The Price of Higher Admission: Coeducation and Some Change

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## CONTENTS

Acknowledgements 3

Introduction 5

Chapter 1: The Beginnings 8

Chapter 2: The Debate and Opposition

Part I: The Debate: Single-Sex versus Coeducational Schooling 14

Part II: Part 2: The Opposition: Foster’s Traditional Views 18

Chapter 3: Opposition and Defense Before Approval 28

Chapter 4: Traditions and Revisions

Part I: The Death of In loco parentis 39

Part II: Revision of the Mission 45

Chapter 5: Transitions and Truths

Part I: Coeducation at Rutgers 48

Part II: What She Said… 56

Conclusion 61

Bibliography 64
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Introduction

This thesis is a study of the transition to coeducation at Rutgers College of Rutgers University. The issue of women’s access to education emerged in the 1960s and continued into the 1970s, resulting from the social and economic forces prevalent during these decades. In an era influenced by both the Civil Rights and feminist movements, there was a growing understanding that the denial of women’s access to higher education in privileged institutions was biased and against the ideals of fairness. Students across the nation increasingly preferred coeducation, under the impression that single-sex education was discriminatory.

In the year 1968, the faculty of Rutgers College, led by Dean Arnold B. Grobman, proposed the initiation of coeducation. Grobman was a modernist, believing the admission of women would benefit the University academically, economically, and socially. Indeed, the selective admission of women would attract only the best candidates, males as well as females, as more prospective students preferred a co-ed student body. Economically, the admission of women would increase the student population, and thereby, increase revenue of tuition.

The coeducation proposal faced strong resistance, especially from Margery Somers Foster, Dean of Douglass College, the neighboring all-female college. Foster was a traditionalist, believing men and women should receive their education separately. Drawing from a rich history of personal experiences and academic studies, she claimed women at Rutgers College would face suppression, either from blatant male discrimination or because of their socialization in a coeducational setting. Additionally, Foster feared Douglass would suffer the loss of potential students to Rutgers, and eventually be forced to make the transition to coeducation. Despite their opposition to one another, both Deans believed the implications of their position most benefited women by providing the best education.
Some hypotheses were helpful in understanding Foster’s arguments. Essentially, I argue Foster’s position relied on the foundations of the climate hypothesis and a “separate spheres” ideology. The “separate sphere” idea reinforces the traditional expectations associated with the respective sexes. The climate hypothesis states coeducational settings can possibly be harmful to women as they reflect the biases of society. In this case, biases against women will be most obvious in a coeducational setting, and least in a single-sex setting. Interestingly, the majority of studies exploring the benefits and consequences of coeducational versus single-sex schooling, including the climate hypothesis, were not published until the mid-1970s and 1980s. Foster’s arguments paralleled premises of the climate hypothesis, but she did not reference it directly.

The second half of the thesis explores the coeducation debate from the perspectives of other key actors: alumnae, students, and the Board of Governors. Alumnae wanted the Colleges to retain their traditional history. This contrasted with most of the students’ positions. As participants in a tumultuous era, they challenged all issues that involved authoritative control and discrimination. In regards to coeducation, student involvement was not very evident until after the Board of Governors’ first decision. The Board of Governors initially favored cross-registration, a system that included co-educational interaction in the classroom and did not require many changes to the University’s system. With a newly admitted University president, and facing the possibility of a potential lawsuit by the faculty of Rutgers College, they gave approval to coeducation in late 1971.

The final chapters of the thesis explore the elimination of in loco parentis, and the aftermath of the transition at both Rutgers and Douglass College. While Rutgers faced logistical problems to accommodate their new female students and their demands, Douglass rededicated and altered their purpose towards females, focusing on the empowerment of women. In addition,
there is a brief comparison of both Colleges’ female freshmen class of ’72 (the first females of Rutgers College); however, access to all the original interviews was not possible, and thus, analysis of certain interviews are based on secondary sources.

The climate of the era may have aided the advancement of coeducation, dissolving barriers against traditional expectations and restrictions. Yet, the advancement of coeducation could not have occurred without pressure and support from the faculty and students at Rutgers University, marking a historical moment for women’s education. Despite Douglass’s resistance, coeducation cleared the path for a revision in the school’s mission and purpose, evolving to become a school dedicated to empower their female students in all respects. In taking account of the struggles and accomplishments that occurred through the late 1960s and early 1970s for both Rutgers and Douglass College, it not only becomes an essential piece of Rutgers history, but also a significant aspect of women’s history, the social climate of that particular decade, and the evolvement of higher education.
Chapter 1: The Beginnings

Originally founded in 1766 by the Dutch Reformed Church to train young men for the ministry, Queen’s College is the nation’s eighth oldest institution of higher learning, maintaining one of the longer standing traditions of an all-male student body for the next two hundred years. Jacob Hardenberg served as the first president and his stepson as the first tutor; the first class did not begin until the second Tuesday in November 1771. Three years later was the first graduation.\(^1\) In the aftermath of the American Revolutionary War, the College’s funding and enrollment decreased. As a result, the College was open and closed twice during the years 1795 to 1825. In that final year, former trustee Colonel Henry Rutgers donated a bell to be erected in the Old Queens building and a sum of five thousand dollars, allowing the College to reopen. In honor of his donation, the name was changed to Rutgers College in 1825.\(^2\) In 1856, Rutgers College became independent from any religious affiliation as the Church released its authoritative powers. This was followed by the acquisition of a land grant (Morrill Act) from New Jersey legislature in 1864, the funds used to expand the institution.\(^3\) Exactly a century after the first name change, Rutgers College became Rutgers University in 1925, in reflection of its increasing number of colleges. This was followed by legislative acts in 1945 and 1956, which officially designated Rutgers “the State University of New Jersey.”\(^4\)

In consequence of the barring of women from the institutions, and influenced by the women’s freedom movement at the turn of the century, the New Jersey Federation of Women's Clubs (NJFWC) sought to establish a women’s institution. Mabel Smith Douglass, member of

\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Ibid. Poulson, 132.
the NJFWC and graduate of Barnard, an all-female college, opened the New Jersey College for
Women in fall of 1918, with a class of fifty-four women and herself as the first dean. In 1955, the school was renamed Douglass College in honor of its founder.\(^5\) Shortly after the creation of Douglass College, the University was divided into a School of Education, and the Colleges of Agriculture, Arts and Sciences, Engineering, and Women; all but the last were collectively known as the “Colleges for Men” until 1957.\(^6\) Douglass College would remain as the only undergraduate college to admit women until the opening of Livingston College.\(^7\) This arrangement, embodying the principle of sexual segregation, remained until the early 1970s.

In the 1960s, Rutgers University acquired part of the Camp Kilmer military base. The Provost appointed a “committee for the future expansion of Douglass and Rutgers College,” with equal representative from each college: three faculty members, the Dean, and another university administrator. Serving as the motivation for an expanding university, the acquisition of land prompted thoughts of growth for both Rutgers and Douglass College. For Rutgers, these ideas included the admission of women; they proposed the creation of “Queens College,” a two-year coeducational college that would feed the students into the single-sex, upper division schools of Rutgers and Douglass.\(^8\) Douglass opposed the plan, wanting to remain a four-year women’s college. They proposed an increase of enrollment to eight and six thousand for Rutgers and Douglass, respectively, accommodating the rising pool of applicants.\(^9\) The committee was disbanded without any proposal for the Kilmer property. In 1969, Livingston College, a four-


\(^6\) Beginning in 1971, the term ‘Rutgers College’ only referred to the college of Arts and Sciences, rather than in reference to the whole university system.


\(^8\) Ibid, 5

\(^9\) Ibid, 6.
year coeducational college was established on the previous Kilmer base, designated an ‘alternative college’ primarily because of its “urban missions and unconventional teaching.”

The establishment of Livingston actually provoked many people to question the continuous single-sex status of Rutgers College and Douglass College.

The issue of women’s access to education emerged in the 1960s, a result of the social and economic forces prevalent during this era. When the baby boom population reached college age, many institutions, including Rutgers, had increasing enrollment numbers. Students across the nation increasingly preferred coeducation, rejecting single-sex education. With the Civil Rights movement, there was a growing understanding that the denial of women’s access to education in privileged institutions was biased and against the ideals of fairness. Simply, many began to see single-sex education as discriminatory rather than a natural part of society. In 1950, there were 1,364 coeducational colleges and universities; by 1969, the number had nearly doubled to 2,148. Inversely, the rise of coeducational schools meant a decline in single-sex schools.

As many universities considered the move to coeducation more economically viable and polls indicated admission of women would enhance the educational atmosphere, single-sex institutions either converted to coeducation or opted to close their doors. Between June 1968 and October 1968 alone, sixty-four women’s colleges went coeducational or closed their doors. Single-sex education seemed ever more out-dated.

As many prestigious universities, including Princeton, Yale, and Dartmouth, had recently admitted women, Rutgers could no longer avoid the expanding trend of coeducation. In the

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words of Richard P. McCormick, Professor of History, “The times were changing; and, among the changes in the air was this one of ending single-sex colleges.”

Rutgers College recognized the students’ preference for coeducation, and believed the admission of women would increase the quality of the student body by admitting better-qualified candidates, improving “the educational climate [and] the tone of class.” As coeducation mirrored the changing conceptions of gender roles and capabilities of women in society, equality and justice became considerable concerns. Professor Remigio U. Pane of the Romance Language Department appropriately expressed this concern. “It is wrong for blacks to be segregated from whites, and it is just as wrong for whites to be segregated [f]rom whites. Women should have the right to attend any college, and not be discriminated against because of their sex.”

It was becoming increasingly difficult to justify the single-sex status of the College.

Although the Rutgers faculty and administration was receptive to coeducation, Douglass was not. Educators at Douglass expressed concerns similar to other women colleges facing the prospect of coeducation with an affiliated all-male college. Many believed coeducation disregarded the best interests of women and encouraged societal subordination. In contrast, single-sex education would provide encouragement for women’s academic achievement and leadership. Douglass also feared that if Rutgers were to admit women, the scholastic standing of Douglass would decline, as many highly qualified applicants would be drawn away.

In the fall of 1968, Rutgers faculty unanimously (with one absentee) approved a resolution in favor of coeducation, or the admission of women: Be it resolved that this Faculty

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endorses the principle that Rutgers College should become coeducational as soon as may be practicable.16 This was Rutgers College’s third attempt to initiate coeducation, as the Board of Trustees, overseeing the university, rejected the prior two attempts. In 1881, the Trustees rebuffed a Rutgers’ faculty proposal to admit women, followed by an 1895 rejection of a plan to associate the Rutgers Female Seminary in New York City with the College.17 Arnold Grobman, Dean of Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and the main supporter for coeducation, perceived coeducation as the necessary course of action, for the benefit of the University and its students. Understanding the Board of Governors would not approve an implementation of this resolution without a proper study of the effects, Grobman requested the Faculty Planning Committee to investigate the possibility of coeducation at Rutgers College, followed by a written statement, in March 1969, to President (of Rutgers) Mason Gross endorsing the resolution.18

The Planning Committee’s final report contained four major claims: first, coeducation would be conducive to a better educational climate; second, coeducation would increase the number of male applicants, increasing selectivity; third, coeducation would grant New Jersey high school female graduates an opportunity for education at their state university; and fourth, changes in enrollment would affect certain disciplines (i.e. there would be less enrollment of males in the humanities).19 Yet, to enroll an equal number of women as men would result in

16 Faculty Resolution included in letter from Dean Arnold B. Grobman to President Mason Gross, 19 December 1968. Contained in Box 2, “Coeducational, I-IV, Ad-Hoc Committee on Coeducation,” Folder ‘Coeducation-Rutgers College I” Special Collections and University Archives, Alexander Library, Rutgers University, New Brunswick (RG 23/G1/02).
more women than men students in the New Brunswick area, because Douglass would remain single-sex; a ratio of one woman for every three men at Rutgers College was the recommendation.

In November 1969, Grobman appointed a representative committee to consider the impact of coeducation on the social life and academics of the other colleges, “rather than the desirability of coeducation per se or of coeducation at Rutgers college.” Headed by Henry Winkler, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the committee studied the ratio of men to women and possible alterations in curricula and student services. They also explored the impact on facilities and housing at Rutgers, as well as the transitional impact on Douglass. It suggested four alternatives: first, Douglass and Rutgers both remain single-sex; second, Rutgers becomes coeducational with a male/female ratio of two to one, while Douglass remains all-female; third, Rutgers and Douglass become coeducational; and fourth, Douglass and Rutgers become coeducational with a rearrangement in the professional schools. The Winkler Committee supported the second alternative, as the outcome would allow relatively an equal number of men and women at the University. In June 1970, the University Senate Executive endorsed the Winkler recommendation. The reports would provide a basis for the ruling by the Board of Governors on the admission of women to the College. In 1972, Rutgers ended the two hundred year tradition, admitting women for the first time.

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Chapter 2: The Debate and Opposition

Part 1: The Debate: Single-Sex versus Coeducational Schooling

The debate on coeducation mirrored the changing conceptions of gender roles and capabilities of women in the broader society. The Civil Rights and the Women Rights movements of the 1960s allowed people to question the lack of gender integration in education, or specifically, made people aware of the bias against women in the denial of access to education in privileged institutions. This resulted in support for coeducational institutions. As many universities considered the move to coeducation for economic reasons and polls indicated admission of women would enhance the educational atmosphere, single-sex institutions either converted to coeducation or opted to close their doors. As previously mentioned, one scholar wrote, “Between June 1968 and October 1968 alone, sixty-four women’s colleges went coeducational or closed their doors, a remarkable phenomenon. Many prestigious men’s colleges also opened their doors to women at this time.”23 Since 1960, almost all single-sex colleges have become coeducational, the number of women colleges declined from over 200 in 1960 to 54 in 2010; currently, there are only four all men’s colleges.24 At least 95 percent of the female college student population today is currently enrolled in a coeducational institution. This phenomenon, a more favorable preference for a co-ed setting, began in the 1960s, which immediately prompted many researchers to question the benefits of coeducational schools in comparison to single-sex schools.

The question – what type of schooling best suits women? – has initiated many studies on this subject matter. These studies explored the impacts of single-sex schools (majority were female) in comparison to coeducational schools. Rice and Hemming’s study compared the number of high achieving women graduates from women’s colleges to graduates of coeducational schools between the years of 1940 and 1970. Using *Who’s Who of American Women* (WWAW), a magazine listing the top influential women of the nation of the time, results from the study showed that graduates of women’s colleges were more likely than coeducational colleges to appear in WWAW. Only the 1960s remained an exception.25 Similarly, another study revealed those graduates of women colleges had higher incomes.26 These findings may correspond to the socio-economic status of women who attend women colleges; as a majority are private, their tuition is more costly that those of public institutions.27

In a series of studies covering half a century, Elizabeth Tidball, an environmental researcher, concluded that graduates of all-women colleges were twice as likely as graduates of coeducational schools to become leaders in their respective fields, or to attain high-level degrees; her studies concur with the results from Rice and Hemming. Tidball’s study (1980) emphasized the beneficial impact of women’s involvement in a variety of academic subjects. In addition, women colleges have a higher percentage of female faculty/administration that serve as role

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models for the female students. Nevertheless, Tidball did not control for the selectivity of certain factors (i.e. income or background). The students’ self-selection in terms of socio-economic status (affordability of the college) and desires of the college experience (certain experiences the student hoped to attain from the particular college) may have influenced the results to a substantial degree. The same study, redone by F. Crosby in 1994, revealed that when controlling for selectivity, the positive effects of single-sex institutions were gone.

In Alexander Astin’s study, *Four Critical Years* (1977), he concluded that the students in all-women’s colleges were satisfied with most aspects of the schools, including instruction, curricular variety, and academic demands. Additionally, he reported the students in women colleges developed greater assertiveness and attained higher levels of achievement with the support of women’s faculty. In his 1990 study, Daryl Smith also declared students from women colleges were more satisfied in all aspects of the college experience— not limited to academics, faculty, and services— except for their social life. Smith’s findings paralleled Astin’s results, emphasizing the trend continues into contemporary times.

Whereas results from the aforementioned studies either confirmed or refuted the benefits of single-sex schooling for females, other studies explored the specifics of the resulting benefits and disadvantages of single-sex and coeducation. In their 1982 study, *The Classroom Climate: A Chilly One for Women?*, the first national report about differential treatment of male and female students by faculty in higher education, Roberta M. Hall and Bernice Resnick Sandler developed the term “chilly climate” to describe biases within the atmosphere of the classroom. Sandler

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argues, “Although many overt barriers have fallen during the last decade so that the door to higher education is now open for many women, there are many subtle barriers that still remain—barriers that may be almost invisible to both students and faculty.” They concluded, “Faculty—men and women alike—often inadvertently treat men and women students differently and thereby subtly undermine women’s confidence in their academic ability, lower their academic and occupational aspirations, inhibit their learning, and generally lower their self-esteem.”

The following may occur at a coeducational institution with a “chilly climate”: women’s cognitions may be suppressed and aspirations and attainment may be lowered, as well as self-confidence and self-esteem, through unequal, discriminatory treatment in the classroom and curriculum. Specific examples would include professors calling on male students more often than females, or asking women the easier questions. While one or two occurrences may not have an effect, multiple occurrences can accumulate into the message that women are of an inferior status and reinforce the tendency among some women to accept and adhere to the status. Additionally, the works of females may be devalued relative to males, and sex segregation would be the norm. In contrast, single-sex institutions would have a more “favorable climate” by allowing less gender bias in classroom interaction and peer interaction, access to successful role models, an availability of leadership opportunities, and accommodations to sex differences in learning are encouraged by the provision of special programs.

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32 Ibid., 113
33 Seifried, T. J. (2000). The chilly classroom climate revisited: What have we learned, are male faculty the culprits? PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning, 9, 25-37.
Further experiments on the “chilly climate” produced both supportive and conflicting results. In a 1994 study of “chilling” practices, T.J. Foster and M.S. Foster’s results were consistent with Hall and Sandler’s, supporting the hypothesis that climates at numerous universities are not supportive of women’s education.\(^{35}\) Contrastingly, two studies by P.D. Boersma (1981) and J.F. Heller (1985) reported differences in faculty behaviors towards women and men were not found, but rather there was evidence to suggest treatment of women as if they were more capable.\(^{36}\) Regardless of the results, the studies prove classroom climate is an important indicator of educational equality for all students, as it illustrates the idea that the members in a classroom reflect and will act upon the biases of the larger society.\(^{37}\)

Foster’s struggle to prevent coeducation was a question of the education the women would receive at Rutgers College, with a coeducational setting, in comparison to a single-sex school like Douglass. Although the studies cited have conflicting conclusions, many of Foster’s arguments and fears used during the controversy are validated by these research results, which demonstrate the advantages for women in single-sex schooling against coeducational schooling.

Part 2: The Opposition: Foster’s Traditional Views

As Dean of Douglass College since 1967, Margery Somers Foster headed the opposition against coeducation at Rutgers College. Educated in all female institutions, in the era before coeducation, Foster held a traditional view towards the education of females and males, in accordance with the separate spheres idea. She believed education for the two sexes should


remain separate, although mixed interaction can occur. In regards to education, Foster’s views parallels the “climate” hypothesis. In her opposition to coeducation, Foster emphasized the discrimination a woman would face, with the presence of a male in the classroom, highlighting the benefits a single-sex education would provide for each sex.

Foster established her grounds and defenses early. At the November 1967 Student Conference, the year preceding the Rutgers College resolution, and her first year as Dean, she presented a speech for the support of single-sex institutions. Outlining the historical significance of women’s education in her *1967 Student Conference Speech*, she posed the question: If women are no longer denied admission from male institutions, can women’s colleges retain their original and practical purpose? Acknowledging the national trend for coeducation, Foster admits to the loss of the original purpose for women colleges; however, she remained a strong proponent of the single-sex tradition, stressing women colleges must remain to serve their female students in their pursuit of higher education. It was essential not to create an educational environment where “women are less vocally argumentative than men…partly due to upbringing in a somewhat co-educational society and a society where the man is traditionally expected to dominate the woman.” She believed the presence of males would unfavorably affect women in the classroom. Women would not be free to express themselves freely in an atmosphere of male condescension and hostility.

Foster’s argument found support in the “climate” hypothesis of social scientists. In the climate hypothesis, it is assumed if students and professors were representatives of society, then

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39 Ibid.
classrooms would reflect the biases of the larger society.” Under this assumption, if the standards for society were subordination of women, then it would not be surprising to find it within a classroom. As long as sexism pervades society, it will invade the classroom. Furthermore, if said classroom had a coeducational setting, then only a single-sex setting would prevent the entrance of such discrimination. Foster would concur, arguing single-sex education protected women from following traditional societal patterns that resulted in their subordination. She contended that without the discrimination, a single-sex setting would allow women to develop their personality and capabilities better without the extra pressures from society. That is, women would have a “favorable climate” for education. In a single-sex setting, the favorable climate would include a greater proportion of women faculty that can serve as role models, offering leadership opportunities, and the freedom to pursue nontraditional subjects without any discouragement from such pursuits. These beneficial aspects of single-sex institutions were listed in the *Douglass Report*. One of the first official documents from Douglass College, the *Douglass Report* lists the numerous arguments supporting Foster’s position on the coeducation debate. Under the section, *Advantages of Separate or Coordinate Education for Men and Women*, one major point declares that when there is no competition with men, women can then claim first-class citizenship on their own campus, an acknowledgement that lends confidence to the woman. Another point states that both men and women are more responsive and frank (in and out of the classroom) when not inhibited by the presence of the opposite sex. This leads to a third point, which states that both

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sexes are more free and objective with their choice of subjects to study beyond the stereotypical
gendered division of subjects; women will choose the sciences and men, the humanities, subjects
that have stereotypical gender connotation as more feminine or masculine. Foster believed
women and men performed their best only when surrounded by their own sex.

Both males and females would benefit from opportunities respective to their sex,
including support from strong leaders of their own sex. Foster uses this argument against
coeducation, stating coeducational institutions have a predominantly male staff. In contrast,
women colleges are largely populated with female exemplars. Foster remarked Rutgers’s
“absence of role models for these women students is of itself a tragic lack.” The predominantly
male faculty provides little or no successful role models for the female students, this gives a
coeducational setting a “chilly climate”, whereas single-sex institutions are staffed with
numerous role models of the same sex for the students to emulate, an aspect of the “favorable
climate.” Foster inquired “whether the woman can find herself as a person, whether she can
come to respect herself as a person and to develop her intellect as a person better under the
pressures and distractions of the coed society or in a society where men are not there in large
numbers all the time.” She concluded a single-sex college offers students a better opportunity to
develop at their own pace and sort out their identities. Additionally, single-sex institutions have
a more conducive climate, or “favorable climate” in regards to personality development, and
coeeducational institutions have a less conducive climate, or “chilly climate.”

43 Margery Somers Foster, “A Summary of Arguments Which Could be Used in Favor of Coordinate, Rather Than
Co, Education at Rutgers and Douglass College,” 1. Box 1 of the Papers of the Office of the Dean of Student
Affairs (Earle Clifford) Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New
Jersey (RG 15/F2/01).
44 Ibid.
46 Margery Somers Foster, “A Summary of Arguments Which Could be Used in Favor of Coordinate, Rather Than
Co, Education at Rutgers and Douglass College,” 1. Box 1 of the Papers of the Office of the Dean of Student
Affairs (Earle Clifford) Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New
Jersey (RG 15/F2/01).
Foster essentially believed in the necessity of separate spheres for the educational development of women\textsuperscript{47}. This position becomes evident in her \textit{1967 Student Conference Speech}. By the end of the speech, she claimed that an education at a women’s college would not only substantiate the female’s personality, but also deter females from an early marriage. “It’s my thought, shared I think by most people, that there is more pressure for marriage when the young couple is together all the time.”\textsuperscript{48} To Foster, coeducation implies a quick route to marriage, whereas the separation from single sex colleges delay the marriage process “so that each of the people involved has the opportunity of developing himself and his tastes and having some experience before he gets tied down too tightly.”\textsuperscript{49} Her comments reveal her belief that women can and should receive an education, but their primary focus in life should remain towards familial obligations; an education allows the woman to develop and become interesting to men, bringing stability to the family. In other words, a single-sex education is the slower route to marriage, allotting time for development of their family roles.

This perception also appears in the works of Christopher Jencks and David Riesman. In \textit{Academic Revolution} (1968), they concluded women would choose single-sex colleges over coeducational schools, although the single-sex schools’ growth and influence on future generations will lessen. As cited in Foster’s “Douglass Report,” Jencks and Riesman declared a woman’s desire to get married is an important factor in the decision of what type of college to attend. The female who wishes to pursue a profession or career will go to a non-coeducational

\textsuperscript{47} Van der Beck, Shanna Lynn. \textit{Douglass College and the Fight to Prevent Coeducation at Rutgers College}. Undergraduate Thesis, Rutgers College, 2001. 35.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
school, while others will pursue a co-ed setting for better marriage prospects, a goal for many college women.\(^{50}\)

Most of Foster’s arguments focused on the social differences between men and women, and the benefits of keeping them separated. Although Foster argued women’s colleges provide greater opportunities for student leadership and more female role models, it is evident from her position in *Summary of Arguments*, that the focus in life should remain on the proper development of character. She declares women mature quicker than men do, as their interests have not fully developed. Again, in a co-ed setting, a woman’s choice will be more hasty and without much deliberation, prompting an early marriage or the loss of self-identity.\(^{51}\) This is summarized in her closing line of the 1967 speech. “On the average I think there are fewer such identity-less women among the graduates of women’s colleges than of co-ed colleges.”\(^{52}\) Foster feared coeducation would have inhibited the development of the woman’s character and personality before her inevitable entrance into society.

As a main supporter of the coeducation proposal, Arnold B. Grobman, Dean of Rutgers College, answered many of Foster’s assertions. Grobman presented to the Board of Governors a *Fact Sheet on Coeducation* (1970). This document included poll statistics and twenty-two facts on coeducation, successfully challenging of Foster’s arguments. He disagreed with the idea that education was better when students are protected by partial isolation, and dismissed Foster’s objection that Rutgers would provide inferior education. Although Foster linked the number of role models to the success of the students, Grobman countered, “It is not clear from the record

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\(^{51}\) Margery Somers Foster, “A Summary of Arguments Which Could be Used in Favor of Coordinate, Rather Than Co, Education at Rutgers and Douglass College,” 1. Box 1 of the Papers of the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs (Earle Clifford) Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey (RG 15/F2/01)

that this is an invariable result,” illustrating his statement with several cases of women colleges with male presidents. Women colleges may have a greater number of female faculty members, but this did not indicate the attainment of high administrative positions, he claimed. Additionally, Grobman provided descriptive information of the female faculty that can serve as role models at Rutgers College, and suggested that new hires would be predominantly female. Furthermore, Grobman declared that all the current faculty members had experience teaching in coeducational environments; on the contrary, they were experienced in everything but teaching an all male student population.

Grobman countered her arguments with observations and evidence, in addition to providing factual statistics of the public’s opinion in favor of coeducation to support his stance. Interestingly, Grobman considered Douglass’ status as an all female school a secondary question to the effects of coeducation at Rutgers College. Although all studies by Rutgers College considered the possibility of coeducation at Douglass, they focused more on the impact on Douglass from coeducation at Rutgers. Grobman understood a proposal for coeducation also at Douglass would have increased the difficulty of persuading the Board of Governors. Even the Winkler Committee stated, “The decision as to whether Douglass College should become coeducational should originate with the faculty and students of that College.” Foster’s fears would not become a reality.

53 Grobman prepared a “Fact Sheet in Coeducation” for distribution at the Board of Governors meeting, 9 October 1970. Included were 22 “facts” on coeducation. Contained in Box 17, “Coeducation Files,” Folder Coed Rutgers College II. Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey (RG 23/G1/02).

54 Ibid.

Yet, Foster most feared the *eventual* impact of coeducation at Rutgers College. Her fears were stated directly in the introduction of the *Douglass Report*. “If Rutgers College becomes coed, *Douglass might eventually be forced to do the same* [emphasis mine] …and there is reason to believe that some of the distinction which Rutgers College and Douglass College have earned over the years will be lost as they become just two more coeducational schools.” As previously mentioned, Foster feared Douglass’s academic standing would suffer if Rutgers College were to become coeducational. She noted one of Rutgers’ objectives for coeducation was to raise their admission standards. Douglass’s Director of Admissions, Jane Harvey predicted, “A large number of the top candidates, if given a choice, would elect Rutgers over Douglass. The prestige of a two-hundred-year old institution, particularly outside of New Jersey where the name of Rutgers is better known than the name of Douglass, would be a strong drawing card for women students.” It would be difficult for Douglass to remain a women’s college, if their strong applicants were enticed away by Rutgers’s well-known name; it would be Douglass’s disadvantage if Rutgers becomes coeducational. One professor commented, “If [Douglass] became co-ed, it might just be an uptown Rutgers.” As Dean, Foster needed to protect Douglass’s traditions and history, prioritizing them as more important than allowing women equal opportunities at Rutgers College.

In May 1971, Foster sent a final document to President Gross and the Board of Governors, right before their decision on coeducation. Within the memorandum, Foster asserted her opposition to coeducation, raising ten key points that needed to be addressed before

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56 Margery Somers Foster, “A Summary of Arguments Which Could be Used in Favor of Coordinate, Rather Than Co, Education at Rutgers and Douglass College,” 1. Box 1 of the Papers of the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs (Earle Clifford) Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey (RG 15/F2/01)
57 Foster Papers
successful implementation.\textsuperscript{59} The majority of these issues revolved around housing concerns, discrimination, and strategies/plans in regards to women’s needs. She also included articles that addressed the (then) current debate. In particular, David Riesman’s article, “Observations on Contemporary College Students – Especially Women,” advised women colleges to “hold out against the rush” towards coeducation. The article, “Few Women Get Positions of Power in Academe, Survey Discloses,” included statistics on the percentage of women holding leadership positions at coeducational institutions in comparison to a single-sex institution for the past three years. One must note that the year 1970 was the transition year for the majority of the nation’s universities, and therefore, women in leadership positions would have exponentially increased after 1970. There was also a letter from Margaret Mead, an anthropologist, stating her opinion that “the most ideal higher educational form under present conditions, are coordinated colleges within a University setting.”\textsuperscript{60}

Foster believed she could only accept coeducation at Rutgers College if “Rutgers College shows any sign of a plan that indicates they understand the problems of women.” Her position stated she did not see Rutgers as ready to accept women properly, as she did not consider herself a viable candidate to help Rutgers College form a plan for women at the College (although her title as the dean of a women’s college implies otherwise). In comparison to the Douglass Report,

\textsuperscript{59} Memorandum from Foster to President Gross, and the Board of Governors, May 7, 1971. The Papers of the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs, Box 1, “Coeducation committee,” Folder #2. Special Collections and University Archives, Alexander Library, Rutgers University, New Brunswick (RG 15/F2/01); Cooper, Melanie Janis. Resolved that I Should be a Man: A Comprehensive Study of Co-education at Rutgers College. Undergraduate Thesis, Rutgers College, 1997. 37.

Foster’s arguments were more substantial, incorporating (then) contemporary articles voicing academics’ opinions on the debate.

It was ironic that the Dean of an all-women’s college opposed creating opportunities for women, whereas the Dean of the all-men’s college was the strongest advocate. Although Foster’s early opposition was based heavily on the theory of separate spheres for men and women, it transitioned to the question of what benefited women, underlying her fear of Douglass College’s survival. As the debate continued into the 1970s, Foster’s arguments were supported by studies, factual evidence, and personal experiences, drawing from a rich history of single-sex higher education. Her arguments focused on the disadvantages of coeducation and advantages of single-sex institutions, arguing against the “chilly climate” of the former and for the “favorable climate” of the latter. She believed that women performed better when in competition only with other women, and only women colleges produced strong women leaders. Grobman envisioned a different future, one in which women had equal representation with men in the student body, faculty, and administration. For both, the less stated concern was to maintain or improve the number of their students and quality of the education.
Chapter 3: Opposition and Defense Before Approval

By the summer of 1970, majority of the University supported the coeducation resolution at Rutgers College. A University-wide committee found it feasible, and the University Senate approved it. The Rutgers Dean’s and majority of the faculties and students’ opinions were in favor of adoption. Only Margery Foster, the majority of Douglass faculty, and the Alumni Associations remained strongly resistant. Yet, approval from the Board of Governors (BoG), a body of eleven voting members who oversaw educational policy for the entire university, was still required before implementation.

Alton Alder, president of the Rutgers Alumni Association stated the association “did not see the advantages of coeducation.” In truth, they believed coeducation “would further limit the admission of highly qualified male applicants to the College.” Shortly before the Board of Governors’ crucial vote on the resolution, the association resolved it “vehemently opposes any attempt at making Rutgers College a coeducational institution” and reaffirmed its opposition even after the Board’s approval a year later, fueled by their desire for Rutgers to remain an all-male institution. Most alumnae believed the admission of women would break the old traditions of either college; they felt the women’s place at Rutgers was at Douglass.

The Executive Director of the Alumnae Association at Douglass College did not oppose Rutgers College admission of women, but was against the thought of men at her alma mater, Douglass. One couple from Colorado, Alumnae Nadels—the husband, class of Rutgers College ’62, and the wife, class of Douglass College ’65—called coeducation “unfortunate”, believing it

62 Grobman Papers.
was unfair to leave the women’s college untouched, while taking away a men’s college. “Rutgers College has a unique heritage and atmosphere, part of which is its maleness. This is something not to be tampered with lightly, but something to be nurtured and preserved, especially at this time when coeducation is conformity.” Their thoughts paralleled Margery Foster’s views about coeducation.

Resistance also came from most of the Douglas faculty as well. In April of 1970, the Douglas faculty voted by a three to one ratio to reaffirm their commitment to coordinate education for a five year period. The majority of the faculty feared Douglas would lose their unique identity if Rutgers became coed, a concern also voiced by alumnae of both Rutgers and Douglas College. There were a few faculty members in favor of coeducation, but they were either older faculty or younger feminists. Opinions were also mixed in the Rutgers faculty. Grobman and McCormick met with the Rutgers Parents Association, who appeared before the Board of Governors to speak in favor of coeducation. It seems a majority of faculty and parents were in favor of coeducation.

Similar to the faculty, student opinion at Douglas on coeducation varied. In the winter of 1967, the Douglas student government committee issued a report opposing coeducation, stating, “Douglas College was founded as a women’s college and we would like to see it remains as a separate division of the University.” Not only would coeducation be “very expensive and difficult”, courses were already offered at Rutgers and available to Douglas students. The report

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66 Ibid., 144, 153-54.
declared Douglass student opinions were against coeducation, although the previous year poll’s results showed strong support for coeducational classes.67

In a difference of opinion, an April 1970 editorial in The Caellian, the Douglass campus newspaper, criticized the decision to remain single-sex. The editors declared “those who truly believe in coeducation—those who know that coeducation is the only realistic way of realizing the actualities of life in the outside world” will not be discouraged.68 One particular student, Susan Edilman, Douglass ‘72, proposed an alternative to coeducation to Dean Grobman. She suggested placing 215 Douglass students in Brett Hall for the Rutgers class and vice versa for Douglass. Grobman replied that it would be a good “experiment,” but the faculty wanted more than just a small number of men.69 Although Douglass student leaders disapproved, the students supported coeducation in any form.

Initial student reaction to the coeducation resolution also varied at Rutgers. A January 1969 editorial in The Targum, the Rutgers campus daily newspaper, condemned the proposal for coeducation. The expectation was that nearly two thousand men would be forced out of the residence halls and certain majors would suffer. “Complete chaos” would result from the move, so “the only logical solution is to make both Rutgers and Douglass coeducational at the same time.”70 Two months later, in March of 1969, another editorial was printed in favor of coeducation. As before, the writer implied approval of coeducation at Douglass, as well as

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68 “The Vote on Tuesday,” Caellian, 17 April 1970, 4;  
70 “Faculty Fiasco,” Targum, 31 January 1969, 2.
Rutgers, declaring that a “single sex institution, especially an all male one, is an old and outdated idea.”⁷¹

Campus polls conducted by The Targum showed the students generally favored coeducation. One poll in February 1966, before coeducation was proposed, had a 96 percent vote in favor of coeducational classes, and an 85 percent vote for the preference [emphasis mine] of a coeducational class. A poll conducted in fall of 1969, after the proposal of the resolution, asked whether students favored “the initiation of coeducation at Rutgers”; only 38 percent of the student population voted, but of those who voted, three-fourths favored coeducation.⁷² In February 1970, the Targum wrote of the coeducation hearing, which was attended by seventy-five students and members of the administration, discussing issues raised by the Coeducation Committee.⁷³ By this time, students were aware of the debates on coeducation and gradually taking positions.

From the number of attendees and lack of poll votes, one would presume the lack of involvement from the students of Rutgers and Douglass, regarding the coeducation proposal, was an atypical reaction for the activities of the 1960s. Lou Coletti, Rutgers Student Government Association President of 1972-73, stated, “There were greater social issues to be dealt with that were preoccupying the students’ time.”⁷⁴ Indeed, students were concerned about the Vietnam War, Kent State shootings, the ROTC controversy, and other events that dominated the media in the late 1960s. Nonetheless, evident from the poll results and numerous articles on the subject, numerous students believed it was an important issue. Moreover, increased involvement from the

students did not occur until after the October 1970 Board of Governors decision, when many of the social and academic issues (i.e. ROTC, physical education requirements, Vietnam War, etc.) were either resolved or becoming resolved. The students responded with numerous articles and editorial opinions opposing or favoring the decision.

Reactions were especially strong in student organizations. The Rutgers Student Council criticized the faculty for acting abruptly, urging the University Senate “to delay final action until a proper investigation can be conducted by all elements of the college community.”

The Rutgers Inter-Hall Residence Association (IHRA), a group of students who resided in dormitories and used this as a common cause, formed a committee to address the proposal; the committee included the IRHA president, the Student Council president, and the Douglass College Government Association Vice President. Within the committee, only the IRHA president opposed coeducation, advocating unrestricted cross-registration, although the organization in its entirety expressed its support for coeducation: “The quality of life at Rutgers College is seriously impaired because of the Board’s refusal to admit women.”

A Rutgers- Douglass Committee for Coeducation was formed, comprising students from both colleges. The Committee actively aimed to educate students about the ongoing debates on coeducation. In November of 1970, they organized a “Sleep-Out for Coeducation,” held at Passion Puddle. The Targum reported only six students out of an original twenty spent the rainy night in a tent. A few months later, in April 1971, the Committee submitted a proposal to the Douglas College Government Association, outlining a detailed plan for coed dormitories for both

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77 Dave Brown, Students Sleep-out for Coeducation at Passion Puddle” The Rutgers Targum, Nov 16, 1970, 4
colleges at minimal costs. This plan would have possibly served as an alternative to coeducation, had not the Board of Governors approved the proposal for coeducation later that year.

In May of 1971, on the Voorhees Mall, students and faculty came together for the rally on coeducation. Attendance was estimated at 350, and speakers included Dean Grobman, President Mason Gross, Student Government Association President David Meiswinkle, and an original campaigner, Remigo Pane. With a calm atmosphere, all speakers voiced their opinions in favor of coeducation, but announced no new developments. President Gross clarified his position, claiming he did not feel it was a necessity, but he would favor coeducation, since he was more concerned with the opinions of the students and faculty. With students, faculty, and now the President’s approval, the Board of Governors faced the majority of the University community in favor of coeducation.

The Board of Governors met on October 9, 1970 to consider the issue of coeducation. Deans Grobman and Foster were formally present at the meeting to defend their position on the issue. Ultimately, the Board voted seven to one against coeducation, but was in favor to “endorse the principle of coeducation,” implying cross-registration of classes between the Colleges. They claimed coeducation at Rutgers would eliminate the single-sex option, as it would eventually compel Douglass to admit men to survive. Instead, they suggested the University explore the “the desirability of further expansion of intercollegiate registration,” or the Federated.

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80 Resolution Passed by the Rutgers University Board of Governors, October 9, 1970.” Memo from Dean Metzger, contained in the records of the Rutgers College Office of Student Life. Folder “1970-71: Coeducation at Rutgers College. Plans, memos, studies, etc.”; Joel Jacobson, a United Auto Workers official, whose daughter attended Douglass College at the time of this decision, cast the one vote in favor of coeducation.
Plan, under which students in any New Brunswick college could cross-register for classes offered by the other colleges.\textsuperscript{81} “With cross-registration between the single-sex colleges and the coeducational Livingston College there will be greater freedom of choice” one member stated.\textsuperscript{82} In actuality, several of the board members supported the tradition of single-sex schools. The Board also cited financial burdens as a reason for their decision, although estimated costs for coeducation were small: $150,000 for the first year and $75,000 for the next four years.\textsuperscript{83}

Perhaps the tumultuous atmosphere of the campus influenced the Board’s decision. As with other campuses nation-wide, students challenged authority on numerous issues, and these issues split the faculty as well. Spring of 1969 brought the black student movement’s disruptive and riveting protests. In the same year, there were disputes about the proposed federated college plan; some believed it restricted the undergraduate education at the university. Both students and faculty were involved in intense antiwar movements against the Vietnam War. Some protests focused specifically on the elimination of the Reserve Officer’s Training Corps (ROTC). The Board presumably believed coeducation would be another potentially disruptive measure.\textsuperscript{84}

In \textit{The News Tribune}, the local paper of Woodbridge, Charles H. Brower, chairperson of the Board of Governors, declared that “many options were needed,” concurring with the resolution of the Board. In contrast, the one Board member who voted in favor of coeducation, Joel Jacobsen, although his own daughter was a student of Douglass College, commented, “I think the principle of seclusion is operating here. There is a monastery at Rutgers and a nunnery at Douglass…” The article commented the Board of Governors suggested coeducation would be

\textsuperscript{81} Resolution Passed by the Rutgers University Board of Governors, October 9, 1970.” Memo from Dean Metzger, contained in the records of the Rutgers College Office of Student Life. Folder “1970-71: Coeducation at Rutgers College. Plans, memos, studies, etc.”
\textsuperscript{83} Henry R. Winkler, Vice President for Academic Affairs, to Members of the Board of Governors, 1 October 1971, Appendix IV, Grobman Papers.; Poulson, Susan L. (1998). \textit{Coeducation at Rutgers}. New Jersey History. 116 (1, 2), 72.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
implemented at future colleges of the University, but the Federated Plan was the best solution at the time.\textsuperscript{85}

The Board of Governors sought to find a balance amongst the colleges, and believed it was in the Federated Plan. Established in the fall of 1969, the system allowed students to enroll at any of the colleges – Livingston, Douglass, or Rutgers – regardless of sex, in any course not offered at their own college. In agreement, Foster thought coordinate education provided the “best of all possible worlds,” and an “exciting and promising contribution of NJ to the higher education of the country,” drawing from the success at Columbia and Brown Universities.\textsuperscript{86} The opponents of coeducation felt coordinate education was preferable, as it not only allowed both sexes in the same course, but also maintained the traditional aspects of the schools. Supporters of coeducation, of course, disagreed, and still wanted women admitted to Rutgers College.

The October 1970 decision was the second time in (then) recent history the Board of Governors rejected a college faculty vote; in the first, they overrode the resolution to phase out ROTC at Rutgers. Critical of the Board of Governor’s decision, the Rutgers College faculty once more passed a resolution in October 1970, reaffirming the resolution for coeducation.\textsuperscript{87} Led by Richard McCormick, Professor of History, the Coeducation Committee was committed to bring about the adoption of coeducation at Rutgers through various means.

At first, McCormick tried to persuade Foster to join the effort to make Rutgers coeducational, and become an institution where ‘women would not be regarded as bait to attract males, would not be assigned a degrading quota, [and] would not be relegated to a secondary

\textsuperscript{86} A Summary of arguments…” 1. Box 1 of the Papers of the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs Earle Clifford. Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University (RG 15/F2/01)
status”. Although McCormick conceded many forms of discrimination against women occur in coeducational institutions, he believed, “the fight must be waged against inequality in the coed institutions.”\(^{88}\) He told Foster, “The cause of women would be aided greatly if you joined us.” A couple of months later, Foster replied with the following, “Nothing would please me more than to declare peace with you on this issue. I am still rightly thinking about the terms under which I could, as I see it, rightly do this.”\(^{89}\) Foster reinforced her position against coeducation.

The Coeducation Committee also pursued “scare tactics” or legal measures. They contacted the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) about the possibility of legal action against the University, after analyzing the lawsuit brought by the ACLU to compel the University of Virginia to adopt coeducation. They also contacted the Women’s Equity Action League (WEAL), which in 1970 filed formal charges against all federal contractors that discriminated against women, focusing on universities with unfair hiring and admittance policies. By not admitting women, Rutgers fell under this classification. The Coeducation Committee became involved in the lawsuit through Phyllis Boring, Professor in the Romance Languages Department, and a member of WEAL.\(^{90}\)

In an October 1970 letter to Dean Grobman, Boring indicated that unless there were equal numbers of women on all the co-ed campuses, or “unless Rutgers College is made co-ed, then Rutgers is breaking the law and stands to lose its federal contracts.”\(^{91}\) Grobman followed up

\(^{88}\) Letter from McCormick, Dec 14, 1970 to Dean Foster. Response from Dean Foster dated Feb 4, 1971. The Papers of the Office of the Secretary of DC, Box #42, Folder “Coeducation Corres. & Reports 3.” Special Collections and University Archives, RU (19/C1/01)

\(^{89}\) Ibid.


with a letter of his own to President Gross, expressing his thoughts that the University would become the next University of Virginia if it did not take preventive actions against potential lawsuits for discrimination. Grobman’s preventive measures included plans to admit 500 women every year beginning in fall of 1971 to Rutgers College, or more simply, the adoption of coeducation.\textsuperscript{92}

McCormick and Boring also enlisted the help of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Professor of Law at Rutgers-Newark Law School (later U.S Supreme Court Justice). In expectation of a lawsuit, Ginsburg prepared a letter to be sent to potential clients, women who were denied admission to Rutgers College, as well as those who “wished to apply but did not do so because the unisexual admissions policy was known to them…” McCormick also suggested Ginsburg attend the Committee’s meeting to give advice on legal issues.\textsuperscript{93} In May 1971, the Committee submitted a petition to the Board of Governors with ten major reasons for the institution of coeducation; all were about the legality of maintaining a single-sex identity. The following statement represented Rutgers University’s position, “The uniqueness [sic] of Rutgers in this respect is not an advantage, but a liability.”\textsuperscript{94}

The Board of Governors did not seek to break any laws, but the specific exclusion in Admission for reasons outside of academic ability in a state university equaled discrimination. In late spring of 1971, as the arguments became legally centered, the Board of Governors


\textsuperscript{93} Draft of letter by Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Rutgers College/Departments/History, Papers of Richard McCormick, Box 9, folder “coeducation.” Special Collections and University Archives, RU (15/AO/12); Rutgers College Planning Committee Subcommittee on Coeducation minutes of Meeting on 12/18/70. Records of the Rutgers College Office of Student Life, folder “1970-71: Coeducation at RC. Plans, Memos, Studies, etc.”

\textsuperscript{94} “Petition of Rutgers College Sub-Committee on Coeducation to the Board of Governors, May 1, 1971: 1-4”. Papers of the office of the Dean of Rutgers College Box 2, Folder “Coeducation Rutgers College IV.” Special Collections and University Archives, New Brunswick, NJ (23/G1/02)
reconsidered the issue of coeducation, resulting in an ambiguous resolution. Although approval was granted to make Rutgers College coeducational, the Board “requested the administration to prepare detailed plans for further implementing coeducation in the New Brunswick area.” Upon this resolution, Grobman and faculty created the *Coeducation Proposal*, a detailed plan of costs and procedures for all implementations regarding the transition to admit women. In their September meeting, the Board gave final and clear approval of coeducation, for the admission of women at Rutgers College. 95 A month later, the Board agreed to the admission of 475 women (400 freshmen and 75 transfers) in the fall of 1972.

After a decade of controversy, and a specific campaign dating to 1968, Rutgers College became coeducational. One factor that may have influenced the overturn on the Board of Governor’s first decision was the University’s new president; some believed the coeducation controversy should be resolved to smooth his transition period. Another was the legal pressures the Board was confronted with after their first decision. Most importantly, the pressure from the Rutgers and some Douglass faculty, combined with student support from both colleges, overwhelmed Foster’s and the Alumni Associations’ resistance to coeducation. In September 1972, Rutgers College broke their all-male tradition to admit women for the first time in their 205 years of history.

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95 Minutes to the Board of Governors meeting, 10 September 1971, 7.
Chapter 4: Traditions and Revisions

Part 1: The Death of In loco parentis

Student culture at both Rutgers and Douglass College underwent significant changes during the 1960s and 1970s. While some of these changes began before the adoption of coeducation, and challenged accepted attitudes and perceptions, others were a direct effect of coeducation, and emphasized male and female identity and relations.

In loco parentis, a tradition that allowed administrators to oversee student behaviors, came under protest by students across the nation’s universities. In 1961, the National Student Association condemned such policies, “Paternalism in any form induces or reinforces immaturity, conformity, and disinterest, among those whose imagination, critical talent and capabilities for integrity and growth should be encouraged and given opportunity for development.”96 As other universities began to alter their position on this tradition, efforts to reduce the in loco parentis role at Rutgers were also developed. This is not unlike the scenario with coeducation.

One of the first victories against in loco parentis at Rutgers College was the deregulation of off-campus students’ behaviors. Both the Board of Governors and the Ad Hoc Committee on Student Rights and Responsibilities supported the act to leave off-campus offenses to civil authorities, unless the offense “poses a serious threat to the University community.”97 Other victories quickly followed this one with little or no protest from either students or officials. In March 1969, the mandatory physical education requirement was abolished.98 Maid services were also eliminated from the dormitories, saving the University the equivalent of eleven full-time

96 “In loco parentis,” Targum, 15 November 1961, p. 1
97 “Crosby Appointed Dean of Men; Board OK’s ‘In Loco’ Statement,” Targum 17 May 1965, p. 1
salaries. These victories encouraged attempts to remove the restrictions on inter-visitation between men and women.

Efforts were led by the Rutgers Residence Hall Council (RHC) (later to become the Inter-Residence Hall Council (IRHC)) with the goal of a closed-door policy, or the ability to have women guests without supervision. Their proposal included a two-step approach where students would demonstrate their responsibility to achieve their final goal. The first stage required a sign-in list, indication of a female in the room with a red card, and an open door. A receptionist supervised order and any infraction of the rules with room checks. Two months later, RHC submitted a lengthy report on the success of the first stage, and results from a questionnaire given to dorm residents that had a 98 percent preference for the closed-door policy. The Dean of Men, Earle W. Clifford, approved the recommendation. The Female Visitation Policy granted unlimited visitation rights and eliminated the receptionist. As problems arose during the second stage, alterations to the policy were made, continuing years after the adoption of coeducation. Overall, the transition to unlimited visitation rights had few problems, and was easily accepted by university officials. As supervision on visitation rights decreased, many students, especially the upperclassmen, felt the preceptors were also unnecessary and resented the constant monitoring. Although, the system was gradually altered to adhere to student’s demands for greater independence and privacy, the preceptor system remains intact to present time.

Separated by two miles between different campuses, but connected by a major highway, the two colleges exuded different atmospheres. Douglas College was situated next to the agriculture school, surrounded by woods and open spaces, providing a rural, relaxed, and secluded setting. The residences were homelike in contrast to Rutgers College’s urban atmosphere.

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100 "Closed-door policy-this weekend," Targum, 9 March 1967, p. 1
atmosphere and high-rise dormitories, as the campus was located nearer downtown New Brunswick. The separation went beyond the physical attributes. Douglass College’s “educational program became increasingly differentiated from that of the men’s colleges. There was notably more concern with the individual welfare of the students, as evidenced by the appointment of resident counselors and by the encouragement given to faculty members to join actively in the extracurricular life of the college.”¹⁰¹ Douglass’s atmosphere was quiet, protective, with a network of social rules and regulations that bound the community of students together. Attempts to preserve the existing nature of the College collided with changes in the student culture.

Liberalization against in loco parentis arrived late at Douglass. Similar to Rutgers, the first indications were housing regulations. At Douglas, students who opposed the rule, one must be at least twenty-one to live off-campus, protested with public demonstrations and a signed petition.¹⁰² This was followed by protests against curfews. In 1967, Dean Foster approved of a student government’s proposal extending the curfew times from 11 pm to 12 midnight on weekdays, and 1:30 am to 3 am on weekends. The students were not satisfied. In February, over forty students organized into the “Committee for Student Rights,” and purposely broke curfew rules in protest against administrative control, stating it was a “declaration of their student, human, and women’s rights.”¹⁰³ Curfew restrictions ended the following year, although residence halls closed at a certain time. The students were able to leave the dormitory at any time, but could not reenter past the closing hour until morning opening. In 1969, an ad hoc committee of

¹⁰³ “Coopie ‘Revolution’ Gathers Momentum Over Active Weekend,” Targum, 26 February 1968, p. 1; “34 Coopie curfew violators get slap on wrist from Honor Bd.,” Targum, 7 March 1968, p. 1
the student government proposed the elimination of curfews entirely. This was granted in January of 1970.

In the fall of 1968, students pushed their demand further by asking for cooperative housing. Under the proposal, students would make “the rules they want to live with.” In addition, the student government passed a resolution requesting the abolition of mandatory attendance at chapel, and the extension of parietal hours. Parietal hours, or visitation rights, were very restrictive in the 1960s, remaining in force much later than at Rutgers. Non-relatives were only allowed in the living rooms, and only at specific times. The proposal’s extension hours included 1 to 6 pm in the afternoons, and Friday and Saturday nights. Student initiatives were approved by Dean Foster, who also transferred the report to the Commission on Douglass of 1968, a committee formed to review the relation of residential rules to the academic process.

Some students thought there should be special designated housing for those who wished to have limited visitation hours. One of the major arguments in favor of this decision can be quoted from the Caellian, the Douglas student newspaper, “…there is a basic psychological need for a place that you can call your own, a place where you know you can go at all times and do what you want to do. Those who want parietals to remain as they are fear that if new parietals were put into effect this need might be ignored.” In contrast, others expressed the possibility that if incoming freshmen were given such an option, “parental pressure would force many girls to live in a restricted parietal house when they really didn’t want to.” In May of 1971, Dean

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104 “GA ad hoc comm. suggests no curfew,” Caellian, 21 February 1969, p. 1
105 “Girls propose co-op housing to increase freedom,” Caellian, 25 October 1968, p. 1
107 “GA ok’s structural revision, urges faculty to omit Chapel,” Caellian, 15 November 1968, p. 1
Foster approved twenty-four hours visitations, with separate housing in consideration for those who did not desire unrestricted visitation.

Perceptions and attitudes towards sexuality also saw significant changes in the 1960s. In 1967, a **Targum** article discussed the attitude changes towards sex; the article reported an informal poll result: sixty percent of students believed pre-marital sex was morally acceptable.\(^{111}\) Another poll revealed ninety percent of Rutgers men rejected the sexual double standard view for themselves and their wives.\(^{112}\) In contrast, Douglass maintained a conservative atmosphere towards sexuality. In a 1967 poll, about fifty percent of the female respondents did not believe in pre-marital sex. Additionally, only ninety out of the five hundred respondents, about twenty percent, confirmed they had sexual intercourse.\(^ {113}\) These numbers supports the position that many of the women accepted the double standard. The husband need not be a virgin, but “their future husband had the right to expect them to be a virgin.”\(^ {114}\)

These views did not hold, as sex between students was slowly becoming acceptable. For many, college was a time where morals, beliefs, and attitudes were reshaped. In a 1967 **Targum** poll, nearly seventy percent of the women believed sex was more acceptable in college than in high school. Independence, society’s permissiveness, and the environment were cited as factors to influence such attitudes. Yet, the tolerance was for others, not for personal conduct. “Thus there seems to be a greater tolerance of the acts of others,” a **Targum** article reported, “a fuller appreciation of the relation of morals and sex to society in general, but not a corresponding

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\(^{111}\) “Rutgersmen tend to disregard ‘double standard’ in survey on sex,” **Targum**, 5 December 1967, p. 1


\(^{113}\) “Girls’ attitudes on morality differ only slightly from males,” **Targum** 5 December 1967, p. 4

\(^{114}\) Ibid.
change in personal actions despite these new attitudes.”\textsuperscript{115} Interestingly enough, these attitudes and perceptions only applied to general society, and not themselves.

Slowly, this would change. A poll taken of the class of 1973, in their first year and then three years later, indicated that the students had become more tolerant of pre-marital sex (81 percent) and of the use of birth control (73 percent) by their later college years.\textsuperscript{116} Another study based on 991 responses from a distribution of over 2500 questionnaires to the female dormitory residences of Douglass, Rutgers, and Livingston, data indicated 56 percent of the women between 17 and 22 had sexual experiences, the proportion rising with age.\textsuperscript{117} Sexual activity was rising, responding to the development of birth control. Initially, only information was provided at the two Colleges’ health centers. At Douglass, the information was not widely distributed, available only to those who sought answers to their questions. Birth control devices were not provided at first, as the Health Center did not have the proper facilities, and there was a legal issue with students under twenty-one years of age. By the late 1970s, after the onset of coeducation, prescriptions were available at both Rutgers and Douglass College.\textsuperscript{118}

The changes did not stop then. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, students challenged University authorities for more independence and privacy. These desires were reflected in their stance on controversial issues, as well as through their demands to gain certain rights. From unlimited visitation rights to accepting views of premarital sex, students demanded the rights and responsibility to govern their own actions. Experiencing the diminishing in loco parentis, Douglass also faced the loss of a purpose and standards with the onset of coeducation. Change was needed to survive.

\textsuperscript{115} “Men undergo change in attitude,” Targum, 5 December 1967, p. 1
\textsuperscript{116} “Student poll shows Douglass attitudes,” Targum, 4 May 1973, p. 3
\textsuperscript{117} “Women’s sexual behavior survey results released,” Targum, 17 April 1974, p. 3
\textsuperscript{118} “Willets dispenses contraceptives,” Targum, 21 February 1975, p. 6
Part 2: Revision of the Mission

Coeducation did not bring Douglass’s worst fears to fruition, as the College maintained high admission and academic standards. Douglass did adapt to the changing University with a renewed sense of purpose and direction as a woman’s college, influenced by the growing feminist movement.

The impact on Douglass from coeducation was small but significant. As predicted by Foster, student ranking of Douglass College women were lower than previous years, "dropping from the 90th percentile in 1971 to the 86th percentile in 1976."\(^{119}\) (The rankings did not fare any worse, eventually rising in future years.) As a result, the history and purpose of Douglass College became very important and emphasized within the Douglass community of students, faculty, and administration. In the late 1960s, the Douglass College catalogue indicated the purpose of Douglass College was “to develop the possibilities for growth in its students, so that they may find the fullest satisfaction in rich and responsible personal lives and serve usefully as citizens.\(^{120}\)

By the mid-1970s, the purpose and history changed. “Douglas is a college for women that offers a liberal education within a coeducation university setting…It recognizes a special responsibility with regard to women’s roles in higher education and in the world.”\(^{121}\) This focus was evident in the 1972 freshman orientation. Guest speakers, workshops, and discussions “centered on developing an awareness of what it means to be a woman at a woman’s college.”\(^{122}\)

To offset the impact of coeducation, Douglass emphasized their status as an all-women’s college as a unique and strong advantage. They particularly focused on the prominent role they

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\(^{120}\) Douglass College Catalogue, 1968-69, p. 7

\(^{121}\) Douglass College Catalogue, 1974-75

\(^{122}\) “Freshman orientation to center of women,” Caellian, 5 May 1972.
would play in a woman’s life, largely influenced by the growing feminist presence on campus. The new feminist bond spread to the faculty, who became active in promoting feminist ideals on campus. Women leaders and feminist speakers were brought to campus through series of lectures on women’s liberation. A 1970 spring panel discussed topics of the history of women’s liberation and the psyche of women. Another panel in the following fall invited students and faculty to discuss their encounters with discrimination.\textsuperscript{123} Taking pride in their single-sex status, Douglass began to direct their efforts towards aiding women of all kinds to understand the value of womanhood from various perspectives.

In 1973, the Douglass Feminist Collective was formed to “raise consciousness at both Douglass and Rutgers College.”\textsuperscript{124} The Collective felt that Douglass should be preserved as a women’s college. New courses were developed in the early 1970s that related specifically to women. This eventually developed into a Women’s Studies Program.\textsuperscript{125} The library began to collect materials relating to women’s roles and accomplishments, while the job counseling services actively promoted expanding career aspirations for women. A Women’s Center was established, catering to women’s interests, and sponsoring conferences on women and politics. An earlier program begun in 1958 by Dean Mary Bunting expanded to enroll older women students. The program’s philosophy was women should “at any point in their lives, have the opportunity to increase their education and maximize their potential.”\textsuperscript{126}

Accepting this philosophy as their own, Douglass changed their mission and purpose to provide opportunities for specific groups of women. Not offered at coeducational institutions –

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\textsuperscript{123} “Lib panel centered on female experiences,” Caellian, 14 September 1970, p. 1
\textsuperscript{124} “Douglass feminist organize collective to share experiences,” Caellian, 7 December 1973, p. 9
\textsuperscript{125} Douglass College Catalogue, 1975-1976
\textsuperscript{126} “Admission of older women increased at Douglass,” Caellian, 22 September 1972, p. 3
\end{flushright}
some of these programs were revolutionary at the time – Douglass College attracted enough women to raise their standards, as well as to maintain their single-sex status.
As Rutgers College became coeducational, the group of women who were long denied access to certain rights and privileges now demanded their opportunities. The road was not smooth, as difficulties arose during the transition from all male to coeducational.

Three years after the coeducation proposal, the Board of Governors finally relented, requesting a detailed report on the changes that would occur with the admission of women before an official change of decision. The Provost of the University, Dr. Richard Schlatter, also requested a proposal that would include the impacts and implications of coeducation. Grobman complied, producing a comprehensive study of the impact of coeducation throughout the University.

In the Proposal for Coeducation at Rutgers University, numerous aspects of the transition to coeducation were taken in consideration, ranging from admissions to curriculum adjustments to residential space and health concerns. By supplying arguments on how an all-male institution would lack understanding towards women’s education and needs, Foster provided the outline Grobman required to address such concerns in his Proposal. For the issue of bias against women during admissions, Grobman specifically mentions the following, “In the admission of women, the Rutgers College Committee on Admission should utilize the same priorities it follows for the admission of men.”

Women will be admitted as men already are, without regard to race, creed, religion, or national origin. However, Rutgers College receives far more applications than it can accommodate and therefore admission is selective. Academic proficiency plays a large role in the selection process.

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127 Arnold B. Grobman, “Proposal for Coeducation at Rutgers University”. Contained in a folder associated with coeducation documents. Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey (15/01/12)
in admission…”128 This set the standards that were to be expected during the admissions procedure; one gender would not be favored over the other. Certain fields of studies, the humanities and sciences, were associated with gender connotations. It was feared that the admission of women would reinforce the stereotypes of these fields, but projections for major shifts in departmental registration were unfounded. On the aspect of housing and health, Grobman detailed the costs of residential renovations for housing and the implementation of additional health services solely for women.129

By outlining the details of the implications for coeducational student life and teaching, this comprehensive study on the impact of coeducation presented the realistic possibility of coeducation at Rutgers College. Although the studies had attributed coeducational settings to a “chilly climate” and a “favorable climate” for single-sex colleges, coinciding with Foster’s own stance and arguments, Grobman provided the evidence that Rutgers College was definitely willing to raise the temperature from cold to favorable.

On September 9, 1971, the new President of the University, Edward J. Bloustein approved of coeducation in his statement to the Board of Governors. “…Accordingly, I recommend to the Board of Governors the following resolution: that approval be granted to change Rutgers College into a coeducational unit, the change be made in steps as it is economically feasible to do so.”130 In regards to the admission of women, Bloustein objected to using a certain quota, but suggested a “moderate number of women” should be admitted. Additionally, he mentioned the need for female staff members at all levels and “in areas beyond

128 Press Release, “Coeducation Comes to RC.” Papers of the office of the dean of Rutgers College, Box 1, folder “coeducation Rutgers College V.” Special Collections and University Archives, RU (23/G1/02)
129 Arnold B. Grobman, “Proposal for Coeducation at Rutgers University”. Contained in a folder associated with coeducation documents. Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey (15/AO/12)
those of ‘student life’ and ‘health services.’”\textsuperscript{131} Bloustein recognized coeducation as in line “with plans for the future growth of the University in New Brunswick”\textsuperscript{132}; his endorsement of coeducation coincides with the University’s extensive structural changes.

Rutgers did not lack effort in their preparation for coeducation. In February of 1972, Rutgers College sponsored a conference on coeducation, inviting many prestigious schools that had recently transitioned to coeducation (i.e. Dartmouth, Princeton, Yale, University of Virginia, etc.). Representatives from each school presented and discussed the successes and difficulties their schools encountered in admissions, financial aid, housing, staff, health services, curriculum, and student life. The conference gave Rutgers an extensive amount of information on various methods for the departments that would be affected by the change; however, with only a few months before the arrival of the first females, many of the methods may have been infeasible to implement.\textsuperscript{133} On another aspect, Douglass College could have provided great insight for Rutgers in regards to housing, courses, health services, etc; however, Foster maintained her opposition against coeducation. In addition, Douglass was preoccupied with their own difficulties as they adjusted to the impact of coeducation.

To help the College adjust to the demands the transition would entail, a special committee was established, the Coordinating Committee for Coeducation. Chaired by Professor McCormick, members included an equal number of representatives of both sexes from students, administrative, and faculty.\textsuperscript{134} The Committee met once a month throughout the year, focusing their attention on the methods departments would utilize for the transition. The Committee could

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\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 2-3  
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{133} Minutes of the Conference on Coeducation at RC, Feb 14 1972, in the hand of Helen Greven. Records of the RC office of student, etc 1971-73.  
\textsuperscript{134} Cooper, Melanie Janis. Resolved that I Should be a Man: A Comprehensive Study of Co-education at Rutgers College. Undergraduate Thesis, Rutgers College, 1997, 41.
\end{flushright}
only offer suggestions and advice, for they had no power to make official decisions; it was simply a forum of opinions addressing issues raised in Grobman’s study.\textsuperscript{135}

The Committee devoted special attention to the department of Admissions, as they would make the initial contact with the women. As suggested by Grobman in his study, the ideal number of admitted women would be 400 freshmen and 75 transfers. These numbers allowed an equal proportion of males and females in the total enrollment of both Rutgers and Douglass College.\textsuperscript{136} Yet, 133 transfers were admitted, totaling 544 females for the first year at Rutgers.\textsuperscript{137} The rankings of the first applicants to Rutgers College after coeducation were “very high” according to the Director of Undergraduate Admissions to Rutgers College, Geoffrey Gould. He reported the standards for women were higher than the males due to the limited number of spaces; the women could not be below the top 15\% of their high school class, whereas the men's standards were just slightly lower.\textsuperscript{138} Of 1255 applications, 462 females were accepted with three hundred on the waiting list. In comparison, only 1021 males were accepted, with no waiting list, from a pool of 4175 applicants. These numbers were an increase of more than thirty percent from the previous year.\textsuperscript{139} Class rank also increased, as suspected with the high standards. In 1971, the year before women were first admitted, the average class rank was at the 87\textsuperscript{th} percentile, and by

\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., 42.
\textsuperscript{136} Enrollments of Livingston, Cook College, and the Schools of Engineering and Pharmacy were not included in this formula. Memo from Dean Arnold Grobman to Dr. Richard Schlatter (Provost), June 18, 1971:2. Records of the Rutgers College Office of Student Life, folder "1970-71: Coeducation at RC. Plans, memos, studies, etc."
\textsuperscript{138} Memo from Dean Arnold Grobman to Dr. Richard Schlatter (Provost), June 18, 1971:2. Records of the Rutgers College Office of Student Life, folder "1970-71: Coeducation at RC. Plans, memos, studies, etc."
\textsuperscript{139} Minutes of the First Meeting of the Coordinating Committee for Coeducation, October 18, 1971. Records of the Rutgers college Office of Student Life, Folder 'Special Coordinating Committee for Coeducation, 1971-1973".
1976, it increased to the 89th percentile.\textsuperscript{140} Coeducation did prove to be economically and academically beneficial for Rutgers College.

Throughout the University, the presence of women on campus slowly but steadily increased. Total undergraduate enrollment in New Brunswick doubled between 1964-65 and 1975-76 schools years. Enrollment at Rutgers College rose 68 percent, and at Douglass, 40 percent. Opened in 1969 with 769 students, Livingston College admitted 3,488 by 1975-76, a 353 percent increase in eight years.\textsuperscript{141} In 1964-65, women were 32 percent of the student body in New Brunswick, but by 1975-76, women were 48 percent. While the total number of men increased from 5,593 in 1964-65 to 9,149 in 1975-76, an increase of 64 percent, the total number of women grew from 2,604 to 8,471—a 225 percent increase.\textsuperscript{142} The admission of women to Rutgers College not only greatly increased the number of women in New Brunswick, but in general, admissions increased overall.

Housing was the next major concern. In 1971, there was a lack of housing for undergraduates. A Residence Education Committee was established through the Office of the Dean of Men to weigh the possible options in regards to the integration and renovations of housing. At the Coordinating Committee’s November meeting, they proposed renovations in all dormitories, as well as three housing options for the women: single-sex, coed by section, and fully coed. Crosby felt full integration was too soon after the elimination of in loco parentis, but the majority dismissed his hesitancy. In the April meeting, it was reported enough women had

\textsuperscript{140} Data provided by Ian A. Hodos, Senior Associate Director of University Undergraduate Admissions, Office of University Admissions, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ; Poulson, Susan L. "A Quiet Revolution": The Transition to Coeducation at Georgetown and Rutgers Colleges, 1960-1975. Diss. Georgetown, U, 1989. Ann Arbor: UMI. ATT 9027671, 173.
\textsuperscript{141} Interview with McCormick. Poulson, Susan L. (1998). \textit{Coeducation at Rutgers}. New Jersey History. 116 (1, 2), 75.
\textsuperscript{142} Poulson, Susan L. (1998). \textit{Coeducation at Rutgers}. New Jersey History. 116 (1, 2), 75.
requested all three options.\textsuperscript{143} Renovations remained minimal as only shower curtains and mirrors were added; most bathrooms retained urinals.\textsuperscript{144} A full structural renovation would have been economically infeasible for the College at the time.

Renovations in housing were minimal, but alterations in the health services were almost non-existent. Glenn Gamble, head of the Counseling and Placement Center believed a female counselor would be “desirable, but not imperative”, anticipating no other problems, despite the rise in sexuality concerns. At the Coordinating Committee meeting, he agreed a full-time woman should be hired, and noted the need for the development of an intensive career-counseling program for women.\textsuperscript{145} Yet, in 1974, there was only a part-time gynecologist available, with a three-week wait; administrators reasoned there was an uncertainty of the availability for funding for these health services.\textsuperscript{146}

As proposed in Grobman’s \textit{Coeducation Proposal}, special efforts were directed towards recruiting women to the faculty and staff. As Foster consistently argued, the lack of female faculty and staff was one of the College’s disadvantages. Grobman understood as the College transitioned from all male, it was important to increase the number of female faculty to provide the female students role models of successful academic women with whom they were comfortably able to approach for advice. In the first year of coeducation, 1972, Alice Irby became the first women in a university-wide post with the title of Vice President for Student


\textsuperscript{144} Report submitted by Howard Crosby to Henry Wrinkler, Vice President for Academic Affairs, September 28, 1971. Records of the Rutgers College Office of Student Life, folder 'Coeducation Rutgers College 1970-71: Coeducation. Plans, memos, studies, etc.'

\textsuperscript{145} Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of the Coordinating Committee for Coeducation, Tuesday April 4, 1972. Records of the Rutgers College Office of Student Life, folder “Special coordinating Committee for Coeducation 1971-1973.”

Services. A few months later, Claire Nagle became the first elected woman on the Board of Governors. Other women were also appointed as associate and assistant professors.\footnote{\textit{Female Board chairman is Rutgers first}," Rutgers, 10 September 1973, p. 6; \textit{Rutgers College is Graduating First Women}," New York Times, 27 May 1973.}

The female presence also entered the classroom, as professors focused on women’s experiences in their curriculum. One political science professor included a section on feminism in her course, noticing when the radical feminist movement was mentioned, the men became upset, but the women reacted intensively, loudly voicing their opinions in class.\footnote{\textit{Rutgers College is Graduating First Women}," New York Times, 27 May 1973.} The 1972-73 and 1973-74 Rutgers College course catalogs each listed only one course that dealt with women’s issue: The Black Women, under the Afro-American Studies.\footnote{Rutgers College Catalogue, 1972-1973 and 1973-1974. Records of the Rutgers College Office of Student Life.} In contrast, Douglass College offered an array of women’s courses.

With the approval of coeducation, questions arose regarding an appropriate athletic program for the women. In the spring of 1972, Helen Greven, Assistant to the Dean of the College for Coeducation announced no major policy decisions would be made on women’s sports until women indicated an interest in competition.\footnote{\textit{Sports slate set for women}," \textit{Targum}, 4 May 1972, p. 9} This hesitation became a concern as the Rutgers females indicated interest in far greater numbers than expected. The next question that arose was whether women athletes should compete on existing men’s teams. This was not possible until the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) changed their regulations to allow for women members. Additionally, the men dominated the facilities and equipment. At this stage, questions arose about sex discrimination under the US Educational Amendment of 1972 (Title IX). The amendment forbids any sexual discrimination in any educational institution using
federal funds; this applied to the athletic department as well. Rutgers once more faced a potential lawsuit.\textsuperscript{151}

The year 1974 was full of many accomplishments. In 1974, the University established a seven-sport intercollegiate program for women, under the program’s director, Rita Kay Thomas.\textsuperscript{152} (The collegiate program is speculated to been a result of the threat of the potential lawsuit). In that year alone, half of the \textit{Targum} staff was comprised of women; three Rutgers College women established the first sorority, Delta Beta Psi; Tau Epsilon Phi, a co-ed fraternity, elected a woman president; and Margaret Keeleher became the first female cadet commander in ROTC.\textsuperscript{153} Lastly, Dr. Phyllis Boring became the first full time female dean at Rutgers College in this accomplished year. The following year saw the establishment of the Women’s Chorale, an all-women’s choir, as the Glee club remained male.\textsuperscript{154} Previous years’ accomplishments included the appointment of women in nontraditional jobs. Campus patrol hired its first women officers in 1972, and in 1973, the University hired its first women bus drivers.\textsuperscript{155} As Bloustein suggested, the University recognized the need for female staff and presence in all areas.

As requested by the Board of Governors and Richard Schlatter, Grobman’s report studied the different factors of coeducation, proposing various changes within the departments that would affected by the incoming women. As appropriate, the departments of Admission and Housing were the College main concerns and received the majority of the attention in regards to preparation for coeducation. While admission exceeded initial expectations with the number of applicants, housing only produced minimal renovations; their attention focused on the type of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[\textsuperscript{151}] “Title IX Under Investigation at State Conference,” The Rutgers \textit{Targum}, September 20, 1974: 8
\item[\textsuperscript{152}] “University set for 7 women’s teams,” \textit{Targum}, 12 September 1974, p. 20
\item[\textsuperscript{153}] “First female ROTC cadet commander assumes post,” \textit{Targum}, 12 February 1974, p. 7; “Delta Beta Psi to be the first Rutgers sorority,” \textit{Targum}, 7 May 1974, p. 1
\item[\textsuperscript{154}] “RU Women’s Chorale formed,” \textit{Targum}, 24 February 1975, p. 7
\item[\textsuperscript{155}] “Campus Patrol announces three women added to ranks,” \textit{Targum}, 13 October 1972, p. 1; “Women drivers join the hassled campus bus scene—and like it,” \textit{Targum}, 26 September 1973, p. 3
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
housing that would be offered rather than the actual housing that were already available. Health services and the Athletic department were similar in their hesitation for implementing changes prior to the first semester. Effective alterations to the existing services would not occur until the women were integrated into the community and demanded these services. In contrast, there were strong efforts in acquiring female faculty and staff. In preparation for coeducation, Rutgers College proposed changes that would benefit the incoming women, but were moderately successful as only certain changes were implemented in certain departments. As the years progressed, Rutgers adapted to the presence of women, increasingly adding services and programs that would benefit the women on campus.

At the semester’s beginning, the women attracted little attention, and the first few days were relatively normal in comparison to the interest produced prior to their arrival. The fall of 1972 had been a topic of debate for the past four years, but the presence of women on campus was anti-climatic.

Part 2: What She Said…

The year 1993 was the twenty-fifth anniversary year of women’s attendance at Rutgers College. In celebration, the project, “Rutgers’ Women: A Living History,” was initiated. To preserve and gain an understanding of the experiences of these particular women, questionnaires were distributed and interviews were conducted with the first women of Rutgers College. Seven years later, informal questionnaires were sent to the women of Douglass College, class of 1972, also to gain their perspectives. The two set of questionnaires addressed the women’s reasons for attendance and an evaluation of their experiences at their respective college.

156 The surveys were distributed to only a select few of the Douglass College women alumni who had agreed to complete them. Time and resource constraints only allowed the possibility of twenty surveys, used to gain preliminary research. Although the Douglass College surveys were on a smaller scale than those sent to Rutgers
Although financial costs and academic reputation were the most important reasons for attending either Douglass or Rutgers College, a majority of the Rutgers College women of ’72 included the opportunity to be one of the first women at a formerly all-male college as one of the major reasons for attendance. As stated by Margaret Van Kleef, “Being the first female group to enter Rutgers, the competition was stiff, and I was pleased to be part of such an elite group.” Although they may have attempted nonchalance about their status, a majority of the women held it with honor. For those who had applied to both Douglass and Rutgers, the newly acquired status of Rutgers College as coeducational may have swayed the decision in favor of Rutgers. One respondent simplified the decision, “Best state school in NJ. Coed vs Douglass which was not coed.” In contrast, a majority of the Douglass alumnae described their reasons for attending as something other than the single-sex status of the college. Yet, many had attended single-sex high schools; the familiar setting of an all-female student body may have been slightly influential in the decision. Moreover, some Douglass alumni recommended a coeducational college, despite satisfaction with their own all-women’s education. “I think women have equal educational opportunities from coeducational or single-sex schools. It is really up to the individual to make the best of the college experiences.” A majority of the women from both colleges agreed, depending on the individual’s need, either school would be beneficial.

In a New York Times interview of the Rutgers College class of 1976 female graduates, a “substantial number” felt discrimination from the male faculty. Most occurred indirectly through chauvinist comments to the class or some form of sexist implications in the materials for the

College women, it provided sufficient data to observe differences in their experiences. –Stated by Van der Beck (Thesis, 2001, 56).

157 Van Kleef, Margaret J. Questionnaire on 9 March 1993. Special Collections and University Archives, Alexander Library, Rutgers University, New Brunswick (R-MC-040).


course. Interestingly, many remarked on the little or no discrimination they received from the male students.\(^{160}\) One male commented it was “good to be able to expect a smile back”, explaining there was a relaxed aura of friendship between the two genders, instead of the expected tension and aversion of the eyes.\(^{161}\) In agreement, one female commented, “Last year, the men would hardly say hello to a woman on campus. This year, they are friendly and less defensive. It’s a lot more normal.” Perhaps, this is a result from women’s preference to fit in that first year, creating nonchalance about being the first women in Rutgers College.\(^{162}\) This nonchalance may have attributed to the anti-climatic atmosphere that first semester.

While the *New York Times* article barely indicated any discrimination from the male students, this was not the case between the women of Rutgers and Douglass College. One Rutgers College women reported unsociability from the Douglass women. “Where I felt discrimination more, and I think there would be a lot of females who would agree with me, was at Douglass campus against the females from Rutgers. We would try to take courses at Douglass, you were allowed to, and those females, especially the first year, were not pleasant at all, to the females at Rutgers if they knew you were from Rutgers.”\(^{163}\) Others remarked on the differences between women at the two colleges: “There was a difference between a Rutgers College female and a Douglass College female in terms of how people, administration and especially Rutgers College men, the way that Rutgers College men looked at these girls…”\(^{164}\) One respondent acknowledged the stereotypes associated with the Douglass women. “…they were all called

\(^{160}\) Ibid.

\(^{161}\) “Women in College see pros, sons, of form life here,” *Targum*, 11 September 1972, p. 1


\(^{164}\) Phyllis Anderson Wright, interview by Tamara Xavier, 25 April 1993. “Women at Rutgers College: A Living History” collection. Special Collections and University Archives, Alexander Library, Rutgers University, New Brunswick (R-MC-040).
Debbie Douglass and I guess the image we had of those women, which definitely was not correct, I’d say, were that they had tea parties, if you think of the stereotype with the white gloves and the proper dress and the whole bit, which some of their dorms at the time had, it was pretty much like that.”\(^{165}\) The stereotype included aspects of reserved sexuality and unattractive appearances. “Debbie Douglass—mucho studios, mucho frigid!!”…”They never smile.” “Debbie has strong middle-class hang-ups.” “Glasses, overweight, and bun.”\(^{166}\) Others remarked on the attitude, “99% stuck up.” “Douglass girls will finally have some competition and maybe they’ll come down off their pedestals.”\(^{167}\) Contrastingly, the stereotype of a Rutgers female was one who was active in student affairs and socially adept.

Douglass students reacted against the stereotype. “I am fully aware that there is a myth of ‘Debbie Douglass’ floating around this campus,” one student wrote, “Douglass women scoff at the ‘Debbie’ myth because she’s a conglomerate expectation compiled over a time period of fifty years…We’re not conforming to molds and we see no image to which we must ascribe.”\(^{168}\) Interestingly, the surveyed Douglass women did not report receiving or returning hostility towards the Rutgers College women. In fact, they described the women as, “No different than the Douglass College female.”\(^{169}\)

In 1970, students from Rutgers and Douglass College had formed a Liaison Committee to “prove that they can not only socialize together, but work together.” The committee consisted of ten freshmen: six from Douglass and four from Rutgers. They had four objectives: to establish unity, to hold joint social functions, to exchange information about each school, and to hold joint

\(^{165}\) Diane Verhasselt, interview by Helen French, 10 April 1994.


\(^{168}\) Editorial by Sara E. Douglass, Caellian, 10 December 1971, p. 7

\(^{169}\) Survey completed by Gwendolyn Marshall, 1 November 2000.

59
class projects. Yet, evident from the women’s comments, the Liaison Committee did not stop the stereotypes or unfamiliarity between the two schools. Only time and the habitual presence of women on both campuses could erase the vivid separation and stereotypes of the two Colleges.

Entering the twenty-first century, the University once again experienced structural changes under the current president, Richard L. McCormick (son of Richard P. McCormick). By merging all the liberal arts colleges, forming the currently in place School of Arts and Sciences, this move essentially dissolved the separation of Rutgers and Douglass College.

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170 “Good-bye Debbie Douglass,” Caellian, 6 February 1970, p. 4
Conclusion

The study of women’s history is a relatively recent theme. Even more recent is the study of women’s colleges. Within this field of study, there is a strong disagreement on the best form of education for women. Some studies explore the advantages and disadvantages; others explore the impacts of coeducational and single-sex schooling. Yet, all studies tried to identify the aspects of single-sex colleges that make them very distinctive. Despite this distinction, women colleges are on the low end of the number spectrum, eventually making the transition or closing as they meet decreasing enrollment numbers or financial instability. Nonetheless, many advocates of women colleges believe women colleges will always remain in existent as long as coeducational colleges remain inadequate for women.

This begs the question: Are coeducational institutions inadequate for men as well? Prior to the 1960s decade, many all-male institutions flourished throughout the nation before the majority either transitioned to coeducation or closed, not unlike the all-female schools. Today, there are only four remaining throughout the country. Only one, Morehouse College in Atlanta, is nationally recognized, whereas the other three are small, private two-year institutions.  The claim is that women’s colleges serve the needs of female better than coeducational institution in regards to academics and discrimination; this is also applicable to the needs of men as well, and thus, all-male institutions. Yet, debates and the majority of the studies have only centered on all-female institutions, rarely mentioning any all-male schools. Perhaps one possible explanation is there are more four-year women colleges that are comparable to most coeducational institutions. Despite the claim, many studies conclude there is no one “best” form of education for women (or anyone). Attendance at a coeducational or single-sex college is an individual decision and in

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accordance to the needs of the individual. A person will most benefit from an institution that suits their needs.

During the coeducation controversy, Foster remained convinced the transition to coeducation at Rutgers College would lead to the eventual decline of Douglass College as a women’s college. The majority of her arguments centered on the benefits a single-sex education provided for females in contrast to the disadvantages of a coeducational setting. In the aftermath of the transition, Douglass improvised its mission and purpose, dedicating its services to the empowerment of women rather than simply just education of females. Douglass College provided special opportunities targeted towards specific groups of women, including nontraditional older women, science and technology majors, and high-achievers; these opportunities were notably different from other colleges. These programs not only served their mission, but also allowed Douglass to remain competitive in a neighboring all coeducational environment.

Women have been part of Rutgers College for the past forty years. Although logistical problems were apparent in the first few years after the transition, they were expected. The first classes of women did not let their newly acquired status stop them from obtaining the services for their needs and desires. Because of the determination of newly admitted women, the housing, athletic, and health departments established new programs that catered to females’ needs. Most importantly, their presence spurred the movement to hire women faculty that would provide the diversity and future influence the administration required for an equitable climate. In the time since, Rutgers College adapted to the presence of women on their campus, becoming a normative expectation for everyone (until its recent merge into Rutgers University-New Brunswick).
Foster was convinced the transition to coeducation at Rutgers College would lead to the eventual decline of Douglass College into a coeducational college as well. Her fears were never realized – to an extent. Despite the assertions of previous honors thesis scholars, Douglass College did decline; as well as did Rutgers College. In 2007, the University experienced a merge of the liberal arts colleges – Rutgers, Douglass, and Livingston – to form one system, currently in place, the School of Arts and Sciences. Rutgers and Douglass College are no longer in existence. Yet, the name of Rutgers remains with the title of the University, and the name of Douglass remains with the residential campus. Furthermore, the dedication towards women did not decline, continuing with the existence of special interest groups in different disciplines (i.e. The Institute for Women’s Leadership, The Certificate Program in International Studies, Mary I. Bunting Program, Public Education Leadership Network, Eagleton Institute for Women Politics). All programs created by the college now apply to all females within the University. No longer differentiated by which college they attend, they are now on an equal status of holding the same title as a student of Rutgers University.
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