

# Women's VU

The monthly newsletter of the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

December 2005, Volume 28, Issue 5

## On the Calendar

- Don't Miss the upcoming production of *Voices of Men*, January 19th. Time and location TBD. Please refer to our website for updates.

- Save the date for Vanderbilt University's 2006 College Campaign of the *Vagina Monologues*. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact vicky.basra@vanderbilt.edu

- **Community-Wide Book Event!** The Vanderbilt and Nashville Communities are invited to participate in collectively reading *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood. The book will be discussed at an open meeting, facilitated by Women's and Gender Studies Director, Dr. Monica J. Casper near the 33rd anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, which is January 22, 2006. Details about date/time TBA.

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For more info, please see our website:  
[www.vanderbilt.edu/WomensCenter](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/WomensCenter)

## Emergency Contraception: U.S. Out Of Step

Reprinted by permission. *National Organization For Women*, October 26, 2005

By NOW Foundation Intern Jesse Mesich

The Food and Drug Administration's unwarranted delay in approving over-the-counter (OTC) sale of emergency contraception (EC) has been much in the news lately. Against the advice of two FDA advisory committees and contrary to the endorsement of some 70 respected medical associations, several FDA officials have suggested that availability of EC to women age 16 and under would lead to promiscuity. There is no evidence that EC use by adolescents increases their level of sexual activity, and there is specific evidence that it does not. Many close observers believe that this fallacious assertion is pandering to the administration's extremist anti-birth control activists.

A 2001 study conducted by the Alan Guttmacher Institute concluded that emergency contraception, if readily dispensed, could cause a 43% reduction of the approximate 1.37 million abortions that occur each year in this country. If EC were dispensed OTC world-wide, it would dramatically cut the approximately 46 million abortions worldwide each year. Of the 210 million women around the globe who become pregnant each year, about 80 million of their pregnancies are unplanned, according to the Center for Reproductive Rights.

Opponents of EC often assert that prohibiting a fertilized ovum from implantation in the uterus, which sometimes happens with EC use, is tantamount to an abortion. While this debate drags on in the U.S., millions of women are denied easier access to a proven

safe drug that is available to women in many other countries.

**39 Countries have OTC Access** - Many other nations not only have EC available in prescription form, but also provide it over-the-counter. Around the globe, there are approximately 39 countries that facilitate access to EC without prescription, including: Albania, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, India, Israel, Morocco, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Congo, South Africa, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

One of the countries that provides emergency contraception without a prescription is France, where it has been available since the 1970s. In May of 1999 it was packaged specifically as the "morning-after pill." One month later, France made EC a nonprescription drug, allowing women to get it directly from the pharmacist as France does not have over-the-counter drugs like in the U.S. The French government also reimburses over 65% of the cost of the drug, and minors are allowed to receive it free of cost and without parental notification. Furthermore, since December 2000, minors have been able to receive EC from their high school nurses. Since EC has been made available in nonprescription form in France, over 1.5 million treatments have been dispensed, 97% with no prescription. As a result, France has an extremely low abortion rate.

India is the latest country to allow EC OTC. The Indian Health Minister announced on August 31 that his country had approved the sale of emergency contraception over-the-counter, and expressed hope that allowing EC OTC will reduce the number of unsafe abortions in India, which kill 20,000 women annually. The health minister said that having the emergency contraception

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## Staff News



The Women's Center wishes to congratulate our very own Jennifer Hackett and her fiance, Brady Mills, on their recent wedding! Both Brady and Jennifer have decided to maintain their own last names, and are excited about beginning a life together as partners.

The Women's Center recently celebrated Jennifer's nuptials with a surprise wedding party. As the guest of honor, she was asked to wear the appropriate "party hat!" Congratulations, Jennifer and Brady!

The Women's Center's current art exhibition features quilt artist **Kathleen Madigan**. Her exhibit, entitled *Breaking Out*, will be on display through December 11. This show is free and open to the public. Call 322-4843 for gallery hours.



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

## Emergency Contraception: U.S. Out Of Step

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available without prescription would be important in alleviating women's distress about seeing a doctor for this reason.

**States Expedite Availability** - It is not only foreign countries that see the practicality in providing emergency contraception over-the-counter; a few U.S. states have also made access easier. In 1988, Washington was the first state to allow women to get EC directly from a pharmacist, without first going to a doctor. This pilot plan was based on a collaboration between doctors and pharmacies that set specific screening criteria women must meet in order to receive EC. There were almost 35,600 prescriptions filled for EC from February 1998 until the trial expired in June 2001, preventing thousands of unwanted pregnancies. Washington's pilot program opened the door for other states to explore their own EC OTC policies. Currently, Hawaii and Alaska allow EC to be sold OTC using the Washington model of collaboration between doctors and pharmacists. Additionally, California, Maine, and New Mexico allow EC to be sold OTC through their specific state-approved protocol. Two other states, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, have also passed laws allowing easier access to EC; however they are still trying to implement them.

Massachusetts is the most recent state to pass legislation allowing EC to be sold over-the-counter. The bill initially sailed through the state's Senate and House of Representatives and passed overwhelmingly. However, Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney vetoed the bill on July 29 in keeping with (he claimed) his campaign pledge not to change any state "abortion laws." Legislators were able to override the veto on September 15 of this year, thus enacting the law. The Massachusetts law is based on the Washington state legislation, and also guarantees that emergency rooms will offer EC to rape victims.

Despite these advances by the states in dispensing EC OTC, there is also a counter-movement by pharmacists who are refusing to fill prescriptions for EC and even for birth control pills. These pharmacists claim moral or religious objections to filling the prescriptions and therefore refuse to fill them even though their female customers received their prescriptions from a doctor. This recent campaign has been instigated by a number of well-known anti-abortion rights organizations and political religious organizations.

**Pharmacists' Refusals Alarming** - The Alan Guttmacher Institute reports that during a six month period in 2004 more than 180 pharmacists refused to fill prescriptions for EC. In fact, four states - South Dakota, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Georgia - have policies that allow pharmacists to refuse to dispense a prescription if they personally disagree with the practice. What is even more alarming is that eight more states are considering similar legislation. We must counter this alarming trend that threatens to deny effective and needed medicine to women.

This decision by individual pharmacists to limit women's reproductive rights has

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# Emergency Contraception: U.S. Out Of Step

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brought outrage from many quarters. Supporters of over-the-counter EC have lobbied legislatures to ensure availability through mandated pharmacist referrals and other means. Two states, Illinois and Nevada, have laws ensuring a patient's access to this legally-prescribed medicine by making it illegal for a pharmacy to refuse to fill a prescription for EC. Five additional states and the U.S. Congress have had similar bills introduced. The federal bill is H.R. 1539, sponsored by Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-N.Y.), which stipulates that if a pharmacist refuses to fill a prescription, the pharmacy must arrange to have another pharmacist fill the prescription within four hours of the initial refusal. One of the important advantages of over-the-counter availability is that it would completely bypass pharmacists' refusals. Perhaps that is why right-wing anti-birth control activists are fighting so hard to stop EC OTC.

**Officials Resign over EC Delay** - The Food and Drug Administration's foot-dragging has prompted several officials to speak out. Two top FDA officials: Dr. Susan F. Wood, who was Assistant Commissioner for Women's Health and Director of the FDA's Office of Women's Health, and Dr. Frank Davidoff, who was a consultant to the FDA's Nonprescriptive Drug Committee, have stepped down from their respective positions in protest of the government's delay in providing EC to the women of this country. Davidoff voiced this frustration in his letter of resignation: "I can no longer associate myself with an organization that is capable of making such an important decision so flagrantly on the basis of political influence, rather than the scientific and clinical evidence."

Furthermore, many in Congress are becoming increasingly more frustrated with the delayed FDA ruling and growing reports of pharmacist refusal. On October 7, a bipartisan letter was sent to the FDA Acting Commissioner Andrew von Eschenbach urging him to stop the delay and allow EC to be sold over the counter to all women.

Another challenge for women's reproductive rights advocates lies in what appears to be a significant gap in public awareness. A 2003 poll conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation revealed that 32% of women aged 18-44 were not aware that there is a method of contraception that is effective after unprotected intercourse has already occurred. Additionally, only 6% of women have ever used EC. A successful educational campaign about what emergency contraception is and how it works, as well as information about the need for EC availability without prescription, would help immensely. Also, when EC is made available over-the-counter in the U.S., there must be an education campaign to ensure that women – especially young women – know about this safe and effective contraceptive option.

To learn more about emergency contraception, please refer to the NOW website at [www.NOW.org](http://www.NOW.org)

## For more information:

- Alan Guttmacher Institute - Emergency Contraception: Improving Access, [www.agi-usa.org](http://www.agi-usa.org)
- Center for Reproductive Rights - EC Legislative Trends; [www.crlp.org](http://www.crlp.org)
- Kaiser Family Foundation - Fact Sheet on Emergency Contraceptive Pills (PDF); [www.kff.org](http://www.kff.org)
- Pharmacy Access Partnership - EC Over-the-Counter Status, [www.pharmacyaccess.org](http://www.pharmacyaccess.org)

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## Women's Issues in the News

### Study Ranks Tennessee Fifth Worst State for Women Murdered by Men

In a recent report entitled *When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2003 Homicide Data*, the Violence Policy Center ranked Tennessee as the fifth worst state in the country in terms of women being murdered by men. The study found that of the 71 females murdered by men in Tennessee in 2003, three were less than 18 years old; four were 65 or older; twenty-five were black; forty-six were white. The report also examined the victim/offender relationship and found that 88 percent of the female victims knew their assailants—63 percent (37 victims out of 71) were wives, common-law wives, ex-wives, or girlfriends of offenders. The study also found that firearms were the most common weapon used. Among the other states listed in the top ten are Alaska, Nevada, Louisiana, New Mexico (tied), South Carolina, Arizona, Georgia, Mississippi, and Texas.

### First African Woman President

In this past November's elections, Liberia's populace elected its first woman president. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf received 59 percent of her country's votes to become Africa's first elected woman president. In an effort to unify her country, Johnson-Sirleaf planned to offer a position to her opponent, George Weah, a popular soccer star, who had 41 percent of the vote.

### Collecting Data on Working Women

In August, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that it would cease collecting data on working women. Given that many policies are constructed using Census Bureau statistics and as well as labor statistics, this was seen as a gross oversight for women. To combat this decision, Senator Kennedy (D-MA) spearheaded an amendment to the Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Bill requiring the Bureau of Labor Statistics to reinstate its former practice of collecting data on working women. In an uncontested, bi-partisan voice vote, the Senate approved this vital amendment. Now it is up to the House-Senate Conference Committee to finalize this version of the Bill with the Senate provisions in place.

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## Dreaming of the East and Worrying the Line



Using a variety of published works, as well as diaries and correspondence, writer Barbara Hodgson has produced a fascinating work on Western women who ventured to the exotic “Orient” between 1717 and 1930. The area involved was the eastern Ottoman Empire, which includes the countries later known as Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, Palestine and Syria. In *Dreaming of East: Western Women and the Exotic Allure of the Orient* (Greystone Books, 2005)

Hodgson, shows the challenges and experiences women enjoyed and endured when traveling through remote locations with very different customs when travel was often a daunting undertaking. The volume includes a great many engravings, paintings and photographs depicting the female travelers, the people they encountered and the colorful places they visited.

Some of the women traveled to the Middle East to be with their husbands; others went out of a sense of adventure or to write or paint there. They seldom went alone. Women not accompanied by their husbands usually traveled with another woman and they mostly employed local porters, guides or aides during their travels. Venturing to lands so different from their own was not only very educational but gave the travelers a sense of freedom and accomplishment. At home, they may have played a submissive role but while traveling they usually had to make their own decisions, hire their own guides and plan their own routes. Hodgson writes that “These women challenged restrictions imposed on their liberties by traveling outside their societies. They experienced what it was like to be foreigners in distant lands, limited only by those constraints they put on themselves.” Such adventurous women could also feel confident about their abilities when they realized that they were much better educated than Eastern women.

Many female travelers adapted their clothing styles and wore some combination of local and Western styles, as long dresses and crinolines were hardly suitable for trekking or camping in dusty locales. Some European women’s fashions were considered indecent by Muslim societies. For safety or comfort some women dressed as men and hoped that they would be mistaken for teenage boys. Female travelers could visit harems, which were forbidden to male outsiders. In their writings these women expressed a wide array of opinions, both positive and negative, about harems and the wives, concubines and slaves who lived in them.

Many of the women had great admiration for the local men who acted as guides or porters and for men they met on their

travels. Some had affairs with Eastern men and a few married and stayed in the Orient. When female travelers returned home they frequently found it difficult to adjust to their old lives and to take up passive roles again.

Cheryl A. Wall, a professor of English at Rutgers University, examines a selection of fiction and nonfiction works of twentieth-century African American women writers in *Worrying the Line: Black Women Writers, Lineage, and Literary Tradition* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005). The term “worrying the line” is borrowed from blues music and is a folk expression that usually refers to the various ways that phrases are broken up to stress or to clarify what the performers mean. They may repeat words, shout or change their pitch.

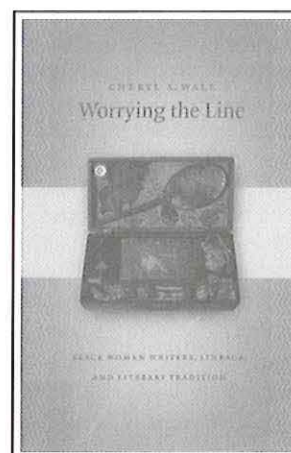
Wall feels that black women writers use similar techniques in their works and she focuses on two of the meanings of “the line.” The first is when it is used a metaphor for lineage and the second is when it signifies literary traditions; she is particularly interested in how these two meanings intersect. Because of the effects of slavery there are usually gaps in the family histories of black Americans and question marks about the traditions of their ancestors. Writers may connect to the unknown past by their use of music, dreams or ritual, and often make use of images like photographs or word pictures. For example, Gloria Naylor’s *Mama Day* discovers some of her family’s history through a series of dreams.

The writers selected by Wall for detailed discussion worry the line in different ways. “The desire to reclaim and reconnect characterizes the project of *Worrying the Line*, but it has multiple modalities. As they survey the remains of history, contemporary black women writers choose differently what to salvage and discard.” In eight chapters Wall illustrates her theories as she discusses works of Zora Zeale Hurston, Lucille Clifton, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Gloria Naylor, Audre Lorde, Gayl Jones and Paule Marshall.

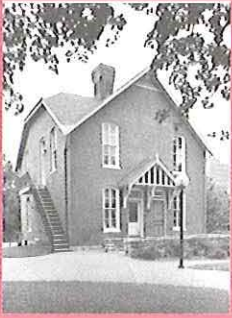
Other new acquisitions include: *Fixing Families: Parents, Power, and the Child Welfare System* by Jennifer A. Reich and *Body Work: The Social Construction of Women’s Body Image* by Sylvia K. Blood.



Barbara Clarke  
Women's Center  
Librarian



## December 2005 Calendar



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

### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### Community Wide Book Event!

The Vanderbilt and Nashville communities are invited to participate in collectively reading *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood. The book will be discussed at an open meeting, facilitated by Women's and Gender Studies Director, Dr. Monica J. Casper near the 33rd anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, which is January 22, 2006. Details about date/time TBA. For more information, please contact [jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu)

### ONGOING:

Artist Kathleen Madigan presents *Breaking Out*.

**What:** Come and see this body of work which celebrates abstract, modern art through quilting.

**Who:** This show is free and open to the public. It is running from October 20–December 11. Call 322-4843 for gallery hours. For more information, please contact [jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:jennifer.hackett@vanderbilt.edu)

### REGULAR GROUPS/ MEETINGS

#### Sistahs Reading Sistahs

Wednesday, December 7, 12:30pm–1:30pm (Meets the 1st Wednesday)

**What:** A book group for everyone interested in reading African-American women authors. This month the group will be reading *The Justus Girls* by Slim Lambricht.

**Who:** This group is free and open to everyone. For more info, please contact [regina.snell@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:regina.snell@vanderbilt.edu)

#### Dissertation Writers Group

Wednesday, December 7, and 14, 11am–12noon (Meets every Wednesday)

**What/Who:** This support group meets every week to provide women Ph.D. candidates with objective reactions and fresh perspectives, as well as a place to unwind during the dissertation writing process. For more information, contact [rory.dicker@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:rory.dicker@vanderbilt.edu)

#### T-BLAST (Transgendered, Bi Women, Lesbians and Straight Women Together) Brown Bag Lunch Group

This group will be meeting again in January. There is no meeting in December.

**What:** Too often, lesbians, bi women and straight women are portrayed as being on opposite sides of a great chasm of difference and

transgendered women are left out of the equation altogether. Yet women throughout history have had great friendships despite differing sexual identities. T-BLAST provides women a space for conversation about issues that affect us all and a celebration of our differences and our friendships.

**Who:** This discussion group is free and open to all women. Co-Sponsored with the VU GLBT Office. For more information, contact [melinda.brown@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:melinda.brown@vanderbilt.edu)

#### Creative Life Planning Group

Tuesdays, December 6, 13, 20 and 27, 11:30am–1:00pm (Meets every Tuesday).

**What/Who:** A group for all dedicated to living life intentionally and creatively. Free and open to everyone and is usually attended by women between 40 and 90 years of age.

For more information, call 322-4843.

#### Creative Writing Group

Tuesday, December 13, 5:30–7:00pm. (meets the 2nd Tuesday)

**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](mailto:annasir@bellsouth.net)

#### Vandy Moms

Thursday, December 8, 11:30am–12:30pm (Meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays - but this month only the 2nd due to Christmas week.)

**What/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. Thursday, December 8, we'll have our *annual holiday party!* To RSVP, contact [misa.culley@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:misa.culley@vanderbilt.edu) or call 343-4367.

#### Book Group

Monday, December 12, 5:15pm–6:15pm (meets the second Monday)

**What/Who:** The book group is open to new members at all times and is for anyone who loves to read. The book group will have a social at this meeting and choose the books for next year. For more information, contact Jane Du Bose at [jdubose@bellsouth.net](mailto:jdubose@bellsouth.net) or Carmen Gherman at [cggherman@yahoo.com](mailto:cggherman@yahoo.com).

#### Vanderbilt Feminists (Vandy Fems)

Wednesdays in December (December 7 only this month), 7pm–8pm (meets every Wednesday.)

**Who:** Open to all students of any gender.

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## December 2005 Calendar Listings

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**What:** A student group concerned about women's issues on campus, and promoting equality between genders.  
Contact [emily.c.baunach@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:emily.c.baunach@vanderbilt.edu) or [katie.protos@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:katie.protos@vanderbilt.edu) Or just come to a meeting!



### Peer Educators of Project Safe

Meets Sunday nights at 7pm.

**What/Who:** Peer Educators are students trained to facilitate workshops that promote discussion and encourage understanding of violence against women. For more information, contact [katie.protos@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:katie.protos@vanderbilt.edu) or [kasie.r.luttrell@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:kasie.r.luttrell@vanderbilt.edu)



### Men Promoting a Solution (MPAS)

Meets Monday nights, 6pm in Sarratt 363

**What/Who:** A group of men dedicated to creating awareness about violent crimes against women and eliminating those crimes through social change. New members are always welcome! For more information, contact [steve.frooman@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:steve.frooman@vanderbilt.edu)



### Support Group

**What/Who:** A support group for women who are survivors of domestic/dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. This group meets weekly at a confidential time and location. All information shared is kept confidential. For more information, please contact [kacy.silverstein@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:kacy.silverstein@vanderbilt.edu) or 322-1333.

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### Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center Project Safe Position Announcement

Project Safe is recruiting a graduate assistant for the Spring semester of this academic year. Project Safe, a program of the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center, is a coordinated campus-wide effort aimed at education, prevention and responses services for Vanderbilt students, faculty, and staff affected by sexual assault, intimate partner abuse, and stalking. The graduate assistant would work ten hours a week and focus primarily on providing administrative and advisory support to the group (MPAS) Men Promoting a Solution. The position would also include providing administrative support to the Project Safe Director and Associate Director.

**Job duties would include:** Coordinate MPAS Meetings and Events; Provide Targeted Outreach to Men and Underserved Populations; Provide support to Project Safe team; Develop recruitment plan; Meet Weekly with Project Safe Team and Women's Center Staff

Please contact Kacy Silverstein at 322-3774 or by email at [kathryn.w.silverstein@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:kathryn.w.silverstein@vanderbilt.edu) for more information about the position.

## Help Support Girls' Education: The Kenyan Girls Project

Esther Achieng, Maureen Akoth, and Carolyn Atieno are sixth graders at Lwala Primary School in Lwala, Kenya. The school has over 500 students—with one outdoor latrine for all students—and has no library, computer lab, or recreational facilities. These young women, moreover, are more than likely to not finish past the seventh grade—in Kenya, even though girls test as well if not better than the boys and their enrollment numbers are comparable, after seventh grade the enrollment numbers for girls drop off dramatically. Girls are responsible for the maintenance of the household, including all cooking and cleaning. Given that there is no electricity, potable or running water in Lwala, their tasks are considerably complicated by fetching and carrying water. And many of these girls will be married off by their families—some as young as ten years old—and will therefore not finish their schooling.

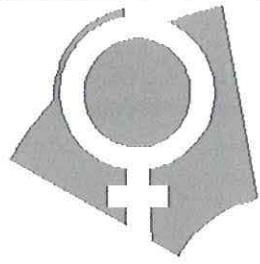
Enter the Kenyan Girls Project—an initiative begun this summer by four 2005 graduates of Dartmouth College—Erin Osborn, Leah Skypeck, Ashley Carruth and Allison Welch. These women traveled to Kenya this summer as part of a Dartmouth service team. While in the country, they helped Vanderbilt medical student and Dartmouth alum, Milton Ochieng, with the construction of a medical clinic in Lwala. They also spent much time with the schoolchildren in Lwala—creating an AIDS/HIV awareness soccer tournament for the children and becoming acquainted with many of the girls in the school. That interaction sparked the desire to create the Kenyan Girls Project—an effort to match Kenyan 7th and 8th grade girls with sponsors in the U.S. Osborn, Skypeck, Carruth and Welch identified this age group as the most critical because, as they note in a recent newsletter, “of the twin problems of increased household responsibility and increased pressure to marry.” They also found that many of the Kenyan families could not financially support continued education for their daughters even if they wished to do so—the Kenyan Government does not pay for secondary education.

The Kenyan Girls Project seeks to raise both funds and awareness of the conditions of female students in Kenya. One trimester of secondary school costs \$100 US, one year costs \$300, and four years cost \$1200. Interested individuals or groups may raise money to sponsor a student, or work with the Project in raising awareness on campus and in the community (information pamphlets and a Power-point presentation will soon be available).

If you are interested in establishing a chapter of the Kenyan Girls Project at Vanderbilt, please contact Mark Dalhouse in the Office of Active Citizenship and Service. [mark.t.dalhouse@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:mark.t.dalhouse@vanderbilt.edu). You may also contact Erin Osborn at [erin.osborn@alum.dartmouth.org](mailto:erin.osborn@alum.dartmouth.org).

—submitted by Mark Dalhouse

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## ***December 1st is World AIDS Day: Do You Know All that You Should?***

**According to UNAIDS statistics,  
Did you know?:**

- There were 37.2 million adults and 2.2 million children living with HIV at the end of 2004;
- During 2004 an estimated 4.9 million people became infected with the virus?
- Around half of all people who become infected do so before the age of 25 and are dead before they are 35?
- Although 95% of the people inflicted with the virus live in developing countries, HIV/AIDS affects everyone.

In 1988, the first World AIDS Day was organized by UNAIDS. It was not just about raising money to combat the virus, but to raise awareness through education. In 2005, UNAIDS handed over the responsibility of organizing and running World AIDS Day to an independent organization called The World AIDS Campaign (WAC). The theme for this year's World AIDS Day is "**Stop AIDS: Keep the Promise.**" Although some organizations around the country and the world have chosen to name their own themes, WAC contends that the single most important principle is to raise awareness and to remember those living with HIV/AIDS.

In June 2001, all 189 members of the United Nations signed the *UNGASS Declaration of Commitment*, stating that their governments would adopt policies to take action on prevention, care and support, and treatment of those inflicted with HIV and AIDS. These countries have committed to reducing HIV prevalence among men and women aged 15-24 by 25% in the most affected countries; ensuring that young people have access to information and services; reducing the number of infants infected by increasing education and services to prevent mother-to-child transmission; and lastly, to increase annual spending in low and middle-income countries. ([www.avert.org/worldaid](http://www.avert.org/worldaid))

### ***What does the U.S. monetary contribution look like?***

According to the Global AIDS Alliance:

*"The U.S. is not providing enough resources. A fair-share contribution by the U.S. government to the global HIV/AIDS response (including extra needed spending on tuberculosis and malaria) would be \$6.7 billion a year given our share of the global economy (close to one-third). The United States is expected to spend about \$2.9 billion on global HIV/AIDS in 2005. The Bush Administration had proposed just \$200 million for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria for fiscal year 2005, though Congress has increased that amount. The U.S., to date, has done little to deliver deeper debt relief, or to broaden this*

*relief to more countries that need it.*

*The U.S. is opposing measures including tiered pricing and generic competition, that would help provide affordable, sustainable access to AIDS medications in impoverished countries. What's more, the U.S. threatens to apply trade sanctions to countries that seek to acquire cheaper medications."*

### **Mark Your Calendars!**

Toronto, Canada will be the site for the XVI International AIDS Conference in August of 2006. This multi-cultural city will be host to over 12,000 participants who will join together to share knowledge on the global HIV/AIDS epidemic. Conference participants will include researchers, clinicians, community organizations, government personnel and people living with HIV/AIDS. For more information on this upcoming conference, please refer to [www.aids2006.org](http://www.aids2006.org).

### **Test your AIDS knowledge**

Take the World AIDS Day quiz and see if you know your stuff.

[www.avert.org/wadquiz.htm](http://www.avert.org/wadquiz.htm)

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## **Women's Health Matters**

### **Body Image and Sexual Desire**

A recent study conducted by researchers at Pennsylvania State University studied the effect that body image plays in determining a woman's sexual desire. Of the 307 women they studied, almost 21 percent reported that they did not find any of their features attractive and reported a general dissatisfaction with their bodies. This negative body image may be the reason why some women's sexual desire declines as they age.

## **IN MEMORIAM**

This past year we witnessed the passing of many brave and inspirational feminist leaders. Among those who passed away this year:

Shirley Chisholm  
C. Delores Tucker  
Molly Yard  
Andrea Dworkin  
Rosa Parks

We remember their contributions with fondness and respect.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**THE DECEMBER NASHVILLE CABLE PROGRAM, ENTITLED *An Entertaining Journey Through Music City* WILL BE DECEMBER 14 AT 11:30AM** at the Wildhorse Saloon. The program will feature live entertainment intended to communicate to our members the richness and diversity of Nashville's music. For reservations, call 255-9111 or visit [www.nashvillecable.org](http://www.nashvillecable.org)

**NASHVILLE NOW** (National Organization for Women) is having their **holiday party Saturday, December 10, at 7:00pm!** Members and friends are welcome. For more information, contact [CynthiaNashNOW@aol.com](mailto:CynthiaNashNOW@aol.com), [tennesseehow@comcast.net](mailto:tennesseehow@comcast.net) or 269-7141.

### FLU SEASON IS UPON US!

**The Occupational Health Clinic** is pleased to announce the 2005-2006 Influenza Vaccine Program for all Vanderbilt faculty and staff. The vaccine will be provided at no charge. ID badge must be presented at time of vaccination. At this time there is no anticipated shortage of vaccine. This year they will give injectable vaccine only. Flu vaccine is now available in the Occupational Health Clinic on a walk-in basis. Hours are 8am-5pm, M-F.

### HELP OTHERS THIS SEASON!

Go to [www.thebreastcancersite.com](http://www.thebreastcancersite.com) and click on "Fund Free Mammograms." Your visits to this website help fund free mammograms for those women who cannot afford them otherwise.

### HEALTHY KIDS 2025 INITIATIVE

Currently, Tennessee ranks as one of the worst states nationally for children's health. Healthy Kids 2025 is an initiative coordinated by Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital to raise awareness about children's health, focusing on injury prevention, fitness and nutrition, early education, and parent connections.

### Healthy Kids Quick Tip: Reading

Learning to read is critical to a child's success in school and later in life. Start a child's love of books at birth by keeping books in your home. Make reading together a habit early on and continue through the child's high school years.

The Monroe Carell Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt offers the Books from Birth of Middle Tennessee program, which provides free books to children every month until their fifth birthday.

To qualify for the program, a child must have been born after May 2000 and be a resident of Davidson County. Families may register online at [www.vanderbiltchildrens.com/booksfrombirth](http://www.vanderbiltchildrens.com/booksfrombirth). Program brochures are also available at local libraries, pediatricians' offices or can be picked up at the Books from Birth of Middle Tennessee office located in the Family Resource Center at the Children's Hospital.

For more information about Healthy Kids 2025, visit [www.vanderbiltchildrens.com/healthykids2025home](http://www.vanderbiltchildrens.com/healthykids2025home) or call Mary Kate Mouser at 936-5317. Also, fill out a children's health survey and earn Go for the Gold credit at [www.vanderbilt.edu/goforthegold](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/goforthegold)



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