

WOMEN'S VU

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Women and The Constitution

Gale B. Pinkston
Opportunity Development Center

This year our nation celebrates the 200th anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution. Throughout the fall and into next year commemorative ceremonies and events are scheduled in our capital and nationwide in tribute to this historic occasion.

The Bicentennial of our Constitution presents a lesson in history and civics to us all. When the Constitution was drafted in Philadelphia in 1787, no country in the world had yet governed with separated powers, providing checks and balances on the exercise of authority.

Many praise the document as the most ingenious governing document in history. Others allege an innate weakness because the document perpetuated slavery and disenfranchised women of all races.

Historical accounts tell us of the 55 men who labored during the revolutionary era to replace the absolutism of monarchy with freedoms created in a new land of opportunities. If we look closely, history also tells us of other men and women who, like the framers, yearned for liberty, but were not privileged to have their interests represented in the creation of the Constitution.

A few daring individuals attempted to advocate important issues notwithstanding this fact. Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams, was concerned with the status of women under the new government. In a letter dated March 31, 1776, she wrote to John, "I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors in the new 'Code of Laws.'" She hoped that the birth of democratic government would allow the empowerment of women.

As we know, Abigail Adams' ideals were not incorporated into the original Constitution. Throughout the first half of the 19th Century, women's rights were pursued by women and men who also opposed slavery, that other injustice which the Constitutional Convention extended.

Legal emancipation of slaves in America brought to the fore the question of enlarging the electorate. Women leaders saw this moment in history as one which might bring women the vote as well. Nineteenth-century activists with the

acumen of Elizabeth C. Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were outraged by the language of the Fourteenth Amendment, which introduced the word "male" into the Constitution.

The question of whether or not women could vote had been regarded as a state matter, along with their property rights, marriage and divorce status, and legal position. Another constitutional amendment was needed to give women the vote in federal elections.

The struggle for voting rights was waged with intense passion and commitment under the leadership of Susan B. Anthony. At Ms. Anthony's insistent urging, on June 10, 1878 Senator A. A. Sargent of California first introduced the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The language simply stated:

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Nearly 41 years would pass before women won the right to vote.

After the passage of the 19th Amendment, those "radicals" who had favored full social and political rights for women kept up the struggle. They had little support. Although the Equal Rights Amendment was first introduced in Congress in the 1920's, it was buried in committee year after year. While advocates for equal rights continued to lobby for a Constitutional Amendment, many states discriminated against women through laws that restricted control over earnings and the right to work. In 1940 over twenty states prohibited women from serving on juries.

The Equal Rights Amendment gained its greatest support in the 1970's when Congress finally passed it and sent it to the States for ratification. In 1982 the ERA fell short of the mark.

Although American women do not yet have equal protection under our Constitution, I sub-

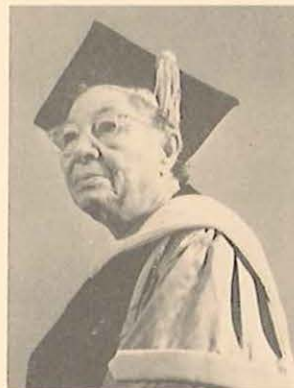
mit that our Constitution is as vibrant today as ever. The Supreme Court's interpretations of the Constitution keeps this amazing document alive. There have been times in history when the Supreme Court blocked initiatives toward the attainment of greater freedom for women. During the 70's, however, the Court's decisions extended women's rights in cases affecting sex discrimination, contraception, abortion, and illegitimacy.

The value of our Constitution exceeds the original document and its Amendments. Recognizing its limitations does not discredit the Constitution, but helps us understand, evaluate, and ultimately extend liberty and justice to all.

As citizens we must remain poised to use our voices in government. Women are no longer as dependent as Abigail Adams and Susan B. Anthony upon the benevolence of those in power to make just and fair laws. We can participate in the democratic process ourselves because of their efforts. We can even succeed in adding to the Constitution an Equal Rights Amendment.

Gale Pinkston is an attorney who holds the position of Assistant Director of the Opportunity Development Center. ■

A Sarratt Gallery exhibit not to be missed



May Chinn (1896-1980) May Chinn, an internist with a special interest in the early detection of cancer, was the first Black woman graduate of Bellevue Medical College and the first Black woman to serve as an intern at Harlem Hospital.

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

Section 1: Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

Section 2: The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Section 3: This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

From October 11 to November 10 in Sarratt Student Center there will be an inspiring exhibit entitled "WOMEN OF COURAGE." Included will be 55 color portraits of the participants in the Black Women Oral History Project. This traveling exhibition of works by photographer Judith Sedwick was organized by Radcliffe College. The picture shown above is one of this collection. Funding for Women of Courage is provided by the Bishop Johnson Black Cultural Center and the Women's Center. Everyone is invited to enjoy a reception October 22 from 4-6 p.m. in Sarratt. ■

Maternity Leave Act

Suzanne Ewing A & SS

Recently Gov. McWherter signed into law Tennessee House Bill No. 1002, a Maternity Leave Act, guaranteeing maternity leave to some employed new mothers. The law's stated purpose is to "encourage bonding between a female employee and her newly born or adopted child," and requires employers of more than 100 people to offer a paid or unpaid 4-month maximum leave without interfering with the employee's accumulated seniority or benefits. The Maternity Leave Act will not, however, apply if the employer finds that "an employee's job position is so unique that the employer cannot, after reasonable efforts, fill that position temporarily." The new law will take effect January 1, 1988.

The Tennessee Maternity Leave Act is similar to the federal Parental and Disability Leave Act proposed by Colorado Rep. Patricia Schroeder, but contains several important differences. The most striking is that it applies only to female employees instead of to both men and women. It will not allow men the option of being the one to care for their newborn. Should the federal bill be passed, it would supercede the Tennessee version.

The Tennessee Maternity Leave Act will allow many more women to stay temporarily at home with their infants without fear of finding their job filled by someone else when they return. It does not, however, address the needs of men who might wish for employer-sanctioned time off to do some "parental bonding" of their own.



— American Association of University Women

Call for papers/conferences

The Women's Center has received information on two conferences requesting papers with a deadline of *October 15, 1987*. If you would like a copy of the brochure(s), please call 322-4843.

One is the International Conference for Women in Higher Education, January 14-16, 1988 in Westin Paso Del Norte, El Paso, Texas. The purpose is to provide women faculty, students and administrators with the opportunity to share research and ideas relevant to Women in Higher Education. Some of the suggested topics are: equity issues, women in their disciplines, and support systems for women in higher education.

Another conference calling for papers is the National Women's Studies Association 1988 Annual Conference entitled "Leadership and Power: Women's Alliances For Social Change." It will be held June 22-26, 1988 at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The theme focuses on how women of various backgrounds can work together.

Another conference we wanted you to know about (deadline has passed for papers) is **First Annual WKU Women's Studies Conference "Bridging The Gender Gap,"** October 28-30, 1987, Western Kentucky University. ■

Boston U. loses tenure case

According to the *New York Times*, 7/29/87, a Federal jury ordered Boston University to pay professor Julia Prewitt Brown \$200,000 for denied tenure.

Professor Brown, whose specialty is 19th-century novels, was denied a lifetime post in 1981, despite unanimous support for her tenure bid from her department and from a collegewide faculty committee.

Boston University president, John R. Silber, called Dr. Brown a "promising young scholar" but denied her tenure due to unfavorable recommendations from scholars outside the school and mixed reviews of her book on Jane Austen.

Services available at the **Psychological and Counseling Center** which may be of special interest to women (students, faculty, and staff) include Assertiveness Training, Women's Professional Issues Support Group, Eating Disorders Group, Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Group and a Weight Management Program. The Center staff, which is comprised of clinical and consulting psychologists, professional support staff, and students in advanced stages of their clinical training, can be reached for details at 322-2571. ■

It's your health

The Woman's Center at HCA West Side Hospital announces the opening of the Woman's Resource Center which provides a library with educational materials and videotapes on various women's health topics. The center is located in Suite 104 of the Medical Plaza Office Building at 2201 Murphy Avenue.

Another service of The Woman's Center is SHARE (Speakers for Health Awareness, Research & Education), a speakers bureau available to community groups.

On October 19th, at 7:00 p.m. The West Side Hospital Woman's Center, in conjunction with the YWCA, is offering a free seminar on **Aids in Women and Children**. For more information on this seminar or other services offered, please call 340-6500. ■

Harvard Medical School Health Letter: The Missed-Period Pill

Although still in the testing stages, a report from France relates the effectiveness of pills in producing abortions shortly after the first period is missed. This pill does not hope to make the decision to terminate a pregnancy any less complex, but the technique may soon become very simple.

If you would like a free copy of this article, just call 322-4843.

A call to women organizers

Recently the Women's Center received *A Call to Women Student Organizers* in Washington, D.C. on the weekend of October 10-11, 1987. The flyer, which came from two Florida students of the nonpartisan student activist group called the Progressive Student Network, addresses many concerns of women. Among these are unequal pay and discrimination against working women, threats to reproductive freedom, and lack of social services for women who have been abused.

These students wish to encourage other students sharing their concerns to participate in the weekend either in person or by networking with them. For further information see the flyer on the Women's Center Bulletin Board. ■

Woodrow Wilson Women's Studies Research Grants for Doctoral Candidates are to encourage research about women. *Nomination procedure:* Students apply directly. For application forms, write the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, Dept. WS, P.O. Box 642, Princeton, NJ 08542.

Awards: \$1,000 for research expenses connected with the dissertation.

Deadline: Nov. 13, 1987, for receipt of all materials.

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Women's Center programs

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

The **Single Mothers Group** will meet October 6 and 20, 6:45-8:15 p.m., at the Vanderbilt Child Care Center. On the 6th Katrin Bean, a Certified Financial Planner, will lead the discussion on Money Management and Financial Planning. Babysitting will be available at the rate of \$1.50 per child/\$2.50 for two or more children.

On October 8, 12:15 pm, a volunteer from the **Rape and Sexual Abuse Center** will show the 20 minute video, "Rethinking Rape," and be available for questions at the Women's Center. This event is co-sponsored by Interhall. Bring your own lunch. Drinks will be provided.

The **Noontime Seminar** will meet Tuesday, October 13th, at 12:30 p.m. at the Women's Center. Dr. B. Jane Rogers, Director of the Center for Fertility and Reproductive Research (CFARR), will be talking about the newest technology in retrieving eggs for invitro fertilization. Bring a bag lunch. Drinks will be provided.

Jean Rhys' book, *The Wide Sargassa Sea* is the selection for the **Book Group** which will meet Monday, October 19, at 5:15 p.m. at the Women's Center. If you have not read the book and are interested in listening to the discussion, feel free to attend. Light refreshments.

Tuesday, October 20, from 4-6 p.m. the **Dissertation Writers Group** will at the Women's Center meet for the second time this year. Women in all schools and disciplines are encouraged to attend.

Dutch Treat Breakfasts are being changed to **Dutch Treat Lunches** for the 1987-88 year. The series will focus on women working at Vanderbilt. Our first speaker will be Elaine Goleski, Project Manager, Heard Library Annex, on Thursday, October 22, at 12:30 p.m. Open to faculty and staff, the group meets in the Divinity School, Room 139. Lunch may be purchased in the Refectory. Coffee will be provided. ■

I can honestly say that I was never affected by the question of the success of an undertaking. If I felt it was the right thing to do, I was for it regardless of the possible outcome.

— Golda Meir

Tentative Information

HOLOCAUST LECTURE SERIES

Monday and Tuesday
October 26 and 27, 1987, 7:30 P.M.
Underwood Auditorium

Theme — "The Holocaust: Where Were the Christians?"

Film — October 20 — *Angry Harvest*, Sarratt Cinema

Lecturers — October 26 —

Eva Fleischner, Professor of Religion, Montclair State College, "The Catholics (especially of France) and the Holocaust"

Nechama Tec, Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Connecticut, "Polish Catholics and the Rescue of Jews"

Lecturers — October 27 —

Alice Eckardt, Department of Religious Studies, Lehigh University, "The Protestants and the Holocaust"

David Rausch, Professor of Church History & Judaic Studies, Ashland College, Author, *Legacy of Hatred*, "Christians After the Holocaust"

Seminars: 118 Sarratt — 12:00-1:30 p.m.

October 26 — Eva Fleischner

October 27 — Alice Eckardt

(Please note that three of the speakers this year are women.)

Appleworks, the Vanderbilt Employee Wellness Program, sponsors activities and classes designed to encourage the Vanderbilt community to achieve and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.

Some of the classes scheduled for the Fall semester are listed below:

AEROBICS

Time	Days	Cost
6:30-7:30 a.m.	M-T-W-Th	\$48.00
Noon-12:45 p.m.	M-T-W-Th	48.00
4:30-5:30 p.m.	M-T-W-Th	48.00
5:30-6:30 p.m.	M-T-W-Th	48.00

YOGA

Time	Days	Cost
4:00-4:45 p.m.	T	12.00

Other courses include body work, conditioning swimming, tri-fitness, walk/run club, massage therapy, swimming, and tennis. For further information, or to learn about the other wellness services that APPLEWORKS offers, call 322-4751.

Women and Friendship Poll

Jan M. Slyk, 4 Alan Circle, Londonderry, CT 03053, is seeking subjects to interview for a magazine article on women and friendship. Readers who wish to take part, send your name and address to Ms. Slyk at the above address.

Announcements et cetera

Planned Parenthood Association of Nashville offers sexuality training opportunities in October. October 8 and 9, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Sexuality Education For Professionals Who Work With Preteens And Teens, \$40. Two separate workshops with parents and preteens or teens will be held on Saturday, October 17th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., fee charged. For further details on these events and free Tuesday night videos please call 327-1097.

Women's Athletic Schedule

Some of the Women's sport's events played at home in the near future are:

Soccer:

Oct. 10	4:00 p.m. Xavier
Oct. 18	4:00 p.m. Emory
Oct. 22	6:00 p.m. Memphis State
Oct. 25	1:00 p.m. Wright State
Oct. 29	7:00 p.m. Rhodes College

The Vanderbilt Women's Basketball team will play an exhibition game November 5, 7:00 p.m. against the Soviet Union National Women's Team.

Of additional interest to women was the recent announcement that Cindy Parrott will be assistant golf coach concentrating on the women's golf team. Sharon Castleman from Cincinnati is returning for her second year as Diving Coach. Also, let's cheer on Head Cross Country coach Margaret Groos while she trains as a national runner for the '88 Olympics.

YWCA classes of interest for October include:

- Hot Air Ballooning — October 10
- Carolina Christmas Tour of Biltmore Estate, Asheville, NC, December 6 and 8 (need to sign up in October)
- Shopping the Estate Sale — October 21st
- Where The Jobs Are — October 26th

For fees and more information call 269-9922.

Occupational Health Offers Free Flu Vaccine:

Free flu vaccines will be offered for employees November 1st-November 30th, Monday through Friday, 2-3 p.m. ONLY. Come to the Occupational Health Services, 608 Medical Arts Bldg., 21st & Garland. If you have questions you may call 2-2692.

Correction

In September VU we gave you a phone number in error for information regarding the Breast Cancer Screening Program of Occupational Health Service. The correct number is 322-2692.

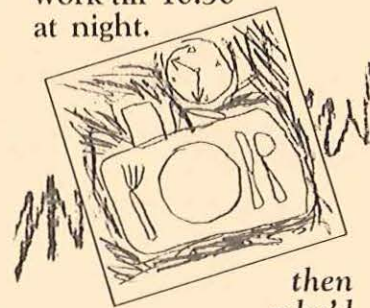
Parents Organized for Support Enforcement, Inc., POSE, is a non-profit organization that teaches parents how to obtain and enforce court ordered child support. POSE holds monthly meetings in Davidson Co., on the first Monday of each month, at the Belmont United Methodist Church, on Acklen Ave., from 7-8:30 p.m.

Persons interested in the organization of a local chapter of P-FLAG (Parents-Friends of Lesbians and Gays) should contact Janet Hazen at 883-1524.

For Sale: IBM 65 typewriter with memory, \$450. Can be seen at Women's Center, hours 8:30-4:30.

You may have noticed our new name. In the Spring of '87 the Board of Trust voted to name the Women's Center for Margaret Cuninggim, who died in 1986. From 1966-75 Dr. Cuninggim served first as Dean of Women and subsequently Dean of Student Services. The dedication of the MARGARET CUNINGGIM WOMEN'S CENTER will be in the Fall of '88 as part of the Women's Center Tenth Anniversary celebration.

For a woman to make as much in a day as a man, she'd have to work till 10:30 at night.



then who'd make dinner?

Pay equity: It's about time.

— American Association of University Women

Edited by Judith T. Helfer

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.

Monthly newsletters, excluding July and August, are sent upon request 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.

Name _____

Department _____

Address _____

Campus phone _____

Student (please give school and class)

Staff _____ Faculty _____ Other _____

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