

WOMEN'S VU

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Quality child care: *national need*

Charlotte Frankel

The 1950s "Mom's in the kitchen; all's right with the world" of Beaver and Wally Cleaver is gone, and it's not coming back. Mom's in the work force helping Dad pay for those \$25 Nikes for Baby's growing feet.

According to social historians, the 1950s were an aberration in 20th century America. As the economy shook itself out after World War II, women who had replaced men on the assembly lines were subjected to social pressure to return to housekeeping to ensure jobs for returning veterans. With an expanding economy and a low rate of inflation coupled with VA and FHA mortgages, a young family could provide for itself quite comfortably, in most cases, on one income.

Of necessity, the working mother is today's norm. This makes quality child care a matter of urgency if our nation is not to be "at risk." One need never have heard of Piaget to realize instinctively that the preschool years are crucial in the development of tomorrow's citizens.

A recent Public Broadcasting System documentary, "Who Cares for the Children," took an in-depth look at existing child care options in this country. Among its findings: the suitability of settings and quality of care vary widely; state enforcement of standards is often haphazard; most child care workers are underpaid; the United States is the only western industrialized nation which offers no financial assistance for child care to middle

income parents. The program concluded that only federal funding can ensure the quality child care the nation needs.

Federal action.

U.S. Secretary of Labor Ann McLaughlin has noted that more than 100 bills now pending before Congress "touch upon some aspect of child care." These issues cut across all demographic lines affecting two-parent families as well as single parents, the middle class as well as low income.

The Act for Better Child Care (ABC bill) led by Sen. Christopher Dodd (D., Ct) and Rep. Dale Kildee (D., Mi) is one of the many bills now in committee. This measure would authorize the expenditure of \$2.5 billion in fiscal 1988, plus such sums as may be necessary for the following four years to "increase the supply of affordable child care, improve the quality of care services, and coordinate new and existing child care resources and services." States would be required to provide a 20 percent match for federal funds, develop plans for child care services and create interagency advisory committees on child care licensing. The bill also would mandate a national advisory committee on child care standards.

According to a recent issue of *Women's Times*, the U.S. Department of Labor has not yet taken an official position on this and many other bills now pending. Conservative columnist William Safire, calling child care the "sleeping domestic issue of the 1988 campaign" chides the Reagan administration for being "late" in



Vanderbilt Child Care Center students. Left to right, Cammie Staros, Eliza Hughes, Zachary Harlyn, Joshua Limor, John Goetz, and Johann Kim.

confronting this problem. Safire says that Secretary of Education William Bennett has "shown cautious interest in congressional proposals but wants federal aid only for the poor." He adds that "the Department of Labor is considering ideas that range from child care vouchers to liability insurance guarantees (for centers) to caregivers' corps, to incentives for companies and unions to develop more child care at the work site. Worker-parents can be more productive and better workers when companies provide on-site day care," says Safire.

Paul Kirk, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, was recently asked if his party's candidates were paying enough attention to "women's issues" this year. Mr. Kirk responded in part: "It is no longer relevant or appropriate to define child care, to use one example, as a 'woman's issue' in a society in which fathers are equally involved in and con-

cerned about decisions relating to their children's welfare."

Harvard's child care challenged by union.

Recently, the perceived lack of affordable day care at Harvard University made national headlines. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) has made this issue the focal point of its efforts to organize clerical and support staff at the university. Although Harvard has been operating day care centers for more than seventeen years and now has seven centers with more than 338 spaces, the fees, averaging about \$750 a month, are too high for many staffers. According to *The New York Times*, "If the union's campaign succeeds, it is expected to strengthen the resolve of union organizing efforts at other universities, as well as in industry. Union officials say they hope their cam-

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Child Care *continued*

paign will help dispel the notion that unions are ailing institutions run by men for men."

Child care at Vanderbilt

In September 1983, Vanderbilt opened a child care center on the Peabody Campus off Edgehill to serve the children of University faculty, staff, and students. From an initial enrollment of 15, the center today has grown to 113 children and has a waiting list of more than 200. There are 24 children in the infant-toddler category, ranging from six weeks to two years. This group has the lowest caretaker-pupil ratio. The other 89 children range in age from two to five years. The infant room, with six beds, has a waiting list of 68 names, according to Assistant Dean, Residential and Judicial Affairs, Mindy Dalgarn, who oversees the child care program. There is a real need for infant care, says Dalgarn, who adds that the University advises prospective parents who wish a place to list their names as soon as pregnancy is confirmed. Fees range from \$225 to \$325 a month based on the child's age and the parents' income.

The on-site location offers many advantages to parents who are "in and out all the time," according to Ms. Dalgarn. Many mothers come in at noon to feed their children and they offer an informal support group to each other. The center draws Peabody students on work-study projects and/or practicums, as well as medical students, she says.

The presence of the center has been used as a recruiting tool for faculty and staff. Nancy Ransom, director of the Women's Center, says that the child care center, which is open from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., reduces scheduling difficulties for faculty and staff parents. She adds that campus child care enables Vanderbilt to attract and maintain the best employees and students who have young children. "Unfortunately," she says, "a long waiting list detracts from the recruitment potential of campus child care."

In August 1987, Provost Charles Kiesler created the Ad Hoc Committee on Child Care to review the current state of child care at Vanderbilt and to suggest directions that the provision of such services may take in the next five to ten years. Committee members met weekly for a four-month period during which they collected demographic information on the center, surveyed parents on the waiting list about their current need for child care, selected an outside consultant to conduct a program review of the child care center (Carol E. Catron, Ed. D., Department of Child and Family Studies, University of Tennessee-Knoxville), organized and coordinated the program review, surveyed other universities' child care policies, and came up with recommendations for the future direction of child care at Vanderbilt. The committee's report was submitted to the Provost in early March of this year.

The committee concludes that "Vanderbilt University is in a unique position to achieve

growth and quality in the provision of child care services. The university administrators, faculty, staff, and parents interviewed represent a large number of individuals excited about, committed to, and involved in child care issues. This level of interest and concern is a tremendous strength for the university as it continues to explore options to meet the needs of children, families, and academic departments with high quality programs."

An alumna of Vanderbilt, Charlotte Frankel is a freelance writer. ■

Goodbye to Toby Winer

Shelley Neill, A&S 2

Toby Winer is a new breed of leader, and her positive energy is contagious. As a young, Jewish, northern woman, the Assoc. Vice Chancellor of Finance recognizes that *she* is different, therefore she can anticipate others' fears and respond proactively.

Neither does she consciously adhere nor attempt to debunk the Superwoman image. "I'm an aggressive woman, but I also try to be positive about what I'm doing. I know where I'm going and I'll get there someday," she claims. To try to deactivate a negative atmosphere, Winer says, "I try to smile. There's a nice way to say 'no'.



In balancing family and career, Winer stresses "optimizing rather than maximizing." And to optimize, she agrees, one must make choices and avoid inflexibility. "You have to take chances to achieve a certain quality. And if [everyday] you're going to leave behind the family you love, the job has to be fun."

Winer admits to being a workaholic, but with a staff of 140 and a \$10 million budget, a businessperson of her stature must be a dedicated team leader. Behind every good leader, she asserts, are good people. "I encourage them to their highest potentials. You have to have con-

fidence in people. You have to listen to them and be flexible to change your mind."

Among other credits, the Winer team is responsible for the installation of a campus-wide 12,000 line telephone system and implementation of a Financial Information System.

Winer has been a booster for the Women's Center, serving on the Advisory Board, conducting a seminar on successful women in finance, and acting as consultant for the staff on the computer system. "I hope I've laid a lot of good groundwork for Vanderbilt and women in general," she said. In August she leaves Vanderbilt to move to San Francisco. Both the Women's Center and the University will miss her.

Toby Winer's 5 Commandments

1. Don't hide behind your dress. Chances are taken, not given. Being a woman should not prevent you from taking advantage of opportunities.
2. Dress for success.
3. When success comes, don't get "too big for your britches." Share your knowledge with other women and be a mentor."
4. Separate your professional life from your private life.
5. Optimize rather than maximize.



The tempest over increasing the minimum wage. All of the recent discussion and furor over raising the minimum wage leaves one with the strange feeling that it represents yet another attempt to keep women in their place. Of those workers earning the minimum wage or less in 1987, almost $\frac{2}{3}$ were women, and almost the same fraction, $\frac{3}{5}$, were over 20 years old. Over half of all workers earning the minimum wage or less were employed in the retail trade, mostly sales clerks. And sales clerks are increasingly older women.

The last statutory increase in the minimum wage was in 1981. Since that time the value of the minimum wage has steadily decreased until today it is worth only \$2.52 in 1981 dollars. In addition, the percentage of the hourly work force earning the minimum wage or less has decreased from 16% in 1981 to just over 7% in 1987. Never in the 50-year history of the minimum wage has it remained the same for so long. Why not give the 4.7 million Americans at the low end of the economic ladder a boost out of poverty?

Eleanor Smeal Report, March 28, 1988



In the library

Fathers and Daughters by William S. Appleton (Doubleday and Co.) is a recent acquisition of the Women's Center Library.

Think fast. Who was the first man in your life—the man whose impact colors your personal relationships and self-concept even now?

Whether one remembers him as dictatorial or pampering, gaining insight into her father's effect can help a woman to better relate to her husband/lover sexually, intellectually, and emotionally. So says psychiatrist William S. Appleton in his book, *Fathers and Daughters*.

Appleton examines the father-daughter relationship as a three-stage process comprised of oasis, conflict, and separation. The oasis period occurs during the daughter's formative childhood years and, typically, during the father's career-building thirties. The fifth year in particular is the highpoint of childhood, "a time when she is definitely his little girl and he her hero" (p. 11).

It is crucial, however, that Dad neither provides too much or too little attention at this time. Excessive devotion may yield an adult daughter who is less capable of maintaining love relationships because no man can compete with her doting father. On the other end of the spectrum, lack of attention may induce insecurity, anger, or obsessive searching for male attention.

As its name implies, the conflict stage is marked by the turmoil of the daughter's adolescence and the father's midlife self-evaluation. Both life stages are characterized by moodiness, discontent, and restlessness. During these years the coveted father resigns his mercy seat while the daughter relinquishes her father's perception of her as pure. According to Appleton, each permits the other to be human.

The separation period follows, in which father and daughter ideally adapt to the daughter's new adult status. Realistically, however, there are two separations (psychological and geographical) which do not necessarily coincide. Appleton explores the affects of such separation upon the daughter's sex life, asserting that two virginities exist: physical and psychological.

Other topics include his influence upon her career and sense of general security and the feasibility of changing his effect. Appleton concludes with the assertion that although she cannot change her father, a woman may come to understand him and therefore better understand herself.

Shelley Neill, A&S 2

It's your health

Lisa Mandeville Fields, RN, MSN

In this age of pursuing perfection and advanced medical knowledge, an increasing number of married couples are looking at pre-conceptual counseling and health care.

Pre-conceptual care involves the assessment of the couple before conception is attempted and diagnosis of factors which may place the woman or her unborn child at high risk during pregnancy. Often effective treatment can be provided to either diminish or eradicate the problem prior to conception.

For instance, women with diabetes are at a higher risk for producing children with birth defects. We know, however, that pre-conceptual care involving normalization of blood sugar values can reduce the incidence of birth defects for diabetic women.

Pre-conceptual care has been available for certain high risk patients for the past 5-10 years. Recently, more women with less serious disorders are being advised to see a perinatologist (high risk specialist in obstetrics) for an evaluation prior to planning pregnancy.

In general, women with medical disorders should seek pre-conceptual counseling. Often the disorder can worsen due to the added physical stresses of pregnancy.

Heart disease is a good example. During pregnancy the workload of the heart is increased and can cause serious problems for women with advanced disease. Diagnosis of the heart disease prior to pregnancy allows the health care professional to predict the degree of compromise that may be encountered during pregnancy with great accuracy.

Certain factors may lead to problems for the unborn baby. Some medications given to the mother may cause birth defects, and it may be possible to prescribe an alternate drug for use during conception and early pregnancy.

Couples with a family history of birth defects or who have had a child with a birth defect should also seek pre-conceptual care. Many times the exact risk of recurrence can be determined or treatment may be possible.

Pre-conceptual counseling is clearly indicated for the woman with medical problems, but it may be a good idea for all women. Often couples are unaware of potential risk factors.

When seeking pre-conceptual care, expect to provide a complete medical history and have a pelvic examination. If you are on medication, know the exact name and dose.

Finally, be a good medical consumer. Make sure you are seeing a specialist when you have serious medical problems. You should be provided with information about your risks in pregnancy and risks to your unborn baby. The final decision to become pregnant, however should rest with you and your partner. ■

Women's Center programs

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

The **Book Group** will meet Monday, June 13, 5:15 p.m., at the Women Center. This will be a planning meeting to choose books to read for the remainder of the year. Please bring your suggestions. Light refreshments.

Lunch with Community Leaders on June 17 will offer an opportunity to meet the president of the Nashville Chapter of 9to5, Sandra Corbin, as well as some other women who are members of this organization of women office workers. The local chapter is part of twenty chapters and a nationwide membership of 12,000.

Some of the objectives of the association are to end discrimination based on race, sex, or age; close the wage gap between men and women; improve economic security for older women; and provide safe working conditions. Bring your lunch and come to the Women's Center on Friday, June 17 at 12:15 p.m. Hot and cold drinks provided.

Beginning next fall the Women's Center will be offering a lunchtime Book Review. The first of these will be on Tuesday, September 20, 12:15 p.m. in Sarratt 118. Cecelie Tichi, Professor of English will review "...And Ladies of the Club" by Helen Santmyer.

If you're looking for some good summertime reading, this enthralling book chronicles sixty-four years in the lives of a group of small town Ohio women who form a literary club. It is available in paperback. ■

The new Women's Center Librarian is Lauri Wright. Lauri received her MLS from Peabody at Vanderbilt on May 13. Lauri invites everyone to come by to meet her; find something to read; and to talk about books, authors, writing, and children — a few of her many interests.

PLEASE NOTE: The Women's Center will be closed all day on June 23 and until 1:00 p.m. on June 24 to allow the staff to attend the conference, "Eliminating Sexual Harassment On Campus," co-sponsored by Vanderbilt University and the Office for Civil Rights, United States Department of Education.

Announcements et cetera

Women. . . . As the numbers of women in ordained ministry increase, the struggles of women continue. It will be some time before women have jobs, elected positions, and respect equal to our numbers and our capabilities. But some interesting things do happen to us along the way.

For the first time in the thirty-seven year history of the National Council of Churches, a clergywoman has been elected President. The Rev. Patricia McClurg, a Presbyterian woman, was elected in November 1987.

South of the Garden, newsletter of the Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South, Inc., January-February, 1988

Thanks! The Women's Center wishes to thank Nancy Smith Moss, Outreach Coordinator, Nursing Continuing Education, for the gift of a lovely poster featuring Noted Women from 1700 which now hangs in our conference room. Come by and read the interesting quotes and information.

The June issue of *Women's VU* is our last one for this academic year. In the May issue I expressed thanks to numerous people. At this time I wish to acknowledge and thank Nancy Ransom, Director of the Women's Center, for her mentoring during my first year as editor. Her advice has been invaluable.

I also want to thank the friends of the Women's Center who have offered valuable contributions and suggestions to me.

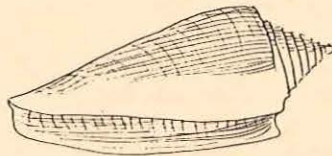
Have a good summer. *Women's VU* will return in September.

Are you gay, or do you know someone who is? The **Second International Lesbian and Gay Health Conference and AIDS Forum** will meet in Boston July 20 through 26. The topic, "Our Experience of the 80s, Our Mission for the 90s," will include grieving and loss, spirituality, special problems of youth, medical concerns, and gender issues for the 90s. For a copy of the brochure, stop by the Women's Center or call 322-4843.

When in doubt, use Ms.

Married executive women prefer to be called "Ms." rather than "Mrs.," according to a survey conducted by Heidrick and Struggles, an executive search firm. According to company president David R. Peaback, 42.7 percent of married respondents choose "Ms." as a title, compared to 39.8 percent who choose "Mrs." The study also finds that younger women prefer "Ms." more than older women: 54.8 percent of the married executives under age 40 choose "Ms." while 17.9 percent over age 50 choose it.

On Campus With Women, Vol 17, No. 3



"The average woman today can expect to spend as many years caring for a dependent parent or spouse as she does in caring for a dependent child. More than one caregiver in four must quit her job or reduce her hours in order to fulfill her unpaid caregiving responsibilities."

—Older Women's League

The **Journal of Political Science** is actively soliciting original manuscripts on the theme of "Women and Politics." A collection of scholarly articles will be published in the spring of 1989. The *Journal* is published annually for the South Carolina Political Science Association by the Department of Political Science, Clemson University. The editor of the forthcoming issue is Professor Lois L. Duke, Department of Government, Auburn University at Montgomery, Montgomery, Alabama 36193-0401. Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate to the editor. The essays should not exceed 20 typewritten pages (including tables and references). Manuscripts must be submitted no later than August 31, 1988.

Inquiries about subscriptions to the *Journal* should be addressed to Editor, *Journal of Political Science*, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina 29634-1509.

Men can be doctors, too.

Recently, I told my 4-year-old son he was due for his annual checkup with his pediatrician. He looked distinctly nervous (rumors about shots had obviously been making their way around the day-care center), and asked me anxiously, "Is she a nice doctor?"

I thought about the doctors my son knows best — me and my close friends, most of them female. I picked my words carefully. It was clearly one of those critical moments requiring all a mother's wisdom and tact. "Benjamin, I have to tell you something," I said. "Boys can be doctors too, if they want to. If they go to school and learn how, boys can be very good doctors, really."

The New York Times Magazine, 3/10/88
"Are Women Better Doctors?," Dr. Perri Klass

Edited by Judith T. Helfer

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