

Brumberg examines female adolescence

Women's Center celebrates fifteen years with the 1993 Margaret Cuninggim lecture

Kay Hancock
Information Officer
The Graduate School

Joan Jacobs Brumberg, historian, women's studies scholar, and professor of human development and family studies at Cornell University, has had a long-term interest in the history of girlhood in America. On November 9 at 7:30 p.m. in David K. Wilson Hall, room 126, she will deliver the 1993 Margaret Cuninggim Lecture on the topic, "Girls Will Be Girls: Adolescent Diaries from the Past and the Present."

Brumberg's lecture will summarize research from her forthcoming book about the changing historical experience of female adolescence. Her work is based on private diaries written by American girls from the 1830s to today.

With a Ph.D. in history and a master's degree in American studies, Brumberg is at home in several disciplines. The courses she teaches at Cornell are cross-listed among the Departments of Human Development and Family Studies, Women's Studies, and History. Her range of interdisciplinary interests is apparent in the books she has published: *The Judson Family and American Evangelical Culture* (The Free Press, 1980) and *Fasting Girls: The Emergence of Anorexia Nervosa as a Modern Disease* (Harvard University Press, 1988).

In an interview Professor Brumberg talked about the subject of her book and the Margaret Cuninggim Lecture.

Question: How did the transition come about in your scholarly interests from work on anorexia nervosa to the

changing historical experience of female adolescence?

Brumberg: My interest actually began with the changing historical experience of female adolescence. In 1982 I was going to write a book about the history of girlhood in America, how it was experienced and how it had changed. Two obvious measures of that change were an increase in the sexuality of adolescents with an accompanying increase in the illegitimacy rate, and the focus on body issues, which was related to a rise in eating disorders.

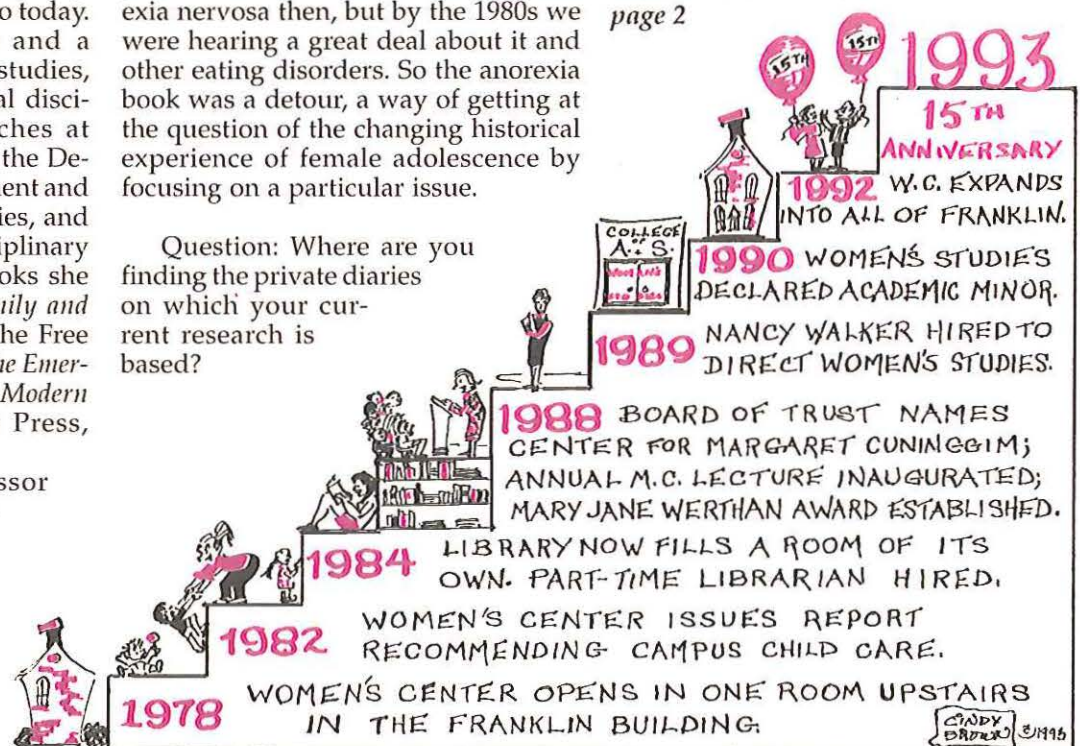
I had the experience in 1965 at the University of Rochester of working as a tutor for a woman in the hospital. She was emaciated, obviously anorexic. The physician did not even mention anorexia nervosa then, but by the 1980s we were hearing a great deal about it and other eating disorders. So the anorexia book was a detour, a way of getting at the question of the changing historical experience of female adolescence by focusing on a particular issue.

Question: Where are you finding the private diaries on which your current research is based?

Brumberg: The diaries are in the traditional historical archives and repositories. I find them by looking in bibliographic guides and searching out the holdings of different libraries. Girls' papers are often embedded in family papers. I also have solicited diaries that have been in families, perhaps hidden in people's dresser drawers and attic trunks.

The book I am writing relies heavily on diaries, but I also am interested in other ways of getting at girls' culture, e.g., photographs, scrapbooks, autograph books, letters. I don't have a lot of material about women in Tennessee and that part of the South. I would be very interested in hearing from women in the Nashville area who have

—see BRUMBERG,
page 2



Brumberg studies the growth of young girls in private diaries

-from page one
such materials. I invite them to write me at the Department of Human Development, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853.

Question: What do you look for in the private diaries of American girls from the 1830s to today?

Brumberg: I am not looking for anything special, but I am using them as a window on adolescence in another time period, as well as today.

Question: What are you finding in these diaries?

Brumberg: Private diaries are, of course, very personal and idiosyncratic, but at certain points in time most diaries also sound the same. I look for patterns of life, daily routines, girls' ties to church and society, what they read, relations with their mothers and boy-friends. In recent years I find references to sex and drugs. Some things girls think about and do and feel—develop-

mental issues—continue over time.

Question: As you work your way through diaries written over the past 160 years, what sorts of things, i.e., feelings, experiences, concerns, remain constant?

Brumberg: Some of the constants are a search for an adult identity, the need for connection with others, new interest in the opposite sex. In recent times, however, I also see some adolescent girls acknowledging a lesbian preference. Diaries by girls also reveal a certain frivolity and enthusiasm, which remain constant over time. The continuities are, of course, shaped by class, ethnic considerations, and location.

Question: What are the changes you note in the things adolescent girls have written about at different times in the period you are studying?

Brumberg: I have been looking at the larger changes in society that affect girls' lives. The decline of religion and of secular institutions has a significant effect. Girls no longer have the same number and frequency of interactions with adult women, i.e., mentors; they have different relations with their mothers, different relations to peer groups, a different sense of selves, a different view of their self-worth and self-esteem.

From the 1920s forward there has been a greater emphasis on appearance and sexuality. I don't see these changes as all beneficial, progressive, and good. In the 1950s, for example, there was a stultifying pressure to conform and to be popular; girls today, however, are much more likely to be brutalized than in the 1950s. Sexual liberalism without a feminist base has problems.

Question: Do the diaries reveal differences in the socialization of girls over time?



PHOTO BY CHARLES HARRINGTON

Joan Brumberg, professor of human development and family studies at Cornell University, will deliver the 1993 Margaret Cuninggim Lecture.

Brumberg: The decline of religion, the decline of secular institutions directed to girls, such as Girl Scouts and Campfire Girls, have significant implications.

The kind of socialization girls received from those institutions, and the female mentoring involved in them, have declined, and we have not explored the consequences. Since the early twentieth century, girls have been socialized to be concerned with how they look, with their public persona. It was important in the nineteenth century for women to have character, to do service to others and the community, to be pi-

Question: Do you think the aspirations and ambitions of adolescent girls today differ from those in the nineteenth century?

Brumberg: They differ enormously. Contemporary girls, specifically middle class girls, have much more freedom of choice. They can envision the future without marriage. They may want marriage and a family eventually, but they will delay it.

They have very high expectations, superwoman expectations, for themselves. Their adolescent enthusiasm for achievement is glorious to see for someone my age, but they may not be terribly realistic. They want to be a Ruth Bader Ginsburg or a Hillary Rodham Clinton, and rightly so.

These are the women I admire also, but the challenge is how to advise girls realistically about the obstacles women still face in our society.



Women's VU

Published monthly September through June at the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center, Vanderbilt University, Franklin Building, West Side Row. Mailing address: Box 1513 Station B, Nashville, TN 37235.

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Pages 6 and 7 photos by Rebecca Fischer

“NEWS QUOTES”

Male batterers show antisocial, hostile tendencies

Domestic violence is an unpleasant reality in our present-day society. But the men who commit such violence against their partners are not easily identified.

To determine what kind of man becomes a batterer, researcher LaTine Else and her colleagues evaluated twenty-one male volunteers who were entering treatment for partner abuse. These men were compared to a control group of twenty-one nonabusers.

The two groups of men did not differ greatly in age, education, or socioeconomic status. The batterers were more likely to be divorced, however, and they were more likely to have been physically or emotionally abused themselves as children. They were also somewhat more likely to have witnessed abuse between their parents.

In addition, the abusing men scored higher on measures of self-criticism and the likelihood of acting out their hostility. They also tended to lack problem-solving skills.

Overall, the men who were batterers scored higher on measures of borderline and antisocial personality disorder. According to the American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic manual, borderline personality disorder is characterized by unstable interpersonal relationships in which other persons are alternately idealized and devalued. Inappropriate, intense, and uncontrolled anger is also a prominent feature. Antisocial personality disorder is characterized by irresponsible behavior that may involve rule violations and even criminal activity.

Only one third of the batterers were diagnosed with either personality disorder, but all scored high on related traits that could not be attributed to alcohol abuse, socioeconomic status, intellectual impairment, or more general psychiatric dysfunction. Together with the increased incidence of separation

and divorce, this finding tends to confirm that a somewhat unstable personality profile contributes to violence against female companions.

Menninger Letter
September 1993

Sandler stands up for women who 'come on too strong'

In 1969, Bernice Resnick Sandler was turned down for a regular faculty appointment with tenure track at the University of Maryland in College Park because "you come on too strong as a woman."

Instead, Sandler, who had earned her doctorate in education at the university, was hired as a lecturer.

She went on to be director for 20 years of the prestigious Project on the Status and Education of Women for the Association of American Colleges in Washington.

Today, the longtime college-watcher is senior associate at the Center for Women Policy Studies, an independent feminist policy research and advocacy group based in Washington.

"While there are still many problems women faculty members face, there also have been positive changes with enormous impact since 1969," said Sandler.

The changes in academia according to Sandler:

Awareness: When Congress held hearings on sex discrimination in education in 1970, no educators testified, she said. It wasn't a problem. Today, it's a legitimate issue.

Laws: Federal antidiscrimination laws exempted women and girls from coverage. Today, sex discrimination in education is prohibited.

Quotas: Highly restrictive quotas kept female applicants from being accepted by colleges and medical, engineering, law, and veterinary schools. Today, students are judged "on their abilities rather than sexual organs," she said.

Professional Associations: Female faculty worked individually for equal rights, but there were few groups doing so. Today, professional organizations have 100 committees and caucuses in academia.

Campus Commissions: There were none on the status of women and no policies prohibiting discrimination. Today, most campuses have commissions

and policies.

But problems remain. Though 28 percent of U. S. college faculty members are female, Sandler describes classroom relationships between women faculty members and students as "chilly."

Her research shows that both female and male students expect female faculty members to be nurturing rather than assertive; a male faculty member who dresses carelessly is "eccentric" but a female is "sloppy"; male students sometimes argue with, interrupt and sexually harass female faculty members but rarely treat males that way; and students are more likely to challenge a female teacher's credentials, tenure, and degrees than those of a male.

Consequently, women often get poor student evaluations, limiting advancement. "Schools have to take this issue seriously and respond publicly, making classroom behavior a topic of discussion," Sandler said.

Gladys Styles Johnston, a former provost of DePaul University, says "students, male and female, tend to see male professors as authority figures. They challenge male faculty less with probing statements."

Though she didn't teach at DePaul, Johnston says she found it a supportive environment for women faculty because out of seven vice presidents, four are female.

Nationwide, she believes the status of women faculty "will change when the numbers of women at the top increase."

Washington Post
September 9, 1993

One of the great challenges we face in the 1990s is to strike a balance between the characteristics we have in common and our diversities.

—Dolores Wharton
National Voter
June/July 1993

Mothers' activities and discussion group in the works

Are you a mother? Do you ever feel frustrated that mothers' "shop talk" is not encouraged?

On the job it is viewed as unprofessional. Off the job you fear discomfoting friends who have not made the choice to have children. Are you at home with your children part-time or full-time and feeling isolated?

Several women associated with the Vanderbilt community including a full-time employed mother, a graduate student, an attorney currently employed part-time, and a full-time-by-choice mother would like to start up a mothers' discussion and activities group. We have children ranging in age from not-quite-here-yet to eight years old and share a common desire to talk on a practical as well as political and intellectual level about motherhood and

—see *MOTHERS*, page 7

Student Voice

And God Made Me Woman

And God made me woman,
with long hair,
eyes,
nose and mouth of a woman.
With curves
and folds
and smooth hollows
and He cleared me out inside,
so that I could be a workshop for human beings.
He delicately weaved my nerves
and carefully balanced
the number of my hormones.
He composed my blood
and injected me with it
so that it would irrigate
my whole body;
there the ideas were born,
the dreams,
the instinct.
All that He suavely created
from puffs of a hammer
to drillings of love,
the million and one things that make me woman every day
it is because of these that I rise with pride
every morning
and I bless my sex.

by Gioconda Belli

Translated from Spanish by Caroline Rittenberry, A&S '94
(during modern Hispanic poetry class, Vanderbilt-in-Spain, Spring 1993)

Sleeveless Theatre offers comedy with a conscience in *The F-Word*

Feminism is anything but a dirty word in Sleeveless Theatre's vaudevillian-style revue *The F-Word: A Fresh and Funny Look at Feminism*.

The political comedy troupe from Massachusetts created a stir with its first show, *Womb for Rent: A Pro-Choice Comedy*. Sleeveless Theatre toured *Womb* throughout the country to packed houses and standing ovations.

In *The F-Word*, the troupe examines the current status of feminism in America against the backdrop of women's history. The group takes a satiric jab at the pundits who claim that feminism is a dirty word. In one sketch, "The Wizard of Oz, Take Two," Dorothy is a co-ed who claims she's not feminist until she is propelled into "Retro-land." There she meets Gloria, the Good Witch of the Left, and must follow the feminist path to meet the women who struggled for the rights she enjoys. Finally, Dorothy must destroy Phyllis, the Wicked Witch of the Right, who plays on the girl's fears about feminism.

Troupe member Kate Nugent described the play as "our way of reclaiming the women's movement. We've taken the issues and the history off of the written page and developed a living political cartoon."

The group will perform in Underwood Auditorium on November 11. For more information, see page 5.



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH BRYAN

The F-Word stars K.D. Halpin, Maureen Futtner, Kate Nugent, and Lisa Channer (clockwise from bottom). The free performance is November 11.

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*Calendar of
Events*

Margaret
Cunninggim
Women's
Center



Please save and post. Individual flyers for these programs will not be sent.

November 3 (Wednesday) through December 10 (Friday)

Art Fabrics by Dolores Ashley Harris, professor of art, Tennessee State University, Nashville, on exhibit in the Cuninggim Center Lounge, first floor, during office hours, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Reception November 4.

November 3 (Wednesday)

Noontime Seminar. Our Siblings, Our Stories: Epic and Tragedy Then and Now led by Susan Ford Wiltshire, professor of classics. 11:45 to 12:45 p.m., Sarratt 205.

Gender Study Group, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., Cuninggim Center. Text required. Before joining the group for the first time, please call 322-4843 for more information. Group also meets on November 17.

November 4 (Thursday)

Cuninggim Center Fifteenth Anniversary and Opening Reception for the Artist, Dolores Ashley Harris, 3:30 to 6:30 p.m., Cuninggim Center. An exhibit of her art fabrics is at the Cuninggim Center through December 10.

November 5 (Friday)

Lunchtime Book Review. Patricia Arnold, associate professor of the practice of human development, reviews *The Space Between Us: Exploring the Dimensions of Human Relationships* by Ruthellen Josselson, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., Cuninggim Center.

November 8 (Monday)

Book Group discusses *The Optimist's Daughter* by Eudora Welty. Facilitator is Janie White. New members welcome. 5:15 to 6:15 p.m., Cuninggim Center.

November 9 (Tuesday)

Margaret Cuninggim Lecture. Joan Jacobs Brumberg, professor of history, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Cornell University, speaks on "Girls Will Be Girls: Adolescent Diaries from the Past and Present." 7:30 p.m., David K. Wilson Hall, room 126. Reception to follow. Co-sponsors are Women's Studies, History Department, and University Lectures Committee. The 1993 Mary Jane Werthan Award will be presented before the lecture. Antonina Gove is the 1993 recipient.

November 10 (Wednesday)

Writers Workshop, 5:15 to 7:15 p.m., Cuninggim Center. New members welcome.

November 11 (Thursday)

The F-Word: A Fresh and Funny Look at Feminism presented by the Sleeveless Theatre of Northampton, Massachusetts, is a multicultural look at feminism. 8:00 p.m., Underwood Auditorium, free. Co-sponsors with the Cuninggim Center are Project Dialogue, University Lectures, and Women's Studies.

November 15 (Monday)

Dissertation Writers Group I meets from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Cuninggim Center. For more information call 322-4843.

November 17 (Wednesday)

Advisory Board second fall semester meeting, Brenda Gilmore, chair, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m., Carmichael Towers East, room 208.

November 22 (Monday)

Dissertation Writers Group II meets from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Cuninggim Center. For more information call 322-4843.

Shattering stereotypes

Katie Roiphe's critical look at America's rape crisis

The Morning After: Sex, Fear, and Feminism on Campus is by Katie Roiphe, a graduate student at Princeton University. The author, who was twenty-four when she wrote the book, began her undergraduate work at Harvard in 1986.

Roiphe is very critical of many of the theories that prevail in feminism today.

Barbara Clarke,
Women's Center
librarian



She believes that many feminists stress the weakness, vulnerability, and victimization of women, and tend to portray men as predators. She feels that concepts of fragile women are too close to the stereotypes prevalent years ago: "this image of a delicate woman bears a striking resemblance to that fifties ideal my mother and the other women of her generation fought so hard to get away from."

Roiphe believes that the rape-crisis movement promotes the idea that women are weak, childish, and lack sexual desire, and that men are predatory. She does not approve of current definitions of date and acquaintance rape; she feels that many incidents labeled date rape lie in a gray area and should not be called rape.

The writer is very critical of Take Back the Night marches, as well as of prevailing definitions of sexual harassment. She believes that while sexual harassment can be a real problem, the current definition is much too broad. The idea that a male student can sexually harass a female professor is insulting, according to the writer. "Rules and laws based on the premise that all women need protection from all men, because they are so much weaker, serve only to reinforce the image of women as powerless."

Roiphe, who considers herself a feminist, is critical also of the theory that pornography leads to violence against women. Other topics covered include the effects of AIDS on the behavior of

young people, and the reasons for the prevalence of eating disorders on campus.

Sexual Violence: Our War Against Rape is by Linda A. Fairstein, who has been in charge of the Manhattan District Attorney's Sex Crimes Prosecution Unit for many years. Most of the crimes prosecuted by her office involve violent assaults by strangers, though they have successfully prosecuted some acquaintance rapists.

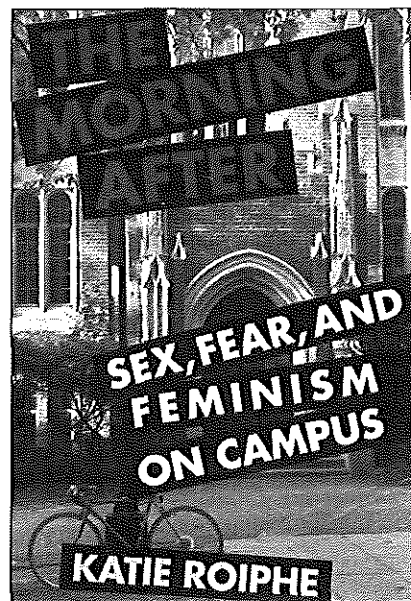
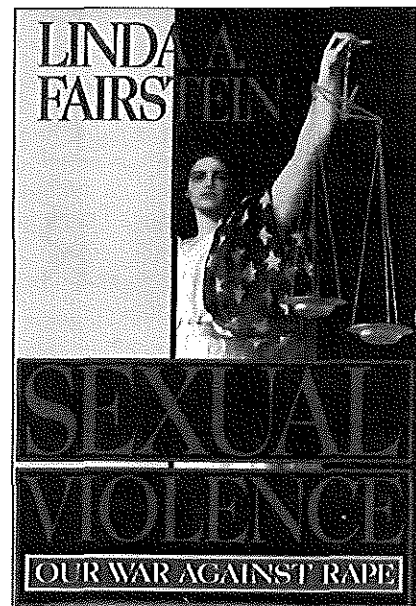
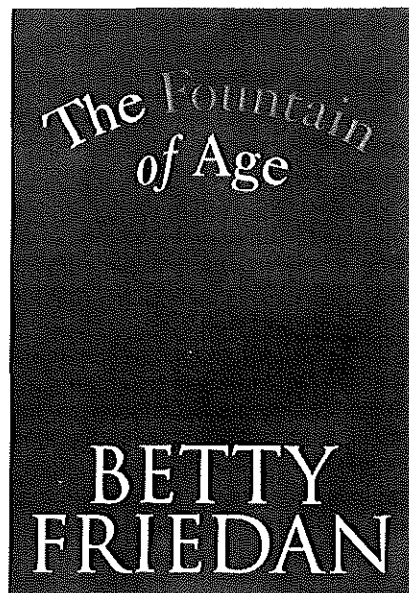
Fairstein shows how the laws pertaining to sex crimes have changed over the past two decades. Twenty years ago rape cases rarely came to trial and rape victims were stigmatized and blamed for participating in their assaults. In 1969 only eighteen men were convicted of rape in New York City, although over one thousand males were arrested for the crime. Until 1972 New York law still required corroboration in rape cases, but not in other types of violent crime, such as robbery and attempted murder. Fairstein states that "until twenty years ago rape victims had virtually been denied access to the criminal justice system."

The writer describes in detail many of the rape trials that took place in Manhattan over the years. DNA analysis now aids in the identification and prosecution of rapists. Fairstein discusses false accusations of rape and points out that they are quite rare.

The only characteristic shared by the thousands of rapists is "that they thrive on the intentional humiliation, degradation, control, and powerlessness of the victims they choose to strike." While there have been many improvements in the ways rape victims are treated, and many changes in the sex crimes laws, there is still much need for improvement. Fairstein concludes with some suggestions about changes that would benefit rape victims in the future.

Betty Friedan's latest work is *The Fountain of Age*, a lengthy volume on aging in both women and men. As women live longer than men, the problems of the aged tend to be those of women. One of Friedan's main themes

—see *LIBRARY*, page 7



—from page 4

parenting.

The form this group would take depends upon the interests expressed by potential members but might include any of the following: discussions, speakers, activities and outings with children, mothers' nights out, and a newsletter. Meeting times, places, and agendas are all open for discussion.

If you are interested in participating, please come to our Open House organizational meeting on Monday, November 8, 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center, Vanderbilt University.

If you cannot make it to this initial meeting or would like more information on this group, please call Nancy Houston at 297-0684.

Library _____

—from previous page

is that people can and do grow and change even in their seventies and eighties. Many people believe that the aged are resistant to change, but Friedan illustrates how people change throughout their lives.

The writer noticed that most of the articles and media images of the elderly are about the problems of the aged and about nursing homes. Rarely is anything positive about aging shown in the media. When society thinks of the elderly in terms of decline and lack of productivity, it is not surprising that people are afraid to face their own aging.

Older people perform surprisingly well on tests and many show little physical or mental deterioration. Friedan interviewed hundreds of older people from diverse backgrounds and different areas of the country, and describes their achievements and the changes they made in their lives in their later years. Those who are allowed to make their own decisions about their future tend to remain in better mental and physical health than those whose decisions are made for them. Those who continue to grow as they age are usually no longer driven to pursue power.

Other topics discussed by the noted feminist include an Outward Bound trip she made when in her sixties, retirement, the death of a spouse, sex-role typing, heart disease, finances, menopause, dying, and nursing homes. ■

PHYSICAL FITNESS ♀ REST ♀ SOCIAL SUPPORT ♀ GOOD DIET ♀ SELF CARE ♀ FUN ♀



MEDICAL CARE ♀ SPIRITUALITY ♀ AWARENESS ♀ LOVE ♀ INTELLECTUAL INTERESTS

Clinton's health care plan faces important issues for women

Along with the changes in the health care industry that are currently under debate, there are two interesting issues that may affect the health care of American women in the future.

The Women's Health Initiative (WHI) is a multimillion dollar federal research endeavor that, over the next decade, will develop much-needed data in women's health. In 1990 the Office of Women's Health Research was established at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to encourage women's health research and to ensure that women are represented fairly in larger research trials.

In the past, women have been excluded from some areas of medical research for a variety of reasons. Therefore, the conclusions reached by these studies may not have clinical relevance to the female population. With this new office in the NIH, research on the conditions and diseases that are more prevalent or serious in women will be undertaken.

The WHI currently involves sixteen research centers around the country with the goal of entering at least 70,000 women into the study. The initial focus will be on postmenopausal health concerns including cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, breast and uterine cancers. There are no WHI research centers in Nashville but the University of Tennessee at Memphis and Emory University in Atlanta will be participating. More research centers are expected to



be added in the future.

With this emphasis on women's health research at the federal level, there has been a rising interest in the practitioners providing health care to women. A new medical specialty has been proposed—that of a "women's health" physician—which would combine the training in reproductive health the obstetrician/gynecologist currently receives with a broader focus on comprehensive health including primary care.

There are already medical training programs around the country that are incorporating a "woman-centered" approach into their curricula. Integration of the social, emotional, and biophysical needs of women into the medical model of care provides a more holistic view.

However, the logistics of creating a new medical specialty are not easy and there is not widespread support for the idea at present.

Both the Women's Health Initiative and the proposed women's health medical specialty will bear watching over the next few years as these issues grow and develop.

Stay tuned! ■

The Women's Health Initiative	AT A GLANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Currently involves 16 research centers, including Atlanta's Emory University, University of Tennessee at Memphis, and University of Alabama at Birmingham. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Estimated cost of 625 million dollars. ▶ 29 additional centers have won contracts to participate in the studies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Will study postmenopausal health during the next fifteen years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Current centers pledge that one out of five participating women will be from racial minorities.

Announcements

SUPPORT GROUP

The Vanderbilt Psychological and Counseling Center is offering a support/therapy group for women who have recently or are currently going through a divorce or separation. The group meets every Monday from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. To register or receive more information, call 936-0371.

CALL FOR HELP

In 1992, a collective of women published a women's handbook at Barnard and Columbia. We have now set upon the task of creating a similar college women's handbook of information and resources for a national audience. The handbook will cover topics such as: gyn/reproductive/sexual health; mental health and therapy; nutrition, body image, eating disorders; violence against women; drugs and alcohol; identity and community; women and education; financial aid; sexuality and disabilities. In order to create a handbook that accurately addresses this diversity, we are in the process of getting in touch with as many women as pos-

sible. *Any* help, from giving us the name of student women/lesbian/of color groups, to becoming an active liaison/stringer would be of great help. If you have any questions, ideas, or comments, please call or write: Rachel Dobkin and Shana Sippy, The College Women's Handbook, The Women's Resource Center of New York, Inc., 2315 Broadway, Suite 306, New York, NY 10024, (212) 875-8533, Fax: (212) 875-8629, E-mail: Rachel5133@aol.com.

READING GROUP

Are you interested in meeting women from outside the Vanderbilt community? Come and join our feminist reading group.

A former Vanderbilt student felt the need to think about feminism in terms of everyday life and that is what our group is doing. If you want to debate the finer points of postmodern feminism, this group is not for you. If you want to talk about how to be a feminist outside of academia, we would love to meet you. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, November 2 at 7:00 p.m. We will be reading Anne Wilson Schaefer's *Women's Reality*. Call Paige Baker at 331-

3320 for details and directions.

CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

The Fourth International Conference on Sexual Assault on Campus will be held September 29 to October 1, 1994 in the Philadelphia area. The conference is currently accepting submissions until January 15, 1994. For more information, please write: Edsel Erickson, Program Committee Coordinator, Sexual Assault Conference, P. O. Box 1338, Holmes Beach, Florida, 34218-1338 or call (813) 778-9140.

The Fourth Women's Policy Research Conference is accepting papers and ideas for panels and roundtable discussions for "Innovations in State and Local Government: New Directions for Women," a conference to be held June 3-4, 1994. Submissions must be received by November 15. For more information contact Lucia Fort, 1994 conference coordinator at (202) 785-0393; FAX (202) 833-4362. Registration information for the conference is currently available.



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Women's VU

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