

# Women's VU

Margaret  
Cunningim  
Women's Center

V A N D E R B I L T U N I V E R S I T Y

VOLUME XXII:3 NOVEMBER 1999

## THE PRESSURE TO CONFORM

# Men on feminism & fitting in at Vanderbilt

by LYNN GREEN  
WOMEN'S VU EDITOR

When a group of undergraduate men gathered at the Women's Center recently to talk about their perceptions of feminism, the conversation took an unexpected turn.

Several participants in the discussion said the actions and attitudes of Vanderbilt women were among the biggest impediments to achieving the feminist goals of equality and empowerment.

Although sympathetic to notions of gender equity, the men expressed concern that pressures to "fit in" lead women students, in particular, to conform to rigid standards of appearance and behavior.

The result is a stereotypical "Vandy-Girl" who wears short skirts and tight shirts, dyes her hair blond, defers to men in the classroom, and searches for a rich husband.

The ten male students, invited to the



Carl Petersen (left), Jon Nielsen and Ryan Falconer at the Women's Center roundtable.

Women's Center for a free-wheeling discussion, seemed to feel both hostility toward the phony image of the Vandy-Girl and sympathy toward the women under pressure to live up to that ideal.

They cited Southern culture, family influences and Vanderbilt traditions as factors that pressure women on campus to conform to a decidedly non-feminist standard.

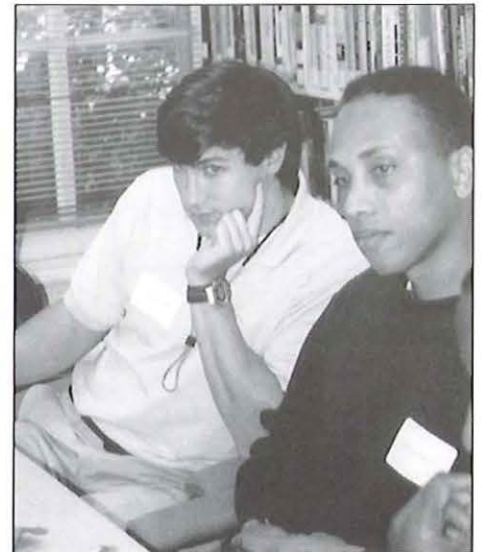
One man reported overhearing a conversation in which a young woman referred to another student as "anorexic and looking good." Another related a story about women students who dress seductively for class in an effort to get a good grade from a male professor.

For men, pressure at Vanderbilt is related not to appearance, but to financial status, they said. As one student put it, women have to be beautiful, and men have to be rich.

The participants in the discussion group seemed unsure what "feminism" means today, although several were able to cite situations in which they thought women were treated unfairly because of their gender.

Since women are the primary participants at most Women's Center programs, we were interested to hear what young men had to say about feminism. The students invited to participate in this discussion were not a random sample of the campus population, but a representative selection of student leaders and others willing to talk about gender issues.

Most were seniors, with several



Banks Petrey (left) and Roger Sneed

years of experience in observing and participating in campus life.

Reprinted below are condensed and edited excerpts from their hour-long conversation, which was moderated by Women's Center director Linda Manning.

**Dr. Linda Manning:** *What does the word "feminist" mean to you all? What comes to mind when you hear that word?*

**David Schiff:** Sometimes, hatred of men.

**Banks Petrey:** Intimidation. It kind of makes you perk up and make sure that you're covering your bases when you talk to girls. You have to be careful about what you say and what you think and how you act.

**Jimmy D'Andrea:** Just a consciousness of the different ways that women have been treated in this country, and reminding people of that history.

*continued on page 4*

## Grant funds campus efforts to combat violence

As this issue of *Women's VU* went to press, the Women's Center received word that Vanderbilt has been awarded a \$435,000 federal grant to address violence against women on campus.

Dr. Linda Manning, director of the Women's Center, said the grant will enable the university's Violence Against Women (VAW) Taskforce to significantly expand victim services and prevention efforts at Vanderbilt. The VAW Taskforce was organized by the Women's Center last spring to investigate and coordinate campus programs that combat domestic and relationship violence, sexual assault and stalking. Shortly after the VAW Taskforce began meeting, Manning was contacted by Heather Moss, research coordinator at the VIPPS Center for Crime and Justice Policy, who recommended that the taskforce seek federal funding. Moss spearheaded the challenging process of applying for a grant from the Violence Against Women Office of the U.S. Department of Justice.

With federal funding, Manning said the taskforce can develop new programs and services aimed at helping all women on campus, including students, faculty and staff. More information, and opportunities on how to become involved in this effort, will be available in the December issue of *Women's VU*.



**Women's VU** is published monthly September through June at the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.  
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## 'Comfort woman' to recount plight of sex slaves

By **HOUSTON RUCK**  
A&S SOPHOMORE

Kim Yoon-Shim is a veteran of World War II, even though she didn't carry a gun, or march in formation or tend to the wounded. Her plight isn't chronicled in history books or observed on national holidays.

Kim Yoon-Shim is a "comfort woman."

Forced into sexual slavery by Japanese armed forces during World War II, Kim is one of an estimated 200,000 young women and girls from Korea, China and other Asian countries, who were lured by the promise of jobs and a better life or were kidnapped only to be placed in "comfort stations," a euphemism for military brothels. These women were forced to provide sex for Japan's overseas soldiers, effectively becoming victims of a war that took more

than six million civilian lives.

On Nov. 12, Kim will be the keynote speaker for Asian-American Heritage Month at Vanderbilt, a month-long observation sponsored by the Asian-American Students Association. Her speech at 3:30 p.m. in Sarratt Cinema is free and open to the public.

Kim, a native of Seoul, South Korea, is the youngest and healthiest known survivor of the comfort women ordeal. She is working with the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues (WCCW) to advocate reparations and a formal apology by the Japanese government for what happened 50 years ago.



Kim Yoon-Shim (right) and a WCCW staffer in Washington, D.C.

Confronting wartime misdeeds, however, has been a difficult process for Japan, although polls in recent years have consistently shown that more than half the population believes the country owes Asia an apology for Japanese atrocities, according to a 1996 *Time* magazine article.

Historian Yoshiaki

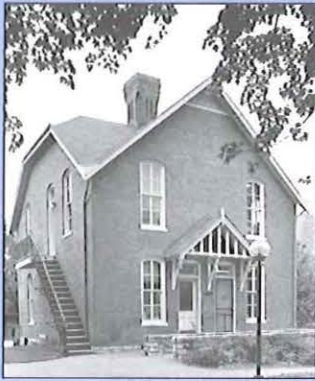
Yoshimi of Chuo University, who disclosed the first documentary evidence on the subject in 1992, revived the comfort women issue after almost 50 years of silence.

In August 1993 Japan finally offered a tepid admission that "in many cases" women had been coerced into sex work. But despite this admission, legislators from the Liberal Democratic Party in Japan formed a coalition in 1996 to criticize school textbooks that portray the army negatively, specifically calling for the deletion of all references to the comfort women.

In 1995 a campaign was launched in Japan to raise \$9.5 million in private funds for the women, but so far has not succeeded in meeting that goal.

In June, the California State Assembly introduced a Joint Resolution that calls on Congress and the President to bring the comfort women issue to the forefront and asks Japan for a formal apology.

In addition to Kim's talk, Asian-American Heritage Month will feature discussions and celebrations of Asian-American culture throughout the Vanderbilt community. For more information about comfort women, visit [www.comfortwomen.org](http://www.comfortwomen.org).



**Margaret  
Cuninggim  
Women's Center**

**Calendar  
of Events**

**PLEASE SAVE AND POST.**

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

# NOVEMBER

## Tuesday, November 2

**Creative Life Planning Group.** Advice on mid-life career changes from Linda Bird, former director of the Vanderbilt Career Center, now with Career Resources. Noon to 1:00 p.m.

## Wednesday, November 3

**Breakfast Program on Long-Term Care.** Glenda Copeland of John Hancock Financial Services will facilitate a panel discussion on long-term care. Breakfast program to be held at the University Club; fee is \$5. Please contact Hilary Forbes at 322-6518 or [hilary.forbes@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:hilary.forbes@vanderbilt.edu) to attend this event. 7:30 to 9:00 a.m.

## Friday, November 5

**Cancer Conversation Group.** The Psychological & Counseling Center and the Women's Center are offering two conversation sessions for male and female students, staff and faculty whose lives are affected by cancer. Register with Hilary Forbes at 322-6518 or [hilary.forbes@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:hilary.forbes@vanderbilt.edu). Noon to 1:00 p.m.

## Sunday, November 7

**Nashville Race for the Cure & Post-Walk Bagel Brunch.** Shuttle vans will leave the Women's Center at 7:45 a.m. for this event at Cool Springs Galleria. The one-mile Fun Run/Walk begins at 8:40 a.m. and the 5K Run/Walk at 9:00 a.m. Participants are invited to return to the Women's Center at noon for a brunch co-sponsored by Alpha Kappa Alpha and Delta Sigma Theta sororities and the Women's Center.

## Monday, November 8

**Book Group** meets to discuss *The Foreign Student* by Susan Choi. 5:15 p.m.

## Tuesday, November 9

**Creative Life Planning Group.** Second session on mid-life career changes. Noon to 1:00 p.m.

## Wednesday, November 10

**Brown Bag Lunch for Lesbian and Bisexual Women.** Monthly meeting for faculty, staff, and graduate students who identify as lesbian or bisexual. Contact Hilary Forbes at 322-6518 or [hilary.forbes@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:hilary.forbes@vanderbilt.edu) with any questions. 11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

## November 11, Thursday

**Images of Social Reform in the Woman's Suffrage Movement: 1900-1920.** Lecture by Katherine Kish Sklar. 4:00 p.m. Wilson Hall Room 103. See article, page 7.

## Friday, November 12

**Cancer Conversation Group** meets for the second of two sessions. Noon to 1:00 p.m.

**Comfort Woman.** Survivor Kim Yoon-Shim speaks about her experience in a World War II military brothel. Sarratt Cinema. 3:30 p.m. See article, page 2.

## Tuesday, November 16

**Creative Life Planning Group.** Vivien Fryd, associate professor of fine arts, discusses women artists, including Mary Cassatt and Georgia O'Keeffe. Noon to 1:00 p.m. See back page for details on Nov. 30 & Dec. 7 meetings.

## Thursday, November 18

**Reading Sisters,** a book group focusing on the work of black women authors, discusses *When Chicken Heads Come Home to Roost . . . My Life as a Hip-hop Feminist* by Joan Morgan. Books available at the VU bookstore. Contact Hilary Forbes at 322-6518 or [hilary.forbes@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:hilary.forbes@vanderbilt.edu) with any questions. Noon to 1:00 p.m.

## Friday, November 19

**Students with Kids** (formerly Diapers & Dissertations). This group for graduate students balancing family responsibilities and school work meets the third Friday of each month. For information, contact Mary Shelton at [mary.shelton@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:mary.shelton@vanderbilt.edu) or Linda Knieps at [knieps@harpo.tnstate.edu](mailto:knieps@harpo.tnstate.edu). 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.



# "Fitting in is high pressure at Vanderbilt" continued from page 1

**Mike Fenwick:** I think more often than not it brings up some kind of image of radical feminism, with phrases like "All men are potential rapists."

**Carl Petersen:** Feminism [has] gone in different directions since it started. There's sexual liberation freedom, and equality in the workplace, and then the more conservative idea of feminism, [in which] there are differences between the sexes, but they still treat each other with respect.



**Mike Fenwick and Linda Manning**

**Jesse Downs:** I always think of a feminist as a person who's yelling out to other women, "Hey, we're good!"

**Schiff:** So you're saying they're trying to reassure each other or something?

**Downs:** Yeah. I also think of a feminist as being someone who's offended by anything that says women *aren't* good.

**Manning:** *In your own personal experience at Vanderbilt or other areas of your life, have you ever been aware of a woman being treated unfairly or not taken seriously because she's a woman?*

**Jon Nielsen:** I know that my mom — she's a working mom — has been passed over a couple of times and certainly is not getting paid what she is worth, not being treated with respect. I guess that's why you could say I've been a feminist since I was young.

**Petry:** I've seen it happen here on campus in working with Greek organizations and having female deans over us. A

lot of times I've seen presidents of the fraternities who just view a female administrator as not warranting authority like a male would. It's frustrating for me to see that someone's age or gender can affect how they're perceived.

**Fenwick:** On the one hand, I may have seen issues or times when women have been discriminated against, but I also think you have to take the other side of that view. On this campus at least, the women [cannot be considered] the poster children of feminism — what they do to themselves, the way they carry themselves. This campus, I think, is one of the big ones [for] eating disorders. . . .

**Roger Sneed:** I've seen in the classroom how women will defer to men. Even if it's a majority of women, when a man speaks, the women will not challenge a man on what he's saying.

**Fenwick:** On the other hand, I'm not looking for a bunch of militant women in the classroom. We don't need that. But perhaps it has something to do with the Southern culture around here. There's a certain pride taken: If you can follow that suit, you can fit in with everyone else.

**D'Andrea:** The atmosphere in the classroom is determined by the professor, too, and sometimes professors don't set up a very supportive atmosphere for everyone to feel comfortable, not just women, but [people of] different backgrounds. Any examples of that?

**Nielsen:** Yeah, I have an example of that. My friend overheard a conversation between three girls while he was coming down on the elevator [in Towers]. I don't know if anybody is familiar with the term "crop tops," but they're just little halter tops. [Two girls were wearing crop tops] and the other one wasn't. The two were asking, "Why aren't you wearing your crop top?" The other girl says, "I just didn't feel like wearing it today." And this girl says, "Well, you've got to wear your crop top, because the last girl who was in this class wore a crop top, sat in the front every day, and got an A." So that was their reasoning to go into class looking like that.

**Sneed:** Were they serious?

**Nielsen:** Yeah. That's one of the better stories from this year.

**Fenwick:** I have another one. In the Towers' bathroom, they have these vents. I'm walking in the bathroom and I hear them next door. Two of them are talking and they mention, "I'm so pissed off at so-and-so," one of their girlfriends. "Why?" "Well, I mean I don't understand it. She's all anorexic and looking good and her boyfriend is just this fat slob; he doesn't care about himself."

**Downs:** Anorexic and looking good?

**Fenwick:** Yeah, those words were put together in a sentence. And the guy was a fat slob who didn't care about himself.

**Schiff:** I think that pressure starts the first day of school. I was a VUceptor this year . . . and the girls would be wearing jeans and t-shirts at first. Then by the next week I saw them wearing skirts and tight shirts and stuff. I [would ask] "Is that comfortable?" And they were like, "Well, everyone else is wearing it." I even told them specifically, "There's a lot of pressure at this school, but you don't have to abide by that." I don't think they understand that self-respect comes from doing what you want to do, not from what tradition says you have to do. Vanderbilt doesn't really encourage them to branch out and be themselves.

**Petry:** I think, overall, the level of phoniness in guys is way down in comparison to girls. I also think that over time, from freshman year to senior year, those phony setups start to diminish. And I can tell you now, I dress the way I

## Participants

**Jimmy D'Andrea,** Engineering senior, president, Student Government Assoc.

**Jesse Downs,** A&S senior

**Ryan Falconer,** A&S senior, RA

**Mike Fenwick,** A&S senior

**Jon Nielsen,** Engineering senior

**Carl Petersen,** Engineering senior

**Banks Petrey,** A&S senior, president, Interfraternity Council (IFC)

**David Schiff,** A&S sophomore, *Hustler* perspectives editor

**Roger Sneed,** graduate student

**Brian Williams,** A&S senior, RA

## What's your reaction?

A few days after this discussion was held, David Schiff, opinion page editor of the *Vanderbilt Hustler*, wrote a column for the newspaper elaborating on the ideas expressed here. Schiff argued that the typical "VandyGirl" is a combination of Barbie and Scarlett O'Hara who "has held herself down, allowing herself to be stereotyped by national magazines and other students." His column drew a steady stream of responses, with several students arguing in letters to the editor that the culture at Vanderbilt, rather than women students, should be cited as the cause of the problem. If you have an opinion you'd like to share on this subject, send your letters and e-mail to the Women's Center by Nov. 10.

want to dress and I do the things I want to do, simply because I want to, and I could care less what others think. Freshman year, I couldn't say that. I'd have a cup at a party, because no matter what's in [the cup], you've got to be cool and you've got to fit in.

**Schiff:** Don't you think girls feel more pressure to drink than we do? I think girls at parties are either trying to impress guys or be confident in themselves. I've been to the University of Texas, and the girls there didn't drink like they do here.

**Petry:** I agree. I think part of that is that it's customary, in a lot of cultures, that men are always offering refreshments ( ) party. "Can I get you this? Can I do this?" I think here, it's sinking to a new level, where guys are not forcing it upon girls, but making it very available.

*Later, the conversation turned back to what one participant termed "the widely held conception" among male students that many women at Vanderbilt are "phony."*

**Sneed:** What do you guys mean by phony? I don't understand that term.

**Severall:** Superficial.

**Schiff:** They don't quite say or do what they want to do, because there are expectations.

**Fenwick:** There's definitely a certain attitude they know they have to conduct themselves in. I feel if you take a girl on this campus who fits that bill, and she transferred to another school, within a year she would be a different person.

**Petersen:** I agree that the social atmosphere, Southern culture, whatever social forces are around us, have an impact on us. But I think there's still the individual personality and character of people that's developed in their families. What has a big impact on whether they're going to conform to something or not. There are plenty of individuals I know,

that although they're in this environment, they don't conform. So it's definitely possible. I think it just depends on personal character.

**Sneed:** How are those women who don't conform viewed?

**Schiff:** Definitely outcasts. My girlfriend is not your typical "VandyGirl." She's not in a sorority; she doesn't hang with the crowds. I think she feels isolated from the other girls. I think that definitely sets her apart.

**Ryan Falconer:** I'm an RA over in Lupton, and we hear about [the problems of women] fitting in. People come down when we sit at the desk, and they complain to us, "Everybody's going out." Whatever the issue is, they don't feel like they fit in or they feel ostracized. And they realize that they are not the typical sorority or Vandy woman. In a sense, I think both the individual and everybody around the individual realizes that, in part, there's an outcast position. Fitting in is high pressure at Vanderbilt. RAs go to the hospital with people who try to fit in at parties and people who try to fit in by going to the bathroom and throwing up. We see all the problems that the women and the men have to go through to fit in.

**Fenwick:** What really blew my mind was, I remember freshman year living in Kissam quad, there were a couple of girls that left the school when rush came around. They either didn't get in a sorority or didn't get in their top choice, and they felt they couldn't stay at Vanderbilt any more.

**Schiff:** They had lost so much face.

**Downs:** Sometimes there's

family pressure, isn't there, on these girls?


**Severall:** Tremendous.

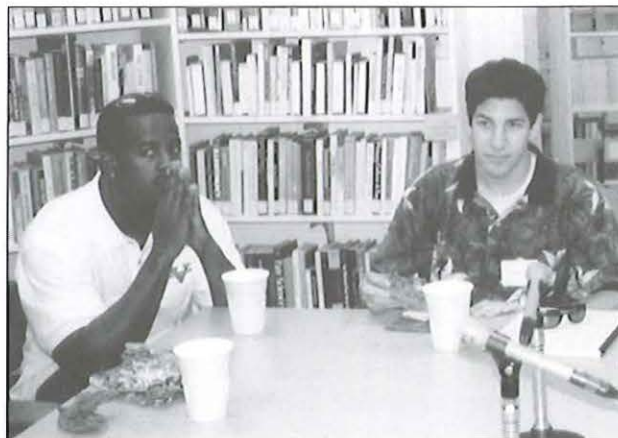
**Nielsen:** I have a story about family pressures. There's a girl on this campus who has blond hair. Her mother calls and reminds her to make sure her roots don't show. And that way, she dyes her hair even more blond, which is something we certainly don't need more of on this campus (*laughter*). But just to make sure that she stands out, that she's that much more blond, her mother calls and reminds her to dye her hair. I thought that was the most heinous thing. . . .

**Manning:** *I want to switch topics here, if we could. In your own personal experience, do you think men get treated unfairly because they are men?*

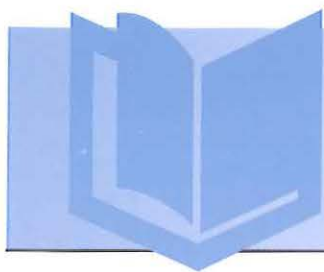
**Fenwick:** I think that whereas women have had a general stigma that they have to be beautiful, men [have to be] rich. They have to have money. You see it in so many movies. Throughout the movie, this guy is struggling, and finally in the end he's got a ton of money and he's sitting on the beach with a beautiful woman by his side.

**Petry:** I definitely think that, especially on this campus, if you don't have a \$50,000 a year job for some consulting company when you graduate, then you're just sub-par. It's frustrating. I definitely think that there's a stigma here, compared to other places. Wealth is a key.

**Fenwick:** It's funny. In a guys' dorm, you might see a picture of Cindy Crawford in a swimsuit, and in a girls' dorm, you'll see some big, ripped guy. But in the girls' dorm, there are words on the poster: "Tall, dark and rich." 



Brian Williams (left) and David Schiff.



## Analyzing the triggers for male violence toward women

Michele Harway and James M. O'Neil examine a controversial topic in *What Causes Men's Violence Against Women?* (Sage Publications, 1999). Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr., who introduced the Violence Against Women Act in 1990, contributed the foreword.

Much has been written on why women stay with violent partners but less is known about why men batter. The reasons men abuse women are multiple and complex, and the editors distinguish between predisposing factors and triggering factors. They proposed a multivariate model to explain the reasons for male violence toward women and then invited 14 experts on domestic violence to critique their model. Psychologists Harway and O'Neil identified four main factors contributing to domestic abuse: macrosocietal factors, biological factors, gender-role socialization factors and relational factors; these four areas were then divided into 13 hypotheses.

Nine chapters are devoted to the contributors' perspectives on these hypotheses. Based on suggestions made by these experts, the editors formulate a revised model defining men's risk factors and conclude with recommendations for the prevention of violence against women.

In *Faithful and Fearless: Moving Feminist Protest Inside the Church and Military* (Princeton University Press, 1999) Mary Fainsod Katzenstein discusses "proactive, assertive, demand-making political activism" in the Catholic Church and the military in the United States. Women within both of these hierarchical and male-dominated

institutions have been working for change from within for many years and the writer bases much of this work on her interviews with these activists.

Many women remain loyal to their church or to the military and wish to change the organizations rather than leave them. Katzenstein, a professor of government at Cornell University,

have not been able to rely on the law, they have managed to bring about changes within the church. Some have moved into positions of power, although the Vatican's attitude toward women has changed little. Catholic feminists have diverse goals and not all are in favor of women priests.

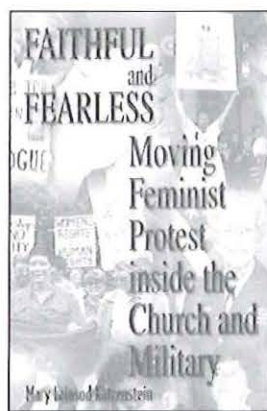
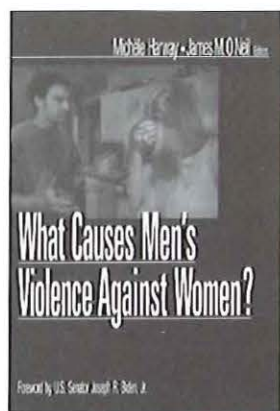
The writer concludes with a discussion of why feminism took different paths in the Catholic church and in the military, two spheres where many would not expect to find much feminist activity.

In *The Concept of the Goddess* (Routledge, 1996), which was recently issued in paperback, editors Sandra Billington and Miranda Green and 13 contributors discuss the goddess in religious systems throughout the ages in Europe and Asia. In

recent decades much has been written about the goddess, especially in feminist and New Age literature.

Many feminists believe that female deities were repressed by religions stressing patriarchal male deities. The editors emphasize that it is unwise to jump to conclusions about the position of women in a society by studying the goddesses of that culture. Many goddesses were very powerful and were often associated with activities usually considered masculine, such as politics, warfare and hunting.

Female deities had some features in common, and Green considers that "the most interesting recurrent image is the ambivalence of so many of the goddesses: they could help or harm, cure or curse, promote life or destroy it. They were formidable forces of energy."



describes the different methods feminists use to fight gender discrimination from within these institutions. In the military, protest takes the form of interest-group politics, with an emphasis on the legislature and the court system. Over the past 30 years the percentage of females in the military has increased greatly and almost all positions have opened to women. Many of these reforms occurred only because of changes in federal laws.

In the church, feminists use "discursive activism" to accomplish their goals, focusing on the power of words and images. Katzenstein feels we can learn much about the history of feminism in the Catholic church by analyzing religious workshops, speeches, conferences and writings. Through these "intensely political" activities, feminists challenge the status quo. Although these women

# VU Theatre presents feminist retelling of 'Othello'

For its second production this season, the VU Theatre (VUT) is staging *Desdemona, A Play about a Handkerchief* by feminist playwright Paula Vogel. Known for tackling controversial subjects, from AIDS to incest, Vogel won the Pulitzer Prize for drama last year. In the article below, Terryll Hallquist, associate professor of theatre and director of the VUT production of *Desdemona*, explains the complexities — and the appeal — of staging Vogel's work.

By **TERRYLL HALLQUIST**

To work on a Paula Vogel play is to come face-to-face with one's never-before-realized prejudices. To explore a text such as her 1993 *Desdemona, A Play About a Handkerchief*, one must grapple with a playwright who, though staunchly feminist, often declines to write female characters to emulate.

In a recent interview with Arthur Holmberg, literary director of the American Repertory Theatre, Vogel explains her position of responsibility as a playwright:

"For me, being a feminist does not mean showing a positive image of women. [It] means looking at things that disturb me, looking at things that hurt me as a woman. We live in a misogynist world, and I want to see why. And I want to . . . see why not just men are the enemy but how I as a woman participate in the system."

It's this feeling of discomfiture that invades her plays, putting her audience in the position of laughing in spite of itself. In *Desdemona*, Vogel demonstrates with unrelenting dark humor how

women are themselves accomplices in a society which pits them against each other. As she explains, "We bond with our husbands and our class structure rather than with each other. . . . Does it make me feel good? No. Does it worry me? Yes. Does it call on me to act? Absolutely. At the moment, we women are colluding with the patriarchal system and with the class structure. You can't deport the enemy, the enemy is inside us . . . we have internalized misogyny and homophobia."

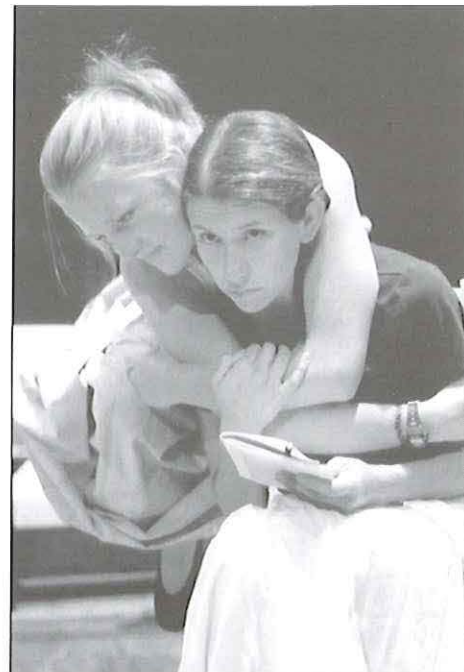
And so Vogel's play unapologetically provokes us with a promiscuous *Desdemona* ten times more wanton than Shakespeare's *Othello* imagines. It is one of Vogel's hallmarks as a playwright to deconstruct, uncover, and answer back to classical texts and the assumptions upon which they rest. In *Othello*, "[t]he virility of men was presented without apology, and yet *Desdemona* is killed for being suspected of having the same human urges," she recently argued in the *Washington Post*. She places this play in the realm of "negative empathy."

"We as audience members resist identifying with the protagonists,

**D***esdemona, A Play About a Handkerchief*  
November 5, 6, 11, 12 & 13 • 8:00 p.m.  
Sunday Matinee: November 7 • 2:00 p.m.  
Neely Auditorium

because they're doing things that we don't want to admit that we have in common," Vogel said.

Although she may rile us, she makes us watch. Vogel consciously employs seduction in her playwrighting. She views



Melanie Hudson (left), as *Desdemona*, and Teresa Stephenson, as *Emelia*, rehearse for the upcoming VU Theatre production of *Desdemona*.

this technique as a means to the goal of retraining an audience unaccustomed to identifying with a female character as the subject of a play.

In *Desdemona*, Vogel offers us nothing easy but, rather, presents us with an opportunity to acknowledge our part in what's happening. Maybe the reason we resist her point of view and why I,

as the director of *Desdemona*, struggle with her characters has something to do with the fact that Paula Vogel refuses to let us off the hook. She demands of us something our culture seems loath to accept — responsibility.

## ONE MOTHER THE VOTE WE NEED IT



## Images of women: the suffrage movement

How was the woman's suffrage movement linked to other social reform efforts of the early 20th century? Historian Kathryn Kish Sklar will address this question Nov. 11 in a lecture sponsored by the Women's Studies program. The talk will be held at 4:00 p.m. in Wilson 103. Sklar, distinguished professor of history at the State University of New York-Binghamton, will use cartoons from the suffrage movement (see detail at left) to illustrate her lecture. She has written and lectured widely on women and social movements in the U.S., and has twice been awarded the Berkshire Prize for her books on social reformers.

# A N N O U N C E M E N T S

- Information on **how to choose and finance long-term care** for yourself and your loved ones will be presented at two upcoming meetings of the Creative Life Planning Group. Glenda Copeland, a long-term care specialist with John Hancock Financial Services, will speak at the group meetings on Nov. 30 and Dec. 7. Her talk will include ideas on how to prepare financially for long-term care, which can cost up to \$45,000 a year. Copeland is also moderating a Nov. 3 panel discussion at the University Club on long-term care. The Creative Life Planning Group includes women of all ages who gather at the Women's Center every Tuesday from noon to 1:00 p.m. The group meets over lunch to share personal stories and consider special topics. Anyone from the campus or community is welcome to attend.
- November 10 is the deadline to submit proposals for the 2000 Conference of the **National Women's Studies Association**. The conference, to be held June 14-18 in Boston, will consider the transformations in women's studies at the beginning of the 21st century and strategies for linking academic studies to community action. For information, visit the web site at [www.nwsa.org](http://www.nwsa.org).
- Internationally renowned **storyteller Diane Wolkstein** will appear at Vanderbilt Divinity School Nov. 15 to perform "The Story of Judith, Woman Warrior." The 7:00 p.m. performance in All Faith Chapel is free and open to the public, with discussion to follow the storytelling. Wolkstein began telling Bible stories to children as a Sunday School teacher many years ago, and has since authored many award-winning children's books. She has performed as a storyteller at the Lincoln Center and the Smithsonian, and her work has been described as storytelling "for anyone, any age." Wolkstein's performance of the story of Judith, the heroic biblical figure who rescued her people from destruction, is sponsored by the Carpenter Program in Religion, Gender and Sexuality; the Women's Center is one of several co-sponsors.



**DIANE WOLKSTEIN**



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