laureate. Born in New Jersey in 1910, Clapp graduated from Wellesley 20 years later with a degree in history and economics, and spent the next few years teaching at the Todhunter School for Girls, now known as the Dalton School. While teaching English literature to her students, she attended nearby Columbia University in pursuit of her master's degree in history, which she received in 1937. She then went on to become a history professor at four different New York City universities, including Columbia and Brooklyn College, where she earned tenure-track professorship. In 1946, she completed her Ph.D. from Columbia; her doctoral dissertation served as the blueprint for her book, *Forgotten First Citizen: John Bigelow*, which received the 1948 Pulitzer Prize for Biography or Autobiography.

A passionate educator, Clapp became president of Wellesley College in 1949, serving in that position for 17 years. At the time, only four women in the United States were presidents of a college or university. While president, she expanded many college resources, including tripling the endowment, adding three new dormitories, increasing paid leave for faculty, and constructing a new library, which is named in her honor. A lifelong feminist, Clapp ensured that Wellesley graduates were prepared for careers rather than only domestic roles.

In 1967, a year after her retirement from Wellesley, she became chief administrator of Lady Doak, a women's college in India. In 1968, she became a cultural attaché to India, and retired to her home in Massachusetts several years later.



# Marilyn Silverstone (1950)

Marilyn Silverstone, born in London in 1929, was a photographer, journalist, philanthropist, and ordained Buddhist nun. Silverstone graduated from Wellesley in 1950 and became associate editor of *Art News and Industrial Design* in the early 1950s. During this time, she relocated to Italy, where she helped produce an Academy Award-winning documentary film. In 1955, she became a professional freelance photographer, traveling the world and capturing images throughout Asia, Africa, Central America, Europe, and the Soviet Union. In 1959, she was assigned a three-month long project in India, and ultimately made New Delhi her new home after its completion, staying there with her husband until 1973.



Silverstone's reputation as a photographer grew, and she was tasked with photographing and reporting on important political moments such as the arrival of the Dalai Lama in India and the coronation of the Shah of Iran. Her work was featured in *Life*, the Scottish National Portrait gallery, *National Geographic*, and *Vogue*, among many other publications. She wrote and published several books during her time in New Delhi, and was particularly interested in Buddhist culture. In 1974, she took vows as a Buddhist nun. She founded and financed a Tibetan Buddhist nunnery in Kathmandu, one of the first to exist outside of Tibet. She lived in Kathmandu until her death in 1999.



# Marion Roe-Cloud (1938)

Elizabeth Marion Roe-Cloud was a social worker and activist who was the first Native American student to graduate from Wellesley, paving the way for future Indigenous students. Her mother, Elizabeth Bender Cloud, was an Ojibwe educator and activist, and her father, Henry Roe-Cloud, was an educator, activist, and government official enrolled in the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. While at Wellesley, Marion was a member of the Phi Sigma Society, served as the Editor of the *Legenda* from 1937-1938, and was a Durant Scholar. She also was an honors student in sociology, writing her thesis on “Indian Land Policy and its Reconstruction in the United States with Special Reference to the Kickapoo Reservation.” After Wellesley, Marion attended the University of Chicago’s Graduate School of Social Service Administration.

Marion moved to the Portland, Ore., area with her husband in 1941. There, she served in various social work positions on both a professional and volunteer basis. In 1969, she was appointed executive director of the Oregon State Program on Aging, which was responsible for coordinating and evaluating all services and programs for the state’s aging population. Under Marion’s leadership, Oregon was consistently among the first states to implement innovations in the field of aging. Outside of her efforts to support senior populations through legislative and administrative work, Marion was a prominent activist in Oregon for Native American and women’s rights. She worked to make the Girl Scouts organization more accessible to Native American girls and was the chairman of the Education Committee of the Portland League of Women Voters, among many other commitments. Marion worked tirelessly to use her social work skills to improve the world around her in any way she could, noting that all of her efforts left her longing for “more than the 24-hour daily quota.”





# Miriam DeCosta-Willis (1956)

Author, academic, and activist Miriam DeCosta-Willis graduated from Wellesley in 1956. She was a dedicated scholar, earning her M.A. in 1960 and a Ph.D. in Romance languages from Johns Hopkins University in 1967. Throughout her time at these institutions, she was one of few Black students in her classes and was the first African American student to earn a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins.

Following her graduation from Wellesley, she moved to Tennessee and became an instructor of French at LeMoyne College. In 1966, after having been denied admission into its master's program on account of her

race, she became the first Black faculty member at Memphis State University. Until her retirement in 1999, DeCosta-Willis continued to be an instructor of Romance languages at Memphis State, Howard University, LeMoyne-Owen College, and George Mason University. During her tenure as a professor, she researched African, Caribbean, African American, Afro-Hispanic, and Latin American literature and culture, as well as Black Memphis history. A prolific author, she published nearly 40 scholarly articles, seventeen book chapters, and authored or edited nine books.

DeCosta-Willis was also a prominent community leader and civil rights activist. She participated in the Montgomery Bus Boycott, served as chair of the Memphis NAACP Education Committee, where she organized a protest against the public school system, joined the March on Washington in 1963, and was an advisor to the Black Students Association at Memphis State, among many other activities. She was fiercely devoted to improving her community, showcasing Black history, and empowering Black writers. She lived in Memphis for the remainder of life, where a dedicated library collection on her life and work exists.



# Nancy Friday (1955)

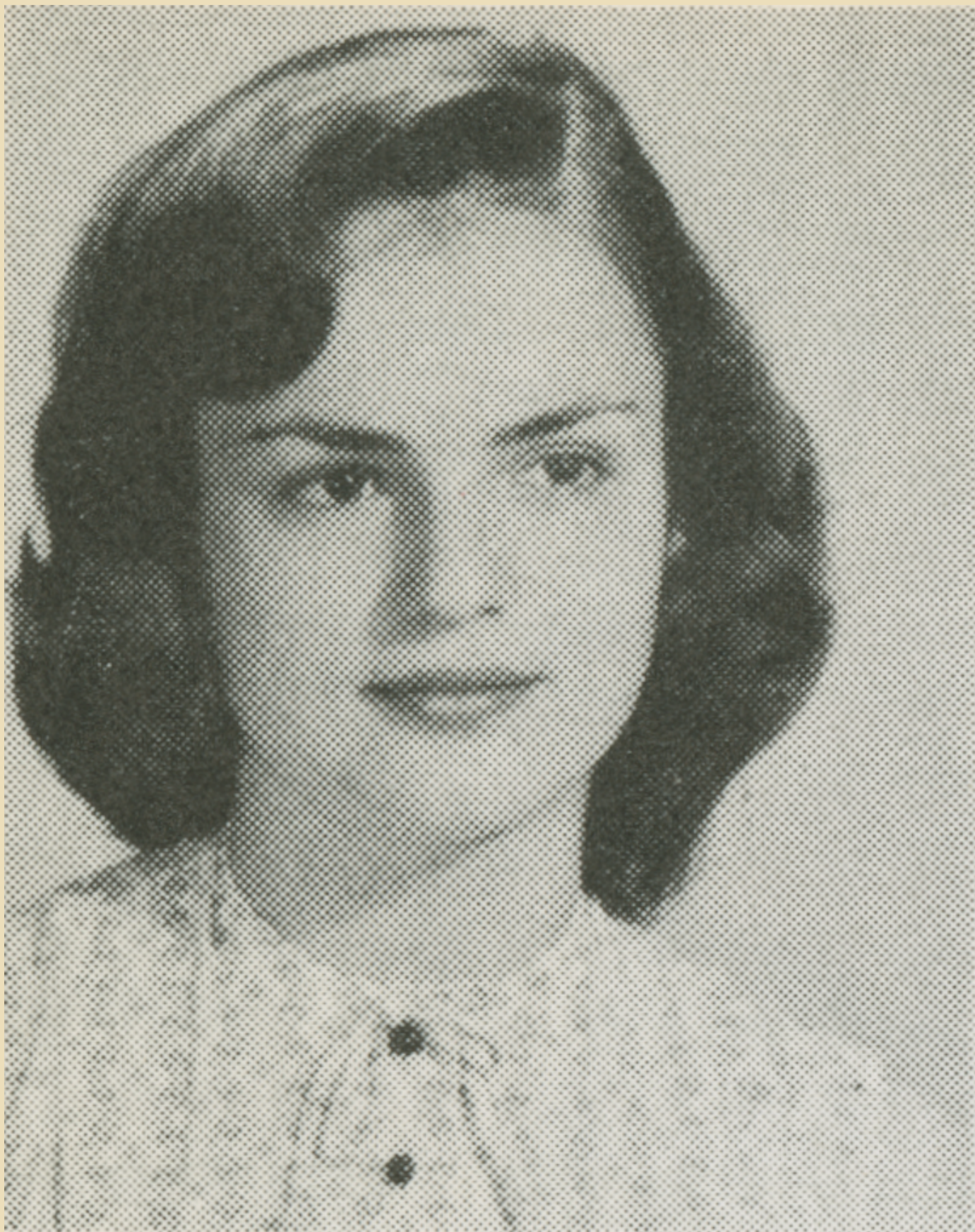
Nancy Friday was an American author and psychologist who wrote extensively about liberation and sexuality, specifically relating to women and femininity. Her books about gender politics greatly influenced American women's sexuality and social identity in the late 1900s. After college, Friday worked as a reporter and magazine journalist before publishing her first book, *My Secret Garden*, in 1973. *My Secret Garden* discussed the multifaceted topic of women's sexuality and fantasy—covering relationships, envy, beauty, BDSM, and more. Friday later published many books including *The Power of Beauty*, *30 Porn Star Portraits*, and *Beyond My Control: Forbidden Fantasies in an Uncensored Age*. She also wrote about generational ideas about womanhood being passed down from mothers to daughters in *My Mother/My Self: the Daughter's Search for Identity*.

Friday appeared on many television and radio shows such as NPR's *Talk of the Nation*, *Good Morning America*, *Oprah*, and *Larry King Live*, to discuss her books. She was motivated to address the guilt and taboo associated with women's sexuality through her writing, and her books generated much conversation, revolutionizing American conceptions of female sexuality.



# Rosario Ferré (Attended 1960)

Rosario Ferré, a formidable novelist, essayist, and poet, was born in Puerto Rico in 1938. After attending Wellesley for a year, she graduated from Manhattanville College and later earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in Latin American literature. She was a dedicated writer who began her career at fourteen, publishing articles advocating for Puerto Rican independence in the island's popular newspaper, "El Nuevo Día." She became well known as an editor and newspaper columnist and critic early on in her career. In 1976, she published *Papeles de Pandora*, a collection of short stories, and a year later, she released *Sitio a Eros*, a collection of literary essays. Her first book, *Maldito Amor*, debuted in 1986. Ferré wrote about Puerto Rican identity and people, often using the island as her stories' background. Her writing explored social and political themes, telling stories from a feminist, historical, and satirical



lens. Ferré was born into a prominent political family—her father was governor of Puerto Rico from 1969 to 1973—and the aristocratic class was frequently a focus of her critique. She wrote about the lives of women, tumultuous relationships, complicated family dynamics, and troubled minds.

In 1990, Ferré began translating her stories and publishing in English. She released many more fiction stories, essays, and poems, served as a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, and was an editor of the *San Juan Star*. In 1995, she was a finalist for the National Book Award for her novel *House on the Lagoon*. Today, Ferré is known as one of the most important female authors in contemporary Latin America.



# Ruth Baker Pratt (1898)

Born in 1877 in Massachusetts, Ruth Baker Pratt was an icon and trailblazer in New York City politics. In 1898, she graduated from Wellesley with a degree in mathematics, and six years after, she married and moved to the Upper East Side, the center of her career and philanthropy. Her interest in politics began during WWI, when she worked on the Women's Liberty Loan Committee. She served on the New York City mayor's wartime food commission, where she met Herbert Hoover and became a life-long supporter of his ideals. After serving as city alderman in 1925 as the first woman in New York City to work on a governing board, Pratt ran for New York's 17th congressional District and won by a large margin. She was the first female Congressional representative from the state of New York. Pratt's fiscal policies earned her nicknames such as "Watchdog of the Treasury," and she was known as an outspoken defender of the national budget. In 1930, Pratt won her re-election to the House, where she was dedicated to resolving the economic impacts of the Great Depression. Some of her notable achievements in the House include expanding disability benefits for WWI veterans and allocating a large grant to the Library of Congress to acquire books for the blind, a bill that was supported by Helen Keller.

Pratt retired from politics following her second term in Congress, spending the rest of her time in New York City pursuing philanthropic causes.





# Ruth Rowland Nichols (1924)

Ruth Rowland Nichols was one of America's most daring and skilled pilots during the Golden Age of Flight of the '20s and '30s. She was born in 1901 to a life of wealth and high society in New York City—a path she rejected in favor of an education, a professional flying career, and later work at NASA, UNICEF, the US military, and as a writer and instructor.

Ruth studied at Wellesley from 1919 until 1924, taking a year leave at her mother's request in order to prepare for her social debut. Characteristically, Ruth spent the year secretly learning to fly instead, and became the first woman to receive her pilot's license from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale in 1922. She would later become the second woman ever to be licensed by the American government and the first woman to receive a transport license from the Department of Commerce.

In 1929, she began her competitive flying career, and founded the Ninety-Niners aviation club along with Amelia Earhart. In 1930, she set the woman's international long distance record on a flight from New York to Los Angeles; on the way back, she flew from Los Angeles to New York an hour faster than Charles Lindbergh's record. In 1931, she became the first and only woman ever to simultaneously hold the international speed, altitude, and long distance records. Ruth continued to fly for the rest of her extraordinary life, setting records and breaking boundaries even as she faced frustrations and roadblocks.



Courtesy of the International Women's Air & Space Museum,  
Cleveland, Ohio.



# Tamaki Uemura (1915)



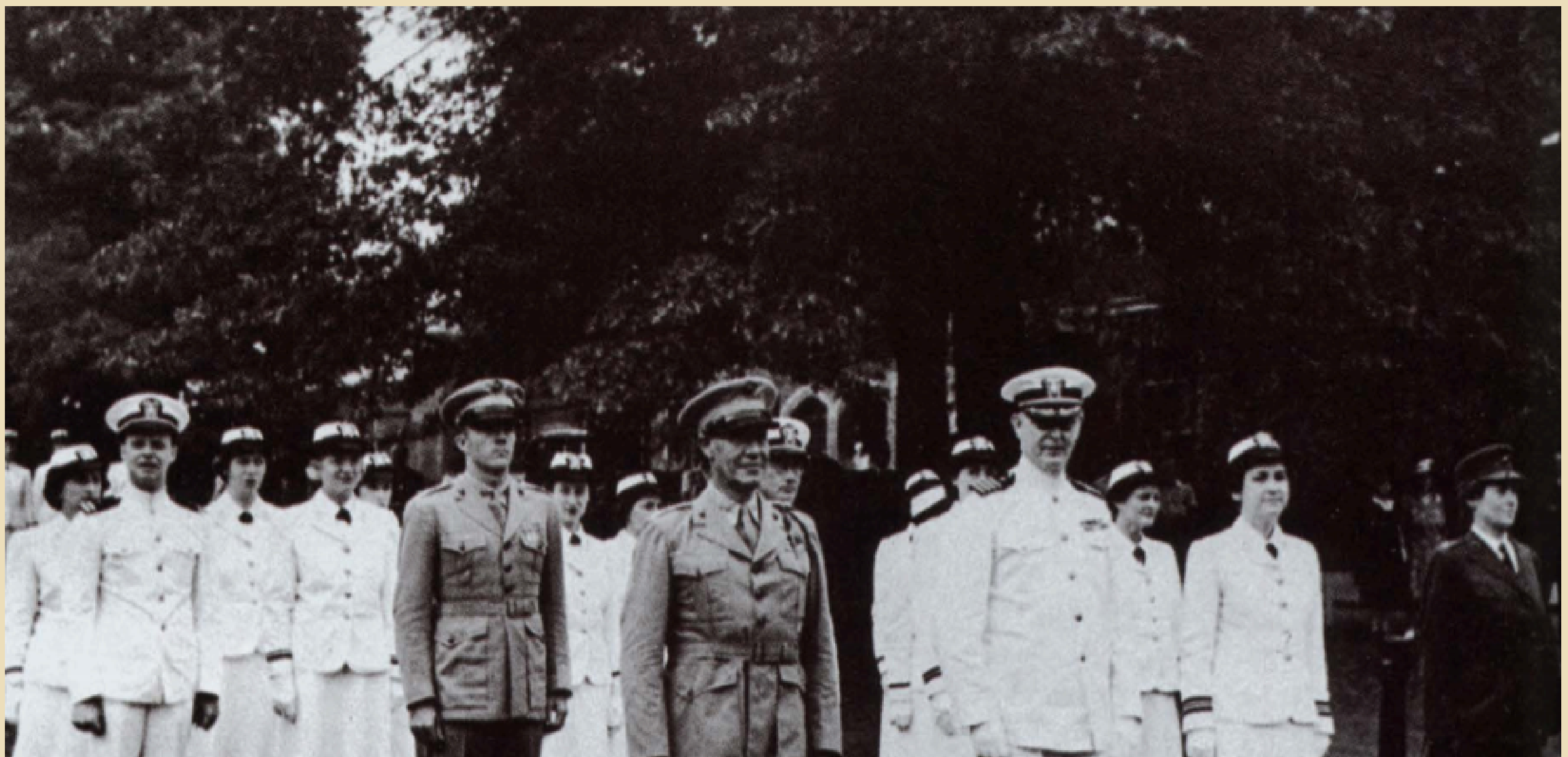
Tamaki Uemura was a notable theologian and Christian leader in Japan in the 20th century. Born in Tokyo in 1890, Uemura received the Helen Gould Scholarship to study theology at Wellesley from 1911 to 1915. After college, Uemura returned to Japan, where she became one of the country's most prominent Christian leaders. Uemura was the first female minister to be ordained in Japan, and she founded the Kashiwagi Church in Tokyo.

In April 1946, Uemura was invited to America by the American Presbyterian Church Association; upon her arrival, she became the first Japanese citizen to come from Japan to the U.S. after WWII. After returning to Japan, Uemura began teaching the Bible to the three imperial daughters, and later to the Empress Nagako herself. Uemura also undertook numerous civic activities. She was the director of the Japanese YMCA, the vice-director of the international YWCA, a member of the Japanese National Public Safety Commission, and a member of the World Federation Alliance. Uemura also participated in the movement to end Japanese prostitution, and publicly rebuked American G.I.s for their maltreatment of Japanese women. In 1965, she received the Second Class of the Order of the Sacred Treasure, an honor awarded by the Japanese government, for her contributions as a Christian leader and public servant.



# Wellesley Codebreakers (1942-44)

During World War II, many Wellesley students and professors aided military intelligence in deciphering German and Japanese military communications. Professors Helen Dodson and Barbara McCarthy were in charge of recruiting Wellesley students to work as codebreakers. How-to courses about code breaking were taught in secret to students to avoid surveillance and the first Wellesley recruits were sent to Washington, D.C., to join WAVES (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service) in 1942. Over the next two years, more Wellesley students followed, joining a team of nearly 11,000 women from women's colleges all over the country that helped gather enough information to shorten the war by one year, saving thousands of lives. Many Wellesley students who participated in the code breaking effort later made important advances in computer science and engineering, inspiring future generations to come.





# Yoshi Kasuya (1923)

Yoshi Kasuya was a Japanese educator who served as a teacher and president of Tsuda College in Japan. She graduated from Wellesley College in 1923 and earned an M.A. and Ph.D. from Columbia University soon after. She was deeply committed to building community and served as the president of the Japanese Association of University Women.

For her thesis, Kasuya spent two months in Germany visiting 40 educational institutions across the country, and returned to the States to write a comparative study of the education of girls in England, Germany, Japan, and the United States. She returned to Wellesley College again in 1950 to study university level education and language teaching, specifically at women's schools. After retiring from being president of Tsuda College in 1962, she was awarded a Blue Ribbon Medal by the Japanese government, as well as the Third Class of the Order of the Precious Crown due to her impressive influence and contributions to women's education.





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THANK YOU