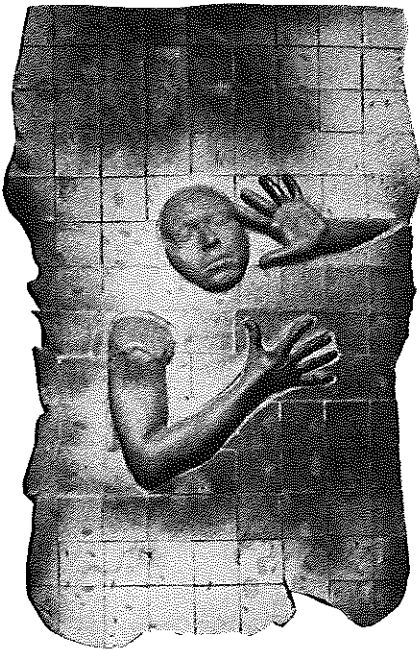


WOMEN'S VU

May 1987

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IX:9



P. Casey Darcy

Shelter, one of a panel of three in a sculpture by Mary Ann Sariello. It hangs in Metro's Justice Center.

A world without shelters

Mary Bufwack, Program Coordinator
YWCA Shelter & Domestic Violence Program

I still don't understand why men beat their wives and companions. Why are injuries to women from domestic violence more numerous than injuries caused by rapes, robberies, and auto accidents combined? I've worked for the last four years at the Nashville YWCA Shelter and Domestic Violence Program. I've heard the experiences and fears of the abused women who call us, approximately 100 each month. I've seen the swollen faces and bruised bodies of over 600 battered women who found refuge at the Shelter. I've looked into the frightened eyes of over 700 children who had witnessed the beatings of their mothers. I've read the explanations and studied the research.

I do understand why a battered woman often returns to the man who beats her. She has bought the "ring-around-the-collar" version of married life which holds the woman responsible for keeping everything in her home perfect. She even takes responsibility for his violence. Her own wishes, including those for a peaceful home, are repressed. Some women take their pledge of undying love and marriage vows so seriously that they may be killed before they break those prom-

ises. They believe in the transforming power of their love and in their partner's possible reform. They believe his threats that he will find her wherever she goes. They believe they can't make it without him. They believe they are not worth more.

And then there is the social reality. Let's say a woman does leave and try to start a new life free of violence. If she works full-time at minimum wage and has a child to support she will not live above the poverty line. This is what most unskilled women must settle for. How can she get the daycare her child needs on this income? She may get on a waiting list for public housing. Meanwhile, landlords who won't rent to a woman with children only underscore the fact that this woman and her children are not welcome in this world.

How does a woman choose between living with a man who will beat her regularly and a society which relegates one-in-three female-headed households to lives of poverty and desperation? How does she choose between domestic violence and social "violence"? Both give the same messages — you are inadequate, you are a failure.

Shelters and programs for battered women and their children are guided by beliefs and goals which are at odds with both these forms of violence. We begin with a belief in the equality, the worthiness of every woman and child who calls or enters; and we try to structure our refuge to give women and children a sense of their own strengths. A woman arriving at the Shelter with her children usually has only a few clothes to claim as her own and no other place to go. Initially she feels like this is a sign that she has hit the bottom. She has failed in every way and must rely on strangers for her life. But she soon finds out that she is not alone, that she does not deserve abuse. She is comforted by women whose experiences and feelings are similar to her own. And she will have the opportunity to comfort, in turn, a new resident as frightened and confused as she was her first night at the Shelter.

Many people are surprised to learn that shelters and domestic violence programs are not interested in telling a woman how she should feel about the man that abused her or what she must do to end the marriage. We concentrate on helping women and children with their feelings about *themselves*. We concentrate on women and children learning what they can do to strengthen their bonds. Women who believe in themselves and who understand the needs of their children are better able to protect themselves and to improve their lives.

Providing an environment and experiences that

encourage a woman to believe in her own abilities is our ideal. But our system is not perfect. Everyone who enters the shelter — residents, staff, and volunteers — are part of a larger society. They carry with them the beliefs that have made minorities, poor people, and women feel powerless. To contribute to the environment of non-violence and mutual trust each person must confront her own attitudes and behaviors about more than domestic violence. In this setting a wealthy white volunteer must meet a poor resident with compassion, not pity. Black and white women and children must live together. Staff and volunteers must make it possible for battered women to participate in running the program. Our goals demand that we not only deal with the issues of domestic violence, but that we confront all beliefs and practices that make people less than they might be.

Even though we are imperfect we maintain a belief in these ideals. We draw our inspiration from the spirit of those miraculous women who look squarely at an uncertain future and choose to create a violence-free life for themselves and their children. The possibilities for the future are in these women and their vision. Their joy in feeling hope is contagious.

Having been inspired by the strength and compassion of the battered women I have met I understand even less why they were beaten by their husbands and companions. And other questions which I cannot answer bother me even more. How can we sustain the hope and vision of women and children? How do we build a sense of worth in women and children when their life experiences say they are worth little? How can we create a world in which we do not need shelters? Better yet, how can we make the world like a shelter? ■

Bedtime story

The following story is true, according to a Vanderbilt staff woman who told it at a recent meeting for women:

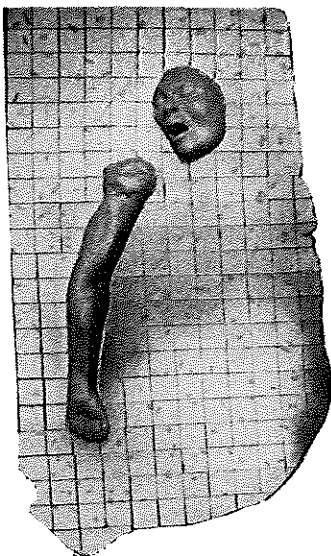
"I woke up in the middle of the night hearing a woman screaming. I looked at the clock; it was 2:00 a.m. I grabbed my housecoat and ran into the hallway of my apartment complex but could hear nothing. I ran downstairs and heard the screaming in the apartment directly below mine.

Still a little bleary-eyed, I opened the unlocked door and walked into a room where a man was towering over a woman crumpled on the floor with a four-year-old boy by her side. I grabbed
(continued on next page)

the woman and said 'You're coming with me.' I picked up the boy in my arms and held the woman by the arm and walked out of the apartment going upstairs to my place to call the police (I'd told the man 'The police are already on their way'). Suddenly the woman screamed 'My baby's in her bedroom!' I went back into the apartment to get the baby — but the man began saying, in a drunken stupor, 'Get out of here . . . this is my house. Get out of here . . . this is my house.'

Wide-awake now and frightened, I left and took the woman and boy upstairs and called the police. The woman, looking out the window, saw the man, her husband, leaving the apartment building and screamed 'He's got my baby!' and started dashing out of the apartment. (It turned out that he did *not* have her.) I put the police on hold and ran to get the woman saying 'You've got to stay here and give a description of your husband to the police so they can pick him up.' The woman did and the police came. They — one man and one woman — seemed irritated about the call. They made it clear that the situation did not warrant their trip. I said 'This woman (pregnant) has been kicked in the stomach, her ankle was twisted, her arm was twisted, she can't walk upright, and you are saying that nothing happened?' They asked a few questions and started to leave. I said 'Well don't we get something?' (like a report). They said no, later they would fill out a report at the station. I asked for their names and badge numbers. They were reluctant to give them. I finally got them; I wasn't about to have them leave without some record that something had happened."

Later, this staff woman called PEACE (see description below) to report the names and behavior of the police officers so that PEACE could work with the police department to sensitize these officers to the seriousness of domestic violence situations. She also gave some helpful phone numbers to the abused woman for counseling. She does not know if the woman called anyone. ■



P. Cecy Daley

Despair (see page 1 photo).

News briefs

Virginia Trotter Betts, associate professor of psychiatric nursing at Vanderbilt, has been chosen to receive one of six Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellowships awarded nationally. The fellowship, which begins in September 1987, will send Betts to Washington, D.C., for graduate studies in health policy, the American political system, health care economics, and other federal-level studies.

— *The Tennessean*
April 12, 1987 ■

Barbara Bowen, professor of French and comparative literature at the University of Illinois, will become the first woman to chair a major department in the College of Arts and Science at Vanderbilt University. As full professor with tenure, she will assume the chair of the Department of French and Italian in fall 1987.

— *Vanderbilt Register*
April 3, 1987 ■

Loretta Bradley, Associate Professor of Human Development Counseling, has won the research award of the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD). This is the highest honor the 54,000 member association bestows. Bradley's research traced past and future trends in the counseling profession. The award was presented April 24 in New Orleans at the annual convention.

Elisabeth Perry, Associate Professor of History, has received a summer award from the National Endowment for the Humanities to direct a four-week summer seminar for secondary school teachers chosen from applicants across the nation. The seminar topic is "Feminist Classics in American Culture: 1870-1930."

Maureen Powers, Associate Professor of Psychology and Kennedy Center Investigator at Vanderbilt, has received the 1986 Fight for Sight Citation in Basic Science for her research program which centers on discovering how our ability to see relates to the structure and physiology of the retina and to the message the retina sends to the brain.

— *Kennedy Center News*
March 26, 1987 ■

The advantage of a business partner: A study of more than 2000 businesses founded since 1960 has revealed that companies started by partners are four times as likely to succeed as companies started by a single individual.

— *Forbes*
February 2, 1987
as quoted in *The Moneypaper*

All female flight crew makes history: On December 29, 1986, American Airlines Flight 412 from Washington to Dallas-Fort Worth was the first ever to have an all-female flight crew in command of both the cockpit and the cabin of a Boeing 727 jetliner.

"It was inevitable a flight like this would happen, and I was glad to be a part of it," said flight engineer Tracy Prior. Six weeks before, Beverly Bass, the flight pilot, became the first woman to win captain's stripes for a commercial airline. The co-pilot was Terry Claridge.

— *Minerva*
Spring 1987 ■

Battered women and poverty: According to a report on "Women in Poverty" hearings conducted by the Governor's Office of Arizona, "poverty ranks high as the reason women return to abusive situations." Many women who decide to leave husbands who abuse them become "instantly poor." Testimony pointed out that such women often have no means ". . . to make claims on . . . the family income."

Victims of spouse abuse need a range of services to heal the trauma of abuse. Among the most critical services are employment programs that can keep them and their children out of the ranks of the poor and provide them with economic independence. The blunt statement of one Arizona victim of abuse puts the essential need for employment programs in perspective ". . . I have learned to understand why some women never leave an abusive situation. It is a choice . . . a choice of being battered or struggling on your own to support your family. Only the strong survive, either way."

— *Response to the Victimization of Women and Children*
Volume 9, Number 4, 1986 ■

TV tunes out women's realities: The National Commission on Working Women (NCWW) has been following television's portrayal of women since 1982. Each year it makes broadcast awards for specific shows and issues a report.

The 1986 season was an improvement, according to NCWW, because female characters were not "continually on the prowl for a mate" or victims, as in past years.

NCWW states there are still far too few minority females on TV. Those who do appear are almost always in situation comedies and portrayed in stereotyped roles. It particularly objected to the negative images of black women on the comedy "Amen."

Most television portrays affluent lives, and the vast majority of females on TV are wealthy. "In reality," NCWW states, "nearly half (48 percent) of employed women hold relatively low-paying clerical and service jobs. The median annual income for all women is only \$7,568."

Three popular shows — Who's the Boss?, Growing Pains, and The Cosby Show — have female characters who are professionally successful, but the shows focus on family issues. "Rarely do viewers see female characters asking for a raise or even talking about finances," said NCWW. "Issues of job security, salary levels, promotions and child care — all familiar to millions of viewers who are also working women — are almost totally invisible."

— off our backs ■

Calcium supplements: don't depend on them

Osteoporosis, which means "porous bones," results from a decrease in bone mass in the body. It primarily afflicts postmenopausal women and can lead to fractures, disability, and even death. In women, the lowering of estrogen levels after menopause increases the loss of calcium from bone. Although some bone loss is an inevitable consequence of aging, full-blown osteoporosis is not. Only one in five postmenopausal women will suffer serious complications from osteoporosis.

Calcium, though, is only one factor in maintaining bone density. According to recent research, manganese may be as essential as calcium for building bones. In laboratory animals fed a manganese-deficient diet, osteoporosis accelerated. And, unfortunately, calcium supplements appear to interfere with the absorption of manganese. According to Dr. Sheldon Margen of the School of Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley, "large doses of calcium supplements may be ill advised, and new recommendations may have to be made soon."

Where can you get sufficient manganese? Dr. Margen advises that some foods rich in manganese — such as spinach and other vegetables — contain a substance that inhibits its absorption. The best sources of available manganese are meat, eggs, and milk. No one knows why the calcium in milk — unlike the calcium in supplements — does not interfere with manganese absorption. Milk and milk products therefore remain the best source of both calcium and available manganese.

If you are worried about osteoporosis:

- Don't smoke.
- Cut your alcohol consumption.
- Get regular exercise. There is some evidence that calcium intake plus exercise does build bone mass. The exercise can be light to moderate, but it must be weight-bearing — for example, walking or running.

• Increase your calcium intake if it is deficient. Whatever your age, try to get the

recommended intake of 1,000 to 1,500 milligrams a day. You can keep your intake high with four or five servings daily of low-fat or skim milk, low-fat dairy products, or other calcium-rich foods such as leafy green vegetables and canned salmon or sardines with bones. Most importantly, try to get most of your calcium from foods in order to get the benefit of manganese. Skim milk is low in calories: four cups supply just 340 calories, plus 1,200 milligrams of calcium. People who have trouble digesting lactose (milk sugar) can turn to fermented milk products such as yogurt or buttermilk, or to the special enzyme-treated dairy products that are now widely available.

If you fall short of your calcium goals, though, you can make up the difference with a supplement. But treat the supplement as just that — something you add to an already balanced diet, not something you consume instead of mineral-rich food.

— The University of California, Berkeley
Wellness Letter
March 1987 ■

Mothers and others for peace

History of Mother's Day: One of the originators of a day of celebration focused on mothers was Julia Ward Howe. After the Civil War, keenly aware of the losses suffered by women and the nation, she decided to urge the women of the world to become active in pursuing peace. "Why do not the mothers of (hu)Mankind interfere in these matters, to prevent the waste of human life which they alone bear and know the cost?"

She conceived the idea of Mother's Day as a day set aside when everyone should dedicate themselves to bringing about World Peace.

What we can do for peace:

1. Work for a nuclear test ban. Call Boner, Gore, and Sasser in support of HRI2 and S472, bills for a bi-lateral nuclear test ban by both the U.S. & U.S.S.R.
2. Educate ourselves on the issue and talk with others about it.
3. Pray for peace.
4. Join a local peace organization.

For more information, call Nashvillians for a Nuclear Arms Freeze: 244-4353. ■

In the library

Books. What library could do without them? The Women's Center library is missing a few. If you know the location of any listed below, please help us to retrieve them and put them back in circulation:

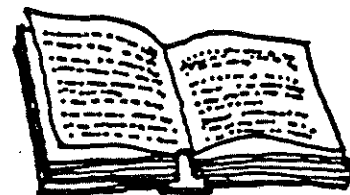
Rich, Adrienne, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*,

Bernard, Jessie Shirley, *The Future of Motherhood*,
Ehrenreich, Barbara, *Witches, Midwives and Nurses: A History of Women Healers*,
Lauter, Paul, *The Conspiracy of the Young Rich* ■

Women's Center programs

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

The Single Mothers Group will meet May 5 and 19, 6:45-8:15 p.m., at the Vanderbilt Child Care Center. At each meeting, time for sharing among group members is given priority. Anyone on or off campus who defines herself as a single mother is welcome. Group meetings are free; child care is provided on site for \$1.50 for one child, \$2.50 for two or more children. The group also gets together for walks, seasonal parties, canoe and camping trips, etc.



The Book group will continue to meet through the summer. Come to the Women's Center and join in the discussion of *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood on Monday, May 18, 5:15-6:15 p.m. Light refreshments. Open to all readers on and off campus.

Every few months the Women's Center hostesses a New Employee Brown Bag Lunch at noon at the Center. These lunches provide an opportunity for new employees to learn about the services available to women on the Vanderbilt campus and to meet other new employees.

The next lunch will be Friday, May 16. If you know a new employee who would like to attend, she should call the Women's Center, 322-4843.

Cancer Prevention for Women is a program to be presented by the American Cancer Society on Thursday, May 21, noon to 1:00 p.m., at the Women's Center. The program will relate lifestyle to cancer prevention. Nutritional information matching specific foods to the prevention of specific cancers will be included. ■

Announcements et cetera

Research assistant wanted for work on project on "Power Language and Women's Advancement in Organizational Leadership" with Dr. Catherine Marshall. Prefer knowledge of qualitative methodology, computers, and writing. For information, call Betty Frankenbach in D.E.L., 322-8000.

The "Women Mean Business" conference is May 8 and 9 at the Nashville Convention Center for women considering or in a small business. The keynote speaker at the Saturday lunch is Kate Rand Lloyd, editor of *Working Woman*. Her topic is "From Now to 2000." A wide variety of how to workshops to help the small businesswoman get started and succeed, such as "When and How to Expand Your Business" and "Protecting Yourself: Legally and Financially." Sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration and Women in Business. Call 322-4845 for more information.

Planned Parenthood Association of Nashville is seeking volunteers in the areas of fundraising, grant writing, and library assistance. Hours are flexible. Call Jan Orleck at 327-1095.

Circle Players will perform "A My Name Is Alice" at Neeley Auditorium May 8, 9, and 10 at 8:00 p.m., \$10.00 per ticket. This five woman musical comedy review explores varied stages of womanhood. An award winning performance. Reservations: 327-4048.

The following is a partial list of services in Nashville touching on the issue of domestic violence. For more information, call the phone numbers listed:

Al-Anon: 254-8966. For family members of alcoholics. Nightly meetings are available on a drop-in basis. A 12-step program is included.

Crisis Intervention Center: 244-7444. Twenty-four hour hot line.

PEACE (Project to End Abuse through Counseling and Education): 255-0711. Coordinates community response to domestic violence working with the police, the court system, mental health professionals, and the Nashville community to end abuse. Services to batterers include evaluation, orientation, counseling, education, and follow-up. Batterers can be referred to PEACE by any agency or individual. Community education and volunteer opportunities are available.

Police Victim Intervention Program: 742-7545.

The Rape and Sexual Abuse Center: 352-1716. Twenty-four-hour Support Line number: 327-1110. Offers advocacy for rape victims, counseling, support groups, community education programs, and volunteer opportunities.

YWCA Shelter & Domestic Violence Program: 297-8833. Provides telephone support, information, advocacy, and when needed, emergency shelter for battered women or women in crisis and their children. Community education available through a speaker's bureau. Call for exact dates and location of volunteer training.

Many other services — legal, food, medical, financial — are available in Nashville. For telephone numbers of sources of help, and for free literature on domestic violence and how to stop it, call 322-4843.

Third annual "Workshops on Women in the Curriculum," May 27, 28, and 29 at the Memphis State University Center for Research on Women. The workshop will provide a forum for college faculty to either develop courses on women or revise their courses to include more information on women. Attention will be given to both content of courses and classroom interaction. Key-note address by Margaret Anderson, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Delaware and author of *Thinking About Women*, is "Denying Difference: The Continuing Basis for the Exclusion of Race and Gender from the Curriculum." Whole registration fee is \$90, or \$35 per day. Write Research Clearinghouse, Center for Research on Women, Memphis State University, Memphis, TN 38152, (901) 454-2770. ■

The great condom controversy — a last word?

Television newswoman Linda Ellerbee may have had the last word or the best feminist quote on the well-publicized condom commercial controversy. Said Ellerbee, networks won't broadcast them until "Men have babies, a woman runs a network, or the president of a network gets AIDS." "And so it goes."

— *Eleanor Smeal Report*
February 28, 1987 ■

Edited by Joan Anderson

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Monthly newsletters, excluding July and August, are sent to all students free. Newsletters to faculty and staff at campus addresses are free. For non-student, off-campus addresses there is a \$3.00 fee for one year. Please make checks payable to Vanderbilt University Women's Center.

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