

WOMEN'S VU

The monthly newsletter of the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

December 2004, Volume XXVII, Issue 4

A Season of Giving

The holiday season will soon be upon us, final exams will be done, papers will be turned in and the hustle and bustle of holiday shopping will commence. It is this time of the year that many of us look to our communities of family and friends to impart a sense of belonging—a sense of togetherness and thankfulness. But, it is also this time of year that many people in our local communities suffer from not having enough—not enough food on the table, not enough warm coats to buffer the chill. It is a time to be thankful and yet, a time to give so that others can be thankful, too. There are so many ways in which people can give back to their communities.

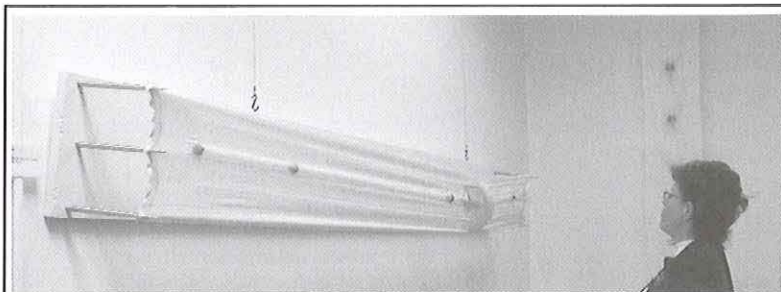
In an effort to “think globally and act locally,” my family has often sought out organizations that can use the extra objects we no longer use. During my planned fall and spring cleaning workdays, I siphon out piles of unused items—objects such as old glasses, barely worn shoes, children’s clothing, “interview suits” I never wore after I landed the job, and all those beautiful clothes in the back of the closet that I’ll never fit into again. I know that there are places where someone—anyone—can use this stuff and so, here it is: some starting points, a list of places that need these wonderful items that we don’t use. Don’t get me wrong, these organizations will still gladly take your monetary donations, but for those of us with little disposable income, helping others by donating unused items is pretty wonderful, too!

Salvation Army’s Angel Tree

Nearly every mall in Middle Tennessee has an **Angel Tree**, decorated with tiny little angels, all asking that their Christmas wishes be fulfilled. Many of these “Angels” are children whose families may be in crisis due to major surgery or they have met federal poverty guidelines. To qualify as an “angel family,” a referral usually comes from social workers, police and even churches. One can stop by and pluck an angel off the tree and fulfill the wishes before December 4. For more information on the Angel Tree, please refer to www.salarmy-nashville.org.

Warm Coats from Warm Hearts

For seven years, the Granny White Church of Christ, along with



Above: A guest studies Susan’s woven artwork.

At right: Artist Susan Clarke (center) discusses her work with two friends. Her exhibit runs through December 19th.



Photos by Misa Culley

its corporate sponsors, WSMV-TV (Channel 4), Lowe’s, HHGregg and earthsavers.org, have collected coats for free distribution to those in need. Although the distribution date has already passed (it was November 13th), it still might be worth passing on that winter coat you no longer wear to someone who will. For more information, refer to their website, www.grannywhitechurch.com

Room in the Inn

For the past 19 years, more than 150 of the area’s congregations have joined forces to partner and run **Room In the Inn**, a service to provide overnight shelter and home-cooked meals to the Nashville’s homeless. From November through March, this partnership, organized by The Campus for Human Development (CHD), a religious non-profit organization, provided more than 28,000 beds and 87,000 meals with the participation of over 38,000 volunteers! CHD welcomes other congregations to participate *continued on page 2*

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For more information, please see our website:

www.vanderbilt.edu/WomensCenter

A Season of Giving

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and welcomes donations of hats, coats, socks, undergarments and blankets. To donate or for more information, please call (615) 251-7019 or refer to their website: www.chd-nashville.org/room-in-the-inn.html

Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee

Their mission is simple: They feed hungry people and work to solve hunger issues in our community. According to its website, "during the 2003/2004 fiscal year, Second Harvest distributed more than 14.5 million pounds of food to hungry men, women, and children." As a mother to young children, it's a frightening thing to read, 'one in five people in a soup kitchen line is now a child. In Middle Tennessee alone, 47% of the people Second Harvest serves are children.' There are many ways you can help: Volunteer your time, organize a food drive, or donate money. One can even make a "tribute" gift in someone's name. For as little as \$10, you can make someone's holiday a bit brighter! For more information, visit their website: www.secondharvest-nashville.org

Nashville Rescue Mission

This Christian-based center serves over 3,000 meals during its annual two-day Thanksgiving Banquet, but can always use donations. Their ministries include several centers that serve the homeless including the Anchor Home and the Hope Center that

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E-mail address: womenctr@vanderbilt.edu

Visit our website at:

www.vanderbilt.edu/WomensCenter

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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.

serve as residential recovery programs for young adults aged 18-21. When you visit their website, www.nashvillerescuemission.org, click on "donate" to view their current needs and wish list. Even a small monetary donation will feed many.

Miscellaneous Items: Clothing, eyeglasses, shoes Dress for Success

This not-for-profit organization has many chapters across the country, assisting low-income women make tailored transitions into the workforce. They provide interview suits, confidence boosts and career development to more than 45,000 women in over 73 cities each year. Each Dress for Success client receives one suit when she has a job interview and a second suit when she gets the job. Women are referred to Dress for Success by government agencies including homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, immigration services and job training programs. If you have a suit you'd like to donate, they ask that you do so by appointment (they have little storage space). They have a great need for suits in sizes 16 and larger and shoes sizes 8 and larger. Remember, everyone wants to make a good first impression; if you wouldn't wear it to an interview, they can't use it either! In Nashville, see the address below. For other national chapters, refer their website for further details and their current wish list: www.dressforsuccess.org.

Dress For Success: Nashville

Phone: (615) 298-4544

Unite for Sight

This organization states that, "over 1 billion people in developing countries need eyeglasses but cannot afford them. Over 4 million pairs of eyeglasses are thrown away each year in North America. The price for glasses in Benin and other African countries can exceed three months' average salary." In an effort to bring eyeglasses to developing countries, Unite for Sight has a form you can fill out and they will contact you to tell you where you can drop off your old glasses. Please see www.uniteforsight.org

Lions Club International's Recycle for Sight

The World Health Organization estimates that nearly a quarter of the world's population could benefit from corrective lenses. Now's the time to take those old glasses that have been collecting dust in the back of your desk and put them to good use! The general public is encouraged to donate their used eyeglasses (and sunglasses to their local Lions club), or to send them to one of the ten regional Lions Eyeglass Recycling Centers listed on their website: www.lionsclubs.org

This, of course, is just a "drop in the bucket." There are many, many worthy charitable organizations in the Middle Tennessee area and I urge you to search them out. Give to those organizations that do the work you aspire to do or that touch your community in a special way. Give where your heart is. Happy Holidays!

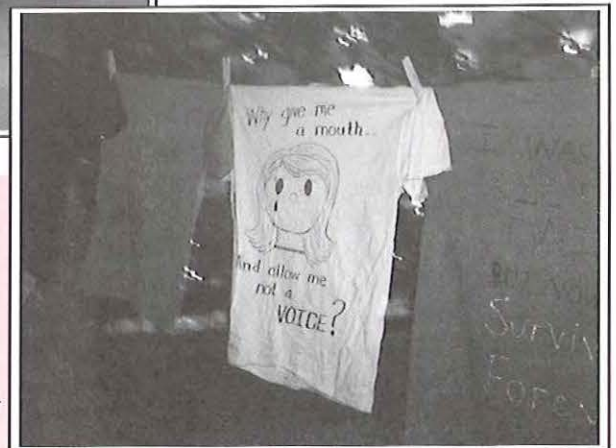
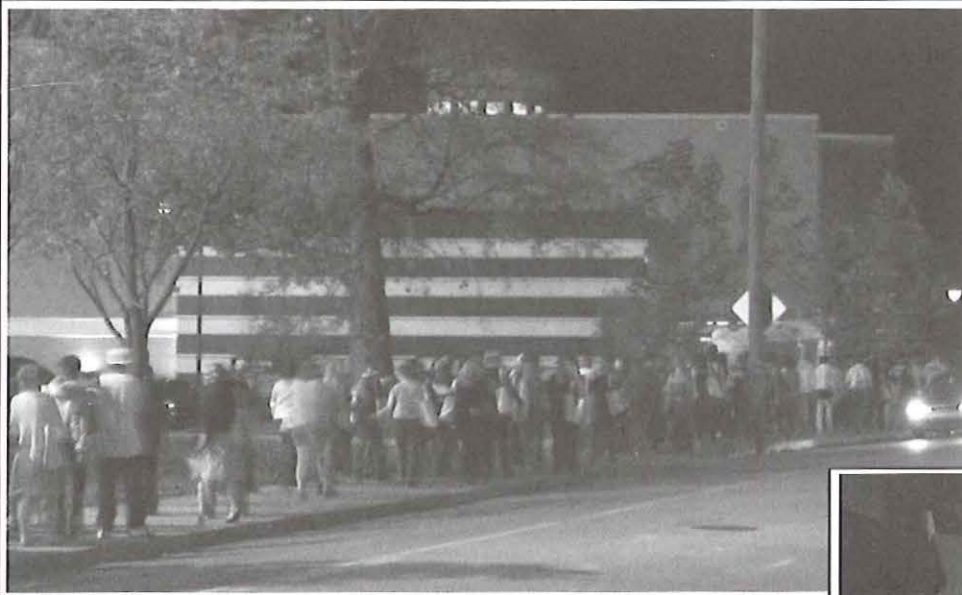
Misa Culley, editor, aspires to be like her mother-in-law, Barbara Culley, who often organizes family donation drives for worthy causes, including their annual Christmas carolling to raise money for the Fannie Battle Day Home. She has encouraged us to give all year long. Thanks, Mom, for setting the standard!



Take Back The Night, 2004

The Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center and Project Safe would like to thank all the volunteers and participants of this year's Take Back the Night. We would like to extend a special thank you to:

Elizabeth Edmondson
Christina Jones
Christina Miller
John Newman
Gladys Robalino
Bryn Sedlacek
Erica Valentino
UT College of Social Work
Belmont Social Work Students' Association
Vanderbilt Feminists
Peer Educators of Project Safe
Alpha Chi Omega
Alpha Tau Omega



White Ribbon Campaign

On December 6, 1989 an enraged gunman roamed the corridors of Montreal's Ecole Polytechnique and shot 27 women, 14 of whom died. Marc Lepine separated the men from the women and before opening fire on the classroom of female engineering students, screamed, "I hate feminists!" The Montreal Massacre resulted in a country not only mourning the deaths of the women, but also expressing its outrage about all forms of violence against women.

As a result of this outrage, the White Ribbon Campaign was founded. Men in Ontario, Canada started wearing white ribbons as a symbol of men's opposition to male violence against women. They decided that they had a responsibility to urge men to speak out against crimes that are gender specific. By wearing a white ribbon, men personally pledge to never commit, condone nor remain silent about violence against women.

On the Vanderbilt Campus, **Men Promoting a Solution (MPAS)** will be heading the campaign. They are encouraging students, staff and faculty to wear white ribbons **during the week of December 6** to show their support in ending violence against women. If you are interested in being part of this campaign, please contact Justin Montenegro at 322-8605 or e-mail him at justin.s.montenegro@vanderbilt.edu.



and to the fraternities that supported *Take Back the Night* by displaying banners:

Alpha Tau Sigma
Delta Kappa Epsilon
Lambda Chi Alpha
Lambda Theta Phi
Phi Kappa Psi
Phi Kappa Sigma
Pi Kappa Alpha
Sigma Alpha Epsilon
Sigma Chi

and The Women's Center Staff:

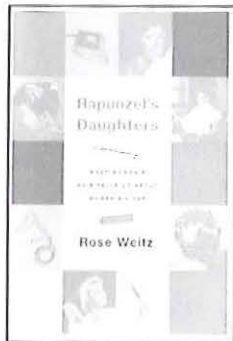
Emily Baunach
Barbara Clarke
Misa Culley
Jennifer Hackett
Sandra Harrell
Linda Manning
Katie Protos
Kacy Silverstein
Robin Van Arman

--Vicky Basra,
Co-Director, Project Safe





Two new books examine the fascination with hair and shopping



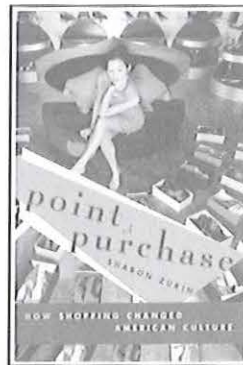
Hair is central to the identity of most women and girls. In *Rapunzel's Daughters: What Women's Hair Tells Us about Women's Lives* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004) Rose Weitz illustrates why hair is so significant to females and how this importance evolved over the centuries. Hair plays a vital role in appearance and beauty and conveys many messages about the wearer. Weitz, a professor of sociology and women's studies at Arizona State University, inter-

viewed a wide variety of girls and women of all ages for this fascinating volume.

Exactly what hair signifies varies from culture to culture and across time but there are always differences between acceptable hairstyles for women and those for men. In modern American culture not only does hair denote gender, but also age, social class, ethnicity, and often sexual orientation and political viewpoints. The writer remarks that "we decide what image we want to present to the world. And the world responds in kind, deciding who we are and how to treat us based in part on what our hair looks like." To a great extent women and girls control the images their hair gives to others and in this way they feel that they are in control of some aspects of their lives, something which is especially vital for teenage girls. In many black communities it is considered more important to have beautiful hair than to be thin, while the opposite prevails in white communities. Weitz was not surprised to find that black women spend three times as much as white women on hair-care products.

Included are chapters on how girls are socialized to value hair and beauty; women's hair in the workplace; the importance of hair for teenagers; the role played by hair in intimate relationships; women who lose their hair temporarily or permanently; aging and women's hair; and why women enjoy visiting hair salons.

The writer hopes that a time will come when hair play will be voluntary and fun, and women will feel less restricted in selecting hairstyles. Currently hair is often styled in certain ways in order to find or keep a job or partner. When women and girls are able to exercise more control over their lives, they will feel freer to appreciate and celebrate their hair.



Sociologist Sharon Zukin's *Point of Purchase: How Shopping Changed American Culture* (Routledge, 2004) is an engrossing work on an unusual topic. Zukin is a professor of sociology at Brooklyn College and the City University Graduate Center and her focus is on the greater New York area.

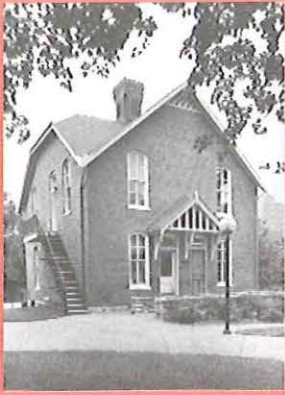
The writer points out that today shopping dominates our lives and that "Our identity is formed by the whole activity of shopping—an activity that

we experience as both freedom and necessity." Not only must we shop regularly to obtain necessities like food but most Americans now have enough free time and money to spend on discretionary items that will give them enjoyment or status.

Zukin shows how shopping keeps national economies afloat, is an expression of buyers' creativity and the principal way consumers create value. Shopping defines who we are and what we aim to achieve as a society. It is a cultural activity and, although many people shop alone, it is a means of socializing. Shopping has become such an everyday activity that it seems natural to us that humans exist to buy and to sell. It is virtually one's duty to shop. The writer points out that much of the nation's shopping, the public sphere of consumption, has traditionally been done by women, who until recent times were excluded from most other public spheres.

Chapters focus on such topics as the history of shopping; learning how to shop; buying at large discount stores; the experience of a casually-dressed Hispanic teenage boy trying to buy expensive jewelry in Tiffany's; consumer guides; brand names and value; and Internet shopping. Zukin feels that there has been a "continuous intensification of shopping" over the last 150 years. Different cultures of consumption have followed one another since then and one result is that many people today see the whole world as a shopping experience.

Other new acquisitions include: *Jailbait: The Politics of Statutory Rape Laws in the United States* by Carolyn Cocca; *Gender and Candidate Communication: VideoStyle, WebStyle, NewsStyle* by Dianne G. Bystrom et al.; and *Restoring Women's History through Historic Preservation* edited by Gail Lee Dubrow and Jennifer B. Goodman.



December 2004 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

Study Break Stress Relief!

When: Wednesday, December 8 from 10:00am-2:00pm

What: The Women's Center is bringing in a massage therapist to do free 10-minute chair massages. Sign up for your time slot today by emailing jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu with your preferred time. Time slots will be given out in the order in which the emails are received. This is open to anyone stressed out by finals or the upcoming holidays.

Ongoing Programs:

In Closure: Mixed media sculptures by *Susan Clark*

Works will be shown in the Women's Center gallery until December 19.

What: Celebrate the final show of 2004 at the Women's Center gallery. Clark's work is wonderful experience of art that jumps off the walls. For more information, please contact jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu.

Regular Groups and Meetings:

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2

Sistahs Reading Sistahs

Who: A book group for everyone interested in reading black women authors. This month's book, *Volunteer Slavery* by Jill Nelson. Feel free to bring a lunch; drinks are provided.

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

For more information, contact nicole.l.mcdonald@vanderbilt.edu

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7

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

What: Home for the holidays?

Join T-BLAST for a conversation about the ways in which LGBT folks, their families and friends deal with holidays and celebrations of all kinds - both the stresses and creative new options (such as family of choice celebrations).

When: 6:15pm-7:30pm (Meets the first Tuesday.)

Where: at the VU GLBT House (www.vanderbilt.edu/glbt) For more information, contact melinda.brown@vanderbilt.edu, patricia.k.gardner@vanderbilt.edu, or jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu

TUESDAYS IN DECEMBER

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.

When: 11:30am-1:00pm (Meets every Tuesday).

For more information, call 322-4843.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

Creative Writing Group

When: 5:30-7:00pm (Meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, usually, but only on the second Tuesday this month due to the holidays)

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

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9

Vandy Moms

What: The December 9th meeting will be a potluck *Holiday Celebration!*

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 second and fourth Thursdays, but not this month due to the holidays). To RSVP, contact misa.culley@vanderbilt.edu or call 343-4367.

WEDNESDAYS, DECEMBER 1 AND 8

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, DECEMBER 8

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 *continued on page 6*

December Calendar

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well as a place to unwind during the dissertation writing process.

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

Fall 2004 dates to meet are: 9/1, 9/22, 10/13, 10/27, 11/17, 12/8. For more information, contact rory.dicker@vanderbilt.edu

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13

Book Group

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

December 13 Party at Carmen Gherman's house to choose books for 2005.

When: 5:15pm-6:15pm (meets the second Monday) For more information, contact Jane Du Bose at jdubose@bell-south.net or Carmen Gherman at cggherman@yahoo.com.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2

Graduate Women Support Group

What/Who: If you are a woman in graduate school, you are going to need some support! Come and gather with others who are experiencing what you are for dialogue, best practice sharing, and support.

When: 4:00-5:15pm (meets every three weeks) Contact vanessa.k.valdes@vanderbilt.edu for more information.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

ECONOMIC SUMMIT FOR WOMEN

The Tennessee Economic Council on Women is hosting its first statewide economic summit for women in Nashville, Tennessee, on December 3, 2004. The summit will be a full-day conference with various speakers, panels and sessions and will end with an evening recognition/awards program. The summit will seek to highlight various economic issues for women including career development and job training, school mentoring and financial literacy, economic/community and workforce development, women's economic autonomy and family/workplace violence. For more information and to register, please contact Janet Rachel, Economic Summit Coordinator - 615-253-6658 or Janet.Rachel@state.tn.us or Michelle Chambers, Interim Executive Director: 615-253-4266 or Michelle.Chambers@state.tn.us

Nashville NOW (National Organization for Women) will have a **Holiday party on December 11**. The party is free and open to members, guests, and those seeking more information. For more info, please contact CynthiaNashNOW@aol.com.



Happy Holidays!



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- Please send my subscription to an off-campus address. Donation is enclosed.
- Please correct my name on your mailing list.
- Please remove my name from your mailing list.

Name _____

Address _____

Student (specify school & year) _____

Staff Faculty Administrator Other

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