

Margaret
Cuninggim
Women's Center

Shari Benstock: Margaret Cuninggim Lecturer

Nancy Walker, Director of the Women's Studies Program and Associate Professor of English

I first met this year's Margaret Cuninggim lecturer, Shari Benstock, at the Shakespeare Wine Bar in Oxford, England, about ten years ago. Her husband, Berni, whom I had known at Louisiana State University some years before, was a visiting lecturer at the University of Leeds, and this was a reunion for us. I mention this fact of our personal history because it seems related to the international character of Shari's scholarship and her reputation. (And also because, after all this time, I cannot refer to her as *Professor Benstock*.) Her first major book, *Women of the Left Bank* (1986) has been published in a French edition, and she is one of the few people I know to have been approached by a film company about movie rights to a scholarly book. No, she's the *only* one I know.

The first subject of Shari's scholarly interest was James Joyce, and al-

where are the women?

though she has increasingly written about the women writers of the modernist period, she continues to work on Joyce, and has participated in a number of James Joyce international symposia. Travel is one of her many pleasures, which is fortunate since her research so frequently requires it. Last spring she spent several weeks at the Bellagio Study

Center in Italy on a Rockefeller Fellowship. Her son, Eric, now grown, became an international traveler early on, and I recall that as a small child he order pâté in restaurants and requested Dijon mustard for his hot dogs.

Like many of us who engage in feminist scholarship, Shari is propelled into most of her research by a recognition of gaps and absences: where are the women? Thus it was with *Women of the Left Bank*. So much had been written about the "lost generation" of Americans and Europeans in Paris in the 1920s, though actually the migration of American intellectuals began several decades earlier with such people as Henry James and Edith Wharton. Gertrude Stein has frequently been acknowledged as an important part of this group, but no one had moved the women from the wings to center stage to tell the story of their place and accomplishments in this literary movement.

Even before *Women of the Left Bank*, Shari was helping other scholars to fill those gaps and absences by serving as editor of *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* from 1982-1986. She took over from Germaine Greer the first journal in America to devote its pages exclusively to articles about the work of women writers. A special issue of this journal, *Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship*, was subsequently expanded into book form, becoming a standard work in the field. Always convinced that women's writing is inseparable from their lives, and that women's sensibilities cause them to blur the traditional distinctions between genres,



Shari Benstock

Shari edited *The Private Self: Theory and Practice in Women's Autobiographical Writing* in 1988, and then began working on a collection of her own essays, *Textualizing the Feminine: Essays on the Limits of Genre*, which will be published next year. And the next project? Which one? She plans a new biography of Edith Wharton and is working with her husband on a study of the origins of modernism in literature. And I've only scratched the surface.

How does she do it all? She has been known to get up at three or four in the morning to write before beginning her day at the University of Miami, and it is fortunate that her husband is an excellent cook, because she acknowledges that without his presence she would forget to eat.

A native midwesterner (she was born in Iowa), Shari looks forward to coming to Middle Tennessee from seasonless Miami while the fall leaves are in their glory, and we all look forward to welcoming her to Vanderbilt and to hearing what I know will be a splendid lecture. ■

"The Literary Baedeker: Images of Travel in American Women's Writing, 1900-1940" is the title of the 1990 Margaret Cuninggim Lecture, October 17, 8:00 p.m. in the new psychology building, room 126. Reception will follow. Sponsors are Women's Studies, the English Department, Students for Women's Concerns, and the Women's Center.



She's auditioning for a National Geographic Special tomorrow.

October is National Disability Awareness Month. Throughout the month the Opportunity Development Center (ODC) is sponsoring or co-sponsoring a number of events designed to raise awareness about disability issues. For more complete information contact ODC. Listed below are two of these co-sponsored by ODC and the YWCA.

Positive Images of Disabled Women. Nearly one in five Americans is disabled. This program focuses on positive, realistic images of women with disabilities. Three successful Nashville women with disabilities will conduct a panel discussion following a film presentation. Wednesday, October 17, 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m., YWCA.

Positive Employment. The Americans With Disabilities Act will make significant changes in the business world for employment of persons with disabilities. This workshop is designed to give employers and businesses an overview of the changes in responsibility as affected by this legislation. Thursday, October 18, 3:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. Fee \$20. For more information on and reservations for these two programs, call the YWCA at 269-9922. ■

It's your health

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

Hysterectomy is one of the most common major surgical procedures performed in the U.S. When a hysterectomy is recommended, a woman should make sure she understands why the procedure is necessary, what alternative treatments are available, and what the potential complications are. Two decisions that a woman can help her surgeon make are the type of surgical approach (through the abdomen or through the vagina) and whether or not to remove the ovaries.

Vaginal hysterectomy means the uterus is removed through an incision at the top of the vagina. Sometimes the fallopian tubes and ovaries can also be removed vaginally, but this can be technically difficult. If the uterus is greatly enlarged or if cancer of the cervix, uterus, or ovaries is suspected, a vaginal approach is not recommended. Otherwise, this procedure has some advantages. Hospitalization is brief -- usually two to three days -- and most women can return to their work and home responsibilities within two to three weeks. There is no visible scar.

Abdominal hysterectomy removes the uterus through an incision in the abdomen. This allows the surgeon to remove a uterus enlarged by fibroids or childbirth and ensures that the ovaries can be visualized and/or removed. Hospitalization is usually five to seven days and recovery is lengthened to four to six weeks. A visible scar is left on the abdomen.

The reason the hysterectomy is being performed usually dictates the type of abdominal incision made. If a large ovarian mass is present or if cancer is suspected, a vertical incision is made. If the uterus is small and no abnormalities are seen, a low horizontal ("bikini") incision is made.

Because ovarian cancer is so hard to detect and treat, most surgeons recommend the ovaries be removed prophylactically at the time of abdominal surgery in women over age forty-five. The ovaries naturally stop production of estrogen and progesterone around age fifty and some practitioners feel that the risks of leaving the ovaries in outweigh the benefits. Other physicians feel that because the ovaries secrete small amounts of male hormone after menopause, a normal organ should not be removed.

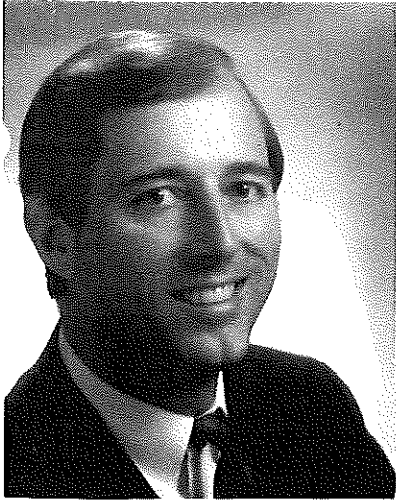
Any woman whose physician recommends a hysterectomy should ask questions. Get a second opinion (or a third!) Empowering yourself with knowledge will allow you to make an informed decision. ■

Women's Studies Job Announcements

The University of Utah is seeking a Women's Studies Director as well as a joint Sociology/Women's Studies appointment for the 1991-92 year with November 5 and October 15 application deadlines respectively.

Dartmouth is searching for a Women's Center Director who also can teach Women's Studies.

Complete job descriptions and application deadlines are available in the Women's Center library.



William Jenkins, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Administration

William Jenkins is the 1990 recipient of the Mary Jane Werthan Award. He is Vice-Chancellor for Administration at Vanderbilt. Anita Linde, Activities Coordinator for the Office of International Services, interviewed Jenkins.

When William Jenkins joined the Vanderbilt community in 1984 as Vice-Chancellor for Administration, he shared with his employees a set of personal beliefs which foretold the philosophy that would inform his work here ever since: "Service with Enthusiasm." Among the items listed in his professional credo, Jenkins included a statement about affirmative action which reads, "This is a step beyond equal opportunity. We must take affirmative steps to attract and hire members of ethnic minorities and women."

On October 17 at the Margaret Cunningham Lecture, Jenkins will be recognized for his commitment to that ideal, when he receives the Mary Jane Werthan Award. Established in 1988 in honor of the first female member of the Vanderbilt Board of Trust, the Award is given annually to "an individual who has contributed significantly to the advancement of women at Vanderbilt."

This is not the first time Jenkins has been rewarded publicly for his commitment to equal opportunity in academia: while working as Associate Vice-Chancellor for Finance and Business at North Carolina State in the early 1980s, he received the University's Distinguished Service Award for Race Relations. Indeed, both Jenkins' professional and

Mary Jane Werthan Award

personal lives have been devoted to supporting organizations which increase opportunities for groups traditionally oppressed by American society. From the Upward Bound Project he helped manage while a graduate student at Purdue University in the early 1970s, to his work for the Finance Committee of the Nashville League of Women Voters in the mid-1980s, Jenkins has actively sought to put his beliefs into practice.

Jenkins sees a tremendous awakening going on in America, as employers realize the benefits of maximizing differences in human resources. Varied backgrounds and experiences of employees enrich the current workplace and attract other talented individuals who perceive the organization as open and progressive. Such hiring practices are, simply put, smart management: "It's a win-win situation," says Jenkins.

A good example of Jenkins' commitment to women at Vanderbilt is the Leadership Development Forum he established this year. When selecting the twenty-three participants from the thirteen administra-

tive areas he supervises, he chose thirteen women. This exceeds the percentage of women in these areas. Also of note is that one of Jenkins' two associate vice-chancellors for administration is a woman. To quote from a letter nominating Jenkins for the award, "... he has hired 'in positions of authority' those candidates that are more likely to follow his lead in the hiring of minorities and females."

Vanderbilt is "headed in the right direction" on the diversity issue, according to Jenkins, though he notes there is still room for improvement. He believes a "critical mass" of people who value equal opportunity and affirmative action must be achieved before an organization can assume a leadership position in the treatment of minorities and women. Once achieved, however, there is a domino effect which creates lasting change. Jenkins' role as a human catalyst in bringing new attitudes and practices into being here at Vanderbilt makes him a worthy recipient of this year's Mary Jane Werthan Award. ■

Calendar of events

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

Feminist Issues In India. In the Fall of 1988 Elisabeth Perry, Associate Professor of History, spent two weeks in India as lecturer for the United States Information Service discussing feminist issues with Indian professionals. On Wednesday, October 3, at 12:15 p.m., she will show slides of her visit and discuss some of the issues she encountered. Sarratt 118.

Book Group will discuss *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan on Monday, October 8, from 5:15 p.m. until 6:15 p.m. in Godchaux Hall living room. Mary Crichton will lead the discussion.

New Employees Brown Bag Lunch will be held on Tuesday, October 9, from noon until 1:00 p.m. at the Women's Center. All recently hired Vanderbilt employees are invited. Bring your lunch. Hot and cold drinks will be provided.

Noontime Seminar: Gender and Neighboring. Women are often regarded as "better" neighbors than men. There is considerable debate over whether this is a result of gender differences or in extent of employment. Karen Campbell, Assistant Professor of Sociology, will present her research on eighty Nashville neighborhoods. Seminar will be on Thursday, October 11, 12:15 p.m. in Sarratt 205.

Calendar continued page four

Ethnography in Guatemala

Laura Warren, A&S Sr

This past summer I had the pleasure of participating in an anthropology course in Guatemala. Former Vanderbilt Professor Duncan Earle, now teaching at Texas A&M University, put together the program for twelve undergraduates at Vanderbilt. During this time we lived on the beautiful Lake Atitlan in the town of Santa Cruz de la Laguna, surrounded by volcanoes and mountains. Students worked on a project of their choice that showed the changes made by Western technology and influence on the Mayan Indians. I chose to work with midwives and discovered what changes had occurred in birthing practices over the years.

I became well acquainted with two midwives, who by chance had the same name, Magdalena or Matal in Kaqchikel, the native Mayan language in this town. Both women became midwives because God told them in a dream that they should take on this role. Besides learning about the birthing traditions of their ancestors, they participated in a mandatory health course taught by doctors and clinicians in the area. Here they learned about Western methods, such as Caesarean sections and internal examinations, which have produced some negative impact on the women.

An example of Western methods causing harm is the midwives now perform internal examinations on their patients weekly in unsanitary conditions, increasing the risk of infection for both mother and child. This practice reflects a broad trend that is happening in Guatemala and other "underdeveloped" countries. Western ideas are being integrated into cultures without full knowledge or mastery of the practices and this produces harmful effects for the populations.

Another example of this is the use of Depo-Provera, a synthetic version of the female hormone progesterone which is injected by many indigenous women throughout the world for contraceptive use. In the United States, it is not FDA approved for contraception due to its serious side



Chamula Indian mother and child

effects. Yet this drug is widely used throughout Guatemala, even though its relation to birth defects is still unknown. In essence, these Guatemalan women are being used as guinea pigs for the continuation of contraceptive research.

Guatemala is a country rich with resources and people, but it has been wracked with terror and violence due to civil war and Western influences. A beautiful culture is being drained by so-called advancements in the name of modernization. Yet a mixture of old and new is possible if both forces work together for the sake of the people and the land. ■

Opportunities that women may want to pursue. More information and applications are available at the Women's Center or the Division of Sponsored Research, 512 Kirkland Hall.

Bunting Institute: Bunting Fellowship (for women in creative writing/arts). Deadline October 15.

Bunting Institute: Science Scholars Fellowship (for women scientists). Deadline October 15.

Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Program. Deadline November 1.

Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation: Woodrow Wilson Women's Studies Research Grants for Doctoral Candidates. Deadline November 9.

National Science Foundation: Visiting Professorships for Women. Deadline November 15.

Calendar (continued from page three)

The Literary Baedeker: Images of Travel in American Women's Writing, 1900-1940 is the title of this year's Margaret Cuninggim Lecture on October 17 (see page one for details).

Journaling Workshop: Every Person's Life is Worth a Story. Miriam Bassuk, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, will offer an approach to journal writing as a means of enriching your life. Through practicing some actual journaling exercises, she will point out the power in this writing to center, review, and flow with the patterns of your life.

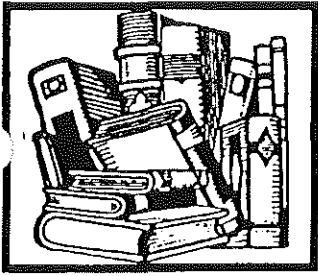
Registration by October 18 will be necessary for this workshop Monday, October 22, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be available at 5:00 p.m. in room 112 of the new psychology building. Fee for the workshop is \$10.

Lunchtime Book Review: *Sisters in Crime* edited by Marilyn Wallace. This anthology of short stories by women mystery writers who generally write novels will be reviewed by Francille Bergquist, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Science, on Tuesday, October 23, 12:15 p.m. in Sarratt 118.

Technical Writing: A Workshop for Graduate Students in Engineering and the Sciences. Facilitators: Marty Nord, Associate Professor, Practice of Management and Technical Communication, Owen Graduate School of Management and the School of Engineering, and Sherra Kerns, Professor of Electrical Engineering and director of the new multi-university consortium on space electronics.

This workshop is an initiation into a special world -- the "discourse community" of technical research. The topics covered: technical writing style for journals, reports, and dissertations; preparing papers for conferences; getting published.

Tuesday, October 23, 4:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. in the Owen Graduate School of Management, room 126. Light refreshments. ■



In the library

Barbara Clarke
Women's Center librarian

Big changes have been made at the Women's Center over the summer. We now have more space in the library for our resource collection, as well as room for you to use it. The librarian's desk and the computer have been moved out of the library and into an adjacent office to make room for a research table in the library. New shelving has been installed, and we even have room for the collection to expand.

Some interesting new books have been received recently. *You Just Don't Understand* by Deborah Tannen is a fascinating and very readable study of the problems of communication between men and women. The author, a sociolinguist, describes how men and women use language in different ways, and how this contributes to frequent misunderstandings. Though men and women officially speak the same language, they don't understand the same language. The author agrees that men and women must learn to understand each other in order to accept their differences.

The Single Mother's Book: A Practical Guide to Managing Your Children, Career, Home, Finances, and Everything Else by Joan Anderson is a useful new book written by a former employee of the Women's Center. The writer discusses many of the problems faced by single mothers and offers practical solutions in such fields as legal matters, finances, child care, self-esteem, employment, and relatives of former partners.

Carol Moog's *Are They Selling Her Lips?: Advertising and Identity* is a fascinating publication on the psychology of advertising. The reader is given an insider's view on the

subject, as the author, a clinical psychologist, frequently works as a consultant to advertisers and advertising agencies. This is a revealing look at the advertising business. Many people are not conscious of the extent to which they are influenced by the advertisements they see, hear, and read. Advertisers hope that not only will people want to look like the models they see, but that they will buy what the models say that they purchase.

Language, Gender, and Professional Writing: Theoretical Approaches and Guidelines for Nonsexist Usage by Francine Wattman Frank and Paula A. Treichler is a book that would be useful for all writers. The authors discuss linguistic sexism in scholarly writing, and they offer guidelines on how to avoid discriminatory language. As sexist language can have such great negative consequences, particularly for girls and women, it is very important — and not difficult — for writers to use nonsexist wording.

Gender Bias in Scholarship: the Pervasive Prejudice, edited by Winnifred Tomm and Gordon Hamilton, is an interesting Canadian publication on the problems of sexism at universities and in academic research. The nine contributors to the book illustrate how vital the gender bias is to those who are affected by it, and why it should be important to people who are interested in balanced research and scholarship. Females have been largely omitted from most aspects of scholarship: they seldom have been the researchers or the subjects of research. Each of the contributors discusses a different aspect of the discrimination — as it affects sociological research, science, art education, philosophy, history, psychology, education, literature, and social science.

Come by the Women's Center Library to see our changes and check out one of the new books mentioned above. Or perhaps you'd like to read a book that has been reviewed at one of our Lunchtime Book Reviews. Our policy is to include them in our collection.

Since the library has expanded, we can accept a limited number of donated books. If you have a book you'd like to give, please call Barbara Clarke. We will need to be selective to avoid overloading the new space.

New Women's Center staff

Two new faces have been added to the Women's Center staff. Gladys R. Holt joined us this summer as secretary for the Center. She comes with over twenty years of valuable experience in the corporate world.



Gladys Holt

Gladys is currently working on a degree in Business Administration from Tennessee State University. Another place you might encounter her is in Nancy Walker's *Images of Women* course, which she is auditing.

Barbara M. Clarke, our new librarian, moved to Nashville from Knoxville, where she held a library position at the University of Tennessee.



Barbara Clarke

Barbara received her BA from Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, and an Associateship Diploma of Librarianship from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Since coming to this country nineteen years ago, she has held library positions with East Tennessee Baptist Hospital and the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

We are proud and excited to have the talents of these two women complete the staff. Come by to meet the new staff members and see the changes we've made. ■

Staff photos by Elizabeth Papousek

Announcements et cetera

Success Strategies for Women's Advancement: Developing Leaders is a conference about women in higher education administration. Speakers will discuss both practical experiences and research findings on challenges, limits, and risks associated with developing and achieving leadership.

On Friday morning, October 5, Donna Shavlik, ACE-NIP Director, Washington, DC, will moderate a panel composed of Arliss Roaden, Tennessee Higher Education Commission; Joseph Johnson, University of Tennessee; Otis Floyd, Tennessee Board of Regents; and William Troutt, Private Colleges Association.

In the early afternoon Brenda Albright will moderate a panel composed of Margaret Perry, Chancellor, University of Tennessee at Martin; Sherry Hoppe, President, Roane State Community College; and Karen Bowyer, President, Dyersburg State Community College.

Following will be two concurrent sessions. Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey and Jeanne Plas, Vanderbilt faculty, will speak on "Negotiating the System: Relating Research to What We're Trying to Do." Rebecca Quattlebaum will lead a panel on "Incentives and Impediments to Making the Transition to Administration."

You can still register at the door for \$45. For more information call Mattielyn Williams at 741-7564.

YWCA: Mid-Life Renewal.

Thirty-something isn't over the hill; in fact, neither is forty, fifty, or sixty-something or more if we continue to renew at each of life's seasons. This is a women's group for all those who want:

- Womanhood that is powerful and soft
- Transformation with a mid-life that is not a crisis
- Body-image that is unrelated to the adolescent look
- Support somewhere besides your undergarment

Four Tuesdays beginning October 23, 7:15 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. Fee: \$65. Instructor: Joan Furman-Seaborg, MSN, RN, nurse practitioner, counselor, consultant

Students for Women's Concerns has organized for the academic year. Chair of the group is Amy Ferramosca and Treasurer is Stacy Price. This student organization will develop programs throughout the year that address issues of concern to women, women's roles in history, and women's perspectives on current issues. New members are welcome. Call the Women's Center at 322-4843 to have your name added to the membership list and learn of future meetings.

Shelia Tobias finds "new tier of talent" for science. Science majors are "hemorrhaging" out of science at the college level says Sheila Tobias, author of a 1990 research report, *They're Not Dumb, They're Different: Stalking the Second Tier*. Women, she says, are fifty percent of the population, forty percent of the workforce, and thirteen percent of employed scientists and engineers. Both Tobias and a 1989 Michigan study conclude that "certain students, among them women and most likely our second tiers, would respond better to science if more 'cooperative and interactive models of learning' were part of the pedagogy...."

Editor's note: Shelia Tobias was a Lecturer in Women's Studies at Vanderbilt in 1979 and 1980. On March 21, 1991 she will return for a lecture on her study of teaching science.

"When I choose compulsive behavior to avoid my feelings, I give up control of my life."

from Thirteen Steps by Bonita L. Swan (Women's Center Library)

Women's VII

Editor: Judith Tefft Helfer

Subscription information: return this form or call the Women's Center at 322-4843.

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