

## Elections '94: Implications for women

compiled and edited by Marge Davis

News commentator Cokie Roberts was hardly exaggerating when she referred to the recent elections as a "Republican juggernaut." For the first time in 40 years, the GOP had gained control of both houses of Congress; similar power shifts occurred in several state legislatures as well. In Tennessee, though the Democrats managed to hold onto their majority in both the Senate and the House, their numbers were reduced; they also acquired a Republican governor.

Women are already feeling the change. The Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues has been abolished; so-called "unfunded mandates" (which include the Family and Medical Leave Act) are under attack; and a number of Republicans have made early pledges to roll back abortion rights, certain vocational training programs, and all manner of welfare "entitlements."

Yet the Republican landslide was not the only election news of significance to women. Despite everything, both the number *and* power of women in office have continued to rise. In Congress, both houses saw a net gain of one woman each, for a total of 49 in the House and eight in the Senate. (Not all the newcomers are pro-choice, however; see the box on page 3.) For the first time in history, a woman will chair a full standing committee in both chambers. In the Tennessee General Assembly, women also had a net gain of two, bringing the total to three women in the Senate and 15 in the House.

To understand the implications of

these changes, *Women's VU* sought the comments and perspectives of several politically active women in Middle Tennessee. **Susan Gutow** is president of the League of Women Voters of Tennessee. Republican **Beth Halteman Harwell** was elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1988. **Nell Levin** is Coalition Coordinator of

anced-budget amendment; and the call for term limits.

We do not have to burden the constitution with amendments to rectify problems for which we currently have solutions. Our Senators and Representatives already have the power to balance the budget if they can justify to their constituents the programs they wish to cut. And voters can enforce term limits very effectively, as they demonstrated in the elections of 1994.

A balanced-budget amendment is a cumbersome and inflexible method of solving our current deficit problems. Cutting entitlements that are unpopular but effective in order to balance the budget in the short term, could be very costly in the long term. Moreover, the suggested cuts will have an impact on services to both older and younger women and children.

As for term limits: Limiting an incumbent to 12 years in the House or Senate will make her

or him no less responsive to special interest groups. Nor are term limits a substitute for campaign finance reform. What they *will* do is take freedom of choice away from the voters.

### Beth Halteman Harwell

One thing I'd like to see that we didn't see in '94 is a (Tennessee) woman running a statewide campaign for the U.S. Senate (or) Congress. ... The issues that Washington is going to be addressing affect women because they deal so much with the family. It is (mainly) women who participate in the welfare program, the AFDC program, so you know women have a lot at stake in what Washington decides.

—continued on page 2



**"As your first woman President, I vow to make Domestic Labor part of the Gross National Product."**

Tennesseans for Fair Taxation. **Sharon Bell** is past president of the Tennessee Women's Political Caucus. In November, she ran unsuccessfully for the state Senate seat long held by Democrat Douglas Henry. **Marilyn Edwards** is immediate past president of the Tennessee Women's Political Caucus. And attorney **Mary Frances Lyle** is the Caucus' lobbyist.

### Susan Gutow

Women, as all voters and citizens, will be affected by the changed face of the Congress created by the elections of 1994. Of the reforms already proposed, two in particular could have far-reaching impacts: the call for a bal-

I hope that women — their ideas and their values — will be reflected in those decisions. But I think we need to break out of the mold of women being dependent and looking like they need handouts. I think women can be quite capable given some opportunities; I think they are capable of taking care of themselves. I think — I hope — that the changes that come out of Washington will help women become economically independent. And that is key.

### Nell Levin

Here in Tennessee, Republican Don Sundquist ran on “no new taxes and no income tax” and was elected Governor. I would like to look beyond campaign slogans and examine some hard truths, the first being that Tennessee’s lack of an income tax and excessive reliance on sales tax as its major source of revenue hurts lower- and middle-income people. On average, a person making \$15,000 a year pays 8.7 percent of her income in Tennessee taxes (10th highest tax burden in the nation) while a person making \$90,000 pays only 4.6% (8th lowest tax burden in the nation).

The second hard truth is that Tennessee’s regressive tax structure perpetuates poverty — especially among

women and children. One in four children in Tennessee lives in poverty. One in seven receives AFDC benefits — which are only \$185 per month for a mother and two children, 48th lowest in the nation.

If Tennessee’s economy slows down (and experts predict it will, beginning this year), sales tax revenue will drop off and the administration will have to either raise taxes or cut services. The most vulnerable populations in either scenario will tend to be women and children.

The third hard truth is that, despite campaign rhetoric, every governor but one in the last 40 years has raised Tennessee’s sales tax rate. It now tops out at 8.75%, one of the highest in the nation.

If Governor Sundquist keeps his word, those of us who are concerned about women’s issues need to monitor the state legislature to make sure that “no new taxes and no income tax” do not also mean slashes to services which affect women and children.

### Sharon Bell

The fact that the Republicans won these elections speaks very strongly to the fact that people want less government. ... I think that what’s going to happen as a result of these elections is that *everything* is going to be put on the table. No program will be exempt, and I think that’s good. We will have to look at all of them and say, “We are headed to bankruptcy on the federal level. What can we cut?” ...

I think (Newt Gingrich’s suggestion about orphanages) is ridiculous. ... But I think we’ve developed a protectionist attitude toward women. Women have to be players at the table, too. We should put our energy, our time and our money into getting more women elected.

### Marilyn Edwards

The ‘94 election has shown that progressive women must fight even harder — not only to gain new protections and opportunities — but simply to protect what so many women have fought for these many years.

Unfortunately, the hardest lesson that I learned as a result of this election is that there are many women who

continue to refuse to support other women. It is not enough to have women who have the desire and fire to run for office. We need to be prepared to help these women — with money and with work.

All issues that affect the lives of the citizens of this country are “women’s issues.” Yes, we are the ones who raised the fight on women’s health issues and job issues and sex discrimination issues. Because we had to. No one else would. But it is unfortunate to see these issues get lost in the scuffle as women belittle other women.

### Mary Frances Lyle

The importance of the women’s vote will undoubtedly help women gain the attention of elected officials on issues which primarily affect women, such as domestic violence. The Tennessee Women’s Political Caucus will be bringing legislation this year to establish statewide policies and procedures for law enforcement and court officials who work with victims of domestic violence. ...

Another popular current issue is welfare reform. Any reform that trains women and places them in jobs with adequate pay and health benefits is desirable, in my opinion. But welfare reform that says to an untrained woman, “Find work within two years or all benefits for your children will be terminated,” would be devastating to women and children. If women are not alert to the differences in the various welfare reform proposals, steps may be taken at both the state and national level which will harm the most vulnerable women and children. The impact of the ‘94 elections upon women will depend largely on how women choose to use their clout.

Domestic violence, AFDC, health care, Congressional leadership, welfare — there are, as the saying goes, almost as many “women’s issues” as there are women. One thing, however, all six of the women represented here seem to agree on. How women are affected by the present shift in political power depends, in very great part, on women themselves. ■



Women’s VU is published monthly September through June at the Margaret Cuninggim Women’s Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. Campus address: 316 West Side Row. Mailing address: Box 1513 Station B, Nashville, TN 37235. Phone: (615) 322-4843. Fax: (615) 343-0940. E-mail address: womenctr@ctr.vax.vanderbilt.edu.

Nancy A. Ransom, director

Judith Tefft Helfer, assistant director for programs

Marjorie Davis, editor (direct dial 343-4367)

Jennifer E. Smith, A&S ‘96, assistant editor

Barbara Clarke, librarian

Gladys Holt, office manager

Cindy Brown, cartoonist

This is a copyrighted publication. Articles may be reproduced with permission of the editor. Letters to the editor are welcome. Send them (typed, signed, and with a daytime phone number, please) to the above address.

# “NEWS QUOTES”

...a compilation of news excerpts from the national press. Some stories have been edited for clarity, consistency or brevity...

## *Anti-abortion violence rises slightly, study finds*

Violence at abortion clinics in 1994 rose only slightly from 1993, according to a survey by an abortion rights group, although the group also found that clinics were experiencing a sharp increase in death threats. (*This report predated the recent murders of two clinic workers in Brookline, Mass. — Ed.*)

The Feminist Majority Foundation, a nonprofit advocacy group that runs a clinic protection program and conducted the study, found that 52 percent of the clinics surveyed experienced violence of various kinds, like death threats, bombings and blockades by protesters, in the first seven months of 1994. This was up from the 50 percent in a similar survey covering the first seven months of 1993.

*New York Times*  
Dec. 22, 1994

## *Blow the men down*

For the first time, an all-female crew will be competing for a spot in the America's Cup, the world's most famous sailboat race. ... At a regatta dinner in Newport, R.I., last August, four-time winner Dennis Conner called the women's team "a bunch of lesbians," prompting team navigator Annie Nelson to douse him with her rum-and-coke. "He was way out of line," says Nelson. Bill Trenkle, who runs Conner's sailing operations, maintains that the comment was "locker-room humor. They were joking around."

*Time*  
Jan. 16, 1995

## *College settles cybersex discrimination charges*

Santa Rosa Junior College (Calif.) agreed to pay three students \$15,000 each, after the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights found the school to be in violation of Title IX, the law which prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions receiving federal funds.

Two of the students were women who had been the target of explicit sexual remarks on a men's-only bulletin board sponsored by the college. One woman had been targeted by her ex-boyfriend, the other apparently because she protested an advertisement in the student newspaper that showed the buttocks of a woman in a bikini.

The third student, a male, saw the messages and broke the confidentiality rule to tell the women what had been said about them. As a result, he said, the school had retaliated against him.

OCR noted that, except in specific exemptions such as restrooms and certain sex-segregated sports, Title IX prohibits single-sex school activities, even if the school sponsors identical activities for each gender.

*About Women on Campus*  
Winter 1995

## *An unsettling settlement*

A class-action suit against breast implant manufacturers resulted in a \$4.2 billion settlement in September. But women outside the U.S. are appealing the out-of-court agreement, which was negotiated with the U.S.-based Dow Corning Corporation. The settlement earmarks 97 percent of the money for U.S. women; the remaining three percent has been allocated for all non-U.S. women.

Lesley Bryan, part of the legal team that negotiated the settlement on behalf of the victims, defends the ratio on procedural grounds, saying that non-U.S. individuals "have limited ability to pursue their claims in U.S. courts." E. Lawrence Vincent, an attorney hired by women in Australia and

New Zealand to challenge the settlement, counters that the 97-3 breakdown was "pulled out of a hat," pointing out that nearly half of all breast implants are sold outside the U.S.

*Ms.*  
Jan./Feb. 1995

## *Walking a mile in their shoes*

In an attempt to dispel stereotypes about single mothers on welfare, four women at the University of Washington created a program in which 21 government officials agreed to feed their families for one month on \$274 — the food-stamp budget for a typical family of four on welfare in the state.

"Walk A Mile in Your Sister's Shoes," which ran Nov. 14 through Dec. 12, paired each participating policymaker with a single-parent mother on welfare. Each pair agreed to talk weekly on the phone to discuss the past week's events and to participate in at least one joint welfare-related activity during the month, such as going to the food bank together. ...

"I wish every single legislator would participate prior to voting on welfare reform," said state Rep. Julia Patterson, a Democrat. "How can you make decisions regarding another person's life otherwise?"

*off our backs*  
January 1995

## *Matters of choice*

According to the Dec. 5, 1994, issue of *New Republic* magazine:

of 36 Democratic representatives who were unseated in 1994, 34 were pro-choice;

of 36 Republican successors, 29 are anti-choice;

of 11 women entering the House, six are anti-choice, five are pro-choice; there are now seven anti-choice women in the House of Representatives.

(Thanks to Sam McSeveney, professor of history and chair of the MCWC advisory board, for forwarding this news item to us.)

## A painless guide to the academic job search

One of the most popular programs ever offered by the Women's Center is back for a return engagement. If you missed "The Academic Job Search" in November, you can see it again in February.

Chapter I ("starting the search") is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 1; Chapter II ("the job interview") follows on Thursday, Feb. 9. Both sessions run from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. in Wilson 103, followed by a pizza reception.

*discover free resources; read successful vitae; take a journey into the minds of the search committee*

Discussions are presented in panel-moderator format by People Who Have Been There: newly hired faculty; graduate students now on the market; and administrators who specialize in advising them. A highlight of Chapter II is role playing by the Academic Job Search Players; a highlight of both sessions is the free pizza reception.

Registration is not required for this special program, which is open

to both men and women. Co-sponsors with the Cuninggim Center include the Graduate School, the Graduate Student Council and the Career Center. For more information, please call 322-4843.

*watching "actors" make mistakes in the job interview is a lot less painful than making them yourself*

## Undergraduate women are invited to a workshop on diversity

Diversity, like opera, is an acquired taste for some. On Feb. 8, social relations consultant S.Y. (Sandra) Bowland, J.D., will outline some of the ways women can discover, understand and celebrate different-ness.

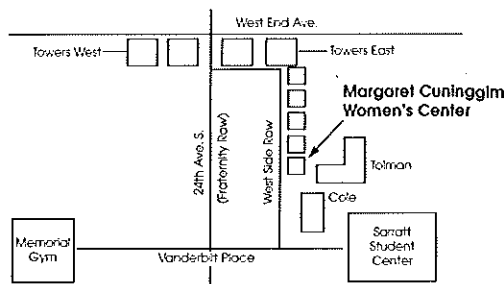
In "Women Transcending Differences: A Workshop on Cross-Cultural Harmony," Bowland will talk about the importance of such factors as attitude, communication, self-assessment and role models in learning to value diversity.

A frequent speaker at schools, organizations and corporations, Bowland has led anti-prejudice workshops for such audiences as DuPont and AT&T. She has an A.B. degree in social relations from Colgate University, a law degree from George Washington University and first-hand experience researching the cultures and communities of Central America and the Caribbean.

This program is open to undergraduate women only. A light supper will be served from 5:30 to 6:00. The workshop follows from 6:00-7:30 in Sarratt 118.

Students must pre-register for this event by calling the Women's Center (322-4843). Co-sponsors are the Opportunity Development Center, the Johnson Black Cultural Center, Interhall, the office of Residential and Judicial Affairs, the Panhellenic Council and the Office of Greek Affairs.

### How to find us ...



## Birthdays of Notable Women February

- 4 1913 Civil rights figure Rosa Parks
- 4 1921 Feminist Betty Friedan, first president of NOW
- 8 1851 Kate Chopin, author of *The Awakening*
- 10 1927 Leontyne Price, first black American international opera star
- 13 1918 Golf champion Patricia Berg
- 19 1946 Karen Silkwood, anti-nuclear activist
- 21 1936 Barbara Jordan, first black woman from the Deep South to serve in Congress
- 25 1904 Adelle Davis, writer and lecturer on healthy eating
- 29 1736 Ann Lee, founder of the Shaker religion

### Call for nominations to the MCWC Advisory Board

The Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center invites nominations for at-large positions on the Advisory Board. Categories with seats available include administration, faculty and students — graduate and undergraduate. Self-nominations are welcome.

At-large members serve a two-year term. Those elected this spring will begin their terms in August, 1995, ending in May, 1997.

Nomination forms are available at the Women's Center and are stacked on the Sarratt desk. Completed forms should be sent to Anne Webster, Chair, Nominating Committee, Box 1513, Station B. They must be received before Feb. 27 in order to be considered for the 1995-97 term.

F  
E  
B  
R  
U  
A  
R  
Y

Calendar  
of Events

Margaret  
Cuninggim  
Women's Center



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

February 1 (Wednesday)

**The Academic Job Search: Chapter One. Starting the Search.** Panel discussion to help graduate students plan well in advance. Moderator is Kay Hancock, information officer of the Graduate School. Panelists are Jasper Neel, associate professor of English; and Nilda Flores-Gonzalez and Dee Ann Warmath, Ph.D. candidates. 5-6:30 p.m. Pizza reception follows. Wilson 103. Co-sponsors with the Cuninggim Center are the Graduate Student Council, Career Center and the Graduate School. (This is a repeat of the successful Nov. 8 program).

**Young Professional Women's Discussion Group.** Speaker is Betty Nixon, special assistant in the office of University Relations and General Counsel. 6-7 p.m.

February 8 (Wednesday)

**Women Transcending Differences: A Workshop on Cross-Cultural Harmony** for undergraduate women. Led by S.Y. (Sandra) Bowland, J.D. Free, but registration is required by calling 322-4843. Light supper at 5:30 p.m.; workshop is from 6-7:30. Sarratt 118. *Please see related article on page 4.*

**Writers Workshop.** 5:15-7:15 p.m. New members welcome.

February 9 (Thursday)

**The Academic Job Search: Chapter Two. The Job Interview.** Recently hired Vanderbilt faculty use role playing to explore the expected and unexpected events of the job interview. Panel includes Beth Rose, assistant professor of history; Sheila Smith McKoy, assistant professor of English; Martin Kleinrock, assistant professor of geology; and Olof Pellmyr, assistant professor of biology. Moderator is Francene Gilmer, assistant director of the Career Center. 5-6:30 p.m. Pizza reception follows. Wilson 103. Co-sponsors with the Cuninggim Center are the Graduate Student Council, Career Center and the Graduate School.

February 10 (Friday)

**Brown Bag Lunch for Staff and Faculty.** The second Friday of each month is designated as a time for guests to meet the Cuninggim Center staff and learn about activities and programs. Men as well as women are invited to bring a lunch from 12-1.

February 13 (Monday)

**Book Group.** This week's topic is *Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years* by Sarah and Elizabeth Delany. Facilitator is Terry Cowdrey. 5:15-6:15 p.m. New members welcome.

February 14 (Tuesday)

**Women's Health Series.** "Breast Cancer Risk: What Does It Mean For You?" Susan W. Caro, RNC, MSN, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Vanderbilt Breast Center. 12:15-1:15 p.m. Calhoun 117.

February 15 (Wednesday)

**So You Think You'd Like to Go to Med School?** A panel of Vanderbilt women medical students discuss medical school and a career in medicine. 4:30-6 p.m.

**Young Professional Women's Discussion Group.** 6:30-7:30 p.m.

February 20 (Monday)

**Dissertation Writers Group I.** 4:30-6:30 p.m.

February 21 (Tuesday)

**Challenging Some Myths About Childbirth.** Penelope F. Wright, RNC, MSN, addresses sources of fear associated with childbirth and birth as depicted in popular culture. Includes videotapes of actual births. 4:30-6 p.m. Both men and women are invited, but reservations are required and limited to the first 20 persons. Call 322-4843 to register.

February 22 (Wednesday)

**Writers Workshop.** 5:15-7:15 p.m. New members welcome.

February 27 (Monday)

**Dissertation Writers Group II.** 4:30-6:30 p.m.

*Unless otherwise stated, all programs are held at the Cuninggim Center, Franklin Building, 316 West Side Row (see the map on page 4). For more information, please call 322-4843.*

# In the library...

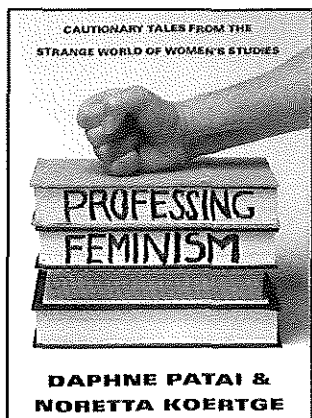
## Two professors of women's studies question the future of feminism

Barbara Clarke,  
Women's Center  
librarian



*Professing Feminism: Cautionary Tales from the Strange World of Women's Studies* (BasicBooks, 1994) is a controversial new publication by Daphne Patai and Noretta Koertge. The authors are critical of many aspects of current feminist thought and of many of today's women's studies programs.

Patai and Koertge, both of whom teach women's studies, interviewed about 30 former women's studies faculty who became so disillusioned that they now work in other fields. The writers found that many of these women had similar complaints and criticisms: that too often women's studies programs are designed to serve a political agenda, that students are being indoctrinated, and that radical teachers — and sometimes radical students — are intolerant of those with more conservative ideas. At some



colleges, male students feel unwelcome in women's studies courses, teachers display an anti-science bias, and young women are often made

hypersensitive to discrimination they may face in the workplace.

Patai and Koertge worry about the future of feminism and are disappointed that many teachers stress the oppression and victimization of women. They also illustrate how some writers go to absurd lengths to avoid using any word or phrase that could possibly be considered sexist.

Gail Dines and Jean M. Humez are the editors of the comprehensive *Gender, Race and Class in Media: A Text-Reader* (Sage Publications, 1995). This volume is designed primarily as a textbook for undergraduates but most readers will find much of great interest. The editors have included more than sixty selections illustrating the relationship between gender, race and social class and the various forms of media, particularly television, films, magazines and popular novels.

Among the many contributors are such well-known writers as Gloria Steinem, Patricia Hill Collins, Andrea Dworkin and bell hooks [sic]. Articles focus on beauty and advertising; racism in old movies; home shopping networks; soap operas; pornography and black women; slasher films; Madonna; television talk shows; MTV; rap music and videos; romance novels; racist stereotyping in television commercials; and a multitude of other topics.

In *The Stronger Women Get: The More Men Love Football: Sexism and the American Culture of Sports* (Harcourt Brace, 1994) Mariah Burton Nelson discusses the effects of the male sports culture on men's and women's attitudes and behavior. The writer, a former professional basketball player, feels that the "manly" sports, such as football, basketball, boxing, wrestling and baseball, are the last bastions of male domination; these are among the few areas in which male size and strength remain important.

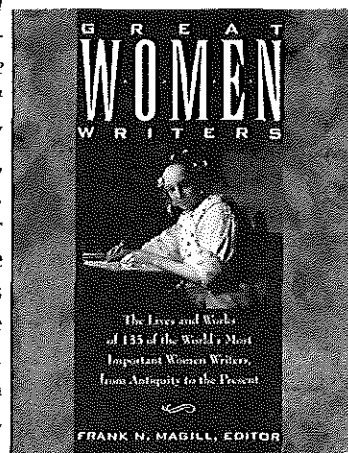
Nelson believes that as women accomplish more in politics, athletics and the workplace, many men cling to sports that seem symbolic of male dominance. The more gains women make, "the more enthusiastically male fans, players, coaches, and owners seem to be embracing a particular form of masculinity: toughness, aggression, denial of emotion, and a persistent denigration of all that's considered female." By playing or watch-

ing sports, boys learn that women and girls should be treated with disdain. The writer shows how manly sports predispose men toward violence against women. She also links male athletes and rape and describes gang rape as a spectator sport.

Nelson illustrates how sports benefit girls and women, and she devotes chapters to female athletes and the media, women reporters in men's locker rooms, and liaisons between male coaches and female players.

Frank N. Magill has edited the valuable reference work *Great Women Writers: The Lives and Works of 135 of the World's Most Important Women Writers*,

*f r o m*  
*Antiquity to the Present* (Henry Holt, 1994). Four or five pages are devoted to each writer, with



each entry including biographical information, a list of major works, a discussion of each woman's greatest achievements, an analysis of her work and a bibliography.

Other recent acquisitions include: *Shopping Around: Feminine Culture and the Pursuit of Pleasure* by Hilary Radner; *The Greaseless Guide to Car Care Confidence: Take the Terror Out of Talking to Your Mechanic* by Mary Jackson; *Loving to Survive: Sexual Terror, Men's Violence, and Women's Lives* by Dee L. R. Graham, Edna I. Rawlings and Roberta K. Rigsby; *Women's Health — Missing from U.S. Medicine* by Sue V. Rosser; and *Reshaping the Female Body: The Dilemma of Cosmetic Surgery* by Kathy Davis. ■



## Health matters

### *Vitamins: the new look of an old friend*

by Zena F. Kuseybi, a student in Vanderbilt's Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program. Ms. Kuseybi has a bachelor of science degree in nursing from East Carolina University and a B.S. in management from Florida State.

When was the last time you willingly choose a serving of squash instead of french fries? Can you still hear your mother reminding you to take your daily vitamin pill?

Careless eating habits may be as American as microwaved apple pie, but don't be *too* quick to dismiss vegetables, fruits and the vitamins contained therein. Vitamins are vital to good health. (The Latin root of this word — "vita" — means life.)

Not only do vitamins help assure bright eyes, strong bones and all those other things you learned about in health class; new evidence also suggests that, thanks to their so-called "antioxidant" properties, some vitamins play a part in slowing the aging process and resisting certain diseases. Taking extra vitamins helps most women to get safely through the great physical passages of their lives: childhood and adolescence; pregnancy and lactation; the years when they take birth control pills and the months and years following menopause. This article considers two issues about vitamins: how to get the vitamins you need, and how vitamins work as antioxidants.

There is no debate about the best source of vitamins. Fresh foods are it. Three to five servings of fruits, four or

five servings of veggies, and two or three servings of dairy foods a day will give you just about all the vitamins you need.

There is debate, however, about the benefits of taking supplemental vitamin pills. Our bodies use vitamins from pills far less successfully than vitamins from foods. The bottom line is that if you do not have a serious vitamin deficiency disease, such as pernicious anemia, then supplements are unnecessary. However, if your diet is seriously lacking vitamins (and minerals such as calcium), then vitamin pills are better than nothing. Taking one standard multi-vitamin pill a day is not harmful.

Even during times of increased need, such as pregnancy, there is no harm in taking standard vitamin supplements. Again, however, the best way to get more vitamins at these times is simply to eat more vitamin-rich foods. The traditional prenatal vitamin pill is required only for women who smoke or who have chronic illnesses or specific vitamin intolerances.

Let's now turn to the question of vitamins as antioxidants. Growing (but not conclusive) evidence indicates that some vitamins may reduce the risks of heart disease, cancer and some diseases of aging. This new power is thought to lie in the vitamins' ability to counteract toxic "free radicals," chemicals which arise from the body's metabolic conversion of foods to energy. Free radicals cause cell damage in a process known as oxidation. Vitamins act as antioxidants, limiting oxidative damage. Other environmen-

tal agents, including cigarette smoke, exhaust fumes, radiation, stress, excessive sunlight and certain drugs can also increase free radicals. Over time, as we are increasingly exposed to free radicals, they can lead to advanced aging, heart disease, cancer and degenerative diseases such as arthritis.

The primary natural antioxidants are vitamin C, E and beta carotene (which turns into vitamin A). The best sources of these vitamins are — you guessed it — fruits, nuts, seeds and yellow vegetables. Proponents of the antioxidant theory suggest that, in addition to eating lots of these foods, taking supplements of these specific vitamins can further assist our natural defenses against free radical damage.

Evidence of the antioxidant power of vitamin C (also known as ascorbic acid) is especially convincing. Long touted as an immune booster and a cold buster, vitamin C has also been linked, in 90 recent epidemiologic reports, to a reduced risk for many types of cancer. The strongest risk reduction is in cancers associated with smoking: lung, bladder, oral and esophageal cancers. For smokers, and for those exposed to second-hand smoke, the advice is to eat lots of grapefruit, oranges, spinach and all the other foods rich in vitamin C.

Vitamin E (found especially in butter, eggs and cereal grains as well as vegetables) and beta carotene (abundant in carrots) may also hold promise as antioxidants, although further studies are needed to verify this salutary effect.

Good old vitamins may thus offer great new advantages. They remain a reliable and essential feature of eating well, and eating well is a basic way we as women respect and take care of our ourselves. ■

Several books are available on the potential benefits of antioxidant supplements. Among them:

*Natural Health* by Andrew Weil, M.D.

*The Vitamin Strategy* by Art Ulene, M.D.

*The Antioxidant Health Plan* by Robert Youngson, M.D.

# Announcements

## Conferences

**Women and Power** is the subject of the March 3-4 Women's Studies Conference at Middle Tennessee State University. Highlights include a keynote address by Mary Daly, author of *Beyond God the Father*. Contact Dr. Judith Slagle, English Dept., Box 70, MTSU, Murfreesboro, TN 37132. Tel: 615-898-2573. Fax: 615-898-5098.

**Transformation: The Changers and the Changed** is the topic of the 1995 conference of the National Association for Women in Education, March 8-11 in Orlando. Fees before Feb. 18 are \$265, \$175 for students and retirees. Contact NAWWE, 1325 18th St., NW, Suite 210, Washington, DC 20036-6511. Tel: 202-659-9330. Fax: 202-457-0946.

### Reminders:

**National Student Conference on Campus Sexual Violence.** March 10-12 at SUNY-Buffalo. Contact: Nate Barnett. Tel: 716-829-3263.

**Women 2000: Global Conference on Women & Funding.** July 4-6 in Amsterdam. Contact: International Training Centre for Women, P.O. Box 3611, 1001 AK Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Tel: 31-20-420-5243. FAX: 31-20-626-3178.

## Study opportunities

**International summer programs** offered by Syracuse Univ. include "Women's Issues in Ireland" and "Women, Work and Families in Costa Rica." For information, contact the Division of International Programs Abroad, 119 Euclid Ave., Syracuse Univ., Syracuse, NY 13244. Tel: 1-800-251-9674. Fax: 315-443-4593. *Application deadline for both is Mar. 15.*

**Five College Women's Studies Research Center** provides visiting scholars with office space and library privileges at five Massachusetts colleges. Contact the Research Center, Dickinson House, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA 01075. Tel: 413-538-2275. Fax: 413-538-2082.

## Call for papers

**The Life and Leadership of Elizabeth Cady Stanton** takes place Oct. 6-8, 1995, at Columbia College. Papers on any aspect of Stanton's life are invited. *Abstracts (150-200 words) are due by March 1.* Contact Vivia Fowler, Chair, Dept. of Religion, 1301 Columbia College Drive, Columbia, SC 29203. Tel: 803-786-3776. FAX: 803-786-3789.

**Ninth Annual WKU Women's Studies Conference** is Oct. 13-14 at Western Kentucky University. The theme is women and education. Organizers invite papers and panels in all areas of women's studies, as well as volunteers to moderate sessions. *The deadline for receiving abstracts (with c.v.) is April 14.* Contact the Program Committee, WKU Women's Studies Conference, 203 Wetherby Administration Building, WKU, Bowling Green, KY 42101. Tel: 502-745-6477. Fax: 502-745-6861.

## Programs, etc.

**"Celebrating Women in Dance and Story"** is the Feb. 4 program of the Middle TN Women's Studies Assoc. Speakers are Karen Roberts Winbush of Uhuru African Dance Co., and storyteller Tina Alston. The program begins at 10:30 a.m. at Belmont University. For more information, call Kriste Lindermeyer at 615-373-3330.

**Conflict, Challenge and Change** is the title of a Feb. 8 lecture by S.Y. Bowland. Sponsored by the Opportunity Development Center, this free forum is designed to help participants understand and respond to cross-cultural conflict. Noon to 3 p.m. in the Corporate Learning Institute. It's limited to the first 60 participants. To sign up, call 322-4705.



printed on recycled paper

Vanderbilt University is committed to principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action.

## Women's VU

To subscribe, return this form to the Women's Center or call us at 615-322-4843 (fax: 615-343-0940).

Newsletters (published monthly except July and August) are sent free upon request to all students and contributors. Faculty and staff subscriptions are free to a campus address. Off-campus subscriptions are \$8 a year, \$15 if mailed first class. Please include your check, payable to Vanderbilt University, with your subscription.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Class (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_

Dept./Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

\_\_\_\_\_ Med Ctr 4-digit ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Staff \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (school & class)

Faculty \_\_\_\_\_ Administrator \_\_\_\_\_ Contributor \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center  
Vanderbilt University  
316 West Side Row  
Box 1513 Station B  
Nashville, TN 37235

Address Correction Requested  
Include Mailing Label

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

NASHVILLE, TN  
PERMIT NO. 293