

“The Wimmin are With Us to Stay”: Women’s Social Activities at the University of North
Carolina from 1897 to 1946

By
Emma Watts

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History Department
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Introduction

The University of North Carolina's admissions department reported that of the 4,355 students that enrolled in the university in the fall of 2017, sixty-one percent of them were female. Women first made their debut at UNC in 1897; total enrollment at the school was estimated at about four-hundred students, five of whom were female. In 1920 the number of women at UNC has gone from inconsequential to dominating. Sallie Stockard was the only female graduate at UNC in 1898 and I will be one of almost 2,000 women to graduate in 2018. From 1897 until 1946 under the guidance of Mrs. Inez Koonce Stacy, the advisor to women and later Dean of Women Students, women fought to go from guests at a male school to students of a co-educational university.¹

The everyday lives of women during their first few years at UNC were not well documented. Apart from the occasions they were mentioned during Board of Trustees meetings or other more official documents, on paper women hardly existed at UNC. From 1906 to 1908 the school yearbook, *The Yackety Yack*, devoted a few pages to women titled, "The Point of View of a Co-ed." In the 1906 pages Mary Graves wrote of how she had heard owls will watch a light until their heads twist off and said, "I have never seen this experiment tried, nor have I seen a newly arrived co-ed walk around a group of students. It may be that in either process heads would fall. However, a co-ed will not be likely to try this: we are always glad enough to slip into the nearest door."² In that first decade women were a rare sight on the UNC camps still and did

¹ Pamela Dean, *Women on the Hill: A History of Women at the University of North Carolina*. (Chapel Hill, Division of Student Affairs, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1987), 1-16.

² *Yackety Yack*. 1906.

their best to remain so. The tenuous position of the women during that time forced them to keep a low profile at the school

The greatest insight into the everyday lives of the first women to attend UNC is through the school newspaper, *The Daily Tar Heel*. The majority of the first-hand information in this paper comes from this newspaper, written by or about women at the school. The articles sometimes contain facts and information, and sometimes contain opinion and speculation. Each article holds significance because the students of the newspaper deemed its contents important enough for the entire school community to read it. The intended audience was the student population of UNC, and so the paper published articles it thought would be relevant to them specifically. Articles in *The Daily Tar Heel* were created by students and for students at the University of North Carolina, which is an important and unique perspective.

It is very important to note the demographics of the students during the time covered in this paper. The women referred to throughout the paper are white women, many of whom were from middle class families. Marcia Louise Latham, who graduated with the class of 1900, was the daughter of a probate judge. Elizabeth Murphy Taylor graduated from UNC in 1910, and her father was a physician. It was uncommon for a woman to receive higher education in the first half of the twentieth century, particularly in the south. These women bravely fought through a hostile environment at UNC, but they also all came from families that could afford to send them to a university. Those described in this paper were exceptions, they were the privileged few.

Not only were the women described in this paper not poor, they were also not women of color. The first black students were not admitted as undergraduates at UNC until 1955, and all three of those students eventually transferred and graduated from different universities. The first female black student was not admitted until 1961, over half a century after the first white women

were accepted. During the period of time covered in this paper Chapel Hill was a segregated town. *The Daily Tar Heel* and *Yackety Yack* often published overtly racist articles and photographs. Shows put on by the Playmakers theater often featured black face. The white women in this paper did face prejudice and did have to overcome obstacles to attend and while they attended the university, but they were still allowed to at the university. The story this paper tells is a miniscule part of the greater history of North Carolina from 1897 to 1946.

There is a sizable amount of research done regarding the first few generations of women to attend higher education. This material almost exclusively focuses on women's time in the classroom, their general academic pursuits, and what they went on to do after they graduated. What women did in their spare time is overlooked. This paper analyzes what women at UNC did while they were not taking classes, and how that affected their place at UNC. There are extremely few sources available that describe women's social activities while at college, and far fewer that describe women's social activities at the University of North Carolina specifically. The information is usually included as an anecdote in the broader context of their academic pursuits. This paper also focuses on how life at a co-educational university differed from life at an all-female college. The experience of a woman at a previously all-male institution, or a "co-ed" as they were commonly referred, was drastically different from at an all-female college. Academics were an undeniably important part of the college experience, no matter what school a student attends, but it would be naïve to imply it dominates the entire college experience. This paper aims to show another, perhaps more personal, side of women's history.

Throughout this paper I will argue that women at UNC became a more integral part of the campus through their social and extracurricular activities, rather than their academic feats. Women both found and created their place at the University of North Carolina outside of the

classroom. In the first few decades women attended UNC they were allowed to take only a limited number of classes, and male students consistently excluded them from the social sphere of college life. This exclusion forced women to create their own spaces to socialize and create community. As time went on female students fought for and won their own dormitory which gave them a place to gather with one another to socialize freely. A building signaled that women were a permanent feature of the university, and male students began to readjust to their presence. Women continued to make strides to further integrate themselves throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Eventually, World War II caused a loss of male enrollment that allowed women to become more involved in male-dominated spaces, and to take on more active leadership roles within the university. After the war, men returned to a school in which women were more present and empowered. All this was done through activities that did not involve academics. Women truly became a part of the university through their social and extracurricular activities.

Chapter One

“Women Students Not Wanted Here”: Women Create a Space of their Own (1897-1925)

One of the first instances of the University of North Carolina's school newspaper ever mentioning female students, who had been on campus since 1897, was when female students, or “co-eds” as they were commonly called, were rejected from a debate club in 1907. *The Daily Tar Heel* wrote, "The co-eds have been much wrought up over the fact that it was decided in one of the literary societies of late that they were not eligible for memberships."³ In those early years male students consistently excluded women from all possible campus activities. In 1907 though, women protested this rejection to the extent that the school newspaper took notice and published an article on the debacle. Women were receiving newfound attention for their efforts. This did not mean the women were in turn included in the extracurricular happenings of the university. It would take many more years after this 1907 occasion before women would begin to be included wholly in the social activities of the university.

Male students saw the University of North Carolina as a man's school in which women were allowed to take academic classes. Women were consistently excluded when they attempted to integrate themselves beyond the classes they were permitted to take. Due to their exclusion, women at the University of North Carolina were forced to create their own social activities. As their numbers grew, the women organized extracurricular activities further until they became established, university recognized entities. These women were not allowed to participate in regular, traditional university activities and therefore created some of their own. In time, these activities gained recognition from both university administrators and male students, helping to promote women's presence at the university.

³ "Danger Ahead." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. February 14, 1907.

The First Women

Although UNC was founded in 1789, the first women did not formally attend classes until 1897. That year women were allowed to join the university's professional schools as juniors and seniors.⁴ At this point, it was not unusual for a woman to pursue higher education, although it was not common.⁵ Approximately 11,000 women were enrolled either in a seminary or college in the year 1870.⁶ By 1900, 71% of schools of higher education east of the Mississippi admitted women.⁷ Women wanted to attend their state universities rather than established women's colleges for various reasons. Most esteemed women's colleges were private, which proved cost prohibitive to many.⁸ In an interview Kathrine Everett, who graduated from UNC's law school in 1920, said in an interview that she wanted to attend a university in the South. The University of Virginia, where her father attended college, did not accept women, and the next best option was UNC.⁹ Another UNC alumna Daphne Athas, who graduated in 1943, grew up in Chapel Hill and when she did not receive the necessary scholarship to attend her first-choice school Radcliffe, she decided to stay in Chapel Hill and attend school there.¹⁰ Every woman had her own

⁴ Pamela Dean, *Women on the Hill: A History of Women at the University of North Carolina*. (Chapel Hill, Division of Student Affairs, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1987), 2-5.

⁵ Barbara Miller Solomon. *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women in Higher Education in America*. (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985), 95.

⁶ Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in Women's Colleges from their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. (Amherst, MA. University of Massachusetts Press. 1993), 56.

⁷ Amy Thompson McCandles. "Maintaining the Spirit and Tone of Robust Manliness." *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*. (Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 1999).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Everett, Kathrine Robinson. "Interview with Kathrin Robinson Everett." *Southern Oral History Program*. Pamela Dean, January 21, 1986.

¹⁰ Athas, Daphne. "Interview with Daphne Athas." *Southern Oral History Program*. Pamela Dean, November 25, 1987.

individual reasons for attending UNC, but many of them revolved around simply the price and convenience of a state university.

The women attending UNC in those early years found themselves cast as outsiders not only with their social and living situation, but also in the classroom. Male students would move to sit away from any woman attending one of their classes, and professors would not always take them seriously as students.¹¹ Daphne Athas described in an interview that even by the 1940s the majority of classes were all male except for her. She claimed it was difficult for everyone including professors because she had entered “A man’s school and a man’s world and they did not know how to handle it.”¹² Women students as a group consistently maintained one of the highest GPA’s at the university, and quite a few were inducted into Phi Beta Kappa, a high academic honor for male and female students alike.¹³ Although it took time, co-eds consistently proved their worth on campus academically. In 1917, then president Edward Kidder Graham declared, “During the past five years women have entered every school in the University. They have done uniformly excellent work.”¹⁴ Success in the classroom would not be enough for women to prove their worth at a co-educational; university, they would need to succeed socially as well, and they would have to do it on their own.

In 1917, President Graham hired Mrs. Thomas W. Lingle to act as Advisor to Women.¹⁵

The Daily Tar Heel wrote that “The rapid growth of the number of women students in the

¹¹ Dean, *Women on the Hill*, 1-16.

¹² “Interview with Daphne Athas,” *Southern Oral History Program*, November 25, 1987.

¹³ Inez Koonce Stacy, “Letter to President.” Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1897-1981. (University Archives. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

¹⁴ Albert Coates. *Edward Kidder Graham Harry Woodburn Chase Frank Porter Graham: Three Men in the Transition of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill from a Small College to a Great University*. (Chapel Hill, NC, Albert Coates, 1988), 19.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

professional schools and academics department has led to the appointment of the first woman officially connected with the University in its regular session.”¹⁶ Mrs. Lingle was the former president of the North Carolina Federation of Women’s Clubs.¹⁷ It is important to note that the administration aimed to hire someone with social experience in women’s lives, rather than someone with an academic history. Perhaps the university was aware that a majority of women’s needs were outside of the classroom. The creation of an administrative role entirely dedicated for the women attending UNC was a significant turning point in the university’s treatment of women. This demonstrated the college was taking them seriously as students, allowing increasing numbers of them, and dedicating staff to attend to their well-being.

A Women’s “Dormitory”

Even with the strides made in women’s presence at UNC, they were still not granted a dormitory of their own. At this point, women’s housing options were restricted to home with their parents, with an administrator or professor, or one of the local boarding houses.¹⁸ It was not uncommon for newly co-educational colleges to lack an official dormitory for female students, and so many of them turned to boarding houses. Boarding houses of this era were wary of having single women, and it was often difficult for women to secure a room. Over time, the majority of boarding house proprietors were impressed by the manners and cleanliness of the female guests compared to their male counterparts, and actually began to pursue them as boarders.¹⁹ The main boarding houses in Chapel Hill were known as Archer House and Roberson House.²⁰ They were

¹⁶ “Co-Ed Dean Appointed.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. September 21, 1917.

¹⁷ Coates, *Edward Kidder Graham Harry Woodburn Chase Frank Porter Graham*, 19.

¹⁸ Dean, *Women on the Hill*, 1-16.

¹⁹ Lynn Peril, *College Girls: Bluestockings, Sex Kittens, and Coeds, Then and Now* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006), 145-147.

²⁰ Stacy, “Letter to President.” Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, December 10, 1921.

off campus, but the university procured both of them to act as housing for female students in 1921.²¹ Eventually both men and women at the school increasingly referred them to as “dormitories.”²² In her annual letter to the president the Mrs. Stacy, who became Advisor to Women after Mrs. Lingle, in 1919, wrote “Under this arrangement, it is possible for them to know one another in a more personal way, and to have presented to them conveniently whatever suggestions and announcements that are called for from time to time. Consequently, they are developing a real spirit of unity which never before has been possible.” Although the boarding houses did not have all the amenities and advantages of an on-campus dormitory, they did allow a chance for the women who lived there to form a community with one another.

The boarding houses each had a housemother and elected women students to lead and organize the women living there.²³ The women were working within their means to create a feeling of a permanent living situation through which a sense of community could be formed. They themselves created a set of regulations for those living at the Russell Inn. The rules included set quiet study hours, a set time in which all visitors had to leave, and to not ride in cars or visit fraternity houses without a chaperone present.²⁴ Mrs. Stacy said these regulations were “...for their own comfort and protection...”²⁵ Stacy’s phrasing of this highlights the women’s tenuous position at both the inns and the university because attendance was seen a privilege that could be revoked. The unsteady position of women required them to carefully monitor their own

²¹ Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, June 14, 1921.

²² Stacy, “Letter to President.” Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, December 10, 1921.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ “Regulations Adopted By Girls at Russell Inn For Year 1922-23.” Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1922.

²⁵ Stacy, “Letter to President.” Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, December 10, 1921.

behavior as to insure nothing was done that might risk their place at school, and the strides they had made in earning a greater role on campus. Still, many women lived in private homes spread out around all of Chapel Hill. Such an arrangement inhibited meaningful, sustained companionship amongst all women. It was apparent to them that a dormitory was essential for better socialization and recreation opportunities for women students.

Male Students Reject Women

On October 22nd, 1920, the *Daily Tar Heel* published an article titled “Co-Eds Again” criticizing an increase in female students and pleading against having permanent housing built for them.²⁶ The Advisor to Women had been requesting a women’s building since the position was first installed. Each year as the number of female students grew it became a more pressing issue.²⁷ The author of the article, William Horner, a sophomore from Durham, NC, said, “There is a movement on foot to build a dormitory for the co-eds. I am opposed to the movement because if it is built I believe that all restrictions now upon co-education here will be removed.” Horner admitted that he did not perceive women attending the professional schools as an issue, only those who could instead be taking classes at the women’s college in North Carolina. Although the politicians and administrators at large were allowing women to enter UNC at greater rates, Horner was emphatic that no one at the school wanted them there.²⁸ He wrote, “The writer of the News and Observer article admitted that she didn’t think co-eds were exactly welcome; a co-ed in the student forum column last year admitted it; a professor admitted it in

²⁶ William E. Horner. “Student Forum: Co-Eds Again.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 22, 1920.

²⁷ Stacy, “Letter to President.” Records of the Office of the Dean of Women.

²⁸ William E. Horner. “Student Forum: Co-Eds Again.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 22, 1920.

class the other day; the Phi Society admitted it last spring and will again this Saturday week.”²⁹ It is impossible to know each individual opinion regarding women at the university, but it was clear that there was a prevalent feeling of resentment among some male students.

As promised, Horner would once again speak out against women during a debate of the Philanthropic Society, one of UNC’s oldest clubs.³⁰ The debate was on whether women should have a dormitory of their own but was overshadowed by the larger question of whether women should be at the university at all. The anti-dormitory side mostly espoused the argument that a women’s college already available female students in North Carolina.³¹ It was undeniably true, of course. The State Normal and Industrial College, commonly referred to as “Women’s College,” had been open since 1892.³² Horner explicitly stated, “A place is provided at Greensboro for women desiring to take academic work. Everything is provided for them there.”³³ These men saw no need to add any more educational opportunities for women of the state, even though the Women’s College did not boast the resources and variety of academics the state’s flagship university possessed. Horner went on to say that he was “in favor of co-education when it includes only those women desiring to enter the professional schools. There should be built immediately new dormitories to accommodate the men who are here and those who desire to come here instead of building a dormitory to house the few co-eds who are in the University.” Ultimately, those opposed to the dormitory maintained that UNC was a man’s college and men should always take priority.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "Phi Society Votes Not to Build Dorm. For the Coeds." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. November 9, 1920.

³¹ Ibid.

³² <https://www.uncg.edu/inside-uncg/inside-history.php>

³³ "Phi Society Votes Not to Build Dorm. For the Coeds." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. November 9, 1920.

The side in favor of women's housing did not believe it was unreasonable of the women attending UNC to want a dormitory of their own. In 1920 these women had just been granted the right to vote, and the gentlemen argued that as voters, they should have equal access to education. As well as promoting the notion of equal rights, Philanthropic men in favor of a women's dormitory also wanted to convince their opponents of women's social value at the school. One student, B. O. Brown argued that women held a valuable social role. He argued that without women, "the social education of some men will be neglected," and explicitly said, "I do mean to emphasize the value of the social contact, and if more women attend the University this great need will be supplied."³⁴ In essence, women were a positive presence on campus because they provided a social education for the men.

In the end, there were 37 men against a women's dorm and 25 in favor.³⁵ Although this vote did not decide the question of whether a dormitory would be built, it revealed some of the sentiments shared by male students. The *Daily Tar Heel* published an article covering it the entire school could know where the Philanthropic Society stood on the issue of a women's dormitory on campus. It is difficult to ignore that those arguing against a women's dorm only really did so on the grounds that women had opportunities to be educated elsewhere. Those who were in favor of the dorm recognized the added benefits of a female presence at the school. They did not necessarily take issue with the education of women, but what women did for the university itself. Women were beginning to build a community of their own and men were beginning to notice.

Women Create their Own Space

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

Even without a dormitory, women found ways to connect with one another and get involved in various extracurricular activities. In 1907 a page of the *Yackety Yack* was dedicated to the newly founded “Woman’s University Club.” It stated that, “The Woman’s University Club was organized in September, 1906, for the purpose of establishing cordial relations between women students, and of promoting their interests.”³⁶ Every female student was automatically inducted into this club. When the first advisor to women was hired in 1917 women began to organize even more formally, and a discussion began on how the Woman’s University Club, or Woman’s Association and it was later called, could work more soundly in creating community for women. The first part of this was to reserve a room in Peabody Hall for the exclusive use of the Woman’s Association. *The Daily Tar Heel* wrote that this would, “become the center of social life and college activities for them. This will fill a long felt need for something besides the intellectual advantages which have been until now the only side of college life participated in by them to any extent.”³⁷ Female students wanted more than an education, they wanted a college experience. By 1920, the Woman’s Association did have its own designated room on campus in Peabody Hall.³⁸ This room was meant to provide for all of their needs including meetings of the Woman’s Association, social gatherings and parties, as well as meetings of any other female club. Without a dormitory, this room provided a common and private space to which all women had access.

³⁶ *Yackety Yack* (Page 111) 1907.

³⁷ “Attention Being Given to Better Co-Ed Organization.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 13, 1917.

³⁸ “Number of Women Here Not Increased.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 20, 1920.

Women expanded their social world when they founded two sororities at the university. UNC's Pi Beta Phi and Chi Omega chapters both became nationally affiliated in 1923.³⁹ Sororities were nationally controversial due to the selection process during rush and the price of membership.⁴⁰ Mrs. Stacy wrote, "The existence of women's fraternities on the campus is too new for any discussion as to influence or desirability. The students involved feel keenly that fraternities will do much to make college life what it should be." At this point the only other extracurricular activity available to women at UNC was the Women's Association, so new opportunities for social life were welcome in any form. Women were not accepted into the male sphere of the university, so they created their own communities.

Seventy-nine women were enrolled at the University of North Carolina in 1923, triple the number enrolled in 1917.⁴¹ The Woman's Association once more evolved into a new form, this time known as The Woman's Student Government Association, although generally most people continued to use the former name. In her annual letter to the president of UNC, Advisor to Women Mrs. Stacy described the changes. She wrote, "The purpose of the organization is twofold – the government of women students and the promotion of their activities on campus." The executive board of this group was "vested with disciplinary power."⁴² This continued an already established tradition of women policing one another's behavior.

Men and Women at Odds

³⁹ Stacy, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1923.

⁴⁰ Peril, *College Girls*, 80.

⁴¹ Stacy, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1923.

⁴² *Ibid.*

In October of 1921 a debate had begun on whether or not female students deserved representation on the school's student council.⁴³ *The Daily Tar Heel* wrote, "The women students are attaining such numbers that they have the right to a more definite representation in campus government."⁴⁴ The discussion in itself shows that women had made their presence on campus known, and known to the extent that some thought that they deserved a voice in the campus government. By the end of that month it was decided that women would have representation on the UNC campus cabinet. In a very matter of fact article *The Daily Tar Heel* wrote that, "A motion that the co-eds be given a seat on the cabinet was unanimously adopted."⁴⁵ This development was important enough that Mrs. Stacy thought to include it in her annual letter to the university president that year. She wrote, "The president of the [Women's] Association is now member, ex officio, of the Campus Cabinet. This recognition of women students in discussion of campus problems, it seems, is the wise and logical step since these problems are fast becoming questions for both boys and girls."⁴⁶ This decision meant women's privileges on campus went beyond attending class and participating in limited extracurricular activities; they would have a role in the student government itself. Male students could exclude women from their social groups, but they could not ignore their growing presence on campus.

In 1920 there was a statewide controversy regarding the government budget that involved many citizens protesting to increase money allocated for public institutions such as hospitals and colleges.⁴⁷ UNC had a serious stake in this debate, as a great portion of the funding, if it were

⁴³ "Women Students and Campus Government." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 2, 1921.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ "Women Students to Be Represented on the Campus Cabinet." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 21, 1921.

⁴⁶ Stacy, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1921.

⁴⁷ Coates, *Edward Kidder Graham Harry Woodburn Chase Frank Porter Graham*, 30-38.

approved, would be rewarded to the university. UNC had been in need of new buildings, materials, staff, and more for a substantial amount of time, and President Chase was determined to obtain the funds.⁴⁸ There was also a notion that some of that new funding could go towards building a women's dormitory. In 1921 the North Carolina General Assembly agreed to award the University of North Carolina twenty-five million dollars over a six-year period for school improvements.⁴⁹ This led to a new debate on what the money was most needed for on campus.

The male students on campus were still not in favor of building a women's dormitory. In March of 1923 female students sent a list of resolutions to the UNC board of trustees in efforts to convince the trustees of the women's rights to coeducation and a dormitory. The resolutions asked that women be awarded the same treatment as men. They argued that as citizens of the state and students of the university they should be able to participate fully in all the college had to offer. In its last resolution they summed up their plea by saying, "Our life in the University has not disappointed us. We love it. We love its inspiration. We crave a share in its scholarly spirit... Having admitted us into the Hall we pray that you do not now cast us back, saying, 'These fine things are for us but not for you.'" ⁵⁰ *The Daily Tar Heel* published these resolutions, and wrote they were "about the most indefinite and ludicrous assemblage of nonsensical and sentimental rubbish that could be found in the history of grammatical phraseology."⁵¹ This overelaborate sentence was a glimpse into what the women were up against in their fight for a dorm. The writer proposed that the women take their passion and energy and redirect it towards the women's

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ "Resolutions Sent by Women Students Asking Sympathy." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. March 14, 1923.

⁵¹ Ibid.

college in Greensboro.⁵² It is clear that any of the social good will previously developed between the men and women at UNC would not be enough to garner the male students' support for a women's dorm.

In the same *Daily Tar Heel* newspaper an entire page was devoted to the paper's stance against the coming of female students and the establishment of a dorm for them titled "Women Students Not Wanted Here." It opened with the question, "Are the Trustees going to sanction general co-education at the University to construct a co-ed dormitory?" Its response was that, "The Tar Heel takes a definite stand against co-education at the University on any such scope as would necessitate the construction of a woman's dormitory here, and believes that the co-educational enrollment should be limited to residents of Chapel Hill, and to graduate and professional students."⁵³ It hotly asserted that the money allocated to UNC should be used for male students, as other money was given to UNC-Greensboro, the women's college, for female students.⁵⁴ The *Daily Tar Heel* had no part in making the final decision, but in many ways it spoke for male students. This firm stance against co-education was no doubt widely shared.

The Battle of Spencer Hall

Before any decisions had been made, there was a common sentiment that building a women's dormitory had much deeper meaning than simply creating somewhere for women to live on campus. It was evident that the argument for coeducation and the argument for a dormitory had been crossed. When a person made an argument in favor of the women's dormitory, they also made an argument in favor of coeducation. Although women had Archer House and Russell Inn, before the latter burned down, there was still the perception that it could

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ "Women Students Not Wanted Here." *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC), March 14, 1923.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

all be taken away. It definitely showed UNC was not interested in supporting women to the extent it support men. To build a dormitory on the university campus signified something greater than simply accepting women. A dormitory meant a permanent home for women on campus, which was something that could not be taken away as easily.

In part of the effort to obtain a women's dormitory on campus the Advisor to Women Students, Ms. Stacy, began a letter writing campaign to notable citizens of North Carolina to garner their support. Stacy wrote to ask for both for monetary donations and written letters of support to the university president at the time, Harry Chase. A group of five UNC alumnae sent a letter to President Chase, requesting that he "place before University Building Committee, our petition that a Womans' Building be constructed during present year at University North Carolina"⁵⁵ In one particularly convincing letter from a UNC professor told Dr. Chase, "...the decision whatever it is will be epoch making, the history of the university considered."⁵⁶ This was undeniably true. Other co-ed colleges had built accommodations for women decades before UNC even began to discuss it. In fact, at Cornell, two black female students were accepted into the school and permitted to live in the women's dormitory in 1911, 14 years before the University of North Carolina would even build housing for the white women it hesitantly accepted.⁵⁷

Male students were opposed women's presence on campus in ways beyond simply a dormitory. In a *Daily Tar Heel* article titled "Co-Eds Go On Rampage" the author complained of a different intrusion on campus. The article told of a group of women who lived at the Russell

⁵⁵ Margaret Berry, Julia M. Alexander, Gladys Avery Tilley, Willie May Stratford Shore, Mattie Ham McCrae, "To President H. W. Chase." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1897-1981. (University Archives. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), 1923.

⁵⁶ "Branson to Dr. Chase." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, March 9, 1923.

⁵⁷ Peril, *College Girls*, 67.

Inn of Chapel Hill left their own tennis courts and converged on the on-campus, male tennis courts. The writer claimed that the co-eds had infringed on “man’s most sacred sanctuary on the Hill,” and was outraged. Eventually, the men chased the women off.⁵⁸ The message this rebellious act aimed to convey was clear: female students at the University of North Carolina had a right to occupy any and all of their school’s facilities and programs. They demanded that all privileges given to male students, such as on campus tennis courts, be fully awarded to women as well. These women believed they would only be truly accepted by UNC when they had their own place to live and engage in recreational activity on campus.

After several years of back and forth, women were granted permission for a dormitory on campus. A total of \$100,000 was approved to put to use towards building women’s housing in 1924.⁵⁹ Nothing proved to be enough to deny women their own space on a campus they had been present on for over two decades. It was a significant turning point for the entire university, and the student body and administration were well aware that a dormitory meant a great deal more than a room in Peabody Hall. Although they were allowed in the classrooms of UNC, and given rooms to gather in on campus, that could all be taken away at a moment’s notice. A building was a permanent feature on campus, and signaled that women were to be a permanent feature as well.

On Wednesday, October, 1924, *The Daily Tar Heel* published an article on the decision to build a women’s dormitory on campus, declaring, “The Wimmin Are With Us To Stay.” The title of the article was undeniably true; building a women’s dormitory on campus meant women were to be a enduring fixture at UNC. There had been almost a decade of controversy leading up to the decision because of resistance to allow a true higher educational experience for female

⁵⁸ “Co-Eds Go On Rampage.” *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC), January 15, 1924.

⁵⁹ Dean, *Women on the Hill*, 1-16.

students at the university. According to the article, the dormitory was a place for the co-eds to live, but it was also “designed as a center for the activities of the women.”⁶⁰ For these men, building a women’s dorm was synonymous with UNC formally becoming a co-educational university, but for women the dorm meant a space to enjoy communal living a recreational activity with one another, a privilege that had not yet been fully awarded to them. Spencer Dormitory allowed women not only the chance to study and live at the university, but also to enjoy themselves.

⁶⁰ “The Wimmin Are With Us to Stay.” *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC), October 15, 1924.

Chapter Two
“Co-Ed Elbow Room”: Female Students Slowly Begin to Integrate (1925-1940)

In 1925 the University of North Carolina built the first dormitory for women students. This was a permanent structure reinforcing that women were not leaving the university any time soon. Shortly after the beginning of the fall semester of 1925, the men of *The Daily Tar Heel* published an article titled, “Reporter Probes Co-ed Question,” and begins by saying, “The co-eds with their new Woman’s Building are here to stay. Believing that 2,000 or more men students would appreciate a little information on the other side of co-education a Tar Heel reporter has collected the following.” The article listed the number of women registered, and then provided the men with the list of rules these women students were required to adhere to, as enforced by the Women’s Association and the Advisor to Women, Mrs. Stacy. These rules included curfews and quiet hours and required a chaperone and permission from Mrs. Stacy to ride in cars with men after dark, visit fraternity houses, or leave campus.⁶¹ By listing these rules the author of the article implied that he foresaw enough interaction between the men and women that it would serve the men well to know their rules. The men had UNC were no longer resisting, but rather adjusting to the presence of women on campus.

Women were entering a new era of life at UNC. Surprisingly, the article noted that “the girls say as a whole that there is so little restriction at the University that they are wild about this glorious place. As there are no petty rules they claim that there is so much more chance to develop one’s creative individuality and to bring forth the inner spirit.”⁶² At that time it was the expectation that women would live under a certain amount of observation in order to keep them “safe,” as was defined by the university administration. Most other schools during this period

⁶¹ “Reporter Probes Co-Ed Question.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC), October 12, 1925.

⁶² *Ibid*.

had much harsher restrictions on women than at UNC.⁶³ Casual dating was difficult at women's colleges, because men were only allowed on campus for certain occasions, and women were not allowed to come and go freely to visit men elsewhere.⁶⁴ At coeducational colleges like UNC women had the opportunity to interact with men on a day-to-day basis, making it much easier to find and go on dates. In the 1920s women had the right to vote and were becoming more empowered and having limited access to the opposite sex became an issue at all female colleges.

This freedom did not mean women had no restrictions whatsoever. Universities had long followed the tradition of *in loco parentis*, meaning they accepted responsibility for the students' welfare while they attended the university.⁶⁵ Women at the University of North Carolina still had to adhere to an abundance of rules and regulations, and having the majority of female students in a single dormitory made these standards much easier to enforce. Women had to sign in and out of the dormitory, they had to get permission from Mrs. Stacy to leave campus, and a chaperone was almost always required when in the presence of the opposite sex.⁶⁶ Although women may have had more freedom than their counterparts at women's colleges, they were still carefully monitored at all times.

County Clubs

⁶³ Lynn Peril, *College Girls: Bluestockings, Sex Kittens, and Coeds, Then and Now* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006).

⁶⁴ Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in Women's Colleges from their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. (Amherst, MA. University of Massachusetts Press. 1993), 288.

⁶⁵ David Hoekema, *Campus Rules and Moral Community: In Place of In Loco Parentis* (Lanham, MD. Rowman & Littlefield, 1994), 27-28.

⁶⁶ Pamela Dean, *Women on the Hill: A History of Women at the University of North Carolina*. (Chapel Hill, Division of Student Affairs, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1987), 1-16.

Within a month after the article discussing the details of female students at UNC, a male club voted to admit women. The university had a tradition of county clubs, in which in every county in the state of North Carolina was represented and members were made up of students from that particular county.⁶⁷ In November of 1925, after a serious debate the Fayetteville Club voted 11-6 to allow women to join.⁶⁸ This was not the first instance of men and women in a club together. The Playmakers had been including both men and women for about a decade by this point, and women had been members of various publication staffs, including *the Daily Tar Heel* since they first arrived at UNC.⁶⁹ The Fayetteville Club held this debate only just after women first moved into their newly built dormitory. This was one of the first examples of the slowly changing relationship between men and women at UNC after women were given their own building on campus.

County clubs had been in existence at the University of North Carolina since 1903.⁷⁰ The overall purpose of these groups was to organize students from the same area to get to know one another, and to discuss issues regarding their counties, assuming they would likely return after graduating.⁷¹ Women's involvement in these clubs was important not only because the acceptance into traditionally male-dominated spaces, but also because of the purpose of these county clubs. These clubs were meant to create a group of leaders for a county that would return with new ideas on improving their home. Women's participation meant that the other members

⁶⁷ *Yackety Yack* (1925).

⁶⁸ "Fayetteville Club Will Admit Co-Eds." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. November 5, 1925.

⁶⁹ Dean, *Women on the Hill*, 1-16.

⁷⁰ *Yackety Yack* (Page 260) 1906.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

of the county club viewed them as possible assets to their county, and made sure they would be a part of the discussions in order to return and become leaders in some fashion.

Phi and Di Society Debates

Not all men were so readily accepting of women's involvement in their social activities and clubs. In 1926 the Philanthropic literary society held a debate on whether they would allow female students to join.⁷² The leaders of the group in favor of allowing women argued there were not enough female students to have a literary society of their own. These leaders also spoke of, "the inspiration that could be supplied by the presence of nature's fairest in that Hall."⁷³ Their opponents countered that other large universities did not have co-ed literary societies, and that the female presence would "tend to take the minds of members away from serious thinking."⁷⁴ Although the resolution to invite women ultimately failed, it had become something the society was willing to seriously consider, which it had not previously. It is important to note that neither side spoke of whether women were academically qualified. More importantly, there were no arguments about if women actually belonged at the university, which had been a main feature of their dormitory debate from a few years earlier, showing that issue had already been settled.

Men were still hesitant to allow women to fully integrate at this time. In February of 1927 in a very similar debate, the Dialectic society also voted not to allow women to join. Those in favor argued that women had the right to vote and should be treated as equals.⁷⁵ The article reported that some members of the Di Society "expressed the opinion that many co-eds on the

⁷² "Women Are Not to be Allowed in Phi Assembly." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 7, 1926.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ "Di Denies Coeds Rights of Senate in Warm Session." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. February 3, 1927.

campus would make worthier and fitter members of the Senate than many of the men.”⁷⁶ This was a noteworthy quote of a man arguing in favor of women on the basis of merit; women could participate in the club on an equal or even superior level than the men.⁷⁷ Unfortunately, this argument did not win over the majority of the society. The opposing side never claimed that women should be denied based on ability. Instead, these men mostly saw the inclusion of women as an intrusion on their “freedom of speech” within the confines of the Dialectic society.⁷⁸ In other words, when debating particularly controversial ideas they did not want to consider if their remarks could possibly offend the women in room in some way. This line of thinking encapsulated male students’ general opinion of the ‘intrusion’ of women at UNC. White men had enjoyed the unrestrained freedom of only having to consider the other white males who surrounded them. This was a comfort that was violated by the company of women. As women’s presence grew on campus, some men, as in the case of those in the Di society, became defensive of their male-only spaces. Keeping women out of the society would allow the men to continue to say what they thought without regard for the opposite sex.⁷⁹

Female Students and Marriage

Male students at UNC allowed that women were to be a permanent feature on campus, but that did not mean they had to be included. *The Daily Tar Heel* sent out a reporter to learn more about the UNC women of 1926, or as the writer put it, to “look them over, for we accept them now as more or less of a necessary evil.”⁸⁰ The condescension is palpable in this quote,

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ "Dramatic Reviewer Finds Co-Eds Have Little Interest in Vague Matrimonial Plans." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 7, 1926.

proving men were still not fully accepting of women on campus. The author begrudgingly accepted them as something that they will no longer be able to avoid and thus found it appropriate to know more about them. The author's contempt did not fade as he went on to describe his impression of the new women at the school, particularly the fact that most of them explained that they came to the university not to find a husband, but to learn.⁸¹ The author says, "The major part of the fair damsels profess a burning thirst for knowledge along the lines of social science. Teaching, dramatics, journalism, law, library work, and medicine also have great followings." Male students followed a similar pattern since women's arrival at the school, in which they were not interested in female academic pursuits but were mainly preoccupied with what social role women would play in their lives.

Men began to acknowledge women as a feature on campus. This led some of them to start considering these women as marital prospects. By the 1920s there were cases of women attending college simply in hopes of finding a husband, although it was not a normalized practice of the so-called 'MRS degree' until the 1930s.⁸² A reporter for *The Daily Tar Heel* wrote, "We noticed, however, despite all of the ambitions and scholarly attitude of the group, that very few wore horn-rimmed spectacles, and that save for one suffragette...there were few who by their dress and attitude, seemed to be fleeing from matrimonial advances."⁸³ Female students were a reality in men's lives and thus they were subject to objectification. Men were beginning to accept that women would be permanent at University of North Carolina, but they were mainly interested in women if they were suitable options for socializing with or even marrying.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women in Higher Education in America*, (New Haven. Yale University Press, 1985).

⁸³ "Dramatic Reviewer Finds Co-Eds Have Little Interest in Vague Matrimonial Plans." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 7, 1926.

Academics

The men were not impressed by the female students' academic aspirations, but that did not deter the women from continuously proving they were very capable scholars. Female students at UNC consistently obtained an average GPA of around 2.5, which was quite respectable in that era. Most students maintained an average GPA around 2.0.⁸⁴ The Pi Beta Phi sorority ranked second in average GPA among all campus Greek organizations, and an impressive number of women regularly made honor role.⁸⁵ Male students were neither threatened nor impressed by the scholarly achievements of the women on campus. No one mentioned academics during the Phi's debate on whether or not women should join.⁸⁶ When men did discuss women in academics they did not deny the success of their female peers, but they also did not applaud it. Men only took interest in their female counterparts in regards to extracurricular activities and social events. They were not going to accept women on the basis of their academic prowess; the men were chiefly concerned with how they could benefit from a coeducational institution socially.

Co-Ed *Daily Tar Heel*

School publications were the center of discussion for popular campus matters. On January 29th, 1927, the issue of the *Daily Tar Heel* was written and edited entirely by UNC's female students. A significant portion of the front page consisted of photographs of the president of the Women's Association, Spencer Dormitory, and Mrs. Stacy. The paper mostly discussed matters that involved women, such as their status on campus, their activities, and the progress

⁸⁴ Inez Koonce Stacy, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1897-1981. (University Archives. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), 1926.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ "Women Are Not to be Allowed in Phi Assembly." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. October 7, 1926.

they had made. It did not ignore the rest of campus; it also discussed sporting events, local theater productions, dances, and other features typical seen in a *Daily Tar Heel*. Men gave women control of this publication for only one issue, but that gave women a voice they had not previously enjoyed.

The main front page article was illustriously titled, “Venerunt, Viderunt, Vicerunt by An Exquisite Effulgence of Own Sweetness and Light;” the first three words are in Latin and roughly translate to “they came, they saw, they conquered.”⁸⁷ Clearly by this time women felt they had thoroughly secured a place for themselves at the university, and declared it so in their *Daily Tar Heel*. The article discussed the history and successes of women at UNC since their arrival in 1897. The author remarked that women knew, “how to play and how to work, and what is much more important, how to divide their crowded time profitably between the two.”⁸⁸ The author confirmed that women came to the University of North Carolina not just to learn, but to experience college, in essence, enjoy themselves.

The author of “Venerunt, Viderunt, Vicerunt” also devoted space in her column to discuss the rules the women of the university were meant to follow. No derogatory remark was made about their restrictions. She wrote that “the rules which are made for the common good of all concerned are readily recognized by the girls and are rarely broken.”⁸⁹ These rules, such as curfews and quiet hours, were created by the women of UNC and enforced by the Women’s Association, of which all female students were members.⁹⁰ These women were evidently aware they had to restrict themselves in ways male students did not. The same was true even on

⁸⁷ William Whitaker, “William Whitaker’s Words” (<http://archives.nd.edu/words.html>) 2007.

⁸⁸ Sara Jane Boyd, “Venerunt, Viderunt, Vicerunt by An Exquisite Effulgence of Own Sweetness and Light.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. January 29, 1927.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

campuses of women's colleges.⁹¹ Rules and restrictions were not a result of men and women attending college with one another, but the notion of women living an autonomous college life. Co-educational universities were particularly sensitive to this, as women were constantly confronted with the disparities between the treatment of men and women at their schools.

This *Daily Tar Heel* gave the co-eds' viewpoint almost assured attention from the student body. Those who read the paper would have no choice but to hear what the women had to say. An article discussed co-education itself and did well to summarize these women's feelings.

The co-eds are not resentful of the attitude of the campus, but every now and then when one of them is aware that because she is a co-ed she is not wanted, because she is a co-ed she must needs rate just a little below par...she is for the minute sorry that she came to Carolina. It is not as if she were trying to usurp the power and the glory of the men...She came to Carolina, not to find herself a husband, but to equip herself to endure life pleasantly and profitably with or without one.⁹²

This quote differs from previous writing because the woman is not arguing her right to be at UNC, but rather her right to be treated as an equal at UNC. Such declarations likely fueled the male students' resentment toward the female students. The writer eloquently addressed the situation of her and her peers at a co-educational university. Women sought to be a typical college student, not a "co-ed."

Women Students Gain a Vote

Women's place at the University of North Carolina was changing in the late 1920s, as were male students' opinions towards them. An article in a *The Daily Tar Heel* from spring of 1927 revealed that women had recently gained suffrage within school elections.⁹³ The author expressed his doubts and his hopes as to whether or not the co-eds would be wise, unbiased

⁹¹ Horowitz *Alma Mater*.

⁹² "On Co-Education." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. January 29, 1927.

⁹³ "What Every Young Woman Should Know." *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chapel Hill, NC. March 29, 1927.

voters.⁹⁴ Although he follows the traditional arrogance of male students, he recognized that women had a voice in the school, and clearly was anxiously awaiting learning what the implications would be. As voters in student elections, women had the ability to contribute to the lives of the student body as a whole, not just the lives of female students. The author of the article was clearly skeptical regarding this advancement for the co-eds, but as with all the advancements they had made thus far, he begrudgingly accepted it as the new reality.

The women were well aware of the impact involvement in student government could have on their role at the university. In November of 1927 Mary Louise Medley wrote an article on the progress co-eds had made at the university. She wrote, “The University of North Carolina is still chiefly a man’s stronghold, but the feminine army in increased numbers is steadily advancing year by year, and making inroads upon its historic battlements.”⁹⁵ Women could sense the changing of the tides at UNC, and as their numbers grew so did their power. When contrasted with the women at UNC just a decade earlier and their dream of having their own dormitory, the progress was quite clear. The largest hurdle still to come was for women to be treated as true equals to the men on campus.

Women are Integrated Further

By 1930, men were beginning to accept co-eds into their lives on campus. Not only did women live on campus at this point, they also were involved in various clubs and organizations, both co-ed and women-only. Proof of this acceptance was confirmed when the Philanthropic society voted to allow women membership.⁹⁶ “The main contention of those favoring the

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Mary Louise Medley, “University Co-Eds Offer Sharp Contrast to Those of Years Ago.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. November 22, 1927.

⁹⁶ “Phi Society Gives Membership to Co-Eds.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. April 23, 1930.

resolution was that the co-eds had been admitted to practically every other organization on the campus, and the Phi Assembly should not entertain any objections to their becoming members.”⁹⁷ This statement was relatively true. In 1930 women were represented in most county clubs, were involved in the Playmakers and student government, and ran the successful Women’s Association as well as two sororities. Women still made up only a small part of the student population, but their presence was constantly growing. By 1930 the number of women enrolled at UNC was two-hundred five, almost double what it was just five years before.⁹⁸ After two debates in which the Phi society deemed women unfit to join their organization, they conceded to the notion that women were an inevitable part of the university. It was illogical to continue being exclusive when women were included in almost everything else.

By 1933 there were two-hundred seventy-seven female students at UNC, which was drastically higher than the one-hundred students Spencer dormitory had been built to hold.⁹⁹ Due to this, many women were forced back into private housing off campus.¹⁰⁰ This also meant that the dining hall in Spencer, which was meant to feed every female student, could not provide for the number of women it was inundated with. Although the university had no intention of building another dormitory at this time, officials recognized the women’s need for space to eat. To remedy this issue the university administrators opened the men’s dining hall in Swain building to women as well.¹⁰¹ For the first time at the university men and women would be sharing everyday meals with one another. Now men and women would not just sit in a classroom together, but would share their daily meals as well.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Stacy, “Letter to President.” Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1930.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 1933.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 1931.

¹⁰¹ “Co-Eds Will Eat at Swain Tables.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. September 26, 1933.

The acclimation of male students to the presence of women became evident when they began to actively invite them into their space. An article was released in *The Daily Tar Heel* reminding female students of the rules and regulations regarding going to fraternity houses, after there had been multiple instances of rule violations, particularly the absence of a chaperone approved by Mrs. Stacy.¹⁰² This article marked the beginning of an almost year-long battle to lessen restrictions regarding visiting fraternity houses. Representatives from the interfraternity council and the women's association jointly proposed to the school administration that women be allowed to visit fraternity houses with less regulation. They did not ask for complete freedom; they proposed that women would be allowed to visit approved fraternities during certain hours of the day, only in large social spaces, and with no alcohol present.¹⁰³ The administration was taking their request quite seriously and planned to meet and discuss the details with the group.

Not everyone on campus supported this loosening of rules. *The Daily Tar Heel* published an article ferociously attacking the notion. It was not uncommon for the paper to publically come out against the activities of women, but in this article, the author attacked men as well. The article reiterated the fear that drove most regulations against women, that they were not “sufficiently mature or sophisticated to uphold their honor while in the very strongholds and lairs of the unscrupulous and rakish Greeks.”¹⁰⁴ It seemed quite difficult to win favor from the school newspaper in this period. Women were consistently joining new spaces on campus successfully and fraternities were simply the next obstacle. The university administration did not heed this author's objections to new fraternity visitation rules. Later that month school officials decided

¹⁰² “Co-ed Frat Information.” *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC), December 6, 1933.

¹⁰³ “Group to Recommend Co-eds be Allowed to Visit Greeks.” *The Daily Tar Heel*. January 21, 1934.

¹⁰⁴ “Defend Co-ed Virtue!” *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC), January 11, 1934.

that fraternities could apply, and if they were deemed fit, they would be allowed to host women with fewer regulations.¹⁰⁵

Approximately a year later the non-fraternity men decided they wanted women to visit them as well. Women's dormitories and men's fraternity houses were built with large social rooms in order for men and women to be allowed to visit one another in a public space where they could be properly monitored.¹⁰⁶ It seems that although the administration deemed these young men and women mature enough to interact on their own, they should never be allowed to do so without being under some form of supervision. An article in the *Daily Tar Heel* wrote, "There is no reason for the dormitory men to be deprived of the privilege of having co-eds as their guests. Of course, at present such an arrangement is not desirable, because dormitory living quarters are not conducive to entertaining feminine friends."¹⁰⁷ Men's dormitories were not built with large social rooms for entertaining guests, as there had never been a need, and it would have been scandalous for a female student to socialize in the men's private rooms.¹⁰⁸ It seemed that all men at the university saw enough value in female students, at least socially speaking, that they at least wished to visit with them at their convenience.

The University and Women

The university had slowly progressed from a denial and resistance of women, to acceptance. Since the erection of Spencer dormitory women transitioned from being guests at the university to members of it. Men and women were beginning to work together, rather than against one another. In her annual letter to the president Mrs. Stacy wrote of how the Women's

¹⁰⁵ "Co-Ed Elbow Room." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC), January 25, 1934.

¹⁰⁶ *Peril College Girls*.

¹⁰⁷ "Co-eds in the Dorms." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC), February 22nd, 1935.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*.

Association was making a distinct effort toward “the understanding and the coordination of the work of the two student governing councils—men’s and women’s.”¹⁰⁹ She also mentioned that the female students had founded a “Young Women’s Christian Association, as complement of the men’s group.” The YMCA played a vital role in campus life. The president of the university Frank Porter Graham had at one point returned to his alma mater in order to act as secretary of the campus YMCA.¹¹⁰ When the office of the Dean of Students sent its annual report to the president it included that the school needed “additional Advisor service for men and WOMEN students.”¹¹¹ Women were not the only people advocating for women on campus. The fact that the author capitalized the word in his report emphasized his support, and the support of office for which he wrote, of female students.

The entire University of North Carolina was taking notice of the progress women had made at the school. Men’s exclusion of women had developed into a cautious acceptance. When women were allowed to enter the University Club it seemed as though they were practically a part of all aspects of life on campus. The University Club was made up of senior class representatives who worked to promote school spirit and comradery among students and alumni.¹¹² Women’s membership in the club signified the school’s willingness to have female students represent it and promote its ideals. Women had consistently made impressive grades, it was not at all uncommon to see many women on honor roll, and for several to receive bids from

¹⁰⁹ Stacy, “Letter to President.” Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1935.

¹¹⁰ Albert Coates, *Edward Kidder Graham Harry Woodburn Chase Frank Porter Graham: Three Men in the Transition of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill from a Small College to a Great University*. (Chapel Hill, NC. Albert Coates, 1988), 53.

¹¹¹ Harry F. Comer “Events and Needs in Student Life During the Past Year at UNC.” Records of the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs. 1920- 2004. (University Archives. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), 1935.

¹¹² *Yackety Yack* (Page 191) 1936.

Phi Beta Kappa. The two sororities consistently had one of the top GPAs amongst Greek organizations.¹¹³ Female students' grades continued to be well above average and their presence continued to grow in the social sphere of the university.

It seemed more and more as though the entire student body was rallying around female students. In 1936, the *Daily Tar Heel* published a letter to the editor from a UNC student named John Frink, who declared he was in favor of having more women students on campus. He wrote, "Why, may I ask, should these people who live in a town which has a great university be forced to spend extra money to send their daughters out of town to other schools that are often inferior to the one right in their home town?"¹¹⁴ In 1917 leaders of the University of North Carolina decided women living in Chapel Hill could attend as freshmen and sophomores, but they repeatedly repealed and reinstated the policy. At the point of this article it was once again forbidden and would not be allowed until a shortage of students during World War II led the school's administration to expand their recruitment reach.¹¹⁵ An article written by a male student pleading for the entry of female students is significant in the context of traditional male opinions of their female counterparts. After decades of fierce protests against the presence of women in 1936 a male student publically wrote of why there should be more. It shows that men, or at least a portion of men, were beginning to become acclimated to women on campus, even to the extent that they wanted more.

The university itself saw the change in student opinion when it decided to build a new women's dormitory in 1937. That year the women enrolled at UNC numbered three-hundred

¹¹³ "Carolina Co-Eds Enter Activities." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC), June 2nd, 1935.

¹¹⁴ "A.S.U. Head Condemns Coed Policy." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC), September 20th, 1936.

¹¹⁵ Athas, Daphne. "Interview with Daphne Athas." *Southern Oral History Program*. Pamela Dean, November 25, 1987.

seventy-nine.¹¹⁶ Spencer had been full since the year it first opened, and with the number of female students constantly growing, there was a serious question of where to house them, a question that had been ignored by the administration until this point.¹¹⁷ The announcement of this new women's dormitory was markedly different than the infamous "Battle for Spencer Dorm" that had occurred when women first fought to have the own dormitory on campus. In a complete turn of events there were no protests, struggles, or anger similar to what had been seen before, but rather a simple announcement of the new dorm in *The Daily Tar Heel*. The article was simply titled, "Work Begins on New Coed Dormitory Here" and discussed the money allocated to new buildings, where they would be located, and other similarly objective details.¹¹⁸ Male students no longer abhorred their female counterparts the way they had done only a decade ago. As women's presence grew more and more on campus, men became more and more used to their presence. This was proven subtly through the previous years, but the lack of protest surrounding the new dormitory only served to prove it all the more.

The female students recognized this new environment of acceptance as well. Only two years later the university decided it would build two more dorms for women. Once again there was no major issue taken by the male students as there once was. A student named Gladys Best Tripp published an article highlighting the progress women had made since their first battle to win a women's dormitory. She bragged that "at the present no other college in North Carolina can offer its girls as fully equipped and beautifully planned dormitories as the University."¹¹⁹ Not

¹¹⁶, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1937.

¹¹⁷ Dean, *Women on the Hill*, 1-16.

¹¹⁸ "Work Begins on New Coed Dormitory Here." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC), January 12th, 1936.

¹¹⁹ "Battle of Spencer Began Rapid Advance of UNC Coeds." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC), March 23, 1939.

only had the women easily won themselves a new dormitory, but they would have a state-of-the-art-dormitory. The permanent presence of women had given male students no other choice but to accept them, which slowly but surely, they were. Although they were a long way away from total equality, it was clear women were a part of the school and in many ways a positive part of it. UNC showed its agreement with three new well-equipped women's dorms on campus.

Chapter Three
“She Walks Alone—With Men”: Co-Eds Become Students (1940-1946)

By 1940 at the University of North Carolina female students were becoming full members of the university. When they first came to UNC in 1897 they had no dormitory and were excluded from all campus activities outside of class. By 1925, after great controversy, women were awarded a dormitory of their own. By 1940 women were welcomed to join the majority of organizations on campus, including the Dialectic and Philanthropic debating societies, the college’s oldest existing clubs. Even more women’s dormitories had been built by 1940, and without controversy. The university was beginning to meet the needs of female students that had been ignored in the past. Women had begun to earn new respect and privileges at UNC.

One of the most apparent changes for women by this point was how male students’ views of them changed. When they first arrived at UNC, the small number of women were all but ignored by male students at the school. As their numbers grew and their existence became more apparent, men began to resent the women; a poll done by the *Daily Tar Heel* in 1923 found that 937 men opposed co-education, while only 173 favored it.¹²⁰ Eventually it became clear that women were to be a permanent fixture at UNC, and slowly male students began to begrudgingly accept them as legitimate students at the university. After 1940 and America’s involvement in the second World War, women’s presence on campus became a truly integral part of the university.

Problems in Student Government

¹²⁰ Agatha Adams, *The Tradition of Women at the University of North Carolina*, (1949).

In the late 1930s and early 1940s disagreements arose regarding women's representation in student government, as well as practices within their own government. In student government, there was a question of whether women had the proper amount of influence. Men and women alike began to express that they thought women's voices were overlooked in meetings and discussions. Although they were fewer in number, female students had become a significant part of the university, and therefore there was a growing sentiment that their opinions and ideas should be taken seriously, and be recognized more explicitly. Women did have their own government which focused on matters specifically pertaining to female students, such as their rules and regulations, but their involvement in general campus activities had increased to the extent that they needed a voice in the decisions being made regarding the whole campus.

The growing importance of women at UNC eventually had to be made official in some form. When the student government rewrote its constitution to become the Student Legislature in 1940, this new constitution held that there would be forty-eight members on the legislature voted from various campus organizations, including dormitories and the Women's Association.¹²¹ This provision guaranteed at least six female representatives in the legislature, and the possibility for more from other organizations. This representation was an important step in the ever-strengthening relationship between male and female students on campus. While training new student officers for the Student Legislature, the assistant dean of students went so far as to discuss women students being overlooked in student government. He said, "All that is needed to stop them is a display of leadership by a few fine girls... but what kind of 'gentlemen' are our boys if it is necessary for women to take this stand?"¹²² He chastised female students for not

¹²¹ "Student Legislature Constitution." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC. April 16, 1940).

¹²² "The Gentleman and the Coed." *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC), May 4, 1940.

asserting themselves but went on to call specifically upon men to take responsibility to create change. Not only did UNC have to change its structure and practices, but male students had to change their perception and thinking regarding their fellow students.

To reinvent the way women were seen at the university it was going to take an effort from both the students and the administrators. When *The Daily Tar Heel* published the article describing the assistant dean of students discussing the treatment of women up during the training, the article's author even declared that "any statement about the woman student situation is always pertinent at Carolina. And a statement now has particular meaning, for it is vital that the students active in the training conference be made aware—as officers—of Carolina's most persistent social problem."¹²³ This statement represents a radical change in how female students were viewed by their male peers. Although female leadership was still lagging, it was a problem that was receiving a great deal of attention, by male and female students alike. This article signaled that the lives of women on campus were no longer just a problem for women to be attentive to, but male students as well.

Growing Number of Women

UNC was in the midst of a slow transition from having a female school within a male school, to creating a more integrated student body. The number of women at UNC grew from two-hundred five in 1930 to six-hundred forty-four in 1940.¹²⁴ Advisor to Women, Mrs. Stacy wrote in her annual letter to the president of how the increased "enrollment of women and growing activities remind us that we are definitely committed to their program..."¹²⁵ More

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Inez Koonce Stacy, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1897-1981. (University Archives. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), 1930, 1940.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

women inevitably meant more attention was directed towards them. An article in 1940 titled, “Ten Outstanding Senior Coeds Compose Grail Figure Tonight” made the front page of *The Daily Tar Heel* and was devoted entirely to recognizing important female figures on campus. The story highlights that a couple of the women were specifically recognized in the “Who’s Who among Students in American Colleges and Universities.”¹²⁶ It seemed female students at UNC were beginning to earn some amount of national notoriety, and the school paper ensured that the entire college would be aware of that.

She Walks Alone – With Men

The Daily Tar Heel had consistently acted as a measure of women’s status at UNC, and during the 1940-1941 school year a student named Martha Clampitt was assigned a weekly column in *The Daily Tar Heel*. The column covered a wide range of topics, not exclusively about matters pertaining to women. Clampitt was widely active in campus activities, and she particularly was quite involved with campus politics. She worked with, and was friends with, Terry Sanford, a Democrat who went on to become governor of North Carolina.¹²⁷ Sanford was also the speaker of the Student Legislature from 1941 to 1942.¹²⁸ Clampitt went on to have a successful career in politics, much of which began with her involvement in campus politics.¹²⁹ Surprisingly, her column was not particularly political, but it was undoubtedly opinionated.

¹²⁶ “Ten Outstanding Senior Coeds Compose Grail Figure Tonight.” *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC), May 4, 1940.

¹²⁷ McKay (Clampitt), Martha. “Interview with Martha McKay.” *Southern Oral History Program*. Kathryn L. Nasstrom, June 13, 1989.

¹²⁸ Albert Coates and Gladys Coates. *The Story of Student Government in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*. (Chapel Hill, 1985), 225.

¹²⁹ McKay (Clampitt), Martha. “Interview with Martha McKay.” *Southern Oral History Program*. Kathryn L. Nasstrom, June 13, 1989.

The Daily Tar Heel publishing a consistent column written by a female student was an important step in women's visibility on campus. The title of the column was, "She Walks Alone—With Men." Clampitt never explained why either *The Daily Tar Heel* or she named it such. It coincided with the notion of UNC existing as a coeducational university, but largely divided between men and women. Men and women had been going to UNC together for almost half a century by this point, and a relationship had grown between the men and women at the school. This relationship was poignant enough that *The Daily Tar Heel* thought a column written by a female student could be relevant to everyone. Still, there was a feeling that these were women attending a men's school. In many ways women attending UNC were on their own, even while constantly surrounded by men.

The "She Walks Alone—With Men" column was not meant to have exclusively female readers. Martha Clampitt prioritized news having to do with women, but often discussed matters that could be interesting to anyone. She often treated her articles as a gossip column and constantly discussed the activities of her classmates, often by name. Men were not safe from being mentioned, both in positive and negative lights. She would write about who had been going on dates with who, dances, who drank too much the previous weekend, and similar affairs.¹³⁰ By this point at UNC, you could not discuss women without also mentioning men, because they were so often interacting with one another.

Martha Clampitt's articles were not hard-hitting exposés or righteous manifestos. She often wrote sarcastically, and was constantly teasing the school and its students. Clampitt's "She Walks Alone—With Men" articles were an example of the significant change in women's

¹³⁰ Martha Clampitt. "She Walks Alone—With Men." *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC. October 9, 1940).

experience at UNC. Any articles written by women before this time were almost always exclusively devoted to the plight of female students, and their wants and needs. Clampitt evidently did not feel the pressure to exclusively cover serious topics about female students those before her did, and gave up opportunities to speak about the inequalities women suffered at UNC. At one point, she began a column by saying, “Ye Editor screamed at me this ayem and told me it was time to beat my gums about social significance again. Although I am not one to hesitate about sticking my neck out, I can’t find anything to squawk about this minute.”¹³¹ The quote exhibited her self-deprecating humor, referring to her activism as squawking, which may have won her some sympathy from would be adversaries, yet she goes on to claim she had no complaints. Although Clampitt’s column did not actively discuss the plight of female students at UNC , the title never allowed one to forget the inequality that still existed.

Trouble with the Women’s Association

The growing presence of women on campus inevitably meant change for women’s groups. These groups, most importantly the Women’s Association, were seeming less necessary as women gained more access and more importance at the university. The Women’s Association had once been the heart and soul of female students’ lives at UNC. It decided and enforced the rules and regulations for women, organized parties, gave leadership roles, and provided a voice for female students. As time went on, many of these opportunities were offered through outside groups, as a greater number of campus clubs were permitting women to join. By 1940 it was highly unlikely that an existing club would remain exclusive to female students. As the number

¹³¹ Martha Clampitt. “She Walks Alone—With Men.” *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC. February 5, 1941).

of women at UNC and the opportunities for campus involvement grew, the Women's Association slowly began to lose its function in female students' university experience.

Women began publically voicing their concerns for the Women's Association, and a leader amongst them was Martha Clampitt. The symptom that made the flaws of the organization more apparent was the overall lack of morale of female students for their own group. In an article she wrote for the *Carolina Magazine* Clampitt said, "The women here have fought a winning battle and will continue to do so. They have increased in number, quality and intelligence. But their own self-government has not increased at nearly the same rate."¹³² She went on to note that "almost 75% of the coeds vote in their own election in the year 1935-36, while not even half (approximately 475) voted last year [1940]." She claimed that "many coeds have said, however, that any interest they have in the W.A. is thoroughly chilled by the first meeting. Nothing of the real spirit of the coed's place on campus is instilled into them, they do not see their power or their position."¹³³ The president of the Women's Association, Jane McMaster, replied to Clampitt's article in the next month's edition of the *Carolina Magazine*. She began by reiterating the importance of the Woman's Association in the context of women's history at the university, but conceded that "now the Woman's Association which is, by the way, composed of all the six-hundred coeds here, is gangling and overgrown."¹³⁴ The Woman's Association had not developed in step with women's presence at UNC, and its power was waning.

The difficulties facing the Women's Association were significant enough that the Dean of Women Students, Inez Stacy, thought it important to include it in her annual letter to the

¹³² Martha Clampitt. "No Rats and Rouge." (*Carolina Magazine*, March 1941).

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Jane McMaster. "So There, Miss Clampitt." (*Carolina Magazine*, April 1941).

university president. She mentioned the Women's Association frequently in her letters, but problems with the organization itself rarely, if ever, came up. Stacy wrote, "the Woman's Association, apparently suffering from growing pains last year and feeling inadequate in its policy of self-government, reorganized."¹³⁵ The organization divided itself into a woman's honor council, an inter-dormitory council, and the senate, and was renamed the "Women's Government Association." The group distributed responsibility into three units in hopes that would help it function more efficiently with so many female students.¹³⁶ The newly designed Women's Government Association was more prepared to provide for female students who had a significant and growing presence at UNC.

Navy Pre-Flight School

World War II officially began in 1939, but it did not significantly impact the lives of students at UNC. When the US declared war in December of 1941, and the Navy established a pre-flight program on campus, the university became heavily occupied with the war effort. In this program, new recruits would come to UNC to train for flight school for the duration of the war.¹³⁷ In essence, the campus was to become a military and academic hybrid of sorts, in 1942 until the end of the war. The war impacted women's lives directly as well. When Mrs. Stacy wrote to the president Graham in 1942 she said, "We have every reason to believe that, with the growing interest of women in war work along with the increased national demand for trained women, we shall exceed our largest enrollment of last year by one hundred or more."¹³⁸ Male enrollment rates were decreasing across the country as men began to enlist in the military, but

¹³⁵ Stacy, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1941.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ John Norris. "Navy 'Launches' Pre-Flight School." *The Washington Post* (May 24, 1942).

¹³⁸ Stacy, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1942.

Naval the pre-flight program and an increase in female students ensured UNC's survival for the next few years.

Civilian men at UNC were suddenly outnumbered by women and men in the pre-flight program. Whether in competition with the Navy men, or simply as a display of masculinity, male students held a widely publicized beard-growing competition. The competition was sponsored by the student union, and the winner with the best overall beard was to be awarded a small sum of money. Women were delighted by this display and supported the beard growing enthusiastically. An article from the *Daily Tar Heel* covering this competition reported that "Navy officers look pretty swell with their uniforms and all, and the same Carolina gentlemen had better express their manly handsomeness with the best spirit or they will be left in the dust."¹³⁹ Women were no longer the single minority on campus, which put them in an unprecedented position at the university.

The women at UNC welcomed their new classmates graciously. Various organizations and groups organized dances and other festivities for the young Navy men, and the female students at UNC supplied these men with eligible dates.¹⁴⁰ One dance organized even encouraged women who had not been asked on a date to come and they would be set up with a Navy man who also did not find a date.¹⁴¹ The male students were openly jealous of these social activities and complained in *The Daily Tar Heel* by announcing that "Carolina coeds are official Naval property."¹⁴² In reality women were acting in the same way they had been, hosting dances

¹³⁹ Anne Montgomery. "Beard Race Fascinates Coeds; Navy Can't Have Everything." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC. May 24, 1942).

¹⁴⁰ "Cadet Dance To Feature 300 Coeds." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC. June 23, 1942).

¹⁴¹ "Coed, Cadet Bow Tonight at Navy Hop." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC. October 3, 1942).

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

and going on dates, only with fewer civilian male students. Women seemed to have the upper hand in UNC's social sphere of life for possibly the first time.

Women and the War Effort

Female students at the University of North Carolina could not go overseas to fight in the world war but still felt a responsibility to contribute in the best way they could. Women were in a unique position to contribute to the war effort because the gender divide of that era allowed them a special set of skills. Before and during the war they often held fundraisers, sewed clothing, took nursing courses, and honed other talents that would supply them with many ways to assist their country during war time. Mrs. Stacy wrote that "through the newly organized War Board composed of members of all groups several types of volunteer war work are possible. All groups have worked together in the field of recreation and entertainment for the service men on our campus"¹⁴³ Women who lived in town were forced into on-campus dormitories in order to make room for the new Navy pre-flight school recruits.¹⁴⁴ This caused increased crowding in the dormitories with three, and occasionally four, women per room, but there was never any evidence that the women complained.¹⁴⁵ Female students at UNC seemed willing and enthusiastic to assist in the war effort in whatever way they could be useful.

There were many men overseas fighting in Europe, and the United States was a country in a state of warfare. During war time, there was a great need for those skilled and trained in technological work. Throughout these years there was a noticeable increase in women at UNC majoring in sciences in order to work in healthcare, technology, or some other field that would be useful in the war effort. For women who were not in that sort of major, there was a significant

¹⁴³ Stacy, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1943.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 1942.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 1943.

demand for training courses they could take in order to learn about new technologies, or other skills that could be useful for the war effort.¹⁴⁶ President Graham sent out a pamphlet detailing UNC's involvement in the war effort that declared, "With the advent of war, women must be trained not only as nurses, technologists and defense workers, but also to take the places of men in many fields of business, journalism, education, and social work." In 1943 the school finally instituted a CAA (Civilian Aeronautics Authority), specifically designed to train female and to equip them to visit high schools and educate the students there.¹⁴⁷ Women and UNC were consistently determined to be fully participant in all activities, even those that were traditionally only for men, and the war effort was no exception.

Female students had unique ways to assist in the war effort that made them a valuable asset. The most significant contributions women at UNC made during the war years were related to fundraising, or holding a drive to collect scrap metal, fabric, and similar items. The Delta Delta Delta sorority, which was founded in 1942, made a distinctive effort in the war effort. The sorority offered scholarships to "women of fine character, who will be useful in the war effort or may be valuable citizens in the post war reconstruction period and who are in need of financial assistance because of economic dislocations resulting from the war."¹⁴⁸ It was not unlikely that a sorority would offer a charitable scholarship, but it shows how all aspects of life became totally and fully devoted to the war effort. Women used the social groups that had worked so hard for to attain status with the greater student body in a new function applicable to the era they were living.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 1942.

¹⁴⁷ "Coeds and War Training." *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC January 10, 1943).

¹⁴⁸ "Tri-Delts Offer New Scholarships to Carolina Coed." *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC April 22, 1944).

Women Take Over Campus

Part of why women were able to make such a sizable impact on campus during the second World War was because they had become noticeably less of a minority. In the graduating class of 1944 women outnumbered men three to one, which had been “the case of other senior classes of the past few years.”¹⁴⁹ It is a well-known history that with so many men overseas fighting, women were left to take care of the nation, and did so quite successfully. This was also true in the microcosm of Chapel Hill. Not only did male student registration decrease during the war, but female student registration increased considerably.¹⁵⁰ In 1939 there were five-hundred four women enrolled at UNC and by 1945 there were seven-hundred twenty-seven.¹⁵¹ Many women began to enroll to learn the more technical, skilled labor that the nation increasingly required during the war period. In a period in which UNC was truly beginning to become a co-educational college, having a female majority changed the atmosphere of the campus in many ways.

The campus continued to function as normally as possible through such extenuating circumstances. Social and extracurricular activities were not eradicated or obsolete. During the war years women founded a third sorority, Delta Delta Delta, and also created the Carolina Independent Coed Society, for women not involved in Greek life.¹⁵² What changed was who was present to participate. Women had begun to make up a much larger percentage of the student population than before the war. There were still many men on campus because of the pre-flight

¹⁴⁹ “Tar Heels Lead Among Graduates.” *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC August 26, 1944).

¹⁵⁰ Stacy, “Letter to President.” Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1942.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 1945.

¹⁵² Margaret Scott. *Some Adjustment Problems of Undergraduate Women at the University of North Carolina*. 1948.

program, and the faculty and staff, but in terms of civilian students, numbers were very one-sided. This enrollment pattern inevitably changed the environment and atmosphere on campus.

There was a new order at the University of North Carolina during this time. This was particularly apparent in Graham Memorial Hall, the college's student union. A *Daily Tar Heel* article written in 1944 highlighted the transformation when it discussed how the student union previously "was run by a bunch of pre-war intellectuals, sneered at by some, respected by others... Today the Student Union is a miniature picture of the University. In its halls live, work, play, study, meet, every type of Carolina student."¹⁵³ Before the war, UNC was controlled by a specific type of student, almost always male. Absence of many of these men during the war allowed for this increased equality, seen first-hand in the student union. The campus was no longer conquered by one group, but rather shared by everyone.

Women at UNC had a newfound power and freedom during the war years. This reorganized the entire campus, and also how the women themselves were organized. The Women's Government had previously implemented a "point system," in which various activities were worth a certain number of points, and each woman was limited to how many points they could accrue. The original motivation for the system was for leadership roles to be more evenly divided among female students and so that no one student could get in over her head by taking on too many activities.¹⁵⁴ During the war years a significant number of women began to push against this system because campus had changed so drastically since the system was originally created. A *Daily Tar Heel* article describing the debate explained that "those who wish to see the system abolished feel that a point system is unwise and unnecessary during present times.

¹⁵³ "Graham Memorial...Hub of Campus." *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC June 13, 1944).

¹⁵⁴ "House Canvas Adds Impetus to Coed Action." *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC January 22, 1944).

‘University women,’ they say, ‘should be fully mature enough to be able to regulate their own activities.’” It also wrote that “during these times...women should be widening their interests and activities in student government and extra-curriculars, since they are now the most stable of any element on campus.”¹⁵⁵ With fewer men and more women, there were abundant extracurricular activities and leadership positions available and many women did not want to be limited by an arbitrary number of points. Eventually, these women won out, and the point system was abolished. The consequences of increased female representation created permanent changes for the entire school.

Post-War Years

Eventually World War II ended, and the demographics of UNC returned to their previous gender imbalance. Campus returned to more typical operations after the war. In 1945 the orientation for new female students was the same as that for male students, but the, “programs were handled in a fashion similar to pre-war orientation.”¹⁵⁶ Campus returned to a more normal, pre-war, environment but women maintained the momentum of war years. In 1944, they hosted a dance that raised over \$40,000 for war bonds.¹⁵⁷ Such an incredible amount of money signaled that women maintained the strength and determination they did during the war years. Campus life had more or less returned to normal, but mindset of female students had changed.

Years after the war also saw continued struggle over how the Women’s Government should be conducted. Female students had a new perspective on how a co-educational campus should function. For example, a glaring instance of inequality between men and women that was

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ “To the Student Body...From the Editor.” *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC September 11, 1945).

¹⁵⁷ “Miss ‘X’ Hits Top of Ladder in Vote Polls.” *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC February 13, 1944).

challenged was that the Women's Honor court handled twenty-five percent more cases than the school's honor council, meaning women were being punished for violating rules at a much higher rate than their male counterparts.¹⁵⁸ Along this theme, many women began to note and take issue that male students had no equivalent social government that ruled their activities, or morality, the way the Women's government did.¹⁵⁹ Of course, such issues had always existed, but it was not until women dominated campus, and suddenly the men returned that the differences became apparent. Women began more and more to notice the discrepancies between their lives at the university and men's lives, and they began to work more and more for this co-educational institution to educate all students in the same manner.

The University of North Carolina would never return to its original conditions before the war. Women had begun to see more equality in the pre-war years, and the equality was solidified by their dominance on campus during the war. This new era was ultimately culminated when the American Association of University Women admitted UNC in 1945. This association had existed since before women were even allowed to attend UNC, and had denied their entrance in to the group because of the inequalities women suffered at the school.¹⁶⁰ The AAUW accepting UNC after almost fifty years showed they too recognized the changes that had occurred for women at the school.¹⁶¹ It had become enough of a co-educational university that it was accredited by other women nationally. This would not create immediate and total equality for women on campus, but did mark the significant accomplishments the female students at UNC

¹⁵⁸ Dean, *Women on the Hill*, 1-16.

¹⁵⁹ Stacy, "Letter to President." Records of the Office of the Dean of Women, 1945.

¹⁶⁰ Dean, *Women on the Hill*, 1-16.

¹⁶¹ Agatha Adams, *The Tradition of Women at the University of North Carolina*, (1949).

had achieved over the years. Women had become a truly important part of the culture of the University of North Carolina.

Conclusion

The women at the University of North Carolina from 1897 to 1946 laid the foundation for the next generations of women to attend the university. When Mrs. Stacy retired as Dean of Women Students in 1946 the position was taken over by Katherine Carmichael. Carmichael was to be the last Dean of Women ever at the University of North Carolina.¹⁶² The women Dean Carmichael served at the beginning of her tenure were radically different from the women Dean Stacy began with. These women had several possible dormitories to live in, and a myriad of social activities they could engage in on campus, including sororities, debate societies, newspaper, and student government. The female students under Dean Stacy had made incredible strides in the role of women on and off campus, but there were still many obstacles for Dean Carmichael and her students in seeking equality for women at UNC.

In 1952 the nursing school at the University of North Carolina opened its door to freshmen and sophomores. Before this, only daughters of “bona-fide” Chapel Hill families were allowed to attend for those years. The majority of women had attended another university before transferring to UNC, either as junior and seniors or in a graduate school. Like her predecessor, Dean Carmichael was often consumed by finding adequate housing for female students. As the number of women at UNC continued to grow, so did the amount of housing Dean Carmichael had to arrange. It did not get much easier over the next few years. By 1963 all women were allowed at all levels of the university.¹⁶³

¹⁶² Pamela Dean, *Women on the Hill: A History of Women at the University of North Carolina*. (Chapel Hill, Division of Student Affairs, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1987), 1-16.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

1963 marked the beginning of a passionate and concerted effort for women's rights and autonomy at UNC. That is not to say women had not been fighting for themselves before, but it intensified in a way so many social movements did in the 1960s. Women could compare their lives to their male peers more than ever, because women could attend the university at any level in any department. It became impossible to ignore the different expectations for the conduct of male and female students, and now that female students had such greater presence and access at the school, they wanted greater freedoms as well. University officials, including Dean Carmichael, were resistant to these changes.⁴ The students' wishes won out in the end, after the passage of Title IX in 1971, equality was to be legally enforced. In 1972 the position of Dean of Women Students was abolished.¹⁶⁴

Over the course of 75 years the University of North Carolina transitioned from a male-only college, to a truly co-educational university. When Spencer Dormitory was built in 1925 it indicated that women were to be a permanent part of UNC. When more dormitories were built in 1937 it signaled that the university was open to allowing even more women on campus and creating space for them. In 1969 it was, "recommended by the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Residential Colleges that [Hinton] James Dorm be made co-ed."¹⁶⁵ Although co-ed had always referred to female students in the past, in this context it was used to mean men and women together, a significant change from rhetoric in the first half of the century. Hinton James was made a co-ed dormitory, and as the years went on most other dormitories followed suit.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Erica Meyer. "Dorm Recommendation Made." *The Daily Tar Heel*. (Chapel Hill, NC. February 21, 1969).

Today, even Spencer Dormitory houses both men and women together. UNC became a truly co-educational university.

The women at UNC in the first half of the twentieth century had made an important impact on the school, but there were still many aspects of their lives in which they lacked equality with male students. Women's admission to the university was still quite limited under Dean Carmichael, and women still faced rules and regulations the male students did not. In 1949, nine-six of women in the graduating class stated that marriage was their number one priority in life. An entire generation of women openly came to college with little intention of pursuing a life that required a degree. The social activities the women under Dean Stacy fought for became the very essence of the college experience for the women under Dean Carmichael. In contrast, a significant number of the first women to attend UNC remained single for their entire lives while pursuing a career.

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