

WOMEN'S VU

The monthly newsletter of the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center

V VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

February 2005, Volume XXVII, Issue 6

Save The Date!

The Life of a Social Activist: Lessons from the Past and Thoughts for the Future

Nashville CABLE Welcomes Noted Activist, **Diane Nash**, to Nashville for their February Membership Luncheon, on **Wednesday, February 9, from 11:30am-1:00pm** at the Airport Marriott Hotel. Ms. Nash will share her vast experiences of the civil rights movement and her thoughts for the future of this work.

Co-sponsored by the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center, **attendance requires advance registration; there is a \$25.00 fee.** For information and registration, please contact Dr. Linda Manning, Director, Women's Center at linda.manning@vanderbilt.edu or at 322-4843. **The deadline for registration is Thursday, February 1st.**

(see bio on Ms. Nash, page 7)

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For more information, please see our website: www.vanderbilt.edu/WomensCenter

NOTED PSYCHOLOGIST TO SPEAK AT ANNUAL LECTURE

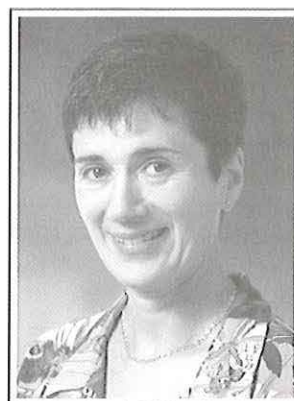
COMING IN MARCH!

Vanderbilt University and the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center presents its annual **Margaret Cuninggim Lecture**. This year's featured speaker is **Dr. Louise Silverstein**, who will speak on *Integrating Feminism and Multiculturalism: Scientific Fact or Science Fiction?* on Thursday, March 24, 2005 at 7:00 p.m., in Wilson Hall, Room 103. Reception will follow in Wilson Lobby. Lecture is free and open to the public.

Louise Bordeaux Silverstein, Ph.D. is Associate Professor at the Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology at Yeshiva University, Bronx, NY where she has taught courses in family therapy and the social construction of

gender since 1992. Dr. Silverstein is a past president of the American Psychological Association's Division of Family Psychology. She currently is a member of the National Committee on Women in Psychology of the American Psychological Association.

Dr. Silverstein is co-founder, with Dr. Carl Auerbach, of the Yeshiva *continued on page 7*



"Unbought and Unbossed"

The Life and Legacy of Shirley Chisholm

by Misa Culley

It is with deep regret that we write about the passing of one of our history's most formidable women, **Shirley Chisholm**, who died January 1, 2005 at the age of 80. It is said that she was in declining health after a series of small strokes last summer. She died in Florida, but was laid to rest in New York beside her husband, Arthur Hardwick, Jr. Reportedly, plans for a large public memorial were cancelled in favor of a quiet service as was her wish. To many she was a symbol of steadfastness and loyalty; a true champion of the underprivileged known for her tenacity and uncompromising integrity.

Born Shirley Anita St. Hill on November 20, 1924, in Brooklyn, N.Y., she was the oldest of four daughters born to parents who had immigrated from the West Indies and who subsisted on wages from factory work and housecleaning. At the age of three, her parents, hoping for a better life for their children, sent them to live with their maternal grandmother in Barbados. There, Shirley and her sisters completed their education in Barbados's British school system. Shirley went on to attend Brooklyn College, where she majored in sociology and was a member of the debating society, where many theorize it is where she learned her noted "cut-and-thrust" oratory style. In 1949, after grad- *continued on page 3*

black history month profile

Celebrate and Remember: February is Black History Month

WOMEN'S CENTER SEEKS NOMINATIONS FOR TWO ANNUAL AWARDS

The Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center is seeking nominations for the **Muliebrity Prize**, an award given annually to recognize achievements by and in support of women at Vanderbilt University.

The **Muliebrity Prize** honors an undergraduate student who demonstrates leadership in activities that contribute to the achievements, interests and goals of women and girls, or that promote equity. Self-nominations are encouraged, as well as nominations by faculty, staff, advisors, friends and peers. **The award will be announced on April 6th, 2005** at the annual Magnolia Awards (formerly Kudos) Dinner, where the honoree will be presented with a cash award of \$100 and an honorary certificate.

Deadline: If you know someone who is deserving of this recognition, please submit your nomination by Friday, February 18, 2005.

Nominations may be submitted in the following ways: in person to the Women's Center in the Franklin Building at 316 West Side Row; by campus mail at Station B Box #351513; by U.S. Mail at Station B Box #351513, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville TN 37235-1513; or by email at womenctr@vanderbilt.edu.

The **Mary Jane Werthan Award** is given annually by the Women's Center to honor an individual who has contributed to the advancement of women at Vanderbilt. It is named in honor of Mary Jane Werthan, the first woman member of the Vanderbilt Board of Trust. Nominations should be sent in the form of a letter addressed to Linda Manning, Director, and any supporting materials should be included.

The deadline to submit nominations for the Mary Jane Werthan Award is March 4th. The award will be presented during the annual Margaret Cuninggim Lecture on March 24th. Please send your nominations to the Women's Center at 316 West Side Row, 37235.

Past honorees have included Dr. Alison Piepmeier of the Women's Studies program (2004), Dr. Ronnie Steinberg of the Women's Studies program (2003), Gay Welch, University Chaplain (2001), Gary F. Jensen, Professor of Sociology (1997), Nina Gove, Professor of Slavic Languages & Literatures (1993), and William A. Jenkins, Vice Chancellor for Administration (1990).



The Vagina Monologues: Back by Popular Demand in 2005

Vanderbilt's student production of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* will take place on February 13 and 14 at 7pm in Sarratt Cinema, and the 2005 cast and production crew are as excited as ever to put on an amazing show! The play is a comedic series of monologues based on interviews with women from all over the globe. V-Day Vanderbilt University 2005 is a collegiate benefit production of the play as part of the V-Day 2005 Worldwide Campaign to end violence against women, and the proceeds raised at this year's performance will be donated to Ujima House, a local domestic violence shelter.

Two new monologues will be featured, including a piece that debuted at the first "transperformed," transgendered version of the *Monologues* in California a year ago. This piece spotlights violence against transgendered women and is entitled "They Beat the Girl out of My Boy... or so They Tried." In addition, our cast includes many new faces and a few veterans whom we are thrilled to welcome back. Look for special V-day events in the week preceding the show and in the lobby outside the performance, and remember that this hilarious and thought-provoking play can make an excellent Valentine's date or a night out with friends! Tickets will be sold through Sarratt Cinema, and for more information, please contact vicky.basra@vanderbilt.edu or 322-1333. For information regarding the V-Day 2005 Worldwide Campaign, please visit www.vday.org. I hope to see you all in February!

--submitted by Emily Baumach, Director, *Vagina Monologues*

Women's VU is published monthly September through June at the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.

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Address changes: Please contact our office manager, Robin Van Arman, at robin.l.van.arman@vanderbilt.edu

Deadline for newsletter: Submissions are due on the 1st of the month preceding publication.

"Unbought and Unbossed:" The Life and Legacy of Shirley Chisholm

uating from college, she went on to earn a master's degree in child education from Columbia University.

Her initial interest in children's education led her to teaching in a Harlem nursery school and later as supervisor of the largest nursery school network in New York. This experience shaped the executive skills that would serve her well as she increasingly became involved in the political arena.

Chisholm was also active in her community; she served as a volunteer in the Brooklyn chapter of the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In 1953, as a member of the Seventeenth Assembly District Democratic Club, she waged a successful campaign to elect an eminent black lawyer to the municipal court.

In 1964, she won a landslide victory for a seat in the New York State Assembly. There, her sensitivities to people of all colors led her to advocate not only for black civil rights, but also for Native Americans and Spanish-speaking immigrants. During her tenure as an assemblyperson (1965-1968), she authored numerous legislation bills, including a program that provided college funding to disadvantaged youth; and a bill that secured unemployment insurance for domestics and day-care providers.

In 1968, Chisholm became the first black woman ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, representing New York's Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. Not long after being sworn in, she was assigned to the House Agriculture Committee, which she felt was irrelevant to her urban constituents. In her usual uncompromising style, she immediately demanded reassignment and instead became a member of the Veterans Affairs Committee.

In 1972, Chisholm became the first black woman to campaign for the presidency of the United States. (The first woman to ever run for president was Victoria Woodhull in 1872 on the Equal Rights Party Platform.) The campaign was viewed as more symbolic than actually attainable. In the end, she won 152 delegates before withdrawing. She, herself, realized the sheer odds it would take to win, and remarked in her book, *The Good Fight*, "I ran for the Presidency, despite hopeless odds, to demonstrate the sheer will and refusal to accept the status quo." She hoped to pave the way for others like herself, who "will feel themselves as capable of running for high political office as any wealthy, good-looking white male."

During her tenure in Congress, Chisholm was a staunch defender of civil rights and women's rights, and her outspoken style often met with criticism from other House members. She was vocal in her opposition to the Vietnam War. Chisholm was

fierce in her convictions, but was said to be a woman with a warm heart. It was this loyalty and concern for others that ultimately led her to retire from Congress after seven terms to care for her husband, Arthur Hardwick after a car accident. (Hardwick, a Buffalo liquor storeowner, was the first African-American ever elected to the New York Assembly. He died in 1986.) In her book, *Unbought and Unbossed*, she reflected on her experiences in Congress and her concerns about how things are done: "Our representative democracy is not working because the Congress that is supposed to represent the voters does not respond to their needs. I believe the chief reason for this is that it is ruled by a small group of old men."

"Of my two 'handicaps,' being female put more obstacles in my path than being black."

--Shirley Chisholm

Her life after Congress included a four-year tenure at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts and as a much-sought-after speaker on the lecture circuit.

She was a critical part of Jesse Jackson's campaigns for the presidency and also created and chaired the National Political Congress of Black Women. She also served on the Advisory Council of the National Organization of Women (NOW).

Her legacy will be one of optimistic faith in what is right and just and the will to fight for it. Her famous words delivered to Congress for the Equal Rights Amendment echo these sentiments: "The time is clearly now to put this House on record for the fullest expression of that equality of opportunity which our founding fathers professed. They professed it, but they did not assure it to their daughters, as they tried to do for their sons." "The Constitution they wrote was designed to protect the rights of white, male citizens. As there were no black founding fathers, there were no founding mothers—a great pity, on both counts. It is not too late to complete the work they left undone. Today, here, we should start to do so."

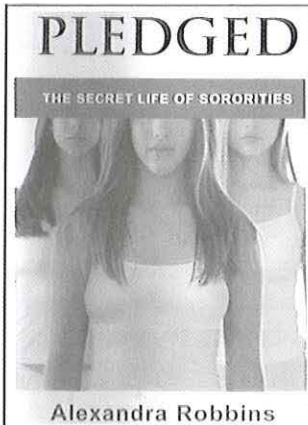
Postscript: A young filmmaker named Shola Lynch, who studied under Ken Burns, recently completed a documentary on Shirley Chisholm that premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2004. The film, *Chisholm '72: Unbought and Unbossed*, features interviews with writer Amiri Baraka, feminist Susan Brownmiller, and former Black panther leader Bobby Seale. On February 7, 2005, *Chisholm '72* will be broadcast nationally on PBS, presented by the P.O.V. series. Check local listings or the P.O.V. website at www.pov.org; on March 1, *Chisholm '72* will be released on DVD/HomeVideo by Twentieth Century Fox.

Misa Culley, editor of this newsletter, has a degree in International Studies and enjoys writing on a variety of topics, especially multicultural issues. She is co-founder and co-facilitator of the Women's Center program, Vandy Moms.





A New Release Examines the Secret Life of Sorority Girls; Library Has Great Selections Celebrating History of Black Women



Writer Alexandra Robbins, a 1998 graduate of Yale University, had not belonged to a sorority and was very curious about how much truth there is in the prevailing stereotypes of sororities. When her requests to openly observe sororities were turned down by all the national chapters, she decided to become an undercover observer at an unnamed university. She naturally wondered what the national chapters were afraid she would discover. *Pledged: The Secret Life of*

Sororities (Hyperion, 2004) details how she spent the 2002-03 academic year observing the sorority members at the unidentified southern college she calls "State University."

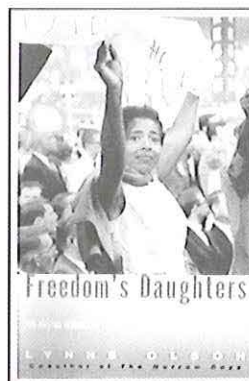
As very few students were aware that the youthful-looking Robbins was in reality a reporter and writer, she was able to observe their uncensored behavior. She did not consider the two sororities she studied in greatest detail to be extreme or atypical. She participated in many of the sorority and fraternity events and observed, interviewed and chatted with hundreds of students, both at this campus and at others. Her main focus is on four of the students, two sophomores and two juniors, in a couple of historically-white sororities. One of the four students was African-American, one of only two non-white girls in her sorority. This particular college differs from Vanderbilt in that all of the fraternity and sorority members normally live in their large chapter houses.

The writer found that the behavior of the students diverged drastically from the rules and regulations of the national chapters, the local sororities and of the colleges themselves. While there are some positive aspects of belonging to a sorority, such as making friends and contacts for the future, there are perhaps more negative aspects. Robbins found that many of the girls seemed much more concerned about sorority life and attracting boys than about their studies. She observed rampant alcohol and drug abuse; a high incidence of eating disorders; much promiscuity; date rape; extreme emphasis on conformity, appearance and on possessing expensive clothes and accessories; verbal abuse and meanness toward other girls; hazing; racism and classism; and various types of cheating. The sorority sisters were also much less involved in philanthropy and service work than

Robbins had anticipated. All the houses maintained files of tests and papers from previous years to give the members unfair help with their studies. Because of mandatory sorority meetings, students often succumbed to the temptation to miss classes or laboratory sessions.

The writer's findings led her to ponder what would lead intelligent, privileged and attractive girls to behave in such ways, especially toward their peers. Rather than being centered on sisterhood, the girls seemed more focused on competition for the fraternity boys they considered to be desirable catches. She considers that "Under the guise of propelling women forward, sororities also tug them backward—with dress codes, male-centered activities, ideas of proper comportment, and a subjugation of self to the group—so that the constant contradictory pulls lead to a stagnancy that is slow to accept any change at all."

In her conclusion Robbins offers many suggestions as to how different aspects of sorority life could be improved by national and local sorority chapters, alumnae, universities, parents, siblings, friends and young women entering college. This is a fascinating book though some parents may prefer not to know what their college-aged children are really doing on campus.



February is celebrated as Black History Month and the Women's Center Library has many books on the history of black women. *Freedom's Daughters: The Unsung Heroines of the Civil Rights Movement from 1830 to 1970* by Lynne Olson illustrates how black women began fighting for their rights as early as the 1830s. Some of our other works published in the past five years on African-American women's history include *African American Women Confront the West:*

1600-2000 edited by Quintard Taylor and Shirley Ann Wilson Moore; *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* by Barbara Ransby; *Gender Talk: The Struggle for Women's Equality in African American Communities* by Johnnetta Betsch Cole and Beverly Guy-Sheftall; and *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice* by Jael Silliman and others, as well as a recent biography of Harriet Tubman by Catherine Clinton.



February 2005 Calendar

PLEASE SAVE AND POST

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 Vanderbilt University's Campus.

For directions, please consult the map at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/WomensCenter/contact.html>. For more information, please call 322-4843.

SPECIAL EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2005

Women's Center Sexuality Series: Inside The Red Tent

What: Women's bodies and cycles have been studied for centuries. Come hear amazing anthropological, medical, and social information about women and the light of the moon, along with natural signs that a woman is fertile, and new and old options for birth control that work for you and your partner. The rhythm method this is not!

Where and When: Wilson 126 at 6:00pm
This program is free and open to everyone. For more information, please contact jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu

SUNDAY AND MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13 AND 14

The Vagina Monologues

Where and When: Sarratt Cinema at 7:00pm
What: Writer and performer Eve Ensler created a one-woman show that speaks of women's bodies covering subjects often considered taboo, risqué, and threateningly empowering. This year, an all VU cast brings the amazing performance to you! For more info, contact vicky.basra@vanderbilt.edu

Who: This performance is open to everyone. Ticket sales are now available at the Sarratt Welcome Desk for \$10/person. Additional information can be found at www.vanderbilt.edu/ProjectSafe. (For more details, please see article on Page 2)

EVENTS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2005 in Rand Dining Hall and Promenade starting at 4:00pm
Girl Scout Cookies

Part 1: Girl Scout Cookie Night at Rand
What: Enjoy your usual fine dining experience in Rand Hall, with a little boost from your favorite Brownie Scouts serving you free Girl Scout cookies for dessert! More cookies will be available for purchase in the lobby, so bring along your checkbook or cash (VandyCard not accepted through the GS). For more information, please contact jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2005 at the Rand Promenade starting at 4:30pm

Part 2: Cookies on Campus

What: Cookies on Campus is a program designed to encourage teen scouts to attend college by giving them a look at college life up close. After their tour of Vanderbilt, they will be selling their cookies for you in the

Promenade. Please come by to purchase cookies from these young ladies, and feel free to ask them how their work on their Gold Awards is coming along. For more information, please contact jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Life on the Tenure Track

What: In this workshop we will have the opportunity to meet women faculty who are on the tenure-track and hear their answers to questions such as: What is life like trying to get tenure? How does one balance a personal life with the responsibilities established in trying to get tenure? And most importantly, has it been worth it?

Who: This program is for women graduate students or those considering becoming one.

Where and When: Schulman Center for Jewish Life, Upstairs, from 4:10-5:30pm

For more information, please go to www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/gradstudents/f2p2

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Women in Islam Series Presents Martha Boyd

What: Martha Boyd, a Major in the U.S. Army Reserves, was deployed to Iraq for over nine months. During that time, she and others were able to begin a domestic violence shelter for women in Baghdad, the first of its kind and a program much needed. Martha will share her experience, the culture and the problems that remain.

Where and When: Wilson 115, 7:00pm
This program is free and open to everyone. For more information, please contact jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu or alison.piepmeyer@vanderbilt.edu

REGULAR GROUPS AND MEETINGS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1

T-BLAST (Transgendered women, Bi women, Lesbians, and Straight women Together)

What: This fabulous group of women will gather this month to discuss romance and relationships.

Where and When: GLBT house at 6:15pm-7:30pm

For more info, please contact melinda.brown@vanderbilt.edu, patricia.k.gardner@vanderbilt.edu, or jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu

TUESDAYS, FEBRUARY 1, 8, 15, 22

Creative Life Planning Group

What: A group for all dedicated to living life intentionally and creatively. Open to everyone in the community and is usually attended by women between 40 and 90 years of age.

Who: This group is free and open to everyone.

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February Calendar

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When: 11:30am-1:00pm (Meets every Tuesday)
For more information, call 322-4843.

WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 2, 9, 16, 23

Vanderbilt Feminists (Vandy Fems)

Who: Specifically for undergraduates (women and men), but open to all.

What: An undergraduate student group concerned about women's issues on campus, and promoting equality between genders.

When: 5:00-6:00pm (meets every Wednesday)

Contact emily.c.baunach@vanderbilt.edu or katharyn.i.christian@vanderbilt.edu Or just come to a meeting!

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2 AND 23

Dissertation Writers Group

What/Who: This support group meets every three weeks to provide female Ph.D. candidates with objective reactions and fresh perspectives, as well as a place to unwind during the dissertation writing process.

When: 3:45pm-5:00pm (meets every three weeks)

Mark your calendar for the Spring dates of 1/12, 2/2, 2/23, 3/16, 4/6, 4/27. For more information, contact roxy.dicker@vanderbilt.edu

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Sistahs Reading Sistahs

What: A book group for everyone interested in reading African-American women authors. This month the group will be reading *Dead Time* by Eleanor Taylor Bland.

This group is free and open to everyone!

When: 12:30pm-1:30pm (Meets the 1st Thursday)

For more info, please contact nicole.l.mcdonald@vanderbilt.edu

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Creative Writing Group

What: The Creative Writing Group is open to new members! We look forward to hearing your piece. No writing experience necessary. You can bring a piece or create one at the group.

Who: This group is free and open to everyone. It is led by Anna Sir who will be doing some writing instruction as well as facilitation of the group.

When: 5:30-7:00pm (Meets the 2nd Tuesday)

For more information, or to RSVP to the group, contact annasir@bellsouth.net

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10 AND 24

Vandy Moms

What: On February 10th, we invite you to bring sweet samples, chocolate or otherwise, to share with the group. Please be sure to bring copies of the recipes, too!

Who: Moms of any age! Women who juggle! Superheroes! Open to all mothers, partnered or single. This is a support network that provides advocacy for moms in the Vanderbilt and larger communities. It also provides programming to inform,

empower and enrich.

When: 11:30-12:30pm (Meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays)

To RSVP, contact misa.culley@vanderbilt.edu or call 343-4367.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Book Group

What/Who: The book group is open to new members at all times and is for anyone who loves to read.

The February book is *Warriors Don't Cry* by Melba Patillo Beals.

When: 5:15pm-6:15pm (meets the second Monday)

For more information, contact Jane Du Bose at jdubose@bellsouth.net

or Carmen Gherman at cggherman@yahoo.com.



IMAGE WEEK FEBRUARY 20-25

The Women's Center is a proud supporter of IMAGE week, a week designed to raise awareness about eating disorders on campus and in our community.

Sunday 2/20: Mirror Project: See the posters in bathrooms across campus with the saying "There's More Than What Meets the Eye"

Monday 2/21: IMAGE @ the wall (all week)– informational table at the wall about nutrition, body image, and eating disorders. Special guest: the life-size Barbie.

Tuesday 2/22: Getting Real: Uncovering the Hidden Agenda of the Media Market Presentation by Tricia Gardner in Furman 132at 7pm

Wednesday 2/23: Food 101: Presentation by Jamie Pope, Register Dietician in Sarratt 345at 6pm about how to manage a healthy college diet. A light dinner will be served.

Thursday 2/24: Student Panel: Presentation by 4 panelists, 2 survivors of eating disorders, 1 friend of a survivor, and 1 expert. Presentation will be in the Branscomb Rec Room at 7pm, with a reception after the panel. Staff members from the Psychological Counseling Center will be present to provide additional information and support to anyone attending the event.

Friday 2/25: Love Your Genes/Denim Day: Boxes will be located in dorms across campus to donate used and old (but wearable) jeans. IMAGE encourages everyone to trash the jeans you don't need to try to fit, while loving the genes that you do fit. All clothing items will be donated to the Salvation Army at the end of the week.

**Events are subject to change. Please visit the University Calendar as the week approaches for the most updated information, or contact becky.spire@vanderbilt.edu with specific questions.

Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center Lecture

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University Fatherhood Project, a qualitative research study of fathering from a multicultural perspective. In 2000, the Association of Women in Psychology awarded Dr. Silverstein and Dr. Auerbach the Distinguished Publication Award. In 2001, Drs. Silverstein and Auerbach received the Distinguished Research Award for this project from Division 51, the Society for the Study of Men and Masculinity, of the American Psychological Association

Dr. Silverstein's lecture will examine the possibilities of integrating feminism and multiculturalism in the field of psychology. Given the changing demographics of U.S. society, multicultural competence is essential for professional psychologists. Mainstream psychology has officially endorsed multiculturalism, while feminism has become virtually invisible. Yet both continue to be marginalized in psychological theory and practice. What would an integration of feminism and multiculturalism look like? Who would have to give up power and privilege to achieve this? Can this goal become scientific fact, or will it remain science fiction?

Dr. Silverstein's publications focus on fathering, family therapy, and feminist theory. She is the author of *Feminist Family Therapy: Empowerment and Social Location* (2003), co-edited with Thelma Jean Goodrich; and *An Introduction to Coding and Analyzing Data in Qualitative Research* (2003) co-authored with Carl F. Auerbach.

Dr. Silverstein is also a family therapist in private practice in Brooklyn, NY.

For more information, call 322-4843. Parking is available at the Terrace Place Garage, across 21st Avenue South from Wilson Hall. For directions, please visit the Vanderbilt University campus map at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/map/entry.html>.



MCWC TO ASSIST IN \$250,000 GRANT

The Tennessee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence has been awarded a \$250,000 grant from the Tennessee Department of Health to assess the social norms as related to sexual assault and sexual beliefs and myths among middle school, high school and college students. The Coalition will partner with Vanderbilt University to develop a specially designed survey tool. The Coalition has also identified eight women's centers in the state in an attempt to reach college students. **The Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center is a major partner in this project.** Project Safe, a component of MCWC, is an inclusive campus-wide effort aimed at education and outreach, prevention and advocacy. From August 21, 2004 to October 3, 2004, they served 23 people with domestic and sexual violence issues and 20 people seeking support for someone they know dealing with domestic and sexual violence. The social norms grant under the Coalition will assess and address myths that make sexual assault common on our campuses and will aim at prevention for younger students.

Civil Rights Activist, Diane Nash, Visits Nashville

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Diane Nash first became involved in the nonviolent movement in 1959 when she was a student at Fisk University. During her tenure, she became one of the founding students of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (1960); chairperson of the student sit-in movement in the first southern city to desegregate its lunch counters (Nashville, TN, 1960); a coordinator of the Freedom Ride (from Birmingham, AL to Jackson, MI, 1961); and director of the direct action arm of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1961.

For her work in the civil rights movement, she was appointed by President John F. Kennedy to a national committee that promoted passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. From 1961-65, she was actively involved in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Ms. Nash, along with a colleague, formed the SCLC's initial strategy for the Selma Right-to-Vote movement; its success contributed to the Voting Rights Act and for her work in it, she and her co-strategist received SCLC's highest award, which was presented by the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ms. Nash has received numerous awards for her work, including the *Distinguished American Award* from The John F. Kennedy Library in March, 2003; *The LBJ Award for Leadership in Civil Rights* from The Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum in March, 2004.



NEWS TO SHARE

Washington State makes history for American women. Democratic gubernatorial candidate, **Christine Gregoire** was sworn in January 12, 2005 and joins U.S. Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray, making Washington State the first state in the nation to have all top three statewide offices held by women. Washington ranks at 33%, second only to Maryland in the percentage of women holding state legislative office, according to the Center for American Women and Politics. In case you're wondering, according to the 2002 *Status of Women Report* by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, Tennessee ranks 47th of the 50 states for women's political participation. For more information on how Tennessee ranks against other states in a variety of indicators, please refer to the website: www.ivpr.org

In the presidential election, the final tallies were announced a few weeks ago. As Democrats and Republicans were deeply divided over the war in Iraq and economic and domestic issues, the final calculated voter turnout was 60.7%, the highest level since 1968. (Center for the Study of the American Electorate). Turnout last year rose by 6.4% over Election year 2000, but even so, **78 million eligible voters still DID NOT vote!**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FEBRUARY 28, 2005

Nashville NOW (National Organization for Women) will meet **Monday, February 28** at the Nashville Peace and Justice Center at 7:00pm. For more info, please contact CynthiaNashNOW@aol.com.

Meharry Medical College is currently doing a few research trials that will impact how Black women are treated for some gynecological health issues. The research trials/studies concern the following issues:

- A study of women determining how sex hormones effect ovarian function and bones;
 - A study of women age 18-48 who are still menstruating and have uterine fibroids;
 - A study of women who suffer from PCOS "Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome" (this is the only research trial that involves taking medicine);
 - A study of women who suffer from stress incontinence.
- For more information call 615-327-5699.

MARCH 3-5, 2005

Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) will host **Women and Power: 2005**, an Interdisciplinary Conference in Women's Studies, March 3-5. The conference will address several topics, including defining, defending, or deconstructing global feminism; identifying women's personal/political power in diverse national contexts; women and terrorism; women's health issues from an international perspective, among many other topics.

The keynote speaker is **Irshad Manji**, an author, television personality, media entrepreneur and queer Muslim. Born in East Africa, Manji studied at the University of British Columbia and now leads Islamic reform initiatives and gay and lesbian pride parades. Manji wrote *Risking Utopia: On the Edge of a New Democracy* and *The Trouble with Islam* and is president of VERB, a television channel designed to engage young people on the issues of global diversity.

For more information or to register for this conference, please contact the Women's Studies department at MTSU at (615) 898-5910.



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