



# Hartford Smith College Club

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2009-2010

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**Heather Page '00**

## President's Note

**By Michelle Doucette Cunningham, Class of 1988**

An amazing thing happened to me this fall. A piece of art that I created was included in a book (*Creative is a Verb* by Patti Digh). The reason this is so amazing is that arts and crafts are a hobby to me, something to do for fun on those rare moments I'm not busy with my family and (non-art) career. An economics major at Smith, I have never taken a formal art class. What gave me the chutzpah to submit my art to a publisher when I hardly think of myself as an artist? I think I owe it all to Smith.

I am always astonished at the achievements of my fellow Smith College alumnae when I read *The Alumnae Quarterly*, and I confess, sometimes a little intimidated. Of the more than 47,000 Smith alumnae, there are certainly those who are notable because of fame or fortune, but I'm more impressed by the success that comes through the vision, hard work, and persistence which makes so many of us successful authors and artists, scientists and engineers, lawyers and business leaders, educators and government leaders.

What sets Smithies apart? Why are we so successful? Academic rigor for one--the ability to think analytically and logically and to acquire new skills and knowledge are hallmarks of a great education. Communication is another theme--the ability to write effectively is a skill that I wish more people shared.

But most importantly, it is the confidence to take risks that distinguishes Smith alumnae. I truly believe that had I gone to a co-educational institution, I would not have developed the confidence in my own abilities that I have today. Seeing role models in the other students around me, the staff and faculty, and the thousands of alumnae gave me something to strive for, and broadened my horizons of what I could do and be.

I was a shy child, overweight and overly sensitive. But I'm not a shy adult. Now I regularly speak to large groups as part of my work. My years at Smith caused this transformation. Smith helped me to find my voice and realize that I had something to contribute in class or discussion over dinner. It also encouraged me to define myself broadly and dynamically, and to explore who else this person might be that I am becoming. And now I can add artist to my list.

While many aspects of a Smith education contribute to the success of its graduates, it is the self-confidence that a Smith College education instills that allows us to take risks, reach higher, and be more successful in all the many ways we define success.

**THERE ARE HSC CLUB BOARD POSITIONS OPEN!**

VICE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY/NEWSLETTER CHAIR

Please also consider becoming a member of the Hartford Smith College Club!

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## Book Group Activity This Fall

By Anne Wettersten, Class of 1992

The book group continues to meet at the Borders bookstore in Farmington at 6 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. We've met this fall to discuss *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett, *The Thirteenth Tale: A Novel* by Diane Setterfield, and the stimulating *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere* by ZZ Packer. It was interesting to converse about the ways that we are all somehow involved and implicated in the fraught history of race relations in the United States featured in *The Help*, and then to embark on Setterfield's atmospheric literary mystery during the brilliant autumn days and chilly nights of October. *The Thirteenth Tale* is especially recommended for fans of Gothic novels, British mysteries, the Brontës, or those who may have discovered Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca* in early adolescence, as I did. What is more, the book motivated me to return to the Hitchcock film version of *Rebecca* (1940), a film which offers artful cinematography as well as classic, haunting fun!

Please visit the Club's website for up-to-date news!  
<http://alumnae.smith.edu/smithcms/hartford/>



## Eileen Rosson Rememberance

By Peggy Shapiro, Class of 1959

The Smith community lost a dear friend on August 30th with the passing of Eileen Kaufman Rosson. Eileen was a gracious, talented, and intelligent woman with a charming sense of humor. She enriched the lives of all who knew her. After graduating from Smith in 1956, she obtained a Master's degree in Education at Boston University and taught school in the Boston area from 1957 -1960. In 1985, she earned her MSW and began a 15-year career as a clinical social worker at Jewish Family Services in West Hartford. She cherished her family and was an extraordinary wife and mother.

Eileen's many interests included travel, relaxing at their lakeside home in New Hampshire, the Loomis Chaffee Board of Trustees, the Wadsworth Atheneum Women's Committee, the Hartford Hospital Auxiliary, the United Way Allocations Committee, and the Waldron Bay (NH) Lot Owners' Association. She was an active participant in the Smith College Club book group. Eileen was also an excellent cook and shared many wonderful recipes with her friends. Everyone was delighted when meetings were held at her home, knowing how extraordinary the refreshments would be.

Heartfelt condolences to husband Bob, daughter Julie Small (Smith '82), sons Andrew and Richard, and sister Ruth K. Shulansky. Eileen will be sorely missed by many.

HARTFORD AREA ALUMNAE SPOTLIGHT

**Name:** Anne Wettersten

**Class Year:** 1992

**House:** Baldwin

**Major:** English Language and Literature

**Favorite Smith Memory:** Enjoying spring and fall seasons with friends on campus and in Northampton

**What town do you currently live in:** West Hartford

**What do you do professionally and/or what are you involved with in the greater Hartford community?:**

I'm currently an adjunct instructor in English and a faculty Writing Consultant at the University of Connecticut. I've worked, along with my husband, Scott Campbell (an Assistant Professor of English at UConn), to implement a new model of Freshman English at the Greater Hartford campus. It has included a revamped Writing Center and new faculty development and resource initiatives. I've also had a Writing Consultant role in a summer pre-college bridge program for socio-economically and/or educationally underprivileged entering Hartford Campus students making the transition into college. Additionally, I've participated in and led mixed student/faculty panels at the NEWCA (New England Writing Center Conference).



**What has being involved in the Club meant to you?:** It has meant a great deal to me to have an opportunity to renew my relationship to Smith and to meet some very warm, interesting, and like-minded people through participating in the book group, and in my work as Club Secretary and Newsletter Editor. As I conclude my term in this role, I look forward to continuing to participate and contribute to Club activities and events. In addition, I'm always seeking new networking contacts in education and related fields. Work in private or charter school settings as well as adult education are some areas I'd like to explore further as well as writing and design. I invite anyone who may wish to share local knowledge, expertise, and/or advice in those fields to contact me at my email address: [awettersten@mac.com](mailto:awettersten@mac.com).



*Fall Mum Show at Lyman Conservatory*



## AN ANNUAL MEETING AND AN INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

### Anne Wettersten, Class of 1992

The Hartford Smith College Club 2010 June Meeting Featured an Intergenerational Dialogue led by Michelle Cote, founding co-director of The Purpose Project. Michelle was selected from over 3000 applicants by *Oprah Magazine* and The White House Project as one of 80 women with an “idea that could change the world.” The goal of The Purpose Project is to create a dialogue and exchange of ideas between different generations of social change-makers. We were pleased to have a cross section of alumnae of different ages to participate in Michelle’s dynamic presentation titled “Talkin’ Bout the Generations.”

Cote’s presentation focused on delineating the features of the five generation categories (The Greatest Generation, The Silent Generation, The Baby Boomers, Generation X, and The Millennials). We then learned about their salient characteristics and discussed how these traits influence our individual attitudes toward work and life balance, the institutions and organizations that employ us, intergenerational communication and compatibility in the workplace and our communities, as well as professional timetables and goals. Furthermore, our varied and multifaceted versions of feminism are vital threads twining their way through all topics and generations. Some of the specific issues and questions raised in our spirited discussion included the following:

### Self-Knowledge

★With our ability to make choices comes the responsibility for making them. What are my priorities? How do I choose between all of the options in front of me?

★Now that the Superwoman myth that became popularized in 1980s versions of feminism is wearing off, we’re finding out that there are limits to everything—principally time. We don’t want to necessarily “do it all” as a means to success, well-being, and meaningful contributions to our communities.

★Where does our motivation come from—the quest to achieve security in life or to pursue our passions? Are these goals mutually exclusive?

★What is my authentic self? How do I express that? We noticed that many of us are careful about where and to whom we express our authentic selves. What does this reveal about our professional lives and our experience of our communities?

★How do the different generations view and interact with technology? Is round the clock access to/from work mandatory in this digital age? How do we use it to help and not hinder our work/life balance?

### Feminism

★How do we align our intentions and actions with the perceptions of feminism and ourselves?

★What is the difference between the everyday realities of feminism and women’s rights and the image of feminism portrayed

by the media? How can we protect the image of feminism?

★How is the progress and level of rights that we enjoy today viewed by those who laid the groundwork?

★Feminism is tied to race, class, and leadership. How do we negotiate these elements of identity in our daily lives?

### Leadership (is there a crisis and what do we do about it?)

★ How do we exert leadership and when? Who are the leaders that we can rely on, the ones with reason, the ones we want to turn to? What happens when they don’t have the solutions that we’re looking for?

★What are our standards for our leaders? Are we experiencing the collapse of the meritocracy (à la David Simon’s vision in *The Wire*)?

★What is the state of Gen X mentorship? It seems to be happening between those older and those younger than us. How do we do it, especially given our smaller numbers (one-half the size of Boomers and Millennials)?

It seems that with so many options in front of us, we need to choose an area of impact carefully. It’s difficult with so many pressing issues, but necessary for both individual and collective progress. We need to look at the trade-offs between broad vs. deep impact. We hope that our extended community of Smith alumnae will continue this ongoing conversation in the diverse places we live and work, and in the myriad roles we continue to inhabit and (re)invent for ourselves.



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*WELCOME TO THE 2010-2011 RECRUITING YEAR!!*

Greetings Smith College Alumnae!

It is autumn once again, and the Hartford Smith Club is joining forces with the Office of Admission to recruit talented young women from Connecticut for the Class of 2015. First of all, many thanks to all of the alumnae volunteers who have helped with our efforts so far. An alumnae connection can make all the difference for a prospective Smithie.

Second, if you are interested in participating in our recruiting efforts this year, there are many ways for you to get involved. The fall and winter are our busiest seasons for recruiting. We currently have over two hundred young women from the area who have landed on the Office of Admission's radar as prospective first-years, transfers and Ada Comstock Scholars, and in the coming months we are going to try to recruit even more. We are looking for alumnae to interview applicants for admission and/or to conduct outreach to these women, whether by phone, email, or in person. I have had the pleasure of interviewing several applicants so far this fall, and they have been a brilliant, diverse group who are enthusiastic about Smith and curious about everything from creative writing to environmental science, from Smith's lacrosse team to its performing arts programs.

One of the Hartford Club's most special recruiting efforts is the Book Award Program. Every spring, the Club gives gifts of books to young women from area high schools who demonstrate the academic excellence, leadership, and service to their communities that characterize the thousands of women who have graduated from Smith College.

This program is a great way to honor the accomplishments of some wonderful high school students and to spread the word about Smith in our communities. This past spring, the club gave awards to 30 high school juniors from 30 schools in Hartford County, both public and private. The book that we had selected was *Ariel: The Restored Edition* by Sylvia Plath '55.

The Club wants very much to expand the Book Award Program, and alumnae input and support would be very much appreciated. If you know of a school that is deserving, please let us know. If you know of a book with a Smith connection that would capture a young woman's imagination, please let us know. A donation of \$25.00 would cover the cost of a book and postage and would enable us to add one more school to our program. Certain schools ask if Smith alumnae could attend their award ceremonies to present these awards or be available to make contact with the recipients in order to tell them about the Smith experience. There are many ways to get involved in this worthy cause.

I look forward to hearing from you if you would like to participate this year. Thank you for all you do for Smith!



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**STAY CONNECTED TO THE CLUB!**

Website: <http://alumnae.smith.edu/smithcms/hartford/>

Our website has an updated look and a new home!

Please bookmark this new link today. Facebook: Smith College Club of Hartford.

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## Career Networking Events

A September Sunday afternoon Tri-College program provided a forum for alumnae to speak directly with other alumnae who are currently working in their fields of interest to gain advice, direction, information, and contacts.

The program, organized by Mount Holyoke's Alumnae Club, took place on September 26<sup>th</sup> at the Village for Families and Children, 1680 Albany Ave, Hartford.

About 40-50 people participated from Smith, Mount Holyoke, and Wellesley Colleges, and a few additional guests from other schools also attended. The event was organized by Alison Perrin, President of the Mount Holyoke Club with some help from Emma Simon, Miriam Hyman and Michelle Doucette Cunningham.

The format included some "speed dating" at tables loosely organized by industry or sector. Participants also introduced themselves to the whole group to help gauge optimum networking matches. The education table was the largest, and included public and private education as well as higher education, and technology was also popular. Michelle reports that there was a great mix of new graduates, mid-career professionals considering career changes, and others exploring options and seeking mentorship opportunities. She found it was a wonderful opportunity to meet with other smart women to talk about careers and choices, as well as hopes and dreams for the future.

A similar event for the spring is currently in the early planning stages. Suggestions from our Hartford members for a March or April event are welcome. All alumnae are highly encouraged to offer their expertise and experience.

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