

# WOMEN'S VU

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VIII:1

## U.N. WOMEN'S CONFERENCE IN NAIROBI



Leading a workshop, the women of the Osaka North Ward International Study Group in Japan, active since 1975, are an action group for better working conditions.

Imagine 10,000 women attending more than 100 concurrent meetings every day for 2 weeks on the Vanderbilt, Peabody, and Scarritt campuses! Imagine every hotel room and every college dormitory room crowded - two and three to a room - from Nashville to Murfreesboro. Imagine women from 150 different nations, dressed in the different costumes and wearing their hair according to the different styles of their countries. Imagine a Catholic mass in Swahili, with a choir accompanied by drums. Now you have a sense of what Forum '85 was like in Nairobi, Kenya, in July.

It was an honor to represent Vanderbilt at the Non-Governmental Organizations-NGO-Forum that marked the end of the United Nations Decade for Women. The Forum and the UN Conference, which overlapped both assessed the Decade's progress as a first step toward future development of sex equality in all nations and women's participation in the political life of all countries.

My activities centered on the four panels and thirteen workshops sponsored by Women's Studies International, a consortium of organizations concerned with higher education, research and teaching about women, and feminist studies. Panels and workshops began with short papers by four to seven women from different countries; discussion with those who constituted the audience followed. Each panel lasted 3 hours; workshops ran 1½ hours. All sessions were well attended. At many workshops women had to be turned away for lack of space.



Making their baskets while listening to speeches, these women are in rural Kenya at Wamungo Handicraft Center, Machakos District.

It was not easy to get away from the women's studies sessions to attend workshops sponsored by other groups. One workshop that I was able to attend was organized by Japanese women from Osaka, on the subject of working conditions in Japan. Although the laws are changing to permit women greater employment opportunity, discrimination against women persists. The Osaka women's group is working in Japan to change the habits of employers and women, so that equal opportunity for women will become a reality.

For the weekend, I signed up for a trip to Machakos, a semi-arid district southeast of Nairobi. Two bus loads of women, ac-

companied by Kenyan hostesses, visited with the Machakos Women's Club and district officials (all male!), and were treated to an African feast at the Kalawa Mixed Secondary School. The school was started in 1970 as a "Harambee," or neighborhood school. In the last two years they have begun to show fruits of their collective efforts: over 10,000 trees were planted around the school grounds. In 1958 Kalawa School student dancers reached the finals in the National Provincial Drama competition at Mombassa. Most important of all, the number of students passing their exams at increasingly higher levels has risen markedly over the last three years, while the number of failures declined. Considering that these youngsters walk 5 kilometers to the nearest water supply, this is an impressive achievement.

Back in Nairobi on Sunday, at the Basilica of the Holy Family I attended mass, which was recited in Swahili. During the following week I visited the many cultural and craft exhibits around the city; watched demonstrations for peace, against war, and women's rights; saw wonderful plays; heard singing in more languages than I could count; and ate foods I have never before tasted. This, in addition to attending the conference sessions four times a day. At the closing on Friday, July 19, women sang and danced for hours on the University of Nairobi lawn. No one wanted to leave.

At this writing I am selecting and sorting 350 slides to share with anyone who is interested in hearing about my adventure in Kenya.

-Nancy Ransom  
Director, Women's Center

### HERSTORY QUIZ

1. What American women in the 1700's, without formal schooling, raised 5 children, managed brilliantly a large farm and business affairs (increasing the holdings), and was one of the great letter writers of all times? She admonished her husband, the President, to "remember the ladies."

2. Born the 15th child of freed slaves, this woman founded and served as president for 24 years of Bethune-Cookman College and as director of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration during F.D.R.'s presidency helping thousands of black youths get jobs and go to college.

Answers on page 3.

## Infant Day Care Now Available at Vandy

"The social life of a child begins when s/he is born."

-Susanna Miller  
The Psychology of Play

A proposal has been approved and plans are underway for an additional program at the Vanderbilt Child Care Center to include infants and toddlers, ages two months to two years. According to Diane Neighbors, the Center's director, opening of the new program will depend upon renovation or completion of space of the facilities.

Under consideration is the Home Economics Annex next to the Stallworth Building on the Peabody Campus. This site is considered ideal as the present day care program is located in the Stallworth Building. If the Annex can be renovated to meet fire codes, building standards, plumbing and other Metro codes, a September or October, 1985 opening is anticipated. If renovation is not possible, Neighbors said a new building, designed specifically for infants and toddlers, will have to be constructed with a January, 1986 opening date. Cost of renovation is high, and cost effectiveness will be one determining factor.

Vanderbilt provides the building and maintenance for the existing day care center. Salaries, supplies, and similar needs are provided for through tuition paid by the parents. Sixty children ages two through five are now enrolled. There are four lead teachers, one for each age, and a total of six to eight assistant teachers, depending on the size of the groups. During the academic year, Vanderbilt-Peabody students work with the staff.

The Center maintains close contact with parents. Daily reports are made to parents, and conferences are held three times a year. The developmental model used at the Center considers each child's emotional, social, and cognitive growth.

In the new infant-toddler facility, 24 to 32 children are anticipated with two lead teachers for the infant group and one for the toddlers.

The additional facilities have received wide support and administrative backing.

Nancy Ransom and Jan Rosemergy were credited by Neighbors as being key persons in the proposal to extend the present program to include infants and toddlers. The proposal included the immediate addition of the infant-toddler program as well as duplication of the present program for 1986.

For further information, contact Diane Neighbors at 322-8074.

-Charlotte Staggs

## LUNCHTIME SEMINARS



Photo by Lewis Hine

Grandmother: Belle Moskowitz

Belle Moskowitz (1877-1933), Governor Alfred E. Smith's political advisor during the 1920s, was one of few women in the post-suffrage era to wield major political power, and the only Jewish woman of her time to achieve prominence in national party politics.

Like many active women contemporaries, Moskowitz felt torn by conflicting images of women's proper place. She married, had a family, and went through several key trans-



Photo by Irma Commanday

Granddaughter: Elisabeth Perry

itions necessary to enable her to achieve in her ultimate field.

Elisabeth Perry, Moskowitz's granddaughter and Assistant Professor of History, will give a Lunchtime Seminar entitled "Gender, Place, and Ethnic Identity in the Early Career of Belle Moskowitz" with slides, Wednesday, September 11, at the Women's Center, noon to 1:00 p.m. Brown bag. Refreshments provided.

## DUTCH TREAT BREAKFAST CLUB

The Dutch Treat Breakfast Club provides an opportunity for staff and faculty to meet for breakfast in the Rand Faculty Room, go through the food line starting at 7:30 A.M., settle in and eat, and hear an informal talk beginning at 8:00 A.M. Some people prefer to come only for the talk, which is followed by questions and answers. Coffee is provided free. The whole program lasts until 9:00 A.M., but people leave as they need to. The breakfasts are casual, pleasant, and informative.

The theme of this year's Breakfast Club is "Getting to Know Vanderbilt." Speakers from various parts of the Vanderbilt Community will describe their departments, explain briefly what they and their staffs do, and discuss how their offices and/or work relates to the lives of Vanderbilt employees. This is an opportunity to get to know the Vanderbilt system better so that it can better work for you.

The schedule of speakers for the 1985-86 is as follows:

Sept. 19, Pat Tucker, Occupational Health  
Oct. 17, Rosamund Gabrielson, Vanderbilt Hospital Nursing Dept.  
Nov. 14, Gerry Halek, Psychological and Counseling Center  
Dec. 12, Beverly Asbury, Religious Affairs  
Jan. 16, Jo Ellen Hunter, Bookstore  
Feb. 21, LaDonna Meuchel, Campus Rec.  
March 17, Shirley Hallbalde, Jean and Alexander Heard Library  
April 17, Schedules and Reservations (tentative)

As sponsor of these breakfasts, the Women's Center extends to all staff and faculty an invitation to breakfast with Pat Tucker, Nurse Coordinator of Occupational Health Services, to hear in depth how her office functions, changes that have occurred over the summer, and what to look forward to this academic year.

This month Easter Gray will offer an AUTO MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP for women faculty, staff and students on Tuesdays and Thursdays for eight sessions beginning September 10. The time is 5:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. Drive your car to parking lot 72A and find out what's under the hood, how to maintain an engine, and how to talk more knowledgeably with mechanics. This is a hands-on experience. The fee is \$45, and class size is limited. For more information and to register call 322-4843.

The UNIVERSITY NETWORK LUNCH will meet Wednesday, September 18 at noon in the Hill Student Center on Peabody campus, Dining Room 1. Bring a bag lunch or buy food in the cafeteria. Invitation open to all faculty and staff.

The GRADUATE STUDENTS' GROUP will kick off this year's get-togethers on Friday, September 13 at the Women's Center, 4:30-6:00 P.M. All women graduate students are invited to come, share, and make the Center and this group your own. Light refreshments provided.

## Women's Center Library Buried Treasure?

The Women's Center library has something for everyone—faculty, staff, and students. Among the topics covered by the library collection are women's history, health and psychology; sex roles, family, and marriage, rape and abuse; affirmative action, comparable worth, women and work; women in academe; and feminism.

The following titles are only a taste of what our four star library (working on the fifth) offers:

- Gloria Steinem, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions*
- Susan Brownmiller, *Femininity*
- Carol Gilligan, *In A Different Voice*
- Robert S. Mendelohn, *Mal(e) Practice: How Doctors Manipulate Women*
- Eleanor Roosevelt, *On My Own*
- *Everywoman's Guide to Colleges and Universities*
- *The Quotable Woman*

People who use the library come to do research; they come to get practical help ("Do you have anything on grants and scholarships available to women?" Yes.); they come to become better informed or to find casual reading (*Divorce and After, Ms.*); and they come to find non-sexist books for their children.

Each year the Center adds to its collection through budget funds and gifts to the library. A part-time librarian and library intern are available on site and by phone (322-4843). Library materials circulate for a two-week period and may be renewed. Reference books, documents and periodicals do not circulate.

If you have not yet used the library, drop by the Women's Center soon (around corner from Sarratt) to browse. Currently on exhibit are materials Nancy Ransom brought back from the U.N. Decade of Women Conference in Nairobi (see cover article).

—Cindy McKnight and Joan Anderson

## REPORT ON THE 1985 NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

More than 1600 participants gathered June 19-23 to attend the Seventh Annual National Women's Studies Association Conference in Seattle. The theme of the conference was *Creating Choices through Feminist Education*. It was held on the University of Washington campus, a beautiful setting with vistas of snow-covered mountains and expanses of water.

The activities of the conference, in addition to 244 program sessions, included meetings of sixteen task forces and caucuses, showings of more than 40 films, screenings of video tapes, poetry readings, five art exhibits, a book exhibit, several music events and theater performances, meetings of a variety of self-help support sessions, and a fun run to raise money for the low-income scholarship fund of the NWSA.

Four members of Vanderbilt were present at the conference. Elisabeth Perry was a panelist of the session on Women and Prostitution: An Historical Overview. Walter Gove presented a paper co-authored with Ph.D. candidate in Sociology, Debra Umberson, on "Children: Their Effect on Personal Well-being." The other attendees were Ellen Caldwell, Department of English and member of the Women's Studies Committee, and your reporter, representing the Women's Studies Committee and the Vanderbilt Women's Center.

Reading through the sixty-page program, I faced the difficult choices of which sessions and programs to attend. High on my list were the session "Unique Women's Studies Programs and Problems: In the Southwest and South" and "Evaluating How Far We've Come in Women's Studies." I learned from a survey by UCLA sociologist Janicemarie Allard that of 91 institutions she sampled, using a number of indicators, 54 per cent were rated as thriving or healthy, 16 per cent as "OK" and only 24 per cent as struggling or barely surviving. The study showed positive correlations between perceived health of programs, access to academic

resources, and the feminist orientation of the curriculum. A national survey of Women's Studies programs by Elaine Martin of the University of Alabama showed that enrollments in women's studies courses over the past five years had increased in 45 percent of the institutions and remained the same in 36 percent, with a decrease in enrollments in only 18 percent of the programs.

Other sessions of interest to the academic community dealt with incorporating feminist scholarship into traditional courses and core curricula. Addressing issues of employment were a paper "Career Preparation of Graduate Men and Women in Science, Engineering and Medicine at an Elite School: Implications for Gender Segregation in Scientific Occupations," and a session titled "Bureaucracies Respond to Affirmative Action."

My own scholarly interests drew me to sessions on teaching women writers, and feminist uses of critical theory. Two other topics extensively addressed at the conference were feminist methodology and questions of language and epistemology.

A social function in several sessions had to do with Women and Aging and Women and Disability. Featured at the main plenary session "Common Causes: Uncommon Coalitions" were the issues of extending feminist perspectives to include the concerns of Third World women, women of color, old women, and women who are poor.

What did the diverse parts of the program—some theoretical and scholarly, some pragmatic and action-oriented—have in common? The connections lie in the domains of "problems," of "definition" and "affirmation." Like all groups that are not dominant or norm-setting, women experience particular problems—of identity, of opportunity, and of power. The search for strategies to solve the problems requires re-defining "what is." The redefinition, in turn, leads to affirmations and celebration of new seeing and being. These qualities were present to some degree, in the various events of the NWSA conference.

In addition, I felt again and again a sense of bonding. It is a powerful experience to be surrounded by women from all parts of the country and the world (Japan and Denmark, for example), from different walks of life, young and old. It also gives deep satisfaction to share common concerns—about work, ideals, and living.

—Nina Gove

### HERSTORY ANSWERS

Both women's pictures have been issued on 22¢ stamps and have been available at all branches of the U.S. Post Office. Interestingly, Abigail Adams is listed in *Notable American Women*, available in the Women's Center library, but Mary McLeod Bethune is not, an indication that women's studies has a long and rewarding way to go.



1. Abigail Adams (1744-1818) 2. Mary McLeod Bethune (1875-1955)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Vanderbilt Psychological and Counseling Center, located at Oxford House, will offer the following groups, free, to faculty, staff, and students beginning in September:

- WEIGHT MANAGEMENT
- EATING DISORDERS
- PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP
- ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING
- STRESS MANAGEMENT
- TIME MANAGEMENT
- RELAXATION TRAINING

In addition to groups, the Center offers vocational self-assessment and individual counseling. For more information and to register, call 322-2571.

Planned Parenthood of Nashville, is offering a MENOPAUSE AND HYSTERECTOMY SEMINAR September 28, 9:00-4:00 P.M., and October 5, 9:00-Noon. The first day of the seminar will help women understand the physical and emotional effects of menopause. The second day will explore the benefits to the menopausal women of proper nutrition, yoga, and other forms of exercise. Fee: \$15 for the first day only; \$25 for both days. This seminar is offered once a year, and enrollment fills up fast. For more information call 327-1097.

The BONNIE BELL 10 K and 2 MILE FUN RUN are Sunday, September 1, 7:30 A.M. For more information, call Nashville Striders, 254-0631.

The YWCA has scheduled the following September worksjops for women:

- BASIC ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING
- YOGA - for all levels.
- SEARCH FOR SUCCESS - identify your behavioral style and your relation to others in a professional setting.
- CAREER/LIFE PLANNING WORKSHOPS
- PROPERTY RIGHTS AND WOMEN
- EXPRESSING ANGRY FEELINGS - way to overcome the fear to expressing anger and how to constructively deal with negative feelings,
- MAKING EXERCISE A PLUS - the do's and don'ts of exercise activities.

For more information and to register, call 385-3952.

FORTY AND FORWARD - the positive aspects of being a women forty or older.

NEW LOOK/NEW OUTLOOK - six weeks of exercises, color analysis, hairstyle, make-up and "Dressing for success".

For more information call 321-3700.

THE RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE CENTER is seeking persons over the age of 18 to volunteer in responsible positions. Training available.

Call (352-1716) for more details.

For details on the academic opportunities listed below, call 322-4843.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) announces the annual VISITING PROFESSORSHIPS FOR WOMEN in engineering and in the disciplines of science supported by NSF. The usual award is 12 months at a host institution, although one-semester appointments will be considered. Ph.D.'s only. Application deadline is October 1.

Proposals are currently being accepted for STUDENT RESEARCH PAPERS and MENTAL HEALTH CENTER STAFF CLINICAL PAPERS to be presented October 31 at the TAMHC (Tennessee Association of Mental Health Centers) 1985 Annual Meeting. The Research Symposium is intended to be a convenient, inexpensive publication medium in which students and mental health center staff can gain valuable experience. Cash prizes of up to \$100 will be awarded for the three most outstanding presentations in each category. Entry is via abstract only. Deadline for proposals is October 1.

The Florida State University Comparative Literature and Film Circle invites the SUBMISSION OF PAPERS related to the theme of its eleventh annual conference, "Gender: Literary and Cinematic Representation." Papers and presentations may be in the field of literature exclusively or film exclusively, or in the relationship between literature and film. Papers are invited in all periods, styles, and genres of literature and film. Abstracts due by October 1.

*Edited by Joan Anderson*

TO RECEIVE YOUR OWN LABELED COPY OF WOMEN'S VU return the form below or call the Women's Center, 322-4843, to place your name on the mailing list.

We regret that for newsletters sent to off-campus addresses there is a \$3.00 fee for ten monthly issues through June 1986. Please make checks payable to Vanderbilt University Women's Center.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student (please give school and class) \_\_\_\_\_

Staff \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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