

WOMEN'S VU

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Vanderbilt Women "Facing Change" at Women's Studies Conference

Vanderbilt University sponsored its first Women's Studies Conference on April 19 and 20. Enthusiasm for this opportunity to speak about the personal impact of feminism and women's studies was evident among the students, alumnae, faculty, and staff who participated in the panel discussions and workshops.

The following are participants' reports of some of the events and workshops. A more complete account is on file in the Women's Center Library.

Keynote Address

Catharine Stimpson, professor of English and director of the Women's Research Institute at Rutgers University, delivered the keynote address at the "ungodly" hour of 5:00 p.m. on a bright spring afternoon to a very receptive audience. Noting that women's studies has been a "growth industry" since 1969, Stimpson accounted its beginnings and development to the single but most challenging assumption: Women are a group who have shared experiences and whose experiences as a group have virtually been ignored by traditional scholarship.

Other questions devolve from basic assumptions about women's historic experience. Women's Studies can be done from the perspective of studying women's separate culture, our separate labors and rituals and strivings, toward illuminating *all* of human history, the private and the public spheres. Or women's studies could focus on the structure of gender, how we as a society and as multiple societies have created whole sets of behavior and labeled them masculine/feminine. It then becomes the task of women's studies to explore the very nature of society along gender lines.

Stimpson envisions the next stage in women's studies to be the study of heterogeneity itself. Women's studies has built upon the recognition that women are a group which demands its own scholarship, but the group is made up of individual and diverse women. Our task will be to recognize that our world is a world of multiple differences which calls for an ethic of respect for the "multiple otherness" of all people.

-Linda Karwedsky

Vanderbilt Sends Representative to Conference on Women

Vanderbilt will be represented this summer at two major conferences on women and a women's health institute.

Walter Gove, Professor of Sociology, will present a paper which he co-authored with Debra Umberson entitled "Children: Their Effects on Personal Well-Being" at the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) annual meeting in Seattle, June 22-25. Umberson is a graduate student in Vanderbilt's Department of Sociology.

Attending the same meeting as a representative of the Women's Center, is Antonia Gove, Associate Professor of Slavic Language and Literature, who is a member of the Women's Center Advisory Board. She will participate in the Women's Centers Caucus of NSWA and report on the work of the Caucus.

The National Women's Studies Association created the Women's Centers Caucus two years ago to provide a national network with university and colleges programs in women's studies. Members of the Southeastern Women's Studies Association (SWESA), Vanderbilt's Regional organization, were instrumental in starting the caucus.

In July, Nancy Ransom, Director of the Women's Center (and a member of NWSA and SEWSA), will represent Vanderbilt at an international conference in Nairobi on the United Nations Decade for Women. She will conduct a workshop on "Women's Centers as Agents of Change" and participate in activities sponsored by Women's Studies International during the two-week meetings. In addition, Ransom will tour regional villages to observe UN projects in development that involve local women.

This conference is the Non-Governmental Forum (NGO) associated with the official United Nations meeting that ends the Decade for Women. In 1980, Ransom attended the "Mid-Decade" NGO Forum in Copenhagen as Vanderbilt's representative, and participated in consultations on establishing women's studies programs.

Among the 26 sponsors of the Women's Studies International Program for this year's NGO Forum are the Institute for Social Studies/Women and Development Program of the Netherlands; The Center for Women's

Women's Political Caucus Meets in Atlanta

The National Women's Political Caucus will hold its biennial convention June 29-30 at the Atlanta Hilton and Towers. This year's event is entitled SHOWCASE '85. A new national chair and her officers will be elected, bylaws amended, and the political course charted for the next two years.

Keynote speakers will be Geraldine Ferraro, Mary Berry, Bella Abzug, and a leading Republican woman to be announced. Special events include opening ceremonies on Friday, June 28 with astronaut Sally Ride. That evening Caucus founder and former Congresswoman Patsy Mink will host a reception in honor of elected women officeholders from across the nation. At the Friday dinner Federal Trade Commissioner Pat Bailey will emcee a "roast" of outgoing national chair Kathy Wilson. Also featured at the dinner will be Doonesbury cartoonist Garry Trudeau.

Gloria Steinem is scheduled to lead a luncheon discussion Saturday, June 29 and Saturday night featured entertainment is Lily Tomlin's exclusive SHOWCASE '85 night club show.

Preconvention activities in addition to Friday's agenda include political training sessions and a welcome by the Georgia Women's Political Caucus on Thursday, June 27. A box lunch is scheduled for Friday.

For further information, contact the Women's Center at 322-4842 or the National Women's Political Caucus, 1275 K Street, N.W., Suite 750, Washington, DC 20005.

Alternative housing and child care may be arranged.

-Charlotte Staggs

Development Studies of India; The Feminist Press (U.S.); Japan Women's Studies Association; El Colegio Mexico/Women's Studies Program; Simone de Beauvoir Institute/Concordia University (Canada); Women's Studies Center (Santiago, Chile); Women's Studies Seminar, Autonomous University of Madrid; The Group for Research on Women of Norway.

Sue Jones, Assistant Professor of Nursing, will attend the Summer Institute on Women, Health and Healing at the University of

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Alumnae Panel

On Friday evening, an alumnae panel of four entitled "Our Lives Since Vanderbilt" recalled the status of women at Vanderbilt during their college years and the subsequent effects on their lives.

Joanne Bailey (BA '52) was admitted under the stringent quota system. She recalled that at least one professor had a policy of giving "A's" to football players and girls. Women's studies were unheard of during her college years.

Martha DuBose (BA '68) said "the world was coming to consciousness and Vanderbilt was sleeping through it." She noted the barriers that Vanderbilt erected against women, emphasizing the quota system that was still in place.

Karen Stall (BA '74) was a member of the last class to be admitted under the quota system. She was unable to attend the conference due to illness; however, Susan Wiltshire, associate professor of classics, related Karen's comments. Karen recalled that she and her contemporaries saw an end to the most blatant forms of discrimination toward women at Vanderbilt. She said, "we got to do the easy part." Future Vanderbilt women had to fight more subtle discrimination. Susan Wiltshire recalled that Karen was the first person paid for a project involving women's studies at Vanderbilt - \$50 for a women's studies bibliography.

Kim Shafer (BA '79) had a very active college experience at Vanderbilt serving as Student Government Association president among her numerous activities. Kim said that she did not pursue women's studies at Vanderbilt because she did not want to stand out in another way. She commented that the irony was that women's studies would have made her more comfortable in pursuing her other numerous endeavors.

All four alumnae expressed a hope that women's studies would be greatly expanded at Vanderbilt. Vanderbilt is currently in the process of hiring a director of women's studies. Kim Shafer pledged \$1000 during the next five years to help support women's studies at Vanderbilt.

-Cynthia McKnight

Women and Art Workshop

The purpose of Angelika Bammer's workshop, "Women & Arts/Women in Arts" was to lay claim to the contribution of women to the visual arts. Feminist revisions of art

history began in the early 1970's by questioning the death of famous or "good" women artists throughout the centuries. During the Middle Ages, lay and religious women copied and illuminated numerous texts. Only with the Renaissance, when art became professionalized, were women officially and systematically barred from the "art world". Women were thus denied access to formalized education and the institutions of recognition and patronage; most women who achieved any notice were daughters of artists, learning at their fathers' knee. Despite being marginalized, women were on the forefront of art history as they raised the then minor genres of still life and pastels to which they had been relegated, into major art forms. Women artists, such as Miriam Shapiro and Judy Chicago, continue to transform how we look at art by refusing to accept the traditional divisions of "high" art and folk art, helping us "re-vision" art.

-Mat Trotter

Women and Religion

The Faith and Feminism workshop focused on the concerns of women who see themselves as "faithful feminists." Gay Welch explained some of the traditional teachings of the church which, depending on one's interpretation, may imply that women occupy a lesser place in society. She pointed out that many of these interpretations may have stemmed from the way the language was translated or from the individual beliefs of the writers.

Currently serving as associate minister of West End Methodist Church, Nancy Carol Miller shared her personal feelings and experiences on the implications of a woman serving in church leadership roles formerly held exclusively by men.

-Linda Bird

Women's Health Workshop

Sue Jones and Vicki Beaver of the Nursing School faculty gave an overview of recent developments in women's health care, ranging from a brief survey of contraceptive safety and efficiency to new maternity rooming arrangements.

The oral "pill" is now much safer; earlier compounds contained three times too much estrogen. The intrauterine device or IUD is too risky for all. A new development on the market which can be purchased over the counter is the contraceptive sponge for women which can be used over a 24 hour period and is 85 to 95% effective, said Sue Jones.

The "birthing room" which allows a patient to labor, deliver and recover in the same hospital room is a new feature in maternity care, said Vicki Beaver. This rooming ar-

angement allows a degree of individualized care not possible in a more conventional setting.

-Charlotte Frankl

Women's Literature

One of the most exciting features of Mary Childers' workshop session on "Engendering a New Literary History" was the visible and weighty presence of the new *Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* (eds. Gilbert and Gubar). It was a tangible demonstration of the distance travelled by women's studies in literature from the time when female authors were barely mentioned (let alone studied) in undergraduate and graduate courses to the current day, when such an anthology is possible.

Two poems were used as springboards for discussion: John Keats' "When I Have Fears" and William Butler Yeats' "A Prayer for My Daughter." The group moved from these specific examples to more general remarks on gender in literature: how the so-called "universality" of the human experience described by literature is, in reality, universal only to one sex; and how one can continue to read even the most overtly stereotypical literary portrayals with a gender consciousness that allows us to read the work as much for what the stereotypes reveal about the (male) author as for truths about the human condition. Many of the participants discusses specific works that had enable them to create for themselves a sense of the new literary history that women as readers and writers can create.

-Elaine Goleski

Women and Education

Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey stated that the forces giving rise to women's studies have brought about changed perceptions of education. She discussed several themes running through education that are reflective of the influence of women's studies: 1) male dominance of administrative positions and a concern over the feminization of teaching; 2) the perception of teaching as nurturance and the need for "hard limits"; 3) the ever present issue of low pay for teaching; 4) the status of the teaching profession; 5) commitment to teaching; 6) locus of control for the teaching profession; 7) the appropriate role for research creation and application; 8) training of teachers.

-Cynthia McKnight

The Work Force

The 1985 labor market is comprised of 50% of the female and 85% of the male population. There have been massive changes in the work force since the end of World War

Community Education Necessary for Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment

Prevention and treatment of child abuse can be a joint effort, according to David Cunningham, Associate Director of the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse. Speaking at the spring workshop of the Middle Tennessee Chapter of the NCPA, April 17, Cunningham emphasized the importance of the family system as a starting place to carry the message to the community, state, nation, and world to "stop abuse."

By age 18 one of every four females and one of every eight males will be sexually abused. Eighty to 90 percent of the offenders are known to the child, someone with whom the child has an on-going relationship; and, although the child wants the sexual activity to stop, other aspects of the relationship—such as gifts—may be enjoyed. In his keynote address at the conference, held at the Downtown Sheraton, Dr. Jon Conte of the University of Chicago School of Social Services, identified two tenets of child abuse. All sexual actions have non-sexual needs. Incest may be an expression of vengeance against another woman; mother becomes replaced by daughter for the release of this aggression. Classic incest—father/stepdaughter—occurs in about 30% of all cases.

While the family connection is important and most abuse occurs within the home, there is a carry-over to the rest of the population. In families with "working mothers," however, there is no more likelihood of abuse than with mothers who do not work.

Lack of community resources and lack of

adequate income play an influential role in why parents abuse their children.

With the women's movement in the 1970's and the increase of rape crisis centers, child sexual abuse became a recognized phenomenon. "Good people can do bad things," stated Conte. This is not just a mental health problem but a problem of the family and the socio-cultural realm. Abusers are preconditioned in their early lives through interpersonal violence, non-empathetic adults, isolation and other forms of physical and/or emotional abuse.

Dr. Conte advocates education as a primary means of prevention. Children need to be taught skills to prevent becoming a victim. Case identification is a necessity to stop chronic victimization.

Incarceration and punishment of offenders are only societal statements—temporary solutions—and are inadequate without rehabilitation and treatment. Education and prevention programs will foster more community and individual involvement in seeking a solution to the problem.

Tennessee has started its prevention efforts through legislation. At the luncheon, Rep. Bill Covington (D-Nashville) received recognition for his sponsorship of child abuse legislation in the Tennessee House of Representatives.

If anyone desires more information about these issues or would like to learn of agencies with programs to help victims, contact the Women's Center at 322-4843.

-Charlotte Staggs

II, said Mary Margaret Marini.

These changes can be attributed to the effectiveness of contraception and the introduction of labor saving devices in the home. Studies have shown that women in the labor market spend half as much time on housework as homemakers.

However, women still do most of the housework even when they work outside the home. Husbands of working women spend an average of 18 minutes more a week on housework. There is a great imbalance in the workload between men and women today. Restructuring family responsibility is harder to accomplish than the acceptance of women in the labor market.

Marini raised the question of whether women and men can ever achieve equal status while women have unequal amounts of time.

-Charlotte Frankel

Concluding Panel

In a final panel moderated by Catherine Stimpson, Antonina Gove, associate pro-

fessor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, and Susan Wiltshire, associate professor of classics, spoke of changes in attitudes toward women. Gove said that women changed when they began pursuing careers. Changes in society have brought change for women that must continue. Few women now envision being a housewife as a career.

Wiltshire stressed the effort involved in changing attitudes toward women. She stated "change does not come easily and sometimes it requires conflict and embarrassment and always politics." Women must face conflicts but avoid burn out because "you see, they win when we get burned out." Wiltshire emphasized that the superwoman is dead, "you can't do it all and it is dumb to try." All women must work together to accomplish the goals of change.

In conclusion, Catherine Stimpson complimented Vanderbilt on its institutional pride. She stressed the value of networking to accomplish the goals of women's studies.

-Cynthia McKnight

WHET Elects New Officers at Statewide Conference

Women in Higher Education in Tennessee held its annual state wide conference on the campus of Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville on Friday, April 26. Some fifty participants, including seven from Vanderbilt, participated in the workshop on "Upward Mobility - Specific Strategies for Movement" led by Max Wortman, Jr., Director of the Institute for Strategic Management and Policy Studies and William B. Stokely Professor of Management at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Bonnie Dill, Director of the Center for Research on Women and Associate Professor of Sociology at Memphis State University, spoke after lunch on "New Trends in Women's Studies - Focusing on women in the South." She explained that Women's research centers across the nation grew in response to the need for scholarship in the field. In 1974 Wellesley College and Stanford University established the first university-based women's research centers. By 1983, when 40 centers joined the network, the Women's Research Council was established to link women's research centers. The Southeast currently has 3 women's research centers, at Memphis State University, Duke-University of North Carolina, and at Spelman College in Atlanta.

Current topics being investigated at the Memphis State Center for Research on Women include the study of women's perceptions of themselves within the class system in the U.S.; the effect of racial oppression on women's lives; stress, mental health and upward-mobility strategies of women. Dill emphasized the importance of bringing a "southern" perspective on class and race to women's studies.

New officers were elected at the business meeting. They are: President Joann Mitchell, Assistant Director, Opportunity Development Center, Vanderbilt University; First Vice President Mary Lou Johnson, Chair, Department of Elementary Education, University of Tennessee at Martin; Second Vice President Virginia Moore, Professor of Law, Tennessee Tech University; Secretary Jeanette Heritage, Professor of Psychology, Middle Tennessee State University; Treasurer Ida Read, Assistant Professor and Librarian, Middle Tennessee State University.

Regional Representatives for Middle Tennessee are Pat Pierce, Vanderbilt University; Gretta Stanger, Tennessee Technological University; and Jana Rollins, Austin Peay State University.

-Linda Karvedsky

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OGSM

The Owen Graduate School of Management announces the Vanderbilt Employee Scholarship Award. The one-half tuition scholarship award (\$6000.00) will be made available to a full-time employee of the Vanderbilt University or Medical Center who has been accepted into the Executive M.B.A. Program for the 1985-86 academic year.

The EMBA Program is a two-year course of study, meeting on alternate weekends, all day Friday and Saturday. Attendance is required in all classes. The first year class for 1985-86 will begin classes with a week-in-residence off-campus on August 18 through August 24. Information and application requirements and procedures may be obtained by calling ext. 2513 or by visiting the EMBA Program office on the first floor of Management Hall.

Women's VU Cost Increases

Beginning with the 1985-86 academic year, the *Women's VU* newsletter will be printed and distributed monthly September through June. Our off-campus postage and handling costs will increase to \$3.00.

If your *Women's VU* is being mailed to you off-campus and you wish to continue to receive it, please return the form below with a check made payable to the Vanderbilt University Women's Center for \$3.00. Mail both form and check to the Vanderbilt University Women's Center, Box 1513, Station B, Nashville, TN 37235.

Call for Papers:

Caroline Gordon and Evelyn Scott: A Hometown Symposium featuring works and reminiscences of these prolific early 20th century writers. November 7-8, 1985, at Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tennessee.

Call for papers deadline is August 1, 1985. Send 10-12 page double-spaced papers to Eleanor H. Beiswenger, Department of Language and Literature, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville TN 37044. (615) 648-7891.

Conferences, cont. from p. 1

California in San Francisco June 14-26. The Institute will focus on a wide range of women's health issues from the perspective of university teaching. The two-week course includes films, lectures, seminars, and field trips as the participants explore attitudes, behavior, and treatment of women and by women. Minority women's health concerns, environmental issues, and violence against women also will be on the agenda.

Reports of these three events will be published in fall issues of *Women's VU*. In addition, participants will preside at noon-time discussions about their respective meetings to answer questions and share information beyond that covered in written reports.

Sue Jones will teach a course on women's health next fall. Nancy Ransom plans to take a camera with her to Kenya, and hopes to bring back slides of her trip.

Gender Role Research

The Rockefeller Foundation has announced support in the range of \$15,000-\$30,000 for projects that will improve the understanding and recognition of changing gender roles in the workplace and within the family. Three sub-themes will be given particular emphasis:

1. The changing nature of women's and men's work and family responsibilities.
2. Differences in the allocation of income and time between men and women within the household and their implication for social welfare of the family, particularly the children.
3. The psychological dimension of gender roles and changing patterns of socialization.

Deadlines for submission of proposals is September 15, 1985. Address inquiries and applications to: Gender Roles Program, The Rockefeller Foundation, 1133 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036.

Center for Health Services

The Center for Health Services, based at Vanderbilt University, develops programs that combine student learning with community need. A new program, the Action Research Project began this year. Action Research links the information needs of social service organizations and non-profit agencies with the academic research of students. Students work on community-defined research projects while also obtaining academic credit.

If you are interested in Action Research for the fall of 1985 or spring of 1986, please contact Pat Sharkey at 322-4773 or 4184 by August 1.

Edited by Linda Karwedsy

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Vanderbilt Women's Center
E-2 West Side Row
Box 1513, Station B
Nashville, TN 37235