

Launching a career

Women graduates find doors wide open in today's job market

by Lynn Green

Women graduating from Vanderbilt this year take with them something previous generations of women only dreamed of—an equal chance to compete for some of the best entry-level jobs.

Today's unpredictable economy, where careers often change course and middle managers no longer rise through the corporate ranks, presents a new set of challenges, however, for women seeking to capitalize on their opportunities.

"Career progression has really changed," notes Linda Bird, director of the Career Center at Vanderbilt. Rather than aspiring to climb the corporate ladder, employees now "have to take more personal responsibility by developing and enhancing their own skills."

Julie Brown, career life planning coordinator at the Nashville YWCA, agrees that the workplace in today's climate of downsizing is "skill-based" rather than "career-based."

The choice of a first job is crucial in such an economic environment. Bird says a first job should be viewed primarily as "an opportunity to learn. You should learn basic work-related skills" that will be easily transferable to other companies and other situations. Having these skills is especially important for women, who appear to have an equal shot at entry-level jobs but still face a glass ceiling when they strive for higher management.

What business skills might a recent Vanderbilt graduate have? According to Bird, companies that recruit here are looking for:

- Good communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Analytical and reasoning ability and a talent for independent thinking.
- Leadership potential, as evidenced by involvement in student organizations, for example.

New graduates sometimes underestimate their marketable skills as they enter the job market, Bird said. Andersen Consulting, the largest employer of Vanderbilt graduates, included a French major among its recent hires. The management consulting firm was seeking quantitative ability rather than specific professional training.

Julie Brown at the YWCA says the focus for new graduates should be "using their ingenuity to sell their skills" to potential employers.

For Stephanie Herrin, A&S '96, (see box), that meant convincing a large manufacturing company that a Spanish major could handle a sales and marketing job. "It's really important that you show

continued on page 2

Finding the first job

Stephanie Grier, graduating with a B.S. in computer science, credits her summer work experience with helping



Stephanie Grier

her land a job at an IBM subsidiary as an information technology specialist. Grier says her four internships with Siemens gave her hands-on experience that complemented her theoretical course work. She hopes to use IBM's tuition reimbursement program to pursue an MBA and rise to a project leader or management role.

For **Stephanie Herrin**, a senior from Orinda, CA, a determined job search and an "enthusiastic" attitude led to a starting position in sales and marketing. Herrin began last fall by talking to recent graduates about their jobs. She identified International Paper as a company to target and scheduled an interview



Stephanie Herrin

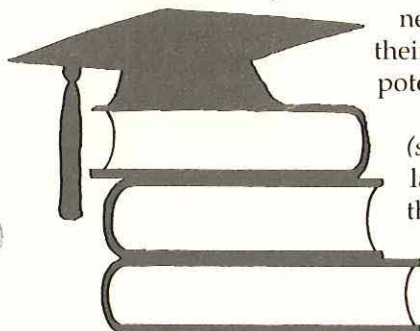
through the Career Center. Herrin says she researched the company beforehand, giving her a confident approach in the interview.

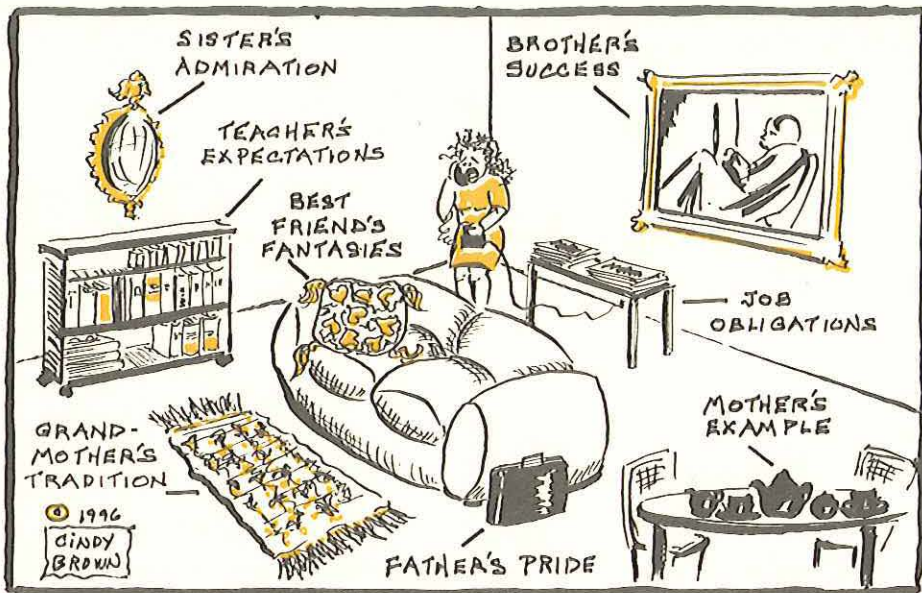
Jamie Bryant, an economics major from Richmond, KY, says her background as a teaching



Jamie Bryant

assistant played a key role in securing her new job. She will start work as a customer support consultant with TCS Management Group in Nashville, teaching corporate clients how to use the firm's software. She sees the chance to travel and work on-site at different companies as a great way "to get your feet wet."





"Sharon, remember that seminar we took —You Can Do It All? Did you take notes, by any chance?"

Shanna Cohn receives first Muliebrity Prize

Shanna Cohn, a senior from Kent, Ohio, has been named the first recipient of the Muliebrity Prize, honoring her work on a wide range of women's issues and concerns.

Cohn, who received the award at the Kudos Ceremony in April, was cited for her academic achievement as well as her leadership roles in several campus organizations.

In nominating her for the award, Barbara Kilbourne, assistant professor of sociology, noted that Cohn "finds it difficult to separate her identity as a woman from her identity as an African American."

"Ms. Cohn makes me optimistic that women will find ways to bridge racial divisions that threaten the women's movement," Kilbourne said. "The future of all women depends on building these types of bridges."

Cohn has worked with the Multicultural Coalition, the Black Student Alliance and the MLK Lecture Series and served as president of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, which focuses on serving the interests of women and girls. An Honors Program student and a member of Phi Beta Kappa, she plans to attend law school after graduation.

The Muliebrity Prize is given by the Cuninggim Center to honor an undergraduate student for work on women's issues and gender equity.

Career, continued from page 1

the company how much you would like to have the job," Herrin says. "Other people may have been more qualified, but they didn't show the enthusiasm I did in the interview."

Young women leaving school without a clear idea of their career

goals might be best served by delaying a determined job search and instead exploring their options.

"Young people need to know their passion" before committing to a career, says Nancy Ransom, director of the Cuninggim Center. "Some students need more time to grow up, and young women in particular still limit their options.

"You should be willing to explore in ways that are acceptable to you," Ransom says, whether that means bumming around for a year or taking a temporary menial job. ■



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

Lynn Green, editor (direct dial 343-4367)

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.



PHOTO BY BILLY KINGSLEY

Shanna Cohn (center) accepts the Muliebrity Prize from Chancellor Joe Wyatt at the Kudos Ceremony as Nancy Ransom, director of the Cuninggim Center, looks on.

M A Y

Calendar of Events

Margaret
Cunningim
Women's Center



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

Collages: Currents in Midstream, textile art exhibit by Arlyn Ende, continues at the Women's Center through May 25.

MAY 4 / SATURDAY

Creative Life Planning Group on retreat off-campus from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. For information call Judy Helfer at 322-6518 or e-mail helferjt@ctrvax.Vanderbilt.edu.

Herstory Archives Slide Show with Alexis Danzig, Archives Coordinator, as narrator, will take you on a guided tour of the Lesbian Herstory Archives (LHA) in Brooklyn, New York. The LHA Slide Show is a collective herstory, as lesbians have lived it and want it remembered. 7 p.m., Furman 114. Sponsored by the History Department, the Lesbian and Gay Coalition for Justice, and the Women's Center. A reception will be held at the women's center for Alexis Danzig following the presentation.

MAY 7 / TUESDAY

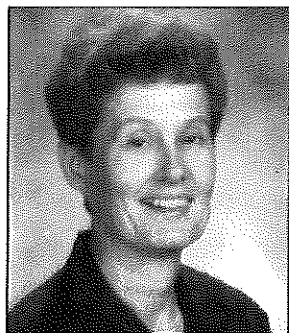
Creative Life Planning Group. Noon to 1 p.m. New members welcome. Call Judy Helfer at 322-6518 for more information. *Also meets May 14, 21 and 28.*

MAY 13 / MONDAY

Book Group meets to discuss *Rameau's Niece* by Cathleen Schine. Facilitator is Terry Cowdrey. New members welcome. 5:15-6:15 p.m.

MAY 14 / TUESDAY

Couples and Money: What do you fight about? 4:30-6 p.m. If you and your partner are fighting over finances, this workshop at the Women's Center could start you on the



Katrin Bean

path to financial harmony. Leading the session is Katrin Bean, a Certified Financial Planner with more than 12 years experience and a family and divorce mediator. This is a repeat of her popular April 18 workshop.

Bean will focus on the differences in money "personalities," from spender to hoarder to money monk, and give tips for bridging the gaps between financial types.

Interested participants are invited to fill out a money profile questionnaire before the workshop to determine their own money personalities. Questionnaires are available at the Women's Center and must be completed one week before the workshop.

MAY 28 / TUESDAY

Freelance Writers Group, a group of women writers who meet monthly to get feedback from other writers and share information about how to get published. Beth Grantham facilitates the group. 5:30-7:30 p.m. New members welcome.

Investment club forming

The Vanderbilt Women's Book Group invites anyone interested in forming a women's investment club to attend an organizational meeting on May 13 at 6:15 p.m., immediately following the book group discussion. The investment club is seeking members who have with a serious interest in learning about the stock market and who can commit to monthly meetings and financial contributions. Women who are interested should have read *The Beardstown Ladies' Common-Sense Investment Guide*, which is available at the Women's Center Library.

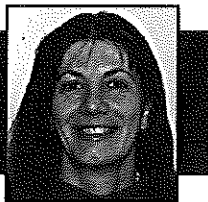
**Katrin Bean's
May workshop is FULL.
Call the Women's Center
for information on
a June session.**

Unless otherwise stated, all programs are held at the Cunningham Center, Franklin Building, 316 West Side Row. For more information, please call 322-4843.

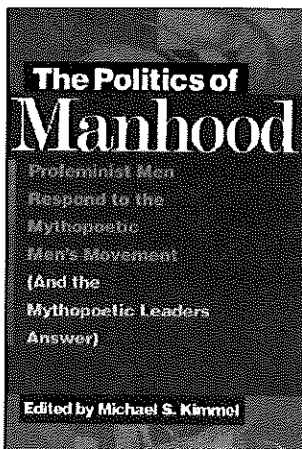
In the library...

Is Iron John antifeminist? New book examines mythopoetic men's movement

Barbara Clarke,
Women's Center
librarian



Sociologist Michael S. Kimmel's latest volume is *The Politics of Manhood: Profeminist Men Respond to the Mythopoetic Men's Movement (and the Mythopoetic Leaders Answer)* (Temple University Press, 1995). The mythopoetic men's movement became well-known in 1990 with the publication of Robert Bly's *Iron John: A Book About Men*. Kimmel feels that the mythopoetic movement "reinscribed patriarchy as a political system by asserting men's need for more power and refusing to move beyond an individual version of empowerment."



Much of Kimmel's book is devoted to articles by profeminist men, who discuss and evaluate the theories of Robert Bly, Sam Keen and others. Bly, Aaron Kipnis and four other mythopoets respond to the criticisms of the profeminist men; Keen declined to participate.

The editor believes that the mythopoets can be considered partial and potential allies of feminist women and profeminist men, but that there is still little common ground between the two groups. He hopes that this volume will be the first step toward open dialogue in the future. Kimmel considers that the mythopoetic movement is at a crossroads, and that it can become profeminist or antifeminist, but that it cannot remain neutral or impartial.

Jessie Carney Smith, a librarian and professor of humanities at Fisk University, has edited *Notable Black American Women, Book II* (Gale Research, 1996), four years after the publication of the first volume. The second volume includes about 300 biographies and brings the total to 800. Smith aimed for diversity in fields of achievement, in historical periods and in geographical areas. The entries cover women born from the 17th century to 1970 and the Occupation Index includes over 200 categories, illustrating the wide range of the women's accomplishments. While the editor wrote some of the biographies herself, about one hundred scholars contributed to the work.

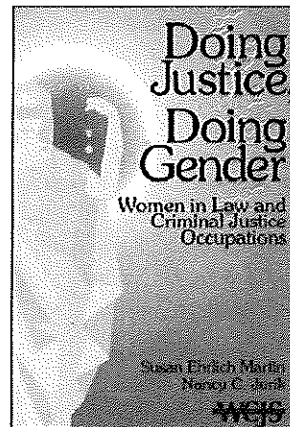


The first detailed study of women correctional officers, police officers and lawyers is *Doing Justice, Doing Gender* (Sage Publications, 1996) by Susan Ehrlich Martin and Nancy C. Jurik. Women found it especially hard to gain acceptance in criminal justice fields, because "resistance to women may be associated with the social control function of justice occupations." Social control involves formal authority over men and women, and jobs that entailed authority over men were not open to women. Many men in these fields still feel that the presence of women threatens the close connection between work and manhood.

The writers devote a couple of chapters to each occupation, and discuss the history of women in each profession, the reasons behind the reluctance to open certain jobs to females, and how women's opportunities have expanded in recent years. They show the effects women have had on the justice systems, the contributions women are making, and the obstacles females still face, such as gender bias, isolation and sexual harassment.

Today almost half of the students in law schools are women, and nearly one

quarter of the legal profession is female. However, women are underrepresented in major law firms and at the highest levels of the profession. Fewer than ten percent of the nation's police officers are women and they are concentrated in the lower ranks.



Women make up about 43 percent of the workers in federal and state prisons, but comparatively few are in supervisory or administrative positions in federal, state or local facilities.



Michele A. Paludi's *Sexual Harassment on College Campuses: Abusing the Ivory Power* (State University of New York Press, 1996) is a revised and expanded edition of her well-known 1990 volume *Ivory Power: Sexual Harassment on Campus*. There are chapters by several new contributors and most of the sections have been revised. The new publication includes updated information on case law, on peer harassment, on university policies and grievance procedures concerning sexual harassment, and on consensual relationships between students and faculty members. This book is valuable for college students, staff, faculty and administrators.



Other new acquisitions include: *Feminism Under Fire* by Ellen R. Klein; *Educating Ourselves: The College Woman's Handbook* by Rachel Dobkin and Shana Sippy; *The Solution-Oriented Woman: Creating the Life You Want* by Pat Hudson; and *Einstein's Wife: Work and Marriage in the Lives of Five Great Twentieth-Century Women* by Andrea Gabor. ■

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



MEDICAL CARE ♪ SPIRITUALITY ♪ AWARENESS ♪ LOVE ♪ INTELLECTUAL INTERESTS

drug use — both recreational and prescriptive. All these behaviors can have harmful effects on the fetus and should be avoided during pregnancy. Since smoking, in particular, can affect the ability of a woman to become pregnant as well as the incidence of miscarriage, its pre-pregnancy cessation is crucial. The prescription drug Accutane, used to treat acne, causes severe fetal anomalies, and young women who are using the drug should never get pregnant.

Nutritional health is another area in which all women can benefit from pre-pregnancy counseling. For instance, many women don't have enough folic acid, a deficiency associated with neural tube defects (an opening in the baby's spine). The Centers for Disease Control has recommended that all women of childbearing age take 0.4 mg of folic acid daily. Foods high in folic acid include spinach, broccoli and most grains. Iron and calcium are two minerals that need to be consumed at higher levels during pregnancy, and having them on board when the pregnancy begins can enhance its outcome.

Women of childbearing age can be pro-active in getting their bodies ready for pregnancy by being in the best health possible in the months before they get pregnant as well as during the pregnancy. Pre-conceptual counseling can play a role in this process, especially for women with existing health problems.

The most important issue, however, is letting all women know that their pre-pregnancy health can be crucial in paving the way for a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby. ■

Health matters

Consider health questions before pregnancy

by Michele Salisbury
Assistant Professor for the Practice of
Nursing, School of Nursing

Health promotion and disease prevention are key buzzwords in today's health care environment. In that context, the idea that young women should be in optimum health before they get pregnant is getting increased attention as a way to promote informed reproductive choices and to improve pregnancy outcomes.

Traditionally, pre-conceptual counseling has been done for women whose family or husband's family have a history of a genetically transmitted disease. Examples include sickle cell anemia, Tay-Sachs disease, cystic fibrosis, Huntington's chorea and hemophilia.

Women who give birth to a baby with a congenital anomaly are also encouraged to undergo genetic testing to determine whether future children could be similarly affected.

Women who are contemplating a future pregnancy and who have pre-existing medical conditions are strongly advised to have pre-conceptual

counseling because, often, getting the disease under control can affect the course of the pregnancy.

A good example of this is women who are diabetic. Women who are insulin-dependent can have normal pregnancies and babies if they enter pregnancy with the diabetes in control and continue to monitor the diabetes

"Women of childbearing age can be pro-active in getting their bodies ready for pregnancy. . . ."

closely during pregnancy. On the other hand, diabetes that is not well controlled is associated not only with congenital anomalies but also with dangerous pregnancies for the mother.

A more recent focus in pre-conceptual counseling is teaching all women, including healthy ones, how to avoid behaviors that can cause problems in pregnancy. Obvious examples in this category are smoking, alcohol use and

HEALTH QUOTES

F.D.A. approval sought for French abortion pill

The New York nonprofit group holding the patent rights to the French abortion pill in this country has filed an application asking the Federal Food and Drug Administration to approve the drug, known as mifepristone. A newly formed private company has been given exclusive rights to manufacture and distribute the drug and hopes to have it on the market by the the end of the year.

New York Times, April 1, 1996

Estrogen supplements could help prevent tooth loss

Estrogen, a proven protector against bone loss, may also help women keep their teeth, a study suggests. Researchers found that women who had used the hormone regularly were 24 percent less likely to lose their teeth than women who never took it. Women who take estrogen may be protected from tooth loss because the hormone strengthens the jawbone.

New York Times, March 20, 1996

Announcements

Programs

Faces of Recovery: Women and Children of the "Sister" Program is an exhibit of photographs by Carlene Hunt depicting women and children in a treatment program for drug and alcohol addiction. The photographs will be on display in the foyer of the John F. Kennedy Center on the Peabody campus May 20-June 30. Visitors are welcome Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. A reception will be held from 4-5:30 p.m. May 23 honoring Hunt, who teaches the "Women and Addiction" course at the School of Nursing and has written extensively on the subject.

Internships

The Agnes Scott College **Program in Women, Leadership and Social Change** combines internships and course work to give women students first-hand experience with the challenges and rewards of leadership. The program brings senior, junior and second-semester sophomore students to Atlanta for one semester to study women, leadership and social change and to take internship assignments with Atlanta-based organizations. Applications for the spring semester of 1997 are due by October 31. For information, contact the Women's Center.

Conferences

Borders/Crossings/Passages: Women Reinterpreting Development is the topic of the 17th annual conference of the National Women's Studies Association, to be held at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, NY, June 12-16. The conference will include more than 200 panels and workshops on feminist issues, focusing on the borders that have defined and divided women. Reservations for on-campus housing are due by May 15; pre-registration is due by June 1. Information is available at the Women's Center or send e-mail to prubio@skidmore.edu.

Diverse Paths: Perspectives on Adolescent Girls is an embedded conference held in conjunction with the annual NWSA meeting June 12-16 at Skidmore College (*see above*). Researchers, educators and clinicians will give presentations on the developmental challenges and opportunities facing young women. Participants may cross between conferences to attend sessions of both.

Once Upon a Time . . . And Now: Our Lives as Sacred Stories in the Arts, Literature and Everyday Life is May 26-28 in Brown Summit, NC. The meeting is sponsored by the Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the

South and will offer participants an opportunity to get away and renew their spiritual resources. The conference will be led by Virginia R. Mollenkott, a Biblical feminist and author of works on female Biblical imagery. Cost of the conference is \$195; registration is due by May 15. Contact the Resource Center at 919-687-0408.

Southern Women: 300 Years of Influence is May 30-June 1 in Natchez, MS. This seventh annual Natchez Literary Celebration will explore the legacy of Southern women in literature, history, music and architecture. Lecturers include Michael Kreyling, professor of English at Vanderbilt, who will speak on Eudora Welty; Pulitzer Prize winning novelist William Styron; and Andrew Jackson's biographer, Robert Remini, who will discuss Rachel Jackson. The celebration also includes tours, performances and exhibits. For more information, call 800-647-6724.

Etc.

The National Women's Music Festival is June 6-9 on the campus of Indiana University. Sponsored by Women in the Arts, Inc., the four-day festival includes performances in music, comedy and dance and workshops on a variety of women's issues. For more information, call 317-927-9355.



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) _____
(please print)

Dept./Address _____

_____ 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

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

NASHVILLE, TN
PERMIT NO. 293