

Stell examines sex discrimination and the law of self-defense

Professor of philosophy Lance Stell opened Women's History Month at Davidson by speaking on the topic of "Sex Discrimination and the Law of Self-Defense" at the Open Luncheon on March 1.

Stell first became interested in the topic when he read an article from a journal called Women's Rights to Legal Reforms. The article explored the question of whether or not our laws contained biases which make the plea of self-defense more difficult for women to assert. Although the notion of there being discrimination in the rules of self-defense seemed "bizarre and amazing" to Stell at first, he soon found cases that made the problem more believable.

A case involving a woman killing her sleeping husband may seem like an isolated and "bizarre" event in itself, but Stell says that women that have been repeatedly battered by their husbands sometimes kill, and when they do, it is "typically" when their husbands are asleep. In these cases women have traditionally sought the plea of temporary insanity or diminished capacity. In the past, judges would not even consider hearing a case where a woman killed her sleeping spouse as a self-defense case.

Today, some judges will instruct juries to consider the laws of self-defense, leaving the possibility open for women to assert that their use of violence was "reasonable" under the hostile circumstances which they had been subjected.

Stell read from a case that showed "how incredibly brutal some human beings' lives are." Judy Norman lived in a brutal environment for twenty years before she killed her alcoholic husband. Her husband beat her so badly when she was pregnant that she had a miscarriage the next day. He would beat her in front of people, make her bark like a dog, and if she ran away, he would track her down and beat her again.

Norman shot her husband while he was asleep, and in the North Carolina court that tried her, the judge would not advise the jury to consider the case in light of the law of self-defense. Norman was convicted, but the North Carolina Court of Appeals reversed the judge's ruling, claiming that he made a mistake in not instructing the jury on the law of self-defense.

Feminists are concerned that the reason the original ruling went against the defen-

dant is because the law on self-defense does not take into account the distinctive circumstances women are in. The Court of Appeals, however, did consider Norman's special circumstances, claiming that she was in "imminent danger," and that her husband's sleep was just a "momentary hiatus in a continuing reign of terror."

In closing, Stell raised the question of how we are to view the law, and whether it needs to be changed to allow women to more successfully plead self-defense in these circumstances. The difficulty of the situation is formulating a law that takes into account these women's rights but does not allow killings of vengeance.

Southern Minority Leadership Program takes off at Davidson meeting

By JAY CHAUDHURI

Five southern liberal arts colleges gathered at Davidson College recently to discuss the newly proposed Southern Minority Leadership Program, an eight-year project which would serve "to educate black students for future leadership positions in the South."

The conference was attended by academic deans representing Davidson College, Furman University, Washington and Lee University, Rhodes College and the University of the South (Memphis, TN). Also in attendance were representatives from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system, the Love of Learning staff, regional foundations and corporations.

Davidson College administrators hosted the conference. They were President John W. Kuykendall, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty Robert C. Williams, and Vice President for Institutional Advancement John V. Griffith.

The proposed program involves a two-phase effort concentrating on recruitment and retention of minority students at predominantly white colleges. In the first phase, these schools would focus on increasing the number of highly under-represented black students. The second phase would concentrate on creating an academic atmosphere and experience that is more supportive to minority students than is pres-

Watson nominees present plans at Open Luncheon

By MARIA DOUGLAS

Four seniors presented their plans for the next year in their Watson proposals at the Open Luncheon last Tuesday. Seniors Mibs Raney, Katherine Mallory, Alida Van Every and Kevin Dunn are the four finalists representing Davidson in the Watson Fellowship competition. Watson grants are given annually to 70 students from 48 participating schools in the country.

Raney, Mallory, Van Every and Dunn were selected from a pool of 12 applicants last fall. The Davidson selection committee interviews all applicants twice. Four finalists are selected and they are interviewed by a representative from the Watson Foundation. Final decisions are made by March 15.

Committee-member and professor of

political science Louis-Ortmeyer said final awards by the Foundation are made on the basis of experiential importance. "It is something important to you, not necessarily academic." He said that the Foundation looks for interesting people with interesting projects they want to pursue for a year after graduation from college.

Thomas J. Watson, the founder and benefactor of the Watson Foundation and IBM Corporation, had a similar experience after his college graduation and wanted to provide other creative graduates the opportunity to experience the world for a year. Beginning in 1969, 70 graduates of small, usually highly

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ently the case.

Phase I involves spreading the Love of Learning program to the other four colleges within four years. The program, begun in the summer of 1987 and created by Davidson College, is designed to recognize eighth-grade black students with college potential. With a five-year sequential program of summer and school year activities, Davidson College acts as a guiding hand for these students in preparation for college.

The program's long-term goal is to inspire these students to pursue doctorates, and subsequently, choose careers in teaching.

The Love of Learning program has already produced results after only two years. Brenda Tapia, Love of Learning director and assistant chaplain, states that more than half of the first class members have been accepted in early admission decisions at colleges, including two acceptances by Davidson. Tapia feels the "holistic" approach that Davidson uses towards these aspiring black students makes the program different compared to other schools. The Love of Learning program involves the student throughout the school, and engages the parents and community. The most important aspect, however, is the emphasis on professional development.

Because of its overwhelming success, faculty and staff from the other participating

schools will observe the Love of Learning program during this summer and the 1989-90 academic year. They will make appropriate alterations for their respective schools. By the start of 1990, it is anticipated that all five schools can establish a summer program similar to Love of Learning.

Representatives from these five institutions will meet to review the first summer's experience during the 1990-91 academic year, and by the summer of 1992, the project expects to have implemented a completely developed program that will prepare minority students for college on all five campuses. Phase II, from 1992-1996, will provide a supportive environment by developing a network of support within the college, among the faculty and in the student's curriculum.

Also during this phase it is anticipated that the five colleges would share their experiences in order to improve the retention rate of minority students. Moreover, in Phase II each campus would create a program of faculty recruitment and develop a curriculum in African and Afro-American studies. The project also anticipates involvement from the local businesses as financial supporters and possible benefactors.

Davidson hopes to have a planning conference in May 1989 in order to discuss this multi-year project.

Ott's Lecture Series to focus on human nature

Are human beings "little better than the beasts," as the biblical book of Ecclesiastes proclaims, or are they "little lower than the angels" as the eighth Psalm indicates? Davidson's 1989 Ott's Lecturer, Rev. Sibley Towner, will speak on The Bible and Our Human Nature on March 13 and 14.

Towner is the Reverend Archibald McFadyen Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. He is a popular and lively speaker. His sermon View from a Screened-In Porch was published in the book Best Sermons No. 1 by Harper and Row last year.

The three individual lectures will be Our Worldly Nature on

Monday, March 13 at 8 p.m. in Eu Hall, Our Animal Nature on Tuesday, March 14 at 11 a.m. in the Chambers Building Art Gallery, and Our Maturing Nature on March 14 at 4 p.m. in Eu Hall.

Towner is the author of several books, including How God Deals With Evil and The Rabbinic Enumeration of Scriptural Examples. His talks at Davidson will be part of his current project, a book called Biblical Humanism.

The Ott's Lecture Series was established in 1893 by The Reverend J.M.P. Ott to secure speakers in support of Christian faith.

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