

Margaret
Cunningham
Women's Center

Facing career realities in the 1990s: *Can women reach the top?* *Tough Choices*

*Lynda Phillips-Madsen, Associate Dean for Administration,
Owen Graduate School of Management*

Linda Bird, Director, Career Center

In the 1980's there was much discussion regarding women in the work place whose careers have "derailed" for many reasons in very different types of organizations. Studies attempt to explain what has caused this phenomenon: why bright, well-educated women in different types of organizations remain unable to reach career goals.

The inability of women in corporations to progress beyond middle management has been labeled the "glass ceiling effect." The "glass ceiling" is a barrier to promotion just below the most senior or management positions in a company.

A woman who has reached middle management in one of Nashville's largest corporations was quoted recently as saying: "There are two ways to look at my future opportunity for advancement within this company. And that is gloomy and not too gloomy."

"How Gloomy Is It?" The forecast for women managers in the marketplace of the 90's can be as gloomy and/or as hopeful as the data one chooses to review. When one looks at Fortune 500 companies, the forecast looks gloomy indeed. Only one woman has made it to the post of CEO and Chairman of her Fortune 500 organization.

That woman is Katharine Graham, whose family owns controlling interest in *The Washington Post*. But even Graham, who is respected in journalism and business circles, and whose family owned the business, was not allowed to assume her leadership post until her husband, the CEO before her, had died. In forecasting the opportunity for women to become CEOs, observation of the *Washington Post* scenario would lead one to make a very gloomy forecast indeed.

A less gloomy observation, however, is that many women are now in middle management positions throughout U.S. corporations. A "natural" forecast is based on the "pipeline theory." That is, that eventually women in middle management will be promoted upward until, "naturally" they will "arrive" at the top of the corporation in senior leadership positions.

So far this "arrival" has not occurred in significant numbers. In fact, recent studies suggest instead that many managerial women are leaving the corporation.

Working women in the 1990's will face more complex issues and tougher choices than ever before. The career concerns of the 80's will remain. Balancing education, career, family, marriage, and managing dual career families will continue to challenge women in the 90's.

Many of us can recall an earlier era when women had three career choices: nurse, teacher, or homemaker. Today, opportunities for college-educated women continue to expand in variety and increase in numbers. Women are an integral part of a revolution occurring in the workplace which some say is as profound as the industrial revolution.

This means that the woman of the 90's needs flexibility to cope with inevitable and rapid change. Success in the workplace will largely be determined by an ability to make tough choices.

The changing status of American and international business will have a direct impact on the nature of careers. Employment stability within organizations is fast becoming a thing of the past. Cutbacks, reductions in force, mergers, and acquisitions are commonplace today. No longer can anyone plan to spend an entire career with one organization.

The much-forecasted globalization of business and industry is a reality in 1990. Already a significant percentage of jobs are directly related to international business.

While business goes global, multinational corporations are not necessarily the setting for most new careers. Employment opportunities with small businesses are expanding more rapidly than in large organizations. The trend during the 80's was a disproportionate number of new jobs being created by small employers. Small companies pose certain risks for employees but at the same time offer exciting potential and are an increasingly popular choice for new college graduates.

Now more than ever, early career planning will be the key to successful career management. Career exploration, self-assessment and decision-making skills are the basic activities in which college students must engage in order to satisfactorily cope with the tough choices of the 90's.

(continued on page two)

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Reach the top? (from page one)

Is the future bleak for college women who want to have business careers in the 1990's? Not necessarily. The "glass ceiling" effect is one of many caution signs that young women entering managerial careers in corporate America should

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observe. But there is good news for women who eschew the large corporation and develop their own business.

For more than a decade, the number of businesses owned by women has grown by nearly 10 per cent, while growth in the number of firms owned by men in the U.S. has grown only 4.3 per cent. Most of the one out of three women who got their MBA's from Harvard and "dropped out" of corporate America started their own businesses. These entrepreneurs took their corporate experience and built their own enterprise!

A national study called "The Executive Woman Project" lists Six "Lessons" for Young Women Entering Corporate Careers in 1990.²

1. Learn the ropes; company rules are usually unwritten.
2. Take control of your career; don't expect mentors or the system to provide advancement.
3. Build confidence by taking a risky new job and work hard to perform well in it.
4. Learn to trust and be willing to rely on others.
5. Take responsibility for a "profit and loss" position where performance is documented and visible.
6. Integrate life and work.

Page 2, Women's VU, April 1990

Women must "work smart and hard," to become successful as executives in large companies or their own small businesses. In the 1990's, as economic forecasts tell of increased competition for American industry, the traditional routes to top management are being challenged. More than ever, whoever can do the job will have increased opportunity to get the job. That person could well be a woman.

Endnotes:

¹Bonnie Arnett, "Are Women Closer to Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling?" *Advantage Magazine*, September, 1989, p. 36.

²From "The Executive Woman Project," reported in *Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Can Women Reach the Top of America's Largest Corporations?* Ann M. Morrison, Randall P. White, Ellen Van Velsor, and the Center for Creative Leadership, Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1987, p. 229. ■



make quick changes, take risks,
and still keep your perspective.

Nominations for the 1990 Mary Jane Werthan Award will be accepted from now through the summer. The recipient will be a person who has made a noteworthy contribution to the advancement of women at Vanderbilt. For additional information call the women's center at 322-4843.

The Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center Advisory Board will meet on Monday, April 2 at 3:30 p.m. in Carmichael Towers East, room 208. Chair Don Welch presiding.

Tough choices (from page one)

Career exploration should continue throughout the college years. The best first step in the exploration is to take advantage of the information available in the Career Center.

• A resource specialist will guide students through the many available books, videos, and company literature to begin their search for career information.

• The alumni career advisory network can put students in touch with Vanderbilt graduates who are willing to provide useful information and guidance.

• Career Center seminars and events scheduled throughout the year on a variety of topics are important sources of career information.

The best-prepared students will pursue career-related experiences while still in college. Campus involvement is one way to develop career skills. The Career Center publication, ACCESS, provides information about campus activities which will enhance the liberal arts curriculum. Part-time employment, summer jobs and internships are increasingly important in building the college student's career awareness and marketability. A new Career Center service called VENTURE develops critical job-search skills and puts students in touch with internship and summer job opportunities.

The excitement of campus interviews during the senior year should be the culmination of several years of careful consideration, planning and preparation to make career decisions. Opportunities available through campus interviews present the first of many situations where the new career seeker will have to make some tough choices. For the well-prepared and flexible new college graduate, the 1990's promise a new world of challenge, change, and exciting new opportunities. ■

HELP WANTED. Secretary III position at the Women's Center. Qualifications include experience with word processing. Interested persons should send a resumé to: Nancy A. Ransom, Box 1513 Station B, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37235. (Please do not telephone.)

Speaking of women . . .

Marilyn Edwards is Associate Director of General Services for Vanderbilt's Plant Operations Department. Her responsibilities include managing Campus Housekeeping, Grounds, and the Vehicle Shop. She has been at Vanderbilt since June 1986. She was interviewed recently by Elaine Goleski, Project Manager of the Library Annex.

What kind of career path led to your current position?

I was born in Fort Huachuca, Arizona (an Army base), but was raised in Los Angeles. I attended Grambling University and graduated in 1967 with a B.A. in Math Education. I taught high school mathematics from 1967-69: a nice occupation, I thought, but not what I wanted to do. So I began to look around. While in graduate school at Georgia State, I started working as Administrative Assistant to the Housekeeping Department Coordinator for the City of Atlanta. I moved from there to a position as an Airport Service Coordinator for what was to become Hartsfield International Airport. In 1980, I was hired as Service Coordinator by the Atlanta Airlines Terminal Corporation. I was a consultant in Atlanta for two years, and then came to Vanderbilt.

What was your first career objective, growing up?

I remember that in ninth-grade algebra class, I suddenly thought, "this is it"—this is what I want to do. Even though classroom teaching didn't work out for me, I feel I am still a teacher at heart. I don't have a structured classroom situation; what I do is work on getting people to change their behavior. I find that asking questions of your staff, as part of being their supervisor, leads to some of the same satisfactions that led me to teaching. It's still fun to see something register on someone's face, to realize that person has suddenly grasped a point or a procedure that you have been trying to help them understand. That moment of enlightenment is a lot like what a teacher does.

Did being a woman make a difference in your work experience?

To me, it doesn't seem unusual to

be the only woman in a work situation: it's something that's happened to me several times in my career. I remember when I was working as a service coordinator at Hartsfield, I was the only woman. I was inspecting a runway and needed to cross another runway, so I had to radio the tower for permission. A startled controller gave me permission, then radioed, "Are you a woman or is your seat belt just too tight?" That kind of surprise was a reaction I got many times at Hartsfield.

What's the hardest work lesson you've learned?

Probably one I haven't learned yet! Managing large numbers of people, both at Hartsfield and at Vanderbilt, is always a challenge. There are currently 210 custodians and 12 supervisory personnel in Housekeeping; in Grounds, 25 year-round employees and 4 supervisors (and lots of seasonal personnel). I will say, though, that all the things I believe can happen in a work environment I've been able to make happen at Vanderbilt.

What's the biggest misconception about housekeeping and grounds?

That they're simple. Most people don't realize that consistency of results is our biggest challenge. Both departments produce a visible, but transitory, product. We are also working with a very diverse group of employees, yet we must find a way to insure a certain level of service. The Nashville labor market is also part of the challenge: it's very tight with low unemployment, so the numbers of workers just aren't there anymore. That means that we have to do more to motivate the workers we have now.

Do you have many female counterparts? Do the professional organizations bring you in contact with other women like you?

It doesn't make sense how few women there are in positions like mine. There are a huge number of women in housekeeping at the entry level, and the low salaries have kept it a "woman's job." I have seen an increase in the number of women



photo by Lesley Collins

Marilyn Edwards, Associate Director of General Services, Plant Operations

managers since 1975, but I'm still surprised at how few there are.

It is still true, at professional meetings, and in training sponsored by the associations, that the participants are predominantly men.

How do you think women make a difference in your profession or in the workplace generally?

I think women have a sensitivity to people, an orientation to working with people, and that is one of our strengths. I feel I am often a problem-solver for the staff in Housekeeping, some of whom aren't aware of the resources that may be available to solve their problems. And in my areas of responsibility, I feel that women excel because they have an eye for detail, a better eye for detail than men.

If you could change places with someone, who would it be?

Maya Angelou. I have seen her read her poetry three times and enjoyed every moment of each performance. She seems to be such a solid person, and she shows such enjoyment in what she does. She is very centered, regarding poetry as her job, her profession, and everything she does is true to her craft. I admire that.

I will say, though, that at this point in time, I like where I am. I'm not talking about contentment in terms of feeling like I've reached my end goal, but that I am comfortable with myself and my work: this is who I am. ■

News quotes

Governor picks Daughtrey for Supreme Court

Gov. Ned McWherter announced yesterday he will appoint Martha Craig (Cissy) Daughtrey to the Tennessee Supreme Court, making her the first woman to ever serve on the state's highest court.

Daughtrey, 47, a court of criminal appeals judge, will replace Justice William J. Harbison, who plans to retire March 31.

Daughtrey would serve the remainder of Harbison's term, which is due to expire this fall, but she was nominated in January by the state Democratic Executive Committee as part of a slate of Supreme Court candidates on the Aug. 2 general election ballot. She would have to be elected in August to retain the seat.

"It is an honor to be able to appoint such a highly capable and greatly talented person as Judge Daughtrey to our state's highest court," McWherter said. "This appointment continues my commitment to appoint qualified women to judicial positions across Tennessee."

The Tennessean
March 4, 1990

Don't stop with one female justice, Smeal says

While praising the possibility that the Tennessee Supreme Court will get its first woman justice, feminist Eleanor Smeal said yesterday that is not enough.

"I hope to goodness you will have the first woman on the court," Smeal, the former president of the National Organization for Women, told a University of Tennessee Law School audience.

"That would give you 20% [of the five-member court]. A terrific thing," Smeal said of the probable election of state Appeals Judge Martha Craig Daughtrey.

"But let's face it, she is where she is because...she had to fight for a primary. She wasn't just approved of as a matter of course."

Smeal said she worried that once Daughtrey is elected, people may come to view her seat on the court as "the women's seat," just as some see

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's seat on the U.S. Supreme Court.

"Are we to stop at that one? How do we get to the point that people recognize that there must be at least four [women on the nine-member U.S. Supreme Court]? And surely we should consider five, occasionally."

From the courtrooms to the corporate boardrooms, from the state legislature to Congress, more women must be in leadership positions, Smeal said.

It is the only way to guarantee equality for women at all levels in society, she said.

At the present rate of change, it will not be until the next century that women, the next generation, will find equality in the judiciary, in Congress and education, she said.

The Tennessean
February 24, 1990

Study detects little extra risk in later pregnancy

Women who put off starting their families until late in their child-bearing years face little extra risk of having premature or unhealthy babies, a study concludes.

The number of women delaying the first pregnancy until their mid-30's or beyond has increased significantly in the past two decades, largely because women have postponed motherhood until they establish careers.

"Most, although not all, previous studies suggest they might be at an increased risk of low-birth-weight infants and stillbirths as well as certain other complications," said Dr. Gertrude S. Berkowitz of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, who did the study. "That's why women over the age of 35 have generally been considered to be a high risk."

The findings by Dr. Berkowitz and her colleagues at Mount Sinai do not mean that women can postpone child-bearing indefinitely and still be reasonably certain they can conceive. As women age, they become less fertile, and when they become pregnant, they are more likely to have miscarriages. These women face a higher risk of having babies with genetic disorders.

The New York Times
March 8, 1990

It's your health

Beth Colvin Huff, RN, MSN
Department of OB/GYN

Varicose veins are not just a cosmetic concern, they can also be a health problem. Understanding how they occur may help you prevent or minimize symptoms.

Gravity helps the flow of blood travel from the heart down to the lower extremities, but blood flow going back to the heart must flow against gravity. This upward flow is helped by leg muscles squeezing to push blood uphill and by one-way valves in the veins that permit the blood to flow in only one direction. When these valves fail, the blood flows backward and accumulates in one area causing the vein to balloon outward. These knotted clusters of swollen veins are varicose veins.

Women are four times more likely than men to have varicosities. Pregnancy increases the risk both from the weight of the uterus causing sluggish blood flow and from hormone levels which can weaken the vein, causing the valves to fail. There is a hereditary link to varicose veins. In those women genetically predisposed, birth control pills may pose problems. As women age, the veins and muscles lose strength and varicosities can worsen.

Symptoms of varicose veins include swelling in the calf, dull pain, heaviness, itching and skin ulcers resulting from poor circulation. Phlebitis, an inflammation of the vein, causes a tender, warm, red, swollen vein and can be associated with a blood clot. These superficial blood clots rarely travel to the heart or lungs.

Treatment is accomplished through surgery or through chemical scarring of the vein, but prevention is the best health plan. If your job requires long periods of inactivity, put your feet up, preferably above hip level, several times during the day. Exercise, especially walking, keeps the muscle tone of the legs strong which improves the flow of blood back to the heart. Weight control reduces pressure on the lower extremities. Proper fitting support hose may help lessen symptoms of heaviness and aching, but be extremely careful to avoid tight, restrictive garments which may worsen the problem. ■



In the library

Naomi E. Heiser
Women's center librarian

Victimization of women and children data-base

The future has arrived at the women's center library with the recent acquisition of our first resource in data-base form. The *Response to the Victimization of Women and Children* data-base (established in 1989) is a major comprehensive source of information about various aspects of violence against women and children. Some of the many topics included are domestic violence, child abuse, sexual abuse, health care for victims, and rape.

The women's center library has received the journal *Response to the Victimization of Women and Children* since 1982. It is associated with the Center for Women Policy Studies in Washington, DC, and is multidisciplinary in scope with the intent of creating "a positive dialogue among advocates, practitioners, and policymakers in many fields." *Response* offers other publications (such as a *Directory of International Networking Resources on Violence against Women*) which are listed in the data-base.

The data-base is divided onto two disks, each containing numerous files which amount to over 600,000 bytes, or more than 300 single-space pages of text. The text is in WordPerfect and can be manipulated and printed out using the functions of this program. Information is organized in various formats (such as bibliographies, abstracts, indexes, and book reviews) and is filed by subject. Some examples:

- Shelter and advocacy literature
- Newsletters on spouse and elder abuse (listed by state)
- International listing of periodicals

in the field

- Literature for and about children of battered women (includes workbooks, coloring books, films, parenting manuals)
- National organizations working on family violence issues
- Nursing network on violence against women (training manuals and health care protocols)
- List of publishers with offerings in the field
- Literature on research in the field of family violence: needs, methods, and controversies
- Indexes for *Response* journal by author, title, key word, and content in volume order.

The founders of the *Response* data-base are optimistic about the possibilities of this type of publishing, since it can be a continuously evolving project. Its flexibility allows for updating, adding, and sharing of information, "which will make it as

useful as possible for everyone in the field from student to practitioner."

Plans for the further development of this data-base highlight the need to:

1. Focus on dealing with the victimization of women and children.
2. Emphasize action-oriented initiatives.
3. Facilitate research and dissemination of information.
4. Identify interdisciplinary connections as well as connections between research, development, and advocacy.
5. Identify needs and resources.

Anyone interested in sharing information with the *Response* authors is encouraged to do so.

The *Response* data-base is available for use on the women's center library computer. Since access to the computer is sometimes limited, it is recommended that anyone wishing to peruse this resource make an appointment with the librarian. ■

Calendar of events

Call 322-4843 for further information on the programs listed below.

Women Writers Workshop will hold an organizational meeting on Wednesday, April 11 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. in 315 MRL (Kennedy Center). All women writers interested in participating in any type of writers workshop are encouraged to attend in case several groups are needed. Box suppers are available for \$6.00 by calling 322-4843 by noon on Monday, April 9.

Poet in residence at Vanderbilt, Ruth Fainlight, will read from her new and collected poems about sibyls on Thursday, April 12 at 12:15 p.m. in Sarratt 205. Professor Fainlight is a visiting poet from England for the Spring Semester. She is the author of ten books of poetry including her most recent, *The Knot* (Hutchinson, London, England, 1990).

The Book Group will discuss *Heartbreak Hotel* by Gabrielle Burton on Monday, April 16, from 5:15 p.m. until 6:15 p.m. at the women's center. Margaret Meggs will lead the discussion. New members are welcome. Light refreshments.

Women and Self-Esteem: How to Maintain a Positive and Realistic Self-Image is a workshop led by Nancy A. Ransom, Director of the women's center on Tuesday, April 17 from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. in Furman 109. (Light refreshments will be available at 5:00 p.m.) The workshop is designed to provide information about the meaning of self-esteem and mechanisms for maintaining a realistic and positive self-image. Pre-registration is required by April 12. Fee \$5.00.

Lunchtime Book Review of *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home* by Arlie Hochschild with Anne Machung will be given by Sue Hinze Jones, a graduate student in sociology, who teaches courses in marriage and the family. Hochschild is a professor of sociology at the University of California who researches two-career families and analyzes the challenges and stresses associated with juggling work and family life. Thursday, April 19, 12:15 p.m. in Sarratt 118. *The Second Shift* is available in the Vanderbilt Book Store and Women's Center Library. ■

Announcements et cetera

University Series On Valuing Diversity. Dr. Edwin Nichols, an internationally known management and educational consultant, will be the featured speaker on Wednesday, April 4, from 8:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. Dr. Nichols maintains a private clinical and industrial psychology practice, has taught at Harvard's Institute for Educational Management, and conducts cross-cultural management workshops throughout the U.S. and abroad. Dr. Nichols has spoken at Vanderbilt several times to enthusiastic audiences of students, staff, and faculty.

The University Series on Valuing Diversity recognizes and celebrates cultural and intellectual diversity in human endeavors. The program is free and open to Vanderbilt students, faculty, and staff on a space available basis. Call the Opportunity Development Center at 322-4705 for possible openings in the April 4 workshop.

Hands Across Vanderbilt

Members of several campus organizations have been meeting weekly to design a program which will encourage commitment to diversity on the campus. Inspired by a similar program at Boston University, Lynn Faust-Cohen, Jewish Student Union Director, proposed the idea to VU students. Initially

discussing a symbolic joining of hands, the group agreed that this needed to be coupled with other ways of encouraging diversity.

The kick off for Hands Across Vanderbilt will be at the University Series On Valuing Diversity, April 4 with Dr. Edwin Nichols (see story above). A variety of activities is being planned in conjunction with Rites of Spring (tentative date Friday, April 6 at noon) and throughout the semester. Among these is a series of dialogues in the dorms which are designed to provide students with an opportunity to discuss ways of promoting acceptance and understanding of diversity at Vanderbilt. The first dorm dialogue will be with Dr. Edwin Nichols on April 4 at 5:00 p.m. at McGill Hour.

SGA and the Racial Environment Project are working toward the establishment of a Vanderbilt Scholarship for a disadvantaged minority.

Watch for details on the symbolic Hands Across Vanderbilt or call Coleen Stumm, Chair of the committee, at 421-6453 and volunteer to get involved. Although this is a student-organized project, the purpose is to involve faculty, staff, and students.

Women Facing the 21st Century: Issues of the 90's presents an exciting exchange of ideas and sharing of

strategies about where we've been and where we are going as we stand on the threshold of a new century.

Conference topics will address what's next for women who have benefitted from the sacrifices made by others during the last thirty years. In addition to panel discussions, main speakers are Betty Nixon and Karen Williams.

Sponsored by the YWCA and CABLE, the conference is on April 28, 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at the YWCA. Cost is \$16 (including box lunch) plus YWCA membership (\$15). For details call 269-9922.

"Covering up one's age is a denial of our own history and our own humanness. It's societally induced and conditioned. It's evidence of the spread and pervasiveness of gerontophobia -- the fear of growing old and of old people. It's a seduction in many ways, but ultimately we don't fool anybody."

Maggie Kuhn,
founder of Gray Panthers

Edited by JUDITH T. HELFER

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Margaret Cuningham Women's Center

Vanderbilt University
Franklin Bldg., West Side Row
Box 1513, Station B
Nashville, TN 37235

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