

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

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MARCH 2003

MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Make Your Own Kind of History!

by Misa Culley

I know, I *know*. I feel it all the time. *I simply don't have time*. I listen to NPR, I watch CNN, I hear the depressing statistics about waging war, infant mortality, Social Security woes, violence everywhere and yet, I probably feel as you do: What's an individual like me to do about it?

In our hectic lives, we always seem caught up in the "little things" that constitute daily life: getting dinner on the table, paying bills, running errands, or if we're working parents, we feel we need to spend any extra time we might have with our children. We hope that the work of fixing the world's problems will fall upon the shoulders of youth who *seem* to have more time. But, I ask you, who will lead them if we don't make the time? Who will set the example for our children, make them see that volunteering is a worthwhile occupation? How do I find time to volunteer? If I do find the time, *will it really matter?*

Women's Center Launches New Website

After months of deliberation and planning, our new website is now ready for your viewing pleasure. Designed by web consultant, Mary Breen, our new website features not only a new logo, but in the coming months, it will feature several links to other women's organizations. Log on to stay informed about the latest in women's issues, check our calendar of events, meet our staff and get involved!

www.vanderbilt.edu/WomensCenter
Check it out!

We are in a "crisis of faith." We have lost hope and are afraid to risk getting involved. So contends author and religious theologian, Sharon D. Welch, in her book, *A Feminist Ethic of Risk*, (Fortress Press, 2000). Welch, who received her Ph.D. from Vanderbilt's Divinity School, believes that as a society, we have become accustomed to a culture that puts great emphasis on personal achievement and immediate gratification. We feel that we would make the time to commit to causes *if we could be guaranteed instant results*. She states that this is what often leads to "despair" about getting involved, especially for the middle class. She writes:

"It is easier to give up (working for) long term social change when one is comfortable in the present and when one is a beneficiary of partial social change. When the good life is present or within reach, it is tempting to despair of it's ever being in reach for others and resort merely to enjoying it for oneself and one's family."

If you are comfortable in your lifestyle, it is hard to imagine a world without the privileges that we all take for granted. But these privileges are not available to all. "Privileges" like healthcare, freedom of speech, equal opportunities for men and women-- these are rights we assume will always be there for our children and us. That is not the case.

Take a Risk...Get Involved...

If you are committed to making the world a better place for your children, your parents, grandparents, others less fortunate, then you must make the time to get involved. Welch says that "risk" shouldn't be synonymous with peril, but rather with hope and an

Continued on page 3

Kudos to...

the V-Day Committee:

Alison Piepmeier
Sonua Bohannon
Candace Chatham
Christie Bevis
Annie Diekman
Gay Welch
Misty Johnson
Katie Irish
Rita Mbamalu
Patrick Meldrim
Maren Schiess
Ginger Skaggs
Tiffany Washington
Pamela Willams
Vanderbilt Feminists

An Extra Special Thanks to Yvonne Heard, Kacey Silverstein, Kelly Lawver and Sasha Miller for going above and beyond during the week of our V-Day events.

We thank these volunteers who assist us with programming, flyer design, receptions and bulk mailings. If you are interested in volunteering your time at the Women's Center, please call 322-4843.



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Women's Center co-sponsors Folk Alliance Outreach Program

When the Folk Alliance held its annual conference here in Music City this past February 6-9, the Women's Center co-sponsored part of its outreach program to bring folk music to Metro schools and community centers, many of which are strapped by tight budgets and lack of money for transporting students to events. The outreach program is Folk Alliance's commitment to giving something back to each host city.

Hoping to offer up a different role model to our young girls and boys about the roles that women play in the world, the local Outreach Committee, made up of area music teachers and fine arts educators, chose several emerging women singer-songwriters to perform in various schools, senior care centers, cultural arts centers and libraries.

In the pop culture world of today's music, where female performers are judged primarily for their physical attractiveness, and the music industry focuses on glamour and sexuality, these performers offered a refreshing perspective for Nashville's students. The music presented reflects the diverse genres in folk music in North America and around the world. Drawing on the rich cultural and social traditions of folk music, these singer-songwriters express a wide range of emotion, sharing a women's perspective on life and a multicultural voice. It is their hope that they will inspire the young people of Nashville to tell their own stories and sing their own songs.

A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Women's Center is seeking nominations for three awards given annually to recognize achievements by and in support of women on campus:

The Mentoring Award honors a member of the University community who has fostered achievements by Vanderbilt women.

The Muliebrity Prize is given to an undergraduate student who demonstrates leadership in activities that contribute to the achievements, interests and goals of women and girls or to promote gender equality.

The Mary Jane Werthan Award is presented annually to an individual who has contributed significantly to the advancement of women at Vanderbilt University.

If you know someone who is deserving in any of these categories, please submit your nomination *by March 10th*. Nomination forms are available at the Sarratt information desk or at the Women's Center. For more information, call (615) 322-4843.

acceptance that any one group or generation will not remove the barriers to justice for all people. She wants us to see that having hope, taking the risk, means acting without always having to see the end results of victory, and that moving forward with courage and commitment is the key.

Ok, you say. That sounds well and good. How do I get started?

Like all great accomplishments, start in small steps. Welch urges us to reclaim "Our Own Power," take the time to develop our skills, and to build community.

She outlines these three steps:

- 1.) Redefine responsible action, that is, an understanding that we can't always get the whole of what we want in one gesture. Take small steps in the directions of your dreams. Understand that change happens over time and across generations. In other words, everything you do, however small it may seem, counts toward the whole.
- 2.) Work in community with others. This is where you build relationships with others and learn new skills. Community is where new ideas can be tested and refined and where you'll find support, joy and celebration for your small victories.
- 3.) Take strategic risks. Pick that which is important to you, but take care of yourself. It doesn't help anyone to be a martyr for your cause. Know your limits, set your boundaries and *do what you can* within your power.

Remember, when you stay focused on the task at hand, you give something of yourself to others and to your children--the knowledge that every small step matters and that there is always hope.

As we get set to celebrate Women's History Month here at the Women's Center, we wanted to let you know about some important resources to help you get started on your quest to get involved. Many of these organizations will welcome your time, effort and talents and yet, if you still can't find the time, many of these worthy organizations need your support when it comes time to voice opinions and support legislation. Your support may only be a few computer mouse clicks away.

Political Organizations:

National Organization For Women (NOW)

website: www.now.org

National Women's Political Caucus

website: www.nwpc.org

NARAL

website: ProChoiceAmerica.org

Websites:

The Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center website at www.vanderbilt.edu/womenscenter

We offer a variety of programming designed to inspire you and get you motivated.

www.feminist.org

This website will give you a rundown of the legislation that is pending in our court systems and guide you as to what steps you can take to assist. It also has many links to other like-minded organizations.

www.nashvillecable.org

CABLE is a network of diverse professional women promoting business opportunities and providing leadership within the Middle Tennessee business community.

www.emilyslist.org

A national organization committed to raising funds to support Democratic, pro-choice women political candidates. They also work to educate the public on women's issues facing legislation.

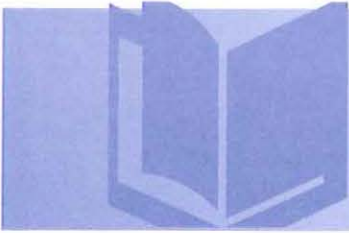
Women and Domestic Violence

Rape and Sexual Abuse Center of Middle Tennessee

25 Lindsley Avenue
Nashville, TN 37210
(615) 259-9055
website: www.rasac.org

YWCA (Shelter and Domestic Violence Program)

1608 Woodmont Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37215
(615) 269-9922

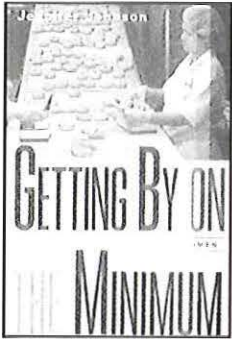


IN THE LIBRARY

BARBARA CLARKE
Women's Center librarian



Jennifer Johnson realized that the voices of working-class white women were largely absent from the literature on working women. In *Getting By on the Minimum: The Lives of Working-Class Women* (Routledge, 2002) she shows to what extent working-class



women are satisfied with their jobs, and how there are still wide class differences between blue-collar and middle-class mothers. The

book "explores these differences, with the goal of discovering which problems are common to all women, which not, which rewards are available to all, which restricted to some." So that the voices of working-class white women might be heard, many passages from their interviews are included.

Johnson, a sociologist at Johns Hopkins University, studied sixty-three working-class and eighteen middle-class white working mothers who were either married or who had a male partner. All of the women, who ranged in age from thirty-three to fifty-two, were participants in an ongoing Johns Hopkins project and lived in the Baltimore area. Most of this volume focuses on the poorer women, but the experiences, lifestyles and attitudes of the middle-class women were used as comparisons.

The writer discovered that most of the working-class women were satisfied with their *jobs*, but not with their *work*. Being content with a job is quite different from being fulfilled by work. Many of the women regretted that their lack of education limited the range of positions open to them. When

asked what they liked most about their jobs the most common reply was "the people." What bothered them most was usually a supervisor. Few women wished to become supervisors as that would change their relationships with their co-workers. Being respected was also a very important part of job satisfaction.

While the working-class women had diverse lifestyles and jobs there was very little social mobility. Only six of the middle-class women had come from working-class backgrounds and all of the women born to middle-class families remained in the middle-class. In comparison, girls born into working class families were usually destined to work in low-income jobs and to marry blue-collar men.

Journalist Betsy Israel, who married at the age of thirty, has produced an engrossing account of the lives of single American women. In *Bachelor Girl: The Secret History of Single Women in the Twentieth Century*



(William Morrow, 2002) she focuses on white heterosexual never-married women, with special emphasis on those in Manhattan, long a magnet for single women. She contends that unmarried women past their mid-twenties have never been viewed in a positive light.

Using newspapers, magazines, journals, diaries, novels, high school yearbooks, radio, movies and television shows, as well as interviews with unmarried women of various ages, Israel illustrates how stereotypes of single women have evolved through

the years and how these images diverged from the realities of the women's lives. Many women enjoyed being single and were happy to stay that way; others simply never found a suitable partner.

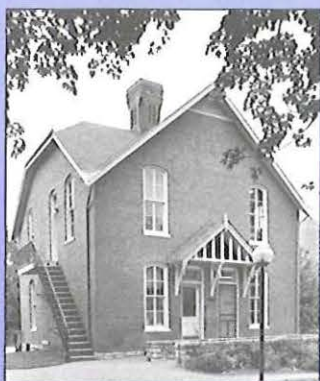
Originally spinsters were women who spun wool and cotton, and by the late seventeenth century the term was being applied to unmarried women who needed an income. Israel's study covers women from the repressed Victoria era to modern television characters like Ally McBeal.

Single women past their early twenties were viewed especially harshly in the two eras. In the nineteenth century unmarried women were frequently portrayed as ugly, cold, unhappy, unfulfilled and even decaying individuals. In the 1950s there was tremendous pressure on girls to marry young, to be homemakers and to have large families. Only this would guarantee true happiness and fulfilment. Single women were considered to be abnormal, unhappy and even perverted; from all sides they were bombarded with advice on how to catch and keep a man.

Even today the media portray unmarried women in unflattering ways although statistics show that growing numbers of adults have never married. Israel avers that "we all know that 'single' as a social entity has its unique complications. Namely, other people's sexist attitudes."

Other new acquisitions include: *Advertising to the American Woman, 1900-1999* by Daniel Delis Hill and *Enterprising Women: 250 Years of American Business* by Virginia G. Drachman.





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 and are open to newcomers at any time. For more information on the events listed, call 322-4843.

March

Monday, March 3, 6:30 -- 8:30 p.m. (Meets the 1st Monday)

Consciousness Raising Group. For graduate students, faculty, staff and community members. The March meeting will be dedicated to deciding the group's mission. Consciousness raising in the new millennium has many of the same needs as CR groups in the 60s and 70s and many new needs as well. Come and let your voice be heard! Bring \$3 for pizza, snacks and drinks. Contact Sarah Walton at sarah.walton@vanderbilt.edu for more information.

Wednesdays in March (19, 26 and April 2nd) at 5-6 p.m. at the Student Rec. Center

W.E.B.S is back! (Women Empowered by Sports) Co-sponsored by the Student Rec. Center and the Wellness Center. Women, in honor of March madness, this month's learning sport will be basketball. This is a basic skill level teaching and learning-by-doing experience that will be completely non-competitive and in a very safe environment. All women are welcome to attend. **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE STUDENT REC. CENTER TO PARTICIPATE.** (Just tell them you are there for WEBS and they will open the gate for you.) All women of all ages, shapes and sizes from the Vanderbilt community as well as the community at large are welcome to participate. It's never too late to learn something new!

Tuesday, March 4, 11, 18, 26 at 12:00 noon --1:00 p.m. (Meets every Tuesday)

Creative Life Planning Group: A group for all dedicated to living life intentionally and creatively.

March 4: Issues

March 11: Martha Gerdeman will give a presentation, "Hidden in Plain View," illustrating how quilts were used as communication for the underground railroad.

March 18: Issues

March 25: Possibly a trip to the Dickson Renaissance Center. Call 322-4843 for more details.

Thursdays in March (6, 13, 20, 27) at 4:00 p.m. (Meets every Thursday)

Vanderbilt Feminists (Vandy Fems): Specifically for undergraduates (women and men), but open to all. A group concerned about women's issues on campus and promoting equality between the sexes. For more information, contact: stacie.r.furia@vanderbilt.edu or justin.f.keith@vanderbilt.edu.

Monday, March 10 at 5:30 p.m. (Meets the 2nd Monday)

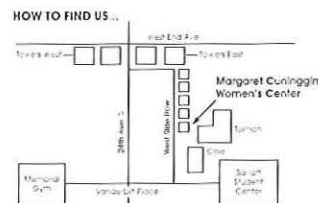
Book Group: This month the group will be reading, *Savage Beauty: The Life of Edna St. Vincent Millay* by Nancy Milford. The group will be facilitated by Deborah Riat. For more information, contact elaine.goleski@library.vanderbilt.edu.

Tuesday, March 11 at 5:15 -- 6:15 p.m.

(Meets the 2nd Tuesday)

Women, Spirit and Poetry: A group for all who are interested in poetry and the spirit. This month's speaker is Kelly Cass Falzone, a first prize-winner of the Tennessee Writers Alliance Poetry Contest and author of *Essential Love: Poems about Mothers, Fathers, Daughters and Sons.*

How to find us . . .



The Cuninggim Center is located in the Franklin Building at 316 West Side Row.



women's HEALTH MATTERS

Women and Bleeding Disorders: An Oxymoron?

by Mavis Harrop

Traditionally anyone who has heard of someone with a congenital bleeding disorder thinks of men. Even though it is usually a male who is born with hemophilia, women can have hemophilia, but more commonly have a medical condition known as von Willebrand Disease.

If a man with hemophilia has a daughter, she will automatically be a carrier. Sometimes if her levels are low enough, she may also have the symptoms of the bleeding disorder such as heavy menstrual cycle or even bruising and joint bleeds. These women are called *symptomatic* carriers.

Von Willebrand Disease is a congenital bleeding disorder that is the most common of bleeding disorders (affects approximately 1% to 2%) and occurs equally in women and men. VWD is caused by a deficient or defective blood protein called von Willebrand factor (VWF), a clotting factor in the blood. If a person has an altered VWF protein or low levels of VWF, it takes longer for the bleeding to stop.

There are three types/degrees of this condition: Type I, or mild, is the most common, Type II is less common and Type III, which is severe and behaves like severe hemophilia. This includes heavy menstrual cycles for women,

bruising, and joint bleeds primarily into the elbows, knees, or ankles. There can also be muscle bleeds. It is important to know how to recognize if you might have a bleeding disorder and to receive appropriate treatment.

You may assume that your internist or ob/gyn would be aware of women with bleeding disorders but this is not the case. The National Hemophilia Foundation has a program called *Red Flag*, whose purpose is to educate as many people as possible, including physicians and other medical professionals, about women and bleeding disorders.

What are the symptoms? Do you have any of the following?:

- Heavy menstrual periods
- Excessive nosebleeds
- Easy bruising
- Bleeding gums
- Heavy bleeding following dental work, surgery, injury, or childbirth
- History of someone in your family having a bleeding disorder

If any of these symptoms are present, it may be signs of a bleeding disorder—a deficiency in the body's clotting system.

There is treatment available to you. There are comprehensive treatment centers throughout the country including right here at

Vanderbilt. The Vanderbilt Hemostasis and Thrombosis Center (HTC) is located in the Vanderbilt Medical Center. We have a team of professionals who are involved in the care of persons with bleeding disorders. These professionals include both pediatric and adult hematologists, a nurse coordinator, licensed clinical social worker, physical therapist, and genetics counselor. There are also referrals made to other specialists as needed.

Have you been concerned about heavy menstrual cycles but thought everyone else must be having a similar experience? Have you had more bruising than your friends? Do you have frequent nose bleeds?

If you think you might have a bleeding disorder, do not hesitate to call the Vanderbilt HTC at 936-1765 to have an evaluation. There is treatment available that will improve your health and quality of life. You can also check with the Vanderbilt Student Health Center or the National Hemophilia Foundation for information. The number at NHF is 1-800-42-HANDI or on the internet at www.projectredflag.org.

Mavis Harrop, LCSW, is a social worker who works with the Hemostasis Thrombosis team/clinic. She has been at VUMC since 1989.



Wednesday, March 12, 4 -- 6 p.m.

Artists Reception: *The Works of Mary Martens*. The exhibit opening is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. For information and directions, call 322-4843.

March 17-24

Eating Disorders Awareness Week

Presented by IMAGE and co-sponsored by the Women's Center and Project Dialogue. Image Week is designed through a collaboration of the Eating Disorders Task Force and the student group, IMAGE. Its primary purpose is to heighten awareness, self-perception and provide education of prevalent body image issues on Vanderbilt's campus. For more information on these programs, contact April Ann Salcido at april.a.salcido@vanderbilt.edu or call 421-3856.

Highlights of the week include:

Monday, March 17: Vanderbilt Student Panel: Your friends talk frankly to you, Wilson 103A, 7 to 8 pm

Tuesday, March 18: Eating disorder screening, Student Terrace, 11 am to 1 pm

Wednesday, March 19: See Barbie at the Wall. Ann Simonton, former supermodel, speaks on beauty and the media.

Thursday, March 20: Eating disorder screening, Student Terrace, 4 to 6 pm

Friday, March 21: Fearless Friday: eat what you want, not what you think you should!

Monday, March 24: I Am Beautiful lunch workshop for faculty and staff, evening lecture for all (see complete description below).

Wednesday, March 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Wilson Hall 103

SEX, POWER AND THE MEDIA: *Ann Simonton* is a supermodel turned activist with a powerful message to convey. Her lecture/slide demonstration confronts our media-saturated culture on topics of corporate ownership, gender, violence and sexual intimacy. Free and open to the public.

Thursday, March 20th at 12 noon (Please note: new day this month)

Living with Loss: Please join us for this monthly lunch group for students who have lost loved ones. Dr. Linda Manning, Director of the Women's Center, will facilitate this discussion. For more information, contact jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu or 322-6518.

Monday, March 24th

I Am Beautiful: The I Am Beautiful programs teach women of all ages, sizes and backgrounds to discover, reveal and celebrate the power of their own unique beauty and to realize their full potential! The I Am Beautiful comprehensive, multimedia seminar covers a range of topics from the academic to the spiritual, with a mix of humor and seriousness-all designed to educate and motivate.

12:00 Noon: Faculty and staff are invited to a brown bag lunch workshop with I Am Beautiful presenter Woody Winfree. Bring a brown bag lunch to Sarratt 189 and we will provide drinks and desserts. There are 36 spots available on a first-come, first-served basis. RSVP today for your spot to jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu or call 322-6518. This was a VERY POPULAR EVENT last time, so sign up early to secure a spot.

7:00 p.m.: The public is invited to hear Woody's presentation at Sarratt Cinema to discuss how our culture convinces us that women are to be judged first and foremost by their looks, not for their efforts and accomplishments. The program will leave audience members with an affirming and liberating view of themselves, with a goal of reshaping perspective, not body size!

Wednesday, March 26th at 4:10 p.m., Furman 114

Katha Pollitt: The Vanderbilt Feminists are hosting Katha Pollitt, one of two female columnists at *The Nation* and a reliable voice of sanity, feminism, and humor on the Left. She is the author of two collections of columns and essays, *Reasonable Creatures* and *Subject to Debate*. She has won many prizes and awards for her writing. Free and open to the public.

***Unless otherwise indicated, all groups are open to all people and are held at the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center at 316 West Side Row on the Vanderbilt University campus.



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

Call for Women Artists

The Women's Center is now accepting proposals for exhibitions for the 2003-2004 academic year. The gallery at the Center is an intimate space with approximately 40 running feet. The Women's Center Arts Committee is interested in reviewing strong two-dimensional work by emerging female artists in the Middle Tennessee area who have not had much exposure. **Proposals are due by April 30, 2003.** For additional information, call the Center at 322-4843.

March 27, 28, and 29, at Fisk University

"Lift Every Voice" Conference, sponsored by Fisk University Race Relations Institute and the Unitarian Universalist Church will feature **Peggy McIntosh, Ph.D.** McIntosh, Associate Director of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, will be visiting Fisk University to offer workshops to the community. For more information, contact Hazel Joyner-Smith, Director, Race Relations Institute at Fisk at hsmith@fisk.edu.

April 3, 5:00 pm reception, 6:00 pm lecture at the Ben Schulman Center for Jewish Life

Wendy Doniger, *this year's Margaret Cuninggim Lecture Speaker*

Wendy Doniger, the University of Chicago's Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions in the Divinity School will be here at Vanderbilt to discuss women's roles in the *Kamasutra* which she has recently retranslated.



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- Please remove my name from your mailing list.

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Address _____

Student (specify school & year) _____

Staff Faculty Administrator Other

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