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## [Nader Urges Students to Action, Activism](#)



Ralph Nader asked students to quell their complacency and become civic activists during a Dec. 8 campus appearance. (Photo: Sally McCay)

Ralph Nader has not mellowed. And, after finishing an impassioned 70-minute broadside arguing for civic education and action to counter the creeping influence of corporate power, he told a questioner at his Dec. 9 campus appearance that he has not given up the idea of running for President, either.

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Dr. Barbara Frankowski, associate professor of pediatrics, has taught thousands of students about sex in her role as a pediatrician and as the Dr. Ruth of the Burlington School District.

### [Master's of the](#)

[Airwaves](#) Leo Schiff is finishing up a final project for his master's degree in social work this week, and will present it on-campus on Dec. 11. Pretty standard stuff, except for this: The event will be Schiff's first degree-related appearance on the main UVM campus.

### [School of \(Indie\)](#)

[Rock](#) Bekah Zietz, the upbeat senior theatre major who serves as the music director for the on-campus WRUV radio station, shrinks in her seat when asked about the list of her favorite music of 2003 she recently published in the *Cynic*.

## THE WEEK IN VIEW

*Dec. 10, 1:30 p.m.*  
Lecture: Finding the Best Consumer Health Information on the Internet," with a hand-on computer training session. Fletcher Free Library. Information: 656-3483.

*Dec. 10, 2 p.m.*  
Trustees: Executive Committee Conference Call, Waterman, Room 352. Information: [trustees](#)

*Dec. 11, 4 p.m.*  
Lecture: The making of "The Vermont Encyclopedia" with Emeritus Professors Ralph Orth and Sam Hand. Bailey/Howe Library, Special Collections Reading Room. Information: 656-2138.

*Dec. 12, 8:30 p.m.*  
Concert: The Top Cats Winter Show. Ira Allen Chapel. Information: 578-6452.

*Dec. 13, 6 p.m.*  
Event: "DREAM Talent Show" featuring talents of kids, parents, and mentors. Memorial Lounge, Waterman.

*Dec. 14, 3 p.m.*  
Athletics: Men's basketball takes on non-league foe Harvard. Free tickets for students. Patrick Gym. Information: 656-4410.

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They came to build it: Thirty-seven teams from 19 high schools vied for \$16,000 in prizes at the Dec. 6 Design TASC Competition. (Photo courtesy of the College of Engineering and Mathematics.)

### 2003 Design TASC Contest Celebrates Teen Ingenuity

Competitors at the annual Design Technology and Science Competition sponsored by the College of Engineering and Mathematics had to figure out how to transport 120 batteries using energy efficient power supplies (a bike pump, flashlight and electric motor.) At stake at the Dec. 6 event were \$16,000 in prizes from sponsors.

Thirty-seven teams from 19 high schools participated; the winners were as follows:

- IBM Grand Prize for Performance and Design: first place, Hanover High School, for its "Roots" project.
- Pizzagalli for Performance: first place, Randolph, "Train Wrecks"; second place, Hanover, "Batteries Not Included"; third place, Sharon, "The Monkey, Not the Engineer"; Honorable Mention, Milton, "The Phyettes and Dudes."
- IDX for Design Portfolio, first place, Hanover, "Wired"; second place, Milton, "The Phyettes and Dudes (squared)"; third place, BFA Fairfax, "Freeze"; honorable mention, Essex, "Screw Loose."
- Husky, Green Award: first place, Enosburg Falls, "Hornet 1"; second place, Missisquoi, "I'm Out of Ideas"; third place, Sharon, "The Monkey, Not the Engineer"; honorable mention, Hanover, "Roots."
- Wal-Mart/UVM, Cost-Effective Award, Enosburg Falls, "Hornet 1."
- TIAA-CREF Creative Award: Randolph, "Train Wrecks."

### Political Expert Shares Views With Students, Predicts a Bush-Dean Showdown

The idea that an emerging mass of nonpartisan voters with a disdain for being pigeonholed as liberals or conservatives will decide the next presidential election is dead, says political guru William Kristol. He believes that America has never been more divided along political, social and cultural lines than it is entering the 2004 election.

Kristol, editor and publisher of *The Weekly Standard*, a conservative political magazine, told an audience packed into Ira Allen Chapel on Dec. 4 that a George Bush-Howard Dean showdown in what he believes is the most important election of 80 years is imminent.

"This is a very big election," Kristol said. "A lot is at stake. The gap between the parties is bigger than ever. There's a huge sociological and cultural divide in America right now.

"A Republican president and a Republican Congress are very rare. A Bush win becomes a fundamental referendum on the direction of the country. The outcome, either way, will have dramatic consequences."

Introduced by Professor Robert Kaufman as "one of America's most important intellectuals," and as editor of the "most influential conservative journal in the nation," Kristol spoke for about an hour, then fielded questions from students for another 40 minutes. The College Republicans sponsored the event.

The former chief of staff for Vice President Dan Quayle focused heavily on the significance of Sept. 11 and how it spawned a new era in American politics. With terrorism still weighing heavily on the minds of Americans, the next election would be decided based on foreign policy and leadership ability, he said.

One student asked whether Kristol felt responsible for helping steer America into the war in Iraq by supporting the effort through his influential publication. Kristol said he didn't think the Bush administration based its decision on the opinion of his magazine, and that in his view, the people of Iraq are better off since the U.S. removed Saddam Hussein from power.

Kristol was critical of Bush's post-war planning and other aspects of the overall recovery effort, but said that he was a proponent of the war before it started, remains one today, and is confident that the U.S. will prevail.

More pictures of the event are available at:  
<http://www.emba.uvm.edu/TASC/2003/index.htm>

### **UVM and Partners to Launch \$3 Million Statewide Technology Project**

The College of Education and Social Services will team up with Champlain College and the three state colleges to train future teachers to make the most of the computers in their classrooms and to create their own state-of-the-art "electronic portfolios" in a new \$3 million program. Over the next three years, the university will study those first users of the e-tools to see how well they use technology when they become teachers.

UVM's proposal, the "Electronic Portfolio Connection," will establish a consortia of Vermont teacher preparation programs at UVM; Castleton, Johnson and Lyndon State Colleges; Champlain College; as well as the Vermont Department of Education; Vermont Institutes; IBM; and Apple Computer. UVM was one of only 25 institutions nationwide to receive U.S. Department of Education funding from the 2003 competition of "Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology," known as PT3. The \$1.45 million grant will be matched with local funds to bring the total to \$3 million over three years.

IBM worked with UVM, the Vermont Department of Education and eight other education sites nationwide for a year and a half to learn teachers' needs before it developed "Teacher's Workplace," an electronic portfolio. "Teacher's Workplace" can be a learning tool so students learning to become teachers can store, retrieve and share their lesson plans, projects, movie clips of their teaching, and Website links; it also permits feedback from mentors and peers and electronic group discussions. The portfolio can also act as an easily updatable job-seeking tool that graphically highlights accomplishments, teaching philosophy and experience. And it can become a measurement tool for formal teacher evaluation by administrators — one that can be accessed at any time by multiple users.

Many educators believe that the electronic portfolio will eventually replace the old three-ring binder as the standard reporting tool for teacher career accomplishment, according to UVM's Joyce Morris, research assistant professor of education and the project's principal investigator.

"More importantly, we think that the electronic portfolio will give a more thorough picture of students' progress and a richer learning experience. And we're hoping that our students will use its techniques — technology, constant feedback and group discussion — with their own students," said Morris. "This project has implications for real change in Vermont in the way technology is used in the classroom. Nearly 700 Vermont college students will receive top-notch technology training and then bring that technology to their own classrooms when they become teachers. Think of the number of children they will reach."

Kristol, a John McCain supporter in 2000, predicted a Bush victory next year, but said: "If the Iraq situation goes south, it's wide open." He said Richard Gephardt is the only one who can defeat Dean, whom he grew up near in New York.

"I give Dean and [campaign manager] Joe Trippi credit," he said. "They saw that it was a whole new world after Sept. 11. I predicted six months ago that Dean would be the nominee before he was even on the radar. Dean is smart, shrewd, and tough and he's built an impressive machine — a steamroller. He's a little reckless and lacks packaging, but Democrats like his passion and the way he says things off the cuff. But some of his comments have hurt him and these kind of statements can add up."

Kristol said he favors Bush over Dean, possibly in a landslide, if the situation in Iraq is decent and the economy continues to improve. If Dean wins the Democratic nomination, he envisions the former Vermont governor choosing John Edwards or Wesley Clark as a running mate to help him in the South.

"Vermont is not really typical of the rest of the country," Kristol said. "Dean will have to convince people that governing Vermont is like, or can translate, into leading the nation."

Kristol, a regular on the political talk show circuit, shared amusing stories from his days as the lone conservative on the faculty at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. "They like to have a token conservative so people know what one looks like, or in case they need a job," he joked.

Kristol talked briefly following his speech about the importance of college students hearing a variety of opinions, both liberal and conservative, jokingly calling himself UVM's "Mr. Diversity" for the night.

"I like speaking to students because they are still open minded," he said. "You hope you can get them to think about things and to see all views."

### **Mieder Offers Proverbial Pickup**

Wolfgang Mieder, professor and chair of the German and Russian, has published a reprint of *A Collection of the Proverbs of All Nations* that first appeared in 1859 by Walter K. Kelly of Ireland.

The book presents a readable, informative, and entertaining treasure trove of proverbs from around the world — and Mieder is giving away 25 copies to all comers. The book's 44 small chapters include a wealth of English and foreign proverbs with translations as well as interesting annotations and explanations aimed at general readers.

This being the holiday season, Mieder is making copies of the book available as presents to anybody interested in the colorful and pithy wisdom of people from many lands. The books

UVM researchers will gather data on those 700 students' performance over the next three years to determine whether there is a tie between a teacher's agility in creating and maintaining an e-portfolio and his or her skill in using similar technology and strategies in classroom teaching. UVM previously received a PT3 grant to help its own faculty use technology in its teaching and will use the new PT3 grant to help other schools use the new tools.

"Electronic portfolios have generated a great deal of excitement and endorsement in education, however, there is little research regarding its influence on teacher practice," noted Morris. "This project will study that and the effectiveness of e-portfolios to improve teacher quality."

### **Environmental Council Seeks Campus Greening Grant Proposals**

The UVM Environmental Council has launched a small grants program to support campus projects that reduce the university's environmental footprint.

The program will favor proposed projects that work towards the goal of "[greening](#)" UVM and help fulfill the Environmental Council's mission. (See <http://www.nwf.org/campusEcology/dspGreening.cfm> for information about the kinds of work the Environmental Council is interested in supporting). Preference will be given to projects that involve partnerships between students, staff, and faculty in non-traditional ways. Grants range in size from about \$500 to \$2,000.

The competitive review process for faculty, staff and student proposals will occur twice annually with the next deadline scheduled for Feb. 1, 2004. Applicants can expect to hear about the status of their proposal approximately two weeks after the proposal deadline, and funding will be available immediately after a positive decision.

For more information about the program and the proposal process, go to: [Environmental Council Grants](#) or contact [Laurie.Kutner@uvm.edu](mailto:Laurie.Kutner@uvm.edu).

can be picked up at his office at 422 Waterman — "first come, first served", as the proverb states.

### **Vermont EPSCoR Awards Small-Business Grants**

The Vermont Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, a National Science Foundation program housed at UVM, has announced grant recipients for its 2003 Small Business Innovation Research program.

The program awarded grants of up to \$10,000 to 16 Vermont businesses this year. A list of grant recipients by name, business and project follows:

- Arms, Steven, MicroStrain, Inc., Energy Harvesting, Wireless Torque & RPM Sensor for Rotating Shafts
- Conklin, Susanne, Conklin Engineering Services, Quantifying Surface Wetness on Concord Grape in Support of Disease Prediction
- Hillinger, Michael, LexIcon Systems, Web-based, Mediated Reading for Early Literacy.
- Hosking, Terry, SBE, Inc., Improving Pulse Capacitors for Demanding Applications
- Keyes, Lawrence, Microdesign Consulting Inc., Integrated Teleconferencing Unit For Distributed Small Group Interaction
- Kogut, Robert, Diffraction Ltd., Flexible Fluid Interconnect for 3D Microfluidic System
- Landry, Christopher, Apollo SRI, Development of APMS as a Substrate for High Performance Liquid Chromatography
- Lansky, David, Lansky Consulting, Statistical software for analysis of cell culture bioassay data using mixed models.
- Martin, Frederic, Martin Consulting, Inc., A Plug-and-Play Network for Micro-Miniature Multiprocessor Applications
- Padgett, Jeffrey, Engineered Solutions, Inc., Stormwater Management Decision Making
- Peery, Tim, Contechs Engineering Design, Inc., Isothermal Rotary Expander for Zero-Emission Cryogen Engine
- Plumpton, James, Burlington Advanced Technology, Novel Technique for Thermal Energy Conversion
- Raab, Frederick, Green Mountain Radio Research Company, Current-switching class-D power amplifier
- Terie, Ellen, Ms., Butternut Ventures, Feasibility of Producing a Soil Erosion Blanket From Raw Wool
- Tolmie, Bernard, Tolmie, Inc., Miniature Digital High-Speed Electro-Optical Connector Hybrid
- Xue, Shuwan, Integrated Biomedical Systems, Integrated kinematical sensor system for human balance assessment

For more information, including details about the 2004 competition, visit the EPSCoR Web site [here](#) or contact Chris Allen, project director, at 656-0193 or [Christopher.Allen@uvm.edu](mailto:Christopher.Allen@uvm.edu).

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### More on an Encyclopedia's Making

Two former UVM faculty and their Johnson State Colleague colleague will discuss the making of *The Vermont Encyclopedia*, published earlier this year by the New England Press on Dec. 11 at 4 p. m. in Bailey/Howe's Special Collections Reading Room.

John Duffy, Samuel Hand and Ralph Orth will talk about how the project came about and why they felt the encyclopedia was necessary. For more about their work, see [New Encyclopedia's an Affair of State](#).

Information, RSVP: 656-2138

### Top Cats to Offer Winter Show

The Top Cats, an a capella singing group of undergraduate males, will give their annual "winter show" at 8:30 p.m. on Dec. 12 in Ira Allen Chapel.

Information: 578-6452

### Winter Recess Basketball Roundup

Classes aren't in session until Jan. 20, but the courts are, with the men's and women's teams playing plenty of important home and road games.

Home games for Coppenrath and company include St. Michael's on Dec. 11, Harvard on Dec. 14, Northeastern on Jan. 7 and Stony Brook on Jan. 14.

The women's team games at Patrick are Central Connecticut on Dec. 20, Maine on Jan. 10, Stony Brook on Jan. 13 and Harvard on Jan. 14.

Information: [www.uvmathletics.com](http://www.uvmathletics.com)

theview

University Communications  
86 South Williams Street  
Burlington, Vermont  
05401-3404

pho 802.656.2005  
fax 802.656.3203

[theview@uvm.edu](mailto:theview@uvm.edu)

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## NOTABLES

December 10, 2003

## Awards and Honors

**Joseph Fischer**, an assistant director of athletics at the University of Vermont, has been named chair of the NCAA Ski Committee. Fischer will also be Director of the 2005 NCAA Championships, which will be hosted by the University of Vermont and held in Stowe from March 9-12, 2005.

## Publications and Presentations

**Saleem Ali**, assistant professor in the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, published an article titled "Environmental Planning and Cooperative Behavior" in the December issue of the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*.

**Antonello Borra**, assistant professor of romance languages, gave a paper, "Films as Linguistic and Cultural Tools in Foreign Language Learning," on Nov. 22 at the annual meeting of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in Philadelphia.

**Dennis Clougherty**, assistant professor of physics, published a paper in the *Physical Review Letters* exploring the quantum mechanics of a cold atom sticking to a surface.

**Bryan Dague**, **Jill Allen** and **William Freeman** of the Center on Disability and Community Inclusion recently presented at the 2003 Vermont Partners in Care Conference. Dague and Allen presented, "The A, B, C's of Transition from School to Adult Life." Freeman presented "Movement, the Language of Children."

**Michael Giangreco**, research professor at the Center on Disability and Community Inclusion, has published the article "Scientifically Based Research and Qualitative Inquiry" in the Fall 2003 issue of *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*. His co-author was Steven Taylor.

**Clare Ginger**, associate professor in the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, presented "Watershed Planning in Vermont: Dynamics of Community, Place and Power" at the 25th annual research conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Nov. 6-8 in Washington, D.C. Graduate student **Heather Hibbard Furman**, who is studying natural resource planning, is a co-author.

**Barbara McIntosh**, associate professor of business administration, recently presented two papers at the Gerontological Society of America meetings in San Diego. "Job Characteristics as Predictors of Career Engagement in Older Nurses" was co-authored with **Kyndaron Reinier**, a post-doc in medical biostatistics; and **Betty Rambur**, dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences; and **Mary Val Palumbo**, research associate in nursing. The second paper, "Perceived Age Discrimination in the Workplace," was co-authored with **Nicholas Danigelis**, professor of sociology.

**Denise Youngblood**, professor of history and vice provost for faculty and academic affairs, contributed an article titled "Soviet Cinema: The Old and the New," in the new Oxford University Press book *European Cinema*.

## Appointments

**Kathryn Friedman**, an experienced administrator who has devoted her professional career to the advancement of diversity and affirmative action

issues, was named the new executive director of affirmative action and equal opportunity.

*December 4, 2003*

### **Awards and Honors**

**Mark Bouton**, professor of psychology, has been named 75th president of the Eastern Psychological Association for 2004/05. He served as President Elect last year. The EPA is the oldest and largest regional divisions of the American Psychological Association, with more than 3000 members. Bouton conducts research on the mechanisms of learning, memory and emotion represented in classical conditioning/associative learning.

**Branimir von Turkovich**, professor emeritus in the University of Vermont mechanical engineering department, was awarded the M. Eugene Merchant Manufacturing Medal at the annual American Society of Mechanical Engineers at its International Congress Nov. 15 in Washington D.C. Presenters cited von Turkovich "for his significant influence on the advancement of the art and practice of machining in industry."

### **Publications and Presentations**

**Jeanine Carr**, associate professor of nursing, recently published two papers: "Poetic Expressions of Vigilance," in *Qualitative Health Research*, and "The Experience of Parents Staying at the Bedside of Hospitalized Children," in the *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*.

**Kevin Foley**, assistant professor of biomedical technologies, published a paper, "Novel Aminopropiophenones as Potential Antidepressants," in the December issue of the journal *Drug Development*.

*Nov. 19, 2003*

### **Awards and Honors**

Dr. **Robert Karp**, assistant professor of medicine, was appointed to a national consensus panel to develop a Clinical Practice Guideline for the American Medical Directors Association titled "Stroke — treatment and prevention in nursing and rehabilitation facilities."

The U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration recently awarded the **Division of General Internal Medicine** a three-year \$565,977 grant to develop a clinical research training curriculum that will be delivered long-distance and provide training and mentoring to learners from around the country. Key members of the project include Dr. **Benjamin Littenberg**, Carleen and Henry Tufo Professor of Medicine; Dr. **Alan Rubin**, research associate professor of medicine; Dr. **Richard Pinckney**, assistant professor of medicine; **Dana Walrath**, assistant professor of medicine; **Paul Turner**, assistant professor of medicine; and Dr. **Charles MacLean**, associate professor of medicine.

Dr. **Alan Rubin** was recently promoted to research associate professor of medicine. In September, he presented a talk titled "A Curriculum on Medical Errors" at a conference sponsored by the American Academy of Family Practice and the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Rubin recently received a grant from the Vermont Department of Health to fund a study he is leading, "Training Health Professionals in Tobacco Cessation."

### **Publications and Presentations**

**John Gennari**, assistant professor of English and Interim Director of the ALANA U.S. Ethnic Studies Program, has two essays out this fall: "Baraka's Bohemian Blues," in *African American Review* and "Giancarlo Giuseppe Alesandro Esposito," in the book *Are Italians White?: How Race is Made in America*.

**Peter Nobes**, primary care clinician at UVM's Center for Health and Wellbeing, was a recent presenter at the Combined Annual Meeting of the New England and New York State College Health Association in Saratoga Springs.

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## Nader Urges Students to Action, Activism

By Kevin Foley



Ralph Nader asked students to quell their complacency and become civic activists during a Dec. 8 campus appearance. (Photo: Sally McCay)

Ralph Nader has not mellowed. And, after finishing an impassioned 70-minute broadside arguing for civic education and action to counter the creeping influence of corporate power, he told a questioner at his Dec. 9 campus appearance that he has not given up the idea of running for President, either. (More on that later.)

The legendary activist, who helped found an influential network of public interest research

groups often tied to university campuses, and who spurred sweeping federal reforms supporting safer highways and drinking water, took the Ira Allen lectern in his trademark rumpled dark suit and urged students "to grow up civic," and challenge a political discourse designed by profit-seeking multinationals with no allegiance to any community or nation state.

Citing two world-changing movements with heavy student participation — the Civil Rights movement and the 1970's environmental uprising that created Earth Day — Nader challenged the 900-plus in attendance to follow their example and launch real reforms. "Students took enough time off from their routine academic life to put meaning in their routine academic life. They put knowledge into action," Nader said.

Nader was invited to campus by Jon Erickson, associate professor of ecological economics, who initially planned a small forum on student activism with plenty of give and take between students and the founder of Public Citizen. As word percolated across campus e-mail lists, and interest in the event swelled, Nader's talk was moved to the larger hall, which it filled with virtually no pre-event publicity.

Although most of Nader's remarks consisted of a sweeping argument for his view that students must shake off apathy and fight for progress on environmental, economic and regulatory issues, he did offer specific praise for the Vermont Public Interest Research Group, which was founded at UVM in 1972 and funded by voluntary student fees. After students eventually decided to reject that mechanism, the group moved to Montpelier and supports itself through door-to-door canvassing. Nader urged students to bring VPIRG back to campus, saying that the experience of researching and advocating for legislative issues was a crucial part of a liberal arts education.

"(Change) can start with a thesis, or a lab project, or the work I saw in another building here with student projects on wind power, sprawl and depleted uranium," Nader said, describing how his class work as a law student eventually led to sweeping safety changes in cars, including mandatory seat belts and other safety features. "Liberal education is not just about developing critical faculties; it's about developing a purpose."

### Justice and joy

Nader would like to see students apply this purpose to a variety of issues. In his talk, he decried corporate crime, environmental pollution, genetically

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### [Sex Ed Educator](#)

Dr. Barbara Frankowski, associate professor of pediatrics, has taught thousands of students about sex in her role as a pediatrician and as the Dr. Ruth of the Burlington School District.

### [Master's of the Airwaves](#)

Leo Schiff is finishing up a final project for his master's degree in social work this week, and will present it on-campus on Dec. 11. Pretty standard stuff, except for this: The event will be Schiff's first degree-related appearance on the main UVM campus.

### [School of \(Indie\) Rock](#)

Bekah Zietz, the upbeat senior theatre major who serves as the music director for the on-campus WRUV radio station, shrinks in her seat when asked about the list of her favorite music of 2003 she recently published in the *Cynic*.



modified organisms, excessive money in politics, a winner-take-all electoral system, standardized tests, attempts to reduce access to the courts, fine-print contracts with binding arbitration, public “giveaways” of the electromagnetic spectrum and of research funds that test and develop expensive pharmaceuticals.

This was not a cheerful litany. In a fairly typical line, Nader told students that, “There’s always a fight on the environment. If you let up... the polluters start spreading their silent form of violence on people, flora and fauna.”

But even as he tried to spur outrage and fight apathy with highly charged language — “[Complacency] produced the corporate crime wave of the last three years,” went one fairly typical Nader argument, “these people looted trillions of dollars, and only one CEO has gone to prison so far” — he also sought to cultivate hope, reminding students that they are among the freest, healthiest and wealthiest people of their age on the planet.

Nader said he believes in the power of individuals to make changes and pursue equity within the civic sphere. Purpose, he said, offers a pleasure far superior to that of empty hedonism and low-grade sensuality.

“Engaging in pursuit of justice is very much what is meant by the pursuit of happiness,” said Nader, describing the enjoyment and meaning he takes from his work.

When Nader finished his formal remarks, the audience stood and cheered long and loud until he opened the floor to questions. Instantly, the stentorian voice of Richard Kemp, member of the Burlington City council, boomed the inevitable question: “Are you running for president?”

Nader said he would make a decision in early 2004, and added that his speech was not a political one.

theview

University Communications  
86 South Williams Street  
Burlington, Vermont  
05401-3404

pho 802.656.2005  
fax 802.656.3203

[theview@uvm.edu](mailto:theview@uvm.edu)

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## Burlington's Sex Ed Educator

By Jon Reidel



Armed with knowledge, frankness and props like this chart of the stages of pregnancy, Dr. Barbara Frankowski has helped teach Burlington kids the facts of life for 20 years. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

magazine section whispering and looking in her direction. One of them walks towards her and, just prior to reaching her, blurts out, "Hey, you're the lady that taught us about penises!"

Encounters like these aren't surprising given Frankowski's decade-plus of teaching sex education in Burlington. Most of the kids in the district see her once a year between fourth and ninth grade with some seeing her from birth to adulthood as one of her patients at Fletcher Allen Health Care. For many students, listening to Frankowski is a definitive life experience. It may have been the first time they learned how a baby is created or about the potential pitfalls of having intercourse.

### Let's talk about sex

It's a typical weekday at Edmunds Elementary School and Frankowski is about to talk to a class of sixth-grade boys. "Remember me from last year when we talked about puberty?" she starts. "We talked about pimples, getting harrier, more muscles, voices changing and things like that."

"Oh, God," says one kid as he buries his head in his hands. "That's nasty," says another.

"Well, a lot of those changes have probably already started happening to you," Frankowski says. "You look a lot different. But today I want to talk about emotional changes instead of physical ones."

She continues by talking about the "three r's" of relationships – respect, responsibility and risks. When the risks of being in a relationship comes up, students seem aware of some advanced topics such as AIDS and other STDs, yet naive in other areas.

"If a girl kisses a boy does she have a baby?" asks one student with most students shaking no. Another student says, "I saw a man and a man kissing and they had a baby in a stroller. I don't get that. How can two men have a baby?"

Frankowski, who answers all questions in a serious manner despite having a strong sense of humor about her work away from the classroom, says the level of queries varies greatly, especially in seventh and eighth grade, where

Dr. Barbara Frankowski, associate professor of pediatrics, has some errands to run. But the simple task of going downtown to purchase a few items isn't as easy as it once was for the pediatrician of 18 years and longtime sex education teacher for the Burlington School District.

As she walks into a local bookstore, Frankowski feels eyes upon her as she frequently does when she's in public. She notices a group of teenage boys near the

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### Ralph Nader Speaks

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students can be emotionally and physically worlds apart.

"I remember a class where one student was so small that his feet didn't even touch the ground," Frankowski says. "We were talking about condoms and he was probably just figuring out what one was when a big kid in the back says in a deep voice, 'Hey, which are better, Trojans or Lifestyles?'"

Frankowski says she sometimes gets asked personal questions about her own sex life, which she tells students is off-limits, just as she'll keep anything they may want to talk about – sexual or not – confidential.

"The only rules I have are that we don't use certain slang words and no personal questions," says Frankowski, who amusingly recalls one student asking her "how many times a week do you do it?" "I tell them that if you can't say it in front of your mother, then don't use it."

In the younger grades, the mere mention of the word penis can send young boys to the floor in fits of laughter. "Some of them are literally rolling on the floor. By the third time, though, some of them start to realize it's a more serious subject, and they say 'hey guys, it's not that funny.'"

### **New concerns**

Many of the serious questions raised by students have changed over the years. The AIDS epidemic of the 1980s spurred a lot of discussion about the unknown disease, which Frankowski says was made very real for students when basketball star Magic Johnson announced that he had contracted HIV.

More recently, the debate in Vermont over civil unions generated a slew of questions about same-sex relationships. Frankowski remembers parents wanting to know exactly what she was going to talk about regarding same-sex relationships.

"It was a difficult time," she says. "Some students would say things like 'my mother says they [same-sex couples] should all be locked up or hung.' But a lot of students knew people that were in same-sex relationships and thought it was OK and would tell other students that."

One fifth-grade girl wrote a question in the form of a statement that read: "if a person gets raped, it's not their fault." Frankowski explained that the statement was true and that "no means no" and that a person has the right to change their mind right up to the last second.

A boy raised his hand during the discussion and said that his dad said "it's the girl's fault because they let them do it, and that they could have fought their way out of it." Frankowski calmly repeated what she said earlier, but this time with a little more emphasis.

"Questions like that are tricky because you don't want to dis their parent," Frankowski says. "You try to give them all the information and lead them in the right direction."

### **The power of parents**

Last year when the school district had to cut her position due to budget restraints, there was an outcry by teachers and nurses who would have had to teach the class in her place. "Anytime they might have to say 'penis' three times in a row they call me in," she says.

One alternative that was discussed was to eliminate sex education classes altogether, which the parents who choose to opt their kids out of the classes probably wouldn't mind.

"If they think their kid is oblivious to it all, guess again," she says, pointing out the possible downside of such a view. "The theory that if you tell kids about sex, they'll be more likely to have it has been proven wrong. If a parent chooses not to have their child sit in the class because they want to talk to them about sex themselves, that's great. I want that kind of interaction at home."

Frankowski says most students today are choosing not to have sex until after high school. Less than half of all high students in America and in Burlington

are having sex for the first time in decades, despite what some students think based on what they see on television, she says.

Much of what Frankowski teaches students may have something to do with this trend, although she says the most important tool in preventing teenage pregnancy, which is also on the decline, is for parents to keep an open dialogue with their children.

“My goal is to make [sex education] not a dirty little secret, but a normal, healthy part of life,” she says. “I have parents come up to me and tell me things like ‘little Johnny was asking dad about wet dreams at the dinner table last night.’ I think it’s good that a child is comfortable talking about things like that with his parents.”

theview

University Communications  
86 South Williams Street  
Burlington, Vermont  
05401-3404

pho 802.656.2005  
fax 802.656.3203

[theview@uvm.edu](mailto:theview@uvm.edu)

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## Master's of the Airwaves

By Kevin Foley

Leo Schiff is finishing up a final project for his master's degree in social work this week, and will present it on-campus on Dec. 11. Pretty standard stuff, except for this: The event will be Schiff's first degree-related appearance on the main UVM campus. Schiff and his 10 colleagues are the first students here to ever complete coursework for a degree exclusively through distance learning.

Over the course of ten semesters and three and a half years, his class, with members scattered from Lyndon to Brattleboro, completed the exact same course requirements, and will earn the same degree, as their on-campus counterparts. They took their classes, which were led by full-time social work faculty, through interactive television, and did research over the Web and by requesting journal articles from accommodating Bailey/Howe librarians.

"It was great," says Schiff, a resident of Brattleboro. "It was a unique opportunity to get the kind of education I wanted and stay in my community."

That is exactly what planners in the Department of Social Work and Continuing Education intended when they developed the program, says Lisa Lax, who coordinated the effort.

"In rural parts of Vermont there is a real need for master's level social workers, and it makes sense to facilitate that training for people living in communities who have a commitment to those communities," Lax says.

For a social worker, a master's degree is a crucial professional tool, enhancing the depth and quality of their work, expanding job opportunities, and allowing the opening of a clinical practice that can accept payments from Medicare. Schiff, who works for the state as a vocational rehabilitation counselor, says his pursuit of the degree has already had a positive effect on how he helps his clients.

### A deep commitment

Making the distance degree happen required an unusual degree of commitment from the department, Continuing Education and the students themselves. The students took on the challenge eagerly: The 11 students completing their studies this week, Lax says, are essentially the same students who started it. Lax and Gale Burford, professor and chair of social work, also praised the department's faculty for wrestling with the technology and making the drive down to Randolph to teach occasional in-person classes.

"It was a major commitment on the part of the faculty to take this on," Burford says.

While Burford believes there is a "real need" to take the program to more rural areas of the state, he doubts the interactive television approach is the best way to do that. After the department evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of its first distance degree program, it will begin exploring ways to find funding to eventually offer a statewide masters again. If this effort is successful, Burford says the department might consider other, less tech-heavy approaches, including having faculty travel for more in-person courses.

And while Burford acknowledges that the program's courses often began with repeated recitations of "Hello, Brattleboro? Hello, Lyndon?", the technology worked smoothly compared to other distance learning projects he has participated in at other institutions. "I actually don't know if people here knew how good of a first-time delivery we had," Burford says.

While interest in the first social-work distance degree program was relatively

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### [Ralph Nader Speaks](#)

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high, the enrollment was relatively low, in part because of prospective students' concerns about the quality of instruction. Now that he's almost finished the program, Schiff says he can offer a whole-hearted endorsement of the approach. While he missed the bonding and out-of-class interaction of a traditional campus program, he said that lively e-mail and phone conversations compensated for much of that absence, particularly among the group of students who attended class in the Brattleboro studio. Schiff says he appreciates the program, and hopes that it resumes.

"We need to find a way to continue this option. It's very important for people who are already working and advancing in human services the opportunity to become master's level social workers," he says. "The demand exists, the technology exists, and the economics are favorable to continue to offer this, perhaps in a modified form."

In the meantime, though, the group will present their papers and enjoy their Dec. 11 "celebratory lunch," savoring their new degrees and the sense of being the first to achieve something important.

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University Communications  
86 South Williams Street  
Burlington, Vermont  
05401-3404

pho 802.656.2005  
fax 802.656.3203

[theview@uvm.edu](mailto:theview@uvm.edu)

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## School of (Indie) Rock

### College radio is passion that will hopefully lead to a profession for WRUV music director Bekah Zietz

By Kevin Foley



Hard rock: Bekah Zietz, music director of WRUV, says she practically lives at the station. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Bekah Zietz, the upbeat senior theatre major who serves as the music director for the on-campus WRUV radio station, shrinks in her seat when asked about the list of her favorite music of 2003 she recently published in the *Cynic*.

"God, the list. I have taken so much crap over that top-ten list. I struggled with it for three weeks, and now my friends are ridiculing me," she says. "They

see Death Cab for Cutie and Rainer Maria and Radiohead and they think it's just *obvious*."

Obviousness is just about the worst thing there is in college radio, which prides itself as being a full-throated forum for anarchy, irony and musical inspiration. WRUV's musical mission is to play songs that can't get airtime anywhere else. The station's only firm guidelines for DJs are to avoid profanity (an FCC regulation) and shun any record ever regularly played on commercial radio.

Beyond that, the bias is toward new, newer, and newest – and for Zietz that means a constant scramble to stay informed. She "practically lives at the radio station," vetting as many as 80 albums a week to build WRUV's music library and tell her DJ colleagues what great new music there is out there to play. This requires stamina — and a quick hand with the reference books.

"I'm listening for something that isn't just your run-of-the mill indie stuff. If something hits me, I write it up, put some stars on it, describe it with gusto and tell the other DJ's to play it," she says. "But the bitter truth is, that the majority of stuff being sent out, the self-burned stuff, is horrible. I know what it takes to be in a band, and I really respect it, so I try to give this music a chance. But some of these bands are not easy to listen to. So I'm using the dictionary to find clever ways of saying that a CD is a piece of poo."

#### Life after radio

That's only one aspect of the job, if a challenging one. In her three years at the station, Zietz has lugged Nalgene bottles of coffee to Monday morning classes after spending Sunday night on air; taken on three or four jobs to help make a concert with Death Cab for Cutie happen ("It was Super Bekah that night," says Paul Searls, visiting assistant professor of history and a WRUV DJ and advisor. "She was doing ticketing, catering, set-up, and she did everything with a smile and flair"); and interviewed prominent musicians like Les Claypool and John Mayer.

She's parlayed that experience into gigs writing for an on-line music magazine — though not, as yet, for pay, something Zietz hopes to rectify over winter break — and an internship with a record label. When she graduates in May, Zietz hopes to take her experience and move to Seattle, where she'll pursue a

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career in music, ideally as a journalist. As she chases her goals, she's experiencing the sometimes dislocating feeling of moving from fan to professional. As an example, she describes an improvisational interview with an emerging band she admires.

"It was strange for them to be here," she says of a band called My Morning Jacket that she interviewed in Burlington just a few weeks before they were featured in *Rolling Stone*, *Spin* and the British rock magazines. "I borrowed my roommate's car and drove them to the Vermont Sandwich Company. I try to find the human quality in these bands when I'm writing about them or describing their music; it's finding something that people can relate to and then making that feel original."

Zietz comes at music from the perspective of a passionate fan. Her new iPod, the largest available, already carries 3,000 songs. She knew she wanted to get into college radio when she was in high school, influenced by the Nirvana CDs and radio stories of a friend's older sister. She listens to everything (except slick commercial country music) — her all time top ten, as distinct from her controversial 2003 version, would probably feature the Beach Boys and Frank Sinatra.

"There are so many bands that I'm in love with...", she says, trailing off.

As she works to turn that passion into a paying job after graduation, she's grateful for her experience at WRUV, which she calls a "saving grace" during rough parts of college, and the friends across the country she's made through being active in the station.

"I've met some of my best friends from doing this," she says. "I've stayed at their homes, worked and traveled with them. Regardless of whether I stay in the business, I will stay friends with some of these people no matter what."

Even if they ridicule the "obviousness" of including The Shins on a year-end top 10 list.

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## Bekah Zietz's 2003 Top 10

Obvious or inspired, assess for yourself:

- 1) Death Cab For Cutie, "Transatlanticism"
- 2) The Postal Service, "Give Up"
- 3) Rainer Maria, "Long Knives Drawn"
- 4) Radiohead, "Hail to The Thief"
- 5) Belle & Sebastian, "Dear Catastrophe Waitress"
- 6) Broken Social Scene, "You Forgot It In People"
- 7) Ted Leo, "Tell Balgeary, Balgury is Dead"
- 8) The Shins, "Chutes Too Narrow"
- 9) Steven Malkmus, "Pig Lip"
- 10) Cat Power, "You are Free"

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