

“When the Dean of Women and others can treat us
as equals and as women, not as little girls,
then I feel she has the right to call us women.”

- *anonymous Ohio State University coed, 1968*

COLLEGE WOMEN OR COLLEGE GIRLS?:
GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND
IN LOCO PARENTIS ON CAMPUS

DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Undergraduate women's struggles to terminate the university's role *in loco parentis* represented a revolutionary moment on American campuses in the 1960s. Though the end results were strikingly similar across regions and schools, the paths to change were very different on historically black college campuses when compared to predominantly white college campuses. Challenges to *in loco parentis* regulations took place earlier on coeducational campuses than at women's colleges. At each college or university, students forged a common language of rights to rescind long-standing non-academic regulations.

Student protests against *in loco parentis* policies emerged out of widespread civil rights activism and Black Power ideology by mid-decade at Howard University in Washington, D.C. and at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Undergraduate women framed arguments against *in loco parentis* rules in terms of civil rights and student respectability successfully to dismantle non-academic regulations on campus by the late sixties. On predominantly white campuses, the tradition of student self-government influenced the shape and tone of women's anti-*in loco parentis* protests. The movement to end the role of

the university in place of the parent harbingered the women's rights movement of the late 1960s at the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio and at Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts. Women's protests on each campus mobilized female students and significantly impacted their understanding of gender issues within the broader American culture.

The underlying concern of administrators and parents regarding morality and sexuality on campus permeated campus debates. The *in loco parentis* ideology ultimately proved obsolete as campus officials realized that they could not codify or enforce individual morality in the face of strident student demands for privacy and self determination. Undergraduate women struggled to redefine femininity and women's roles in light of shifts in the gender and race structures of American life. During the 1970s undergraduate women pressured campus administrations to institute programs and services the students themselves deemed necessary to their success and welfare on campus. College women learned to navigate campus life without the special protections and pre-established women's community that *in loco parentis* policies and women's self-government had once provided.

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INTRODUCTION

COLLEGE WOMEN OR COLLEGE GIRLS?

“In the absence of a precisely defined relationship between the student and the university, there exists the traditional relationship summarized in the concept *in loco parentis*. The theory establishes the university as paternal guardian over the moral, intellectual and social activities of the student. From the tradition ... come these conceptions: the student need not be directly involved in the formation of general university policies and the administration may circumscribe the perimeter of a student’s interests, speech and thought, personal and group associations, and actions.”¹

Undergraduate women’s activism and protests to terminate the university’s role *in loco parentis* (“in place of the parent”) represented a revolutionary moment on American campuses in the 1960s. Though the end results were strikingly similar across regions and schools, the paths to change were very different on historically black college campuses when compared to predominantly white college campuses. Challenges to *in loco parentis* regulations took place earlier on coeducational campuses, where different regulations for women and men hastened protest, than at women’s colleges. At each college or

¹ United States National Student Association, *In Loco Parentis*, The Ohio State University Archives, Student Affairs, Office Of: RG 9/a/13: *In Loco Parentis*: 1966-1967, Columbus, Ohio.

university, students forged a common language of rights to rescind long-standing non-academic regulations.

Student protests against *in loco parentis* policies emerged out of widespread civil rights activism and a shift to new Black Power ideology by mid-decade at historically black colleges and universities. Undergraduate women framed arguments against *in loco parentis* rules in terms of civil rights, racial ideology, and student respectability successfully to dismantle most non-academic regulations on campus by the late sixties. On predominantly white campuses, the tradition of undergraduate women's self-government influenced the shape and tone of women's anti-*in loco parentis* protests. The student movement to end the role of the university in place of the parent harbingered the women's rights movement of the late 1960s on these campuses. Women's protests against seemingly trivial issues on each campus actually mobilized female students into activism and had significant impact on women's understanding of issues within the broader culture of American life.

While most students wrapped anti-*in loco parentis* arguments in the language of maturity, responsibility, and individual rights, the underlying concern of administrators and parents regarding morality and sexuality on campus permeated campus debates. The *in loco parentis* ideology ultimately proved obsolete as campus officials realized

that they could not codify and enforce individual morality in the face of increasingly strident student demands for privacy and self-determination. In the wake of student success ending *in loco parentis* policies, undergraduate women at both predominantly black and white schools struggled to redefine femininity and women's roles in light of shifts in the gender and race structures of American life. Undergraduate women pressured campus administrations to institute programs and services the students themselves deemed necessary to their success and welfare on campus. Students also learned to navigate campus life without the special protections and pre-established women's community that *in loco parentis* policies and women's self-government had once provided.

This is the story of revolutionary institutional change on American campuses, propagated by undergraduate women during the tumult of the 1960s. Studies of campus activism in this era largely focus on the anti-Vietnam movement, the free speech movement, and other male-defined protests and demonstrations in hot spots such as California and New York.² My goal here is to trace women's activism on

² See for example Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); David Burner, *Making Peace with the 60s* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996); Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (Toronto; New York: Bantam Books, 1987); Kenneth J. Heineman, *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era* (New York: New York University Press, 1993); Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History*

campus with a focus on the issue that affected all undergraduate women's lives, and to look beyond the predominantly bicoastal focus of sixties historiography. Most American college students did not attend Berkeley, Columbia, or New York University; to flesh out a more complete picture of student activism, I argue that historians need to investigate women's lives at more diverse institutions of higher learning. This includes Midwestern campuses, historically black colleges and universities, and women's colleges.

Student activism to end the role of the university *in loco parentis* is a study of institutional change within the academy and the dramatic impact women's voices and opinions had on campus culture. I am not recounting the important influence of student activism in the anti-war movement and in efforts to end the influence of the military industrial complex on undergraduate institutions or the larger counterculture of the sixties. When women's demands for the end of non-academic regulations aligned themselves with these important movements or their leaders, they are discussed, but their stories are not a central theme herein. Instead, I place the long (r)evolution of *in loco parentis* policies and the ways women pressured campus administrators to redefine "parental" authority at the center of the narrative. Undergraduate

of Liberalism in the 1960s (New York: Harper & Row, 1984); W. J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War, the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Melvin Small et al., *Give Peace a Chance: Exploring the Vietnam Antiwar Movement* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1992).

women – both black and white – challenged the ideological and practical premises of *in loco parentis* regulations and the boundaries of authority within the institutions of higher learning. Students pushed for change through the so-called “proper channels” – student government, petitions, self-studies, and legislation for example – but turned to direct confrontation when other efforts failed. Protests and demonstrations, flagrant disregard of unpopular regulations and campus shut downs revealed the power of undergraduate women successfully to organize for significant change and to act against stereotypes of the passive or accommodating woman. What began as seemingly trivial protests about dress codes played a role in much larger changes in American colleges and universities.

This study investigates campus life and student activism at four American colleges in the mid-twentieth century: Howard University (Washington, D.C.), an historically black coeducational public university; Ohio State University (Columbus, Ohio), a coeducational, predominantly white public research university; Simmons College (Boston, Massachusetts), a predominantly white, private northeastern women’s college; and Spelman College (Atlanta, Georgia), an historically black private women’s college. A comparative analysis of these four diverse institutions reveals the complex relationship of race, gender,

class, and sexuality in our understanding of campus life. These four institutions, though geographically diverse, are each located in urban centers affected by national media and trends. Howard University and Spelman College had long, respected traditions of excellence in higher education within the African American community and in particular among the black middle classes. Each campus had considerable archival sources available for the time period under investigation. Campus newspapers, administrative records and letters, student handbooks and yearbooks, as well as college self-studies and campus correspondence provide a rich picture of campus life and activism of the era. The women's self-government associations at Simmons and Ohio State left numerous records to their campus archives, including meeting minutes, proposed legislation, personal notes concerning campus events, self-studies, and letters to their deans. Unfortunately, a fire at Spelman College in the late 1960s destroyed a number of pertinent campus records, including some of the women's self-government association's documents. The available records were nonetheless significant. It is important to note that some campus clubs at each school did not turn over records from the era, if any were kept.

The oldest of the schools in this study, Howard University in Washington, D.C., was chartered by the thirty-ninth Congress in 1867 as an institution "for training colored preachers and teachers to help

uplift some of the four million recently emancipated slaves and a quarter of a million Negroes who had been born free.”³ Named after civil war hero, Commissioner of the Freedman’s Bureau, and founding member of the college General Oliver Otis Howard, Howard University was opened to female and male students of all races interested in higher education in the liberal arts, sciences, or studied professions. In 1960, campus officials estimated that approximately one-half of all African American architects, engineers, doctors, and dentists in the United States had trained at Howard University, and that ninety-six percent of black lawyers had received degrees at Howard.⁴ One hundred years after its charter, Howard University boasted the “largest concentration of black scholars and black P.h.D.s [sic] at any single institution of higher education” and stood as one of, if not the most prestigious historically black universities in the United States.⁵

By far the largest institution in this study, Ohio State University was founded in 1870 as a direct result of the 1862 Morrill Act designed to establish land-grant colleges throughout the country. Initially

³ Rayford Logan, *Howard University: The First Hundred Years, 1867-1967* (New York: New York University Press, 1969), 15.

⁴ Harry G. Robinson, Hazel Ruth Edwards, and Howard University., *The Long Walk : The Placemaking Legacy of Howard University* (Washington, D.C.: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center Howard University, 1996).

⁵ Julian B. Roebuck and Komanduri Srinivasa Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Their Place in American Higher Education* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1993).

created by the Ohio General Assembly as the Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical College, Ohio residents decided to offer a liberal arts curriculum at the new coeducational college as well. Classes began on the Columbus, Ohio, main campus in 1873. Recognizing the college as “a scientific school, liberal in its charge and practical in its aims,” the General Assembly renamed the institution The Ohio State University in 1878.⁶ In 1963, OSU enrolled over 30,000 students on campus, including graduate, undergraduate, and professional students.⁷ Of that number approximately 8,000 students resided in on-campus residence halls under the direct supervision of *in loco parentis* policies.⁸

Sophia Packard and Harriet Giles, members of the Women’s American Baptist Mission Society of New England, founded the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary in 1881 in Atlanta, Georgia.⁹ Renamed Spelman College by the 1920s, Giles and Packard founded the school to educate recently emancipated African American women in Georgia “because state officials there ... had made no provision for black

⁶ Ryan Sweeten, ed., *A History of the Ohio State University* (Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University, 1985), 3.

⁷ Sweeten, ed., *A History of the Ohio State University*, 22.

⁸ Thomas C. Sawyer, *The Ohio State University Student Personnel Administration 1873-1970*, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio, 57.

⁹ The college was renamed to acknowledge the generosity of the Rockefeller family. John D. Rockefeller’s wife’s maiden name was Spelman; the home of her abolitionist parents had been a stop on the Underground Railroad in Cleveland, Ohio. Janice M. Leone, “The Mission of Women’s Colleges in an Era of Cultural Revolution, 1890-1930” (Doctoral Dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1989), 64.

women's education."¹⁰ The founders of Spelman believed that the education of black women was crucial to improving the living conditions of African Americans in the South because black women had access to professions and community organization that black men did not in the Jim Crow era.¹¹ "In offering a Christian education to black women, Spelman ... hoped to alleviate not only the oppression of the black community but also to better relations between blacks and whites, thus improving society in general."¹²

In the late 1920s, Spelman joined with neighboring Morehouse College and Atlanta University to form the Atlanta University System; by the 1960s, the renamed Atlanta University Center encompassed Spelman, Morehouse, Atlanta University, Clark College, Morris Brown College, and the Interdenominational Theological Center of Atlanta, and provided Spelman undergraduates access to the resources and

¹⁰ Packard and Giles, quoted in Leone, "The Mission of Women's Colleges in an Era of Cultural Revolution, 1890-1930", 61.

¹¹ See for example Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993); Amy Thompson McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999); Stephanie J. Shaw, *What a Woman Ought to Be and to Do: Black Professional Women Workers During the Jim Crow Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

¹² Leone, "The Mission of Women's Colleges in an Era of Cultural Revolution, 1890-1930", 124.

curriculum of each member institution.¹³ Spelman is the “oldest undergraduate liberal arts college for black women” in the United States, “renowned for its academic excellence and the leadership and achievements of its students and alumni” in the past century.¹⁴ Enrollment at Spelman College nearly doubled in the decade of the sixties, from approximately 650 students in 1962 to over 1100 in 1971.¹⁵

Simmons College opened its doors in Boston, Massachusetts in 1902, founded in the vision of local businessman John Simmons “for the purpose of teaching medicine, music, drawing, telegraphy, and other branches of art, science, and industry best calculated to enable the scholars to acquire an independent livelihood.”¹⁶ Simmons believed that women should be prepared for lifelong professional careers and that a college devoted exclusively to the needs of working women would best achieve this goal.¹⁷ “Simmons [College] became one of the first

¹³ Roebuck and Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Their Place in American Higher Education*.

¹⁴ Roebuck and Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Their Place in American Higher Education*, 61.

¹⁵ *Spelman College Bulletin*, April 1964, The Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 136-39; *Spelman College Bulletin*, 1972-1974, The Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 142.

¹⁶ Kenneth Lamartine Mark, *Delayed by Fire, Being the Early History of Simmons College* (Concord, N.H.: Priv. print. Rumford press, 1945), 24.

¹⁷ *Simmons College Catalog*, 1972-1973, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 12.

colleges for young women” in the United States “to recognize the value of combining vocational instruction with a liberal and cultural education.”¹⁸ By 1963, nearly seventy-five percent of the 1,700 students enrolled at Simmons College lived on the small urban campus.¹⁹

Like those on most other campuses in this era, administrators at Howard, Ohio State, Simmons and Spelman faced the challenge of increasing enrollments in the early 1960s and beyond, as the young ‘baby boom’ generation came of age and moved away to college. The percentage of eighteen to twenty-one year olds attending college increased from 30% in 1950 to 48% in 1970.²⁰ In 1965, approximately 4.5 million students attended institutions of higher education in the United States, with enrollments on the rise through the early 1970s.²¹ Though it is impossible to generalize to all American campuses from these four institutions, evidence of trends or disparities is nonetheless significant.

¹⁸ *Simmons College Catalog*, 1963-1964, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 35.

¹⁹ *Simmons College Catalog*.

²⁰ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970* (1975).

²¹ "Campus '65: The College Generation Looks at Itself and the World around It," *Newsweek*, 22 March 1965.

This is the story of undergraduate women in an era of revolution.²² Most of the women involved in this story were not civil rights, New Left, or women's movement activists. Some women in this study may have supported the goals and actions of the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, but they did not all participate in movement actions off campus. While the arguments and ideologies of these important political and social movements obviously influenced undergraduate women throughout the era, this is an investigation of the thousands of undergraduate women at Howard University, Ohio State University, Spelman College and Simmons College who made their personal lives political in campus debate. These women demanded an end to college regulations and traditions that limited their autonomy on campus and forged a common language of rights in support of this goal.

Campus traditions, the type of institution, enrollments, and the nature of the relationship between students and campus administrators shaped the ways undergraduate women pursued change on each campus. At coeducational institutions such as Howard University and the Ohio State University, for example, the evident disparity between women's regulations and men's lack of rules galvanized women to action by mid-decade. While women ultimately sought and achieved

²² Susan Brownmiller, *In Our Time: Memoir of a Revolution* (New York: Dial Press, 1999); Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Knopf: distributed by Random House, 1979); Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking, 2000).

very similar ends, each campus followed somewhat different paths to change. The initial focus of undergraduate women's activism was not rights for women worldwide or even nationwide, but rather a focus on personal freedom for undergraduate women on campus and a push for democratic representation within the campus community. Undergraduate women of the 1960s acted out to help themselves and people like them – they made the personal political on campus even before the women's liberation movement of the late 1960s coined the phrase.

At historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), African American women challenged campus administrators to live up to the ideals of equality and respect many espoused in the civil rights movement's efforts to end racism and segregation in American society. Undergraduate women demanded an end to treatment as second class citizens by their own college administrators and faculty, and demanded a voice in the formation of campus regulations and a curriculum that celebrated their African heritage. By studying change at HBCUs as well as predominantly white institutions, this project expands on discussions of undergraduate culture and life begun by Amy McCandless and Helen Horowitz.²³

²³ Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1987); McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*.

Campus life is a microcosm of larger social forces in American culture; looking at the lives of undergraduate African American women reveals the unique situation of black collegiate women in the American south and the impact of race and gender ideology on their daily lives. McCandless' arguments about the "twoness" of higher education for women in the south hold for the two southern schools in this study. McCandless asserted that Southern college women remained always "cognizant of the ways in which they are simultaneously American and Southern, Southern and female, female and black/white, and black/white and upper/middle/lower class."²⁴ This double consciousness combined with the culture and economic values of the south to create a distinct educational system in the region. I contend that by the later twentieth century, national trends affected schools like Spelman College and brought them more in line with educational trends in other parts of the country – although the traditions of the southern college influenced the shape and tone of change on campus.²⁵ I argue further that the unique circumstances of *each* institution shaped student interpretation of national trends. There is also evidence that the "politics of respectability," described by Evelyn Brooks

²⁴ McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*, 281.

²⁵ McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*.

Higginbotham in her study of black Baptist women in the Jim Crow era, was a very real part of undergraduate life at Spelman College and Howard University.²⁶ Undergraduate women negotiated the boundaries of respectability in efforts to redefine female beauty and conduct without perpetuating negative stereotypes of African American women within black or white communities. Spelman, founded by Baptist missionaries, provided young women a ‘safe space’ on campus (outside of the church) to develop as leaders in their fields and communities – leadership and organization students used against the school itself in the late 1960s to force dramatic change in women’s regulations.

Including the often overlooked campus activism of African American women complicates Beth Bailey’s discussion of the sexual revolution on campus. Bailey’s study of campus life in Lawrence, Kansas, during the 1960s and early 1970s focused on the myriad changes in American culture that made up the sexual revolution.²⁷ Though much of my research at Ohio State and Simmons supports Bailey’s findings that numerous disparate social trends and grass roots changes in sexual mores ultimately coalesced into what we now perceive as a revolution, I argue that placing sexuality at the center of

²⁶ Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women’s Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920*.

²⁷ Beth L. Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

the *in loco parentis* debates distorts the prominence of sex in the campus discussion itself. For black women, sexuality was a charged issue – many young women struggled to dispel the hurtful stereotype of the licentious black female. Too, although sex and sexuality played an important role in the debates over the role of the university *in loco parentis*, most undergraduate women did not frame their arguments in those terms. While the national media focused to a large degree on undergraduate sexual license in the sixties, the language of individual rights, responsibility, and equality were the most expedient arguments for students on campus.

It is also critical to recognize the agency of young women in dismantling ‘in place of the parent’ regulations on campus. David Allyn argued that the 1968 Barnard College “scandal” involving the off-campus cohabitation of undergraduates Linda LeClair and Peter Behr signaled the end of *in loco parentis* policies on campus, in that college administrators “quietly extinguished the last remnants of *in loco parentis*” to avoid similar scandals.²⁸ In fact, this was not the case on the campuses investigated here; there was nothing quiet about the revolution on these campuses in 1968 and 1969. Allyn’s dismissal of

²⁸ David Allyn, *Make Love, Not War: The Sexual Revolution, an Unfettered History* (Boston, Mass: Little Brown, 2000), 96-99.

the role of undergraduate activism does not do justice to the dramatic impact women had on campus in the late 1960s.

Cultural emphases on democracy, racial equality, and individual achievement in the fifties influenced young women's expectations of college life and adult responsibility in the early to mid-1960s. Despite the cultural influence of 'traditional' gender roles after World War II, depictions of women in careers and public life and the necessity of women's income to sustain middle-class status for many families created a tension between ideology and reality. Joanne Meyerowitz and others have discussed this tension in the American popular media; I argue that undergraduate women of the sixties were forced to reconcile the image of domesticity with the reality of increased opportunities for women in the paid labor force and the government's entreaties – and for African American women, the expectations of family and community – to young people to achieve excellence in academics and careers regardless of sex.²⁹ This tension was particularly acute at women's colleges such as Simmons and Spelman, where undergraduates worked to balance new career opportunities and established methods of accommodation to the gendered structure of work.

²⁹ Historians have begun to chip away at the strictures of women's gender roles in the post-war era. Meyerowitz and others relocate women's activism, paid labor, and the ideology of respectable womanhood in the fifties by exploring the histories of women that have been too long overlooked in these collected essays. Joanne J. Meyerowitz, ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994).

My research fleshes out Barbara Miller Solomon's observation that the language of "democracy" in battles over *in loco parentis* policies led to the "unexpected awakening of a feminist consciousness" among undergraduate women.³⁰ Horowitz, too, has drawn links between the dedication of career-minded coeds of the forties and fifties and the feminist movement of the sixties.³¹ One of my goals here is to draw out those connections while recognizing that context played a very important role in how women pursued change and in the strength of the women's movement on campus. In the aftermath of anti-*in loco parentis* activism, some undergraduate women expanded their critique of campus culture to institutional problems within American culture and argued that the world off campus needed changing as well. Women activists drew parallels between campus issues and broader social problems, then worked to address issues such as health care and gender inequality on and off campus.

By exploring women's various arguments for change on campus, the debate over *in loco parentis* becomes part of a broader cultural discussion of women's lives in the era. Undergraduate women's activism shows the continuity and influence of the language and ideologies of the early civil rights movement and combines with the New

³⁰ Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 202.

³¹ Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*.

Left as a key contributor to the women's liberation movement of the late 1960s. Race emerged as an important factor in *in loco parentis* debates at HBCUs; while it changed the tone of the discussion, it did not change the arguments women used to redefine institutional authority. The tradition of women's self government played a key role in the tone of debate as well. The relationship between administrators and students and the channels available for women to pursue change had an impact on how women pressed for policy changes. Women's arguments against social regulations foreshadowed the critiques leveled against other institutions in American society by the women's liberation movement on and off campus.

Chapter one explores the context of post World War II America and how significant changes in the gender, race, and class structures in the United States affected higher education in general and gender roles in particular. Understanding the tensions within the growing consumer culture and the struggle of women to reconcile the promises of prosperity with the economic realities of their daily lives sets the stage for the dilemma of young women in the sixties. Though American women were lauded for their return to domestic pursuits in the fifties and their loving attention to home and family, more and more families expected their children – male and female – to attend college as a means

of securing or cementing the family's middle-class status. Women in higher education received conflicting messages: they should do their best and excel in academics while in college, but they should not try too hard lest they not find that marrying man to take them out of the paid labor force and give them a home and children.

Central to any discussion of women's lives in mid- century is the idea of the feminine and all that femininity represented in American life. Chapter two discusses the cultural significance of femininity on college campuses and the real social, economic, and political ramifications for women who adhered to or challenged middle-class definitions of womanhood. College officials used *in loco parentis* policies to teach and reinforce respectable womanhood on campus, in a culture where the performance of the feminine represented the essential core of women's gender roles. Women who challenged the necessity of dress codes, standards regulations, or definition of female beauty in American culture unleashed a firestorm of controversy among parents, administrators, and their peers. Undergraduate women's challenge to seemingly trivial standards of beauty and conduct in fact shook the foundation of non-academic regulations on campus, as women exercised increased autonomy and sought to expand this independence from campus regulations.

Rules concerning women's dormitory hours, curfews, visitation, and the like came under heavy attack in the mid-sixties, when undergraduate women demanded to be treated as mature adults instead of dependent children. Chapter three examines the specifics of the regulations themselves and the logic behind *in loco parentis* regulations as explained by contemporary experts, college officials, the national media, and parents themselves. The specter of the sexual revolution shaped parental and administrative perceptions of early student resistance to *in loco parentis*.³²

Chapters four and five lay out the arguments and events that spurred activism on campus to end non-academic regulations. These chapters also explain watershed events on each campus, tracing the similarities and differences of campus crises. The language of the civil rights movement and the new militancy of the Black Power movement significantly shaped demands to end *in loco parentis* at Spelman College and Howard University. Change at the Ohio State University and

³² The topic of homosexuality is one striking silence in this investigation. It is not my intention to perpetuate the invisibility of homosexuality in the historical record, however the available sources prevent me from delving into this issue in more detail. During the 1950s and most of the 1960s, homosexuality was considered a treatable mental illness. In an era when women's all-consuming passion was supposed to be finding a husband to settle down and have children with, women who did not find men sexually or emotionally appealing likely faced overwhelming pressure to keep their feelings to themselves on campus, at least until graduation. The enforced homosocial environment of women's dormitories no doubt made lesbian relationships possible and even probable, but documentation of these relationships did not come to light. By the late sixties and early seventies, with the growth of the gay and lesbian liberation movements and the removal of homosexuality from the American Psychological Association's clinical classifications, homosexual students became more visible in campus publications.

Simmons College emerged out of a reassessment of women's status on campus and the role of student government in policy formation and enforcement that foreshadowed women's activism in the women's liberation movement on these campuses.

By the early seventies, the doctrine *in loco parentis* was nearly eradicated on campuses. Students and administrators worked to redefine the boundaries of their relationship, as many campuses became increasingly driven by student demands for relevant curriculum and campus services. Chapter six considers the campus landscape in the wake of the revolution in women's regulations and explores women's political activism after the protests and demonstrations. My research, then, charts the ways that women's activism against the role of the university *in loco parentis*, developing in different ways at different kinds of campuses, adds to our understanding of how changes in expectations for women played out in the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s. It is the story of how college girls in the United States became college women.

CHAPTER 1

COLLEGE GIRLS

“Women graduates of institutions have a special role to play in their homes and communities because they are the culture bearers of society, and the home can be no better than the woman who directs its welfare.”¹

To understand the campus tumult of the sixties, it is essential to explore those forces that shaped the dynamics of campus life and the debate concerning higher education for women during the early Cold War era. Central to an understanding of the conflicts between undergraduate women and academic administrators on college campuses in this time period is an appreciation for the cultural negotiation of gender, race, class, and sexuality in the United States during the 1950s. Postwar concerns with the containment of communism at home, the economic and political health of the nation, and the strengthening of American families shaped gender ideologies and the goals and regulations of college life. Many American men eagerly took advantage of the G.I. Bill and the postwar economic boom in the United States, a boom that held out the promise of middle-class

¹ Albert E. Manley, "Message from Dr. Albert E. Manley, President of Spelman College," in *Reflections* (Atlanta, Georgia: 1967), 115.

prosperity for every family. The confluence of these political and economic changes led to the expansion of higher education for the middle classes as college became affordable for more Americans, higher education that could lead to social and economic mobility for the children of the new middle classes.

With the expansion of higher education and the growing numbers of women students, educators and administrators faced numerous challenges. First, how if at all should the curriculum change to benefit the growing number of young women whose assumed goal after college was to marry and raise families? Second, to what extent could or should campuses regulate the morality and attitudes of their undergraduates? Third, how much autonomy should each campus give its students, in particular female students, in shaping campus life? Finally, in an era of consumption, how could campuses stay competitive and attract new students, while still upholding the values and image of a moral community for which parents were willing to pay?

Educational institutions addressed these problems in the unique context of the fifties. On some college campuses, college officials placed the onus of regulation enforcement on undergraduate women's self-government associations where possible. In doing so, campus administrators allowed undergraduate women a degree of autonomy within proscribed boundaries; undergraduate women developed and

enforced moral codes and policed respectability among their peers. Attempts by campus administrators to hold fast to the answers they had formulated into the next decade would prove futile on many campuses when students questioned the conflicting messages administrators, parents, and popular culture taught them about their roles in American life.

Women in higher education

American society did not accept higher education for women as commonplace until the early twentieth century. University and college life had been a male domain since the earliest days of the American colonies – many perceived women pioneers in this area as rebels, the exceptions rather than the rule. Women who attended college or university in the later 1800s generally came from economically modest backgrounds and were career oriented in their goals.² In the early years of coeducation, campuses had “no formal codes or rules [to] separate the sexes” and women were often left to find their own housing arrangements off campus in the absence of women’s living quarters on campus.³ Women’s colleges in the northeast attracted daughters of the affluent classes, while women’s colleges in the south provided

² Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1987), 197.

³ Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, 195.

secondary and higher education for young women as an alternative to coeducation.⁴ The female communities of teaching, social work, settlement houses, and other reform work provided a relatively secure and independent livelihood for women graduates, many of whom did not marry after graduation.⁵

The expansion of higher education for women in the early 1900s resulted in part from the emphasis on education for women within the black community as a means for race advancement and the assurances from college officials that young women would be safe to pursue higher education through the establishment of campus dormitories and “manners and morals” regulations.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, segregation and disfranchisement limited opportunities for African American men and women in the south. As historian Glenda Gilmore argued in her study of North Carolina politics at the turn of the century, black women served as the link between their communities and white culture by working for political, educational, and community reform in ways that black men could not. Women viewed education as the key to class

⁴ See for example, Liva Baker, *I'm Radcliffe, Fly Me!: The Seven Sisters and the Failure of Women's Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1976); Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*; Amy Thompson McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999).

⁵ Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*; McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*.

mobility and race uplift, and through collective action created a social service network for black families and career opportunities for educated African American women.⁶

Black women confronted stereotypes that characterized them as sexually promiscuous, asexual mammies, or overbearing matriarchs. They “rejected white America’s depiction of black women as immoral, childlike, and unworthy of respect or protection” by adopting Victorian middle-class values of thrift, temperance, hygiene and purity in what Higginbotham has named the “politics of respectability.”⁷ Many black women strived to be “their own best argument” for respectable womanhood and racial justice, holding themselves to higher standards of conduct, achievement, and appearance than white women.⁸ Black families viewed education as a way to “protect black women from domestic service and sexual intimidation and exploitation by whites,”

⁶ Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

⁷ Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920*; Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women’s Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 186.

⁸ Deborah G. White, *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 109.

making education of daughters instead of sons a “practical investment” in the future of the race and the community.⁹

Encouraged by their families, black women pursued higher education for careers in teaching, nursing, and social work to help better themselves, their families, and their communities throughout the twentieth century.¹⁰ Stephanie Shaw’s study of “socially responsible individualism” described the pressure on young women in the early twentieth century. “Each individual woman, by virtue of her preparation – mental, moral, and, for a time, manual – had the superhuman ability to change the whole society,” Shaw argued, “and that was what she had to do.”¹¹ Young women reached their goals with the help of their immediate and extended families as well as their communities, and as such had a responsibility to return to aid those communities.

By the turn of the twentieth century, college officials succeeded in attracting the daughters of the middle-class by implementing changes on campus so girls could “remain safely feminine even when exposed to

⁹ Patricia Roberts Harris, “Problems and Solutions in Achieving Equality for Women,” in W. Todd Furniss, Patricia Albjerg Graham, and American Council on Education., *Women in Higher Education* (Washington,,: American Council on Education, 1974), 16.

¹⁰ Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (New York: W. Morrow, 1984), 243-44.

¹¹ Stephanie J. Shaw, *What a Woman Ought to Be and to Do: Black Professional Women Workers During the Jim Crow Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 217.

higher education away from the protection of home.”¹² Universities constructed women’s residence halls and developed guidelines for women’s study and social interactions on and off campus, more formally known as *in loco parentis* policies. In his study of nineteenth and twentieth century campus life in the United States, David Hoekema outlined the four principle tenets of *in loco parentis* doctrine. Acting in the place of the parent, institutions exercised authority to direct student behavior and to punish students at their discretion for violating regulations. Tradition and fairness protected students’ basic freedoms on campus, though institutions of higher education exercised an “exemption from limits on searches” in collecting and evaluating evidence of misconduct, as would a parent.¹³ Finally, the concept of *in loco parentis* held colleges and universities responsible for the welfare of students, and many parents held institutions to a high standard of care for their children.

In loco parentis policies impacted nearly every aspect of a college woman’s daily life; dress codes, codes of conduct, housing regulations, visiting hours and curfews proscribed women’s actions on and off campus during their tenure as undergraduates. Colleges used these regulations to enforce high standards of appearance, conduct, and

¹² Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, 201.

¹³ David A. Hoekema, *Campus Rules and Moral Community: In Place of in Loco Parentis* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1994), 27.

respectability. For African American women, these regulations could be particularly restrictive. “The discipline of women at black colleges reflected a special determination to obliterate a presumed inherited taint of impurity often associated with the female slave in the minds of black men,” historian Barbara Miller Solomon argued. “Parents approved of this strictness.”¹⁴ For African American women, higher education included learning the “politics of respectability.”

The steady increase in the number of middle-class white women within the halls of academe from the early 1900s through the early 1940s brought with them “more conventional notions of womanhood” and the perception of college as “a way station to a proper marriage,” not the “steppingstone to a career.”¹⁵ The 1920s saw a marked shift in white undergraduate cultures from concern with academic excellence to concern with the status and popularity garnered through dating the right man on campus – a trend that continued well into mid-century. This trend led the new Deans of Women to strengthen women’s regulations through the 1930s, in the belief that “women students, beyond parental control for the first time in their lives, clearly needed

¹⁴ Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 159.

¹⁵ Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, 201.

protection from impetuous male undergraduates,” “unwarranted sexual advances,” and “administrators who were insensitive to their needs.”¹⁶

In light of this shift on campus, educators began to question the utility of liberal education for women – a debate that continued through the 1940s and early 1950s. “Educators of women,” Solomon noted, “invoked the old seminary precept that liberal education would enable women to deal with any circumstances that life brought forth but was not intended to train them for any particular situation.”¹⁷ With new developments in science and technology, the need for university trained professionals – men – led some educators to challenge the place of women in higher education; many assumed women would ultimately marry and raise children, thus “wasting” an advanced education. This ambiguity concerning women’s place in colleges and universities was not reconciled before the outbreak of World War Two, when growing numbers of women flocked to campuses to replace the men who left to defend the home front.

Consuming gender: America at mid-century

Postwar discussions of the political and economic future of the United States versus Soviet communism placed the domestic burden of

¹⁶ Carolyn Terry Bashaw, *“Stalwart Women”: A Historical Analysis of Deans of Women in the South* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1999), 42.

¹⁷ Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, 83.

American stability on the shoulders of the middle-class family. The realignment of strict gender roles at the close of World War Two established clear guidelines for the ideal ordering of mid-century life, an ideal that favored white, middle-class Americans and attempted to ignore racial and class problems that simmered beneath the surface of American popular consciousness.

The Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly referred to as the G.I. Bill, had a profound impact on American life and higher education. Veterans and their families used funds supported by the G.I. Bill to help pay for higher education and new homes. This legislation expanded aid to American colleges and universities through the 1960s and drove college enrollments to an all time high, from 1.5 million students enrolled in 1940 to 3.6 million in 1960. Male veterans of World War Two and the Korean conflict made up the majority of new students on campus in this era; the number of white men attending college exceeded the number of white women enrolled in the fifties. Despite this phenomenon, the number of women enrolled at institutions of higher education continued to increase steadily every decade, continuing the trend established in the late 1800s.¹⁸ The federal government also increased funding to colleges and universities,

¹⁸ For example, the U.S. Bureau of the Census recorded 601,000 women enrolled in higher education in 1940, or 40.2% of total enrollments, and 1,223,000 women, representing 37.9% of the college population in 1960. The ratio of male to female enrollment evened out by the late 1970s as the number of women enrolled in academe continued to rise while male enrollment slowed down.

providing more access to higher education for children of the working and lower middle classes.

The G.I. Bill fueled the new American ideal: men were expected to continue in steady employment outside of the home, to find a wife to settle down with in the new home purchased in the suburbs, and to provide economic security for their families. Women were expected to discontinue full-time paid employment outside the home, to find a husband to buy that house in the suburbs, and to settle in to the serious responsibility of bearing and raising children to strengthen American democracy.¹⁹ In her collection of women's oral histories of the fifties, Brett Harvey pointed out that "women were expected to seek – and find – fulfillment in marriage and family: love, identity, excitement, challenge, and fulfillment."²⁰ Elizabeth Cohen argued that Americans built a "consumers' republic," a "strategy that emerged after the Second World War for reconstructing the nation's economy and reaffirming its democratic values through promoting the expansion of mass

¹⁹ See for example Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988)., Sara M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: Free Press; Collier Macmillan, 1989)., Joanne J. Meyerowitz, ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994)., and Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking, 2000).

²⁰ Brett Harvey, *The Fifties: A Women's Oral History* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993), 71.

consumption.”²¹ Consumption reinforced gender roles; men worked to earn money to buy the products and services that would ensure their happiness and the happiness of their families, while “[t]he professionalization of the housewife turned the act of consumption into a patriotic act and kept American industry humming.”²²

Alongside messages equating consumption with happiness for post war families came a celebration of democracy and the democratic process. For black Americans, this meant a dedication to teaching students to “apply the concepts of democratic action to themselves and their race.”²³ Educators encouraged African American youth to defy the injustices of racial segregation and work toward real democracy to improve American life. Women’s magazines simultaneously called on women to protect the home front with a commitment to motherhood and consumption while encouraging women’s political participation. The positive images of women’s public activism would, authors argued, “prove the strength of democracy by avoiding ‘citizen apathy,’” and

²¹ Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer’s Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Knopf, 2003), 11.

²² Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America*, 14. See also May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era.*, 183-184.

²³ McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women’s Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*, 201.

provide a sharp contrast to “Soviet citizens, male and female, [who] did not participate in a democratic process.”²⁴

Thus, conformity to gender expectations was politicized; white, middle-class American families served as models of democracy and prosperity for the rest of the world, a bulwark of the U.S. in the struggle to contain communism. Failure to adhere to conventional gender roles was perceived as a challenge to the status quo, a threat to the American way of life, and simply unpatriotic. During the fifties, the consequences for nonconformity were real – individuals and families risked losing their social status and economic livelihood if accused of Communist sympathies or activities.²⁵ Heterosexuality was enforced; Americans “perceived [homosexuality] as a danger not only to the individual but also to the creation of a responsible generation concerned with raising families and rearing the next generation.”²⁶

Proper women were expected to place the interests of their children and their husband first, and independent careers or pursuits outside of these concerns were perceived as anomalies among the middle classes. Women who worked to contribute to family expenses –

²⁴ Joanne Meyerowitz, “Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946-1958,” in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, 241.

²⁵ May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era.*, Richard M. Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The Mccarthy Era in Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990)., Harvey, *The Fifties: A Women's Oral History*.

²⁶ David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 54.

to fuel the consumers' republic – and did not otherwise challenge gender conventions were often lauded, because women's roles as consumers and mothers were linked to the health and longevity of the nation and economy. Many Americans assumed that women only worked to pay for non-essential consumer goods, regardless of whether women worked as primary breadwinners or as secondary contributors to the family economy.

Despite postwar ideology to the contrary, a growing number of American women worked outside the home to help support their families. For most African American women, work outside the home had been and continued to be a fact of life. As numerous historians have documented, World War II opened up new employment opportunities for American women, while it also broke down many of the barriers to married women's employment outside the home – employment that many women were unwilling or unable to relinquish after the war ended.²⁷ According to historian William Chafe, between 1940 and 1960

²⁷ Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982)., Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America.*, Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex During World War II* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987)., William Henry Chafe, *The Paradox of Change: American Women in the 20th Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991)., Dorothy Sue Cobble, *Dishing It Out: Waitresses and Their Unions in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991)., Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, *Abiding Courage: African American Migrant Women and the East Bay Community* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

twice as many women were at work, ... the proportion of wives at work had doubled from 15 percent in 1940 to 30 percent in 1960, ... the number of mothers at work leaped 400 percent – from 1.5 million to 6.6 million – and 39 percent of women with children aged six to seventeen had jobs. By 1960, both the husband and wife worked in over ten million homes (an increase of 333 percent over 1940), and mothers of children under eighteen comprised almost a third of all women workers.²⁸

Historians Joanne Meyerowitz and Susan Hartmann have explored this contradiction in American culture during the 1950s. According to Hartmann, “experts and opinion leaders not only recognized and approved of women’s increasing employment but also sought to adjust public opinion and public policy to accommodate women’s greater participation in the public sphere” to fuel the growing postwar economy.²⁹ Of course, women’s gender roles shaped their labor force participation and experiences. Meyerowitz found that popular women’s magazines of the era simultaneously extolled domesticity for women and “an ethos of individual achievement that celebrated nondomestic activity, individual striving, public service, and public success.”³⁰

²⁸ Chafe, *The Paradox of Change: American Women in the 20th Century*, 188.. See also National Manpower Council., *Womanpower; a Statement, with Chapters by the Council Staff* (New York,: Columbia University Press, 1957).

²⁹ Susan Hartmann, “Women’s Employment and the Domestic Ideal in the Early Cold War Years,” in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, 86.

³⁰ Joanne Meyerowitz, “Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946-1958,” in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, 231.

As in mainstream culture, women were perceived as critical to the survival and health of the family within African American communities; but the dependent role of the wife in middle-class white gender ideology did not necessarily hold for black women. Deborah Gray White argued that during the postwar period, “women were not thought of as men’s subordinates [in African American communities]. Their power lay in their role as chief purchaser of consumer products and as community organizers of neighborhood consumer activity.”³¹ Working women made it possible for black families to achieve and maintain middle-class status, an impossible feat for many single income black families.³²

Models of proper womanhood in black communities incorporated the mainstream model of femininity but recognized the economic and political realities black men and women faced in the United States. “As much as family, community people, and teachers advocated education for ‘the race’ as a key to progress,” Shaw explained, the “prevailing conventions related to gender remained intact. But the formal education and educational goals [black women] pursued – in social work, education, librarianship, and nursing – while reinforcing those

³¹ White, *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994*, 167.

³² See for example, Patricia Roberts Harris, “Problems and Solutions in Achieving Equality for Women,” in Furniss, Graham, and American Council on Education., *Women in Higher Education*, 11-26.

subordinate roles, kept [women] from internalizing an inferior status.”³³ Professional education at once empowered women and reinforced gender roles within the African American community by directing women to traditional and service oriented career paths.

The emphasis on education and service translated into a steady rise in the enrollment of black women in colleges and universities in the United States during the postwar period.³⁴ Black women in higher education faced the reality that they would work after college in much higher proportion than white women, and that they would probably bear a significant degree of economic responsibility for their families. “[B]lack women, driven by economic necessity, were flocking to college in droves,” argued Harvey. “In addition, more and more black women were going on for higher degrees. In fact, by the mid-fifties, more black women than black men had earned master’s degrees, even though black men held more Ph.D.s.”³⁵ Through the 1950s, more women than men completed four-year degrees and “constituted the majority of educated of their race.”³⁶

³³ Shaw, *What a Woman Ought to Be and to Do: Black Professional Women Workers During the Jim Crow Era*, 218-19.

³⁴ Jeanne L. Noble, *The Negro Woman’s College Education* (New York: Teachers College Columbia University, 1956), 29.

³⁵ Harvey, *The Fifties: A Women’s Oral History*, 58.

³⁶ Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, 179.

Historian Cynthia Harrison pointed out the “fundamental conflict between equal opportunity for women in the public realm and fulfillment of the role of traditional motherhood” that shaped women’s lives by the late 1960s, a conflict recognized by the report of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) in 1963.³⁷ The Commission’s report “assumed that motherhood must come first for women,” but documented widespread discrimination against women in American society and noted that the pay gap between men and women had increased since World War II.³⁸ The PCSW proposed that marriage should be considered an economic partnership, that child care services should be available for families, that paid maternity leave should be available, and that the President call for the hiring, training, and promotion of women on an equal basis with men in all companies that secured federal government contracts.³⁹ These recommendations, combined with the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, made some progress toward eroding the barriers to women’s opportunities and advancement in the paid labor force.⁴⁰ This further

³⁷ Cynthia Ellen Harrison, *On Account of Sex: The Politics of Women's Issues, 1945-1968* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 138.

³⁸ Flora Davis, *Moving the Mountain: The Women's Movement in America since 1960* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 37.

³⁹ Davis, *Moving the Mountain: The Women's Movement in America since 1960*, 37.

⁴⁰ The 1963 Equal Pay Act bars sex discrimination by private businesses, with the exception of women in professional, administrative, or executive positions and some agricultural employees. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in

spurred women into higher education to take advantage of improved job opportunities. For black and white women, higher education translated into better paying jobs.

Women and higher education revisited

How women used their higher education in the fifties and sixties was an individual choice made in the face of significant pressure to conform to conventional gender and racial ideologies. For young women attending college in the U.S. at mid-century, conventional gender roles and the image of the proper 'lady' proscribed choices and opportunities offered on and off campus. As historian Amy McCandless pointed out, "[r]ules and regulations [on college and university campuses] mandating ... ladylike conduct were not conducive to developing intellectual independence or critical thought, unfortunately."⁴¹ For many undergraduates, the pull of individual academic achievement was often

employment on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, or national origin by private employers. The legislation also created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to investigate charges of racial and sexual discrimination; the EEOC did not focus efforts on sex discrimination cases for many years, despite the large number of complaints it received throughout the late 1960s. Though Title VII (sex) was not enforced or taken seriously initially, the Civil Rights Act was nonetheless a landmark for the nascent women's movement. For further discussion, see for example Davis, *Moving the Mountain: The Women's Movement in America since 1960*; Harrison, *On Account of Sex: The Politics of Women's Issues, 1945-1968*; Susan M. Hartmann, *From Margin to Mainstream: American Women and Politics since 1960* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996); Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*.

⁴¹ McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*, 127.

at odds with the image of the proper woman paraded before them as young girls.

White women who lived up to the feminine ideal, as understood and discussed by educators, psychologists, journalists, and parents, pursued higher education to learn the skills necessary to become a good wife, a better mother, and a smart consumer. If a “college girl” also obtained skills pertinent to a career outside of home and family, she could put it to good use after her children were grown or to work part-time while her children were still young. If African American, she was expected to use her college education to be wife, mother, consumer and also a professional career woman in her chosen field.

After World War Two, many educators continued to debate the usefulness of higher education for women. According to Paula Fass, as higher education for women became more accessible to many American families, educators struggled to define the best curriculum for undergraduate women.⁴² Colleges and universities assured parents of their renewed commitment to liberal education to prepare women for all phases of their lives – wife, mother, citizen, and eventually, worker. Harvey observed, “[a]t the heart of the problem was an old idea: that education in women is antithetical to their roles as wives and

⁴² Paula S. Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

mothers.”⁴³ Experts feared that exposure to the traditional liberal arts education would raise women’s expectations for independent lives outside the home and family, ambitions that could potentially lead women to experience and express dissatisfaction with the domestic sphere. The result for educators, according to Fass, was a “female paradox: the fact that women were receiving more education than they seemed to need ... in a society which continued to ascribe, though not entirely to confine, female roles to family.”⁴⁴ The growing number of affluent young women preoccupied with marriage “baffled” contemporary educators and led to a shift in emphasis to the so-called “female curriculum” at mid-century.⁴⁵

For some colleges, the solution was to offer women a “feminine” education shaped by utilitarian goals – focusing, for example, on home economics, marriage and family courses, psychology, and basic accounting. For other colleges the traditional liberal arts education, historically offered as the groundwork for advanced study for male students, was perceived as sufficient for undergraduate women.⁴⁶

⁴³ Harvey, *The Fifties: A Women's Oral History*, 67.

⁴⁴ Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education*, 157.

⁴⁵ Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, 85.

⁴⁶ For more in depth discussions of the debate, see for example Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present.*; Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education.*; Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America.*

Regardless of their tack, academic programs directed women into traditional women's occupations such as teaching and nursing; few overtly challenged the gender roles of the postwar era.

Contemporary researchers argued that college was a place for young women to find husbands, where women were expected to maintain full social calendars, and where students felt "it was damaging to the girls' chances for dates to be outstanding in academic work."⁴⁷ As historian David Johnson argued, the "very ambition to rise to positions of respectability in male-dominated environs cast doubt on [a woman's] femininity."⁴⁸ In her study of higher education in the United States, Fass found that "[i]nvestigations of women students in the fifties and sixties went to great pains to document how deeply women were invested in marriage goals and organized their [studies] around this premise" in order to conform to peer standards and broader gender expectations.⁴⁹

While many middle-class families willingly sent their daughters to college, contemporary experts warned girls not to put off looking for a

⁴⁷ From Mirra Komarovsky, *Women in the Modern World: Their Education and Their Dilemmas* (Boston: Little Brown, 1953), quoted in Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education*, 182.

⁴⁸ Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government*, 155.

⁴⁹ Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education*, 176.

husband too long, or they would reduce their chances of finding him.⁵⁰ College girls in the fifties openly admitted to attending college to receive their “MRS” degrees, and various studies and periodicals discussed the stress and anxiety young women faced in their last years of college if they hadn’t found that marrying man by graduation. Contemporary journalist Gael Greene, after interviewing 614 students from 102 college and university campuses in the United States, offered a bleak picture of the coed who was not engaged – and without prospects of becoming engaged.

At curfew, the girls trudge in. The girl down the hall was pinned tonight. She can hear the squeals. Her own roommate is AWOL because she suddenly decided to elope. As senior year approaches, the sparkle of diamond chips in the dining room – modest though it may seem to Harry Winston – is more dazzling than she can bear. In a letter from home, Mother wants to know whatever happened to that nice Milwaukee boy she used to see so much. Suddenly “career” is an ugly word. That job in San Francisco waiting after graduation has lost its appeal. Another thick ivory wedding announcement in the mail this morning. And that makes three baby gifts this semester to offspring of her class’s early brides.⁵¹

While undergraduate white women navigated the conflicting pressures of academic excellence or matrimony, African American women continued to balance the expectations of academic excellence, career expectations, and matrimony.

⁵⁰ Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*, 40.

⁵¹ Gael Greene, *Sex and the College Girl* (New York: Dial Press, 1964), 51.

African American educators and students assumed that young women would pursue careers outside the home. For many black women, a husband did not ensure economic security after marriage. “Joyce,” a graduate of Southern Illinois State University during the early 1950s, stated it very bluntly:

The progression [for young African American women] was, you went to college, you got a good job, you got married. The thing you *didn't* do was quit college or quit work. You were not going to raise a family on one black man's salary. And you were not going to easily find a black man who was pre-med or pre-law.⁵²

With more women than men completing bachelors degree programs, many found themselves more educated than their male peers. Historically, black women found more job opportunities open to them than black men, who were often barred from professions that white men sought. In her study of black female college graduates in the 1950s, Jeanne Noble found that most women felt compelled to work after college. “This whole business of making a living looms very large in the life of the Negro [sic] and certainly of a Negro woman,” one graduate offered, “the role of education (to her) is to prepare her for a job.”⁵³ For the women surveyed, Noble learned that the “three most important areas for college education” were “training for a particular occupation or profession,” “preparation for marriage and family life,” and “the desire to

⁵² Harvey, *The Fifties: A Women's Oral History*, 61.

⁵³ Noble, *The Negro Woman's College Education*, 96.

be a more useful citizen.”⁵⁴ Women graduates also felt that men and women needed courses in homemaking and child psychology alongside the traditional curriculum; and in testament to the strength of dominant gender roles, one interviewee admitted that “a large percentage – up to 90 percent – [of African American college women] don’t want careers. They want a home. They don’t want a career above all else.”⁵⁵

Women’s self-government: students in place of the parent

The college women of the 1960s were the girls of the fifties, internalizing these contradictory messages, messages their mothers, aunts and sisters also struggled to reconcile and adapt to in their own lives. Children of the fifties – both boys and girls – were encouraged to excel in math and science and pursue higher education in an effort to bypass the Soviet Union in the race to space. “[L]ike millions of girls of my generation,” wrote Susan Douglas, an adolescent during the 1950s,

I was told I was a member of a new, privileged generation whose destiny was more open and exciting than that of my parents. But, at the exact same time, I was told I couldn’t really expect much more than to end up like my mother. Was I supposed to be an American – individualistic, competitive, aggressive, achievement-oriented, tough, independent? This was the kind of person who would help

⁵⁴ Noble, *The Negro Woman’s College Education*, 96.

⁵⁵ Noble, *The Negro Woman’s College Education*, 98-99, 97.

triumph over *Sputnik*.⁵⁶ Or was I supposed to be a girl – nurturing, self-abnegating, passive, dependent, primarily concerned with the well-being of others, and completely indifferent to personal success?⁵⁷

Recurring themes of individual achievement outside of the home and a celebration of domestic pursuits in women’s magazine articles during the early Cold War era revealed the “ambivalence and contradictions in postwar mass culture” concerning women’s gender roles.⁵⁸ While popular magazines did not overtly challenge marriage and motherhood for women, Meyerowitz found that fewer articles focused on women’s domestic pursuits in the postwar period than before the war, and that many authors “endorsed women’s nondomestic activity, and celebrated women’s public success” in politics, business, community service, entertainment, and professional careers.⁵⁹ These articles undermined the predominant gender ideology but also “served as conservative reminders that all women, even publicly successful women, were to maintain traditional gender distinctions” in their appearance and

⁵⁶ *Sputnik* was the first satellite successfully launched into orbit. *Sputnik’s* launch in 1957 was a triumph for the U.S.S.R. and marked the beginning of the ‘space race’ between the United States and the Soviet Union.

⁵⁷ Susan J. Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Times Books, 1994), 25.

⁵⁸ Joanne Meyerowitz, “Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946-1958,” in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, 238.

⁵⁹ Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, 250-51.

demeanor.⁶⁰ *In loco parentis* regulations reinforced these tensions for undergraduate women during the 1950s and early 1960s.

While on campus, young women navigated conflicting demands placed upon them by peers, parents, faculty and administrators, and their own ambitions. *In loco parentis* policies provided social, academic, and moral structure to young women. College administrators, campus tradition, parental pressure, and college girls themselves determined these policies. Women's self government associations and the political and cultural traditions on each campus shaped how young women experienced and navigated the gender and racial tensions of the post war era; as such, they had a dramatic impact on the focus and dynamics of campus protests in the 1960s and beyond. The structure and nature of student government at each school played a role in the ways that women's protests against *in loco parentis* policies took shape.

On many college campuses administrators oversaw the development of women's student government organizations in the early- to mid-twentieth century, as well as the creation and strengthening of the Office of the Dean of Women. The Dean of Women (or comparable administrator) was primarily responsible for supervising women's lives on campus, overseeing student government, and working within the administration as an advocate for undergraduate women's needs and

⁶⁰ Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, 233.

concerns. Historian Carolyn Terry Bashaw argued that Deans of Women “struggled to provide women students with both the space and the opportunities to cultivate judgment, to exercise leadership abilities, and to maintain robust health. They knew that these skills, coupled with academic credentials, better prepared college women to lead independent adult lives.”⁶¹

Ideally, women’s self-government provided undergraduate women the opportunity to develop leadership skills in a same-sex environment, to have a voice in campus politics, and to take on additional responsibilities during their tenure as undergraduates. In the 1950s and early 1960s, most active women’s self-government associations did not, in fact, have much autonomy from the Dean of Women, if they exercised any independence at all. Horowitz argued that student governments were created

not to empower college leaders, but to foster communications with them and co-opt them... In return for office, heads of college government were given the responsibility for influencing their following and, where there were student courts, for acting as judge and jury.⁶²

⁶¹ Bashaw, *“Stalwart Women”: A Historical Analysis of Deans of Women in the South*, 14.

⁶² Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, 108.

According to Horowitz's findings, "[s]tudent government was part of the effort to harness college life to official ends."⁶³ The relationship between the students, their self-government, and the Dean of Women was shaped by the goals, strategies, and successes of each on campus. This is evident in the four institutions studied here. Simmons College and the Ohio State University had the most visibly active student governments on campus; Spelman College student government was also fairly visible. Howard University, in contrast, lacked a tradition of women's government in the fifties and struggled to interest women in student government into the 1960s.

The first African American and first male president of Spelman College, Albert E. Manley, "participated in a major transformation of the Spelman curriculum, from a program dedicated to the development of black women not only as citizens of the United States, but also as leaders of the African-American community."⁶⁴ During the 1950s, President Manley moved the small but growing college (approximately 450 students enrolled in 1953; by 1963 that number had increased to over 700 students) away from the traditional vocational and "skills-oriented disciplines" towards "a greater emphasis on liberal arts

⁶³ Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, 108.

⁶⁴ Albert E. Manley, *A Legacy Continues: The Manley Years at Spelman College, 1953-1976* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1995), 27.

curriculum designed to enable the student to learn how to think independently.”⁶⁵

For the traditionally conservative Spelman campus in Atlanta, Georgia, Manley was a new, more liberal voice. In his own words:

My views on manners and morals, when compared to those of earlier presidents of Spelman College, were not as straight-laced and binding. The administrators of the schools, colleges, and universities I had attended had the attitude, particularly at the college level, of allowing students to make their own decisions about interpersonal relationships unless a student gave evidence of developing characteristics that were vicious, especially in terms of violating the freedom of others.⁶⁶

In his inaugural address, Manley outlined the “five values supporting [his] beliefs,” pointing to the direction he wanted to move Spelman in during his time in office.

1. A social attitude which is healthy because it replaces frustrated resentment against social injustice with constructive activity.
2. An appreciation of creativity in all areas of human endeavor, with knowledge of the difference between professional and liberal education, and the arts and the sciences.
3. An appreciation for freedom of inquiry, with an impartial consideration of all sides of a problem before arriving at just conclusions.
4. Development of leadership for the purpose of making the maximum contribution to human welfare.

⁶⁵ Albert E. Manley, *The Tenth Annual Report of Albert E. Manley, Fifth President of Spelman College*, April 1963, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 7., Manley, *A Legacy Continues: The Manley Years at Spelman College, 1953-1976*, 19.

⁶⁶ Manley, *A Legacy Continues: The Manley Years at Spelman College, 1953-1976*, 21.

5. Excellence of performance in a competitive world of work to fulfill the need of experiencing the job of work well done.⁶⁷

On this small campus with an activist President, the Dean of Women was primarily responsible for overseeing women's clubs and organizations on campus and acting as an intermediary between the students and the administration.⁶⁸ With encouragement from the President and leadership among the student body, a student government was established on campus in autumn 1957.⁶⁹

The Spelman Student Government Association consisted of a student-only executive Student Council and Spelman Student Association (SSA); a judicial board composed of faculty, staff, and student representatives, and the Board of Review that included students, faculty, staff and the President of Spelman.⁷⁰ The goals of the student government were

to develop an esprit de corps; to develop techniques necessary for the assumption by students of responsibilities in a democratic society; to promote student self-discipline and leadership, to encourage high standards of school

⁶⁷ Manley, *A Legacy Continues: The Manley Years at Spelman College, 1953-1976*, 35-36.

⁶⁸ Spelman Student Government Association, *Student Government*, 1958, Box 163: *Rules and Regulations*, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.

⁶⁹ Manley, *The Tenth Annual Report of Albert E. Manley, Fifth President of Spelman College*, 12.

⁷⁰ Spelman Student Government Association, *Student Government*.

conduct, scholarship and morals; and to develop a spirit of cooperation in the college community.⁷¹

The Spelman Students Association, the legislative branch of the student government, had authority over “student regulations dealing with calling hours, all sign out privileges, house rules, cultural and recreational privileges, and all questions of honesty,” social activities, student publications, clubs, and student association funds.⁷² The Board of Review had final authority in any cases or legislation brought on campus. Students also reinstated the campus newspaper in 1959, creating a forum to discuss issues affecting them on and off campus.⁷³ Manley’s models for and approach to campus life and the needs of Spelman women had a significant positive impact on the pace and tone of change on campus in the fifties and sixties and provided undergraduate women direct lines of communication with campus officials.

In contrast to Spelman, Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts, had a long tradition of student government.⁷⁴ During

⁷¹ Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 1960-1961, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 33.

⁷² Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 33.

⁷³ Manley, *The Tenth Annual Report of Albert E. Manley, Fifth President of Spelman College*, 12.

⁷⁴ Student government was first established at the college in 1904. Simmons College, *Student Handbook*, 1962-1963, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 11.

the fifties, student government was decentralized on campus under the House Presidents' Council (HPC). Within each dormitory, women elected one undergraduate to “[make] rules and recommendations, [act] as a liaison between the students, the campus and the college administration, and [co-ordinate] campus activities.”⁷⁵ Each dormitory had its own House Council, responsible for individual house rules, activities, and the enforcement of residence hall and campus rules. The HPC reported directly to the Director of Students, who was accountable to the Dean of the college. According to the Simmons College Student Handbook, the Director was responsible for the “welfare, safety, and assistance ... guidance, education and growth of all residence students.”⁷⁶

At the end of the decade, students and college administrations reformulated student government to accommodate the growing campus population. In 1961, the Student Government Association (SGA) replaced the House Presidents' Council. SGA oversaw Student Government Council (Stu-G), “the central and most powerful” branch of government on campus. Stu-G acted as “mediator between the students, various organizations outside the Simmons community, and the faculty and administration.” The organization oversaw campus

⁷⁵ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*, 1959-1960, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 38.

⁷⁶ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*, 37.

clubs and organizations, and served as a “problem-solving, opinion-gathering group” that “on the basis of student opinion...formulates policies for the student body and makes recommendations to the faculty and the administration.”⁷⁷ Within Stu-G, officers were responsible for overseeing campus functions, student elections, social activities, and the new Honor Board (this replaced the House Councils of the previous government system). Honor Board was responsible for educating students about, suggesting improvements to, and enforcing the policies of the school’s Honor Code.

Simmons administrators laid the burden of regulations and enforcement on the students themselves (with oversight by the Dean and Director of Students); regulations reflected the campus’s “moral community,” in a sense. By enrolling at Simmons, students agreed to adhere to the Honor Code / Honor System,

one of the most valued traditions at Simmons, ... based on an ideal of individual integrity and responsibility. ... Honor Spirit ... promotes in the student a sense of moral and social responsibility, a sincere regard for the reputation of the College, and a cooperative attitude toward the regulations established by Student Government. The Honor Spirit makes a girl want to live up to or by the ethical, moral, intellectual, and social standards set up by the community for the community.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*, 11.

⁷⁸ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*, 15.

Peer group conformity shaped the campus climate. In essence, students chose Simmons because they wanted to be like the Simmons girls. Stu-G members were required to wear blue and yellow rosettes on meeting days,

to symbolize the individual student and the outgrowth in structure of Student Government to serve this individual student. The rosettes are worn for the purpose of reminding the students that ideas, suggestions, and criticism are welcomed and sought by the council. These officers are representing ... the student body.⁷⁹

Student leaders were still highly visible to their peers on campus, particularly at the dormitory level. The more centralized structure of student government in the early 1960s allowed students to focus their questions and concerns to one group, their Stu-G representatives.

At Howard University, the Dean of Women seemed to students the “female disciplinarian” as the “educator whose administrative and programmatic role is that of bridging the gap between classroom and extra-classroom activities through the provision of facilities and programs which maximize the student’s opportunity to secure a broad education.”⁸⁰ In 1961, the administration at Howard renamed the Dean of Women and Dean of Men the Associate Deans of Students, combining the two offices and the resources available to them.

⁷⁹ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*, 13.

⁸⁰ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1961-1962*, 30 June, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 34.

In 1962, the Associate Dean of Students – Women’s Department expressed grave concern about women’s lack of participation in student activities and self-government on campus. After examining the problem, Women’s Department officials concluded:

the lack of widespread participation and leadership by women is not due to any invidious discrimination. ... Therefore, it appears that women have elected not to give the kind of leadership which their numbers and individual capacities indicate is possible. It is believed that certain attitudes of dependency and recessiveness, originating perhaps in the home situation, are encouraged and reinforced in the University community.⁸¹

Women’s student government was virtually non-existent at Howard University in Washington, D.C. during the 1950s. Undergraduate women elected Floor and House Council officers within their dormitories to “experience ... leadership and organization” during their tenure at Howard.⁸²

Attempts to invigorate women’s self-government in the early sixties under the Association of Women Students (AWS) were not successful. According to Student Personnel documents,

[t]his important area of student self-government function[ed] sporadically and [had] little influence among women students. The association [came] to life for special projects and work[ed] well on ... occasion. There [was] still the real challenge of helping [the AWS] to understand its

⁸¹ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1961-1962*, 52.

⁸² Howard University, *H-Book*, 1963-1964, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 10.

role and to organize for a consistent and constructive women's government.⁸³

Undergraduate women at Howard were virtually invisible in campus records and publications, a trend that continued into the early 1960s.⁸⁴

Like students at Simmons College, undergraduate women at the Ohio State University had a long history of self-government. In her study of the Women's Self-Government Association (WSGA) at Ohio State in Columbus, Ohio, Merily Dunn found that "[u]ntil the late 1960s, women students operated in a primarily sex-segregated world. The university interacted with them through the office of the Dean of Women, which oversaw the activities of the [WSGA], the organization charged ... with structuring the non-academic lives of women students."⁸⁵ As an aspect of a very large coeducational university, women's self-government provided coeds a more intimate college experience and the opportunity for leadership positions they might not have enjoyed otherwise.

The Women's Student Government Association was founded at Ohio State University in the early 1900s as the Women's Council to

⁸³ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1963-1964*, 30 June 1964, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 76.

⁸⁴ According to Howard University archivists, records of the Women's League (the precursor of the AWS), the AWS, the House Councils, and most student clubs are not available because students did not keep or turn in records, or because the records were not located or catalogued within the library system.

⁸⁵ Merily Dunn, "Separation and Integration: Women at the Ohio State University, 1960-1975" (Ph.D. Dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1993), 5.

represent the interests of female undergraduates to the administration and to regulate women's behavior on campus. By the 1950s, women in WSGA worked to establish, enforce, and reform regulations on campus with student input and the guidance of the Dean of Women's office. The WSGA Constitution stated their purpose, "to regulate all matters pertaining to the student life of its members," to "assist members in becoming self-directed individuals," and to "foster respect for the worth of the individual" on and off campus.⁸⁶ To this end, the organization oversaw women's activities on campus, including clubs, sororities, social events, and the Women's Residence Hall Council (WRHC).

The WRHC at Ohio State represented the female resident students of south campus and affiliated residence halls. WHRC worked more directly with undergraduate women and communicated the needs and opinions of resident women to the WSGA councils. The goals of WRHC, as outlined in their constitution, echoed those of the WSA. WRHC endeavored to "provide opportunity for leadership and for cultural and social development of women residents," to coordinate the activities of resident women among halls, to "foster a high academic atmosphere" among undergraduate residents, and to "promote the

⁸⁶ Women's Self Government Association, *Constitution of the Women's Self Government Association*, The Ohio State University Archives, Dean of Women, RG 9/c-2/16, Columbus, Ohio.

general welfare of these women within the framework of the University.”⁸⁷

The Standards Commission of the Women’s Self-Government Association had the dubious honor of being the organization that many undergraduate women demonized in the 1960s. Undergraduate women

created [Standards] to encourage good living with high ideals among all Ohio State undergraduates and to bring a greater understanding and knowledge of these principles to the attention of each woman student so that she will feel the need for making self-government an integral part of her life not only at Ohio State, but in her outside community living as well.⁸⁸

The WSGA Standards Commission drafted new regulations for undergraduate women and considered proposed revisions to established rules. The group also oversaw enforcement and disciplinary action of women’s social regulations – undergraduate women understandably perceived the Standards Commission as the morals police on campus. Dean of Women Christine Conway, the WSGA, and the WRHC provided a means of communication between undergraduate women and the administration; each purported to represent the best interests of students on campus. It was the definition of “best interests” that young women would contest in the 1960s.

⁸⁷ Women’s Residence Hall Council, *Constitution*, 1965, The Ohio State University Archives, Dean of Women, RG 9/c-2/16: *Women’s Residence Hall Council: Constitution and By-laws: 1965*, Columbus, Ohio.

⁸⁸ Ohio State University, *Student Handbook of Rules and Regulations*, 1964-1965, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio, 22.

Undergraduates largely accommodated *in loco parentis* policies until the mid-1960s, in that few saw the need openly to dispute such restrictions or protections, choosing instead to break the rules covertly as they saw fit. As college enrollments swelled and the consensus behind social regulations faltered, campus officials faced the real challenge of enforcing increasingly specific behavioral policies. Court challenges to the *in loco parentis* doctrine resulted in the “legal recognition of student rights to privacy” which “block[ed] any attempt to control essentially private behavior” by universities in the seventies and beyond.⁸⁹

The tradition of self-government, the involvement of college administrators, and the level of participation permitted students in shaping campus policies contributed significantly to the form and success of campus protests against *in loco parentis* policies in the 1960s. By the early sixties university and college curriculum and American girls mutually reinforced the prevailing – and contradictory – gender expectations of the era. In the culture around them, young women learned that their destiny was the home and children, that they were critical to the success of American democracy and the economic

⁸⁹ Hoekema, *Campus Rules and Moral Community: In Place of In Loco Parentis*, 99.

prosperity of the United States, and that it was acceptable to work outside the home to provide the “extras” for their children and home.

For children of the expanding middle-class, higher education provided the skills they would need to advance in the changing workplace – or home – of the next era. Colleges and universities strived to provide what parents wanted for their children. College life provided girls with a structured, protected, and academic atmosphere that would teach them how to fulfill their future roles in American society. Undergraduate women’s efforts to navigate and clarify the contradictions in American culture and on their own campuses led to a revolt that had tremendous consequences for women – and men – in the next decade.

CHAPTER 2

FEMININITY 101

“Out-of-class experiences of students are as important a part of their University training as the classroom experience. Both are integral parts of the educative process. This being true, the residence halls are the laboratory for well-rounded living. Here the girls learn to live in a mature and independent fashion, taking responsibility for their own conduct. Socially, it means training in etiquette, experiences in giving teas, dances, and other important events. These are important in developing poised women.”¹

The case of the Nellie Neats versus the Gretchen Grubs at Simmons College demonstrated the image of femininity that campus administrators expected students to emulate on college campuses in the early 1960s. On Skit Night in November 1964, the Sophomore Workshop presented to freshmen, upper-classwomen, faculty, and parents a short play concerning the case of the Nellie Neats versus the Gretchen Grubs. Unlike the Gretchen Grubs, who dressed in “sweat shirts, dungaree skirts or shifts, [and] sandals” and didn’t bother with their makeup or dirty hair, the Nellie Neats presented themselves at their best on campus: “nice outfits, nylons and flats [shoes] or loafers,

¹ Christine Conway, Dean of Women, quoted in Thomas C. Sawyer, *The Ohio State University Student Personnel Administration 1873-1970*, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio, 37.

hair washed and set, [and wearing] lipstick and other make-up.”² The audience learned that good girls – Nellie Neats – always dressed well, attended classes, studied diligently, showed courtesy and respect to their peers, and never stayed out too late. The poor Gretchen Grubs did not seem to care that their lack of interest in anything but dates, bridge games, and gossip sessions would translate to peer disdain and failure at Simmons. The Nellie Neats taught their audience that young women who cared about their appearance and who worked hard were happier and more successful at college, a message many undergraduate women had internalized in the early 1960s.³ The skit also revealed the role of peer enforcement and self-policing of dress and conduct standards among undergraduate women before mid-decade.

Undergraduate women launched the earliest challenges to *in loco parentis* policies against campus dress standards and, more indirectly, conduct regulations. For campus administrators, these regulations served numerous functions. First, college officials designed *in loco parentis* policies to shape and preserve the moral character of young women while away from their families; second, to establish cultural expectations of respectable womanhood for undergraduate women to

² Simmons College, *Report on the Sophomore Workshop*, RG 35.1, Box 11, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts.

³ A literal example of Judith Butler’s assertion that all gender is performative. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 25.

adhere to; third, to provide structural guidelines for undergraduate living; finally, to project an acceptable and appealing image of the university to the public at large.

Whether formally codified or strongly “recommended” by campus administrators, appearance standards reflected contemporary models of proper, or respectable, femininity. Colleges acted *in loco parentis* to teach and enforce respectable womanhood on campus; formal and detailed dress codes in place through the early 1960s helped students look like ladies on campus, setting standards they were expected to uphold off campus as well. Students learned from handbooks, faculty, administrators, and peers what was expected of them on campus as ‘proper’ ladies whose appearance and behavior on and off campus had an impact on the image of their college, their families, and their femininity.

Proper “feminine” appearance and conduct were supposedly rewarded with social acceptance, dates, career success, and the respect of peers, strangers, and potential employers. It also reflected positively on the campus community – and for African American women, their race – as a whole. Once students learned the rules, campus officials enforced regulations through peer pressure and judicial boards. By the mid-1960s, undergraduate women on each campus embraced changing definitions of femininity as best suited their needs. Many women, no

longer willing to adhere to the college's image of femininity, called for the end to campus dress regulations. After successfully challenging dress codes on campus, students expanded their efforts to dismantle the role of the university 'in place of the parent.'

"We are proud of the way our college girls look – well-groomed and neat but not gaudy. They enjoy being girls and acting like ladies."⁴

For undergraduate women in the late 1950s and early 1960s, college was a time for more than classroom book learning. Campus administrators and parents expected young women to learn the basics of social etiquette, ladylike conduct, and proper manners. Campus dress codes and conduct regulations reinforced middle-class gender roles and the prescriptions of femininity for young women. Judith Butler argued that "the effect of gender is produced through a stylization of the body ... and must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles constitute the illusion of ... [a] gendered self."⁵ Administrators expected female students to develop and perfect their performance of the feminine, with attention to appearance, carriage, hygiene, demeanor, and etiquette. Images of respectable femininity on campus crossed race lines; African American

⁴ Dean of Women Julia Austin, *Nine Lives of a Co-Ed: Women's Handbook*, 1967, The University of Tennessee at Martin, Martin, Tennessee, 3.

⁵ Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 140.

and white campus administrators had indistinguishable definitions of lady-like appearance, conduct, and dress codes in the late fifties and early sixties.⁶

Why the intense concern over women's appearance on campus? Historian Beth Bailey has argued that an obsession with the performance of "masculine" and "feminine" behaviors that "demonstrated and reinforced a 'traditional' difference between men and women" arose in the postwar era as men's and women's roles grew increasingly discordant from social and economic realities in the United States.⁷ Moreover, experts urged women to "study femininity" in order to prove one's womanhood and to reaffirm the masculinity of the men around them.⁸ In her essay on femininity and patriarchal power, Sandra Lee Bartky contended that "femininity as spectacle is something in which virtually every woman is required to participate."⁹ This was

⁶ This supports Butler's argument that "the insistence upon the coherence and unity of the category of women has effectively refused the multiplicity of cultural, social, and political intersections in which the concrete array of 'women' are constructed." Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 14.

⁷ Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 98.

⁸ Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America*, 106. Barbara Ehrenreich argued that men studied and projected a more extreme masculinity – independence – in the post war period to counter the fears that men were becoming too soft or feminine with the transition to a white-collar economy. Barbara Ehrenreich, *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1983).

⁹ Sandra Lee Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power," in *The Politics of Women's Bodies: Sexuality, Appearance, and Behavior*, ed. Rose Weitz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 34.

true for undergraduate women at Howard University, Ohio State University, Simmons College and Spelman College at mid-century.

The spectacle of femininity included clothing, beauty products, and comportment. Women's fashions in the fifties and early sixties emphasized women's physical differences from men while also restricting their ease of movement. Fashion magazines showed the hourglass silhouette for women, a look achieved only with petticoats and the firm support of girdles and other body shaping garments.¹⁰ Blouses or fitted sweaters, knee-length or longer skirts, and pantyhose were *de rigueur* for any outing. High heels, gloves, purses, and hats completed a woman's tailored and well-kept look for more formal occasions.

Well-coiffed and maintained hairdos were a badge of honor among women as well. Hair straighteners, hot combs, and hair wax were necessary for many African American women to attain white-defined standards of female beauty.¹¹ In the *Spelman Spotlight* news column "Gloria's Corner," one Spelman undergraduate suggested "a very simple, easy to care for [hair] arrangement" as "appropriate for the

¹⁰ See for example, Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997).

¹¹ Peiss explored the world of cosmetics and African American "beauty culture." Kathy Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1998). See also Maxine Leeds Craig, *Ain't I a Beauty Queen?: Black Women, Beauty, and the Politics of Race* (New York: Oxford university Press, 2002) for a discussion of beauty culture in African American communities during the twentieth century,

classroom.”¹² Hair was a “woman’s crowning glory” when “clean and appropriately styled.”¹³ The cultural emphasis on beauty and fashion not only provided women with examples of femininity to strive towards, but reaffirmed their role as consumers of both product and gender ideology. Women exercised a degree of artistic flair through the use of cosmetics “to give an artificial aspect or to strengthen natural color. When it is applied properly,” Gloria continued, “it should enhance your natural beauty.” Knowing how much make-up was enough was also important, she explained, because “too much make-up causes anyone to look cheap.”¹⁴

Femininity was more than the right clothes and the right hairstyle. Feminine women displayed “a childlike innocence and dependence,” grace, modesty, deference to men and superiors, and was “not likely to challenge the status quo.”¹⁵ They also exhibited reserve in movement and conversation, “far more restricted than men in their manner of movement and spatiality” – reinforced by the containment of

¹² "Gloria's Corner," *The Spelman Spotlight*, October 1962.

¹³ "Gloria's Corner."

¹⁴ "Gloria's Corner."

¹⁵ Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power," 29; Amy Thompson McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), 219.

women's bodies by popular fashions.¹⁶ A cartoon in the Spelman College campus newspaper, the *Spelman Spotlight*, poked fun at the lady coed:

I'm always well dressed. I attend cultural affairs quite often... I'm always sedate, dainty, charming – simply angelic! Never raising my voice in public or smoking or drinking or indulging in unlady-like conversation or exposing myself to radicals and extremists (I'm impressionable!). I always read the most current fashion magazines ... I'm the epitome of gentility!¹⁷

The cartoon reinforced an understanding of what was expected of undergraduate women by parents and campus administrators at the same time that it mocked the ideal.

For African American women, adherence to the model of middle-class respectability served both personal and political ends. The demonstration of middle-class values, morals and appearances was a weapon against political, social and economic discrimination and an example to their communities of right living. Amy McCandless asserted that on southern college campuses, “[f]emale students who were not rich or white were encouraged to attain the ideal by acting like ladies.”¹⁸ For black women in the American South, respectable femininity offered

¹⁶ Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power," 29.

¹⁷ Cartoon, *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1966.

¹⁸ McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*, 219.

a degree of protection from white racism in their daily lives and served as a powerful political argument for racial equality.

The model of femininity lauded by Spelman and Howard undergraduates was nearly identical to white, middle-class ideals of femininity. Student critics of Howard University in the early 1960s often focused on the alleged emphasis on “white” values and conservatism of the campus community. A Howard University alumnus recalled that “[most] of the students were middle-class and they wanted to be good. They wanted to succeed, and they wanted to have a good time. A lot [of women] were looking for husbands.”¹⁹

This concern with outward appearances and conduct, what Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham labeled the “politics of respectability,” was particularly evident on the Spelman College campus in the early sixties.²⁰ Spelman’s ties to the Baptist church shaped campus policies from its inception. Spelman students received an education in manners, morals, domesticity, academics – and respectability. Campus officials expected undergraduate women to be a credit to themselves, their families, their college, and their communities in their day-to-day life. The college required all students to adhere to strict regulations

¹⁹ Henry Hampton, Steve Fayer, and Sarah Flynn, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s* (New York: Bantam Books, 1990), 428.

²⁰ Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women’s Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993).

concerning dress and conduct. Additionally, campus regulations required Spelman undergraduates to have their rooms tidied and their beds made every morning before leaving for compulsory eight a.m. chapel services. Housemothers and resident advisors punished violators if they did not pass the daily inspection.

The concern with cleanliness at Spelman extended into the area of personal hygiene. “Gloria’s Corner” detailed for undergraduate women the “personal grooming habits” essential to any woman’s success. “Society is very severe in its criticism of body odor or soiled clothing,” Gloria warned, “consequently, a girl may be embarrassed or politely shunned if she is negligent about them.”²¹ The *What Shall I Wear?* handbook for Spelman undergraduates also provided direction on basic hygiene for women, demonstrating the school’s presumption that not every incoming student had a firm grasp on middle-class standards in these areas.

Good grooming is essential to feeling and looking smart. Make a mental must-list and follow it faithfully: a daily bath plus use of a deodorant, a weekly shampoo and manicure, a wash-day every day for underwear and hosiery. Brush your teeth after meals. Brush your hair before bedtime each evening, and set curls when necessary. These little things are small but they make all the difference between looking untidy and looking smart.²²

²¹ "Gloria's Corner."

²² Committee on Social Graces and Behavior Fashion Committee, *What Shall I Wear?*, 1957, Box 163, *Rules and Regulations*, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 11.

The emphasis on hygiene at Spelman exposed the efforts of middle-class African Americans to distinguish themselves from poor blacks in the eyes of white America.²³ For students and educators at black colleges and universities of the black middle-class, respectability was both an index of race progress and a form of protest.²⁴

White women also used “femininity” to their own ends. Simmons College, for example, was founded on the belief that women should be educated for careers outside the home. Campus officials emphasized the importance of femininity and the social graces to their students, whose academic and professional achievement potentially challenged prevailing gender ideology in the postwar period. For Simmons undergraduates, the image of respectable womanhood was wedded to a strong belief in women’s intellectual and leadership capabilities. As women who conformed to social standards and played by the (gender) rules of respectability, many Simmons women, like their Spelman peers, perceived femininity as a key to success in their fields. Women who looked and acted feminine and pursued careers in women’s fields

²³ Hunter discussed the association of black domestic workers with disease, specifically tuberculosis, in the Jim Crow era south. Progressive era reformers emphasized the importance of hygiene to combat not only the disease associated with poverty but to undermine racist assumptions concerning African Americans and disease. Tera W. Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

²⁴ Jenny Hutchinson Marisa Chapell, and Brian Ward, "'Dress Modestly, Neatly... As If You Were Going to Church': Respectability, Class and Gender in the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Early Civil Rights Movement," in *Gender in the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Peter J. Ling and Sharon Monteith (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 73.

such as nursing and social work did not overtly challenge contemporary gender roles. Respectability was an investment in their future as career women, wives, and mothers.

“People judge you by your appearance”²⁵

College officials used women’s dress codes and conduct regulations to communicate not only the standards of appropriate behavior to young women, but to convey a positive image of the college to the community at large. Simmons College, Spelman College, Ohio State University, and Howard University provided incoming female students with special handbooks or guidelines detailing the styles on campus.²⁶ Campus dress regulations were dependent on the cooperation of undergraduates themselves, as well as the resolve of the administration to enforce the rules. For small, private colleges like Spelman and Simmons, peer standards made enforcement easier for school officials. The sheer number of students and their diverse backgrounds made enforcement more of a challenge at large

²⁵ Lyn Polomski, *Address to Student Government Workshop*, RG 35.1, Box 11, Folder 10, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts.

²⁶ The *Illini Guidelines: A Handbook for Undergraduate Students* provided one of the most detailed explanation of dress codes in my research. The University of Illinois provided a chart for students to outline appropriate attire for numerous campus occasions. It is also one of the few such documents I uncovered that detailed men’s dress for all occasions as well. The chart reflects dress standards similar to each of the schools in this study. For full text, see Appendix A. *Illini Guidelines: A Handbook for Undergraduate Students at the Urbana Campus of the University of Illinois, 1963-1964*, Student Life and Culture Archival Program, University of Illinois Archives, 41/3/0/5, Box 1, Urbana, Illinois, 73-74.

universities. Undergraduate complicity with regulations was essential to the success or failure of dress codes.

Dress codes at each college were relatively uniform. Most campus dress standards reflected each school's desired public image for students on and off campus and established limits on "comfort" within campus buildings and grounds. Campus officials expected women to wear knee-length or longer skirts, blouses, and flat or low-heeled shoes to classes in all weather. In addition, some handbooks advised women to bring several "date" dresses or formal gowns for school mixers and dances, as well as conservative suits, hats, and gloves for Sunday church services. The 1963 Howard University *H-book* offered tips on manners and attire to "College Lad and Betty Coed," also with an emphasis on neatness and conduct "which reflects credit on you [the student], your family, your friends, and your school."²⁷

The Committee on Social Graces and Behavior compiled the *What Shall I Wear?* guide for Spelman students, offering tips on style, cut, and accessories to maximize a campus wardrobe as well as what to wear to different types of campus events. With a keen eye towards the public image of students and the college, the Committee reminded undergraduates that at Spelman, "simplicity [of dress] is the keynote;

²⁷ Howard University, however, did not have formal dress codes in the early 1960s. This is discussed below in detail. Howard University, *H-Book*, 1963-1964, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 12.

however, there is a definite trend toward neatness. Our campus is informal and casual ... we do not advocate, however, extreme comfort so that it may cause discomfort to the onlooker or the passerby.”²⁸

In general, students were not allowed to wear casual or informal clothing in public view; setting clear appearance standards for students to follow was designed to teach them the importance of appropriate and respectable attire for all occasions. The image of the university or college was also important in attracting new students to the smaller campuses; if a college did not turn out respectable, well-behaved young women after four years, middle-class parents would be loathe to send their daughter to that institution.

Students negotiated the boundaries of good taste and decorum by adhering to dress codes and regulations while in public. At Simmons in the early 1960s, for example, students were expected to dress up for Sunday dinner – dresses, hose and heels, no socks or sneakers.²⁹ Students were not allowed to wear slacks, Bermuda shorts, or slippers to meals, classes, on the streets around campus, or when entertaining guests in the dormitory living rooms. Additionally,

Kerchiefs, curlers, and hairclips are not to be worn to dinner at any time or to supper Sunday night. They may be worn to breakfast on any morning, to supper on Friday and Saturday nights, and on nights preceding official holidays.

²⁸ Committee, *What Shall I Wear?*, 1-2.

²⁹ Simmons’ dress regulations were more relaxed than those at Spelman but not as lax as those at Ohio State. They serve as a good general example of dress codes.

At these times curlers must be *entirely* covered. Blouses must be neatly tucked in for all meals and when in public.³⁰

Within the residence halls and during final exam periods, administrators gave women a greater degree of freedom in attire. At Ohio State University and Simmons College, for example, undergraduate women could wear peddle pushers, jeans, and shorts in the upstairs corridors and in their own rooms. If women descended to the public main lobby areas, however, they were required to cover up their informal attire with a long coat.

On each campus, handbooks reminded women to follow the feminine niceties and “social amenities” in public.³¹ At Spelman and Simmons, for example, smoking in public areas was not allowed; coats were not to be worn in the dining halls; proper introductions and courtesies were to be extended to all adults; no alcoholic beverages were permitted on campus; shades had to be drawn in the evening or when students were away from their rooms; sun bathing was restricted to private, secluded areas; cutting across greens was frowned upon; yelling out of windows or chewing gum in public were considered no-nos; visiting in or lingering at parked cars was prohibited; and of course, no

³⁰ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*, 1959-1960, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 47-48.

³¹ Chris Patterson, "Dean Calhoun Meets Press Explains the Dress Policy," *The Hilltop*, 26 April 1965.

“engaging in unlady-like behavior ... when in [the] company of men.”³² Each of these activities was considered improper conduct for young women, particularly ladies. The Simmons College handbooks dedicated several pages instructing undergraduate women on how to give introductions, write invitations, and compose thank you notes to ensure that students learned the etiquette of formal occasions as well.³³

“the issue is not now warmth but an ideal, and can we as young women change the rule”³⁴

Because *in loco parentis* policies affected women on such an intimate level, the movement to rescind the rules showed students that the personal was in fact political. For many women, the adamant resistance of administrators to changing seemingly innocuous women’s regulations on campus must have sounded alarms. Why all the noise over wearing a pair of slacks? An underlying factor in the debate surrounding dress codes was changing popular styles of clothing itself. Fashions for young women shifted in the sixties; the pantsuit and less structured clothing grew increasingly popular among young women by 1964. Dungarees became the casual uniform of youth culture on many

³² Student Council, November 1957, Box 163, *Rules and Regulations*, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.

³³ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*; Simmons College, *Student Handbook*, 1962-1963, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts.

³⁴ Women's Residence Hall Council, Minutes, 16 November, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/c-2/16: Student Housing: *Women's Residence Hall Council: Minutes: 1962-65*, Columbus, Ohio.

campuses, thus the strident concern with students wearing unsightly jeans on campus.

Androgynous clothing, unstyled hair, and a general rejection of middle-class standards of respectable appearance threatened to undermine the image of femininity. Students recast personal appearance, considered a gauge of one's social class and respectability, as a political statement. "Beards for men, no lipstick for women, and long hair for both" became stylish when students and the fashion industry adopted the androgynous, unkempt image as part of mainstream culture making "fashion out of non-fashion."³⁵ Women's concerns about the relevance of dress regulations on campus and their fight to end dress codes were first steps towards activism for many undergraduates.

Students at Simmons College attacked dress regulations in the early sixties in an effort to relax, but not end, dress codes. During the 1962 spring semester House Presidents Council (HPC), a student group responsible for making policy recommendations to the school administration, initiated preliminary challenges to *in loco parentis* policies at Simmons College. In a report from the Rules and Standards Commission, the committee recommended the compilation and

³⁵ "The New Campus Look," *Newsweek*, 22 March 1965.

publication of an informal Standards booklet separate from the campus rules and regulations publication. The Commission argued that

[t]he very fact that the Simmons rules and standards are very often forgotten and disregarded as seen by improper dress on Sundays in Bartol Hall [dining hall], and by lax dress during the week, besides many lax attitudes in manners and unwritten rules, we feel that this booklet would ... be advantageous to the campus.³⁶

While the Council articulated a willingness to follow certain rules and standards regarding appearance on campus, they also detailed a request to “wear slacks in the library in the evening and during cold weather.”³⁷

Dean Eleanor Clifton objected to the proposed change on the grounds that Simmons was a city college, students wearing slacks in the library would “create an unladylike attitude and sitting position in the library which has many guests and should present a nice appearance,” and permitting slacks in the library would lead to slacks in the main buildings on campus. Dean Clifton suggested the girls’ energies would be better engaged in efforts to allow their dates into the library.³⁸ One Simmons student criticized her peers for treating the library atmosphere “too casually,” and encouraged students to “try to

³⁶ Doreen Mahoney and Pat Mais, *Rules and Standards Commission Report*, 1962, RG 35.1, Box 9, Folder 21, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts.

³⁷ Doreen Mahoney and Pat Mais, *Rules and Standards Commission Report*.

³⁸ Doreen Mahoney and Pat Mais, *Rules and Standards Commission Report*.

act, or just sit, in a ladylike manner.”³⁹ Because the library was a “semi public” area where faculty and visitors observed students, undergraduates should work to convey the proper image.

Sitting on the floor is one thing; sprawling over it, arms, legs, and books scattered in all directions is another. Curling up in a chair is one thing; weird contortions which reduce the area covered by a skirt to even less than bare minimum are another, which are looked upon in askance by many adult visitors. For the sake of public relations and Simmons’ ‘image’ in the outside world, if not for the sake of presenting a pleasing appearance to friends and classmates, students should try to pay a little more attention to how they look to others.⁴⁰

Women observed the rules of good taste and feminine conduct by not taking up too much space or being too loose with their movements, as well as chaste in their posture. Undergraduate women at Simmons became less and less tolerant of strict guidelines for female conduct by the later sixties, and less willing to enforce rules they did not agree with.

Though “girls” at Simmons did not successfully overturn dress policies in their initial efforts, *Simmons News* editor in chief Carol Lurie raised a serious challenge to *in loco parentis* and the administration in her column on November 2, 1962:

In [social, academic, and political life] there is a basic concern over the following questions: 1) are rules necessary? 2) who should make the rules? 3) how far can a

³⁹ Lynn Foshier, "She Walks in Beauty, But..." *The Simmons News*, 6 April 1964.

⁴⁰ Foshier, "She Walks in Beauty, But..."

group go in making its own rules? 4) what will be their effect?

[In the social sphere] what real purpose [does] a rule forbidding the wearing of slacks to breakfast and lunch at Bartol Hall has [sic] in our contemporary society? Will it help Simmons' girls to be better citizens? Will it help increase the Simmons image as an academic community? It is easy to see that the answer to all three of these questions is in the negative, and yet, the rule persists. Why?

We must not let the fence that surrounds the Brookline campus restrain our intellectual process of questioning and examining. ... We must, instead, strive to present to the public an *honest* picture of the Simmons student. The rules which presently rigidly define our social life hamper the presentation of an honest image.⁴¹

Lurie touched on an important dilemma colleges and universities faced in this era. Could women be trusted to make responsible decisions about dress and conduct without formal rules on campus? College officials held through the early 1960s that undergraduate women needed these regulations, despite mounting pressure from students to end dress codes and conduct standards.

In autumn 1966, the Simmons College House Presidents Council passed a resolution to change campus dress standards, based on a proposal by the student government (Stu-G) and their Rules Evaluation committee. The new standard, effective 2 December 1966, stated that "each girl in the Simmons College community has the right to decide upon her own standards of dress. Along with this right comes the personal responsibility for the student to appear neatly attired at all

⁴¹ Carol Lurie, "The Iron Rule," *The Simmons News*, 2 November 1962.

times and to encourage fellow students to do the same.”⁴² The new dress code for main campus buildings was based on the assumption (stated by Stu-G) that women were mature enough to make decisions for themselves, but that the new code would be revoked if people abused it.

In the wake of this policy change the image of the Simmons student came under intense scrutiny from some faculty and students. Undergraduates criticized the different atmosphere on campus in an article for the *Simmons Review* the summer after the dress standard was abolished. Though the Stu-G president believed that the change would “help eliminate a veneer of conformity prevalent on the Campus,” other students felt that “what made Simmons outstanding before the change in dress standards was the students’ professional dress.”⁴³ There seems to have been a split between those who favored the requirement of professional, feminine attire on campus and those who adopted more casual dress.

A letter from the editor of the campus newspaper, the *Simmons News*, urged students not to “transform [campus] into Greenwich Village,” but to remember to dress neatly at all times “whether it be in

⁴² House President's Council, *Dress Code*, December, The Simmons College Archives, RG 35.1, Box 13, Folder 6, Boston, Massachusetts; Nancy Scannell, "Stu-G Changes '300' Standards for Dress," *The Simmons News*, 2 December 1966.

⁴³ Jo Ann Murphy, "The Fashion Rebellion," *Simmons Review*, Summer 1967.

slacks or skirts” lest the privilege be taken away.⁴⁴ Women could make their own decisions about attire, but those decisions were immediately circumscribed by general standards of appropriate feminine clothing – standards that undergraduate women themselves defined and that did not seem to differ greatly from the previously enforced dress codes.

Student debate over dress codes and women’s disappearing femininity at Simmons betrayed the deep tensions in American culture concerning gender roles. Many students acknowledged the changing perception in American culture of women as “people” (read: equal citizens), but were less willing to sacrifice the *image* of femininity that distinguished women from men and did not directly challenge men’s authority. Discussions centered on the ambiguity of “feminine”: was a woman feminine because she met certain appearance and conduct measures, or was a woman feminine simply because she was female?

The power of clothing and image was of great concern to many women at Simmons. Some students believed that the more casual atmosphere at Simmons had, in fact, had a negative impact on women’s behavior and therefore, the school as a whole. Criticism was primarily leveled at a number of undergraduate women who interpreted the elimination of the dress code as the opportunity to wear slacks (masculine) on campus instead of skirts (feminine). A Simmons

⁴⁴ Nancy Scannell, "Editorial," *The Simmons News*, 2 December 1966.

psychology professor argued “the theory that masculine attire promotes learning is more attractive than an alternative one suggesting that we are witnessing a mass defection from femininity and that wearing pants symbolizes something more significant than mere comfort.”⁴⁵

Not all students had faith in the ability of their peers to make good decisions regarding feminine attire. One undergraduate revealed the persistence of respectability and femininity despite the shift in policy. “Letting each girl assume responsibility for appearing neat is too much freedom for many Simmons students,” Patricia White asserted.⁴⁶ “To call dungarees, especially frayed and faded ones, sweat shirts, and baggy sweaters ‘neat’ is to completely ignore the definition of the word. ... It is too bad,” she continued, “that some girls ... are making no effort to dress properly for the many visitors and prespective [sic] students who come to the College daily.”⁴⁷ White argued that some undergraduates were too young to govern themselves without a written rule, to the detriment of the campus community as a whole.

Refuting another popular argument in favor of slacks – namely, that casual attire was acceptable while at Simmons and that young women would dress more professionally when they entered the workplace – a resident head commented that women who dressed

⁴⁵ Murphy, “The Fashion Rebellion.”

⁴⁶ Patricia White, “To the Editor,” *The Simmons News*, 9 December 1966.

⁴⁷ White, “To the Editor.”

carelessly as undergraduates would not become “models of femininity” after graduation, and that lower dress standards had a negative effect on campus morale in general.⁴⁸

Paula Sneed, a Simmons alumna from the class of 1969, recalled in a speech to an Alumni meeting in 1992 that the “rebelliousness of wearing pants” in the late 1960s was in part a matter of comfort. Sneed recounted one particularly “miserable, horrible, snowy day [when] we wore pants. When we [commuters] got to class someone told us we weren’t allowed to come to class in pants ... ‘You know,’ they said, ‘you’re going to hear about this.’ But the fact of the matter is, we should have been able to wear pants and the thought that we couldn’t on a cold ... day was something that defied logic.”⁴⁹

In light of these critics, and in direct response to an editorial from a male Massachusetts Institute of Technology student criticizing the recent changes in “Sally Simmons” in the *Simmons News* in early 1967, a Simmons junior defended the growing trend among students who no longer believed that a woman’s image or presentation reflected her character or called into question her inherent femininity.

You [the M.I.T. student] say that Sally was a lady – a pleasure to look at and well dressed, smiling. I’m uncertain as to what your definition of a lady is. Surely a girl does not earn that title by wearing a skirt to class and pasting a

⁴⁸ Murphy, “The Fashion Rebellion.”

⁴⁹ Paula Sneed, “What Did Simmons Do for Me? Plenty,” *Simmons Review*, Winter 1992.

smile on her face. If Sally did possess deeper qualities and values which entitled her to be called a lady, will she lose these because the rules have been changed? If she does lose them, if she does not have the will power to adhere to these values without the crutch of a rule, then these values were only skin deep. ... by forcing the Simmons student to think for herself and to make her own decisions, we may awaken her individuality. ... You say that Sally was not gross or crude. I don't understand. If she was a refined young lady, will extended curfews or a relaxation of the dress standard transform her basic character? Does she not have the freedom and the right to conduct herself as she always has?⁵⁰

This junior and others students at Simmons argued that wearing slacks on campus was more a sign of individual choice, maturity, and practicality than an outright rejection of femininity. The junior also acknowledged the separate nature of femininity as appearance and femininity as manner and conduct. This critical idea became more influential in the late sixties within the women's liberation movement.

At Ohio State University, undergraduate women led an offensive against the slacks rule during fall 1963 and spring 1964. OSU coeds were upset by the "ten degree provision" that mandated women could wear slacks on campus only when temperatures dipped below ten degrees Fahrenheit, and dress regulations on campus that stated coeds were not permitted to wear slacks in the dining halls. *Your Appearance Counts*, a dress regulations card compiled by students and the Dean of

⁵⁰ Arlene Sano, "To the M.I.T. Student Who Mourns the Death of Sally Simmons," *The Simmons News*, 10 March 1967.

Women's office and posted in residence hall dining rooms, explained the logic behind such provisions.

Believing that personal appearance has an important effect on the atmosphere and attitudes at Ohio State, we feel that certain standards of dress in the dining halls should be requested of all students. Residence hall living necessitates contacts with many people. Although we respect each woman as an individual, we also realize that her actions and appearance have widespread effects on others within the residence halls.⁵¹

The Women's Residence Hall Council proposed to the Dean of Women's Office that coeds be allowed to wear slacks to lunch after a "nearly unanimous" vote in the dormitories in support of the policy change.⁵² The proposal stated that "skirts and dress are proper" for the dining halls, "however, during Winter Quarter [January through March] slacks may be worn with discretion on school days."⁵³ Students reasoned that "slacks are much more feminine than the baggy dresses that seem to make such a frequent appearance in the cafeterias."⁵⁴ Further, coeds did not want to have to return to their rooms to change for meals when, weather permitting and with the consent of their professors, they had worn slacks to class. Ultimately, members of the

⁵¹ Women's Residence Hall Council, *Wrhc Meeting*, 6 February, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/c-2/16: Student Housing: *Women's Residence Halls Council: Minutes: 1962-1965*, Columbus, Ohio.

⁵² Saundra J. Marini Suzanne C. Friemann, and Marjo A. Tingle., "Is Wsga a Rubber Stamp?," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 12 February 1965.; Sue Reisinger, "Wsga Breeds Controversy, Liberalizes Women's Rules," *The Lantern*, 27 September 1967.

⁵³ Women's Residence Hall Council, *Wrhc Meeting*.

⁵⁴ Women's Residence Hall Council, *Wrhc Meeting*.

WRHC argued, “it is up to each girl as to what kind of image she is going to make for herself,” so dress regulations were unnecessary.⁵⁵

Associate Dean of Women Ruth H. Weimer responded to the students’ request by revoking the ten degree rule, arguing in a letter to the WRHC that the ten degree provision was “ineffective, and that the only time slacks should be worn is on an extremely bad day; the judgment about which should be left up to each individual.”⁵⁶ She also stated that slacks were not permitted in the cafeterias at lunch at any time during the week.⁵⁷ Further, Dean Weimer conceded that dress standards were not designed for comfort but to project respectability. “Winter Quarter is really no different from any other quarter in that warmth is not the main issue at stake. Perhaps the question is really what are our expectations for women students at Ohio State?”⁵⁸

The link between feminine appearance and conduct that the deans struggled to maintain in early 1964 came under heavy fire from students. A sophomore education major disputed Associate Dean Weimer’s logic concerning standards on campus in a letter to the *Lantern*. “I would like to know how the correlation between a woman’s

⁵⁵ Women's Residence Hall Council, *Wrhc Meeting*.

⁵⁶ Associate Dean of Women Ruth Weimer, *Letter to Nancy Hass, Wrhc*, 10 February 1964, *Dean of Women* RG #9/c-2/16, Women's Residence Hall Council: *Correspondence with President*: 1963-1965, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio.

⁵⁷ Women's Residence Hall Council, *Wrhc Meeting*.

⁵⁸ Weimer, *Letter to Nancy Hass, Wrhc*.

dress and her moral actions can be drawn. Can a woman be judged promiscuous, indecent, and/or immoral because she is wearing slacks or has her hair in rollers while in the dining hall?"⁵⁹ This direct challenge to the basic premise of dress codes – that one's appearance is a measure of one's femininity and respectability – proved very influential among undergraduate women.

Weimer's ambiguous response to students – they should use their best judgment when deciding what to wear on campus, but as young ladies they should know better than to wear slacks – did not quell student unrest regarding dress regulations. In February 1964, the Women's Self-Government Association "resolved ... to support the idea that women students should use their own discretion in deciding appropriate attire for all occasions" in a show of solidarity with the WRHC.⁶⁰

The staff of the school newspaper and the Women's Residence Hall Council encouraged undergraduates to voice their opinions and to pressure student government representatives to amend the regulations. In a letter to the campus newspaper, the *Lantern*, three coeds asked for clarification on Weimer's decision.

We fail to see how a pair of slacks can shatter a good image [of women on campus], if one has been created. ... [W]hat

⁵⁹ Jerry H. Arnholt, "To the Editor," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 December 1963.

⁶⁰ Jr. Thomas Buckham, "Wsga Ok's Private Visit, Urges Girls to Wear Well," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 27 February 1964; Women's Residence Hall Council, *Wrhc Meeting*.

kind of image [is the Dean of Women's Office] projecting to the student on this campus by refusing women their so-called right to govern themselves.⁶¹

Frustrated and unhappy with the reluctance of the Office of the Dean of Women to liberalize the dress code, and with WSGA's failure to fight the Dean on a proposal that student government and the residence hall councils had passed, three senior coeds wrote an editorial to the *Lantern*. They stated simply that "[w]e would suggest, constructively of course, that WSGA change its name to Women's Social Planning Association or a similar title which would more precisely describe its limited area of performance."⁶²

The Women's Residence Hall Council voted in winter quarter 1965 to remove their name and endorsement from *Your Appearance Counts* to protest dress codes on campus.⁶³ The group voted to keep this policy in effect in spring quarter as well, and continued to raise the issue of the slacks ban with Dean Weimer's office through fall 1964. In November, students revisited the debate. Undergraduate women argued that because "town [commuter] and sorority girls wear slacks" on campus (because they do not dine in the residence halls) it was unfair that dormitory residents could not, but conceded that "some

⁶¹ Toby Fettner Rosemary Scurris, Shelly Blank., "To the Editor," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 25 February 1964.

⁶² Suzanne C. Friemann, "Is Wsga a Rubber Stamp?."

⁶³ Women's Residence Hall Council, *Wrhc Meeting*.

women would take advantage of the rule [permitting slacks and] it would ruin the image of dorm women.”⁶⁴ Shirley Carvin of the WRHC argued that in the debate over slacks, “the issue is not now warmth but an ideal and can we as young women change the rule. If we are willing to change this one, are we willing to go farther and change others” or to accept the decisions of the Dean of Women’s office.⁶⁵ Women at Ohio State were ready to change the rules.

In November 1966, OSU’s South Campus students voted 2024 to 707 to abolish all dress regulations in their dormitories and dining halls, “with girls favoring abolition more strongly than men.”⁶⁶ Students labeled the dress regulations “enforced conformity” and “discrimination,” argued that they were mature enough to dress themselves, and called for a student bill of rights to settle questions about the authority of the college to make such regulations.⁶⁷ North Campus students quickly followed South Campus’s lead, ending dress regulations by student vote in early December 1966. Dean of Women Christine Conway bowed to student pressure and allowed the votes to

⁶⁴ Women's Residence Hall Council.

⁶⁵ Women's Residence Hall Council.

⁶⁶ Phil Long, "Dress Rule Vetoed on South Campus," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 16 November 1966.

⁶⁷ Philip H. Kalban, "Dress Rule Policy Is Enforced Conformity," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 14 November 1966.; Charles Hunter, "We're Old Enough to Dress Ourselves," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 25 October 1966.; Ben Randall, "Discrimination and Dress," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 15 November 1966.

stand as campus policy.⁶⁸ Students' unwillingness to equate personal morality with fashion choices, a confidence in individual ability to make appropriate choices, and arguments equating academic freedom with an end to *in loco parentis* policies ultimately sealed the fate of formal dress standards on the OSU campus.

Unlike most other institutions in this time period, Howard University did not have formal dress regulations in place in the early sixties. According to Associate Dean of Students Patricia R. Harris, the administration allowed students to use their best judgment in this matter, dictated by "good taste." Dean Harris insisted that

[a]ppropriateness and comfort, rather than convention and style, should be the standards set for and by our students. We should permit expression of individuality through unconventional dress, so long as no major questions of taste and decency arise. We must interpret to a critical community the fact that we are an institution at which students find themselves by testing convention through rebellious expression in dress and certain other kinds of behavior. ... It is important that penalties for failure to conform to generally accepted standards for the best in dress to be limited to peer rejection and expressed disapproval of staff.⁶⁹

In response to concerns voiced by the faculty and administrators that student dress was "sloppy" and "unbecoming a college student," Dean Harris argued that Howard students were "remarkably well-dressed,"

⁶⁸ Richard Bashor, "Dress Rule Abolished by North Campus Vote," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 8 December 1966.

⁶⁹ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1961-1962*, 30 June, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 37.

and in fact “rather too well-dressed.”⁷⁰ Harris noted that “[w]omen students who appear on campus for 8:00 A.M. class in high heels and high fashion clothes, present every bit as adverse an impression with respect to her seriousness of purpose, as does the sloppy student.”⁷¹

Students did briefly debate the legitimacy of dress regulations on campus in 1965 when Harris’ successor, Associate Dean of Students – Women Edna M. Calhoun, stated that the “freedom to dress as they so desired had resulted in almost complete abandonment of good taste on the part of a noticeable number of women students,” and moved to introduce a no slacks policy for coeds.⁷² The dress policy printed in the Women’s Handbook stated simply that “Bermuda shorts, kilts, slacks, denims and cut-offs are suitable for active sports; do not wear this attire in classrooms, the administration building and offices or for off-campus street wear.”⁷³

Calhoun’s actions excited protest on campus. Throughout spring 1965, students questioned the necessity of any dress regulation and challenged the administration’s authority to establish such a rule. Students unhappy with campus policies, including “the ridiculous dress

⁷⁰ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1961-1962*, 37.

⁷¹ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1961-1962*, 37.

⁷² Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1963-1964*, 30 June 1964, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 80.

⁷³ Patterson, "Dean Calhoun Meets Press Explains the Dress Policy."

rules imposed on mature Howard women,” founded Students for Academic Freedom (SAF) in February 1965.⁷⁴ Over one hundred students organized to question those campus policies they viewed as “an intolerable usurpation and prostitution of the academic freedom of Howard students.”⁷⁵ The new dress code and women’s dormitory rules were among the eight issues SAF were most concerned with.⁷⁶

In the campus paper, *The Hilltop*, a sophomore commented that the “purpose of school should be to instruct and not to inculcate shallow moral standards and standards of conduct” through dress codes.⁷⁷ A senior coed argued that “[t]he women of Howard University should be allowed the liberty to dress as they see fit.”⁷⁸ Further, since “slacks as campus apparel need not interfere with one’s educational achievement,” she warned that by following Calhoun’s policy, students were “just giving her more leeway to dictate [their] lives.”⁷⁹

In response to student arguments that the clothes did not affect academic achievement and that a dress code for women was an attempt

⁷⁴ SAF, “Realization of Academic Freedom, Cooperativeness in University,” *The Hilltop*, 26 April 1965.

⁷⁵ SAF, “Realization of Academic Freedom, Cooperativeness in University.”

⁷⁶ WAJ, “Those in Glass Houses Should Not Throw Stones,” *The Hilltop*, 1 May 1965.

⁷⁷ William Grover, quoted in Edith Higginbotham, “The Inquiring Reporter,” *The Hilltop*, 15 March 1965.

⁷⁸ Higginbotham, “The Inquiring Reporter.”

⁷⁹ Lydia Padilla, quoted in Higginbotham, “The Inquiring Reporter.”

to “maintain the antediluvian standards characteristic of most Southern Negro colleges,” Dean Calhoun scolded undergraduate women for complaining about the ban on slacks and shorts.⁸⁰ “There is a large percentage of immature Howard women students,” stated Calhoun in an interview with the *Hilltop*, who were “by no means well versed in social amenities.”⁸¹ According to Calhoun, the regulation was necessary to show these students “what is appropriate for college women.”⁸² Her statements further fueled the “great dispute” between students and the administration over attire, curfews, and student rights.⁸³

One week after her statements about “immature” coeds, Dean Calhoun spoke with *Hilltop* reporter Wanda Oates. The Dean explained that she did not think of dress “regulations in the women’s handbook as hard and fast rules” but as “guidelines emphasizing appropriateness and good taste” designed to help women students “grow in maturity and understanding as they develop into fine young women.”⁸⁴ When asked directly about the dress code, Calhoun stated that “of course the students have the right to make their own choices” about attire; “there

⁸⁰ Deidra Thomas, quoted in Higginbotham, “The Inquiring Reporter.”

⁸¹ Patterson, “Dean Calhoun Meets Press Explains the Dress Policy.”

⁸² Patterson, “Dean Calhoun Meets Press Explains the Dress Policy.”

⁸³ Wanda Oates, “About Regulations: Hilltop Interviews Dean Calhoun,” *The Hilltop*, 1 May 1965.

⁸⁴ Oates, “About Regulations: Hilltop Interviews Dean Calhoun.”

is absolutely no dress regulations for women in effect at Howard. We [the administration] only suggest what is considered proper.”⁸⁵ Without the tradition of formal dress codes and in light of the immediate and negative response by students, the Dean Calhoun and the Howard administration could not impose formal dress regulations for women students beyond the intangible definition of “appropriate” attire in 1965. The controversy over women’s regulations, the deterioration of the student-administration relationship, and the creation of Students for Academic Freedom had lasting consequences for Howard University in the late 1960s.

“We are proud to be black so we are ... rejecting white standards of beauty.”⁸⁶

Photographs of undergraduate women from Howard, Spelman, Ohio State, and Simmons in the early sixties conform to the conventional middle-class standards of beauty for the time. In general, many African American women straightened their hair and followed fashions closely. Images of Homecoming Queens at Howard and Spelman (who held Homecoming celebrations with their brother school, Morehouse College) revealed a preference for lighter-skinned women, and brief Queen interviews emphasized the themes of marriage, home,

⁸⁵ Oates, "About Regulations: Hilltop Interviews Dean Calhoun."

⁸⁶ "The Afro - Another Campus Fad?," in *Bison: The Howard University Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: 1968), 180.

and community service among the candidates. By 1967, campus yearbooks and publications revealed a departure from white standards of beauty among the majority of African American students. Initially, for many, the move to “natural” hair was political. Black women sought to redefine beauty on their own terms on campus and succeeded.

The politics of beauty at Howard University revealed the shift in gender ideology and image that took place within African American communities across the nation. In the mid-sixties, young civil rights workers increasingly adopted the “natural” look and cornrow braids as a manifestation of political solidarity and authentic “blackness.” Black nationalists within the civil rights movements called on African Americans to reject the hair straighteners, bleaches, and white standards of beauty as oppressive.⁸⁷ In August 1966, the mainstream African American magazine *Ebony* covered the changing image of African American beauty in response to readers’ criticism of their models and advertisements as too “European,” featuring a young female civil rights activist with a natural hairstyle – or “afro” – on the cover.⁸⁸ For many students, appearance itself became a statement – a rejection of mainstream, middle-class values and norms – in support of political

⁸⁷ McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women’s Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*, 235-36; Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America’s Beauty Culture*, 256-60. See also S.E. Anderson, “For Black Girls Only, an Appeal for Beauty,” *The Hilltop*, 7 January 1966; William Truly, “Negro Girls Getting Prettier?,” *The Hilltop*, 18 February 1966.

⁸⁸ Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America’s Beauty Culture*, 259.

beliefs.⁸⁹ Once designers and manufacturers adopted the looks of style-based political statements, these appearance choices become mainstream and apolitical. The authenticity of one's beliefs could not be measured by clothing and appearance.

The Queen competition of Homecoming 1966 ushered in the "black is beautiful" and Black Power movement at Howard. The winning candidate's platform embraced a politicized definition of female beauty and a critique of Howard University's failure as a black institution. Robin Gregory, a senior, was a veteran of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee's voter registration project and the March on Washington organizing committee. Gregory decided to run for Homecoming queen after being approached in the fall of 1966 by a group of law school students who "wanted to run somebody that has a natural hairstyle" and somebody already politically active. She and her supporters wanted to make a statement about the Homecoming competition as a "superficial kind of thing that kept affirming old values that we [Black Power activists] were trying to resist or overthrow. ... [The students] usually picked someone who was as close to white as

⁸⁹ Peiss explored the "decisive break in the way American women made and understood their appearances. ... Beautifying became highly politicized in a climate where social movements recast personal matters as public issues." Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture*, 260. See also Ingrid Banks, *Hair Matters: Beauty, Power, and Black Women's Consciousness* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

they could possibly get. [I]t didn't have to be skin color. It was just the whole image of the person."⁹⁰

Historian Paula Giddings, who attended Howard University in the mid-1960s, remembered the impact Gregory's campaign had on women and men on campus:

She had an Afro, which ... was the statement she made physically. And she was always flanked by two very handsome men, very serious, very well dressed, with bow ties. They always had their arms folded and would look straight ahead while Robin talked. And Robin talked about the movement. Robin talked about black politics. Robin was not the traditional homecoming queen candidate.

[Sorority and non-sorority women] felt very excited about Robin's campaign and what it symbolized, not just in terms of politics but in terms of what women should be doing as well, the role of women. ... Robin [was] being taken very, very seriously [by men as well as women], not just because of any physical attributes but because of her mind. And this I think was as important as the racial aspect of her campaign.⁹¹

When Gregory was crowned Homecoming Queen by popular vote, the room "exploded" in cheers. Students celebrated throughout the auditorium and later the streets of campus, dancing, cheering, and chanting black power slogans.⁹²

⁹⁰ Hampton, Fayer, and Flynn, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*, 433.

⁹¹ Hampton, Fayer, and Flynn, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*, 435.

⁹² Hampton, Fayer, and Flynn, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*, 435.

The Hilltop praised Gregory for abandoning the “searing heat of the straightening comb and other head melting devices,” and students leveled extensive criticism on white-defined beauty standards over the next two semesters. Black women at Howard increasingly turned away from “traditional” (white) female beauty towards the “authentic” image of black beauty. One coed described the psychological impact of abandoning the beauty salon:

The ritual of a hairdresser appointment and the disappointing results after hours of toil finally impressed me with the fact that excessively curly (kinky) hair is meant to be worn naturally. I also discovered that natural hair is as beautiful if not more attractive than hair that has been mutilated ... I feel that many Negro women have been brainwashed in believing that natural hair is ugly.⁹³

When asked “Why did you go natural?” by a *Hilltop* reporter, a Howard sophomore stated, “[a]fter I threw off my white concept of beauty it was like emerging from a dark room. I discovered that Black is beautiful and that my hair is beautiful and that I couldn’t be anything else but proud of these attributes.”⁹⁴ The natural and the afro became fashionable among African American women at Ohio State University and Simmons College in the same time frame as Howard University’s coeds adopted the styles. The Black Student Union at Ohio State ran separate Homecoming Queen competitions in 1968 and 1969 to

⁹³ Carol J. Lawson, “The Inquiring Reporter,” *The Hilltop*, 21 October 1966.

⁹⁴ Beverly Thompson, “The Inquiring Reporter,” *The Hilltop*, 21 October 1966.

celebrate their heritage and to protest the white-defined beauty standards of middle America.

While not all coeds opted to abandon the salon, the natural – and its most voluminous incarnation, the afro – symbolized to many students a commitment to black cultural pride and a rejection of white culture and images. “The natural look had brought about a reappraisal of black appearance; first as a radical symbol, then as a fashionable style, it retained its political associations with black pride, authenticity, and freedom.”⁹⁵ Ironically, a Howard University student reported in spring 1968 that “even girls whose hair, in its natural state, was not kinky were rumored to have put chemicals in it to make it have the Afro look.”⁹⁶

By fall 1968, Howard students debated whether the very popular natural had been “reduced to a fad” and commercialized by the cosmetics industry.⁹⁷ Some students warned “the African bush cannot be mistaken as a yardstick for one’s true conviction to the black liberation struggle.”⁹⁸ Nonetheless, students noted the “definite cultural trend taking place” on their campuses.⁹⁹ “Race pride and race

⁹⁵ Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture*, 260.

⁹⁶ "The Afro - Another Campus Fad?"

⁹⁷ Antoinette Roberts, "Are the Natural and the Afro Becoming Faddish?," *The Hilltop*, 27 September 1968.

⁹⁸ Steve Abel, "Students Favor Afro," *The Hilltop*, 15 December 1967.

⁹⁹ "The Afro - Another Campus Fad?"

awareness have become for black Americans and particularly Howard students, the order of the day.”¹⁰⁰ Even Homecoming candidates’ campaigns reflected more political engagement than past competitions, as the queens “addressed themselves to issues ranging from Black unity to student autonomy and campus involvement in the community.”¹⁰¹ Overall, women at Howard embraced the black-defined image of female beauty. Spelman women were not as quick to accept the new standards of beauty, but photographic evidence from campus newspapers and the Spelman yearbook show that the natural look was widespread on campus by 1970.

The politics of femininity were everywhere evident on campuses in the 1960s and early 1970s. What had at first seemed an innocuous request – to be allowed to choose clothing based on practicality and comfort in cold weather – soon blossomed into a full-fledged attack on *in loco parentis* regulations on campus and a move away from conformity to an ideal of femininity and feminine beauty. Campus newspapers and yearbooks documented the shift from more formal, conservative women’s fashions in the early 1960s to the relaxed, unstructured fashions of the early 1970s. The definition of respectable

¹⁰⁰ "The Afro - Another Campus Fad?"

¹⁰¹ "Candidates' Skits Show New Awareness," *The Hilltop*, 18 October 1968.

feminine fashion expanded to accommodate a vast array of styles. Increasingly casual fashions replaced the complex and physically restrictive styles of the 1950s and early 1960s that emphasized women's "femininity" at the expense of practicality and comfort.

Evidence points to a struggle between those who wanted to hold on to older definitions of femininity based on public appearance and personal conduct, and those who adhered to a changing definition of femininity based not on appearance but on internal character, individuality, and freedom of choice for women, a definition difficult to reconcile with *in loco parentis* policies that treated women as children, not adults. For many women during the mid-1960s, clothing, the most visible sign of this shift, became a symbolic statement rejecting or embracing the old standards.

A difficult problem for undergraduate women was how to reconcile calls for equality of opportunity while still preserving the gendered notion of "femininity," an idea, for some feminists, based on socially constructed appearances and women's inferiority to men. Some recognized that a redefinition of gender roles and increased opportunities for women in the workplace could coexist with traditional outward appearances of femininity. Women could still look like "ladies," but they could also expand the definition of acceptable female behavior

to include confidence and equality with men, and secure campus policies that treated them like adults, not children.

Female students argued for the freedom to make their own decisions regarding clothing and image on campus, and ultimately expanded the scope of their demands to include an end to other *in loco parentis* policies on campus. Student attempts to redefine femininity on campus revealed their struggle to reconcile the conflicting and often contradictory messages about gender and race in American society during mid-century. Undergraduate women demonstrated that the performance of gender was critical to the perpetuation of conventional assumptions concerning femininity. Ultimately, young women were challenged to “prove” their femininity not by the clothing and cosmetics they wore or how they styled their hair (though these barometers continued to be a reality for women, as we have seen above), but by the life choices they made in terms of marriage and career and how they conducted themselves in mixed company.

The mixed messages to women on campus and in American culture – women should be passive, dependent, unquestioning and fulfill their prescribed duties versus the ideal college student who seeks knowledge, challenges underlying assumptions, and is above all else a free-thinking individual – crystallized into growing discontent among a vocal minority in the early sixties. Undergraduate women’s initial

challenges to dress codes had expanded to question the role of the university *in loco parentis* by mid-decade. Women's choices concerning appearance on campus by the mid-sixties made very personal decisions into political statements about race, class, and gender. Undergraduate women expanded their critique of the college's role in place of the parent throughout the later sixties; issues of personal appearance and conformity with gendered notions of beauty soon gave way to a broader student attack on the scope and nature of administrative power on campuses across the United States.

CHAPTER 3

IN LOCO PARENTIS

“...preoccupation with locking [undergraduate] women in their residence halls at a fixed time each night gave aid and comfort to the parents. It gave some structure to campus life so that it was not necessary for a couple to decide when they should say good night. It challenged the adventuresome to figure out how to beat the system. Women were locked in, of course, to protect them from the crew cut, all-American type college man, not on the remote chance that there would be a sex fiend lurking on the campus.”¹

Regardless of social, economic, or political background, all undergraduate women of the 1960s lived their college years under campus regulations designed to set limits “in place of the parent.” *In loco parentis* policies shaped women’s campus activities, their relationships (sexual or otherwise), and set physical and geographical boundaries on everyday life. Colleges and universities designed in place of the parent policies to provide physical safety and moral guidance to college girls, to establish limits on women’s non-academic activities, and to protect them from the temptations and distractions of life away from home. Women away from the supervision of parents or husbands were perceived as a potential danger to themselves and/or the

¹ Dorothy Truex, "Focus on Feminine Ferment," *The Journal of College Student Personnel* 11, no. 5 (1970): 324.

reputation of their families; thus, college administrators felt it their responsibility to keep a watchful eye on undergraduate women in their care.

Administrators' discussions regarding the necessity of *in loco parentis* policies after World War II focused on the physical safety of undergraduate women, the guidance such policies provided in terms of time management and academic focus, their aid in the development of respectable, responsible citizens, and their utility as a means of keeping tabs on young women's whereabouts in case of emergency. The underlying, if unspoken, rationale for *in loco parentis* policies was to limit opportunities for sexual contact between men and college women on and off campus. Women who had nothing else in common with their peers shared the experience and language of complex and detailed regulations concerning curfews, visiting hours, social and cultural permissions, and sign in and sign out procedures. This common ground, and the shift from the perception of campus regulations as privileges to the perception of campus regulations as impediments to student rights, united undergraduate women to demand the end of *in loco parentis* policies on each campus.

“little girls behind a prison fence”²

To reassure parents that their daughters would be safe while living away from home, campus administrators implemented specific and detailed regulations concerning women’s movements on and off campus. While ostensibly for the protection of college girls from the dangers of life away from family and newfound independence, many of these campus regulations were also an effort to limit opportunities for ‘immoral’ conduct by college men and women.

Campus geography and architecture reflected administrative concerns for the physical safety of undergraduate women. Spelman College and Simmons College, both women’s colleges in urban areas, built barriers around campus centers and dormitories. The campus handbook warned Simmons undergraduates of the dangers of walking alone or at night between the iron-gated dormitory campus and the nearby open academic campus. Spelman women were literally garrisoned, protected from the potential dangers of Atlanta, Georgia – and the men of Morehouse College, their brother school – by a brick wall, fences surrounding campus, and armed night watchmen.³ At Ohio State University and Howard University, women’s dormitories were clustered together on campus and locked at specific times each night. Howard University, faced with the challenge of overcrowding on a small

² An Interested Student, "Letter to the Editor," *The Spelman Spotlight*, 11 April 1963.

³ Marilyn Hunt, "The New Exchangers," *The Spelman Spotlight*, February 1967.

urban campus, established a satellite women's dormitory, Slowe Hall, away from the main campus in 1962.⁴ This created problems for travel between central campus and the dormitories, particularly for women walking alone or at night. Campus guides and officials encouraged Howard coeds to travel in groups between Slowe Hall and the main campus. Security guards patrolled the grounds of each college at night, no doubt to the dismay of couples seeking privacy. Security on campus was a serious concern for college officials; attacks on students usually led to increased attention to safety on and around campuses. Student discussions of safety on campus seldom linked physical security with *in loco parentis* policies. Instead, students called for improvements such as increased lighting, armed emergency doors (to prevent students from propping them open), and more visible security officers in problem areas on campus.

To best serve the needs of undergraduate women away from home, most campuses in mid-century required all women students to live in campus housing. Housemothers, resident advisors, and deans took up the mantle of "parent" for young women on campus, providing guidance and structure for women away from home. Students with family in the immediate vicinity could request permission to live off campus with relatives, but were still subject to campus curfews and

⁴ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1961-1962*, 30 June, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C.

visitation regulations. College officials developed sign-in and sign-out rules for monitoring undergraduate women's activities and whereabouts on and off campus.

Sign-in and -out regulations at Simmons College relied on a complex color-coded card system based on students' destinations and activities. The 1962-1963 handbook outlined the program for students; students who did not follow these guidelines were subject to penalty by the Simmons Honor Board.⁵ Undergraduates signed out to their destinations on a white slip "to be off campus after 8:30 p.m. or [when] attending an invitation dance on campus."⁶ Students going to the library before 8:30 p.m. but returning after 8:30 p.m. signed out on a "cherry" colored slip. Students used blue slips to sign out for weekends and overnights away from campus, according to the permission cards authorizing such absences from campus.

If a student signs out for an overnight she must know that a responsible, adult woman, over 21 years of age, will be her hostess overnight. Any doubts about the situation must be referred to her Resident Head or Director of Students. She may not sign out for overnight with another student for a destination within Boston (25 mile radius) without obtaining permission, in advance.⁷

⁵ For the complete text of *Permissions, Signing Out, and Signing In*, please see Appendix B.

⁶ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*, 1962-1963, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts.

⁷ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*.

Campus regulations required students to sign out on yellow slips for every vacation, detailing contact information at their final destinations and all extended stops en route with dates and times. Finally, undergraduates signed out on pink slips to return to campus alone – with special permission – after 8:30 p.m. Only students taking evening classes or working off campus could obtain permission for pink slips. Women could change the name of escorts or destinations after 10:30 p.m., in accordance with their curfews and permissions (see below). Because Simmons' regulations depended on the honor system, women could sign each other out if they co-signed the slip.

Though the most colorful system of the four schools, Simmons' sign-out procedures did not vary greatly from policies at Spelman, Howard, or Ohio State. Campus staff used sign-in and -out cards to record contact information and the names of male escorts in case young women needed to be reached for an emergency – and to know where to begin looking for students who did not return by curfew. Administrators used the very real threat of contacting a girl's parents if she did not return to the dormitory on time and failed to contact the resident advisor with her location and return time. Resident heads and directors also used bed checks after curfew and before the dormitory was unlocked in the morning to enforce women's regulations. Being on time, adhering to curfews, and faithfully recording one's location and

escort on sign-out slips were part of each college girl's education in morality, respectability, and responsibility.

Campus officials also required students to receive individual permissions for many activities outside of class attendance, school-sponsored social events, and dormitory meetings. Instead of asking mom or dad, undergraduate women asked their resident head (dormitory supervisors), director of students, or the dean for permission to stay out late, attend off-campus dances or concerts, or to sleep over in a friend's room. Women's self-government committees or the Dean of Women's office spelled out student permissions and dormitory sign-out procedures in annual campus handbooks. Handbooks at Simmons and Spelman also named taxi companies approved for student use in the cities; each college prohibited women from staying in local hotels without prior approval from parents and the dean well in advance.

Most of the schools under investigation had fairly open-ended permissions; regulations set curfews for women to be in their dormitories each night (see below) with some specific restrictions on event attendance or frequency. Spelman was a notable exception. Spelman had a strong tradition of high standards of conduct, academic performance, and conservative values. At the core of student life was the understanding that a Spelman girl was a credit to herself, her family, her school, and her community. Women attending Spelman

College had a reputation for being serious, “sophisticated” students “guarded by the faculty, just as the Army, Navy and Air Force guard the United States.”⁸

According to the Spelman College Bulletin, Spelman College aimed to develop “women of character and good will, with their mental capacities trained to the highest point of usefulness.”⁹ To this end, Spelman undergraduates were required to attend morning chapel services at 8:00 a.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and church services every Sunday afternoon. From the evidence, many Spelman undergraduates of the early sixties took to heart the responsibility to be their own best example of conduct above reproach.

Spelman handbooks of the late 1950s and early 1960s specified where students could socialize off campus and how often. *In loco parentis* policies required students to pre-register or sign out for all activities off campus and to use the library. For example, Spelman officials permitted undergraduates to shop in the “West End” shopping district only and to “attend the movies once a week at the Ashby or Ritz Theatres on afternoons when their class schedules permit.”¹⁰

⁸ L. J. Harrison, "Letters to the Editor," *The Spelman Spotlight*, 4 May 1960.

⁹ Spelman College, *Spelman College Bulletin 1962-1964*, April 1964, The Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 91.

¹⁰ Spelman College, *College Handbook*, 1957-1958, Office of the President, Albert E. Manley Papers - Unprocessed, Atlanta, Georgia.

Students have permission to go to town once a week. Freshmen and Sophomores register in groups of three for shopping trips after having secured permission from their housemothers. Juniors register in groups of two or more. Seniors register in groups of two or more for shopping trips until senior privileges become effective [at which time Seniors were allowed two trips per week into town].¹¹

Women needed special permission from the Dean of Women to go to other areas in town or after nightfall.

Spelman regulations allowed seniors to “secur[e] refreshment” from a local drug store Sundays after vespers but the “period off-campus is limited to 30 minutes and the latest time for return is 5:30 p.m.”¹² These restrictions on women’s movements served multiple purposes. To uphold the image of the college and young women attending Spelman, it was imperative for undergraduates to focus on academics and social activities within the protected walls of Spelman. Respectable single women did not wander city streets alone. In segregated Atlanta, Georgia it was safer for women to travel in groups and to limit the number of opportunities for young women to get into trouble. These policies were designed not only to protect college girls from the very real physical dangers young African American women faced in the South, but also to give their parents some degree of comfort in knowing that campus authorities kept close tabs on their daughters.

¹¹ Spelman College, *College Handbook*.

¹² Spelman College, *College Handbook*.

The number and nature of permissions was negotiable on each campus, within limits. Undergraduate women lobbied through their self-government associations and residence hall councils for increases in the number of permissions each month and for extensions on how late they could stay out on each permission. What was not negotiable – and what few undergraduates questioned early in the decade – was the necessity of permissions and sign-out rules. “I like to think that someone is worrying about me if I’m not in,” a Simmons psychology student commented in 1965.¹³ The successful implementation of sign-in and sign-out procedures relied heavily on the accommodation and compliance of hundreds – or thousands, in the cases of Ohio State and Howard – of undergraduate women to the rules. The ability of campus administrators to enforce the regulations depended on the size of the campus population, the degree of tension between campus peer standards and *in loco parentis* regulations, and a common belief in the fairness and equity of rules on campus.

Student judiciaries played a vital role in the longevity of *in loco parentis* on campus. Judiciaries tried minor offense cases on each campus and meted out punishments to students found guilty of violating campus regulations. The Dean of Women or Dean of Students Office handled major offense cases involving potential expulsion from

¹³ Jean Wilson, "The Sticky Problem of Curfews," *Simmons Review*, Summer 1965, 18.

the college. At Ohio State University, each women's dormitory council heard individual cases from their residence hall. In the early 1960s, OSU coeds attempted to implement an automatic penalty system to make punishments more uniform across campus to alleviate the inconsistencies and arbitrary punishments of some residence hall councils. At Spelman College, penalties were listed in the College Handbook to inform coeds of the consequences of breaking campus regulations.

Simmons College relied on the Honor System, based on "mutual responsibility." This tradition placed the onus on students to turn themselves in for violating campus policies and to counsel other students whom they observed breaking the rules to turn themselves in to the Honor Board for punishment. According to the Simmons Student Handbook, mutual responsibility was "a difficult obligation ... [but] protects the violators from further suspicions or careless gossip and strengthens the Honor System."¹⁴ Campus officials placed a high degree of responsibility on students to police campus conduct; success depended on students' willingness to enforce a system both groups agreed to.¹⁵ As we will see below, by the mid-sixties students – at

¹⁴ Simmons College, *Student Handbook*.

¹⁵ Beth Bailey discussed this dynamic in her study of the University of Kansas in the same era. Beth L. Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Simmons, Howard, Spelman, and Ohio State – used the administration’s own arguments to call for an end to formal *in loco parentis* regulations by extending the definition of responsibility to include decisions about where to go and when to come home.

***“fragile minds and enticing bodies”*¹⁶**

Associate Dean of Students (Women) Edna Calhoun complained in spring 1964 that female students at Howard University were “left almost entirely to their own devices without supervision” for most of the week, concluding that “many of the observable problems relating to behavior of women students can be traced directly to this situation.”¹⁷ In addition to lax supervision, Calhoun felt there were too many “serious infringements” of campus regulations due to “great confusion among women students concerning what they conceive as personal freedom.”¹⁸ As early as 1963, Howard coeds resisted the administration’s definitions of acceptable campus conduct. Among the most contested policies were curfews – a long-standing tradition on every campus and charged with emotion on each side of the issue.

¹⁶ Truex, "Focus on Feminine Ferment," 323.

¹⁷ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1963-1964*, 30 June 1964, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C.

¹⁸ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1963-1964*.

Like permissions and sign-out procedures, curfews for women on each campus served multiple purposes. According to campus administrators and college student personnel, curfews – the hour each night that undergraduate women were required to be back inside their dormitories – provided much needed structure to campus life. Campus officials argued that young people away from home for the first time could not be expected to make good decisions about time management for their first years on campus. Women’s curfews fulfilled the “need to extend to the girl in college the protection and guidance provided by her father at home [and] the need to encourage her academic achievement by insuring ample time for study.”¹⁹ Curfews and permissions were often class-based, so allowed sophomore, junior, and senior women progressively more privileges and later hours. This reflected a belief that as students matured, they were better equipped to use their permissions and curfews responsibly while still managing academics.

The most obvious case for curfews was the need to limit opportunities for sexual contact between college men and women. Though Associate Dean Calhoun (Howard University) openly rejected this justification for *in loco parentis* policies – “questionable conduct, or immorality does not depend on the hour, and can be successfully perpetuated during daylight or darkness” – many educators and college

¹⁹ William R. and Larry W. Nelson MacKay, "Dormitory Closing Hours and Academic Achievement," *The Journal of College Student Personnel* 11, no. 5 (1970): 385.

administrators of the late fifties and early sixties believed it was their duty to provide moral guidance to students and create a wholesome, respectable campus atmosphere for young people.²⁰ Simmons College professor Donald Dunbar voiced the opinion of many contemporary educators and parents that “the College has a responsibility to see that a deviant culture is not instituted” or encouraged among college youth. “The College can’t eliminate the problem” of changes in morality, “but through the use of restrictions (curfews, signing out, etc.) it can curtail it.”²¹

Part and parcel of these policies was an understanding that respectable women did not stay out until all hours of the night. Though undergraduate men did not have formal curfews on any of the campuses under investigation, the prevailing sentiment was that boys would return to their dorms when the girls went in for the night. Curfews for women, permissions, sign-out procedures, and visitation hours dramatically affected how young people experienced sexuality in college. While campus officials strove to limit opportunities for sexual intercourse, students became more creative and resourceful about the when and where of sexual contact. The “official world of rules and public rituals [on campus in the late fifties and early 1960s] coexisted

²⁰ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1963-1964*.

²¹ Nora Ann Sheehan, "The Crisis in Student Morality," *Simmons Review*, Winter 1964, 7.

with and partially shaped a covert world of sexual experiences that did not fully correspond to the rules” though few students openly challenged these regulations until the mid-1960s.²²

As long as women were unwilling to challenge the image of respectability that social regulations enforced (despite their private actions before curfews or their willingness to violate regulations individually), these *in loco parentis* policies held. As we shall see below, over time young women and men became less concerned with adhering to the image and rules of proper conduct. Stanley Gross, an associate professor of education and psychology at Indiana State University, characterized curfews and dormitory hours of the sixties:

College policies and procedures, generally, are oriented to student sexual expression as a problem of control. Most American colleges and universities have taken a coercive, restrictive, and disapproving view of student sexual expression, either to maintain order, to protect themselves from external criticism, or to implement moral supervisory purposes. The major expression of this view is the strict regulation of dormitory ... living and the punishment of those who transgress.²³

Many students shared the perception of policies as punitive and outdated by mid-decade. A Simmons College student commented in 1962 that social rules were “badly in need of a re-examination and revision. They seem to have been made at some long-ago date by a firm

²² Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland*, 80.

²³ Stanley J. Gross, "Student Sexual Expression," *The Journal of College Student Personnel* 9, no. 1 (1968): 10.

believer in the customs and mores of Victorian England.” She explained that “most Simmons girls had given little thought to either the origin, the effect, or the purpose of these rules,” but most “arbitrarily memorized and obeyed” the rules nonetheless.²⁴ So what did curfew and visitation policies look like in the early 1960s that led to the revolution on campuses across the nation?

Curfews at Howard University remained the same throughout the early 1960s. First year women had to return to their dormitories by 9:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday nights until the first Friday in November. From then on, they enjoyed sophomore curfews of 10:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday. Both classes could receive 1:00 a.m. extensions for weekend events. Curfews for junior and senior women were 11:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and permissions as late as 3:00 a.m. on weekends.²⁵ Simmons College also set curfews according to academic class standing, with all underclasswomen required to be in their dorms between 9:30 p.m. and 12:30 a.m. Junior and senior curfew was set at 1:30 a.m. every night of the week.²⁶

Spelman College and Ohio State University set relatively uniform curfews across class standing. All dormitories at Spelman had lights

²⁴ Carol Lurie, "The Iron Rule," *The Simmons News*, 2 November 1962.

²⁵ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1963-1964*, 80.

²⁶ See Appendix B for full description. Simmons College, *Student Handbook*.

out at 11:00 p.m. and were locked at 12:00 a.m. each night. Students who expected to be out later than 8:30 p.m. were required to obtain special permission in advance.²⁷ Women's dormitories at Ohio State closed at 11:00 p.m. on weeknights and 1:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights. Each student was permitted a "mid-week" permission of 12:00 a.m. every Wednesday or Sunday night, and four 2:00 a.m. permissions per academic quarter (Friday or Saturday nights only).²⁸

To complement curfews, Simmons College, Spelman College, and Ohio State University established visitation hours on campus. During set times each week, male callers were allowed to visit with young women in public areas only. Students at Simmons who remained on campus with their dates still had to sign out during visitation hours. Ohio State coeds could visit in public areas of the men's dormitories, if

²⁷ In general, Spelman College was very conservative regarding women's movements off campus, and had very strict visitation policies for male callers through the later 1960s. Girls were expected to return to their dormitories every evening between 5:00 and 8:30 p.m. Upperclass women could be out until 10:45 p.m. with special permission. Students could keep lights on after 11:00 p.m. to study with permission of the housemother, but were required to be in their own dormitory rooms before midnight. Spelman College, *Spelman College Standards for Resident Students*, 1959, Office of the President, Albert E. Manley Papers - Unprocessed, Spelman College Archives, *Rules and Regulations*, Atlanta, Georgia; Spelman College, *College Handbook*; Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 1960-1961, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia; Student Council, November 1957, Box 163, *Rules and Regulations*, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.

²⁸ Women's Residence Hall Council, *Handbook for Residents*, 1 September, The Ohio State University Archives, *Women's Residence Halls, The Ohio State University*, Columbus, Ohio.

a chaperone was present, until closing hours of their own dormitories.²⁹ Spelman College held brief calling hours from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. each evening; these hours overlapped with the dining hall's meal service, which women were required to attend and where men were not permitted.³⁰

Howard University had no formal visitation hours. In 1962, Associate Dean of Students (Women's Department), Patricia R. Harris recognized the problem this created for students and administrators. Harris called on the university to "provide adequate space for relaxation and entertainment of guests." She argued that it was "the height of folly" for a "coeducational urban institution ... to restrict too severely the availability of on-campus areas in which women students may receive and entertain their male guests."³¹ Moreover, she continued, courtship was a "normal, if not an essential, part of college life" and it was the responsibility of the university to provide "hospitable areas on campus" for courtship "if students are not to be remitted to parked automobiles and apartments. Such space logically should be in the residence halls." ³² Dean Harris' comments highlighted a dilemma for

²⁹ Ohio State University, *Student Handbook*, 1964-1965, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio.

³⁰ Miss Vogue, *The Spelman Spotlight*, 4 May 1960.

³¹ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1961-1962*, 43.

³² Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1961-1962*, 43.

campus officials. How could administrators encourage respectable, “normal” heterosocial activity without granting students a degree of freedom that might encourage immoral conduct?

“Our Social Selves: Dating, Courtship, and Preparation for Marriage”³³

To understand the heated debate surrounding *in loco parentis* policies in the 1960s, it is critical to map changes in sexual mores among American youth in the mid-twentieth century. The goal of most young women and men in the fifties and early sixties was marriage. The rules of dating and courtship, however, were different for youth in this era than they had been for their parents. Gail Greene highlighted the tenuous continuity of older sexual mores in her study of college girls. Describing the “new style in sex ethics” on campus in 1964, Greene stated

Mama, the Church, [girls’ hometowns], and the Dean of Women may pledge allegiance to the traditional standards of chastity and worship at the altar of purity in soul and reputation, but the accepted, vigorously voiced public moral codes are practically meaningless to young women of today. This does not mean, however, that they are unaware or unable [sic] to ignore their existence.³⁴

³³ B. LaConyeya Butler, *Students’ Outline of Education 103*, 23 May 1961, Office of the President, Albert E. Manley Papers - Unprocessed, Spelman College Archives, *Freshman Orientation*, Atlanta, Georgia.

³⁴ Gael Greene, *Sex and the College Girl* (New York: Dial Press, 1964), 24.

Instead, many young women turned to their peer group for definitions of respectable and acceptable behavior, particularly to answer the question ‘how far is too far?’ Young women were expected to set the limits on sexual activity, a daunting challenge in a time when the vague and individual definition of “love” became the benchmark by which young women deemed sexual intercourse respectable or promiscuous.

A common theme on each campus was the popularity and “success” of the school’s undergraduate women – measured by how many girls went out on dates, with whom, and how often. In a culture preoccupied with consumerism, an individual’s value increased or decreased according to one’s ability to regularly get dates. Going “steady” and wearing a boyfriend’s pin was seen as a serious, monogamous commitment on most campuses and the promise of an impending wedding band. For undergraduate women, “emphasis on getting a husband [was] widespread.”³⁵ Lois Moreland, speaking about “Sex on the Campus” at Spelman College, noted the “‘mania’ to get married” among undergraduate women.³⁶ Homecoming queens and spring queens were often the most popular girls on campus. News articles offered undergraduate women tips for dating and beauty (literally increasing their face value), from smart accessorizing to which

³⁵ Sheehan, "The Crisis in Student Morality," 6.

³⁶ Phoebe Bailey, "College Sex Life Discussed; Mrs. Moreland First Speaker," *Spelman Spotlight*, 17 October 1963.

boys they should turn down lest they look too desperate for a date. Young women who were not willing to participate in the sexualized youth culture of the fifties and early sixties were perceived as outcasts or failures.

Behavior that would have labeled a girl “fast” in previous decades had become a baseline expectation, even on first dates. It was not a great leap, then, for American youth to expand the definition of acceptable behavior to include premarital sex, limited by the precondition of “love” and the moral beliefs of the individuals themselves. Nonetheless, the general consensus among middle-class youth (including the students investigated here) did not condone multiple sexual partners, but rather sex within a monogamous relationship. A Harvard undergraduate wrote that “the new morality of sex with love ... is far healthier than a degrading double standard or an irrational insistence on virginity. It is a morality that frowns on sleeping around.”³⁷ Greene’s study found that “[f]or the great majority of college girls, sex without love is promiscuity, and promiscuity is undeniably a dirty word. Very few college girls approve of sleeping with just anyone strictly for the fun of it. Even those who do it tend to

³⁷ Hendrik Hertzberg, “The New Morality,” *Newsweek*, 27 April 1964, 10.

disapprove.”³⁸ Without love, heavy petting and sexual intimacy short of intercourse were acceptable limits on sexual behavior for young women.

Undergraduate women received conflicting messages about sex standards on campus from parents, peers, campus officials, and “experts.” While most authority figures decried premarital sex and intimacy as morally wrong, others such as the Reverend Gerald Paul of Howard University held that “premarital sex is alright providing it is a relationship between two responsible persons and there is love, *agape*, in the light of Jesus Christ.”³⁹ Nora Sheehan of Simmons College explained that Simmons women did not see the question of premarital sex as cut and dry. The student “generally agrees that promiscuity is wrong,” she acknowledged, “but when affection exists between two people she is not at all sure that intercourse is wrong. ... [A]s an engaged senior remarks, ‘You can’t keep a boy interested with just a peck on the cheek.’”⁴⁰

As Beth Bailey and Susan Douglas have documented, national magazines aimed at American youth published hundreds of articles about sexual mores, offered advice columns for young men and women unsure of the limits of acceptable sexual behavior, and put out polls to

³⁸ Greene, *Sex and the College Girl*, 127.

³⁹ "Group Explores Sex, Religious Dilemma in Project Awareness Panel Discussion," *The Hilltop*, 18 December 1964.

⁴⁰ Sheehan, "The Crisis in Student Morality," 7.

help their readers learn where their own behavior fit into these norms.⁴¹ “Petting” and “necking” became requisite behavior among American youth in the dating culture.⁴² By mid-century, petting and necking had moved from private conduct American youth condoned but did not display publicly to weekly or daily exertions in student lounges (affectionately labeled “passion pits,” “zoos,” or “the snake pit” by coeds), at college parties, and on campus lawns.⁴³

The pervasiveness of changing sexual mores among youth was evident in the effort colleges and universities exerted to enforce ‘traditional’ moral standards by the early 1960s through detailed and exhaustive regulations concerning conduct. For example, the Ohio State *Handbook for Residents* advised residence hall officials that “if [students] sit on davenports they are to have feet on the floor and are not to indulge in continuous demonstrations of affection.”⁴⁴ The break between belief in the marital containment of sexuality and growing sentiment among youth that sex within the context of a loving relationship – married or not – was acceptable ultimately forced

⁴¹ Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988); Susan J. Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Times Books, 1994).

⁴² Petting was generally understood as any form of intimate touching below the shoulders (short of intercourse), while necking refers to kissing and similar contact at the neck and higher.

⁴³ Greene, *Sex and the College Girl*, 202.

⁴⁴ Women's Residence Hall Council, *Handbook for Residents*, 26.

university officials on many campuses to abandon school regulations limiting opportunities for student privacy. By the mid-1960s, undergraduate women – not necessarily all of them – broke the rules more and more blatantly and without apology.

With few alternatives available for privacy, some students necked publicly, whether in student lounges, dormitory lobbies, campus lawns, at the campus gates, and in front of women’s dormitories before closing – wherever they could find some semblance of privacy on a public campus. According to students interviewed in the early 1960s by journalist Gael Greene, this lack of privacy led to “the ‘Lockout’ scene – the *en masse* final embracing before curfews in the women’s dormitories” on many campuses, which many coeds perceived as “a grim and unaesthetic, but essential, feature of campus romance.”⁴⁵ In “Students Aren’t Choosy About Romantic Atmosphere,” an undergraduate news writer listed the most popular parking lots on and around the OSU campus for parking and “doing what comes naturally” on dates during the cold winter months. The author suggested “for those couple wishing to cut down on travel time as the women’s curfew hour approaches, the parking lot of a funeral home across the street from the women’s dormitories is available on evenings when business is

⁴⁵ Greene and her research assistants interviewed 614 students, primarily women, from 102 colleges across the United States. Ohio State University and Simmons College are listed in her study sample. Greene, *Sex and the College Girl*, 202-03.

slack.”⁴⁶ For those students not fortunate enough to enjoy the privacy of an automobile, the author thanked those parties willing to give students a bit of privacy in public areas.

University officials have helped out by continuing a tradition of dimming the lights in lobbies of the women’s dormitories during the last 15 minutes before closing time. And local beer pub proprietors take advantage of the situation by providing special couples’ rooms in their establishments where beer pretzels and romance can be shared in dimly-lit privacy.⁴⁷

Not all students (or parents) found public displays of affection appropriate or necessary on campus. Letters to the editor in 1965 and 1966 bemoaned the “torrid osculations” on campus grounds and in the dormitory lounges at Ohio State University.⁴⁸ Warren and Marian Ellis wrote the *Lantern* concerning behavior witnessed while visiting campus on Sunday afternoons, “prolonged animalistic clutchings, positionally restrained to some extent in the dormitory lounge, but horizontally and sprawingly displayed on the slopes surrounding Mirror Lake, with complete disregard for onlookers and passersby ... adults and children alike.”⁴⁹ Senior Marc Singer commented on the “sprawingly displayed” students. “They must have some idea as to how asinine they look,

⁴⁶ "The Game's the Same: Students Aren't Choosy About Romantic Atmosphere," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 6 January 1964.

⁴⁷ "The Game's the Same: Students Aren't Choosy About Romantic Atmosphere."

⁴⁸ Warren and Marian Ellis, "A Social Phenomenon," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 1 November 1965.

⁴⁹ Ellis, "A Social Phenomenon."

sitting bleary eyed while necking in the lobbies of the girls' dormitories."⁵⁰ Singer suggested students turn to an automobile, a "deserted alleyway," a friend's or fraternity house, or "an empty closet available somewhere" if their "passions are that uncontrollable."⁵¹ A sophomore Howard coed commented on the necessity of her dormitory's lounge attendant. "Somebody has to show you where the limit is because once you get started, you just don't know when to stop."⁵² According to the Student Center lounge attendant, "those men don't mean the girls any good."⁵³

As conduct that had once been considered very private behavior appropriate for the bedroom only became fit for public consumption, coeds redefined "respectability" on campus. "Virgin and non-virgin, sexually emancipated and romantically, stubbornly, or fearfully chaste, with few exceptions college girls agree: Sexual behavior is something you have to decide for yourself."⁵⁴ For undergraduate women not willing to test these limits, and for parents and administrators who did not want young women to do so either, curfews, permissions, visiting

⁵⁰ Marc Singer, "A Reminder," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 1 February 1966.

⁵¹ Singer, "A Reminder."

⁵² Barbara Patterson, "Lounge Attendant Observes Student Conduct in Center," *The Hilltop*, 12 November 1965.

⁵³ Patterson, "Lounge Attendant Observes Student Conduct in Center."

⁵⁴ Greene, *Sex and the College Girl*, 22.

hours, and sign-out regulations were welcome tools that enabled girls to avoid such situations – “a plausible excuse to avoid the temptation of the automobile backseat.”⁵⁵ For other students, these rules were an obstacle to be overcome. A Simmons undergraduate (“Name Withheld”) confessed in the *Simmons News* that women who did not agree with the 9:30p.m. curfews “go out, without signing out, and ... return at [their] leisure, without threat of punishment.”⁵⁶ By 1965, undergraduate women *en masse* were no longer willing to uphold the “adult”-defined image of respectable, middle-class behavior to appease their parents, campus administrators, or their peers; *in loco parentis* was doomed.

Morals education or higher education?

By late 1964 the issue of undergraduate sexuality was a hot topic in the American media. The shift in morality among American youth and the role of the university *in loco parentis* were at the crux of the discussion. National newsmagazines, academic conferences, college personnel and dean associations, and parents and students themselves entered the debate. Should universities enforce middle-class norms of respectable behavior, or should American youth determine their own definition of respectable conduct? Should the university focus only on the academic aspects of student development, and what would be the

⁵⁵ Wilson, "The Sticky Problem of Curfews," 18.

⁵⁶ Name Withheld, "To the Editor," *The Simmons News*, 12 November 1963.

possible repercussions for students if this happened? Students also struggled with this question before 1967; many students were not willing to break from their parents' definitions of respectability and generally accommodated regulations. Before the mid-1960s there was no sustained or sustainable movement to confront university *in loco parentis* policies, but there were arguments and resistance to the regulations. This changed dramatically by 1968 as students on most campuses rejected the role of university as parent outright, and colleges were forced to deal with the consequences.

In the midst of increasing concern and debate regarding sexuality and morality on campuses across the nation, arguments for continuing the college's role *in loco parentis* abounded. A 1962 *Newsweek* column on college students' morals concluded "colleges still believe they should mold manners as well as minds."⁵⁷ Judge Jennie Loitman Barron of the Superior Court of Massachusetts argued in a 1964 *Ladies Home Journal* article that college administrators were "duty-bound to protect the emotionally immature girl ... [and] must assume the task of maintaining the standards of proper moral behavior demanded by parents and society." Further, she argued, to allow college girls "unrestricted opportunities, to give her freedom to study in a boy's room, to set

⁵⁷ "Boys and Girls Together," *Newsweek*, 29 October 1962.

curfew as late as 3:00 or 4:00 a.m., and then expect her to avoid emotional and biological perils, is absurd.”⁵⁸

Simmons Dean Eleanor Clifton argued in 1965 that an end to curfews was “unrealistic” for undergraduate women. “The College has to be practical,” she explained, “many parents would object strenuously to no curfews. Rules ... teach responsibility and self-discipline. They help students to establish good habits and values.”⁵⁹ An Ohio State University parent agreed with these sentiments, reasserting the diminishing *in loco parentis* stance of the university. In 1966, one coed’s father wrote the Dean of Students requesting that all overnight and weekend out of town permissions be refused his daughter without his direct permission. Because the parent’s request was more restrictive than the current OSU policies for women, Dean of Women Christine Conway responded by requesting that the parent discuss the matter directly with his daughter and reach an agreement with her, as “this [would] be more effective than our staff approaching her ... since we really cannot refuse permission for her to sign out.”⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Quoted in William R. Butler, “Student Revolt for Freedoms,” *The Journal of College Student Personnel* 6, no. 6 (1965): 328.

⁵⁹ Wilson, “The Sticky Problem of Curfews,” 18.

⁶⁰ Christine Conway, Letter from Dean of Women, 26 October, Student Affairs: Office of, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/a/9, *Dean of Women: 1966-67*, Columbus, Ohio.

A *Newsweek* article on “The Morals Revolution on the U.S. Campus” in spring 1964 asserted that though “chastity remains a virtue for most of [the] 4½ million college students” across the U.S., American colleges “must not abdicate [their] role in conserving, transmitting, and helping to mold both moral and intellectual values.”⁶¹ Nonetheless, the author argued, colleges and universities “cannot tell a student what to think about sex.”⁶² Dean of Students James Harvey from Hope College (Holland, Michigan) “disagree[d] that the college cannot or should not give direction to the students on how they should think about sex and other moral problems.” He argued “colleges must do everything possible to teach good moral behavior,” and asserted “colleges can work directly and effectively in this area of morals and values, and in fact this, I believe, is our most important reason for existing.”⁶³

Campus officials showed this commitment to morals education in their initiation of and approval for lectures, workshops, panel discussions, and undergraduate courses concerning sex, sexuality, morality, and the choices students confronted on campus every day. Students on each of the four campuses could not escape this discussion in the sixties. Prevailing sentiment at Howard, Spelman, Ohio State

⁶¹ “The Morals Revolution on the U.S. Campus,” *Newsweek*, 6 April 1964, 59.

⁶² “The Morals Revolution on the U.S. Campus,” 59.

⁶³ James Harvey, “Letters,” *Newsweek*, 20 April 1964.

and Simmons in the earliest years of the decade held to accommodation of campus regulations and the continuation of self-government (where it existed).

Comments made by campus administrators and faculty through 1965 continued to characterize students as children involved in a learning process with the university or college as the sage instructor. Dr. E.G. Williamson put it most bluntly at Howard University in 1964, when he argued that the university needed to “indoctrinate [students] into the tribal mores of the campus, and more important, ... begin this process of indoctrination the first day they are on campus” to instill the moral values of the university and create a program of “preventive discipline.”⁶⁴ Director of Students Mrs. E. Taylor Smith, Simmons College, warned students who felt they were already mature when they reached college that “you can not walk too fast, but rather you must take things in stride,” urging the girls to strive towards maturity.⁶⁵ Dean of Students Armour Blackburn, Howard University, characterized the role of the university as both “priest and prophet:”

Priest in that it is our responsibility to nurture in our students the desire and the will to preserve the

⁶⁴ Dr. Williamson was Dean of Students and Professor of Psychology at the University of Minnesota in 1963 when Howard University officials asked him to critically examine the student personnel program as part of the Self-Study Program. These comments were offered as part of his appraisal. Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1963-1964*, 19.

⁶⁵ "Mrs. Smith Appointed Director of Students," *The Simmons News*, 24 February 1964.

fundamental values and institutions of our culture. Prophet in that we must be able to foresee the direction and the desirability of change and we must have the capacity to deal with it effectively.⁶⁶

Many students also agreed, to varying degrees, with the university's role *in loco parentis* during the early years of the decade. Students defended the necessity of non-academic campus regulations, often echoing the language of the university administration. For example, in a recurring news column in *The Spelman Spotlight*, an undergraduate writing as "Miss Vogue" offered advice and insight to fellow students. Responding to criticism of Spelman's off-campus permissions by a group of Morehouse College men, Miss Vogue argued that the rule that women could only attend local theaters in "herds" of six or more was reasonable. "This rule was made not for companionship, but for protection. Whether you agree or not, there is some safety in numbers."⁶⁷ Whether Miss Vogue is referring to safety from Morehouse men or from strangers is not clear. In the eyes of the administration, it was no doubt both. The column suggested that readers pursue change through their student leaders and in the meantime follow the "justifiable" regulations.

⁶⁶ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division to the President of Howard University, 1964-1965: Volume I*, 30 June 1965, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 9.

⁶⁷ Miss Vogue.

In 1963 Ruth Tamaroff, a Simmons undergraduate, defended curfews designed “for our own welfare.” She argued “it is necessary that the school be aware if one of the students is missing. It is a matter of personal protection.”⁶⁸ Tamaroff criticized her peers for following campus regulations not because of individual beliefs or honor, but because they feared “getting caught” and punished by Dorm Board. She challenged Simmons undergraduates to learn the purpose behind the rules and regulations on campus and to comply with them in the true spirit of the campus Honor Code.

By setting stringent regulations and expecting students to abide by them according to the self-imposed Honor Code, women’s continued commitment to only minor changes, if any, revealed their agreement with the rules. Student complaints about “petty rules and nosy, ‘yes’ people” and “[students] who thought it was their moral right to know what someone is doing 24 hours a day” belied the commitment of some Simmons undergraduates to uphold campus rules and see transgressors punished accordingly by acting as the administration’s eyes and ears in the dormitories.⁶⁹ Undergraduate women involved in student government were usually the most politically active women on campus, and by far the best organized. These undergraduates had a

⁶⁸ Ruth Tamaroff, "A 'New Deal' at the Dorm?," *The Simmons News*, 8 March 1963.

⁶⁹ Susan Boyer, "To the Student Body and the Administration," *The Simmons News*, 13 May 1966.

vested interest in supporting the policies approved by the dean of women and in working through established channels to secure policy changes. The snail's pace of bureaucracy and the many levels of campus government these proposals had to pass through hampered any quick response to general student opinion. Undergraduate women in the early 1960s were more or less content to work through the system to obtain more liberal privileges on campus.

A survey of campus opinion concerning the Simmons Dorm Board System (student-run judiciary) in February 1964 revealed that undergraduate women were generally happy with the system as a whole. Of the sophomore, junior, and senior women polled, the majority felt that Dorm Board punishments "fit the crime," that penalties meted out should be "constructive" and not "detering," and that a system of self-imposed penalties would work at Simmons in the future.⁷⁰ In other words, most undergraduate women felt they were responsible enough to self-administer clearly outlined automatic penalties for their own transgressions, thus eliminating the need for the Dorm Board, except for serious cases. As a community established on the premise of "mutual responsibility," many coeds felt they could agree upon a set of pre-determined, standardized punishments and conduct themselves accordingly.

⁷⁰ Staff Writer, "Council Evaluates Poll," *The Simmons News*, 24 Febraury 1964.

The Dean of Women at Howard University noted what she perceived among coeds as a “lack of concern” with existing regulations in her 1965 *Report to the President*.⁷¹ She bemoaned the “flagrant disrespect ... for regulations regarding procedures for leaving and returning to the halls” among undergraduate women.⁷² Women who agreed with the curfews and hours no doubt used them, while women who did not support the regulations likely felt comfortable breaking them. Without a strong system of self-government at Howard University, students had few means to propose new or protest existing campus policies.

The perceived immaturity of freshmen and sophomore students – thus their need for guidance and regulations – was a common theme in campus editorials and *in loco parentis* debates. Donna Hutter, an Ohio State freshman in 1963, urged the Women’s Self-Government Association to increase restrictions on freshmen students. “Freshmen hours are a farce. They do not utilize the time for studies but rather for the social life [sic]. ... [s]ince freshmen are given the same hours as upperclassmen it gives them no incentive to becoming upperclassmen.”⁷³ Hutter suggested mandatory and supervised study

⁷¹ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division to the President of Howard University, 1964-1965: Volume I*, 80-81.

⁷² Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1961-1962*, 81.

⁷³ Donna Hutter, “To the Editor,” *The Ohio State Lantern*, 21 October 1963.

nights for freshmen until they reached a C- grade point average. She believed it would “help many immature and irresponsible students into becoming more aware of their responsibilities.”⁷⁴

Female undergraduates often vehemently defended visitation and calling hours regulations. Undergraduate women were chastised by their peers to “respect ... the present ending of social hours” before new ones could be approved by the Dean’s office.⁷⁵ In the early 1960s, many coeds perceived men in the dormitories as violators of their personal space. While few women sought to end or curtail hours, efforts to expand them were sometimes blocked by student dissent. An expansion of visiting privileges threatened the all-female environment in the women’s dormitories.

A letter from the Simmons College House Presidents Council in 1963 enumerated specific arguments against the expansion of open house hours proposed by another student. The HPC argued that the reasons against increasing the number of open houses (scheduled times when male callers could be in women’s dorm rooms) outweighed the reasons for such a change.⁷⁶ Specifically, they argued, “no girls in the dorm, including the floor rep[resentative]s, want to be saddled with the

⁷⁴ Hutter, "To the Editor."

⁷⁵ Miss Vogue.

⁷⁶ Simmons College residence halls held open houses one Sunday afternoon per month.

extra responsibility of staying in on a Sunday afternoon to chaperone a floor.” In addition, HPC claimed “the invasion of privacy would be undesirable,” and that the proposal to close off an entire floor if no girls were hosting guests was not feasible because “unnecessary voting would have to take place” to determine if a floor would be closed off, and “girls outside the fire doors would still have a problem” because they could not be cordoned off for privacy. More frequent open houses meant students would have to clean out the laundry rooms more often, and HPC refuted the suggestion that more open houses would make women clean their rooms, claiming that “other less involved suggestions for cleaning them up” could be made.⁷⁷

On top of the many inconveniences that the House President’s Council outlined to students, they also alleged that most girls did not actually want to host visitors anyway. “On the whole, we feel that it is completely unnecessary to increase the frequency of dorm open houses. Most girls would not be interested in inviting callers. Our rooms are our bedrooms, and our living rooms and first floor lounges are the places for entertaining male callers.”⁷⁸ These undergraduates, echoing the arguments of the college administration, felt that boys in their rooms were not appropriate when other venues for socializing were

⁷⁷ House President’s Council, “To the Editor,” *The Simmons News*, 16 December 1963.

⁷⁸ House President’s Council, “To the Editor.”

provided. Simmering beneath this argument is the definition of respectable womanhood, wherein women did not hold private audience with men in their bedrooms, lest they be suspected of immoral and indecent private conduct.⁷⁹

Some undergraduate women were unwilling to ask for or make dramatic policy changes on campus in the early 1960s; some of these women were still hesitant to pursue dramatic change in the later years of the decade. In spring 1966 one Ohio State junior asked that her name be taken off a petition for self-determined hours for upperclass women when the students who circulated the petition used it to demand a no-hours policy be put into effect immediately. The coed argued for an investigation into the feasibility of a no-hours policy on campus by the Women's Self-Government Association Standards committee; she was unwilling to support implementation of such a policy and objected to the abuse of her confidence. The traditional approach to campus change via student government usually guaranteed a longer and well-studied transition from old to new policies.

Curfews and permissions gave women a degree of control in dating, one advantage that some coeds were not ready to relinquish. Without the maturity or ability to say no to peer pressure, women's

⁷⁹ This is explored in more depth in chapters four and five.

hours were a justified rationale for turning down invitations. Coeds could use women's regulations as an excuse for cutting an evening short (though this could also work against them, if they were cajoled into staying out until the last possible minute) or as an excuse for saying no without blame. In a peer culture that placed much of the onus on young women to limit sexual activity (to say "no"), curfews and sign-out slips were additional resources to draw upon. Students on each campus were consistently reluctant to increase non-academic privileges for freshmen (and sophomore) girls, arguing that underclass women benefited from regulations until they matured, like upperclass women.⁸⁰

Finally, undergraduate women appealed to their peers over and over again to abide by campus rules and regulations to secure future privileges. After campus officials increased the number of hours per week that women could host male callers on campus and decreased the number of required morning chapel services from five per week to three Nelda King, a Spelman undergraduate in 1961, urged her peers to "stop for a moment and realize that with new privileges come new responsibilities."

We must be careful not to abuse these privileges. If we realize our responsibilities to ourselves and to our college to keep the rules and regulations given to us, and to prove

⁸⁰ These debates are discussed at length in chapters four and five.

ourselves as worthy young women, then more privileges will be given to us. The decision is ours and ours alone.⁸¹

Students also reminded their classmates of their obligation to live up to the goals of the university:

A girl who comes to Simmons should realize that she is making a contract with a private institution. She should be prepared to accept the standards and fulfill the responsibilities which this institution requires of her. If she is not prepared to do this she should not enroll here.⁸²

Students and administrators used the contract argument often in the early to mid-1960s to limit expressions of student discontent with campus rules. Until a majority of students disagreed with the policies of the university or college, and enough were willing directly to challenge the authority of the system they had been taught to respect, arguments like these held sway. Students still used the language of “privileges” through mid-decade – when many turned to focus not on privileges, but on “rights.” This paradigm shift ultimately united students on each campus behind the common goal of dismantling *in loco parentis* regulations at the college level.

Apathy to activism: the lull before the storm

In the early sixties, small but vocal groups of students called for the rethinking of the role of university and college administrators *in loco*

⁸¹ Nelda J. King, "Editorial," *The Spelman Spotlight*, 16 October 1961.

⁸² Judy Harrell, "The Time Is Now..." *The Simmons News*, 9 March 1964.

parentis. Initial efforts to liberalize women's regulations were, for the most part, initiated by women's student government organizations in response to suggestions from the student body. These early debates affirm the continued strength of post-war gender systems on campus as late as 1966. The first attacks on *in loco parentis* on campus, as we have seen, focused on dress regulations, which led to the loosening of formal dress regulations at Ohio State, Simmons, and Spelman (Howard did not have a formal policy in place during the 1960s). Students challenged the belief that outward appearance revealed inner character; they argued that what a woman chose to wear had little to do with her virtue or respectability. Having separated image from behavior, students escalated their efforts to take more personal responsibility for their actions on campus. Amidst criticism of campus apathy by a vocal minority of activists, these early attempts to ease restrictions on women met with limited success but established a firm foundation for later debates and victories.

As early as 1963, the Simmons College House Presidents Council initiated a self-study of campus regulations and punishments.⁸³ As

⁸³ House Presidents' Council, *Report of the House Presidents' Council on Dorm Board Evaluation*, Spring 1964, The Simmons College Archives, RG 35.1, Box 9, Folder 22, Boston, Massachusetts. Simmons was not alone in this endeavor. In the early 1960s, many other colleges and universities requested information on women's social regulations from peer institutions. Ohio State University's WSGA conducted a study of this nature in the early 1960s. Letters from other campus officials in this regard are located throughout the records of campus administrators at OSU and within the holdings of the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign's Student Life and Culture Archival Program.

part of the study, student leaders requested information from other private colleges in the nation regarding women's hours policies and penalties. In light of increasingly relaxed permissions on similar campuses, the HPC petitioned for more uniformity in punishments meted out on campus, an increase in the number of permissions per student per month, and the institution of 3:00 a.m. study permissions on campus. For the most part, students supported these and other minor policy changes and pursued them through the established channels. Some campus activists openly criticized their peers for a lack of enthusiasm or interest in the issues raised by a vocal minority. "If you, a student, sincerely disagree with some of the rules," undergraduate Ruth Tamaroff entreated, "the intelligent action is not to simply disobey them and hope that you aren't caught, but to do something about the rules."⁸⁴ In an effort to begin constructive discussion of campus regulations, one undergraduate reassured students that "evolution initiated by interested students is not revolution, and agitation for beneficial change is not necessarily an evil."⁸⁵

Campus administrators agreed to allow 3:00 a.m. study permissions in 1964, and by spring 1966 expanded automatic permission and removed the limit on special permission for Simmons

⁸⁴ Ruth Tamaroff, "Through a Looking Glass," *The Simmons News*, 12 November 1963.

⁸⁵ Rita Rosenstock, "The Right to Change," *The Simmons News*, 21 February 1963.

girls. HPC simultaneously formalized the automatic penalty system, so students who violated campus hours regulations were expected to punish themselves accordingly (for example, setting an earlier curfew, “campusing” – having to stay in the dorm for the evening – themselves for a night or a weekend, relinquishing an automatic permission, etc.). Nonetheless, student government (Stu-G) leaders at Simmons were disappointed with the criticism leveled at them by other students for failing to act quickly enough on their requests. Stu-G officers were particularly frustrated with an apparent disinclination among students to seek offices in student government between 1963 and 1966. Though a number of individual students attempted to instigate an organized and significant challenge to curfews and permissions, most students opted to accept punishments for breaking the rules instead of trying to change them.

In an article for the *Simmons Review*, Myrna Chaison cited a number of reasons for alleged student apathy on campus. These included students’ focus on academic performance and off-campus activities and a frustration with “red tape” on projects proposed by student leaders. When Chaison asked why students were not interested in running for Stu-G positions, a junior responded “like their parents, they are not particularly interested in government.” A freshman claimed, “students want to know what’s going on. But they

don't want to do anything constructive. It's much easier to read about an event than plan it."⁸⁶ Chaison reminded her readers that Stu-G was a "pressure group" on campus, and did not have the authority to legislate campus regulations. As such, she concluded, "students expect too much from Stu-G and are disappointed when the organization does not meet these expectation. They [students] do not run for office because they think Stu-G is ineffective." Chaison warned students not to abandon student government because it was the only formal group on campus to represent student opinion to the administration – "Stu-G will lose the influence it has because students refuse to run [for office]."⁸⁷ Except for minor regulations changes and the termination of a formal dress code policy, Simmons students were not yet ready to mount a focused challenge to *in loco parentis* policies or administrative authority at the college.

Initial efforts to reform non-academic regulations at Spelman College also met with limited success and lukewarm support from students. After the administration fired the professors who had encouraged the discussion of "liberty at Spelman," few were willing or able to amass widespread enthusiasm for policy change. Despite the involvement of many Spelman women in local civil rights

⁸⁶ Myrna Chaison, "Is Stu-G Fading Away?," *The Simmons Review* 1964, 16.

⁸⁷ Chaison, "Is Stu-G Fading Away?," 17.

demonstrations and protests off campus in 1960 and 1961, most students were loath to turn a critical eye on campus life. Frustrated Spelman leaders called for a self-study in 1967 to investigate campus conditions and regulations. Anna Porter, editor in chief of the campus newspaper, also called for an investigation into student apathy on campus.⁸⁸ Undergraduate Yvette Savvoir challenged Spelmanites to get involved in on- and off-campus issues:

That fence around Spelman should not serve as a 'chastity belt.' Spelman students have a very cloudy awareness of the real world, especially the Black world outside of the [Atlanta University] Center. For too many Spelmanites knowledge ends with the closing chapter of a textbook; interests end with acceptance by a particular person or clique. We have no social consciousness and, furthermore, the atmosphere here discourages concern.⁸⁹

The theme of student apathy was also a perennial favorite at Howard University, where students often criticized their peers for unquestioning adherence to campus regulations. In a 1963 article in *The Hilltop*, William Johnson, Jr. described student apathy at Howard as "distressing." "On a campus where the principles of universal suffrage are espoused, pleas for equal rights are screamed, and discrimination against said rights are actively campaigned against, one would think that the students would actively concern themselves with

⁸⁸ Anna Porter, "Academics," *The Spelman Spotlight*, January 1967.

⁸⁹ Yvette Savvoir, "Letter to the Editor," *The Spelman Spotlight*, March 1967.

local (campus) political issues. Unfortunately, this is not so.”⁹⁰ Student leaders and campus officials berated Howard’s reputation as a respectable party school for children of the black middle-class in the early 1960s; students in particular were critical of the “white” mindset of administrators and faculty members.

For their part, HU President James M. Nabrit, Jr. and the Associate Deans of Students defended the regulations on campus as very forward thinking and their attempts to “identify and isolate the causes for ... unrest ... and put forth a diligent effort to eliminate these sources of concern.”⁹¹ Director of Student Life, Benny Pugh, was particularly proud of the cooperative atmosphere on campus in 1965-1966:

From the very beginning of the first semester until very early June, an air of progressiveness and willingness to resolve problems of mutual concern permeated the relations between faculty, administration, and students. Certainly it is no mean accomplishment for the three major factions of a modern-day university to ‘co-exist’ so harmoniously when throughout the country and world students are demanding increased responsibility and, in general, to be considered as young adults who actively participate in their environs.⁹²

⁹⁰ William J. Johnson, Jr., "Student Apathy Assailed by Writer," *The Hilltop*, 27 May 1963.

⁹¹ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division, 1965-1966 Volume I*, 30 June, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 2.

⁹² Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division, 1965-1966 Volume I*, 166.

Low voter turnout at undergraduate student government elections in spring 1966 did little to dispel this perception of calm on campus, despite occasional student demonstrations protesting poor dormitory (women's in particular), library, and food service conditions on campus. Students began investigating campus problems in 1965, flexed their muscles in peaceful demonstrations, and learned the limits of campus dialogue.

Concurrent with mounting discontent at Howard, undergraduate women at Ohio State University pointed to the "decline in apathy" on their own campus and others across the nation.⁹³ In the midst of broadening support for a liberalization of upperclass women's curfews, the Women's Self-Government Association itself came under attack. Echoing the frustration of women at Simmons College, unhappy students belittled the "ponderous pace of student government" in proposing, studying, formalizing, and securing the Dean's approval for changes to women's non-academic regulations.⁹⁴ The OSU Union of Students labeled WSGA (and the Student Senate) "a mere puppet for

⁹³ Author Sherryl Woods highlighted demonstrations at Cornell, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Fordham, and New York Universities against women's hours restrictions and the belief among students that "university officials have no right to dictate a moral code." Sherryl Woods, "A Decline in Apathy," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 6 May 1966.

⁹⁴ Sherryl Woods, "The Ponderous Pace of Self Government," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 20 May 1966.

the administration.”⁹⁵ Seniors Louise Millarve and Kathy Wilson challenged WSGA to “gain courage and propose a democratic campus vote for all women to permit us to decide for ourselves whether we are so irresponsible that we must be protected by women’s hours.”⁹⁶ Policy changes initiated by WSGA in the wake of self-study and comparisons of women’s regulations on other campuses in the U.S. were ultimately overtaken by the groundswell of student support for the eradication of most, if not all, such polices on campus. This surge in undergraduate activism and new desire to challenge the assumptions of campus authorities and regulations characterized politics at each college in the late sixties and early seventies.

Early efforts to change women’s regulations on campus met with resistance, as most female students were not willing to challenge the authority of campus administrators directly. Students defended many campus policies, while others began to critique the premise of *in loco parentis* policies. Self-studies on numerous campuses resulted in minor changes to college or university policies, initiated by student governments in the interests of the student body. These studies proved a stalling tactic for administrators unwilling to implement dramatic

⁹⁵ Louise Millarve and Kathy Wilson, "Dear Editor," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 November 1965.

⁹⁶ Louise Millarve and Kathy Wilson, "Dear Editor."

policy changes, but also provided student leaders with a more complete picture of regulations at campuses across the nation. In some cases, students used the findings of these studies as arguments to liberalize women's regulations on their own, more conservative campuses.

By the late sixties, student challenges to administrative authority increased dramatically. As enrollments expanded each year, more and more students critiqued the system they had inherited from their predecessors. Students who entered college in 1965 and 1966 had already been exposed to the growing number of protests and demonstrations on and off college campuses concerning issues of social justice, civil rights, and government policy. Contemporary students were well-versed in the expectations of gender and racial ideologies of the post war period, but fewer students were willing blindly to follow the rules. Instead, young women and men were determined to redefine the relationship between youth and authority figures such as parents, teachers, and politicians. Students seized upon the newly successful common language of citizenship rights to replace the obligations of privilege campus officials used to justify college regulations, and demanded the rights of citizens on campus. Undergraduate women in the early 1960s had learned the language and tactics of the administration in early efforts to ease the paternalism of campus

regulations; women ultimately used this knowledge to dismantle the rules that structured their everyday lives on campus.

CHAPTER 4

PROTEST 101

“...the university is being challenged about its ‘right’ to require students to live in dormitories, to maintain closing hours, to place restrictions on those students twenty-one years and older, and to demand that students observe a moral tone and a social pattern in keeping with the high expectations of most parents, the faculty, and the administration.”¹

In 1967 and 1968, college and university administrators faced overwhelming pressure from students to change or end *in loco parentis* policies on campus. In the midst of constant discussions about the decline in morals on campus, the escalation of the anti-Vietnam War protests on and off campuses, the shift in the civil rights movement to calls for Black Power, and the first nationally reported women’s liberation demonstrations, challenges to non-academic regulations seemed a minor concern. Yet the end of *in loco parentis* policies across the United States had a dramatic impact on the lives of undergraduate students across the nation. Student concerns about social justice came home to campus between 1965 and 1968, when many college students made a marked departure from the standards and traditions of an

¹ William R. Butler, "Student Revolt for Freedoms," *The Journal of College Student Personnel* 6, no. 6 (1965): 326.

earlier generation to implement their own vision for American colleges and American culture. By 1968 a vocal and active segment of the student body ultimately redefined the relationships among students, college administrators, and the world around them.

As one of the most overlooked revolutions on American campuses in the sixties, the dismantling of non-academic regulations had a tremendous impact on the shape of higher education in the late twentieth century. The revolution in manners and morals on campus was part of the sexual revolution, but it was even more – regardless of a student’s politics or background, the language and goals of student efforts to dismantle curfews, sign out procedures, and the like united women (and men) on many campuses in a common cause, strengthening and drawing strength from the growing women’s liberation movement and Black Power movement of the late 1960s and changing the relationship between students and the university. As part of the myriad of issues students protested in this era, women’s opposition to *in loco parentis* shared a new language of rights and voiced radical – and not so radical – demands.

The impact of the student movement to end *in loco parentis* policies was both immediate and long-term; students abandoned campus traditions and non-academic regulations based on outdated gender systems and class expectations and demanded more rigorous

coursework relevant to the changing nature of American society. Students demanded the respect of university officials and parents as adults, a recognition that not all authorities were eager to give. Undergraduate women reshaped the nature of the responsibilities academic institutions had to their students, sought recognition of women's changing roles in the American economy and culture, and demanded equality with their male peers in colleges and universities.

The surge in support for the liberalization of women's regulations on each campus occurred between 1966 and 1968; campus debates focused mainly on issues of maturity, student rights, the non-enforceability of regulations, and more often implied than overtly stated, sexuality. Students' arguments against *in loco parentis* expanded to include challenges based on self-determination for black students and accusations of sexism and paternalism against campus administrators and trustees. Due to the scope of student arguments and the tremendous efforts students undertook to secure changes in campus regulations, the discussion of the *in loco parentis* revolution is broken into two chapters. In this chapter, I explore the issues of academic freedom and student rights with a focus on events at the historically black colleges. In chapter five, I analyze the charged issues of sexuality and gender in the context of the *in loco parentis* debates at each college. I also detail the struggle between students, their campus governments,

and school administrators that played an important role in the shape and pace of change at the Ohio State University and Simmons College.

Students challenged *in loco parentis* policies at Howard University and Spelman College using the language of citizenship and responsibility in an effort to redefine the role of the black college and university in American society. Fighting not only for student rights, but also civil rights, many undergraduates perceived the struggle against their campus administration as a struggle against paternalism and 'Uncle Tomism,' or the effort to help black students assimilate into the larger white culture after college. For many African American students, *in loco parentis* policies reflected a desire to make black students more like their white counterparts. Students fought to dispel myths of inferiority and immaturity and to overcome racial stereotypes of childlike adults and incapable students. Academic freedom, student rights, and a desire to influence the creation and implementation of student regulations and curriculum were bound to the civil rights movement, the more militant Black Power movement in particular. On these two campuses, students' desire to implement their vision of a black university meant that the role of the university *in loco parentis* had to come to an end.

“We should impress upon them the need for academic freedom.”²

The question of academic freedom and student rights was not new in the mid-1960s; students raised the issue during the McCarthy Era, but support grew dramatically during the next decade in the effort to end *in loco parentis*. At the center of the issue of academic freedom for students in the sixties was a concern with the balance of university authority – academic and non-academic – and student independence of thought and action.³ The perceived ‘right’ of students to question campus authorities and the autonomy of student organizations from the administration were key concerns for students in efforts to liberalize curfews and permissions. As early as 1962, academic freedom was a topic of extensive discussion at Simmons College.⁴ In fall of that year, Simmons Student Government Association voted to allow the United States National Student Association (NSA) to investigate the state of academic freedom on their campus as part of a national study.⁵

² Students for Academic Freedom, "S.A.F. On Academic Freedom," *The Hilltop*, 26 April 1965.

³ The scheduling of controversial speakers for campus events is probably the most familiar example of this struggle for academic freedom in the post-war era. This was a particularly hot topic at Ohio State University in the 1950s and 1960s. According to Heineman, the “Ohio legislature viewed universities as potential breeding grounds for political subversion.” Kenneth J. Heineman, *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 36.

⁴ See below.

⁵ Judith Adelman and Judith Harrell, "N.S.A. Investigates Academic Freedom," *The Simmons News*, 22 October 1962.

In 1962 Neal Johnston, director of the NSA Academic Freedom Project, discussed with Simmons undergraduates what the organization perceived as the “four most common objections to *in loco parentis*.”

1) irrational opposition against any rule whatsoever; an attitude tantamount to anarchy. 2) the ‘peer group’ argument which maintains that college students should have the same degree of individual freedom as their former peer group in high school who are now workers. 3) the claim that education is not a privilege, but rather a necessity to achieve individual and societal goals. 4) the position that ‘An encirclement in bureaucracy and legality is stifling to education.’⁶

Johnston argued further that he did not reject *in loco parentis* on these terms, but instead “on the basis of utilitarianism. If you are old enough to be educated, you are old enough to manage yourself.”⁷

On the Simmons campus this project led directly into a push to end campus dress codes and liberalize non-academic regulations in the early 1960s. The NSA’s platform highlighted key arguments in the struggle against non-academic campus regulations; undergraduate women developed and built upon many of these themes throughout the struggle to restructure and remove *in loco parentis* policies. By 1965, the discussion of academic freedom had infiltrated most campuses across the nation and had been picked up by the national media as well.

⁶ Rita Rosenstock, "Johnston Discusses Philosophy of Freedom," *The Simmons News*, 16 November 1962.

⁷ Rosenstock, "Johnston Discusses Philosophy of Freedom."

One aspect of the discussion in the mid-1960s concerned the responsibility of universities and colleges to enumerate campus regulations and penalties for the student body. Despite exhaustive women's social regulations, campuses in general did not have the equivalent of a student bill of rights through the mid-twentieth century. The lack of a complete codification of campus policies was of particular concern to students accused of breaking unwritten rules. Administrative officials referred students to the campus mission statement when no clear policy or penalty was spelled out. For example, Howard's rules and regulations statement read:

Attendance at Howard University is a privilege and not a right. In order to protect its standards of scholarship and character, the University reserves the right to deny admission to and require the withdrawal of any student at any time for any reason deemed sufficient to the University.

Admission to and enrollment in the University include obligations in regard to conduct, both inside and outside the classroom, and students are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner as to be a credit to themselves and the University.⁸

According to college and university presidents and deans, students agreed to adhere to the expectations and mission of the college when they accepted admission and registered for classes. Most students did not question this assumption until confronted with perceived abuses of power by campus officials.

⁸ Howard University, *H-Book*, 1963-1964, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 23.

Undergraduates accused their respective administrations of erratic enforcement and inconsistent penalties, creating rules under vague and non-specific policies, and unjust persecution at the whim of administrators. During the campus wide discussion of “Liberty at Spelman” sponsored by the Social Science Club in spring 1963, students expressed grave concern regarding “unwritten rules.”⁹ Undergraduate Jean Berrien reported in her coverage of the event, “[t]he fact was brought up that in many instances housemothers take it upon themselves to declare a rule which cannot be found in any rulebook, but which must be adhered to at the risk of punishment for failure to do so.”¹⁰ Students at the forum also raised questions as to how their grievances could be heard in the future; administrators informed them to pursue change through the “proper channels.” Berrien explained,

An examination of the [Student] Handbook [by interested students] revealed an ambiguity surrounding what constitutes ‘proper channels.’ There seems to be a discrepancy in what is written in the rulebook and the actual practice, since one reading the Handbook would assume that a majority of students can institute a rule.¹¹

The discussion of academic freedom and student participation in campus administration waned at Spelman in the immediate aftermath

⁹ Jean Berrien, "Student-Faculty Confab Spurs Local Interest," *The Spelman Spotlight*, 11 April 1963.

¹⁰ Berrien, "Student-Faculty Confab Spurs Local Interest."

¹¹ Berrien, "Student-Faculty Confab Spurs Local Interest."

of this event, although a vocal minority of students continued to criticize the college for a lack of “clear and precise written statements of regulations and responsibilities pertaining to educational policies and curricular activities.”¹²

In spring 1966, Spelman Student Government Association representative Jane Sampson listed student rights and responsibilities that underclass Spelmanites should consider for the future of Spelman. Most notably, she urged each student to “[m]ake himself [sic] cognizant of the regulations of his institution and to comply with them; yet, he must also have a responsibility to question these regulations and to offer constructive criticism of the institution’s academic and non-academic policies.”¹³ Calls for academic freedom on campus encompassed not only issues of free speech and the right to protest regulations, but the right to challenge social policies students did not agree with in the face of administrative resistance. At Spelman, student unrest continued to escalate through 1968.

In 1965, students at Howard University leveled scathing criticism at President Nabrit and the administration concerning student rights on campus, including the perceived lack of freedom for undergraduate

¹² Jane Sampson, "S.S.G.A. Newsletter," *The Spelman Spotlight*, 26 May 1966.

¹³ Many female students at both the single-sex and coeducational colleges used male pronouns to refer to both mixed-sex and women-only groups. Sampson, "S.S.G.A. Newsletter."

women. The campus organization Students for Academic Freedom (SAF) accused:

Howard University is one of the few American Universities that is still almost completely dominated by authoritarian administrators. The wishes of students and faculty alike are ignored when rules are arbitrarily made somewhere in the upper echelons. Many times [students] are not told why or how a rule or policy comes into being.¹⁴

The administration responded to SAF's call for action with a series of meetings involving student leaders and newspaper staff to "improv[e] student-faculty administrative relationships."¹⁵ President Nabrit, for his part, issued a statement to the campus community that detailed the history of academic freedom "in theory and practice" at Howard.¹⁶ He further rejected many of SAF's criticisms and defended Howard's progressive academic and (unwritten) social policies. This did not mean that the campus would tolerate troublemakers or bow to the demands of a vocal minority of students. President Nabrit noted:

This is not a 'collective' where each one has an equal voice in its operation, this is an educational institution under the guidance and supervision of a Board of Trustees, administrative officers and faculty. The interests of the students in the affairs of the University is encouraged, and the expression of student opinion is welcomed at all times. Students must realize, however, that the responsibility for

¹⁴ Students for Academic Freedom, "S.A.F. On Academic Freedom."

¹⁵ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division to the President of Howard University, 1964-1965: Volume I*, 30 June 1965, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 8.

¹⁶ James Nabrit, "Statement by President Nabrit on Issues Surrounding S.A.F.," *The Hilltop*, 1 May 1965.

the determination of University policy rests with the faculties, administration, and Board of Trustees.¹⁷

Nabrit's statement reaffirmed what many students believed, that academic freedom at Howard was a farce and students would have to demand the rights and privileges that the "proper channels" would not approve.

Student frustration with the administration, *in loco parentis* policies, and the slow pace of change on campus mounted. Social regulations continued to surface as one of many issues upsetting students. In a sarcastic and biting critique of campus life at Howard, undergraduate Ellarwee McGowan pointed to the contradictions and hypocrisies on campus in a letter to *The Hilltop* editor. "What is all this talk about academic freedom on Howard's progressive campus?" she argued, "Of course we have academic freedom."¹⁸ Howard coeds, she mocked, had the freedom "either not to wear slacks or to wear them and be expelled."¹⁹

It seems that SAF is really uninformed. Any undergraduate can tell them that Howard University is really a co-ed finishing school for Negro savages. How else would we learn 'eddie-kette," and the social graces? After all, no one is really interested in how much you know. ... As long as a graduate can be 'graceful in both habit and etiquette' what difference does it make that he can't carry on a decent intellectual conversation?

¹⁷ Nabrit, "Statement by President Nabrit on Issues Surrounding S.A.F.."

¹⁸ Ellarwee McGowan, "Letter to the Editor," *The Hilltop*, 4 June 1965.

¹⁹ McGowan, "Letter to the Editor."

I urge the student body and members of SAF to remember it is not *action* that is characteristic of the mature Howard 'college student,' but *inaction* and complete surrender of mind, that meets with approval in the eyes of Howard's present 'progressive' administration.²⁰

Academic and non-academic regulations became fair game in the debate over academic freedom on campus. Without a strong women's self-government, Howard women had few formal organizations to speak for their interests. Students turned to demonstrations and protests on campus in the tradition of the civil rights movement. Women who had participated in the movement alongside men and taken leadership roles in civil rights organizations across the south were not content to sit idly by while their own university limited their freedoms on and off campus. As at Spelman, tensions at Howard continued to escalate.²¹

Undergraduate students on each campus called for formal statements of rights and responsibilities to be published on campus to safeguard against inconsistent and heretofore unassailable punishments. These demands were most virulent after student expulsions or severe punishments for social policy infractions raised questions about the power of the university versus the rights of students. Howard students in particular were outraged in November

²⁰ McGowan, "Letter to the Editor."

²¹ For oral histories by Howard coeds involved in the campus protests, see for example Henry Hampton, Steve Fayer, and Sarah Flynn, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s* (New York: Bantam Books, 1990).

1966 when campus authorities suspended and then expelled an undergraduate woman for violating an unwritten dormitory regulation concerning off-campus privileges. Students did not question the coed's guilt, but protested that the student had not received due process in the decision and that the punishment was not leveled uniformly. A coed wrote to *The Hilltop* that she knew "of several young ladies who have committed the same offense, were placed on simple restrictions, and are now going to classes with the rest of us."²² Too, she argued, "in the dorms, your punishment for a certain offense depends on how well you cop your plea and, especially, to whom."²³

Graduate and undergraduate students accused the university of violating their Fourteenth Amendment Constitutional rights. One student leader commented, "I have enough to worry about with the white man denying my rights. Then I turn around and my rights are denied here too."²⁴ According to news reports, approximately three hundred students rallied on campus to reinstate the undergraduate in question, to secure a due process for future accused students, and to

²² Aaro Jean Ben, "Inequity, Absurdity in Dorm Rules," *The Hilltop*, 18 November 1966.

²³ Ben, "Inequity, Absurdity in Dorm Rules."

²⁴ "Due Process Subject of Campus Controversy," *The Hilltop*, 10 November 1966.

establish a student, faculty, and administrative board to codify student regulations at Howard.²⁵

A student forum invited the deans of each university college for a discussion of campus regulations in December 1966. The deans admitted that the university's policy was "mystical and dreamed up," that there was no listing of student conduct regulations, and that faculty had to reformulate (unwritten) rules every year because of a constantly changing student population.²⁶ Cheryl Epps' 1972 study of student disciplinary procedures at Howard between 1950 and 1965 confirmed this admission. Epps concluded that "since the [Judiciary] committee was operating without a code of conduct, theoretically they had professional license to punish any act to which they took offense or considered an indiscretion."²⁷ The protests resulted in an examination of rules at Howard University and the establishment of a judiciary committee by the Association of Women students to formalize codes of conduct.²⁸

²⁵ "Due Process Subject of Campus Controversy."

²⁶ "Forum Raises Question on Due Process," *The Hilltop*, 2 December 1966.

²⁷ Cheryl Anthony Epps, "A Historical Study of the Methods and Procedures Used in Dealing with Student Disciplinary Problems at Howard University" (M.A., Howard University, 1972), 84-85.

²⁸ Epps, "A Historical Study of the Methods and Procedures Used in Dealing with Student Disciplinary Problems at Howard University"; "Forum Raises Question on Due Process."

Investigation into campus policies at Howard University, Simmons College, Ohio State University, and Spelman College quickly broadened into a critique of *in loco parentis* policies as violations of student rights as American citizens and participants in the university system. Many undergraduates called for a separation of academic regulations and conduct policies on campus, rejecting the moral authority the university had long taken for granted. A Howard coed argued that “a dormitory offense should have no bearing on one’s academic status at this or any other university. Dorm conduct has absolutely nothing to do with classroom ability.”²⁹ A Simmons College psychology professor called for recognition from campus authorities that “academic freedom includes not only the right to speak according to one’s own individuality, but also the right to behave in other ways (e.g., socially) according to one’s individuality.”³⁰ By 1967, the American Civil Liberties Union and the American Association of University Professors joined the debate. The ACLU argued that “in their non-academic life, private or public, students should be free from college control.”³¹ In October, the AAUP issued a *Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students*, outlining an academic bill of rights for

²⁹ Ben, "Inequity, Absurdity in Dorm Rules."

³⁰ Albert V. Griffith, "To the Editor," *The Simmons News*, 14 November 1966.

³¹ Maurice J. Solkov, "A Case against in Loco Parentis," *The Lantern*, 10 January 1967.

students and faculty at the college and university level.³² As a result, many campus officials acceded to student pressure, adopting the AAUP's statement or a modified version thereof. The ramifications for non-academic social regulations were tremendous; students added this weapon to their arsenal.

“Bodacious Student Power”: Revolt at Howard University³³

At Howard University the struggle to end *in loco parentis* centered on the rights of students to have a voice in the formation and implementation of campus policies and punishments. The Black Power movement proved progressively more influential at Howard in late 1966 and 1967 both culturally and politically. Women's social regulations were tied to the struggle for student rights and self-determination at Howard, part and parcel with other campus reforms sought by the student body. As the number of campus demonstrations increased and frustration with the resistance of campus authorities to student demands grew, student protest leaders equated Howard's administration and Board of Trustees with the oppressive white political and economic system off campus. These inflammatory accusations did little to win over campus authorities and ultimately culminated in a

³² See Appendix C for selected text.

³³ Ed Schwartz, "Bodacious Student Power," *The Hilltop*, 20 October 1967.

crisis on the Howard University campus in spring 1968. In the aftermath of this face-off, Howard students claimed a measured victory in the academic and non-academic arenas of campus life.

The election of Robin Gregory as Homecoming Queen in fall 1966 touched off a shift to black pride and Black Power on campus. The idea of Black Power was first raised in *The Hilltop* in the weeks before the homecoming competition, and Gregory's homecoming campaign was used primarily as a platform to discuss Black Power politics at Howard University (see chapter two).³⁴ Undergraduate women played an important and visible role in the success of the Black Power movement and numerous demonstrations on campus.³⁵ In "More Power to Black Power," *Hilltop* editors discussed the tenets of Black Power and the "disheartening" news that civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and A. Philip Randolph planned to issue a formal statement

³⁴ Stokely Carmichael of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (and Howard University alumni) introduced the phrase "Black Power" in June 1966 during the Meredith March through Mississippi. Carmichael did not have a clear definition of Black Power at the time, but he and others soon developed a loose ideology for the phrase, a phrase that became the rallying cry for many young African Americans on campuses across the nation. Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 354-60.

³⁵ In the upheaval of spring 1968, two of the four primary student organizers were female: Adrienne Manns, then editor in chief of the campus newspaper, and Barbara Penn, then president of the Liberal Arts Student Council, representing the vast majority of undergraduate students at Howard. More on this below.

rejecting Black Power.³⁶ The author quoted Black Power advocate Stokely Carmichael:

This is what [advocates of Black Power] seek: control. Where Negroes lack a majority, black power means property representation and sharing of control. It means the creation of power bases from which black people can work to change state-wide or nation-wide patterns of oppression through pressure from strength. ... Politically, black power means what it has always meant to SNCC: the coming together of black people to elect representatives and to force those representatives to speak to their needs.³⁷

The author continued,

The idea of Black Power removes much of the romanticism from civil rights. ... It declares for once and all that black people must determine for themselves the direction of the civil rights struggle. It declares that all-black political parties may be needed to achieve what regular party organizations will not try for. It declares that we will no longer maximize the importance of acceptance by others and minimize the importance of accepting ourselves.³⁸

Undergraduate women and men mobilized on campus behind the banners of student rights and academic freedom combined these with the new ideology of Black Power. Taken together, students wielded a powerful argument for student power on the Howard campus. Through the lens of Black Power, students sought to implement changes that reflected self-determination for students (including eliminating curfews and dormitory visiting hours) and student representation on campus

³⁶ "More Power to Black Power," *The Hilltop*, 14 October 1966.

³⁷ "More Power to Black Power."

³⁸ "More Power to Black Power."

wide judiciaries (which tried non-academic rules violation cases) and committees.³⁹ Eventually, students expanded these demands to include the call for a black curriculum responsive to the needs of black students and celebrating black culture, heritage, and history.

Students protesting campus policies condemned the university and the stance of the HU administration for perpetuating the racism of white society by “behav[ing] as if they were places where Negroes could prove themselves worthy of admission” to white culture.⁴⁰ Black colleges “became staging areas for a privileged minority of a minority,” a Howard undergraduate argued, “who after having been dipped in a four year whitewash was expected to exhibit minimal traits of negroness sufficient to disappear into the white mainstream.”⁴¹ While the administration advocated use of the “proper channels” for dissent as respectable (read by students as “white”), undergraduate men and women’s protests against the university’s “Uncle Tom” stance on

³⁹ The gender dynamics of the Black Power movement are discussed in depth in chapter six.

⁴⁰ Tom Myles, *Centennial Plus One: A Photographic and Narrative Account of the Black Student Revolution: Howard University 1965-1968* (Washington, D.C.: Black-Light Graphics, 1969), 7.

⁴¹ Myles, *Centennial Plus One: A Photographic and Narrative Account of the Black Student Revolution: Howard University 1965-1968*, 7.

student rights and the paternalist slant of campus regulations became more strident and confrontational.⁴²

In the wake of the Homecoming competition and the initial tumult on campus in late 1966, attention turned to women's curfews and what some students perceived as the continued assault on student rights to challenge the administration. A student-faculty committee developed new freshman curfew regulations, relaxing freshman women's hours. Howard women were not satisfied. Campus editorials suggested "a meaningful project for students desiring a more responsible, more student-oriented system could be the liberalizing of the curfews and other regulations for upperclass women."⁴³ Students interviewed on campus generally agreed that seniors and women over twenty-one years old should not have curfews; one coed argued that a senior woman "should know what is best for her without being governed by a set of rules which only forces her to act in a devious way."⁴⁴ Janet Woodleg, a coed involved in campus protests, argued that students had turned to campus-wide demonstrations because "for years we have tried to beat the white man at his game by acting more civilized. We even tried

⁴² Archie Morris, "Status Quo at Any Cost Destroys University's Soul," *The Hilltop*, 28 April 1967. See also "Policy Paper Hits 'Irresponsible Activities,'" *The Hilltop*, 5 May 1967; "Policy Stifles Dissent," *The Hilltop*, 5 May 1967; Schwartz, "Bodacious Student Power."

⁴³ "Editorial: Women's Curfews," *The Hilltop*, 3 February 1967.

⁴⁴ Lorraine Goodwin, "Inquiring Reporter," *The Hilltop*, 24 February 1967.

acting in the same manner as he did. These methods have failed miserably. This is the only other alternative.”⁴⁵ As with the struggle to end segregation outside the university, accommodation to the process on campus had failed. Instead of bowing to the expectations and regulations of the administration, students demanded a redefinition of student rights by reclaiming Howard University as a black college.

In this vein, students continued to protest ties between mainstream white America and the direction of HU. On 21 March 1967, approximately thirty-five Howard students, including Robin Gregory, protested at an on-campus speech by Lieutenant General Lewis B. Hershey, Director of the U.S. Selective Service. The next day, Dr. Nathan Hare, assistant professor of sociology, announced to the news media the formation of a Black Power Committee at Howard University. In April, Gregory and three other students charged with disrupting the Hershey speech were to be tried before a disciplinary committee until a group of protesters stormed into the hearing room to release the accused students. The protesters were removed from the building, but a growing crowd of upwards of four hundred watched as the leaders burned effigies of President Nabrit, Lt. Gen. Hershey, and Dean Frank Snowden of the College of Liberal Arts. Students staged

⁴⁵ Janet Woodleg, "Respectable," *The Hilltop*, 14 April 1967.

rallies and demonstrations over the next weeks to protest the “kangaroo court” and dearth of student rights and freedoms on campus.⁴⁶

In spring of 1967, Howard University’s President James Nabrit conceded that “he shares a suspicion long held by many students” that University committees “delay rather than speed solutions” to campus “problems” such as dormitory hours and compulsory ROTC for men.⁴⁷ Nabrit also stated his desire to see students take on more responsibility for “handling their own problems.”⁴⁸ In light of frequent demonstrations for due process and student representation on administrative committees this signaled a win for the student body; the pace of change would determine the extent of their victory.

The Faculty Senate undermined Nabrit’s comments with a policy statement regarding campus demonstrations in response to the Hershey incident. The faculty declared that the University reserved the right to determine the location and time of campus rallies, that protests against speakers on campus had to take place outside of the speaker’s venue, and that all news or press releases issued by campus demonstrators and organizations had to be cleared by the Office of Public Relations on

⁴⁶ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1966-1967, Volume I*, 30 June 1967, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C; Ernest E. Goodman, "Anatomy of the Spring Unrest," *Howard University Magazine*, July 1967; Myles, *Centennial Plus One: A Photographic and Narrative Account of the Black Student Revolution: Howard University 1965-1968*.

⁴⁷ "Nabrit on the System," *The Hilltop*, 14 April 1967.

⁴⁸ "Nabrit on the System."

campus.⁴⁹ Students responded with a campus-wide class boycott stressing “togetherness and negritude” supported by student government officers, campus organizations, and notable for participation by between thirty and eighty percent of the undergraduate population.⁵⁰ As the academic year closed, students secured assurances from the administration that the faculty statement on demonstrations would be reviewed so as “not to infringe upon the students’ right of freedom of expression” and that a Student Judiciary would be established in September 1967 to write a code of conduct.⁵¹

What had been a vocal minority of students – as President Nabrit often pointed out – snowballed to encompass a significant percentage of the student population in the wake of the campus boycott. During the summer of 1967, the University expelled three women for violating dormitory regulations and nineteen student activists, including the

⁴⁹ "Policy Paper Hits 'Irresponsible Activities.'"; "Policy Stifles Dissent."

⁵⁰ Student leaders originally claimed 90 percent participation, and then lowered their estimates to 80 percent. Class attendance sheets turned in to the academic deans showed approximately 30 percent of students expected in classes that day did not attend, but did not account for possible participation of students who did not have scheduled classes that day. The most significant drop in attendance was recorded by the College of Liberal Arts, which determined about 50 percent of the 4,447 undergraduate students enrolled did not attend classes the day of the boycott. Goodman, "Anatomy of the Spring Unrest," 20; N. Hare, "Behind the Black College Student Revolt," *Ebony*, August 1967, 61; "Leaders Claim Student Victory," *The Hilltop*, 12 May 1967; Myles, *Centennial Plus One: A Photographic and Narrative Account of the Black Student Revolution: Howard University 1965-1968*, 47.

⁵¹ Goodman, "Anatomy of the Spring Unrest," 21.

chairman of the spring boycott committee, without hearings.⁵² Student unrest simmered in the fall of 1967 while student-faculty committees worked to draw up the promised judicial and conduct codes. In February 1968, tensions mounted when a campus guard pushed a coed who was “not moving fast enough to get inside the [women’s] quad[rangle] before curfew.”⁵³ Undergraduate women protested the same evening in the dormitories and later by sitting on the brick wall in front of the quad, an action prohibited by the university “because some administrators said that the white people who drive pass [sic] during rush hour would get an unfavorable impression of Howard students if they saw them hanging off the walls like monkeys.”⁵⁴ A group of students tore down part of an iron railing constructed alongside the wall to prevent students from sitting there; parts of the railing were later found in the Office of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.⁵⁵ Student activists rejected what they perceived as the conciliatory stance of the university to the white community and their continued dismissal of student requests.

⁵² Myles, *Centennial Plus One: A Photographic and Narrative Account of the Black Student Revolution: Howard University 1965-1968*, 60.

⁵³ Adrienne Manns, "Getting Straight," *The Hilltop*, 23 February 1968.

⁵⁴ Manns, "Getting Straight."

⁵⁵ Armour Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1967-1968, Volume I*, 30 June 1968, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 22.

Dr. Nathan Hare (fired from Howard University for campus activism in 1967) argued that the “missionary mentality” of black colleges, “when combined with the Negro passion for acceptability in the eyes of a white society,” created “a rigid body of restraints on the social and psychological freedom of the black student’s life. Students view this situation as a hypocritical façade, a heinous camouflage designed to protect the public image of a group victimized by feelings of collective inferiority.”⁵⁶ Instead of a university responsive to the needs of white America, students called for a “democratic black university” dedicated to the development of “rational, well-educated, well-equipped black people who are capable of coping with a hostile white environment and capable of contributing to an emerging black community.”⁵⁷

Student leaders from diverse organizations gathered in early March 1968 to “suggest” reforms to the Howard University administration and Board of Trustees to solve the problem of student unrest. Adrienne Manns, editor in chief of *The Hilltop*, outlined the proposed changes drawn up by students. The proposals called for the expansion of Howard’s curriculum to include “Afro-American” and African history, economics, social science, literature, and music courses; a work-study program to involve students in the black

⁵⁶ Hare, "Behind the Black College Student Revolt," 59.

⁵⁷ Manns, "Getting Straight."

community of Washington, D.C.; freedom of administrative control for campus publications and student government; faculty control over academic affairs (in place of the Board of Trustees); a revision of faculty tenure regulations; and the rehiring of faculty members fired for political activism. Students called for women's curfews to be abolished "and the dormitories run primarily by students" and the guarantee that "every student subject to disciplinary actions should be insured of a fair hearing by both students and faculty and their [sic] should be a clear list of rules and regulations governing student conduct."⁵⁸ Activists closed with a challenge to the established authorities at Howard University: "All administrators who wish to retain the present non-democratic, non-black interest policy of the university should resign to allow the administration of the above program and subsequent ones that will no doubt grow out of student-faculty dialogue."⁵⁹

On March 19, 1968, hundreds of students rallied on the Howard campus protesting charges brought against thirty-eight students for disrupting campus events and participating in the quadrangle protests. The students reissued their proposals, and a smaller group of undergraduates staged a sit-in at the Administration Building. The next morning, students took over the campus switchboard and

⁵⁸ Adrienne Manns, "What We Want," *The Hilltop*, 8 March 1968.

⁵⁹ Manns, "What We Want."

occupied and blocked the entrance to the Administration Building. The chairman of the Board of Trustees and President Nabrit approved an administrative decision to close the university and initiate legal proceedings against student leaders. The deans and administrators agreed to postpone the student hearings and contact parents about the closing of the university.⁶⁰

More than one thousand students participated in the occupation, with more students outside the building for speeches and support.⁶¹ Organizers turned some student participants away from the building occupation for safety reasons. Students' parents who supported the demonstration set up information tables outside the Administration Building to dissuade other parents from removing their children from campus during the protest. Local merchants, campus organizations, and fellow students provided food and beverages for the protesters.⁶² On 23 March, the student delegation reached a tentative agreement with representatives from the Board of Trustees and the administration.

⁶⁰ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1967-1968, Volume I*; Myles, *Centennial Plus One: A Photographic and Narrative Account of the Black Student Revolution: Howard University 1965-1968*; "Sit Down U," *Newsweek*, 1 April 1968; Clyde Waite, "Students Take over the University's Administration Building," *The Hilltop*, 22 March 1968.

⁶¹ Multiple accounts confirm over 1,500 participants. John C. Price estimated that approximately 1,200 students occupied the Administration Building at any given time during the protests and estimated about 1,000 students demonstrating outside on campus grounds. John C. Price, "Student Protests Disrupt Howard Operation," *Howard University Magazine*, May 1968.

⁶² Cindee Marshall, "Sit-in Proves to Be Effective," *The Hilltop*, 29 March 1968; Pearl Stewart, "Many Parents Support a Building Takeover," *The Hilltop*, 29 March 1968.

Students voted to accept the offer on the table, and by that evening the occupation had ended.

As part of the agreement between students, faculty, the administration, and the Board of Trustees, all students were guaranteed due process if accused of violating university regulations; violations of dormitory regulations were to be handled by student residence hall judiciaries; curfew hours for senior women were eliminated; the Association of Women Students was asked to draw up a proposal for the liberalization of curfew hours for underclass women; campus officials established a bus service for the transportation of women from Slowe Hall and Meridian Hall (women's dormitories located on the fringes of campus in "bad" neighborhoods); freedom of speech and the press was guaranteed; and meetings began among the faculty to expand the curriculum to include more "black" course offerings.⁶³ In the aftermath of the student uprising, faculty, administrators, parents, and students alike acknowledged the "civilized and rational" conduct of student protestors and negotiators who did not resort to violence and left the Administration Building in much the same condition that they entered found it.⁶⁴ The Association of Women Students moved quickly to propose that all women's curfews be abolished and that mandatory

⁶³ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1967-1968, Volume I*.

⁶⁴ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1967-1968, Volume I*; Marshall, "Sit-in Proves to Be Effective."; Stewart, "Many Parents Support a Building Takeover."; Waite, "Students Take over the University's Administration Building."

sign-in and sign-out be discontinued in favor of a voluntary sign-out sheet for emergency use only. Coeds overwhelmingly supported these changes and voted to formalize them early in fall 1968. As one coed pointed out, “to say that the women students at H.U. are happy about not having any curfews would be an understatement.”⁶⁵

At Howard, the movement to end *in loco parentis* policies was part of the larger movement to secure academic freedom and student rights on campus. Women played an active and visible role in the struggle, and their efforts saw fruit in the end of curfews. In July 1968, Associate Dean of Students Edna Calhoun foresaw the final phase of this struggle when she predicted that “the establishment of a program of co-educational visitation in the residence halls” would be an “area of concern which may precipitate student unrest at Howard University.”⁶⁶ The momentum of the 1968 occupation carried through the next few years, ushering in more changes for women at Howard University – a topic to be discussed further in chapter five.

“we are mature young ladies”⁶⁷

Although many students felt that dormitory conduct should have nothing to do with academic status, they also believed that academic

⁶⁵ Betty Smith, "Coeds Dig Non-Existent Curfews," *The Hilltop*, 25 October 1968.

⁶⁶ Blackburn, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1967-1968, Volume I*, 35.

⁶⁷ An Interested Student, "Letter to the Editor," *The Spelman Spotlight*, 11 April 1963.

status should have everything to do with dormitory regulations. One of the most popular arguments for the liberalization of women's dormitory regulations revolved around student maturity and responsibility. Early calls to ease curfews and social permissions focused on women's increased maturity as they progressed through their academic requirements. As curfews relaxed, women used the same arguments to call for the eradication of these regulations altogether. By the mid-1960s, many students considered themselves adults when they graduated from high school. College as a maturing process guided by the well-intentioned assistance of campus officials was replaced by an expectation that students were adults (or a mere semester or two away from becoming adults) when they arrived as freshman, and as such the university had no role *in loco parentis*. These arguments held increasing sway in the later 1960s when legislators moved to lower the voting age to eighteen, after many young people disputed a legal age of adulthood at twenty-one when men were drafted to die for their country overseas at eighteen years of age.⁶⁸ If men were mature enough to fight for their country at eighteen, surely women were mature enough at eighteen to determine what hours they kept?

In initial efforts to liberalize women's regulations, undergraduate women argued for the relaxation of upperclass women's hours, on the

⁶⁸ The 26th Amendment to the United States Constitution, ratified in 1971, lowered the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen years of age.

basis that these women were more mature, more familiar with college life and expectations, and more responsible than freshmen and sophomore women.⁶⁹ Upperclass women argued that they should be given later hours because they had proven to the university or college that they were responsible adults by their third or fourth years. A freshman woman at Ohio State in 1968 stated plainly that “freshmen need limited hours during their period of adjustment [to college life]. Sophomores do not need this protection.”⁷⁰ Simmons undergraduates cast curfew and permissions extensions as an opportunity for the college to show faith in upperclass students. One woman argued that “[t]he request for a later curfew is not a sign of immaturity. Rather, it is a request for added responsibility. If the curfew fails, then we have failed in our role as young, responsible, and reliable women.”⁷¹

Students also attacked the premise of social regulations – the role of the university as parent. This argument was particularly powerful on large college campuses like Howard University and Ohio State University. A Howard coed questioned whether “there can be any

⁶⁹ Nationally, see for example Mathew R. Sgan, “Social Area and Room Visiting Privileges in College Housing,” *The Journal of College Student Personnel* 6, no. 5 (1965).

⁷⁰ Women's Self Government Association, *Sophomore Hours Survey: Comments*, November 1968, RG #9/c/6, Women's Self-Government Association: *Extension of Dormitory Hours: 1967-1968*, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio.

⁷¹ Judy Turner, “Curfew Question Revisited,” *The Simmons News*, 12 May 1967.

consensus of opinion as to what all parents desire” for their children.⁷² Women at Ohio State were quick to point out that “most parents feel a student is mature enough to make his [sic] own decisions” concerning where and when they go out, and that the “University should realize that it is not running a babysitting service.”⁷³

The assumption behind curfews concerned women’s need for protection from themselves and from predatory males; *in loco parentis* policies in general were predicated on the assumption that college students were children – irresponsible and immature – in need of protection and guidance. By the mid-1960s students were less willing to accept this premise for campus regulations. An OSU coed asserted, “if you’re old enough and responsible enough to stay in school, you are old enough and responsible enough to take care of yourself and make your own decisions.”⁷⁴ A Spelman woman lamented,

how can we convince the ... faculty that we are sick of these illogical rules, that we are not little girls, but mature young ladies, that we are old enough to look after ourselves without having someone to spy on us every minute of the day and tell us where to go, what to do, who to go with, how to get there, how to act, and when to come back?⁷⁵

⁷² "Editorial: Women's Curfews."

⁷³ Women's Self Government Association, *Sophomore Hours Survey: Comments*.

⁷⁴ Women's Self Government Association, *Sophomore Hours Survey: Comments*.

⁷⁵ An Interested Student, "Letter to the Editor."

The challenge to non-academic social regulations based on maturity and responsibility undermined the basic principles of *in loco parentis*, as well as the presumption of female as synonymous with child-like. Campus officials who had once argued that women's regulations were in place to protect those few girls who needed them met resistance from undergraduate women who clamored for an end to regulations designed to protect the few by imposing on the rights of the many. In the midst of the struggle to abolish all hours regulations at the University of Washington, one student entreated her peers, "please don't try to play God or Dean by voting down the no-hours proposal. There are women who want their freedom and the no-hours proposal will enable them to finally obtain it."⁷⁶ Ohio State coeds soon echoed these sentiments in their own fight for a no-hours policy.

Student arguments based on responsibility and maturity in the mid-sixties eventually expanded to embrace the eradication of all women's social regulations after the success of the piecemeal liberalization of rules; it was a short step from fighting to ease restrictions to challenging their very existence on campus. Undergraduate women "want and ... need to be recognized for what we are – women, not girls, members of a society which we are responsible

⁷⁶ University of Washington *Daily* Guest Editorial, "A Most Liberal Proposal," *The Lantern*, 19 January 1967.

to, and which in turn is responsible to us.”⁷⁷ Undergraduate women were more and more inclined to see themselves as adults at eighteen or nineteen years of age, a time when they would no longer need parental permission to marry or to establish housekeeping on their own if they were not in college. The popular argument concerning legal adulthood was difficult for administrators to counter. An Ohio State coed challenged the university to accept changes in women’s regulations, because not to “would be an admission that the dean of women does not think college women are as mature as other women their age [outside the university] or as mature as college males,” who were considered adults at eighteen.⁷⁸ Theoretical discussions of the role of the university as a beneficent guide in the transition from youth to adulthood no longer held sway among the vast majority of undergraduate students during the mid- to late sixties. When asked what she would miss most after leaving Spelman, senior Jean Berrien replied, “I’ll miss the silly rules and regulations, [and] the nice people who are convinced they know more than my parents and are responsible for my upbringing.”⁷⁹ At a time when their parents did not

⁷⁷ Turner, "Curfew Question Revisited."

⁷⁸ "Faith in Coed Maturity Is the Real Issue," *The Lantern*, 7 November 1966; Solkov, "A Case against in Loco Parentis."

⁷⁹ Katie Coleman, "So Many Memories," *The Spelman Spotlight*, June-September 1963.

have legal responsibility for their actions, students did not see the logic of university control either.

Universities and colleges contributed to the dismantling of *in loco parentis* regulations with their rhetoric of the development of students into responsible citizens, well versed in the democratic ideal and critical of the world around them. Undergraduates were quick to point out that

[a] conflict arises because the University is expected to fulfill two separate and sometimes contradictory functions: it is expected to be an ... instrument of society whereby the individual is taught to conform to society's general standards of conduct: and at the same time it is supposed to develop skilled and sophisticated societal leaders who must be able to think for themselves.⁸⁰

Students turned these sentiments to their own advantage in the fight to end non-academic regulations. A petition to eliminate hours at the Ohio State University in 1966 read, in part:

The mission of the modern American university is both formal education and providing an atmosphere conducive to the development of mature, responsible citizens. The conservative paternalism which has been exercised [sic] over the women students here at Ohio State University is definitely inconsistent with this goal.⁸¹

If the university or college wanted to succeed in its academic mission, students argued, then *in loco parentis* policies undermined the ability of students to develop fully; their goals were self-defeating unless the

⁸⁰ William J. Shkurti, "Students Must Accept Their Responsibilities," *The Lantern*, 11 January 1967.

⁸¹ Sherryl Woods, "1800 Coeds Sign Petition for No Hours," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 18 May 1966.

university was willing to abandon many campus restrictions or redefine the institution's purpose.

Lyn Polomski, Vice President of the Simmons Self-Government Association in 1962, underlined this dilemma for undergraduate women in particular. "Through standards and regulations Simmons hopes to instill a spirit in the student," she reasoned, "to prepare a girl for the future, to instill good habits, values and mores."⁸² But through non-academic social regulations, Polomski continued,

does not the college in *actuality* remove responsibility – the responsibility of personal decision making from the individual student. If there is a Cardinal hand book telling you when to appear, where and what to wear then you always know just what you can and can't do and isn't this stifling the very thing a college should aim to nurture? ... Yes these students have freedom – a freedom from responsibility and spirit, initiative and independence. [*emphasis in original*]⁸³

Campus officials eventually buckled under the weight of student pressure to align the goals of the university with the realities of student life.

Calls for academic freedom and student rights, combined with the continued dedication to the strengthening of democratic citizenship and the recognition (if somewhat wary) that students were adults upon acceptance to the university, shifted the power dynamic on most

⁸² Lyn Polomski, *Address to Student Government Workshop*, RG 35.1, Box 11, Folder 10, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts.

⁸³ Polomski, *Address to Student Government Workshop*.

campuses by 1968. A Howard undergraduate contended, "if we assume that we are admitted to the University as responsible and mature individuals then already there would be no reason for discipline and control for we would be expected to judiciously perform those things which are required for our over all well-being."⁸⁴ Respect for administrative authority and reverence for college traditions was replaced by student demands for respect as citizens from the university itself, and an end to all campus regulations that treated them as less than fully mature and responsible young adults. In the midst of the battle to extend curfews at Simmons College in 1967, an undergraduate held that "[t]he extension of a curfew by one hour will not immediately cause her ['Sally Simmons'] to lose all faculty or reason. But it may foster respect – respect for a College which recognizes the rights as well as the duties of its members and which can be proud of the young women it produces."⁸⁵ By the late 1960s, students protested *in loco parentis* policies as outdated and contradictory to the goals of the university for the modern student population. Undergraduate women rejected restrictions on their freedom of movement on and off campus, and demanded an end to policies that treated them like college girls instead of college women.

⁸⁴ Mervin Mohammed, "Stringent Regulations Defeat Purpose," *The Hilltop*, 6 November 1964.

⁸⁵ Turner, "Curfew Question Revisited."

***“We got our stuff together”:* Rebellion at Spelman College ⁸⁶**

Undergraduate women at Spelman College radically redefined the boundaries of administrative authority and the shape of campus life in the late 1960s. Early in the decade student discontent was generally sporadic and contained, as many Spelmanites focused their social activism on the civil rights movement in and around Atlanta, Georgia, or focused on completing their degrees and moving into the next phase of their lives. Campus periodicals were sprinkled with editorials bemoaning campus regulations and living conditions; like many other students, women at Spelman often complained about dining hall food and the interference of campus guards during their last quiet moments with dates before curfew. For the most part, student dissatisfaction was directed to student government representatives for study and action, and the gradual easing of *in loco parentis* policies seemed enough to assuage the student body. Overall, the tone on campus was influenced by President Albert Manley and his dedication to make Spelman among the best liberal arts college in the south.

Manley outlined general goals for student achievement at Spelman in his inaugural speech and worked with administrators,

⁸⁶ "Students Reject Speak out Agenda," *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1968.

faculty, trustees and students to implement his vision.⁸⁷ The faculty listed their academic aims, based on Manley's statements, in the 1964-1965 *Faculty Handbook*. A key expectation for Spelman women while in school and beyond was "[t]o understand and participate wisely in the process of social, economic, political, moral, religious change that is taking place in all segments of present-day culture."⁸⁸ Students at Spelman continued to be active in civil rights and community work, per the direction set by the administration. This emphasis on civic education and activism ultimately came home to campus in the late sixties, when undergraduates turned the lessons learned in community activism back onto campus policies.

Some community work during the early 1960s was political. A number of students from Spelman College participated in civil rights sit-ins and demonstrations in the Atlanta community in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Spelman students contributed significantly to the wording of "An Appeal for Human Rights," published in the local *Atlanta Constitution* and a number of national newspapers in March 1960. The "Appeal" pledged the support of students in the Atlanta University Center to the civil rights movement and listed the reasons the movement was necessary in Atlanta, Georgia, and in the South in

⁸⁷ See chapter one.

⁸⁸ Editor June M. Aldridge, *The Spelman College Self-Study Report, 1968-1969*, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 16.

general. Some faculty members encouraged student activism, notably among them Howard Zinn and Staughton Lynd, as well as the strong tradition of women's political activism in the African American community. Professor Melvin Drimmer described the "typical Spelman ingenuity" of students arrested at demonstrations in 1964, told by activists not to use their real names when booked and processed. "When the young ladies were called before the judge to be sentenced to prison they took such nice Spelman names as 'Sophia Packard,' 'Laura Spelman,' 'Harriet Giles,' [and names of other campus buildings honoring the founders and benefactors of the college] ... one student at the end of the line signed herself in as 'Miss Sisters Chapel.'"⁸⁹

In the midst of the early successes of the non-violent student civil rights movement, an increasing number of Spelman students turned a critical eye towards campus life, voicing concerns about the unwritten regulations on campus, the lack of uniformity in enforcing written rules on campus, and the apparent lack of respect for coeds as adults on the part of the faculty and administration. In March 1963, the Social Science Club sponsored an open discussion entitled "Liberty at Spelman." The well-attended event brought student concerns regarding

⁸⁹ Melvin Drimmer, "The Future of Spelman and the Atlanta University Center in an Age of Blackness," *Spelman Messenger*, May 1969, 23. Manley, Albert E., *A Legacy Continues: The Manley Years at Spelman College, 1953-1976* (New York: University Press of American, Inc., 1995); "An Appeal for Human Rights," Box 163; Student Liberation Front. Spelman College Archives, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia. See also McCandless, *The Past in the Present*.

campus life and academic freedom to the table, providing a forum for students, faculty, and administrators. Students voiced concerns about “illogical” rules, “petty” social regulations, arbitrary “unwritten rules” enforced at the whim of housemothers, and the “general discontent among the students caused chiefly by an attitude of paternalism which Spelman has adopted.”⁹⁰

The faculty urged Spelman coeds to use their student government to address campus problems through proper channels. In the wake of the discussion, students openly criticized the administration for its policies. A junior coed, in response to the discussion, wrote to the *Spotlight* that she was

disgusted...by the corrupt state of this school, ... as exposed by the victims under its intimidation and threats that various persons are now enduring as a result of their forthrightness in exercising their freedom of speech in discussing liberty at Spelman.⁹¹

After the summer break, students dropped the discussion about liberty. Howard Zinn, who had helped organize the campus discussion on this topic, had been quietly dismissed from the department of history. A few Spelman students questioned the actions of the administration, but the

⁹⁰ “Student-Faculty Confab Spurs Local Interest,” *The Spelman Spotlight*, 11 April 11 1963. Spelman College Archives, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia.

⁹¹ Weaver, Anna Jo. “Letter from a Junior,” *The Spelman Spotlight*, 11 April 1963. Spelman College Archives, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia.

actions of campus officials silenced further inquiries.⁹² Student activists left Spelman or focused their efforts off campus.⁹³

In spring 1965, student dedication to good citizenship and participation in political and moral change caused tensions on campus in a struggle between Spelmanites and the administration. Despite the desire for students to assume their “responsibilities in a democratic society,” the Spelman administration suspended and threatened to expel an undergraduate woman for violating campus curfews to attend an out of town civil rights demonstration, the Freedom March on Montgomery, Alabama.⁹⁴ Organized as the Spelman Students for Freedom of the Atlanta University Center’s Student Liberation Front (SLF), a group of undergraduates issued a formal statement decrying the actions of college officials.⁹⁵ The SLF did not question the accused student’s guilt, but attacked the hypocrisy of an administration that

⁹² Betty Stevens, "Ssga President Speaks: An Open Letter to the Students," *The Simmons Spotlight*, 17 October 1963; Alice Walker, "Letter to the Editor," *The Spelman Spotlight*, 17 October 1963.

⁹³ Walker, "Letter to the Editor."

⁹⁴ Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 1960-1961, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 33; Student Liberation Front, *Senior Student Suspended for Supporting Civil Rights*, April, Box 163, *Student Liberation Front*, The Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.

⁹⁵ The Atlanta University Center was the formal coalition of local black colleges, including Spelman College, Morehouse College, Atlanta University, Clark College, Morris Brown College, and the Interdenominational Theological Center. Students at Spelman and Morehouse were permitted to cross-register at each school to take full advantage of course offerings in the AUC. Student Liberation Front, *Senior Student Suspended for Supporting Civil Rights*.

encouraged students to fight for social justice but would not permit them to leave campus to do so. Too, they asserted:

When a college can assume this much power, there is a need for re-evaluation. When its students are as oppressed and frightened as we are, there is a need for re-evaluation. And when students have to resort to subversive actions in hope of securing our just and right freedom, for to openly identify ourselves would mean automatic suspension or worse, then certainly there is a need for re-evaluation.⁹⁶

Spelman students questioned the very regulations themselves, using the language of the civil rights movement to criticize their own faculty and administration. Students highlighted the tension between the college's stated goals and inconsistent actions. Undergraduates were caught between conflicting ideas of proper behavior: as mature young women, was it more important to adhere to campus regulations established for the benefit of the community, or was it more important to follow one's moral compass and protest human oppression in the interests of justice?

Dr. Manley addressed the student body during mandatory chapel services in response to initial protests. Spelman Students for Freedom spokeswomen turned the arguments of the liberal arts college, the president, and the civil rights movement back onto the Spelman administration. Dr. Manley held simply that students who attended Spelman agreed to abide by its rules upon registration; that students

⁹⁶ Student Liberation Front, *Senior Student Suspended for Supporting Civil Rights*.

who break the rules must accept the consequences; the student should have asked permission to attend the march; and students would reveal their names if they felt their protests and actions were unimpeachable.⁹⁷ Students responded to each of Manley's arguments in a leaflet distributed across campus. Students for Freedom asserted that another woman who had asked permission to attend the march had been refused by the Administration, therefore women who wanted to attend knew they had to break curfew. Students argued that revealing their names to the college "would be suicide," displaying the strength of the administration; students at Spelman did not have a formal statement of student rights to protect their right to due process or free speech. The most profound criticism leveled at the Manley administration demonstrated an important shift in student thinking and a new willingness to challenge *in loco parentis* regulations, namely, that "when the rules are morally unjust and violate our citizenship rights they are to be broken. This is the meaning of 'Civil Disobedience,' as preached by Thoreau and practiced by Dr. M.L. King, Jr."⁹⁸ Based on what they had learned from the world around them, these young women fought to defend their right to act out against the injustices of

⁹⁷ Spelman Students For Freedom, *Spelman Students for Freedom*, 4 May, The Spelman College Archives, Box 163, *Student Liberation Front*, Atlanta, Georgia.

⁹⁸ Spelman Students For Freedom, *Spelman Students for Freedom*.

the world; the events of 1965 signaled a fight against injustices at home, on campus.

Unfortunately, self-determination for students was not a tradition on the Spelman campus, and the young women who argued that they were mature enough to assume more responsibility for themselves and their own decisions faced an uphill struggle in the late sixties. At spring commencement, in the wake of the Freedom March incident, Patricia Harris (then former dean of Howard University and ambassador-elect) offered her insights into the role of the black university in the United States. Harris described the “task of Negro education ... to make it clear to the Negro and to society that he was not a child, and to prepare him to compete, intellectually, with the products of the white colleges that would not admit him.”⁹⁹ Spelman women had just called for this same recognition from their own college, recognition that they should not be treated as children while pursuing their education and serving the greater interests of their communities. “[Black] colleges became literal carbon copies of the excluding schools, as faithful a replica of the original as the resources available permitted. Our mission as educators,” Harris explained, “was to relate our students to the attitudes, practices and values of the majority society so

⁹⁹ Patricia R. Harris, “The Commencement Address: May 31, 1965,” *Spelman Messenger*, August 1965, 7.

that they could understand that society which we have known they would ultimately enter. We were the surrogate acculturizer.”¹⁰⁰

By 1965, administrators at Spelman faced the same challenges as predominantly white institutions in the 1960s – the growing difficulty of enforcing regulations violations by students demanding an end to unjust policies. The relaxation of women’s regulations on campus threatened to undermine the model of respectable womanhood that institutions like Spelman sought to demonstrate within the black community and present to white America. By 1968, they also faced the task of redefining the goals of the black college to align more closely with the politics of student rights and Black Power. Administrators continued to hold fast to dominant models of black womanhood while undergraduate women struggled to implement a new vision that departed from the “majority society” and recognized their maturity and independence.

In her 1965 convocation speech at Spelman College, alumna (and future Spelman College president) Audrey Forbes exhorted students to “ACT!” to serve their communities and fellow citizens and to take pride in their actions.¹⁰¹ Pride, Forbes continued, “will compel us

¹⁰⁰ Harris, “The Commencement Address: May 31, 1965,” 7-8.

¹⁰¹ Dr. Audrey Forbes Manley was the first alumna elected president of Spelman College, 1997-2002. Audrey Forbes, “Ten-Year Reunion Address,” *Spelman Messenger*, August 1965, 15.

to vote, to run for public office, to support national projects geared to better living. It will compel us to uphold the constitution, to work for better schools and better communities.”¹⁰² Still reeling from the events of the previous spring and fearful of the consequences of acting out on campus, the 1965-1966 Spelman Student Government Association called for due process on campus, “clear and precise written statements of regulations and responsibilities pertaining to educational policies and curricular activities,” “protection from any unreasonable arbitrary actions by members of the faculty and/or administration,” “freedom from double jurisdiction” for off-campus conduct, “freedom of conscience relating to religious worship,” and increased authority and powers for student government.¹⁰³ Students again directed their discontent through the ‘proper channels.’

By late 1966, a number of students had turned a critical eye on campus politics and initiated discussion of the new Black Power ideology.¹⁰⁴ A survey conducted by the *Spelman Spotlight* in October found that students were not happy at Spelman and that “many of the students are convinced that Spelman does not encourage individual

¹⁰² Forbes, "Ten-Year Reunion Address," 16-17.

¹⁰³ Sampson, "S.S.G.A. Newsletter."

¹⁰⁴ The campus newspaper featured a number of articles and political cartoons that discussed Black Power ideology and criticized Spelman students who aligned themselves politically against this movement as well as those students simply uninterested in campus politics.

thinking.”¹⁰⁵ After the last minute cancellation of a speech by Stokely Carmichael by campus administrators, students once again implored officials to respect them as adults “mature enough to listen to these speakers and not be brainwashed,” and echoed earlier charges that the administration would not allow them to think for themselves.¹⁰⁶ At a meeting of students and faculty, undergraduates “expressed concern over the amount of ‘spoonfeeding’ and paternalism” on campus.¹⁰⁷ Ultimately, Carmichael and others were permitted to speak on campus. Dr. Manley and Dean Chivers cited a lack of communication between the students and themselves as the reason for the delay, not the nature of Carmichael’s ideas, and the administration guaranteed women’s right to schedule controversial speakers in the future.¹⁰⁸

In a “Message” to students published in *Reflections*, the campus yearbook, in 1967, Manley claimed, “This is the age of the woman, particularly the educated woman. ... Women graduates of the ‘60’s [sic] are no longer restricted to established feminine life styles. ... You are fortunate to be college women in this age. You will suffer no restrictions or inhibitions. Your career of today can indeed be your profession of

¹⁰⁵ Staff Writer, “Results of Student Poll,” *The Spelman Spotlight*, October 1966.

¹⁰⁶ Anna B. Porter, Letter from the Editor, *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1966.

¹⁰⁷ Angelique Pullen, “Faculty-Student Relationship Discussed,” *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1966.

¹⁰⁸ “The Carmichael Controversy,” *The Spelman Spotlight*, 25 November 1966.

tomorrow.”¹⁰⁹ In light of “restrictions” on campus, Manley made a good-faith effort to open a dialogue between students, faculty, and the administration and invited students to speak directly with him if they had concerns about the college.

The Student-Faculty Seminars of 1967-1968, initiated to encourage such dialogue, focused primarily on dissatisfaction with dormitory life and non-academic regulations. Students felt that “the regulations were excessive and ... unnecessary” and did not reflect the increased maturity of upperclass women.¹¹⁰ “As the student matures there should be a gradual relaxing of rules and by the senior year, few regulations should be required or necessary.”¹¹¹ Women involved in the seminars contended that most undergraduates felt numerous rules “inhibit[ed] the opportunity of developing, independently, qualities of poise and maturity” and “created an atmosphere of paternalism and dependence” at an age when women were adults.¹¹² They also conveyed to the faculty that students of all class standings wanted an end to sign-in and sign-out requirements, and to be treated as mature young ladies. A Spelman senior suggested that the “College should not

¹⁰⁹ *Reflections*, Message from Dr. Albert E. Manley, President of Spelman College, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 115.

¹¹⁰ June M. Aldridge, *The Spelman College Self-Study Report*, 407.

¹¹¹ June M. Aldridge, *The Spelman College Self-Study Report*, 407.

¹¹² June M. Aldridge, *The Spelman College Self-Study Report*, 407.

attempt to duplicate the home atmosphere from which many students come, but should challenge the student to grow up. If college students cannot handle these responsibilities, they should remain at home.”¹¹³

Frustrated with the pace of change on campus, a group of Spelman undergraduates founded the campus organization *Sisters in Blackness* (SB) in March 1968. This group represented a formal recognition of the Black Power movement at Spelman.¹¹⁴ The SB sought in part to “promote better relationships and more understanding of and among students on ... campus,” to “study and learn what it means to be black within the social, political, and economic structure of the United States,” and to promote “Black Consciousness and awareness” on the Spelman campus.¹¹⁵ The organization called for the “revolutionary” implementation of a Black University at Spelman College. “We seek to build, through education, a new social structure for black people in which they will be offered a valid, reasonable and beneficial alternative to the status-quo that presently exists.”¹¹⁶ The women argued that institutions that encouraged “acculturat[ion] into a

¹¹³ June M. Aldridge, *The Spelman College Self-Study Report*, 407.

¹¹⁴ See Appendix D for full text of the organization’s charter. *Sisters in Blackness, Charter for the African and Afro-American Society*, March, The Spelman College Archives, Box 164, *Student Organizations*, Atlanta, Georgia.

¹¹⁵ *Sisters in Blackness, Charter for the African and Afro-American Society*.

¹¹⁶ Ellen DeK. Osorio, "Clarification of a Black University," *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1968.

society which debilitates black people” had “no real relevance to the total black community.”¹¹⁷ Instead, colleges like Spelman had a responsibility to “include the beauty of our neglected culture and ethnic background in every course offered” on campus.¹¹⁸

In October student representatives of the Black People’s Alliance of the Atlanta University Center presented the AUC Council of Presidents with a list of proposals from the Ad-Hoc Committee for a Black University, “articulat[ing] changes that must be made in the American educational system, but even more specifically in the Atlanta University Center.”¹¹⁹ In response, President Manley asked Spelman undergraduates to present their own list of demands, specific to the Spelman campus, to the administration to ensure that the proposals “represent[ed] the consensus of the majority of the students at Spelman College.”¹²⁰ The Spelman Student Government Association (SSGA) met immediately to rewrite the list of demands originally presented by the Ad-Hoc Committee. SSGA presented the approved revisions to the student body on 7 November 1968 as the *Proposals of the SSGA Toward*

¹¹⁷ Osorio, "Clarification of a Black University."

¹¹⁸ Osorio, "Clarification of a Black University."

¹¹⁹ Ellin Osorio Marilyn Hunt, Bernadine Moses,, "Student Revolution: The Whole Story," *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1968; *Statement by the Atlanta University Center Students*, October 1968, The Spelman College Archives, Box 163: *Student Liberation Front*, Atlanta, Georgia.

¹²⁰ "Proposals Get Response," *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1968.

a Black University. SSGA asked students to vote yes or no for each proposal.

The *Proposals* included a call for student representation on all academic and college committees, a “Black Curriculum” to “reflect the Afro-American experience, ... taught from a non-western perspective,” community involvement by the college, and an expansion of the library. Regarding *in loco parentis* policies, Spelman women reiterated the changes they had discussed in the Student-Faculty Seminars. Arguing as “mature Black women” and “mature adults,” the undergraduates called for an end to compulsory religious services, an end to the designation of “off-limits” areas in Atlanta, an end to compulsory dress codes (“As mature adults we feel we are capable of determining what attire is appropriate for what occasion.”), and a formal codification of dormitory rules, no longer to be “left to the discretion of the House Mother.” Regarding curfews, the *Proposals* explained:

Many noted sociologists have pointed out that the control of social conduct on “Negro” college campuses, by the Administration, is in direct imitation of those same “puritanical” values which have for so long antagonized the ultimately oppressed Black people. Moreover, during a time when major “white” universities are discarding these same values to achieve social freedom, it is obvious to us that enforced curfews are another tool used by our oppressors to enslave the minds of Black students while socially separating them from their brothers and sisters in the community.

Therefore, we feel that the continuation of an enforced curfew for mature Black women is undesirable and must be abolished. ... society is saying to Black

women that we are not capable of displaying the maturity and capacity of taking care of ourselves in terms of judgements [sic] that our white counterparts are.¹²¹

Students rejected campus policies that perpetuated their treatment as second class citizens within the confines of academia. The statement did not call for an end to compulsory Thursday assembly (though it did request formation of a planning committee to schedule relevant programs), nor did undergraduates propose to abolish the sign-out process completely, "so that a student could be contacted in case of an emergency."¹²² Instead, they pushed for voluntary sign-out for students to use at their discretion.

The student body voted overwhelmingly in favor of abolishing curfews, compulsory sign-out requirements, and dress codes, and the SSGA reconvened immediately and passed legislation to this effect.¹²³ The next morning, Dean of Students Naomi Chivers called a meeting of the SSGA cabinet for an explanation of events; President Manley joined the group and informed the student representatives that they did not have legislative authority in these areas and had to consult with the administration before such policies could be instituted. Manley also

¹²¹ "Students Get Demands," *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1968.

¹²² "Students Get Demands."

¹²³ Students voted to revise the *Proposals'* stance on sign-out regulations. "Students Get Demands."

raised the question of the SSGA Constitution, which he claimed had never been ratified by the students and therefore was not binding.¹²⁴

To allow the student body time to ratify the Constitution and discuss the matters at hand in greater depth, and to encourage the participation and input of the faculty and administration, President Manley cancelled classes for two days to hold a "Student-Faculty Speak Out" on campus. He assured students he would "do everything in [his] power to work with the Spelman student government to make necessary changes."¹²⁵ After an initial struggle between Manley, the faculty, and student body representatives concerning the powers of the SSGA to legislate on curfews, each party agreed on an agenda for the two-day event. All parties agreed that the SSGA constitution would have to be "studied, revised, re-approved and ratified before the SSGA could know its real powers" after the speak out.¹²⁶ In the meantime, students would discuss non-academic regulations on 11 November and cultural affairs and curriculum changes on 12 November.

On day one of the Speak Out, Spelman coeds rallied again for an immediate end to curfews, dress codes, and compulsory sign-out policies. For the administration, curfews were the most contentious

¹²⁴ "Students Get Demands."

¹²⁵ Albert E. Manley, "Proposals Get Response," *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1968.

¹²⁶ "Students Get Demands."

topic on the table. President Manley urged the assembled students to consider the legal responsibility of the college, the opinion of parents, and the cost of changing curfews while formulating their recommendations. "There are questions of cost involved in guaranteeing you access to the dormitories at all hours of the night," Manley explained, "while at the same time guaranteeing your protection from thieves and Peeping Toms and the lunatic fringe at those same hours of the night."¹²⁷ The President left it up to students to devise "creative and meaningful" plans for dismantling *in loco parentis*.¹²⁸

The Spelman student body conducted a closed meeting to discuss the proposals on the table. They returned to the faculty and administration with the decision not to compromise on their stated goals and to abolish social regulations immediately. According to President Manley, sign-outs and the dress code could be acted upon within 24 hours, but he needed at least three weeks to investigate the legal ramifications of non-compulsory curfews. The assembled student population called for a vote: to refuse Manley's offer and protest or accept the terms on the table. Students voted to protest through the occupation of Giles Hall. After finding the doors of Giles Hall mysteriously locked in the middle of the day, organizers called a "sleep-

¹²⁷ "Students Reject Speak out Agenda."

¹²⁸ "Students Reject Speak out Agenda."

out” to begin at midnight in Morgan Hall for students to assemble peacefully in violation of dormitory curfews. Students returned to their dormitories to prepare for the protest; organizers asked students to bring blankets and pillows, to donate any money they could spare to buy food, or bring what food they could obtain to Morgan Hall. According to newspaper reports, students headed back to their dorms shouting, “we got our s... together!”[sic]¹²⁹

One hour before the scheduled sleep-in, representatives from the Spelman Self-Government Association announced in the dormitories that President Manley had granted the students’ demands.

With an overwhelming amount of enthusiasm, the students recalled their civil rights struggle and applied the tune used then to their present struggle. All over the campus the young ladies could be heard singing ... “We Shall Overcome” [and other freedom songs] from the steps of Howe Hall. Upon entering Howe Hall, the student began vibrantly belting out “Woke up this morning with my mind set on victory” accompanied by clapping and stomping until the [official] announcement was made.¹³⁰

As of midnight the next night, all students would be free of compulsory dress codes and sign-out regulations; the new curfews could not be implemented immediately, but for legal reasons would be in place upon receipt of parental permissions.

¹²⁹ "Students Reject Speak out Agenda."

¹³⁰ "Proposals Revised," *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1968.

In a letter to Spelman parents, the Dean of Students Office explained "Spelman College has agreed to students' request that more responsibility be placed on them in the matter of curfew. The students feel they are mature enough to choose the hour when they will return to the dormitory."¹³¹ The dean outlined the changes in curfews for individual family approval. First semester freshman, according to the recommendations of the SSGA, would be held to a midnight curfew every night. The administration informed parents who did not approve unlimited curfews for their daughters that curfews for all other students would be midnight Sunday through Thursday and one a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights, with two a.m. curfews for seniors (upon request) on weekends. The letter closed with assurances from the Dean that "the college will still be concerned about the welfare and safety of your daughter," and was accompanied by a letter from the Spelman Student Government Association explaining the changes they had implemented.¹³²

Students and faculty devoted day two's proceedings to discussion of the implementation of a black curriculum at Spelman and the race policies at the college. Most agreed on the need for such programs, and

¹³¹ "Proposals Revised."

¹³² See Appendix E for the full text of the SSGA letter to parents. "All Minds on Victory," *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1968; Albert E. Manley, *A Legacy Continues: The Manley Years at Spelman College, 1953-1976* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1995), 49-50.

the group created student-faculty committees to develop plans and oversee the “increased emphasis upon curricular and extra-curricular experiences and courses in Afro-American culture and for greater involvement in community programs.”¹³³ The dismantling of *in loco parentis* policies at Spelman College would not have been possible without the overwhelming unity of the student body in 1968. In sharp contrast to the hard line stance taken by administrators at Howard University, President Manley and Dean Chivers worked closely with the smaller student population, and SSGA in particular, to maintain an open dialogue with all parties. Individual attempts to challenge the regulations at Spelman met with defeat; by organizing under the banner of Black Power and student rights, and emphasizing the maturity and capability of the undergraduate population, the SSGA secured a higher degree of academic and social freedom on campus.

Arguments concerning academic freedom and the maturity of undergraduates resonated with many students, regardless of race. For African Americans, the language of freedom and responsibility echoed the calls for racial equality raised in the context of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and early 1960s. Students at Howard University and Spelman College turned a critical eye towards their own

¹³³ "Proposals Revised."

institutions. Undergraduates combined the language of student rights and freedoms with sweeping demands for Black Power within the black university, a movement that resulted in the dismantling of *in loco parentis* on each campus and a reassessment of the goals and needs of both students and the academy. Students at the Ohio State University and Simmons College also used the language of rights and freedoms to chip away at in place of the parent policies on campus. For students at these two schools, however, the strictures of respectable womanhood did not accommodate white women's activism or calls for independence. In debates at each institution, the issues of sex and women's uncontrolled sexuality frightened administrators and parents. Despite their concerns, undergraduate women continued to demand – and achieve – independence from the university as parent in the late 1960s.

CHAPTER 5

PROTEST 102

“In 1957, Women’s Self Government Association (WSGA) sold cookbooks containing favorite recipes of faculty members and students. But ‘a woman’s place’ is no longer necessarily in the home. Both women and WSGA have changed. ... [J]ust as curfews are a thing of the past, so is WSGA’s role as a law making and enforcing body. ... ‘Rules have been dying...thanks in part to WSGA. Women don’t need rules now, it’s debatable if they ever did.’”¹

While undergraduate women voiced arguments based on student rights and their maturity as young adults, the shift in attitudes and a new openness about sexuality created an undercurrent of tension between students and university officials. The ‘new morality’ embraced by many young people in the 1960s did not sit well with administrators concerned about the reputation and image of their students and institutions, nor with *in loco parentis* policies designed to reign in the very behavior students increasingly demonstrated on and around campus. Contemporaries and historians often rolled these changes into the “sexual revolution” of the late twentieth century. Coupled with the visible changes in gender roles and ideology, student efforts to modify or eradicate women’s social regulations provide a glimpse into the larger

¹ Beverly Burge, "W.S.G.A.: Curfews, Cooking to Careers," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 6 April 1972.

cultural contest between the economic realities of women's lives and the ideological stronghold of 'traditional' gender roles.

At Simmons College and Ohio State University, women's student government played an important role in mediating between the demands of students and the caution of administrators. In sharp contrast to events at Howard University and Spelman College, undergraduates achieved the reformation of *in loco parentis* policies on campus without suspending university activities. Administrators were no more willing, however, to give in to student proposals without investigations into the feasibility of such plans and without considering the opinions of parents and trustees. Undergraduate women eventually expanded their critique of *in loco parentis* on campus to a critique of American social and economic systems that disadvantaged women based on their sex, in spite of their individual talents. This realization and women's attendant political actions to address the problems of gender and race discrimination reveal a link between women's campus activism and the women's liberation movement.

***"The presence of a bed in the room is not an open invitation to sex."*²**

The most inflammatory topic entangled in the debates to end *in loco parentis* policies – and the subtext of many of the preceding

² Judy Turner, "Parietals - a Plea for Privacy," *The Simmons News*, 3 November 1967.

justifications and objections to such a course – was the ‘new morality’ of the sexual revolution. The underlying rationale for many non-academic campus regulations was to limit the opportunities for undergraduate women to engage in sexual activity, and to help them learn the boundaries of acceptable female conduct. In the mid- and late sixties, students clamored to remove campus authority from their dormitory bedrooms and rejected the once revered moral authority of campus officials.

While a few administrators and faculty members no doubt acknowledged that undergraduate women were, in fact, sexual beings, most were not willing to institute policies that would reflect or even imply such knowledge. Dean Calhoun of Howard University was a lone voice in this regard; she stated plainly, “I don’t think [women’s regulations] are tied up with morals at all” because, she acknowledged, “women can get soundly pregnant [anytime of the day].” Calhoun argued instead that women’s hours were in place to comfort “parents, alumni, the district [Washington, D.C.], and students” that women would be “safe and tucked in” at a reasonable hour each night.³ Administrators concerned with the public image of their university or college and their concomitant ability to attract the tuition dollars of parents feared that lax social regulations would jeopardize the future of

³ "Forum Raises Question on Due Process," *The Hilltop*, 2 December 1966.

the institution itself. Individuals on each side of the *in loco parentis* debate acknowledged the belief held by some “parents, alum[ni], citizens, and sorority advisors who equate coed freedom with the end of virginity, decent grades, and the American way of life.”⁴ Associate Professor of Education and Psychology Stanley J. Gross of Indiana State University wrote of this dilemma in January 1968:

The college is a creature of its culture. The sanctions emerge from the culture and the college accommodates as well as it can to the limitations posed by the mostly conservative men charged with responsibility for it. Sex is an emotionally charged issue in our culture about which there is much ambivalence and confusion. The anxiety appears to lead to the adoption of extreme positions [by administrators and students]. One such position is the assumption, pertinent to the use of sanctions, that policies that do not provide support for traditional moral values contribute to their destruction. ... Educators, as a result, fear that the college itself is threatened if its reputation is tarnished by the perception that they condone ‘free love.’⁵

Other arguments for the dismantling of *in loco parentis* were irrelevant in this view, as the general public would perceive an end to such policies as an invitation for base behavior on campus regardless of the arguments used in favor of more student freedoms. Campus officials were cornered between trustees who held fast to “traditional” morality and the attendant restrictions and guidelines in place on many campuses through mid-decade, and increasingly militant and

⁴ University of Washington *Daily* Guest Editorial, "A Most Liberal Proposal," *The Lantern*, 19 January 1967.

⁵ Stanley J. Gross, "Student Sexual Expression," *The Journal of College Student Personnel* 9, no. 1 (1968): 12.

outspoken undergraduates dissatisfied with the imposition of moral values by the university. They also had to navigate “between ‘parents who do not support the restrictions which colleges traditionally placed on students’ and other parents who ‘expect colleges to police their sons and daughters in ways which they themselves did not, or could not.’”⁶

Students, for their part, became increasingly open in their discussions and displays of sexuality on campus and in their willingness openly to flaunt or challenge campus policies intended to limit this behavior. Adrienne Mann, a coed at Howard University, described the scene on campus many evenings. “[Students] can do anything before curfew, especially if you’re in the light. Security guards go around beating flash lights in the bushes while people have intercourse in the lounge watching television.”⁷ The don’t get caught atmosphere of the fifties and early sixties crumbled under the combined weight of undergraduate women and men who rejected their parents’ moralism in favor of a more open and, according to some, honest expression of (hetero)sexuality. Parents’ and administrators’ worst fears – that college dormitories would become the scene of “orgies, wine, men and song” full of “partying, heel-kicking, loose women” – didn’t

⁶ Logan Wilson, President of the American Council on Education, quoted in Collegiate Press Service, “Student Is ‘Forgotten Man’ in U.S. Colleges, Says A.C.E.,” *The Hilltop*, 6 November 1964.

⁷ Nathan Hare, “Behind the Black College Student Revolt,” *Ebony*, August 1967, 59.

materialize.⁸ Instead, women demanded an end to policies that seemed hypocritical and outdated in favor of general student conduct regulations designed to safeguard the academic community as a whole, not the individual morality of women alone.

Ohio State coeds tried to establish the distinction between rules and behavior in their challenge to women's regulations and to calm the fears of parents and administrators. "Many people are confusing the issue of liberalized hours with that of liberalized morals. These are separate issues. By advocating the former, we do not advocate the latter. A woman's conduct is not controlled by the hours she keeps. It is controlled by a code that she has established for herself."⁹

William R. Butler, Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Miami, commented in 1965 on the "new freedom being sought by today's students ... for more sexual self-direction which would mean more privacy with members of the opposite sex and more opportunity to determine for one's self the limits of his or her own sexual behavior."¹⁰ Undergraduate women argued for the same right to privacy in the dormitories as they would have in their own homes. In many cases, women acknowledged the implication of privacy but

⁸ LaDonna C. Brown, "What's the Problem," *The Hilltop*, 17 December 1971.

⁹ "Lantern Defines Policy on Hours," *The Lantern*, 29 November 1966.

¹⁰ William R. Butler, "Student Revolt for Freedoms," *The Journal of College Student Personnel* 6, no. 6 (1965): 325.

defended the innocence and intellectual benefits of allowing men and women to share private moments in the dormitories. A Simmons student explained that a dorm room must function as a home for four years, a role the “Simmons dormitory does an extremely poor job in fulfilling.”¹¹

The dormitory is where you receive guests, entertain them upon occasion, or just hold conversations and discussions. ... For example, you cannot ‘entertain’ a male guest in a dorm room at present. You may have a brand new record album he wants to hear, and his own record-player is broken, but you may not take him to your room to hear that album. Perhaps you’ve bought some unusual posters and paintings – sorry, no men allowed. ... Having a deep conversation, or, even worse, an argument, is absolutely impossible within the confines of dormitory living rooms or beau parlors. If you sit in the living room, every passer-by, from parents to other people’s dates, can hear the entire conversation. A couple arguing in a beau parlor merely embarrasses everyone who walks into a nearby area inadvertently.¹²

Skeptical housemothers and administrators at Simmons and Ohio State maintained that students did not need privacy, since they should not be conducting themselves in such a way as to need time alone with a man. And they probably assumed that male students could find another record player.

Nonetheless, undergraduate women maintained that campus officials had no business in the private lives of students; the

¹¹ Turner, "Parietals - a Plea for Privacy."

¹² Turner, "Parietals - a Plea for Privacy."

administration and faculty held authority in academic matters but could not expect to impose old codes of conduct on modern students. "If the events in a particular apartment happen not to conform to some administrator's idea of what is 'decent,' whose business is it? The business of civil authorities if a law is broken; the business of no one except those involved, if no law enters the picture."¹³ Rejecting blanket regulations, many students adopted a live and let live attitude towards morality and sexuality. As mature young adults, undergraduate women contended, they were responsible for the consequences of their actions. "Morality on campus is an individual matter," an Ohio State undergraduate asserted in 1967. "Nothing but incongruity evolves when the university as the cradle of academic freedom also acts as the authority on the moral behavior of the student body."¹⁴ Women's conduct with or without *in loco parentis* regulations reflected only on the women themselves, not on the university as a whole. And most women, students argued, were capable of projecting their own definition of respectable adult behavior.

Finally, in a dramatic departure from the earlier perception of women's regulations, a few undergraduate women contended that the continued existence of curfews and permissions forced women to break

¹³ "No-Hours Policy? Well, Not Quite," *The Lantern*, 26 October 1966.

¹⁴ James H. Bradner, "In Loco Parentis: Academic Neutrality," *The Lantern*, 13 January 1967.

the rules and jeopardized their safety. A Howard coed protested that women wouldn't have to "sneak dudes in" to the dormitories after visiting hours "if they were given the [visitation] hours they requested."¹⁵ And a Simmons student argued in favor of curfew extensions because it could save a life – the "difference between racing back in the car to make that curfew – or being a little bit safer."¹⁶ These arguments were no doubt less persuasive than others, but do reveal the very different approach to rules and regulations by some undergraduate women – no longer policies to be feared, but openly challenged. The enforceability of women's non-academic regulations rested significantly on the support of undergraduate women's acceptance of their underlying ideals. By the late sixties, as beliefs concerning sexuality, maturity, student rights, and the nature and purpose of higher education itself shifted, the foundation of these campus regulations crumbled.

Overall, by the late 1960s undergraduates' lack of respect for the authority of the university and the justification of *in loco parentis* policies greatly undermined the possibility of enforcement on many campuses. Campus policies could not change quickly enough to suit students at Spelman College and Howard University in 1968, as we

¹⁵ Barbara Stith, "Bethune Demands 24 Hr. Visitation," *The Hilltop*, 5 November 1971.

¹⁶ Judy Turner, "Curfew Question Revisited," *The Simmons News*, 12 May 1967.

have seen. Ohio State University also struggled to keep pace with student demands for change between 1966 and 1968. At Simmons College in the late 1960s women engaged in a prolonged debate with their administration over the ramifications of the demand for liberalization of women's regulations in light of the shift in sexual mores.

"No logical reason exists except discrimination due to sex."¹⁷

In March 1965, *Newsweek* published an article on "Campus '65," an in-depth investigation of undergraduate life and culture in the United States, with a particular eye to how students viewed themselves and the colleges they attended. *Newsweek* contributors interviewed approximately 800 of the more than 5.2 million college students from all over the nation, and spoke to student leaders and college officials at forty institutions.¹⁸ Investigators found that, when asked, students described themselves as generally pleased with their experiences at college and politically moderate like their parents; "ill-disposed to shake

¹⁷ Women's Self Government Association, *Sophomore Hours Survey: Comments*, November 1968, RG #9/c/6, Women's Self-Government Association: *Extension of Dormitory Hours: 1967-1968*, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio.

¹⁸ "Campus '65: The College Generation Looks at Itself and the World around It," *Newsweek*, 22 March 1965, 43-44.

the earth, confident in existing institutions such as banks, big corporations, the medical profession, and the scientific community.”¹⁹

Undergraduate women described the “senior panic” at women’s colleges, “when the rush begins to land a husband.”²⁰ Students offered clear pictures of what their lives would look like in fifteen years:

A Tennessee A&I coed saw herself as the “mother of five boys. Live in Pennsylvania. Live in a modern circular house that is completely automatic... will worry about nothing.” “I’ll be happily married, with three kids. I’ll be living on Long Island or some suburb.” A Carnegie Tech coed will be married with “two children, live in the San Francisco suburbs ... the world will be pretty much the same.”²¹

Undergraduates described the postwar dream of family, house, car and appliances situated in suburbia. But the article also pointed to an increase in political activity on campus surrounding civil rights issues and the role of the college *in loco parentis*, foreshadowing the changes to come. “Many schools still maintain [the] tradition [of] telling the students how to dress, how to behave, and when to come in at night. This usually goes down hard with the youngsters, these quasi-adults who ask: ‘Why are we treated like children in college?’”²²

¹⁹ "Campus '65: The College Generation Looks at Itself and the World around It," 47.

²⁰ "Campus '65: The College Generation Looks at Itself and the World around It."

²¹ "Campus '65: The College Generation Looks at Itself and the World around It," 47.

²² "Campus '65: The College Generation Looks at Itself and the World around It," 46.

Just over one year later *Newsweek* featured an article on “What Educated Women Want,” detailing the “relatively new and so far ill defined role for the educated woman.”²³ The author found that women were interested in marriage, but “the career drive in girls today exceeds the mating drive” unlike coeds interviewed just one year earlier.²⁴ “Reports from the big coeducational campuses and select women’s colleges alike confirm that the top of the Class of ’66 is turned on by a changed ideal of feminism. They want to use their rights and their heads, but they cling with vengeance to femininity and its benefits.”²⁵ Women’s new “senior panic” revolved around finding a job instead of a husband by graduation. The girls of the Cold War era took achievement in education to heart, the author argued, and sought “important work” after commencement.²⁶ The turmoil on campus by 1967 bore these claims out; fewer and fewer undergraduate women focused primarily on finding a husband, while a growing number of women struggled to implement changes to social regulations that did not apply to men and

²³ "What Educated Women Want: Marriage Yes - but the Career Drive Is Strong," *Newsweek*, 13 June 1966, 68.

²⁴ "What Educated Women Want: Marriage Yes - but the Career Drive Is Strong," 68.

²⁵ "What Educated Women Want: Marriage Yes - but the Career Drive Is Strong," 68.

²⁶ "What Educated Women Want: Marriage Yes - but the Career Drive Is Strong," 71. Susan Douglas and Ruth Rosen discussed the new emphasis on education for women in the fifties as part of the space race. See Susan J. Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Times Books, 1994); Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking, 2000). "What Educated Women Want: Marriage Yes - but the Career Drive Is Strong," 71.

to make the academic curriculum more relevant to their needs in the job market.

Gender-centered arguments against *in loco parentis* policies on campus focused on three key themes: men on campus were not subject to comparable regulations (or any, in each case); students were responsible enough to make their own decisions, they should not be considered children; and undergraduate women needed to be prepared for life after college while still in college, a task social regulations did not achieve. Though the label “feminist” was not often bandied about on the Ohio State, Howard, Spelman, or Simmons campuses until 1969-1970, there were vocal proponents of political and social equality on each campus throughout the decade. At Simmons College and Spelman College in particular, faith in women’s abilities pervaded most campus publications and activities; peers, administrators, and parents assumed women at these schools strove for academic excellence and future careers in their chosen fields. How and where women applied their education, however, was shaped by the culture of the times. The discrepancy between gender ideology and the realities of women’s lives through the 1960s ultimately contributed to student unrest and fueled efforts to discontinue the role of the university *in loco parentis*. The battle to end women’s social regulations contributed more to the early women’s liberation movement on campuses than feminism contributed

to the early *in loco parentis* debates. By the late 1960s, women motivated to work for changes in their campus privileges and rules made the jump to organizing to improve women's lives in American society.

Undergraduate women at coeducational Howard University and Ohio State University pointed to the lack of social regulations for male students as the most obvious case against women's non-academic regulations on campus. These arguments exposed another important paradigm shift; female students who did not believe they needed protection from the university would not tolerate the university's paternalism for very long. OSU coeds petitioned in spring 1966 to end curfews for all upperclass women. "The university recognizes the right of the male student to govern his own hours," one coed argued, "it must now recognize this right for the female also."²⁷ Howard coeds, who arguably had the most liberal regulations in the early 1960s, continued efforts to eliminate women's rules altogether until they succeeded in 1968-1969.

Some undergraduate women rejected women's second-class status on campus and challenged the college community and campus officials to rectify the situation by eliminating women's regulations. An OSU coed called attention to the dilemma of the Women's Self-

²⁷ Sherryl Woods, "1800 Coeds Sign Petition for No Hours," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 18 May 1966.

Government Association in a time when gender ideology shifted but WSGA's role and campus policies did not.

[T]he Women's Self-Government Association, which proclaims itself the staunch supporter of women's rights, is often the agent which takes them away. While its spokesmen [sic] express fears of male superiority on campus they help to perpetuate a condition in which the female student is inferior to the male, restricting her responsibilities and freedoms.²⁸

Campus administrators placed much responsibility for student conduct and penalties in the hands of students themselves at Simmons College, Ohio State, and to some degree Spelman College. Undergraduate women who did not agree with the logic of social regulations as safeguards for women but perceived them as unfair campus policies were less likely to enforce – of follow – these regulations to the letter. Student governments on each campus had to decide how best to mitigate the tensions between the student body and the administration. Ultimately, we have seen, student government representatives sided with their peers.

Arguments concerning student immaturity and irresponsibility to justify campus regulations through the mid-sixties held little sway among students who considered themselves adults upon entering college or university. A Simmons undergraduate said it best in spring 1967, in the midst of the curfew struggle: "We [undergraduate women]

²⁸ "Faith in Coed Maturity Is the Real Issue," *The Lantern*, 7 November 1966.

want and we need to be recognized for what we are – women, not girls, members of a society which we are responsible to, and which in turn is responsible to us.”²⁹ Many young women of the mid- to late sixties embraced a new definition of student that defined them as women instead of children; women, accordingly, did not need the college ‘parent’ to restrict their every move.

Women who did not expect to move from their father’s house into college and finally to their husband’s home – unlike their mothers or older sisters – needed to be prepared for independence after graduation. “The purpose of [college],” a Simmons undergraduate argued,

is not to turn out sheltered young maidens. [College] should be a place for the intellectual, spiritual, and social growth of a modern young woman who will be prepared to assume an active role in life upon graduation. She is not a hot-house flower, and this is not a finishing school.³⁰

Undergraduate women argued that campus policies were a handicap to ‘real world’ experience, particularly in their efforts to secure off-campus housing privileges. As early as 1964, students at Simmons College lobbied for off-campus living privileges for senior women.³¹ Students

²⁹ Turner, "Curfew Question Revisited."

³⁰ Turner, "Curfew Question Revisited."

³¹ ‘Off-campus living’ refers to independent living away from parents or relatives. On most campuses, college policy permitted unmarried women to live off campus with relatives in the area only; in some cases, the Dean of Women’s office made exceptions for women over 21 years of age to live in university-approved off-campus apartments or boarding houses. This was the exception and not the rule until the mid- to late 1960s at OSU, Simmons College, and HU. Spelman College provided on-campus housing for all out of town students. Campus officials offered any remaining empty

held that learning to fend for oneself in an apartment taught women “the duties of a mature, independent (or married) woman.”³² A coed from Ohio University (Athens, Ohio) offered a popular argument for off-campus living, where there were

[n]o housemothers, no dormitory counselors, no deans to tell you when to come in, who cannot visit you in your apartment and the like. I would like to have had the experience of throwing a guy out of my apartment at 4:00 a.m. if he tried to go too far with me. This is the way it will be on the ‘outside.’³³

Administrators and faculty did not condone this eagerness to live away from campus, but rather extolled the education benefits of living on campus as part of a community of women. Campus officials at Spelman College described residential life as “an opportunity for concentrated study, shared responsibility, cooperative and congenial living, self management, and group adhesiveness,” all virtues to be developed while in college.³⁴ Dean Eleanor Clifton of Simmons College refused women’s requests for off-campus living permissions in 1966, citing the “learning that takes place outside of the classroom” as a

rooms to students from the Atlanta area, though expected most local students to reside with family members in Atlanta.

³² Betty Shapiro, “Live and Learn ... Off Campus,” *The Simmons News*, 13 October 1964.

³³ Quoted in Butler, “Student Revolt for Freedoms,” 325.

³⁴ Each Spelman College Student Handbook in the time period investigated lists these goals for residential living. See for example, Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 1970-1971, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.

valuable experience for students and the economic drawbacks for the college if women did not live in the dormitories.³⁵

A number of undergraduate women felt themselves capable of determining not only their own hours and the company they kept, but also argued they were mature enough to apply this knowledge to independent living outside of their parents' home and the college campus. Coeds at OSU asked the administration if undergraduate women over 18 were less mature than other 18 year old women not in college, and if the ability to "clean house, cook, and wash dishes" gave these women more rights than their OSU peers.³⁶ By 1970, each campus except Spelman College allowed at least senior women to live in off-campus housing. At Howard University, campus officials established off-campus living for coeds in fall 1965, when "over-admission" of women students forced the administration to provide housing in Hilltop House, a local apartment building.³⁷ Coeds responded favorably to the situation, and the university was unable to revert to on-campus housing only. Student pressure played as much a role in the decision to allow off-campus living as growing enrollments

³⁵ Terri Winter, "Off-Campus Living: "Destruction of Plan"," *The Simmons News*, 29 April 1966.

³⁶ "Faith in Coed Maturity Is the Real Issue.," Andrea Pearl, "Dark Ages' Rules," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 6 May 1966.

³⁷ "Lack of Women's Dormitory Facilities Forces Initial Efforts to Establish Off-Campus Housing," *The Hilltop*, 1 October 1965.

and a shortage of on-campus housing at Ohio State as well, while the Simmons administration allowed less than fifty senior women to move off campus for their senior year, based on a random drawing of interested students. As Dean Clifton had alluded, Simmons needed the funds generated by undergraduate room and board contracts to maintain the residential campus and therefore limited off-campus living through the 1970s.

A limited number of women voiced arguments against *in loco parentis* policies with the language of the reemerging women's movement on campus, primarily in the later years of the decade and in the final struggles against social regulations. Arguments in this vein were most evident at Ohio State University after 1967. In a survey of OSU coeds to learn student views on extending self-regulated hours to sophomores, the Women's Self-Government Association compiled the written comments of approximately one hundred students from each academic class. The vast majority of responses focused on women's maturity and attendant right to follow self-regulated curfews, while a handful of arguments point to the new feminism on campus. A junior coed commented on the irony of the title 'Dean of Women' on campus:

Although I am pleased the system [of self-regulated hours] finally got into effect, I feel it should have started many years before. Now I am waiting for the day when women will have equal rights with men and we will have no hours at all. When the Dean of Women and others can treat us as equals and as women, not as little girls, then I feel she has

the right to call us women. Until the bureaucratic organization known as Standards resolves its ways, the term “women” on this campus will be a farce.³⁸

These women perceived women’s regulations as antithetical to women’s liberation on campus. The language of feminism and women’s liberation had a more significant impact on campus organizing and attitudes in the final push to dismantle *in loco parentis* during the early 1970s. Nonetheless, women had built a tradition of activism on campus with a shared language of rights and equality by 1967-1968 on each campus. This laid a strong foundation for women’s activism into the next decade, preparing the ground for activism among recent graduates and incoming students.

“It is unrealistic in modern society to lay any restrictions on women away from home”: Revolution at Ohio State University³⁹

Of the colleges in this study, Ohio State University stands out as a microcosm of the battles to end *in loco parentis* policies, encompassing the vast array of arguments students employed to precipitate campus change. OSU was the largest and most diverse of the four schools investigated, with the strongest tradition of women’s self-government. Students’ most focused activism to alleviate or end *in loco parentis* policies occurred during 1966 and 1967, when

³⁸ Women's Self Government Association, *Sophomore Hours Survey: Comments*.

³⁹ Women's Self Government Association, *Sophomore Hours Survey: Comments*.

undergraduates raised each of the above arguments to challenge the role of the university in place of the parent. Thus by 1968, students at Ohio State already had extensive experience organizing to reform or revoke many women's regulations, even as protests at the other schools gained momentum and their own was winding down.

Concurrent with the debate surrounding dress regulations on campus in 1966, Ohio State coeds raised a challenge to women's curfews and the role of the college *in loco parentis*. At Ohio State, the Women's Self-Government Association placed itself at the center of these debates as representative of student interests to the administration and as bearer of administrative decisions to the student body. WSGA regulations required all proposed policy changes to be submitted for consideration to the appropriate committee, then moved to a general vote based on the recommendations and changes in committee. Once legislation and policy changes made it through the WSGA's bureaucracy, the Dean of Women could veto any new policies. The WSGA members of the mid-1960s were at crosscurrents; coeds at Ohio State increasingly pressured their representatives to ease the restrictions placed on undergraduate women while the administration, particularly the Dean and Assistant Dean of Women, were unwilling to meet students' every demand. For their part, the WSGA worked to close the distance between the two groups; proposals perceived as potentially

unpalatable to the Dean's office spent more time in committee in an effort to accommodate both students and administrators. The willingness of the WSGA to push through such policy changes escalated through mid-decade, as student pressure became more strident and the foundation of administrative power continued to erode.

The Women's Self-Government Association at Ohio State spearheaded initial efforts to ease curfews. In February 1966, the WSGA discussed a number of possible curfew changes for upperclass women. These included a one-hour extension of women's hours (from 11:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday nights); unlimited 2:00 a.m. permissions for sophomore, junior, and senior coeds; and a proposal to abolish senior women's curfews altogether.⁴⁰ By April, Dean of Women Christine Conway had approved a liberalization of hours by the WSGA that included unlimited 2:00 a.m. permissions for upperclass women on weekends and a midnight curfew on weeknights, except Tuesdays, for all coeds.⁴¹ Though the proposal to abolish senior curfews was voted down in committee, citing that there was "no way to enact this [change] at present," the WSGA solicited proposals from the coed population to

⁴⁰ Richard Stelling, "W.S.G.A. Proposes Curfew Changes," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 24 February 1966.

⁴¹ The Tuesday curfew of 11:00 p.m. remained in place to accommodate dormitory and house meeting attendance on campus. Sherryl Woods, "Coeds' Hours Liberalized by W.S.G.A.," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 14 April 1966.

eliminate hours for seniors on weekends.⁴² By early May, women's government passed a resolution to end curfew hours for senior women and women over 21 years of age; the Dean of Women approved the policy change to go into effect fall quarter 1966.⁴³

On May 1, 1966 two undergraduate women circulated a petition to eliminate curfew hours altogether for sophomore, junior, and senior women at OSU in part as a response to the WSGA's entreaties for hours change proposals, but also to disprove Associate Dean of Women Ruth Weimer's assertion that women's hours had not changed at Ohio State "because the women seemed apathetic."⁴⁴ The petition read, in part:

The overbearing controls and restrictions imposed on the woman student stifles maximum development of responsibility and maturity. Justifications of hours for women, such as insuring adequate study and sleeping time and knowledge of the whereabouts of women students to insure their safety, are not sufficient to warrant infringement on the rights of the individual. The University recognizes the right of the male student to govern his own hours. It must now recognize this right for the female student also.⁴⁵

Judy Winkler and Donna Goodman resolved to obtain signatures from one-fourth of the close to 10,000 undergraduate women at Ohio State

⁴² Stelling, "W.S.G.A. Proposes Curfew Changes."; Woods, "Coeds' Hours Liberalized by W.S.G.A.."

⁴³ Gail H. Scarbrough, "Petition Asks Abolition of Hours for Women," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 2 May 1966; Ruth H. Weimer, Letter to Head Residents, 13 May, Office of Student Affairs, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/a/9: *Dean of Women: Off Campus Rooming Houses, 1965-1966*, Columbus, Ohio.

⁴⁴ Scarbrough, "Petition Asks Abolition of Hours for Women."

⁴⁵ Woods, "1800 Coeds Sign Petition for No Hours."

and present the petition to the WSGA for action. Approximately three-quarters of undergraduate women attending OSU lived away from home; between four and five thousand of these women lived in on-campus university residence halls.⁴⁶

In less than two weeks, Goodman and Winkler obtained approximately 1,600 coeds' signatures, the endorsement of the Freshman Senate and the Free Student Federation, as well as a resolution "backing the moral concept of no hours" from the Student Senate.⁴⁷ By late May 2,361 undergraduate women had signed the no hours petition – approximately half of all residential coeds at Ohio State.⁴⁸ The South Campus Student Association and Tim Neustadt, student body president, also endorsed the petition. In light of overwhelming support for ending non-freshmen women's curfews, Winkler and Goodman submitted the popular no-hours petition to the Women's Self-Government Association, asking that the new policy (or lack thereof) be in place by fall quarter.

⁴⁶ Office of the Dean of Women, *Housing Analysis*, Autumn, Office of Student Affairs, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/a/10, *Dean of Men and Women: Housing: 1965-66*, Columbus, Ohio; Ruth H. Weimer, *Women's Residence Halls*, 17 August, Office of Student Affairs, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/a/9, *Dean of Women: Dormitories: 1966-67*, Columbus, Ohio.

⁴⁷ Mary V. Gordon, "Hours 'Concept' Ok'd by Senate," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 13 May 1966; Phillip A. Long, "Frosh Senate Endorses 'No Hours' Resolution," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 11 May 1966; Scarbrough, "Petition Asks Abolition of Hours for Women."

⁴⁸ Sherryl Woods, "The Ponderous Pace of Self Government," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 20 May 1966.

Students railed against not only curfews and dress codes, but also the pace of implementing change on campus. In a letter to *The Ohio State Lantern* two senior women, Louise Millarve and Kathy Wilson, alleged that women's government was "a mere puppet for the administration," whose function as rules enforcer served as "an insult to the integrity of college women."⁴⁹ Wilson and Millarve further challenged the WSGA to hold a "democratic campus vote" to allow undergraduate women to "decide for ourselves whether we are so irresponsible that we must be protected by women's hours."⁵⁰ "Only when the deans and the administration realize that students can run their own lives without a multiplicity of rules that are tainted by an 'in loco parentis' attitude," the coeds contended, "will people stop laughing at the mockery of student government."⁵¹

Senior Andrea Pearl characterized women's "unrealistic" regulations as throwbacks from the "dark ages."⁵² Pearl leveled her criticism at the University as one of the

institutions that attempt to develop independence, insight, intellect, and other related qualities and capabilities of students. The outdated rules and regulations are merely stifling this attempt, postponing the accomplishment of this

⁴⁹ Louise Millarve and Kathy Wilson, "Dear Editor," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 November 1965.

⁵⁰ Louise Millarve and Kathy Wilson, "Dear Editor."

⁵¹ Louise Millarve and Kathy Wilson, "Dear Editor."

⁵² Pearl, "Dark Ages' Rules."

goal, as well as making it harder to reach. Senior women and women over 21 are no longer babies – and there is no reason why they should be treated as such.⁵³

As mature women, these undergraduates and others argued, coeds could be trusted to determine their own hours on campus, and the WSGA should enact policies supported by the student body, not continue attempts to enforce “outdated” rules to appease the administration. *Lantern* editor Sherryl Woods urged the WSGA to “stop talking and start doing,” lest it continued “letting down the women that it represents.”⁵⁴ In the early days of the battle to end *in loco parentis* policies at Ohio State, women’s government had not yet reconciled its roles as standards police and student representatives to accommodate a shift in student attitudes concerning sexuality, gender, and the ‘new’ rights of students.

Dissatisfaction with the “ponderous pace of self government” deepened by fall quarter 1966, when students learned that the Women’s Self-Government Association had failed to act on the no-hours petition submitted the previous spring, where it died in committee.⁵⁵ Donna Goodman expressed the concerns of her peers in a letter to the *Lantern* in early November, criticizing members of the WSGA for failing to represent the interests of their constituents. Despite signatures from

⁵³ Pearl, "Dark Ages' Rules."

⁵⁴ Woods, "The Ponderous Pace of Self Government."

⁵⁵ Woods, "The Ponderous Pace of Self Government."

over twenty percent of the total female undergraduate population Goodman collected, only one WSGA representative of sixty-four “supported the petition in its original form.”⁵⁶ In response to the WSGA’s explanation for the delay – “the girls on campus have no idea how much work it takes to implement a ‘new no-hours system’” – Goodman asserted the women of WSGA “should stop representing the dean of women’s office [sic] and start representing the women of campus;”⁵⁷

...maybe WSGA does not realize it, but implementing the desires and demands of the women on campus is their job. And if they do not find the ‘time’ to do their job, they should ‘get-out’ and let some other group on campus that has the time and the desire do the job they campaigned to do.⁵⁸

Goodman was not alone in her critique of women’s government. “It is strange,” one coed noted in fall 1966, “that those living in an environment most conducive to the development of mature thinking are treated as if they are not able to handle themselves.”⁵⁹ Confident they could “handle themselves,” undergraduate women at Ohio State University expanded their attack on non-academic regulations to include permission to visit in men’s apartments (broadly interpreted as

⁵⁶ Donna Goodman, "Find Time or Get Out," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 14 November 1966.

⁵⁷ Goodman, "Find Time or Get Out."

⁵⁸ Goodman, "Find Time or Get Out."

⁵⁹ Barbara Dobranic, "Faith in Coed Maturity Is the Real Issue," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 7 November 1966.

men's residence halls, rooming houses, and off-campus apartments) later than the 2:00 a.m. restriction and a rule change to permit senior women to reside in off campus apartments. Labeling the standing rule of no women in men's apartments after 2:00 a.m. "patently unenforceable" for senior coeds on weekends (in light of the new 6:30 a.m. curfews) "considered an invasion of privacy by most student women" [sic], coeds pressed for the liberalization of men's apartment visitation rules or, ideally, the end of senior curfews.⁶⁰

Campus officials designed early morning curfews for undergraduate women to prevent students from spending the night in men's apartments, as women had to leave early enough to be in before curfew. The Women's Self-Government Association answered pressure to liberalize women's visiting hours in men's apartment with a proposal to extend weekend visitation for senior women to their 6:30 a.m. residence hall curfew. Coed Barbara Dobranic considered this proposal "no great service" to senior women, many who "have been doing that much already without having to be told."⁶¹ If the Dean and the WSGA feel women are mature enough to have no curfews on weekends, she asserted, then the "inconvenience this [proposed] rule causes for the

⁶⁰ Barbara Dobranic, "Let's Forget the 6:30 Rule," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 8 November 1966; Charles Hunter, "No-Hours Policy? Well, Not Quite - That's Not All," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 26 October 1966.

⁶¹ Dobranic, "Let's Forget the 6:30 Rule."

coed makes it intolerable... Few people relish the thought of arising at 5 or 5:30 a.m. on Saturday or Sunday, whatever the reason may be.”⁶²

Many students supported the “no strings attached” approach to senior weekend hours and visitation. “Unless the dean of women’s secret police force is far larger than we imagine,” one student wrote in the *Lantern*, “anytime any coed is caught in violation of the [2:00 a.m. visitation] rule, she becomes the unfortunate one in 1,000.”⁶³ Furthermore, the student argued, ending the senior curfew rule would have two advantages for coeds. First, coeds could leave valid emergency contact numbers at sign-out instead of sneaking around surreptitiously or lying on sign-out cards, and second, a real no-hours policy would not force senior women to hasten back to their dormitories at “any arbitrarily selected hour of the morning.”⁶⁴ A number of undergraduates felt that no weekend curfews for senior women (and, if successful, junior and sophomore women) meant that “the only regulation need be that [senior coeds] will be expected to return before midnight Sunday, when the magic of ‘no hours’ wears off and she turns back into a thoroughly protected Ohio State girl.”⁶⁵

⁶² Dobranic, "Let's Forget the 6:30 Rule."

⁶³ Hunter, "No-Hours Policy? Well, Not Quite - That's Not All."

⁶⁴ Hunter, "No-Hours Policy? Well, Not Quite - That's Not All."

⁶⁵ Hunter, "No-Hours Policy? Well, Not Quite - That's Not All."

Parents and WSGA representatives did not see the issue of visitation and curfews as quite so facile. Pressure on the WSGA from parents to prevent changes to curfew and visitation regulations for women met pressure from students to liberalize women's rules. According to Ruth Weimer, parents responded to articles in the Cleveland and Cincinnati newspapers with letters and telephone calls to the Dean's office; many parents expressed the opinion that "approval of the [6:30 a.m.] resolution would mean that the University is condoning women's spending nights in men's apartments."⁶⁶ Representatives of the Women's Self-Government Association and the House President's Council addressed these concerns by defending the proposal "in terms of offering responsibilities, not just more freedom, to mature women students" and displaying the University's "confidence in its women [evidenced] by extending the hours."⁶⁷ Accordingly, parents could rest assured that they did not have to worry about their responsible daughters.

Frances Gilfilen, WSGA Public Relations Coordinator, took issue with the arguments presented by students in support of the new rules as more in line with existing student behavior. Gilfilen argued that the new curfew and visitation rules were not "some sort of special overnight,

⁶⁶ Sue Reisinger, "W.S.G.A. Told Press Blurred Hours Issue," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 10 November 1966.

⁶⁷ Reisinger, "W.S.G.A. Told Press Blurred Hours Issue."

early-rise type regulation,” but “merely an added privilege and convenience to be jointly accepted with the extended responsibility for one’s actions.”⁶⁸ She acknowledged that the “impracticality of ‘checking up’ on supposedly mature, educated women” motivated the WSGA to propose the rule change to make the “rule concerning visiting hours to apartments consistent with the rule extending women’s hours.”⁶⁹ Instead of presenting (more revealing?) arguments that would frighten parents and administrators away from rules changes, the WSGA representative implied, women’s arguments for change should acknowledge maturity and responsibility of thought and action.

Lantern editor in chief Barbara Dobranic explored the issue of women’s hours in an extended opinion piece in late November 1966. Dobranic, with the assistance of her editors, outlined student sentiment on both sides of the debate by responding to a series of questions presented by students. The editors argued, at base, that the university “must take a neutral stand on the issue of personal behavior” and that “it is time for some individuals to realize they cannot determine what is good or bad and what is right or wrong for all [students].”⁷⁰ Concerning visitation by coeds in men’s apartments, the editors held “the reason a

⁶⁸ Frances Gilfilen, "A Word from W.S.G.A.," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 15 November 1966.

⁶⁹ Gilfilen, "A Word from W.S.G.A."

⁷⁰ Barbara Dobranic, "Lantern Defines Policy on Hours," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 29 November 1966.

woman has for wanting to remain in a man's apartment is not our concern, the concern of a university, or the concern of anyone but that woman" and emphasized that some parents, administrators, and students were confusing liberal rules with liberal morals.⁷¹

Since the "abolishment of such rules does not transform condemned behavior to condoned behavior," they continued, students would be morally responsible for their own actions but accountable only to themselves. Dobranic and the editors couched the debate in terms of personal freedom for coeds, particularly freedom to act responsibly without restrictive regulations.

The whole matter boils down to a question of whether or not a woman should be able to conduct her personal affairs as she sees fit without being forced to follow a code which may or may not be in harmony with her own values. We believe she should have this right.⁷²

In defending individual rights of students on and off campus, they asserted, "a student's personal life is not a proper subject for edicts and memoranda from a dean's office."⁷³

On the heels of the 6:30 a.m. visitation rule, students clamored for the extension of curfews for junior and sophomore women. In December 1966, undergraduate women presented a petition and proposal to the WSGA signed by 838 residence hall women and

⁷¹ Dobranic, "Lantern Defines Policy on Hours."

⁷² Dobranic, "Lantern Defines Policy on Hours."

⁷³ Dobranic, "Lantern Defines Policy on Hours."

endorsed by the South Campus Student Association in favor of no-hours privileges for junior women. Students requested the proposal be voted on immediately rather than having it sent to the Standards Committee for discussion. In a 20-19 vote, the motion to suspend the Standards rule was defeated and the proposal was sent to committee. Reactions to the vote were mixed; one petition supporter commented that the decision to send the proposal to Standards “shows that WSGA is incapable of making its own laws,” while a WSGA representative defended the vote.⁷⁴ “It is ridiculous to bring a proposal before WSGA and expect to have it passed right away,” Barbara Davis stated, “[WSGA] must take time and be precise in our decisions.”⁷⁵ WSGA President Jennifer Lohse reminded students that the organization “must take care so ... resolutions will be acceptable to those who have the final approval” once the WSGA approved new policies.⁷⁶ But as more students supported dramatic changes to *in loco parentis* regulations, fewer of them were willing to allow the student government to follow protocol to implement new policies or repeal existing ones.

Amidst growing and vociferous support for the significant modification of social rules, winter quarter 1967 proved to be the most

⁷⁴ Sue Reisinger, "Hours Plan Rerouted by W.S.G.A.," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 1 December 1966.

⁷⁵ Reisinger, "Hours Plan Rerouted by W.S.G.A.."

⁷⁶ Reisinger, "Hours Plan Rerouted by W.S.G.A.."

contentious and revolutionary for undergraduate women at Ohio State. While students defended efforts to liberalize women's regulations, the Women's Self-Government Association took a series of missteps by delaying decisions on popular campus issues. In response to perceived inaction by the WSGA, a handful of students called for the end of the organization. It is in early 1967 that the momentum shifted at Ohio State University in favor of those students who supported a move away from the traditional role of the university *in loco parentis* and towards a more independent and self-regulating student body. The WSGA also moved to align itself with the interests of the student body, from a diluter of student proposals to an advocate for change on behalf of the coeds at OSU.

Undergraduate women wasted little time in winter 1967 before raising the issue of women's regulations proposals pending action before the WSGA. The chasm between students and the dean became painfully evident when *The Lantern* published an interview with Dean of Women Christine Conway. Regarding women's hours, the dean stated that women "living on their own" could "take advantage of their freedoms," but women attending the university were not living on their own.⁷⁷ Conway emphasized the necessity for "guidelines" for young women on campus, "for security and for groups of people to know when

⁷⁷ Louis Simpson and Michael Masonbrink, "In Loco Parentis: The Case for Curfews," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 9 January 1967.

to settle down.”⁷⁸ In terms of semantics, Conway stated her preference for “lock-up time” or “security time” in place of the word curfew and defended “lock-up time” as necessary for coeds. Conway discussed the moral, not legal, obligation of the university to provide “adequate supervision” of undergraduate women. “I think if we are all being sensible,” she maintained, “we know it’s the women in society that we are concerned with; that we have a lot more to lose if a girl is wandering around alone than if a guy is.”⁷⁹ The interview revealed the strength and continuity of *in loco parentis* attitudes on the OSU campus, in no lesser a figure than the woman ultimately responsible for approving policy changes for coeds.

The Dean of Women’s comments shed light on the possibility of change through women’s government system. Queried on the university’s position on a no-hours policy for all women, Conway responded:

I can’t imagine [WSGA] not thinking something through pretty carefully before they made a recommendation. And, being the responsible body they have been around this campus for the last 50 years I can’t imagine them making such recommendations, if they use good judgment.

[Interviewer:] But would the University step in [if such a recommendation was made by the WSGA]?

Dean Conway: Oh, I don’t think it can help but to do this. The University is held responsible.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Louis Simpson and Michael Masonbrink, "In Loco Parentis: The Case for Curfews."

⁷⁹ Louis Simpson and Michael Masonbrink, "In Loco Parentis: The Case for Curfews."

⁸⁰ Louis Simpson and Michael Masonbrink, "In Loco Parentis: The Case for Curfews."

Women over 21 and senior women had enough life experience to live off campus and determine their own hours on weekends, but responsible WSGA women would not deign to extend the definition of maturity to include underclassmen if they used “good judgment,” itself a sign of maturity. Conway’s statements demonstrated the difficult position of the WSGA on campus; how to translate widespread student unrest for policy changes into amenable reforms? Student representatives faced the challenge of aligning new policies and old ideas about women’s social regulations.

Students continued to chime in on the debate in favor of regulations changes. One student proclaimed optimistically “*in loco parentis* is dying even at Ohio State. It is time the students give it a decent burial.”⁸¹ Some undergraduates rejected Conway’s explanation of social regulations; “the proposition that summary discipline by a university is justified because it is dealing with legal infants, whose collective welfare must be safeguarded by keeping them free of contamination by undesirable elements simply will not wash.”⁸² Two undergraduate women argued simply that a no-hours policy should pass because a junior is just as mature as a senior. “Just as the clock is no magical measure of morality” in student conduct, they contended,

⁸¹ Maurice J. Solkov, "A Case against In Loco Parentis," *The Lantern*, 10 January 1967.

⁸² Solkov, "A Case against In Loco Parentis."

“the calendar is no magical measure of maturity.”⁸³ The students urged the WSGA to pass the weekend no-hours proposal for junior women and the 6:30 a.m. men’s apartment visitation extension for seniors and women over 21.

The WSGA empowered women to formulate policy and mete out punishments for rules transgressions, but undergraduate women criticized the WSGA for hampering change. Criticism of the WSGA was especially strident after representatives failed to maintain a quorum to vote on the visitation proposal in January 1967. “Tired of not discussing what we all wanted to discuss – the [visitation] proposal,” a number of students walked out of the WSGA meeting.⁸⁴ When questioned about the event, WSGA President Jennifer Lohse expressed her disappointment. “They probably left because they were tired, since this meeting lasted longer than most. There were a lot of technical questions about the proposal,” she continued, “but we could have cleared them up. It definitely would have been voted on if they had stayed.”⁸⁵

Lantern editors Donna Plesh and Barbara Dobranic complained that the reasons given by Lohse were “nothing more than excuses for

⁸³ Barbara Dobranic and Donna Plesh, “W.S.G.A. Should Pass the Hours Proposal,” *The Ohio State Lantern*, 12 January 1967.

⁸⁴ “Wsga Lacks Quorum - Postpones Hours Proposal,” *The Ohio State Lantern*, 13 January 1967.

⁸⁵ “Wsga Lacks Quorum - Postpones Hours Proposal.”

poor planning and ineffective handling of the issues.”⁸⁶ Plesh and Dobranic reminded *Lantern* readers that many coeds were tired of waiting for WSGA to act. “Can WSGA members find the time and the energy to deal with the problem of hours,” they challenged. After collecting a total of more than 3300 signatures in support of liberalizing women’s regulations on campus, they warned “if these proposals are not voted on next week, it will prove that WSGA is not a representative organization, not an efficient organization and not a necessary organization.”⁸⁷

Kathleen Fitzsimmons echoed these sentiments, labeling the actions of the women’s government “reprehensible.”⁸⁸ She admonished the WSGA to act on the petitions submitted by her peers – lest students resort to “a direct, pertinent solution” to remedy the WSGA’s inaction, “the abolition of the Women’s Self-Government Association.”⁸⁹ “We are not powerless,” Fitzsimmons urged, “and except in our own WSGA, [we] are not voiceless.”⁹⁰ One freshman urged students to circumvent the ineffective WSGA and the Dean’s office by appealing directly to the governor, state Senate representatives, and state House representatives

⁸⁶ Barbara Dobranic and Donna Plesh, “The Same Old Story: W.S.G.A. Delays Again,” *The Ohio State Lantern*, 13 January 1967.

⁸⁷ Barbara Dobranic and Donna Plesh, “The Same Old Story: W.S.G.A. Delays Again.”

⁸⁸ Kathleen Fitzsimmons, “Abolish Wsga,” *The Ohio State Lantern*, 18 January 1967.

⁸⁹ Fitzsimmons, “Abolish Wsga.”

⁹⁰ Fitzsimmons, “Abolish Wsga.”

to secure the “same [individual] rights as those of the non-student” in Ohio.⁹¹

Another student chastised the WSGA for continuing to delay action on proposals that were already being implemented at other large universities across the nation – in this case, the author cited the University of Washington and the University of Wisconsin. “There has been more than ample time for study and consideration” of visitation in men’s apartments (“proposed TEN WEEKS ago” [emphasis in original]) and the extension of no hours on weekends to junior women (“presented TWO MONTHS ago”), she argued, and held that “the women on this campus should no longer accept the excuses that WSGA has been giving for delay.”⁹² In a marked shift from complicity with regulations of earlier coeds, the student remarked on the future of the WSGA at Ohio State if it failed to act. “We hope WSGA realizes that no law is respected if it is considered obnoxious by the people it affects, and that no institution that perpetuates such laws is respected by those people.”⁹³ University administrators could not expect to enforce campus policies without the acquiescence of the student population; if a significant number of undergraduate women were no longer willing to adhere to

⁹¹ Errol Reiter, "Your State and Hours," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 19 January 1967.

⁹² "Pass the Hours Proposal without Further Delay," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 19 January 1967.

⁹³ "Pass the Hours Proposal without Further Delay."

regulations, the WSGA and the Dean's office could not realistically discipline thousands of students simultaneously.

The Women's Self-Government Association recognized the mounting support to reform *in loco parentis* policies on campus. In late January 1967, the organization unanimously approved the proposal to permit women eligible for extended hours to visit in men's apartments after 2:00 a.m.⁹⁴ The proposal passed with a clause to allow men to visit in women's apartments after calling hours under the same circumstances.⁹⁵ In a nod to student activism surrounding the new rule, WSGA President Jennifer Lohse explained, "the philosophy of the proposal holds that women mature enough to determine their own hours must also be considered mature enough to decide where they will spend those hours."⁹⁶ Undergraduate women celebrated another step in dismantling *in loco parentis* at Ohio State.

Student representatives worked to pass the hours proposals coeds petitioned for during February 1967 pending the return of questionnaires distributed to rooming and sorority houses concerning implementation of extended curfews for juniors. In a letter to Dean of

⁹⁴ In this case, OSU narrowly defined "men's apartments" to exclude men's on-campus residence halls. The WSGA approved a rule revision to permit women to visit in public areas of men's residence halls in accordance with extended hours in winter 1968. M. Kathleen Redmond, "W.S.G.A. Extends Hour Privileges," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 24 January 1968.

⁹⁵ Sue Reisinger, "Wsga Approves Apartment Rule," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 20 January 1967.

⁹⁶ Reisinger, "Wsga Approves Apartment Rule."

Student Relations John Bonner, Jr., Dean Conway expressed the belief that the WSGA's reports would favor one of two recommendations to be passed by the body:

(1) That seniors and women over twenty-one will have extended hours every night, and juniors and sophomore women would have extended hours on Friday and Saturday nights only.

(2) The proposal that juniors and seniors have all extended hours which means no hours during the week. The sophomores and freshmen have hours as they are now stated.⁹⁷

The WSGA passed the proposal extending all curfew hours to 6:30 a.m. for junior and senior coeds, effective fall quarter 1967. Their action signaled a new commitment to liberalize regulations in the interests of the many undergraduate women who wanted fewer restrictions on campus instead of an older commitment to 'protect' the many in the interests of the few women who may have needed such limits on their activities. Dean Conway also expressed "great confidence in the maturity and responsibility of the upperclass women" in support of the no-hours policy.⁹⁸

Despite opposition from a number of sorority delegates, the WSGA implemented the no-hours policy supported by student petition the previous quarters. Sorority representative Martha Rose expressed

⁹⁷ Christine Y. Conway, Letter to Dean John T. Bonner, Jr., 10 January, Office of Student Affairs, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/a/9: *Dean of Women: 1966-67*, Columbus, Ohio.

⁹⁸ Joseph Keefer, "O.S.U. To Lift Junior, Senior Curfews: 'No Hours' Policy to Start in Fall," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 7 February 1967.

concern with the proposal because “juniors in the sororities have most of the responsibilities within the sororities,” and “an extension of the no-hour privilege to juniors would interfere with fulfillment of these responsibilities.”⁹⁹ Rose argued that junior women with extended curfews would be too busy socializing late into the night to meet their sorority responsibilities. Another member of WSGA retorted that many women currently under the no-hours system did not in fact “[stay] out for the sake of staying out,” and disagreed with Rose’s rationale for denying the proposal, because “we [WSGA] shouldn’t take privileges away from other women just for the sororities.”¹⁰⁰ Dean Conway warned of parental dissatisfaction with the no hours policy for upperclasswomen, but nonetheless approved the WSGA vote and announced that implementation of no curfews would be subject to the vote of each women’s residence hall. This action permitted sororities and rooming houses to retain the 2:00 a.m. curfews for juniors by majority vote if so desired.¹⁰¹

After suffering the criticism of student activists, the WSGA received accolades from the student body in the wake of the new

⁹⁹ Sue Reisinger, "W.S.G.A. Votes to Abolish Junior, Senior Curfews: Approval of Dean Required," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 2 February 1967.

¹⁰⁰ Reisinger, "W.S.G.A. Votes to Abolish Junior, Senior Curfews: Approval of Dean Required."

¹⁰¹ Keefer, "O.S.U. To Lift Junior, Senior Curfews: 'No Hours' Policy to Start in Fall.;" Nancy L. Parr, Letter to Ohio State University Parents, 30 October, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 44/19/1: *Women's Self-Government Association: General 1963-1969*, Columbus, Ohio.

policies' approval by the Dean of Women. Barbara Dobranic, a vocal supporter of the reforms, acknowledged that the struggle to revoke hours had been long, and summed up the lessons of coeds' efforts.

The fight for elimination of hours ... proves that responsible action works. Women who felt they were mature enough to set down their own hours handled their crusade for the elimination of the curfew in a mature way. They formulated, circulated and signed petitions and gave them to their student governing body, the Women's Self-Government Association.

It proves that WSGA does represent the women on this campus. WSGA listened to what coeds were asking for and acted on their requests.

It proves that Christine Y. Conway, dean of women [sic], does place trust in the coeds of Ohio State and that she has become more aware of their demands.

It proves that the University is more readily accepting change and is abandoning its outdated in loco parentis concept.¹⁰²

The last point – the willingness of the university to abandon its role in place of the parent – was still a matter for debate, but in the flush of victory Dobranic and other seemed content with her interpretation of events. Lohse predicted that the WSGA would soon recommend that sophomore women be exempt from curfews, but felt that the end of junior and senior curfews “was a big step in the right direction.”¹⁰³ The battle to liberalize women's regulations quieted in the wake of these two new policies. In autumn 1967, the offices of the Dean of Men and the

¹⁰² Barbara Dobranic, "Elimination of Hours Proves Many Things," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 8 February 1967.

¹⁰³ Keefer, "O.S.U. To Lift Junior, Senior Curfews: 'No Hours' Policy to Start in Fall."

Dean of Women merged to form the Office of the Student Relations under the leadership of former Associate Dean of Women Ruth Weimer.

Unlike students at Howard University or Spelman College, the tradition of student government at institutions such as Simmons College and Ohio State University focused student discontent with campus policies on student representatives, who then had to reconcile competing alliances with their peers and the administration. At OSU in 1967-1968, the WSGA managed to reform *in loco parentis* policies and also to move away from their earlier role as “Ohio State’s Girl Gestapo.”¹⁰⁴ By the late 1960s, this shift caused a crisis among the WSGA members as they struggled to define their role on a campus without extensive formal women’s social regulations.

In defense of the role of women’s government at the Ohio State University, WSGA President Nancy Parr detailed the actions of the organization as an advocate for women’s interests on campus in fall 1967. Parr addressed criticism that the WSGA did not act quickly in response to women’s concerns, explaining that the legislative process within the WSGA takes time, “but it is ... the process that makes our legislation more meaningful to those who must review it before it goes

¹⁰⁴ Sue Reisinger, "Wsga Breeds Controversy, Liberalizes Women's Rules," *The Lantern*, 27 September 1967.

into effect” (i.e., the administration).¹⁰⁵ The most important aspect of women’s government on campus was the opportunity it provided undergraduate women to develop leadership skills while in college. Parr asserted that women did not hold many leadership positions in Student Assembly or other campus coeducational organizations because men who had leadership training that women did not dominated these groups. She argued that the trend was “changing, but it is changing slowly – very slowly.”¹⁰⁶

Before undergraduate women abandoned their self-government organization, Parr warned, “the women’s role will have to be equalized much more with the men’s role in society before it will be reflected in the university-student setting.”¹⁰⁷ The WSGA president’s comments indicated a distinct shift in campus discourse towards explicitly feminist concerns and activism. Parr noted this tension in campus perceptions of women’s government:

I find a few people expressing the opinion that WSGA is actually widening the gap [between men’s and women’s opportunities]. As of yet, I see no concrete examples to support this view. I do not see where our work in the liberalization of hours, for instance, has done anything but give women a bigger share of the responsibility held by men. ... Perhaps because we sponsor activities particularly geared to women, some people feel we are emphasizing

¹⁰⁵ Nancy Parr, "Forum: W.S.G.A. Trains Leaders," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 16 November 1967.

¹⁰⁶ Parr, "Forum: W.S.G.A. Trains Leaders."

¹⁰⁷ Parr, "Forum: W.S.G.A. Trains Leaders."

differences rather than similarities between the two sexes. I would point out that the planning behind the activities we sponsor provides the very leadership that women would be less likely to obtain if they participated in other organizations.¹⁰⁸

This discussion of the necessary skills women's organizations provided on campus until more equal opportunities became available in the broader culture survived the *in loco parentis* debates, and shaped women's campus activism at Ohio State (and elsewhere) into the 1970s.

The WSGA president foreshadowed the role the organization would take after the demise of social regulations on campus when she suggested that the women of WSGA would not only represent women's interests when discussing future rules proposals, but would also continue to provide leadership development opportunities for women in offering and planning services for coeds on campus. In the interim, Parr held that the WSGA would take "a more critical view of the position of women on campus" and try "to improve that position."¹⁰⁹ The organization began to fulfill this promise during the next academic quarter.

Undergraduate women launched a renewed attack on *in loco parentis* policies in early 1968 with a challenge to the 6:30 a.m. curfew

¹⁰⁸ Parr, "Forum: W.S.G.A. Trains Leaders."

¹⁰⁹ Parr, "Forum: W.S.G.A. Trains Leaders."

rule. A column in the *Lantern* revisited previous arguments against social regulations to organize students on campus:

We all know that women who come to Ohio State are not capable of watching out for their own good. We realize that women who don't attend the University are more intelligent and more capable of taking care of themselves in the wee hours of the morning. This is, of course, one of the bases for *in loco parentis*. After all, the mere fact that a person is an adult at age 18 is no reason that the University should not continue to treat her as a child until she is 21. For this reason, we should all say a great big 'thank you' to the University and to WSGA for protecting our poor women students. Just think of what kind of campus we would have if women were allowed to have personal freedom. IF YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT WOMEN'S HOURS AND OTHER INFRINGEMENTS ON PERSONAL LIBERTY, JOIN I.F. (Individual Freedom Party).¹¹⁰

The tongue in cheek discussion of student sentiment condescendingly referred to traditional justifications of student supervision at the university to enlist the support of the otherwise quiet coeds. Momentum built on campus in early 1968 to extend sophomore curfews and eliminate junior and senior hours altogether. In a surprise move backed by Dean Weimer, the WSGA approved the extension of junior and senior curfews to 12:00 p.m. in May 1968, effective fall quarter.¹¹¹ This allowed upperclasswomen to sign in anytime before noon the next day, thus eliminating curfews in spirit, if not in letter. One undergraduate heralded this move as a "morals revolution" by the

¹¹⁰ "Women's Hours," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 6 March 1968.

¹¹¹ Redmond, "W.S.G.A. Extends Hour Privileges."

WSGA who, “in effect, legalized overnights in men’s apartments for women students.”¹¹²

Recognizing the trends on campus, Director of the University Counseling Center George Wooster suggested in a private memo to Dean of Students Ruth Weimer that the Office of Student Affairs lead the effort to “simply ... eliminate all of the hours rules” for women rather than react to demands he expected “the students would pick ... up again this year.”¹¹³ Wooster proposed that women be informed “of the hour at which the residence hall would be locked” and could arrange for a security officer to let them in after hours, “or else make other arrangements.”¹¹⁴ The elimination of hours made sense, he argued, because

[m]uch has been said about the greater maturity of college students these days, and the necessity of giving them greater responsibility for their own lives. It seems to me that it behooves the University to relinquish control as much as possible in the nonacademic areas. ... we need to avoid restrictive measures insofar as possible.¹¹⁵

Weimer responded with little enthusiasm to Wooster’s suggestions and expressed clear reservations about the maturity of

¹¹² Beth Phillips, “Wsga Supports Morals Revolution,” *The Ohio State Lantern*, 25 September 1968.

¹¹³ Wooster also noted that he suggested this action “at various times in the past.” George Wooster, *Hours Rules and Procedures for Women in the Residence Halls*, 13 September, Women’s Self-Government Association, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 44/19/3: *WSGA: General 1963-1969*, Columbus, Ohio.

¹¹⁴ Wooster, *Hours Rules and Procedures for Women in the Residence Halls*.

¹¹⁵ Wooster, *Hours Rules and Procedures for Women in the Residence Halls*.

underclasswomen. The question of women's hours "is a matter which is really in the hands of W.S.G.A. to make recommendations to us, and I feel that should be their prerogative. Personally," Weimer wrote, "I am not ready to subscribe to a no hours policy, and I am particularly interested in maintaining some kind of framework for freshmen [women]."¹¹⁶

A small number of coeds shared Weimer's reservations concerning liberty for freshmen women. The Women's Self-Government Association revisited the issue of extended hours for sophomore women in fall 1968.¹¹⁷ In a survey conducted to gauge student opinion, the WSGA polled women from each class standing in the residence halls and rooming houses. Less than one-quarter of student responses expressed support for sophomore hours. The students who supported curfews argued that sophomores were not mature enough for extended hours, that "there really should be some supervision of coeds at the sophomore level ... for their own benefit," that parents would not approve of extended hours, that there was "not a vital need" for rewriting hours, and that "extensions of hours for [sophomores and

¹¹⁶ Ruth Weimer, Letter to George Wooster, 19 September, Women's Self-Government Association, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 44/19/3: *WSGA: General: 1963-1969*, Columbus, Ohio.

¹¹⁷ Christine Walker, "Wsga Group to Study Sophomore Hours Rule," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 11 October 1968.

freshmen] only invite trouble.”¹¹⁸ Those who advocated curfews for sophomores and freshmen focused on maturity and responsibility, themes other coeds used successfully to pass more liberal curfews for juniors and seniors at Ohio State and elsewhere.

Those undergraduate women opposed to granting extended curfews to sophomores were in the minority at Ohio State in 1968. The overwhelming sentiment on campus supported the WSGA’s proposal to revoke curfews for second year coeds, for all of the reasons discussed above. Students in favor of extended curfews contended, for example, that hours for women but not for men were “unfair”; that coeds “old enough and responsible enough to stay in school” could “take care of [themselves] and make [their] own decisions”; that the university could not teach a woman morals by enforcing curfews, because “if we have no morals by now, we will never have any”; that “everyone stays out anyway” and with extended hours “no one would have to stay out all night” [e.g., take an overnight permission]; that “if sophomores want to stay out [past curfew] they’re probably going to stay out anyway”; and that “determination of hours should be left to each individual.”¹¹⁹ A senior woman refuted hours for sophomore women as unethical:

May I quote from J.S. Mills that laws or rules may only be morally and ethically made when an act or behavior

¹¹⁸ Women's Self Government Association, *Sophomore Hours Survey: Comments*.

¹¹⁹ Women's Self Government Association, *Sophomore Hours Survey: Comments*.

infringes on the rights of others; at all other times and all behaviors the preference of the individual has priority [sic]. Also, if a girl has not learned any sense of responsibility by the time she is 19, 20 years old and has lived on campus for one year, chances are she won't learn it by continued protection and mothering. The sophomore women are indeed ready for the acceptance of the responsibility of legislating their own behavior and should be allowed to legally do so.¹²⁰

Though some respondents exceeded the scope of the question ("both signouts and hours are absurd," "no hours for anyone at any time"), the overwhelming majority of women surveyed voiced strong support for ending sophomore hours.

The Women's Self-Government Association dealt a fatal blow to non-academic regulations at Ohio State 1969. After considering the results of the Sophomore Hours Survey and discussing possible solutions to the hours question, WSGA President Judy Case announced extended hours for sophomore women four weekends per academic quarter, effective 24 January.¹²¹ On the heels of this legislation, the WSGA passed a resolution to establish "self-regulating" hours for all sophomore, junior, and senior coeds at Ohio State University as of fall quarter.¹²² Freshmen women's curfews conformed to each residence's

¹²⁰ Women's Self Government Association, *Sophomore Hours Survey: Comments*.

¹²¹ David Schreiner, "Soph Women to Get Liberalized Hours," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 9 January 1969.

¹²² Mary Beschenbossel, "New Rules Suggested by W.S.G.A.," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 28 February 1969; Office of Student Affairs, *Student Handbook*, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio, 29-30.

closing hours. Three years after Donna Goodman and Judy Winkler presented a petition to the Women's Self-Government Association, undergraduate women at Ohio State secured a true no-hours policy for upperclasswomen. The struggle to end *in loco parentis* at OSU was characterized by a struggle to redefine the role of undergraduate women's authority on campus. By the 1970s, the voices of undergraduate women moved to secure rights and responsibilities for women in the broader culture.

“this is not a finishing school”: Reform at Simmons College¹²³

In the mid- to late 1960s, student government (Stu-G) focused student activism at Simmons College. As the 1966-67 Stu-G president, Lynne Laurans strengthened the organization during her tenure in office.¹²⁴ Judy Anderson, Stu-G president of 1967-1968, continued the work of the newly activist government. Both Laurans and Anderson endeavored to extend the influence of student representatives with the administration to secure reforms in women's regulations. Despite the successes of the House Presidents Council and student government on campus in this area, it was ultimately the creation of a committee of students, faculty, and administrators called the President's Council that

¹²³ Turner, "Curfew Question Revisited."

¹²⁴ See chapters two and three for discussions of new campus policies under Laurans' cabinet. "Stu-G Inauguration Marks Beginning of New Regime," *The Simmons News*, 24 March 1967.

ushered in the changes undergraduates called for at Simmons. Throughout the late sixties, students prided themselves on avoiding the violence and disruption that shook so many campuses across the United States. In the end, Simmons too had dismantled most *in loco parentis* policies on their campus, and radically redefined the relationship between students and campus officials.

In May 1967, the Simmons College House Presidents Council approved a proposal to extend curfew for all classes to 2:30 a.m. on weekends, 1:30 a.m. on weeknights, and to allow senior women a 'senior privilege,' or an unrestricted overnight permission, approved by parents, wherein the student returned to campus anytime before 6:30 a.m. HPC passed this proposal after hearing research compiled by members of the council, including a study of 27 schools from the National Student Association conference and a poll taken in fall of 1966. The NSA study found that only five schools had curfews less liberal than Simmons, twenty-two schools enforced more liberal curfews, and seventeen of the twenty-seven did not enforce curfews for upperclass women.¹²⁵ The Simmons student poll recorded that 55 percent of freshmen, 63 percent of sophomores, 83 percent of juniors,

¹²⁵ "H.P.C. Seeks 2:30 Curfew Senior Privilege Clause," *The Simmons News*, 12 May 1967.

and 87 percent of seniors who responded favored a 2:30 a.m. or later curfew for all classes.¹²⁶

The administration, led by President Park and Dean Eleanor Clifton, rejected the new policy. This refusal, based on accusations of incomplete and imprecise data, drew criticism from the student body. The administration called for more precise and complete data and “more extensive study of how more liberal curfews are implemented at other schools.”¹²⁷ The same month, approximately eight hundred of the fourteen hundred undergraduate Simmons students gathered in a silent sit-in demonstration to “eliminate [the] communications difficulty between the administration and themselves.”¹²⁸ Organized by the incoming Stu-G president, Judy Anderson, women gathered to question the administration’s policy on faculty salary and academic advancement after news of the departure of a number of faculty members at the end of the term.¹²⁹ After a yearlong effort to liberalize campus policies and the attendant success, students exhibited a new capacity for organizing around controversial campus issues. President William Park responded

¹²⁶ "H.P.C. Seeks 2:30 Curfew Senior Privilege Clause."

¹²⁷ "H.P.C. Seeks 2:30 Curfew Senior Privilege Clause."

¹²⁸ Laurie Bromberg, "The Peaceful Revolution," *Simmons Review*, Summer 1967, 2; *Simmons College Catalogue*, 1966-1967, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 115.

¹²⁹ Judy Anderson, et. al., Stu-G announcement concerning President Park, May 1967, The Simmons College Archives, RG 35.1, Box 10A, Folder 6, Boston, Massachusetts; Bromberg, "The Peaceful Revolution."

to the students' action by holding a "question-in" on campus directly to address student concerns.¹³⁰ President Park declared that he took the right of students to demonstrate "seriously," but that he also had a "dislike – prejudice, if you will – for demonstrations" and that the students' silent demonstration "hurt the ... Simmons image in the eyes of the public."¹³¹

Students did not agree with the president's assessment of the demonstration or his response to the HPC curfews proposal, although they affirmed a shared desire to work with the administration to obtain policy changes. Reporting for the campus newspaper, an undergraduate characterized the mood on campus in spring 1967:

What we have recently done at Simmons is special to us – and to Simmons. We proceeded with tact, cautious femininity, order, and responsibility. This is not the fad ... or the methodology set for us by other colleges and universities. Simmons should insure an environment conducive to change, rather than late acceptance and regular adherence to tradition. Simmons ... must encourage constructive change from within.¹³²

Undergraduates urged the president and the administration to allow them a voice in women's regulations and campus policies, citing the student body's "duty to question existing traditions" and "privilege to

¹³⁰ William Park, *President's Reply to Student Questions with Regard to Certain Matters of Administrative Policies and Procedures*, 24 May, The Simmons College Archives, RG 35.1, Box 10A, Folder 6, Boston, Massachusetts.

¹³¹ "Park Protests Protests; Reveals Simmons Policy," *The Simmons News*, 26 May 1967.

¹³² "Stu-G Progress Report," *The Simmons News*, 26 May 1967.

precipitate change.”¹³³ To encourage dialogue and channel student unrest, President Park formed a President’s Council in spring 1967 to discuss campus problems and student government regulations proposals, determine plans of action, and recommend changes to the Simmons Corporation (board of trustees).¹³⁴ The establishment of the President’s Council by the administration signaled its new willingness to work toward reform at Simmons College. Students lauded the president’s action as a step in the right direction.

In fall 1967, students immediately resumed efforts to change curfews and expand open house visiting hours in the dormitories, or ‘parietals.’¹³⁵ Upperclass women were particularly upset about uniform curfews instituted the previous semester to liberalize women’s hours. Like their peers on other campuses, the women at Simmons felt that the new curfews did not take class standing, maturity, and experience into consideration. Under its previous student government, the House Presidents Council (HPC) had proposed a senior privilege clause that would allow seniors a weekend curfew of 8:00 a.m.; President Park had rejected the proposal citing inconvenience to other students, the

¹³³ Bromberg, "The Peaceful Revolution."

¹³⁴ Pamela D. Griffin, "The Students as Agents of Change," *Simmons Review*, Winter 1968.

¹³⁵ The term “parietal” generally refers to the authority of college administrators and faculty within the confines of campus. In the 1960s, students on different campuses used the term as shorthand for specific aspects of *in loco parentis* regulations. Simmons College undergraduates used it to refer to visiting hours.

financial burden of implementing such a plan (e.g., hiring more security guards), and the immaturity of some seniors.¹³⁶ Students renewed their efforts to pass, at the very least, a 2:30 a.m. weekend curfew for senior women.

Judy Turner, editor-in-chief of the campus newspaper, raised key arguments discussed by students in her editorial concerning “in-locus parentis”[sic]:

there is a basic contradiction in a curfew system which expects freshmen to be able to handle a 1:30 A.M. curfew every night of the week, but does not consider juniors and seniors mature enough to handle a later curfew, even on weekends.

Secondly, the dilemma of the girl who wishes to come in after 1:30 but does not want to sign out for an overnight remains unsolved. The present system puts both her and her date in an extremely embarrassing position. Moreover, the girl's freedom to determine her own course of action, based on personal standards and maturity, is seriously hampered.

Finally, it is common knowledge that all sin does not occur after 1:30. It is to be hoped that, after two years of operating under a 1:30 curfew, the Simmons student can cope with a later curfew, preferably of her own choosing. If she cannot, she has failed and, more importantly, Simmons has failed, in developing a sense of maturity and discretion.¹³⁷

Turner's last two points raised a key problem in the campus debate – sexuality – and a problem that campus officials did much to avoid discussing openly. As a women's college particularly concerned with

¹³⁶ Nancy Scannell, "President Park Turns Down 8 A.M. Curfew," *The Simmons News*, 20 January 1967.

¹³⁷ Judy Turner, "Editorial," *The Simmons News*, 6 October 1967.

image and reputation, relaxing curfews to permit women back onto campus late at night was a double-edged sword. Which would look worse, students returning to campus at all hours or students not returning to campus until the next morning (when taking overnight permissions)? Turner's open discussion of "sin" was apparently taboo amongst the administration, insofar as they did not speculate on what women might be doing with extended curfews and open visitation.

The Stu-G rally in October revealed the mood of the Simmons student body. Student Government President candidates Judith Weiner and Arlene Johansen presented their campaign platforms and presidential programs for the upcoming year. Johansen stressed "research and documentation of such issues as curfew revision and off-campus living before throwing the areas open to the student body and the administration."¹³⁸ "Freedom is sacred," Johansen stated, "only when kept in order, exercised in balance with moderation."¹³⁹ Wiener presented students with a program ending all curfews on campus except for first semester freshmen and allowing off-campus living for seniors. No voice of moderation, Weiner emphasized the responsibility of the college to allow students the "freedom to learn, to make mistakes,

¹³⁸ Judy Turner, "Candidates Take Stands; Rally Sparks Debate," *The Simmons News*, 20 October 1967.

¹³⁹ Turner, "Candidates Take Stands; Rally Sparks Debate."

and to grow.”¹⁴⁰ She argued, “[t]he College should serve as a focal point of student life, not a fence.”¹⁴¹ Women at Simmons voted for change; Wiener was elected Stu-G president.

House Presidents Council approved the initiation of parietal hours on campus in late October 1967, for a one-semester trial period and subsequent evaluation. Under the Council’s plan, men were allowed within women’s dorm rooms during hours established by majority vote in each dormitory.¹⁴² Two days after the HPC’s announcement of the new policy, and in the face of popular support for the plan (a number of dormitories had already voted on hours and planned to begin the new program the next weekend), President Park notified Stu-G and the HPC that the council did not have jurisdiction over visitation. “A parietal rule governs internal life [of the college],” Park explained, “but allowing men in [women’s] rooms involves bringing people in from outside.”¹⁴³ The matter of open visitation was tabled until the next meeting of the newly established President’s Council.

Simmons students responded to the challenge to the powers of campus government with a reassessment of the role of Stu-G and the

¹⁴⁰ Turner, "Candidates Take Stands; Rally Sparks Debate."

¹⁴¹ Turner, "Candidates Take Stands; Rally Sparks Debate."

¹⁴² "Parietal Power in Question; Park Calls Halt to Action," *The Simmons News*, 3 November 1967.

¹⁴³ "Parietal Power in Question; Park Calls Halt to Action."

HPC in policy formation, and a focus on the “very definite need to define ‘student power’ at Simmons College.

Students, through Student Government and House Presidents Council, have their own definition of student power, responsibility and freedom based on the fact that they feel they have a right to influence their own lives. Students’ definitions are not adequate nor explicit when confronting the Administration’s definition. ... There seems to be no definite explanation of the powers which students should be permitted or of the areas in which they should be exercising that power.¹⁴⁴

Recalling the events of the previous year, students were confused and upset about the “arbitrariness” of the president’s decision. Park had allowed dress code reform, curfew liberalization, and had participated in an open dialogue with students after their silent protest in the spring. Park commented on how proposals could be improved to prevent a future veto when he did not approve of changes, but to date he had not placed women’s social regulations outside the purview of the House Presidents Council of Stu-G.

On the eve of the President’s Council meeting, undergraduates urged campus officials to consider the question of parietals seriously through the eyes of the student body.

Certainly, within her own home, the student would be able to maintain some element of privacy above what she experiences in the dorm. Moreover, times *have* changed. Granted, the Simmons room is a sleeping area, and therefore, a bedroom. It is also a study room, discussion

¹⁴⁴ Kristen Hardendorf, "The Power of Paradox," *The Simmons News*, 3 November 1967.

room, listening room, reading room, and party room. To classify such an all-purpose living space as merely a bedroom is incorrect and unfair. Although the room is unfortunately not as suited to entertaining a male guest as a suite would be, it is adequate. The presence of a bed in the room is not an invitation to sex, but the privacy of the room is an invitation to free conversation and discussion. ... students welcome the idea of parietal hours as a final granting of that element of human dignity – privacy – and a freedom to use their own rooms as they choose.[emphasis in original]¹⁴⁵

Student government representatives to the President's Council armed themselves with the widespread support of the student body (junior and senior class referendums in favor of curfews and off-campus living), pride in their peaceful and cooperative approach to change on campus, and in anticipation of the administration's arguments against parietals based on potential student conduct – sex – in women's private rooms.¹⁴⁶

In its first official meeting, the President's Council capitulated to pressure from the student body to liberalize women's non-academic regulations. President's Council consisted of two faculty members, six members of the administration, and eight students, including the president of Stu-G. The sixteen-member council voted unanimously to permit juniors and seniors to return to the dormitories on an overnight sign-out anytime between 1:30 a.m. and 6:30 a.m.¹⁴⁷ The new policy stipulated that students' parents had to authorize the new system for

¹⁴⁵ Turner, "Parietals - a Plea for Privacy."

¹⁴⁶ "Curfews out; Off-Campus Living In," *The Simmons News*, 8 December 1967.

¹⁴⁷ Griffin, "The Students as Agents of Change."

each student before she could participate in the new curfew system, effective January 1968. Members also voted unanimously to authorize off-campus living for a set number of senior women in fall 1968. Women who moved off campus assumed commuter student status; as such, the council announced, the college would relinquish non-academic regulatory responsibility for those students.¹⁴⁸ The council agreed to discuss the parietals proposals at the January 1968 meeting.

After two years of student activism undergraduate women at Simmons celebrated the “sweet smell of success” in the wake of these policy changes, but also questioned the efficacy of student government.¹⁴⁹ “There can be little doubt in anyone’s mind,” Judy Turner commented in *The Simmons News*, “that the council has great potential for becoming a new manifestation of student power – student power exerted within the framework of a tripartite body with decision-making power on social issues.”¹⁵⁰ Stu-G president Judith Wiener noted a shift in the relationship between the administration and the student body during the next semester. Before the President’s Council was created, she argued, “the student and the administration were unable to communicate with each other. It was as if we were on

¹⁴⁸ "Curfews out; Off-Campus Living In."

¹⁴⁹ Judy Turner, "The Sweet Smell of Success," *The Simmons News*, 8 December 1967.

¹⁵⁰ Turner, "The Sweet Smell of Success."

different teams.”¹⁵¹ With the advent of the council, Wiener continued, “when a problem arises, we can sit and talk about it together. It’s easier to find a solution which satisfies everyone.”¹⁵² With a small campus population (similar to Spelman College), a direct line of communication with the administration proved an asset to both ‘teams.’

In preparation for the President’s Council meeting concerning parietal hours on campus, students in each residence hall held a vote to determine the mood of women in the dormitory. The overwhelming majority of students voted to establish open visitation hours on Saturdays and Sundays for at least four hours a day (primarily in the evenings – the dinner hour to closing was most popular). In two of the ten dormitories, women voted for parietals after closing hours; one dorm’s residents voted for hours every day of the week, not just weekends; one group voted for Sunday hours only.¹⁵³ Acting on student sentiment, the President’s Council again voted to liberalize women’s regulations in February 1968 over the objections of President William Park.¹⁵⁴ The approved parietal proposal allowed for each dormitory to vote on and establish up to fifteen hours of open visitation per week. In

¹⁵¹ Griffin, "The Students as Agents of Change."

¹⁵² Griffin, "The Students as Agents of Change."

¹⁵³ "Dorms Favor Parietals; Days, Hours Vary," *The Simmons News*, 15 December 1967.

¹⁵⁴ Mary Jane Wilkinson, "P.C. Passes Parietals, Smoking, Special Frosh-Soph Overnights," *The Simmons News*, 9 February 1968.

a dramatic move, the council voted unanimously to extend the special overnight privilege recently approved for juniors and seniors to sophomores and second-semester freshmen.¹⁵⁵

In a few short months, students working with President's Council managed to virtually abolish all curfews, secure off-campus living privileges for a handful of senior women, and establish parietal regulations permitting men – at a women's college – to visit privately in women's rooms. Student leaders attributed the success of their proposed changes to “an increase in student participation in all phases of college life previously not the domain of the Simmons student.”¹⁵⁶ They also credited the surge in on-campus activism of 1966 to 1968 with a new attraction “not only to local issues but to national and international issues” among students.¹⁵⁷ Membership of the Simmons' Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) increased on campus and the group organized anti-Vietnam demonstrations and teach-ins to coordinate with national events. Student activities for the International Relations Association (politically neutral organization concerned with the United Nations and world politics) and the Simmons Civil Rights

¹⁵⁵ Subject to the approval of the Simmons College Corporation; the policy went into effect in September 1968.

¹⁵⁶ Mary Jane Wilkinson, "Wiener Cites New Student Activism," *The Simmons News*, 17 May 1968.

¹⁵⁷ Judith Turner, "Apathy to Activism in Four Years," *Simmons Review*, Summer 1968.

Club also increased in the late sixties.¹⁵⁸ Undergraduates at Simmons also continued to push towards an end to *in loco parentis* policies on campus through 1969.

House Presidents Council initiated a survey of dormitory residents in spring 1969 to gauge campus opinion on extending parietal hours.¹⁵⁹ Five students representing the Mesick Hall residents requested the HPC expand parietals by allowing men to escort their dates back to the dormitories after 1:30 a.m. (dates ended at the campus gates, where security guards escorted students back to their dormitories) and to extend overnight guest privileges to men.¹⁶⁰ The council argued that this proposal was not feasible, as it would “be a general inconvenience to the other students.”¹⁶¹ HPC also noted a proposal to be made to the President’s Council to abolish all curfews and implement 1:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. curfew checks in their stead. Though the council made little headway during spring 1969 with policy

¹⁵⁸ Nancy Scannell, "Activism," *Simmons Review*, Summer 1967; Turner, "Apathy to Activism in Four Years."

¹⁵⁹ Sharon Combs, *House President's Council: Minutes*, 6 March 1969, The Simmons College Archives, RG 35.01, Box 13, Folder 5: *SGA Records*, Boston, Massachusetts.

¹⁶⁰ Sharon Combs, *House President's Council: Minutes*, The Simmons College Archives, RG 35.01, Box 13, Folder 5: *SGA Records*, Boston, Massachusetts, 24 April 1969.

¹⁶¹ Combs, *House President's Council: Minutes*.

changes, students did not abandon their efforts in the next school year.¹⁶²

In a fresh attempt to increase the number of hours men could visit in women's residence halls in fall semester 1969, undergraduate women reintroduced the problem of Simmons' "exceedingly backward and inconsistent" policies, "in view of the permissive and liberal stand that is taken at Simmons on most other issues."¹⁶³ In a survey of eight local colleges and universities students reported that each institution enjoyed far more liberal visitation policies than at Simmons, including at Wellesley College and Radcliffe College, other nearby women's colleges.¹⁶⁴ The investigators found student sentiment at each school a "definite endorsement of liberal parietal rules."¹⁶⁵ Student interviewed at these colleges

tended to minimize the inconveniences of having males free to walk around the dorm and to emphatically praise the idea that a girl is insured, through these parietal rules, of

¹⁶² Simmons College implemented self-regulated hours in fall 1971, the last of the four schools in this study to abolish curfews altogether.

¹⁶³ Eileen Oginitz and Sandy Johnson, "Yes, Virginia, Other Schools Do Have Parietals." *The Simmons News*, 13 November 1969.

¹⁶⁴ Radcliffe College operated under 24-hour parietals; Wellesley College parietals opened women's dormitories from noon until closing time every night. Eileen Oginitz and Sandy Johnson, "Yes, Virginia, Other Schools Do Have Parietals."

¹⁶⁵ Eileen Oginitz and Sandy Johnson, "Yes, Virginia, Other Schools Do Have Parietals."

being able to entertain a male visitor privately – without being confined to a downstairs lounge.¹⁶⁶

The *Simmons News* also surveyed undergraduates at Simmons to evaluate social life and regulations on campus. Approximately one-third of the student body participated in the survey; 84 percent of respondents agreed with extending parietal hours, 8 percent felt satisfied with existing hours, and 5 percent marked “indifferent.”¹⁶⁷ When questioned about specific parietal changes, approximately one-quarter of women surveyed voted in favor of hours every night, more than one-third voted for parietals weekdays and nights, 15 percent voted for weekends only, and the remainder made specific suggestions, from “some type of 24-hour arrangement, either limited to weekends or in some instances unlimited on a seven-day-a-week basis.”¹⁶⁸ Overall, the respondents argued for policy changes to “make [Simmons College] a real life place” and “the kind of college which respects one as an adult not only at 300 [the main academic campus] but also at her dormitory.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ Eileen Oginitz and Sandy Johnson, “Yes, Virginia, Other Schools Do Have Parietals.”

¹⁶⁷ Rosemary Jackson, “On a Scale from 1 to 10... Students Rate Social Life,” *The Simmons News*, 13 November 1969.

¹⁶⁸ Jackson, “On a Scale from 1 to 10... Students Rate Social Life.”

¹⁶⁹ Jackson, “On a Scale from 1 to 10... Students Rate Social Life.”

Students and administrators who opposed expanding parietal hours suggested that such a policy would infringe on the privacy of women in the dormitory who were not comfortable with male visitors; of particular concern was the “student who wants to protect her privacy and who has a roommate who wants to utilize this new system” of visitation.¹⁷⁰ Undergraduates in favor of liberalizing the rules repeatedly assured their peers they could work out any potential problems in this area. Opponents to proposed parietal changes also expressed concern regarding security and theft in the dormitories, to which supporters replied the changes should not have any impact. Supporters also argued that “the new proposal would make rule-breaking unnecessary,” because students would not have to sneak their male callers in and out of the dormitories.¹⁷¹

A student referendum in spring 1970 showed that of the resident undergraduates questioned, 753 students favored 23-hour parietals while 128 students opposed the new proposal.¹⁷² The President’s Council met in April to hear the parietals proposal. Administrators cited a Massachusetts cohabitation law to block any request for illegal

¹⁷⁰ Students renamed *The Simmons News* the *Janus* in spring 1970; in 1971 they renamed it the *Simmons Janus*. “Parietals, Sign-Outs, Off-Campus Living,” *Janus*, 9 April 1970.

¹⁷¹ “Parietals, Sign-Outs, Off-Campus Living.”

¹⁷² Two-thirds of the approximately 1500 undergraduates at Simmons College lived on campus; almost 900 of the 1000 resident student participated in this referendum. “Parietals, Sign-Outs, Off-Campus Living.”; *Simmons College Catalogue*, 1969-1970, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 125.

24-hour parietals, but proved amenable to the 23-hour parietal proposal. After the Council discussed opponents' concerns, policies at other local colleges, and the results of the previous student opinion polls and referenda, all members voted in favor of a four-week trial period for 23-hour parietals on the Simmons resident campus.¹⁷³ The parietals would continue based on the failure or success of the trial run on campus. The Council also voted to introduce a new sign-out system wherein student listed their destination and contact information in a sealed envelope, to be opened only in a "dire emergency."¹⁷⁴

Overall, the social regulations for the Simmons undergraduate of fall 1970 looked dramatically different than those of five years earlier. Policies unthinkable less than a decade earlier assumed the status of "rights" at Simmons College and in the minds of "Sophia Simmons." Students of 1970 took pride in the changes on campus, as an undergraduate writing for the campus newspaper, *Janus* explained:

Simmons girls used to be called Sally. Now they are called Sophia. This change of name symbolizes a change of image which embodies liberalization and progress. ...It is impossible to characterize the Simmons girl. By many she is still thought of as an upper-middle-class virgin with clean white teeth and a passion for apple pie, the American flag, and small dogs. This is far from accurate. Over the past several years the students' backgrounds have become more diversified ... girls are admitted to the college as individuals on the basis of their overall records rather than

¹⁷³ "Parietals, Sign-Outs, Off-Campus Living."

¹⁷⁴ "Parietals, Sign-Outs, Off-Campus Living."

as another Simmons type. The administration is becoming alert to [the] student voice.¹⁷⁵

Simmons undergraduates made radical changes in a short time period by working through their student government, with the campus administration, but acknowledging their responsibility to each other as students first, and demanding this respect from their chosen college. Perhaps the most radical change of the era at Simmons College – in the eyes of parents and the Sally Simmons’ of the fifties – was permitting men into private rooms all hours of the day and night at a women-only college. Men, it seems, belonged in the ‘home.’

“no longer expected to be, or serve as parent substitute”¹⁷⁶

Undergraduate women and campus administrators hastened the demise of *in loco parentis* policies on each campus by the 1970s. In the early seventies, Congress passed legislation to prohibit sex discrimination in educational institutions. Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 stated, in part, “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Under Title IX, women’s curfews were considered discriminatory at coed

¹⁷⁵ "See Sally Run; See Sophia...?," *Janus*, 2 April 1970.

¹⁷⁶ Carl Anderson, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1969-1970*, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C.

institutions and subject to challenge, although Ohio State and Howard had already eliminated women's hours by 1972. Other legal challenges to the doctrine *in loco parentis* helped seal the fate of such policies on American campuses during the 1970s, as numerous cases brought before the courts recognized students' individual right to privacy, and therefore limited the ability of colleges and universities to restrict non-disruptive private behavior.¹⁷⁷ Undergraduate women cemented the policy changes they sought in the sixties by the mid-1970s.

Howard University abolished formal women's hours in 1969, and by fall 1970 opened coeducational dormitories on campus.¹⁷⁸ Undergraduate women at Howard defeated a proposal for coeducational visitation in women's residence halls in fall 1968, but passed the proposal in fall 1969.¹⁷⁹ Undergraduate women objected to coed visitation initially for a number of reasons, including inconvenience and potential loss of privacy (similar to the arguments raised at Simmons College).¹⁸⁰ Junior and senior women clamored for and won 24-hour

¹⁷⁷ For a more complete discussion of the legal changes to *in loco parentis* policies on U.S. college campuses, see David A. Hoekema, *Campus Rules and Moral Community: In Place of in Loco Parentis* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1994).

¹⁷⁸ Anderson, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1969-1970*, 150; Howard University, *H-Book*, 1970-71, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 25. "Co-Ed Living Succeeds with Few Serious Problems," *The Hilltop*, 9 October 1970.

¹⁷⁹ Pearl Stewart, "Women's Dormitories Okay Co-Ed Visitation Privileges," *The Hilltop*, 3 October 1969.

¹⁸⁰ "The Inquiring Reporter," *The Hilltop*, 4 October 1968.

visitation privileges in fall 1971.¹⁸¹ The University permitted each dormitory to determine visiting hours by majority vote.

With the disintegration of their role *in loco parentis*, residence hall staff and student personnel at Howard developed a philosophy statement to guide their actions with regard to students. The statement read, in part:

Contemporary college students enjoy greater responsibility in the administration of universities, and share with the administrators and staff an increasing share of decisionmaking. [sic] Students are becoming more responsible for their own progress and well-being. Professional staff members are no longer expected to be, or serve as parent substitute.¹⁸²

No longer responsible for regulating student life, Howard's student personnel division worked to assist students in their efforts at self-government, to support students' transitions from high school to college and beyond, and to promote "student centered" programs and activities.¹⁸³ Students at Howard University were not unique in this respect during the early seventies and beyond. The concept of the university *in loco parentis* was a casualty of student activism and educational reform of the previous decade. Administrators redefined

¹⁸¹ Stith, "Bethune Demands 24 Hr. Visitation."; Barbara Stith, "Bethune Hall Given 24-Hour Visitation," *The Hilltop*, 12 November 1971.

¹⁸² Anderson, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1969-1970*, 152.

¹⁸³ Anderson, *Annual Report of the Student Personnel Division 1969-1970*, 152.

their role from authoritative figures to guiding resources students could draw upon.

Ohio State University permitted each residence hall to determine visitation hours beginning in fall 1970, on the condition that visitation hours occurred within the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 12:00 p.m. and 1:30 a.m. Friday and Saturday.¹⁸⁴ As of fall 1970, the university required only first quarter freshmen women to follow set curfews and permissions; all other coeds exercised self-regulated hours. Dormitory closing hours limited women's movement out of the halls only in the early morning; residence halls "closed" at midnight during the week and at 2:00 a.m. on the weekends and "opened" at 6:30 a.m.¹⁸⁵

In 1971, the WSGA and Dean of Students agreed officially to end all women's hours and permissions, freshmen included, and expanded the previous year's key card system to allow undergraduate women access to the dormitories after closing hours. This program allowed women themselves to determine how and where to spend their time while enrolled at the university. Ohio State opened its first coeducational dormitory in 1966, with men and women living on

¹⁸⁴ The Ohio State University, *Residence Hall Handbook*, Residence and Dining Halls: Office of Residence Life, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/f-10/2: *Residence Hall Handbook: 1970-71*, Accession 29/86, Columbus, Ohio, 37.

¹⁸⁵ Office of Student Affairs, *The Ohio State University Student Handbook*, 1970-1971, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio, 32-34.

different floors of the hall.¹⁸⁶ By the early 1970s, nine of the twenty-three residence halls on campus accommodated co-educational living arrangements.¹⁸⁷

Campus administrators and the Spelman Student Government Association liberalized first year women's hours and permissions at Spelman College incrementally during the early seventies. The SSGA instituted unlimited curfews for all upperclasswomen in fall 1968, although freshmen women continued to carry curfew restrictions through 1977.¹⁸⁸ Students at Simmons College established self-set curfews and 23-hour parietals by 1971; in fall 1974, students initiated a program of residence-determined parietal hours. They also showed a renewed commitment to the Honor System in the early seventies to maintain campus unity and camaraderie in the absence of many formal behavioral regulations.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Charles Hunter, "Morrill Tower Is 1st Coed Dorm," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 4 October 1966.

¹⁸⁷ Dean of Students, *Residence Hall Diversification Plan for 1972-1973*, Dean of Students, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/c/9: *Residence Halls: Housing: Open Visitation: 1967-1973*, Columbus, Ohio.

¹⁸⁸ In fall 1977, Spelman regulations extended unlimited hours to second semester freshmen women. Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 1969-1970, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia; Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 1974-1975, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia; Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 1977-1978, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.

¹⁸⁹ Simmons College, *Simmons College Handbook*, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 28.

Student Affairs administrators replaced the once exhaustive conduct regulations with succinct statements on expectations for student behavior and general conduct guidelines for campus life. In fall 1970 and beyond, student handbooks at Simmons and Spelman provided short lists of major offenses warranting disciplinary action or dismissal. The Spelman College handbook explained that “disciplinary action will be taken in cases where student behavior is damaging or defacing to property, disruptive or disturbing to other persons, intimidating and unwarranted hostile, profane, or abusive.”¹⁹⁰ Simmons officials offered a brief list of prohibited activities: “the use or sale of illegal drugs; the use of alcohol by any person under 21; trespassing by uninvited guests; and abuse of any other Federal, state, or local law.”¹⁹¹ Spelman College added “flagrant dishonesty,” “physical combat,” “violation of curfew regulations,” “any act which can be termed morally degenerate” (though the handbook did not clarify who defined

¹⁹⁰ Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 28.

¹⁹¹ Simmons College, *Simmons College Handbook*, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 16. Campus officials explicitly acknowledged the problem of illicit drug use on campus during the early 1970s. This is the first mention in the Simmons College Handbook; Spelman College first noted the use of “drugs and hallucinogens” as a major offense in 1970, with an extensive Atlanta University Center *Policy Statement on Drug Use and Traffic* in the student handbook; Howard University published the April, 1972 *Policy Statement of Howard University Concerning the Indiscriminate Use of Narcotics, the Possession For Sale, Transfer, or Exchange of Drugs or Narcotics, and the Manufacture, Transfer, Sale or Exchange of Drugs or Narcotics*, accompanied by explicit photographs of needle users’ arms in the 1972-1973 student H-Book; Ohio State University continued to list drug use as an illegal behavior in student and resident advisor handbooks throughout the early 1970s.

degenerate), and “behavior that brings serious personal discredit to the student or to the college” as offenses punishable by expulsion.¹⁹²

The administration at Howard University spelled out a code of conduct similar to that at Spelman, without the morality clauses. In addition to the basics above, Howard informed students that hazing, plagiarism, forgery of identification cards or college records, theft, raiding residence halls, and “possession or sale of firearms” constituted grounds for disciplinary action.¹⁹³ Campus officials also defined “obstruction or disruption of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary procedures, or other University activities” as punishable conduct, no doubt in response to campus unrest at Howard in the last years of the 1960s.

Ohio State University administrators found it necessary explicitly to state the limits of acceptable conduct for undergraduate students, particularly regarding conduct that previous administrations sought to curb discreetly through regulating women’s hours and permissions. The 1974-1975 *Guidebook for Residents* stated plainly

[v]isitation is defined as those time periods when residents may have friends and relatives of the opposite sex in their residence hall rooms. This visitation policy permits only visitation. Specifically, cohabitation, overnight visitation, and sexual relations are not sanctioned in University

¹⁹² Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 28.

¹⁹³ Howard University, *H-Book*, 1972-1973, Howard University: Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Washington, D.C., 36-37.

residence halls. ... Only overnight hall guests of the same sex as the host or hostess are permitted.¹⁹⁴

Administrators' concerns about sex in the dormitories were grave enough to warrant an official policy statement on student behavior, however students themselves did not share this concern. When asked whether "illicit sexual behavior" was a "serious problem" in OSU residence halls, respondents (both undergraduates and residence hall advisors) characterized sex as a "moral issue to be resolved by each individual."¹⁹⁵ Students argued that yes, their peers were having sex in the dormitories and entertaining overnight guests, but such things occurred "no more [at Ohio State] than in any other university," and they did not pose a "serious threat to [the] residence hall system."¹⁹⁶ Two freshmen women assured the interviewer that "a person is going to do these acts ... no matter where they are," and that "the problem [of illicit sexual behavior] is fairly well controlled for the size of this school."¹⁹⁷ Unless caught, there was very little else the university could do to limit student conduct of this nature.

¹⁹⁴ It seems homosexuality was not a concern for the administration. The Ohio State University, *A Guidebook for Residents*, 1974-1975, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/f-10/2: *A Guidebook for Residents*: 1974-75, Accession 29/86, Columbus, Ohio, 32-33.

¹⁹⁵ David Brown, "Asking Around," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 23 February 1971.

¹⁹⁶ Brown, "Asking Around."

¹⁹⁷ Brown, "Asking Around."

Student defiance of the role of the university *in loco parentis* peaked at Ohio State University, Howard University, Spelman College, and Simmons College between 1968-1969. Undergraduates – regardless of campus traditions or college enrollments – used a common language of rights and freedoms and demonstrated their willingness to challenge the seemingly omnipotent administration to secure more student self-determination and a recognition of student maturity. This sea change replaced outdated gender systems and sexual attitudes with the more modern ideas of the baby boomers’ youth culture at mid-century. The activism of young women to end social regulations in the late 1960s laid the foundation for their continued activism to dismantle the last vestiges of non-academic regulations in the early 1970s, as well as the popularity and participation in the women’s liberation movement and continued support for Black Power on each campus.

Undergraduate women increasingly turned from organizing against *in loco parentis* to political activism to combat the problems of sexism and racism by the late sixties and early seventies. Coeds who found it “hard to believe that obvious discrimination could exist at a state university in this day and age” anxiously pointed out that “the rules support an out-dated tradition of the double standard.”¹⁹⁸ Undergraduate women demanded student governments fight for and

¹⁹⁸ Pat Counts, "Sexual Prejudice," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 14 April 1969.

protect women's rights on campus and academic equality in the classroom or else lose the confidence of the student population. As the role of the college in place of the parent crumbled in the late 1960s, undergraduate women turned their attention to organizing to secure and protect women's rights and interests on – and off – campus.

By the 1969-1970 academic year, Spelman, Howard, and Ohio State had virtually eliminated women's curfews; in fall 1970 Simmons followed suit. Students on each campus utilized the arguments that made the most sense given the context of their own campus traditions, student concerns, and administrative disposition. In the wake of these campus revolutions, undergraduate women struggled to create a new space for themselves at coeducational Ohio State and Howard Universities, and to reexamine the role of the women's college at Spelman and Simmons Colleges.

CHAPTER 6

COLLEGE WOMEN

“As a woman, your traditional roles in society are ... undergoing change. Women from all levels of society are reexamining their lifestyles and goals; they are attempting to achieve new and unique sense of identity. There is increasing opposition to the restricted definition of femininity (and masculinity, for that matter) that had confined women to a passive role in the functioning of society. ...WSGA is actively involved in relevant women’s issues ... Our programs are generally geared towards helping O.S.U. women find a life-style that will make full use of their interests and talents.”¹

By 1970, students had waged and won a revolution on American campuses. Armed with a common language of rights and responsibilities, undergraduates banded together to take on the outdated regulations of their colleges and universities and implemented campus polices that were a more realistic reflection of student beliefs and campus realities. The power dynamic on campuses in the late 1960s and early 1970s had shifted in less than a decade. Students demanded and received the right to shape not only regulations, but also revise course offerings and hold seats on academic and policy committees on each campus. The parent-child relationship between

¹ Pat Markunas, *Welcome from the President, 1972-1973*, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/c-17/1: *About Buckeye Coeds: 1966, 1970-1973*, Accession 127/88, Columbus, Ohio, 1-2.

administrators and students faded in the wake of the *in loco parentis* protests. Students considered themselves adults responsible for their non-academic life, while the university provided academic services to student consumers. Undergraduate women created a firm foundation and tradition of activism and political organization on campus, a foundation that they continued to build upon through the 1970s.

After the demise of *in loco parentis* policies on each campus, women turned their attention to addressing those issues that the liberalization of regulations did not eradicate. As Pat Markunas, 1972-1973 President of the Women's Self-Government Association at Ohio State explained, undergraduate women in the early seventies had to "reexamine" their roles in American society. Support for matters relevant to college women's lives splintered undergraduate women's focus in the absence of a core issue to unite women on campus. With a shared activist vocabulary and tradition of success, women at each institution pressured college administrators to institute or expand services for women on campus, such as health care and Planned Parenthood services. Many vestiges of an older gender system transformed on campuses when young women embraced 'liberation.'

In the wake of undergraduate activism to abolish women's social regulations, students created new spaces for women on campus. Undergraduate women organized seminars and campus conferences to

discuss and explore women's changing roles – both economic and social – in American society. Events such as the bridal fair at Ohio State University did not survive the demise of *in loco parentis* and the rise of feminist activism, while longstanding campus traditions that celebrated women as individuals, such as the Founders Day ceremony at Spelman College, proved amenable to undergraduates and remained a part of campus culture.²

Shifting definitions of gender and femininity spurred women's continued activism on campus and attended a move away from a focus on "MRS. degrees" to a focus on curriculum and careers for many undergraduates. For African American college women, racial ideologies in the wake of the civil rights movement and the vision of the Black Power movement complicated discussions of women's 'proper role' in the family, in the movement, and in American society. A new emphasis on masculinity and the focus on women's reproductive abilities as central to race success shaped many undergraduate women's struggles to reconcile old and new gender ideologies and to define their own paths. White undergraduate women played a significant role in the growing feminist movement on and off campus, building on their shared past on campus and a growing commitment to foment change in

² For example, the *Simmons Review* described the turn away from traditional campus events such as Christmas Cotillion, Olde English Dinner, Junior Prom, Step-Singing, and others through the late sixties when women abandoned campus traditions "no longer relevant to the times." Julie Guinn, "Tradition, Tradition," *Simmons Review*, Late Summer - Early Fall 1974.

women's lives. Undergraduates built on their success in dismantling women's regulations, creating various organizations on campus to address women's needs and women's issues.

***"We can't live in fear"*³**

Ending formal women's social regulations did not solve the real problem of personal security on the urban college campus. With many *in loco parentis* policies gone, undergraduate women worked together in the late sixties and early seventies to pressure campus officials to address security concerns on and around the main campuses to protect all students from potentially unsafe situations. Without numerous curfews and restrictions on women's movements after dark, students believed campus officials had a responsibility to their students to provide adequate preventative measures to ensure the well being of students on campus. For their part, some campus administrators provided safety guidelines to advise women of precautions to take to protect themselves on and off campus. Crimes against women galvanized campus support for increased safety measures such as improved lighting, escorts for women after dark, and improved building security.

³ Pam Leven, "We Can't Live in Fear; We Can Take Precautions," *The Simmons Janus*, 3 November 1972.

As early as 1965 Ohio State University students petitioned the Columbus City Council to improve "street and alley lighting in the University district," and the WSGA led a letter campaign with the Student Senate to urge property owners in the area to trim foliage to accommodate the new lights.⁴ The Council promised to install better lighting in the campus area in 1966, but did not fulfill this promise.⁵ After a flurry of crime in the university area in fall 1968, students at Ohio State revisited the issue of improved lighting in the high crime areas near campus.⁶ The Women's Self-Government Association formed a committee in early 1970 to investigate an increase in attacks on coeds in the campus area. The committee requested improved lighting, increased police and security patrolling, and the expansion of campus bus service to some off-campus areas.⁷ One undergraduate woman suggested an escort system for south campus (the community most affected by area crime) to walk coeds to their residences after dark.⁸

⁴ Students collected 8,854 signatures in support of better lighting and wrote over 2000 letters to area property owners in 1965. Shirley Schneider and Kathy Mikol, "Opinion," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 29 October 1968.

⁵ Shirley Schneider and Kathy Mikol, "Opinion."

⁶ According to a study by student reporters in 1968, approximately ten percent of crime committed in the Columbus area took place in the immediate vicinity of the OSU campus. Shirley Schneider and Kathy Mikol, "Opinion."

⁷ Clare Schaeffer, "W.S.G.A. To Investigate Area Attacks on Coeds," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 February 1970.

⁸ Schaeffer, "W.S.G.A. To Investigate Area Attacks on Coeds."

The WSGA emphasized that women themselves had to exercise caution and be aware of the problems on and off campus.⁹

Howard University coeds who lived in the Meridian Hill building in the late sixties faced the very real dangers of urban crime in their approximately one-half mile commute to and from the main campus. "Not only are [Howard women] subjected to the undue hardship of having to provide transportation at their own expense to and from campus," protested a graduate student in 1968, "but even in trying to flag down cabs or to catch buses and especially by 'hitch-hiking' rides, expose themselves to all manners of rapists, purse snatchers, and undesirable characters."¹⁰ The women in Meridian challenged the university to address their safety concerns and to take steps to increase safety in the area instead of "delegating so much time to 'covering up' the adverse publicity which arises from incidents involving Howard students."¹¹ Campus activists obtained university bus service for Meridian Hill women as a result of the 1968 protests, although the dangers in the area did not diminish.¹²

⁹ The Officers and Program Council of WSGA, "W.S.G.A. Urges Rational Approach," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 13 March 1970.

¹⁰ Robert B. Lee, "Save the Women," *The Hilltop*, 12 January 1968.

¹¹ Lee, "Save the Women."; Pearl Stewart, "'Woman Power' Helps Meridian," *The Hilltop*, 4 October 1968.

¹² The community surrounding the Howard University campus in Washington, D.C. is still considered a dangerous area for Howard students. The campus shuttle service

University authorities openly acknowledged this problem of student safety in campus handbooks distributed to incoming students during the early seventies. “The Ohio State University is surrounded by a declining urban neighborhood,” the 1970-1971 *Residence Hall Handbook* explained. “We have problems with undesirable people wandering onto campus especially at night. A number of measures are taken for your protection,” the handbook assured students.¹³ As extra precaution, women students were advised to “tell roommates when they should expect your return” when going out at night, “never hitchhike” [emphasis in original], walk in pairs or groups, “stay in well-lighted areas,” and to notify police and residence hall staff “immediately” if they were a victim of a crime.¹⁴

Women at Simmons College reacted vigorously to a series of attacks around campus in fall 1972.¹⁵ “Because of our [urban] location,” editor-in-chief Pam Leven argued in the *Simmons Janus*,

we have been warned repeatedly not to take unnecessary chances regarding our safety and especially not to go out

provides continuous and frequent bus service from the Howard Metro (subway) stop to the main campus (approximately six blocks) and surrounding residence halls.

¹³ The Ohio State University, *Residence Hall Handbook*, Residence and Dining Halls: Office of Residence Life, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/f-10/2: *Residence Hall Handbook: 1970-71*, Accession 29/86, Columbus, Ohio, 18.

¹⁴ The Ohio State University, *Guidebook for Residents*, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/f-10/2: *Guidebook for Residents*, Accession 29/86, Columbus, Ohio, 20.

¹⁵ "Attacks on Students Increase Security," *The Simmons Janus*, 3 November 1972.

alone after dark. Last week's assaults took place on well traveled areas in broad daylight. Apparently we must re-assess the situation here.¹⁶

Campus administrators responded to the attacks (against a number of Simmons women, as well as undergraduate women from two other women's colleges close by and a Boston University graduate student in the area) by securing additional police patrols in the area, including plainclothes officers during the daytime, and informing students to take "appropriate security measures when walking along the Fenway."¹⁷ With an eye towards the long term, students told Simmons officials, "we won't rest until we see some concrete changes" such as improved lighting along and a "visible guard" on the Fenway, paid for by the city or the school. "We're not asking for changes," one student admonished, "we're demanding them."¹⁸ Students discouraged their peers from changing their activities in the wake of the attacks and suggested instead that women utilize the shuttle bus service and take precautions by traveling in pairs, "but don't curtail your activity."¹⁹

¹⁶ Leven, "We Can't Live in Fear; We Can Take Precautions."

¹⁷ The Fenway area of Boston refers to the city's Olmsted Back Bay Fens park system in the Fens neighborhood and the surrounding streets. Simmons College is adjacent to the Fenway. "New Security Follows Attacks," *The Simmons Janus*, 10 November 1972.

¹⁸ Leven, "We Can't Live in Fear; We Can Take Precautions."

¹⁹ Leven, "We Can't Live in Fear; We Can Take Precautions."

Security within the dormitories in a new era of coed visitation and coeducational residence halls presented novel challenges to campus authorities as well. Some Simmons students bemoaned the installation of alarm systems in the dormitories, designed to “route all traffic through a single entrance” each evening to tighten campus security.²⁰ Many women approved of the new alarms as a “good idea ... worth the inconvenience” of not being able to use all doors after 11:00 p.m.²¹

Coeducational residence halls proved more of a challenge at Ohio State. In many coed dorms, men and women occupied separate floors of the buildings, and men were not allowed to enter women’s floors except during visiting hours and then by invitation only. By the early 1970s, problems with men on the women’s floors led administrators to introduce a blanket policy to protect coeds in these halls:

A security problem is developing because some men are not respecting this rule and rights of the women residents. ... Women residents have a right to security and freedom on their floors. They cannot feel such security and freedom if men enter their floors. ... Therefore, any men who enter women’s floors henceforth will be considered serious offenders, and they will be apprehended by resident officials, staff or police if necessary.²²

²⁰ Pam Leven, "Security Tightens, Students Strangle," *The Simmons Janus*, 18 November 1971.

²¹ Leven, "Security Tightens, Students Strangle."

²² Dean of Students, *Residence Hall Diversification Plan for 1972-1973*, Dean of Students, The Ohio State University Archives, RG 9/c/9: *Residence Halls: Housing: Open Visitation: 1967-1973*, Columbus, Ohio.

The “right to security and freedom” discussed at Ohio State was the general consensus among coeds and administrators. Campus administrators could not point to regulations that no longer existed to deflect criticism of lax campus security. Though campus safety concerns were not new at urban colleges, students shifted the onus of their personal safety onto the schools themselves by the early seventies. Undergraduates argued that students taking reasonable precautions should be safe in the campus areas where they lived and worked. Campus safety officials expanded their services to accommodate the new freedom of undergraduate women to be out at all hours of the day and night, though their protection did not extend off campus.

“Women are human, too”: negotiating gender on campus²³

By the late sixties and early seventies, changes in the broader American culture both reflected and precipitated change on college campuses. Undergraduate women who had struggled to secure individual rights and the privileges of adulthood while still in school carried those ideas into their lives after graduation. Young women new to campus had grown up in an atmosphere of racial and class tension, well versed in the language of rights, freedom and democracy. Undergraduates on campus in the last years of the decade were aware

²³ Julia Osborne, "Women Are Human, Too," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 7 May 1971.

of, if not a part of, dramatic shifts in the power dynamic on campus and witness to the influence of many voices in ending unpopular campus policies. Undergraduate women faced a daunting question: what did it mean to be a woman in the seventies? Did earlier paradigms of gender apply to women's lives in the wake of the tumult of the sixties, and did women want those paradigms to survive? What was "feminine?" Could the old femininity and the new woman coexist, and if so, how? In the years during and after the main offensive against *in loco parentis*, and with a new responsibility for self, undergraduate women were in a unique position to analyze, challenge, and redefine gender in America. Though not all undergraduate women could agree on a new model of femininity, issues that affected every woman's life – reproductive health, work and/or careers, and equal opportunity in education and in the workplace – garnered broad support on college campuses.

Many undergraduate women in the late sixties and early seventies challenged the very foundation of gender roles and femininity in the United States. While undergraduates had succeeded in redefining 'female' and 'student' as 'adult' and demanded a recognition of women's independence instead of passive dependence on authority on campus (at least in the realm of social regulations), these shifts had not necessarily taken place in the larger culture. In the wake of the *in loco parentis* revolution, a number of undergraduate women turned their

critique of campus policies from the contained university setting to the broader social context of American life.

What white women found, and what some sought to change, was a culture that undervalued their contributions and capabilities as women, that treated them as second class citizens, and limited their opportunities based on biology. "Society has smiled on submissiveness, non-involvement, naïveté, and sexual personification" for women, OSU junior Barbara Helm argued in 1969, "but not on independence."²⁴ African American women had long recognized these problems in the United States; during the late 1960s and early 1970s, some expected to make gains as a result of the civil rights movement, while others worked to redefine black womanhood in light of a new dedication to "blackness." The concerns most important to women on campus were shaped to a great extent by the traditions and atmosphere of their colleges; while some issues proved universal in their appeal, the uniqueness of each campus affected the approaches and solutions to women's issues in this era.

Contemporaries noted a departure among undergraduate women during the later sixties away from marriage and towards career preparation. The number of American women working outside the home increased during the 1960s; by 1968, more than one-third of

²⁴ Barbara Helm, "Forum: Free Women," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 February 1969.

women participated in the paid labor force.²⁵ The number of married women in the workforce rose precipitously between 1960 and 1968 from 30.6 percent to 37 percent.²⁶ As early as 1966, studies pointed to the growing inclination among female students to pursue higher education as preparation for long-term employment. An Ohio State University study “indicated more girls are planning to pursue a career after marriage than ever before,” and “more [undergraduate women] had chosen a career and considered graduate school” than undergraduate women a decade earlier.²⁷ Given evidence of the economic reality of women’s lives – that most women could expect to work outside the home – this change should have come as no surprise.

Students and faculty on each campus discussed the nature and impact of these larger changes in the United States on women’s education for new and traditional careers outside the home. In 1967, Spelman College president Albert Manley explained, “women graduates of the ‘60s are no longer restricted to established feminine lifestyles” of their mothers’ generation, and “the increased educational achievement

²⁵ Jo Freeman, *The Politics of Women's Liberation: A Case Study of an Emerging Social Movement and Its Relation to the Policy Process* (New York: McKay, 1973).

²⁶ Freeman, *The Politics of Women's Liberation: A Case Study of an Emerging Social Movement and Its Relation to the Policy Process*.

²⁷ Ronna Levine, "Today's Coeds May Become Tomorrow's Career Women," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 25 May 1966.

of women has given a double stimulus to [women's] employment."²⁸ Further, Manley argued, "the traditional attitudes of men about working women are shifting. Many men now encourage their wives to seek a career."²⁹ This so-called shift in traditional attitudes was not universal, as a Simmons student noted later in the decade. "The long-established tradition of male superiority is not dying without resistance," she observed, "but women are now less reserved in asserting their independence and demanding their social and economic rights."³⁰

In the milieu of individual rights and equal rights on campus, undergraduate women expected more of the same off campus. Josephine Milburn, Associate Professor of Government at Simmons College in the late sixties, believed that "parents and educators have an obligation to encourage girls to follow careers" instead of convincing young women that "full-time professional commitment is alien to the woman's role."³¹ Women's roles had expanded to include paid labor outside the home as necessary and acceptable in many cases, without an attendant easing of the strictures of femininity in appearance and demeanor. Contemporaries commented on the idealism of

²⁸ Albert E. Manley, "Message from Dr. Albert E. Manley, President of Spelman College," in *Reflections '67* (Atlanta, Georgia: Spelman College, 1967).

²⁹ Manley, "Message from Dr. Albert E. Manley, President of Spelman College."

³⁰ Jean Ferguson, "The Reservoir of Rage in Women," *Simmons Review*, Late Fall - Early Winter 1969.

³¹ Ferguson, "The Reservoir of Rage in Women."

undergraduate women who exhibited “relaxed acceptance” of their male peers and saw “marriage, career, social action, and dialogue [as] inextricably intertwined.”³²

Educators did not challenge the assumption that women would continue to be responsible for home and family even if they pursued careers after graduation and marriage. “No longer must a woman devote her time exclusively to domestic responsibilities,” Albert Manley explained to undergraduate women at Spelman. “Steady advances in the technology of housekeeping now allow women ample time for vocational fulfillment,” and “through planned parenthood she can collapse the span of years previously devoted to maternal responsibilities.”³³ Women who continued to appear “feminine” – well-groomed, manicured, polite, soft-spoken – even if they acted more “masculine” – independent, capable, logical – were tolerated if they were also willing to continue to do “women’s work” in the home.

During the late sixties and early seventies, campus newspapers explored the new choices and roles for college women in the work force. The Ohio State Women’s Self-Government Association sponsored a talk entitled “Marriage and Career – Are They Compatible?” in early 1968 in a seminar series on “The Emancipated Woman.” Dr. Claribel Taylor,

³² Ferguson, "The Reservoir of Rage in Women."

³³ Manley, "Message from Dr. Albert E. Manley, President of Spelman College."

Chairman [sic] of the Family and Child Development Division of the School of Home Economics, argued that research showed “married women who have a college education and are working are usually the most satisfied with life and free from emotional disturbance” in general, “than the average housewife.”³⁴ She explained that a higher percentage of women participated in the labor force, a higher percentage of them were “well educated,” and a higher percentage of women with children were working “than ever before.”³⁵

Taylor told her audience that “wives who combine romantic companionship with parenthood and perhaps with employment, have the best of all possible worlds” but cautioned that “not all men are prepared to live with a woman” who pursues a career, “a woman who aspires to be more than just a woman.”³⁶ These comments exposed the continued tension between femininity and changing women’s roles, that women who pursued careers were not feminine, or not feminine enough. “In order to feel masculine,” Dr. Taylor explained, “[men] need a woman whose only identity is femininity. They would feel inferior to

³⁴ Lilli Adler, "Marriage, Career Mix - Speaker Says," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 1 March 1968.

³⁵ Adler, "Marriage, Career Mix - Speaker Says."

³⁶ Adler, "Marriage, Career Mix - Speaker Says."

one who demanded more than that,” such as independent earnings and time away from the responsibilities of family.³⁷

The perceived dissonance between femininity and women as paid professionals in non-traditional occupations provided interesting copy for campus journalism students. Campus career counselors, experts, and peers discussed the growing idea that “a woman can be a biologist and still retain her femininity.”³⁸ Exposés on women in “men’s fields” called attention to women’s femininity to quell the concern that such women were too masculine, and reassure readers that the women did not overtly challenge men’s roles. Reminiscent of advertisements to encourage women’s participation in war work during the 1940s, writers highlighted the student’s appearance and clothing, her unique abilities, and her dedication to “traditional” women’s concerns such as marriage and or family.

Three such articles from the Ohio State *Lantern* profiled undergraduate women in the engineering and pharmacy schools. Describing the “only woman out of 28 fifth-year chemical engineering students at Ohio State” and “the first [woman] in at least fifteen years to receive her degree from the department,” staff writer Eileen Billie detailed the discrimination Wilma Diskant faced in the engineering

³⁷ Adler, "Marriage, Career Mix - Speaker Says."

³⁸ Marsha Salett, "Simmons' Career Philosophy Is an on-Going Lib Movement," *Simmons Review*, Late Fall - Early Winter 1970.

program.³⁹ Diskant, an “attractive blonde girl” nicknamed “Blondie” by her male peers, described her first days in the department, when male students asked “are you really in the right class?” and when “her professors in some of the beginning chemical engineering course would take a look at her and announce in a clear, distinct voice [the course number and name of the class] and wait for her to leave.”⁴⁰ Attesting to her femininity, Diskant’s brother (a junior at OSU) told Billie that as an engineer, Diskant “doesn’t just mix the ingredients for a cake, she agitated them. ... To the feminine chemical engineer, batter is a ‘homogeneous mixture.’”⁴¹

Diskant’s story at once reinforced notions of gender – she planned to marry after graduation, she looked like a woman, and she baked – while simultaneously expanding the image of what a woman could do – she trained in a male-dominated field, would pursue a career as an engineer and work toward a graduate degree. Emphasizing women’s right and ability to make choices as individuals did not seem to undermine the academic gender structure too dramatically. As we will see below, when women as a group challenged gender roles more directly, campus response was more hostile.

³⁹ Eileen Billie, "Female Chemical Engineer Prompts Surprised Reactions from Students," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 2 June 1967.

⁴⁰ Billie, "Female Chemical Engineer Prompts Surprised Reactions from Students."

⁴¹ Billie, "Female Chemical Engineer Prompts Surprised Reactions from Students."

The male authors of articles on Su Harris, the 1968 May Queen at Ohio State University, and Carole Bernardo, a 1969 OSU senior, focused on each woman's femininity and downplayed any potential challenges to traditional men's roles. Larry Burriss described Bernardo's work – "A Man's Job" – in the Materials Research Laboratory of the Civil Engineering Department as "the unfeminine task of testing hot, sticky asphalt."⁴² "Despite her technical work, and her experience in an engineering setting" Burriss explained, "Miss Bernardo has had no lab or engineering courses" and "after graduation she would like to teach French or English" – a traditionally female pursuit.⁴³

Peter Eichstaedt's profile of "a svelte, tanned, 5-5, 110-pound blonde" named Su Harris focused almost entirely on Harris' appearance and aspirations to be an actress instead of her near completion of a five-year pharmacy degree program at Ohio State. Before informing readers that his subject was the spring May Queen, Eichstaedt described his initial encounter with Harris: "Her hair, which she would often gather in her hand and push up on her head, fell loosely onto her shoulders. She wore sandals, snug grey levis [jeans] and a close fitting cotton shirt which accentuated her femininity."⁴⁴

⁴² Larry L. Burriss, "Coed Does a Man's Job," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 March 1969.

⁴³ Burriss, "Coed Does a Man's Job."

⁴⁴ Peter Eichstaedt, "Su Harris: I Like Being a Girl," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 22 May 1968.

Harris indicated her preference for the “old traditions and the classic concept of college life, which consists of parties, silly games, and traditions that only college students can enjoy” while downplaying her academic achievements and success in the pharmacy department. “Su claims her perseverance has enabled her to pass her pharmacy courses. ‘I have no flair for science’ she says.”⁴⁵ Finally, the author emphasized Harris’ non-threatening “conservative attitude” and “casual interest in world affairs,” as well as her affinity for being “noticed as a girl” in a male-dominated field, “something had no trouble noticing!”⁴⁶ Su Harris “like[d] being a girl,” and the author emphasized many of Harris’ more comforting, feminine traits instead of her presence in a non-traditional field of study at Ohio State.

“‘freedom’ is what we as Black women must strive to keep”⁴⁷

African American women created a definition of femininity throughout the twentieth century to dispel the negative stereotypes of the domineering matriarch, shuffling Mammy, and the promiscuous temptress by modeling their lives on the ideals of white womanhood while working to improve themselves and their families through paid

⁴⁵ Eichstaedt, "Su Harris: I Like Being a Girl."

⁴⁶ Eichstaedt, "Su Harris: I Like Being a Girl."

⁴⁷ Gwendolyn M. McAfee, *Reflections*, 1972, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 172.

labor and a commitment to education. “The black woman has always known her worth, and respect [has] been accorded her by menfolk and children in spite of criticism,” one Spelman alumnae argued.⁴⁸ The shift in gender roles within the broader culture brought white American women’s lives more in line with the economic realities of African American women’s lives and their history of paid work outside the home.

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s study, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, sparked a heated national debate in 1965. The report discussed the pervasive impact of racism and the legacy of slavery on the lives of African Americans, although contemporaries and scholars criticized Moynihan for blaming African Americans for their economic and political disfranchisement in the twentieth century. In the late 1960s, many scientists and sociologists cited the Moynihan report to contend that the problems of the black community lay in the alleged matriarchal gender structure of the black family, breathing new life into the negative stereotypes of black women.⁴⁹ This debate shaped the negotiation of gender in the black community and on campus during the late sixties and early seventies.

⁴⁸ Clara Stanton Jones, "Reflections on "Black"," *Spelman Messenger*, August 1970.

⁴⁹ For more in depth analysis, see Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (New York: W. Morrow, 1984); Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984).

For many African American students in this era, the goals of black liberation and nationhood prompted a reconsideration of women's roles within the home, family, and community. Arguing that women who dominated their men had upset the natural gender order, activists called for the assertion of black masculinity and the retreat of black women into the home to raise families, harkening a return to African tradition.⁵⁰ Black leaders argued that women needed to dedicate themselves to black liberation through childbearing and education of their children.⁵¹ "For Black families it is vitally important that the male be equally, if not more educated than his wife, for Black families suffer enough as it is from female dominance," one student argued.⁵² "What I think is needed," another male student echoed, "is for some of our capable Black women to get off their rear-ends and play a more responsible role in confirming the Blackman's [sic] manhood" by

⁵⁰ Contemporaries criticized the movement's turn to stereotypes of African heritage, arguing that black nationalists perpetuated oppressive sexual and racial myths. See for example, Juanita Kidd Scott, "Negro Women -- Torchbearers of Culture," *Spelman Messenger*, November 1970.

⁵¹ Robert "The Black" Taylor, "Class of '71: A Woman's Viewpoint," *The Hilltop*, 14 May 1971.; Geoffrey H. Simmons, "Changing Role of the Black Woman in Today's Society," *Priority*, 5 October 1973.; Stephani J. Stokes, "Me and Women's Lib," *Priority*, 5 October 1973. See also Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*.

⁵² A Brother, "Howard Women: Unhip, Lack Cool, Unsophisticated," *The Hilltop*, 28 March 1969.

allowing him to be “legally and morally responsible for his family’s well-being.”⁵³

In the early seventies, tension between male students and coeds flared up around these issues of gender and sexuality. The emphasis on supporting black men in their effort to reclaim manhood and advance the race cast women in a supportive or secondary role. Discussions at Howard University revealed that for many African American men, women’s willingness to advance the cause through sexual intercourse played a significant role in their vision of black liberation. Pearl Stewart, a senior at Howard in 1971, discussed women’s role in black nationhood. “Sometimes the role has been one of direct leadership” such as the women who helped organize the protests on campus in 1968, “and other times it has been more supportive, and there have been other women who have just been supportive in bed.”⁵⁴ Many coeds did not agree with this approach to race work and criticized the men for trying to “get over” on them.⁵⁵

The preoccupation of Howard men with sex was a recurring theme at the university throughout the late sixties and early seventies. In the pages of the campus newspaper, students attacked each other’s commitment to the cause of race uplift, which a number of men viewed

⁵³ Hard Rock, "Ultimate Solidarity," *The Hilltop*, 11 October 1968.

⁵⁴ Robert "The Black" Taylor, "Class of '71: A Woman's Viewpoint."

⁵⁵ Trick or cajole them into sexual intercourse without commitment.

through the lens of supporting black men emotionally and physically, and which many black women viewed as education, respect, and unity outside the bedroom. Howard coeds were surrounded by attitudes similar to those expressed by a male student who contended that “Black women must stop emasculating their men ... and make yourself as pleasant and feminine as possible. You must make your man feel like a man.”⁵⁶ Women argued that Howard men needed to act like men if they wanted to be treated like men, and that they should direct their anger outward at white institutions instead of inward against black women. Coed Margarite Hauser expressed deep dismay at the treatment of women on the Howard campus in the late sixties:

As a Black woman, and especially as a coed on this campus, I have come to question the merits of the so-called love our brothers have for us... It is becoming increasingly apparent that... while our brothers chant to us of respect of Black womanhood, they show us so little of that respect. Being a “sister” – at least on this campus – involves being subjected to the most vile language imaginable, being expected to tolerate various degrees of physical handling by all sorts ... just because they are brothers, and being expected to condone and cover up assault by [campus activists] because they are black “heroes.” If this is your idea of a Love Supreme, I want no part of it. You be Black your way, and I’ll be Black mine.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ A Brother, "Howard Women: Unhip, Lack Cool, Unsophisticated."

⁵⁷ Margarita Hauser, "To the Editor," *The Hilltop*, 1 November 1968.

Given the continued tension and anger displayed in campus debates in the ensuing years, Hauser's words were not heeded by a number of Howard students.

Amidst the debate concerning true commitment to the advancement of the race at Howard, Spelman students moved away from the divisive politics of one-upmanship in the movement. Administrators and faculty at Spelman reaffirmed their commitment to education for women in the Spelman College tradition and their attention to the "special needs of women" in higher education while they worked to channel the militancy of young women into constructive channels.⁵⁸ Gender expectation for students at Spelman continued to follow earlier models including education, career, and family – with a departure from older images of feminine to a more racially inclusive definition of female beauty.

Campus officials acknowledged that students and faculty were "mesmerized by the idea of black or blackness" and "black is beautiful" on the college campus, but attempted to reign in the energy of black revolution to avoid "extremism or separatism" on campus.⁵⁹ Nonetheless, the "lifting as we climb" tradition of black women's education remained firmly intact through the tumult of the era at

⁵⁸ Albert E. Manley, *Report of the President: Annual Report*, April 1968, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.

⁵⁹ Richard A. Carroll, "Mesmerism and the Black College," *Spelman Messenger*, February 1969.

Spelman, where campus speakers and faculty reminded students “neither femininity or blackness can substitute for competence and brains” in the success of the race and the family.⁶⁰

Melvin Drimmer, associate professor in the Spelman history department, cautioned undergraduates about the dangers of such extremism in the black community. “Militancy is now equated with getting oneself an Afro hair style and thinking that this is going to help people in the ghettos. Struggle,” Drimmer lamented,

is equated with intimidating fellow Black students for associating with the enemy – white students who have come to Spelman to learn. Liberation now consists of attempting to take over ... or set fire to [campus buildings]. Confrontation means intimidating members of the faculty and student body whom the so-called militants disagree with, labeling every Black man who disagrees with them an Uncle Tom, and every white a racist.⁶¹

Instead of directing their militancy at each other and undermining their ability to work together, Drimmer urged students to focus their energy on improving the campus, hiring better faculty, developing community programs, establishing a Black Studies and African Studies program, and most significantly applying their efforts to their own education for the improvement of the black community as a whole.⁶²

⁶⁰ Scott, "Negro Women -- Torchbearers of Culture."

⁶¹ Melvin Drimmer, "The Future of Spelman and the Atlanta University Center in an Age of Blackness," *Spelman Messenger*, May 1969.

⁶² Drimmer, "The Future of Spelman and the Atlanta University Center in an Age of Blackness."

Campus sentiment soon echoed this call to action. In an open letter to the student body, Spelman Student Government Association president Annette Hutchins called for unity in the wake of the turmoil of the late sixties.

Our greatest struggle comes when we begin as Black women to seek that direction which our individual lives must take. We must determine what we can do together, but we must also make the lonely decision as to what we must do as individuals to contribute to a better world. Spelman College must be a total experience to prepare us for life. ... Together I would hope that we as Sisters can move forward out of a quadrennium of necessary evaluation which has tended to immobilize many of us. I would hope that we would cease to intimidate one another with rhetoric of Blackness, but that we would begin to realize our limitation, and increase our expectation through concrete involvement in Spelman, in Atlanta and in the world that surrounds us.⁶³

Students at Spelman struggled to reconcile the rhetoric of blackness with the tradition of race pride and education among black women. "Let us not be deceived by the rhetoric of Ultra-Blacks who seek to make you ashamed of the heritage here at Spelman," one undergraduate urged, "we must rise to lead our people out of a decade of darkness."⁶⁴ Spelmanite Harriett Geddes challenged her peers "to accept your role as a black woman and wear this honor with black

⁶³ Annette Hutchins, *Letter from the S.S.G.A. President*, Student Handbook, 1972-1973, The Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia, 37-38.

⁶⁴ Paula Hicks, "Struggle for Black Womanhood," *Spelman Spotlight*, September 1972.

pride.”⁶⁵ Building a bridge between black nationalism and study at Spelman, Geddes “dare[d] [students] to set worthwhile goals and never stray from them because you and I both know that black womanhood is the key to Black Man Power.”⁶⁶ Like many Howard coeds, Spelman students did not plan to support black liberation by lying on their backs. Instead, students worked to end institutional racism, continue the fight for equality (both racial and sexual), and by “building up and strengthening ... the institutions of the Black community” in the tradition of Spelman alumnae – without many of the non-academic restrictions on previous generations.

For African American women, the question of women’s liberation was politically charged. Women’s liberation activists at Simmons College embraced the demands of the Black Student Organization on campus in the late 1960s, but this cooperation was the exception and not the rule at the schools under investigation. The relationship between black women and white women was contaminated by their shared history of white oppression; liberation activists fought to get women out of the kitchen, many contemporaries noted wryly, while

⁶⁵ Harriett L. Geddes, "A Letter to Freshmen," *Spelman Spotlight*, October 1971.

⁶⁶ Geddes, "A Letter to Freshmen."

black women fought to get into their own kitchens.⁶⁷ Images of the white mistress abusing the African American domestic and keeping her from her family to raise the white woman's children simmered beneath the surface for many black women.⁶⁸ Sylvia McGriff discussed the barrier of race in the *Spelman Spotlight*:

How could a Black woman who once marched wearily into the kitchens and upstairs of bedrooms of "Missy" only to find her drenched in ... perfumes, robed in nothing but the finest and adorned in beautiful jewels and accessories ever imagine that her struggle is synonymous with that of white women?⁶⁹

Too, white women represented the feminine ideal which African American women had been judged against in the Jim Crow era and beyond. Some black coeds had difficulty finding common ground with white women to unite against male oppression when they believed that only unity with black men would end race discrimination; that "the black women's place was in the black liberation movement and not women's liberation."⁷⁰

⁶⁷ "Blacks V. Feminists," *Time*, 26 March 1973.; Mary Kay Bradshaw, "Women's Lib Avoids 'Tack-on' of Blacks," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 6 April 1973.; Stokes, "Me and Women's Lib."

⁶⁸ See for example, "Blacks V. Feminists."; Helen H. King, "The Black Woman and Women's Lib," *Ebony*, March 1971.; Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*.

⁶⁹ Sylvia McGriff, "Lib ... Can It Free Black Women?," *The Spelman Spotlight*, October 1970.

⁷⁰ Jocelyn Dorsey, "Blacks Shun Women's Lib: 'We Are About Unity'," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 6 April 1972.

For many undergraduate black women drawn to political activism, the oppression of race weighed more heavily than the oppression of sex. “We must understand,” McGriff argued, “that job discrimination and other unequal opportunities are not unique to our male or female being, but to our BLACKNESS” [emphasis in original].⁷¹ Ohio State sophomore Navita Cummings reasoned that black women needed to “concentrate on our struggle because nine times out of ten you will be denied a job because you are black and not because you are a woman.”⁷² Many black women did not see a shared history of work and struggle with their white peers, and pointed to this perceived lack of responsibility among pampered white women as the gulf between them.⁷³ Spelman College alumnae Clara Jones observed in 1970 that “white women are to be commended for recognizing their bondage and crying out against it. Nevertheless,” she argued, “the black woman’s immediate occupation must be the liberation of black people, a goal that has indissoluble partnership with mankind’s hope for salvation.”⁷⁴

The perception of black women as overbearing, emasculating matriarchs perpetuated by the 1965 Moynihan Report distorted the truth of African American women’s long history of employment outside

⁷¹ McGriff, "Lib ... Can It Free Black Women?."

⁷² Dorsey, "Blacks Shun Women's Lib: 'We Are About Unity'."

⁷³ Dorsey, "Blacks Shun Women's Lib: 'We Are About Unity'."

⁷⁴ Jones, "Reflections on "Black"," 14.

the home, emphasis on family, and dedication to the uplift of the race. Activists in the black community accused women who aligned themselves with the women's liberation movement of sustaining negative images of black women and continuing to undermine black families and black men's masculinity. "The majority of black women are not interested in the liberation movement," political scientist and professor of Black Studies Curtina Moreland explained to an OSU audience, "because they are trying to disprove social myths of female dominance among black people."⁷⁵ To disprove these myths, Moreland contended, "black women ... are willing to give up the things that white women are fighting for."⁷⁶

Some undergraduate women committed to race equality sought to dispel the myths of black womanhood by dedicating themselves to an essentialist definition of womanhood by focusing on reproduction and child rearing; others sought a more equal relationship between black men and black women to strengthen the black family and by extension the black community. The *Hilltop* posed the question of whether black women should become involved with the women's liberation movement to a number of students in fall 1971; nine of the eleven published responses argued no. "Hell, no," a Howard University coed responded

⁷⁵ Bradshaw, "Women's Lib Avoids 'Tack-on' of Blacks."

⁷⁶ Bradshaw, "Women's Lib Avoids 'Tack-on' of Blacks."

vehemently, “Black women should be involved in uplifting the morale of their Black men and producing Black babies for our forthcoming nation. Nothing else.”⁷⁷

A vocal minority of African American women and men expressed support for women’s liberation and saw a role for themselves in the movement, despite arguments of irrelevance. Larry Rose of Howard University felt that “Black women really should study what Women’s Lib is all about” before they dismissed it, “because there are certain aspects of [the] movement that can be beneficial to Black women.”⁷⁸ Stephani Stokes unapologetically described herself as a “feminist within my Blackness.” Stokes recounted conflicts with men and women who “do not understand that my movement includes the elimination of both sexism and racism” as the means to Black Liberation.⁷⁹ For her, a strong sense of self and equality with men was essential to the success of liberation for African Americans and for women.

⁷⁷ "Campus Speakout," *The Hilltop*, 29 October 1971.

⁷⁸ "Campus Speakout."

⁷⁹ Stokes, "Me and Women's Lib."

“We’re not out to chase men with axes or castrate them”⁸⁰

The women’s liberation movement of the late sixties and early seventies proved more influential at the predominantly white Simmons College and Ohio State University than at the historically black Howard University and Spelman College, for many of the reasons explored above. The movement leveled a harsh critique of women’s status in American society, called for equal rights and opportunities for all women, and attributed many of the problems women faced to the social construction of women as second-class citizens compared to their male peers. This critique and analysis of gender roles and femininity combined with calls for new legislation and organizations to protect women’s legal, economic, and reproductive rights characterized much activism in the early 1970s. Regardless of examples to the contrary, the phrase “women’s liberation” evoked images of angry, bra-burning radicals intent on the destruction of American values for many contemporaries – an image many campus activists struggled to refute.

The women’s liberation movement emerged simultaneously at Simmons College and Ohio State University in 1970, although women’s liberation at Simmons did not expand significantly for almost a full year. Women’s liberation collectives shaped campus debates and policy

⁸⁰ Theresa Orr, "Strike Aids Women's Lib but Summer Rift Develops," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 30 September 1970.

directions through the 1970s, calling attention to the needs of women on campus and in the broader culture. While more women participated in the movement at Simmons and OSU, African American women from Spelman and Howard debated the relevance of what they perceived as a white women's movement to their own lives. The language of individual rights that proved successful in the battle to end *in loco parentis* carried over into women's political activism to change the patriarchal society around them.

A group of undergraduate and graduate women who "want[ed] equal rights for women in all areas" of society founded OSU-Women's Liberation (self-titled "Women's Lib") in December 1969.⁸¹ Karen Danesi, a sophomore at the time, explained that the group was organized because "society placed a stigma on women that should be erased," and "the traditional role of women defined by motherhood is changing now that women are seeking higher education and better jobs."⁸² The collective joined a strike coalition in spring 1970 and enumerated the objectives of Women's Lib as co-organizers of a campus demonstration.

The women's liberation movement emerged on the Ohio State campus in spring 1970, when a number of campus groups threatened

⁸¹ Orr, "Strike Aids Women's Lib but Summer Rift Develops."

⁸² Orr, "Strike Aids Women's Lib but Summer Rift Develops."

to close down the university if the administration failed to implement dramatic changes. Under the umbrella of the Ad Hoc Committee for Campus Rights, students submitted a list of demands for immediate implementation at Ohio State in mid-April 1970. The demands reflected the work of student leaders within the black student movement, the women's liberation movement, the anti-war movement, and student rights activists on campus. Members of the Ohio State University – Women's Liberation Movement (Women's Lib) played a visible role in drawing up and presenting the committee's demands, as well as in directing the events that took place on campus in the ensuing weeks. The demonstrations steered Women's Lib organizing and activism for the rest of the academic year.

Through the Ad Hoc Committee's statement, OSU – Women's Liberation requested that the university "end restrictive quotas based on sex," "recruit and hire more women" at all levels of campus employment, end "sexist" discrimination policies in hiring, establish a free campus day care center, establish an on-campus planned parenthood center, and provide equal representation on all campus committees and bodies pertaining to student life and curriculum. Students also called for the "immediate abolishment of degrading and unfair disciplinary practices which apply only to women students and other policies and programs which degrade women" and "the initiation

of courses on women's past history and the abolishment in all fields and departments of the inaccurate, degrading stereotype image of women which represents them as inferior human beings."⁸³ These demands covered issues that had been discussed on campus and in the national media over recent months and years, and picked up the challenge to prevailing ideas of femininity and women's roles that undergraduate women had started in their earlier fight to end women's non-academic regulations on campus.

Student leaders who led a campus rally in late April ordered protesters to use raised "fists and silence" as they moved across campus peacefully to present their demands to OSU President Novice Fawcett. "We are protesting giving the campus over to people who are in the business of making and fighting wars," Ad Hoc Committee spokeswoman Lorraine Cohen explained to students gathered on the Oval, as well as the "continuation of the University's repressive pseudo-parental code" limiting free speech and demonstrations on campus.⁸⁴ School officials turned the crowd of approximately three hundred students away from the Administration Building. Protest leaders refused an offer to send in a small group of delegates to present the

⁸³ Ad Hoc Committee for Campus Rights, "Ad Hoc Demands Listed," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 5 May 1970.

⁸⁴ The Oval is a grassy pedestrian yard area at the heart of the Ohio State University main campus. It was/is often the site of campus demonstrations, rallies, impromptu speakers, Frisbee games, and general goofing off. Bonnie Schwartz, "Group Asks Student Strike," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 27 April 1970.

coalition's demands, in part because President Fawcett was not on campus and also to demonstrate their "'all or none' policy" to the administration.⁸⁵

Cohen immediately announced the coalition's plans to lead a student strike the following Wednesday at noon to hear the administration's response to their demands, stating, "We will not spend the day in classes. We are striking if the University continues to be what it is."⁸⁶ The Student Assembly of the Undergraduate Student Body endorsed the Ad Hoc Committee's actions and "call[ed] for the active peaceful and non-violent student and faculty participation" in the boycott of classes, "until such time as members of the Administration agree to meet and frankly and openly discuss with student representatives" the students concerns and "they are further willing to discuss and reach a clear policy statement as to what they intend to implement in the immediate and long-range future to strive forward in more adequate progress in these areas."⁸⁷ With the broad support of the undergraduate population (though by no means unanimous support), campus administrators and activists anticipated the class boycott.

⁸⁵ Schwartz, "Group Asks Student Strike."

⁸⁶ Schwartz, "Group Asks Student Strike."

⁸⁷ Undergraduate Student Body, *Student Assembly, Resolution*, April 1970, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio.

What had initially involved a very small number of students – considering the thousands of students enrolled at Ohio State – escalated quickly to include the participation of two thousand plus students, then pulled in even more during the ensuing debates. In addition to speeches from members of Afro-Am, a black student organization on campus, and the Ad-Hoc Committee for Student Rights, the anti-war and student rights organization, Joel Ann Todd, Lorraine Cohen, and Linda Green of the Ad Hoc Committee and Women’s Liberation spoke to the crowds.⁸⁸ “Women at OSU are the biggest minority group on campus,” argued Green, “and need support on this campus right now. Women want both birth control and abortion counseling service. A women’s body is her own, not the state’s.”⁸⁹ Green also reiterated the Committee’s demand for the end “of the ridiculous quotas in the graduate and professional schools” that limited female enrollments.⁹⁰

Despite the efforts of appointed demonstration marshals to control the crowds and Cohen’s professed faith in non-violent protest and “a long-term program of action” to correct the university’s ills, the administration called in 1,200 National Guardsmen to campus late in

⁸⁸ Linda Green and Lorraine Cohen were graduate students involved in organizing OSU-Women’s Liberation in 1970. Bonnie Schwartz, “Student Rioters Battle Police,” *The Ohio State Lantern*, 30 April 1970.

⁸⁹ Schwartz, “Student Rioters Battle Police.”

⁹⁰ Schwartz, “Student Rioters Battle Police.”

the day to reinforce the efforts of the Columbus City Police, campus police, and the State Highway Patrol to reign in the increasingly violent and confrontational crowds around campus.⁹¹ Officers used tear gas, rubber bullets, and nightsticks to contain demonstrators, the mayor of Columbus imposed a city-wide curfew from 8:00 p.m. to 6:30 a.m., and President Fawcett closed the Ohio State University campus.⁹² Students and administrators acknowledged the responsibility of both demonstrators and police for the violence; President Fawcett recognized in a written statement that "student leadership [of the boycott] attempted to keep the demonstration in bounds but despite their best efforts the demonstration did become violent."⁹³ Nonetheless, Fawcett informed the campus community that tear gas would be used to "break up crowds of people and to avoid further disruption," the National Guard and Highway Patrol would remain on campus, and a midnight to 6:30 a.m. curfew would remain in effect until order was completely restored.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Novice G. Fawcett, *Statement by President Novice G. Fawcett*, 30 April, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio, 1; Schwartz, "Student Rioters Battle Police."

⁹² "An Editorial," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 30 April 1970; Fawcett, *Statement by President Novice G. Fawcett*, 3; Schwartz, "Student Rioters Battle Police."

⁹³ "An Editorial.,"; Fawcett, *Statement by President Novice G. Fawcett*, 2; Schwartz, "Student Rioters Battle Police."

⁹⁴ Ohio State University Information Center, *Statement to the University Community*, 1 May 1970, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio.

In the aftermath of the campus shut down, a poll of approximately 13,000 students, faculty, and staff conducted by the Department of Geology showed widespread support among each group for the actions and goals of the Ad-Hoc Committee and censure of the administration's response during the boycott.⁹⁵ Building on this momentum, the newly dubbed Strike Coalition at Ohio State published a revised, detailed list of demands for the University administration in mid-May that represented the interests of Afro-Am, the Ad-Hoc Committee for Student Rights, and the Women's Liberation Front. OSU-Women's Liberation consolidated their initial arguments to include "demands ... aimed at giving women an equal opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the University and end its current repression."⁹⁶ These included the establishment of a Planned Parenthood center close to campus, "to which the University should contribute a centrally located building and furnish it with non-medical supplies," a women's self-defense program, and the creation of a free campus day care center with a "male and female staff, a full time nurse, a lunch program, and supplies."⁹⁷ OSU-Women's Lib also demanded that the university

investigate the status of women at Ohio State University in general, and specifically in such areas as Graduate and Professional School Quotas, Sexist Scholarships, Hiring

⁹⁵ "Disorder Mishandled, O.S.U. Poll Indicates," *Columbus Dispatch*, 8 May 1970.

⁹⁶ "Strike Coalition Demands," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 20 April 1970.

⁹⁷ "Strike Coalition Demands."

practices, Promotion practices, and Research funding, and also, investigations to offer suggestions for a series of courses on women which could be initiated at the University. [sic]⁹⁸

As part of the successful boycott committee, the goals of the women's liberation movement received more exposure and support than they might have otherwise enjoyed separate from the strike. These goals also provided direction and guidance to the women's movement on campus through the mid-1970s.

In June 1970, students called a series of "focused mass marches" in "campus areas connected with the strike demands" to focus further attention on the issues at stake.⁹⁹ The Council of Governments (COG) offered the results of a referendum sponsored by the Inter Collegiate Council and the Student Assembly after the mass marches to the administration in mid-June. The COG poll of approximately 8,500 students and faculty showed the vast majority of respondents supported the efforts of the undergraduate student representatives, the faculty negotiating team, and the graduate student representatives, and less than half supported the efforts of the university administration.¹⁰⁰ The referendum also indicated nearly half of those questioned

⁹⁸ "Strike Coalition Demands."

⁹⁹ Bonnie Schwartz, "Ad-Hoc Calls for 'Mass Marches,' Plans to Resume Full-Scale Strike," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 1 June 1970.

¹⁰⁰ "Campus Referendum Results Show 57% of Voters Favor Student Strike," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 9 June 1970.

supported the goals of OSU-Women's Liberation and just more than half backed the demands of Afro-Am.¹⁰¹ In light of this support for the student strikes, campus officials published the *University Administration Responds to Student Demands* in fall 1970. The report detailed each of the Strike Coalition's demands and the actions taken or planned to address student concerns. Women's requests for a study on the status of women at OSU, including hiring, employment, and admissions practices, and for a self-defense program were accepted. The more controversial requests for Planned Parenthood services and a day care center were under study by the university.¹⁰² OSU-Women's Lib, expanded to over two hundred strong and growing, made these two demands the focus of their work in 1970-1971.¹⁰³

One of the most significant barriers to the women's movement on campus was the negative stereotype of members or supporters of the women's liberation movement. Activist women at both Simmons College and Ohio State University seemed to spend as much time defending themselves against being labeled unfeminine as advocating their agendas. Women's liberationists struggled to separate ideologically

¹⁰¹ "Campus Referendum Results Show 57% of Voters Favor Student Strike."

¹⁰² The Ohio State University, *University Administration Responds to Student Demands*, 29 September, The Ohio State University Archives, Columbus, Ohio, 4; Mary Webster, "University Meets 22 Student Demands," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 1 October 1970.

¹⁰³ Beverly Morgan, "800 Women Ponder 'Exploited' Sex Role," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 19 October 1970; Ann Sheldon, "Women's Lib Sets Goals," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 6 October 1970.

their biological sex – female – from what they considered socially constructed gender roles – femininity. Comments deriding feminists' appearance or painting them as gender radicals often overshadowed efforts by activists to explain these ideas to the general public.

In an article published in *The Second Wave: A Magazine of the New Feminism*, Nancy Williamson of Boston, Massachusetts, described the impact of clothing and standards of the feminine in American culture; her comments provide a clear picture of what contemporaries considered appropriate feminine carriage and attire.¹⁰⁴

Women in the movement are frequently accused of being ugly (as if it were some crime that invalidates everything else we do), of defeminizing ourselves (femininity being directly proportional to the shape, size, and amount of breasts and legs showing), of having an uncouth appearance (i.e. short hair, shiny noses, unshaved legs and armpits). Frequently at public forums, orientation meetings, and in personal contacts, we are questioned about our appearance. Why do you wear 'men's clothes' is a frequent query. (Anything that is comfortable seems to be classified as 'men's clothes.') Why don't you want to look attractive? (It seems we can't be attractive if we don't wear makeup and dresses.)¹⁰⁵

While many observers supported women's social and economic equality to varying degrees, they could not understand, or rejected outright,

¹⁰⁴ Created for a female readership, *The Second Wave: A Magazine for the New Feminism* was written and distributed by Female Liberation, a women's collective based in Boston, Massachusetts. The magazine was published from 1971 through 1983, though the collective disbanded in 1974 for ideological reasons. The Simmons College Library has complete holdings of the publication.

¹⁰⁵ Nancy Williamson, "The Case for Studied Ugliness," *The Second Wave: A Magazine of the New Feminism*, Spring 1971, 10.

such criticism of women's performance of femininity. Women who acted like "men" but looked like "women" (as defined by mainstream culture) were somehow less threatening than women who looked too "masculine," even if they acted like "women." For their part, the American media fixated on women's underwear, making the bra a symbol of traditional womanhood.¹⁰⁶

Women involved in the movement at Ohio State expressed deep frustration with the national and local media for "invariably capitaliz[ing] on screaming radicals who [allegedly] burned bras ... while a 'super-straight commercial press' set up their own model of what a woman should be."¹⁰⁷ Was the braless look a fashion statement or a political statement, or both? Students stressed personal comfort for both arguments but some women agreed that not wearing a bra was indeed "a part of women's liberation," and "part of the movement for freedom of expression."¹⁰⁸ "We are not against femininity," countered

¹⁰⁶ Shirley Brownell, "To Bra, or Not to Bra; That Is the Question," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 27 April 1970.

¹⁰⁷ Sheldon, "Women's Lib Sets Goals." The image of the bra-burning feminist is attributed to national coverage of the 1968 Miss America Pageant protests in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Reporters described the "freedom trash can" filled with "instruments to torture women," including high heel shoes, bras, hair curlers, girdles, and magazines such as *Playboy* and *Ladies Home Journal*. Demonstrators intended to light the "trash" on fire, but did not – although press reports stated otherwise. A number of women's historians discuss this and similar incidents; see for example Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989); Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking, 2000).

¹⁰⁸ "Women's Lib Chief: 'Men Are Sexist'," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 June 1970.

OSU-Women's Lib member Linda Green in 1970, "and wearing or not wearing a bra is completely irrelevant to our cause. Femininity does not mean subservience."¹⁰⁹

This gender dilemma was especially evident on the Simmons College campus in the early 1970s, where students who supported equality for women – particularly in the workplace – were less willing to abandon the image of femininity. Organized student participation in the women's liberation movement began at Simmons in fall 1969, when campus activists hosted an informal discussion of the topic. Students raised concerns about "the problems of stereotyped roles which many girls felt compelled to assume," expressed "dissatisfaction with the notion that a woman must eventually define her role in terms of a man," and determined that the "ultimate goal" of the movement was "total individual freedom."¹¹⁰ Participants argued that the liberation movement was "a human revolution aimed not only at freeing women from their traditionally stereotyped roles, but also at freeing men."¹¹¹

Students at Simmons College interested in the women's liberation movement agreed to meet in the coming months, though efforts to recruit more members proved difficult in the next year. As a woman's

¹⁰⁹ "Women's Lib Chief: 'Men Are Sexist'."

¹¹⁰ Evelyn Shalom and Sheera Strick, "Women's Liberation Group Holds Campus Discussion," *The Simmons News*, 30 October 1969.

¹¹¹ Evelyn Shalom and Sheera Strick, "Women's Liberation Group Holds Campus Discussion."

college long dedicated to educating women for meaningful careers outside of the home, many students and faculty felt that Simmons already “*was* the liberation movement.”¹¹² A random survey of one hundred students in fall 1970 found that “although most Simmons students don’t belong to a Lib group, they are, for the most part, well-read in both group and movement literature.” Sixty-two percent of respondents agreed with the statement “I believe in equality for women, but I don’t find answers or satisfaction in the existing Women’s Lib groups,” and the same percentage also agreed that Simmons College did “not provide an adequate amount of information and education on Lib issues.”¹¹³

When asked why they did not approve of the women’s liberation movement, students pointed to the “militarism, ... bra burning, and ... the loss of femininity in many Lib groups” and argued that “violence ... is [not] a very ‘feminine’ way of reacting” to women’s needs. “Radical factions,” one student complained, “are making a laughing matter out of the entire worthwhile movement.”¹¹⁴ Simmons’ traditional educational approach – preparing women for the world they would encounter as career women – “de-emphasizes the students’ need to belong to a Lib

¹¹² Emphasis in original. Salett, “Simmons’ Career Philosophy Is an on-Going Lib Movement,” 17.

¹¹³ Salett, “Simmons’ Career Philosophy Is an on-Going Lib Movement.”

¹¹⁴ Salett, “Simmons’ Career Philosophy Is an on-Going Lib Movement.”

group,” the study’s author argued.¹¹⁵ A focus on individual goals and achievement that had helped earlier generations of Simmons graduates to succeed in both traditional and non-traditional women’s occupations undermined the urgency for organized, collective protest.¹¹⁶

With an official membership of five students in early 1970, Women’s Liberation at Simmons College faced an uphill battle to recruit new members. Criticism of the movement placed group members on the defensive against a campus culture that emphasized individual achievement to address women’s problems. Students interested in liberation activism turned to very active Boston area collectives such as the New England Women’s Coalition, Bread and Roses, and Female Liberation. “Women’s Liberation members are not just single, ugly women,” one student activist posited. “The presence of married and single, student and non-student, young and old women brings a freshness and new approach to the movement and especially to the collectives.”¹¹⁷

Activists fought critics of the movement in the pages of the campus newspaper and demanded balanced coverage from student

¹¹⁵ Salett, "Simmons' Career Philosophy Is an on-Going Lib Movement."

¹¹⁶ Marybeth Brennan, "Simmons' Goals Redefined," *The Simmons News*, 12 March 1965; Ferguson, "The Reservoir of Rage in Women."; Salett, "Simmons' Career Philosophy Is an on-Going Lib Movement."

¹¹⁷ Joan Beach and Cindy Hunt, ""Some of My Best Friends Are Women"," *Janus*, 3 December 1970.

reporters. In response to an article in the *Janus*, the Simmons Woman's [sic] Liberation Collective refuted reporter Debbie Lerner's entreaties to just tell the Simmons community what they "could do to help themselves" instead of just telling them they were oppressed.¹¹⁸ "It seems to us that it is essential to have an extended discussion on the oppression of women before we can deal with their liberation," the collective argued.¹¹⁹ Simmons' tradition of educating women for professional careers based on individual achievement did not provide a hospitable environment for collective challenges to employment conditions women were taught to accommodate by acting and appearing feminine.

Most discussions of women's liberation at Simmons focused on the question of masculinity and femininity in American culture. Simmons' Socialist Women, another liberation group on campus, "refute[d]" the concepts of masculine and feminine "since society has," they argued, "taken all the qualities [of human behaviors] and divided them in half, saying women are passive, irrational, sensitive, submissive, emotional beings while men are rational, decisive, unemotional, insensitive, active beings."¹²⁰ The Simmons Woman's

¹¹⁸ Simmons Woman's Liberation Collective, "Woman Power," *Janus*, 19 February 1970.

¹¹⁹ Simmons Woman's Liberation Collective, "Woman Power."

¹²⁰ Joan Beach and Cindy Hunt, "'Some of My Best Friends Are Women'."

Liberation Collective explained that they “never advocated a reversal of roles (masculine or feminine)” but in fact challenged the “very existence of these roles” as “detrimental to a healthy and free society.”¹²¹ The Collective did not attract students who were “blissfully content [or] those who, although oppressed, are not in a position either socially or economically to attack the system.”¹²² The SWLC sought students like themselves, who “want opportunities for ourselves. We want to be able to make decisions concerning our own lives, and not to be shunted into the role that this society defines as acceptable for us.”¹²³

By October 1970, four women’s liberation collectives existed on campus, with numerous others in the greater Boston area.¹²⁴ Women’s activism in liberation groups on campus on issues such as reproductive rights and political equality was shrouded by continued discussions concerning femininity and the women’s movement. Students expressed skepticism about activists’ questioning of masculine and feminine and perpetuated negative media images of student activists. In an attempt to clarify their ideas on gender, a member of the Simmons’ Socialist Women commented

¹²¹ Simmons Woman's Liberation Collective, "Woman Power."

¹²² Ferguson, "The Reservoir of Rage in Women."

¹²³ Simmons Woman's Liberation Collective, "Woman Power."

¹²⁴ Joan Beach and Cindy Hunt, "'Some of My Best Friends Are Women'."

Many feel that Women's Liberation means giving up men (boyfriends, husbands), knitting, bras and leg-shaving, but this is not necessarily so. What it is, is essentially a state of mind, a raising of your self-opinion as a person first, then as a woman.¹²⁵

"But," argued another member of the collective,

the giving-up of any of these things or a change in attitude about them may evolve out of increased self-awareness; you realize your own personal value and then decide the importance of these things to you.¹²⁶

In other words, women didn't have to give up any of the trapping of femininity to support women's liberation, but once they became part of the movement, they might realize that the performance of the feminine was not as important as other issues or concerns in their life.

The women's liberation movement at Simmons College expanded significantly after a speech by Gloria Steinem, "the priestess of the movement," at Harvard Business School in October 1971.¹²⁷ Steinem discussed the need for women to work together to "humanize" sex roles and end women's second-class status, and elaborated on the "psychological conflict" between femininity and sex roles. "Clad in corduroy slacks and a skinny ribbed sweater with long hair shining under the stage lights," Eileen Ogintz reported, "Ms. Steinem appeared to be the epitome of modern femininity" as she addressed the crowd.

¹²⁵ Joan Beach and Cindy Hunt, ""Some of My Best Friends Are Women"."

¹²⁶ Joan Beach and Cindy Hunt, ""Some of My Best Friends Are Women"."

¹²⁷ Eileen Ogintz, "Steinem Probes, Provokes," *The Simmons Janus*, 7 October 1971.

A woman's identity is supposed to rest on what's outside instead of what's inside [Steinem argued]. ... Feminine tasks are always the jobs that men don't want to do – the SHIT WORK – This has become the pattern for other subjugations. ... Men don't have anything to fear. Women don't want to do to you what you have done to them. Men are also restricted and dehumanized [by sex roles]. [emphasis in original]¹²⁸

Steinem argued that a change in sex roles for men and women would “leave the individual free to become an individual,” basically that “a woman should have the chance to choose her own life style” instead of being forced into a role they didn't create for themselves.¹²⁹

Though “most Simmons girls are smart enough to see the value in many facets of the Women's Liberation Movement,” most did not participate in the movement on campus until the weeks after Steinem's speech.¹³⁰ Ironically, Steinem's feminine appearance was probably as important to many Simmons undergraduates as her message. A women's liberation activist who demonstrated confident command of herself and her audience, intelligence, critical thought, and success in her chosen field, and simultaneously appeared feminine, Steinem provided a working model for undergraduates still unsure of how to be feminine and liberated at the same time.

¹²⁸ Ogintz, "Steinem Probes, Provokes."

¹²⁹ Ogintz, "Steinem Probes, Provokes."

¹³⁰ Ogintz, "Steinem Probes, Provokes."

Steinem's visit, as well as a shift in emphasis from ideological debate to directed activism on campus, spurred more organized political activity at Simmons College in 1971. Less than a week after Steinem's talk, the new Women's Caucus "announced the birth of an organized effort to sensitize the Simmons Community to the problems of women's rights."¹³¹ The Women's Caucus outlined their objectives in an open letter to the Simmons community. Many of their goals echoed those of women's liberation at Ohio State in the preceding year and of the New England Women's Coalition in Boston.¹³²

Organizers sought to establish and support activities to "help women achieve more total freedom," to educate the Simmons community on women's issues, to provide private assistance for women as needed, to collect and distribute information "relating to all forms of discrimination against women," and to seek "qualified" women for positions at Simmons College, particularly for administrative offices.

¹³¹ The Women's Caucus included staff and students from Simmons College; the group formed in late summer 1971. Janet Cutler, "Caucus Spurs Action for Women's Rights," *The Simmons Janus*, 15 October 1971.

¹³² The New England Women's Coalition held a number of mass meetings in the greater Boston area in early 1971 to discuss the goals of the "multitude of smaller groups" they represented. The Coalition presented a list of objectives for the women's liberation movement in and around Boston. These included, briefly, "control of our own bodies," "free 24 hour childcare center," "equal employment opportunity," "equal access to education and job training," and the "repeal [of] all laws regulating private sexual behavior." More than five hundred women's liberation activists staged a march on the Boston Common in March 1971 to commemorate International Women's Day and call attention to their objectives. Eileen Glynn, "Lib Coalition Voices Demands," *The Simmons Janus*, 12 February 1971; Betsy Neale, "Women March for Liberation," *Simmons Janus*, 12 March 1971.

The Caucus also proposed to “identify and overcome any barriers that limit education and employment opportunities for women” at Simmons and to enlist the support of the trustees and the Simmons administration in these endeavors and for an affirmative action program for women at the college.¹³³

The Women’s Caucus offered students and staff the opportunity to work on task forces researching women’s education, birth control, abortion, women in the workplace, child care, women’s literature, and women and the Vietnam War.¹³⁴ The committees worked with campus officials and local organizations to advance women’s equality on and off campus, for students, staff, and faculty.¹³⁵ By early 1972, the Caucus had invited speakers from the local chapter of the National Organization for Women, Women in the Arts, Female Liberation (publishers of *Second Wave*), and other local women’s liberation organizations to campus, and had created the Women’s Political Caucus to focus on abortion reform.¹³⁶

Women’s liberation activists at Ohio State University also organized around specific women’s issues such as child care, equal

¹³³ Cutler, "Caucus Spurs Action for Women's Rights."

¹³⁴ Mel Petrell, "Caucus Mobilizes Simmons Women," *The Simmons Janus*, 4 November 1971.

¹³⁵ Peggy Loeb, "Task Forces Do the Job for Women's Caucus," *The Simmons Janus*, 9 December 1971.

¹³⁶ Kathie Rita, "Women's Groups Explain Themselves," *Simmons Janus*, 30 March 1972.

rights, and health concerns during the early 1970s. Members of OSU Women's Liberation (Women's Lib) penned numerous letters to the editor and articles for the campus and local newspapers as well as held rap sessions to discuss politics and reform. The group did not shy away from guerilla actions to drive home their criticism of American society. In February 1971, Women's Lib protested the annual Bridal Fair sponsored by the Women's Self-Government Association and *Modern Bride* magazine. The Fair featured local vendors and businesses, a fashion show, and product displays designed to celebrate marriage and offer coeds ideas for planning their own weddings.¹³⁷ In an article published in the *Lantern* on 3 February 1971 Women's Lib questioned traditional gender roles and conventional expressions of femininity in American culture the fair celebrated. "We strongly object to patriarchal traditions of many contemporary marriage arrangements, wherein the woman is placed in a subordinate status and is assigned by her sex to menial tasks, wherein a man must dominate his wife and children to fulfill his 'masculinity.'"¹³⁸

Members of Women's Lib contended that American culture "sold" women on the idea of marriage from birth, and that the Bridal Fair intended to sell women on oppressive ideas and vapid consumerism.

¹³⁷ Marsha Goulder, "Women's Lib Wants to Abolish Bridal Fair," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 February 1971.

¹³⁸ Columbus-OSU Women's Liberation, "Bridal Fair Unfair," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 February 1971.

This commercialization of marriage, protesters argued, transformed college women themselves into commodities. The group contended the fair's underlying assumption, "that women pursuing a college diploma do not intend to pursue careers but instead to pursue an M.R.S. degree" was "out of date and no longer true for most women."¹³⁹ Women's Lib wanted to replace the fair with events emphasizing equal relationships between partners, alternatives to marriage for women, and a conference to explore the changing roles for women in American society. Critics of Women's Lib agreed with calls for equality for women, but stressed that careers, love, and marriage were not mutually exclusive – and asked to keep the Bridal Fair.¹⁴⁰

In February 1972, the Women's Self-Government Association again sponsored its annual Bridal Fair event in the Ohio Union ballroom. In response to protesters from the previous year's event, WSGA organizers invited representatives from counseling services, Planned Parenthood, and local adoption agencies to sit booths at the Fair. Members of Columbus-OSU Women's Liberation and the Gay Activists Alliance (GAA) reiterated their critique of the fair as a celebration of the commodification of young women via the institution of marriage. Protesters also challenged an underlying assumption of the

¹³⁹ Columbus-OSU Women's Liberation, "Bridal Fair Unfair."

¹⁴⁰ Colleen McMahan, "Keep Bridal Fair," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 17 February 1971.

fair itself – that the celebration of love between two people was acceptable for heterosexuals only.

The Bridal Fair demonstration began with a three-tiered wedding cake plastered with monopoly money.

The spectators and merchants watched warily as three women – dressed as a man, a bride, and a housewife – pushed the cake through the ballroom. ...The “bride” had paper money pasted to her veil and a sign saying “buy me” on her cheek. ...All three were sporting handcuffs. ...[Later that day] the procession entered the ballroom amid shouts and rice-throwing by the Women’s Lib and GAA bridal party. Procession members walked from booth to booth, viewing the merchandise.¹⁴¹

Despite the protest of a visible minority, over five thousand students enjoyed the Bridal Fair; news coverage noted that the Planned Parenthood booth “seemed to be the most popular.”¹⁴² Barbara Watts, adviser to the WSGA, commented that WSGA “understands the arguments of [the protesters] and shares some opinions with Women’s Lib about the event,” but did not elaborate.¹⁴³ The Women’s Self Government Association’s efforts to “come up with ways to get around the protests” for the Bridal Fair of 1973 were unsuccessful.¹⁴⁴ Student attempts to organize a “more casual and informal,” “not all women-

¹⁴¹ Leola Johnson, "Bridal Fair Protesters Include Bearded 'Bride'," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 4 February 1972.

¹⁴² Darleen Cramer, "Show Stealers," *The Ohio State Lantern*, February 9 1972; Johnson, "Bridal Fair Protesters Include Bearded 'Bride'."

¹⁴³ Johnson, "Bridal Fair Protesters Include Bearded 'Bride'."

¹⁴⁴ Linda Moore, "Bridal Fair Gets New Twist," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 4 October 1972.

oriented” event offering “enough diversity ... to interest everyone” resulted in no bridal fair for 1973 and beyond.¹⁴⁵ Instead, the WSGA shifted its attention to planning “Women’s Week” events that explored women’s roles and issues of the day in the spirit of sisterhood.

“Women and Our Bodies”¹⁴⁶

With the increased openness on campus regarding issues of sexuality, undergraduate women did not hesitate to expand this discussion in the early seventies. While not all African American women necessarily agreed with white women’s politics, what many undergraduate women could agree on across race lines in the seventies were the issues of women’s right to control their bodies and secure respectful, safe, and affordable reproductive health services on and off campus. Undergraduate women on each campus pushed administrators and their student governments to provide or broaden women’s health services. In response to student pressure, college faculty and health centers offered a number of seminars and courses on human sexuality, changing women’s roles, and contraception for

¹⁴⁵ Moore, "Bridal Fair Gets New Twist."

¹⁴⁶ Title of a 1969 pamphlet produced by the Bread and Roses Collective; later became the Boston Women’s Health Collective’s *Our Bodies, Ourselves*.

interested students through the late sixties and early seventies, at both single-sex and coeducational colleges.¹⁴⁷

Within the context of women's health, a number of on and off-campus organizations worked to educate women about their bodies and reproductive health issues. Cindy Hunt of the Simmons *Janus* reported on the weekly sessions of "Issues in Women's Liberation," a course offered by the Communiversity, a free education program sponsored by Boston University for the surrounding communities, and led by the Bread and Roses collective in 1970.¹⁴⁸ Hunt described the collective's work to "make women more intelligent and discerning in their dealings with the medical profession," and their development of their first comprehensive text, *Women and Our Bodies*.¹⁴⁹ "Women have not been taught about their bodies," the Women's Action Collective of Ohio State explained in 1972, "our objective is to make women feel more at home with their bodies and in control of their sexuality."¹⁵⁰ Stephani Stokes lauded the dignity and healthfulness of natural childbirth in an article

¹⁴⁷ See for example Evita Paschall, "Health Service Studies Human Sexuality," *The Hilltop*, 12 February 1971. Also Ronna-Lee Borenstein, "Course Offered in Human Sexuality," *The Simmons Janus*, 9 March 1973.

¹⁴⁸ Cindy Hunt, "Bread and Roses: "Women and Our Bodies"," *Janus*, 29 October 1970.

¹⁴⁹ *Women and Our Bodies* birthed the still popular *Our Bodies, Ourselves* women's health guide; Bread and Roses became the Boston Women's Health Collective once women in the collective realized the real need and demand for the information they collected for *Women and Our Bodies*. Hunt, "Bread and Roses: "Women and Our Bodies"."

¹⁵⁰ Mary Wachowiak, "Women's Group Acting on Problems," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 7 November 1972.

published in the Howard *Hilltop*, where she also linked childbirth without drugs and hospital intervention to childbirth in “traditional Africa.”¹⁵¹ Stokes urged black women to “bring [childbirth] out of the cold, expensive hospital to the home and community” through birth coaching and control “of herself, control of the contractions, and control of the hospital situation, as much as possible.”¹⁵² Undergraduates also worked to find doctors “receptive to women’s needs” for campus health centers.¹⁵³

Women’s desire to control their own bodies – a continuation of the movements to end women’s hours and women’s dress regulations – was evident on campus. One of the most popular issues women raised was the creation or expansion of reproductive health services for undergraduate women. Women pushed for campus health plans and infirmaries to include gynecological care and birth control information and prescriptions. In 1971, activist women at Ohio State proposed the addition of a full-time gynecologist and the establishment of an additional treatment room at the student health center. The Columbus-OSU Women’s Liberation group asked that OSU liberalize its policy on the distribution of contraceptives to students and provide educational

¹⁵¹ Stephani Stokes, "Natural Childbirth: Natural Blackness," *The Hilltop*, 8 December 1972.

¹⁵² Stokes, "Natural Childbirth: Natural Blackness."

¹⁵³ Wachowiak, "Women's Group Acting on Problems."

materials about sexuality and women's health issues. The students also courted organizations such as Planned Parenthood in the early 1970s to provide resources and information to women on campus, sometimes to the dismay of campus administrators.¹⁵⁴

In response to student requests, Director of the student health center Dr. H. Spencer Turner argued that the health center should provide contraceptive information, but lack of space and personnel limited their ability to do so. Too, Turner stated that a full time gynecologist would have to handle more than "elective gynecology" at the health center, but located funding for "12 additional hours of gynecology service" per week.¹⁵⁵ Turner did not support Planned Parenthood's services on campus, but argued that an office "near campus, but not on it" would better serve the OSU community.¹⁵⁶

A survey of nearly five hundred Simmons students in spring 1971 reported that "ninety percent of the respondents ... would like to see the infirmary dispense contraceptives" and "feel that there is a need for more health education at Simmons."¹⁵⁷ Students specifically wanted

¹⁵⁴ Leanne McLaughlin, "Turner, Women's Lib Reach Partial Agreement on Gynecology Proposal," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 22 January 1971.

¹⁵⁵ McLaughlin, "Turner, Women's Lib Reach Partial Agreement on Gynecology Proposal."

¹⁵⁶ McLaughlin, "Turner, Women's Lib Reach Partial Agreement on Gynecology Proposal."

¹⁵⁷ Diane Brody, "Survey Shows Need for Gynecologist," *The Simmons Janus*, 30 April 1971.

more information on “venereal disease, abortion, menstrual problems, nutrition and dieting, pregnancy tests and emotional aspects of sexuality.”¹⁵⁸ Simmons women showed strong support for hiring a full time gynecologist at the student infirmary; nearly eighty percent of respondents stated they would utilize such services if they became available, about the same number of women who had sought treatment and contraceptives from private physicians off campus.¹⁵⁹

Spelman College offered its first official family planning program in 1973, a program “intended to be largely educational.”¹⁶⁰ The program provided courses on women’s health, rap sessions and seminars, gynecological services and laboratory tests, and contraceptive “counseling, information and services” for all students in the Atlanta University Center.¹⁶¹ The new willingness of Spelman and other campuses to offer such services was a break from earlier trends in campus medical services and would not have been possible without student pressure and a shift in popular attitudes concerning sexuality and women’s control over their own bodies.

¹⁵⁸ Brody, "Survey Shows Need for Gynecologist."

¹⁵⁹ Brody, "Survey Shows Need for Gynecologist."

¹⁶⁰ Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 1973-1974, The Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.

¹⁶¹ Spelman College, *Student Handbook*.

Student discussions surrounding birth control and abortion revealed the volatile nature of these issues on campus in the late sixties and early seventies. The birth control pill, the new and increasingly popular contraceptive among young women by the late sixties, raised a host of questions involving morality and medicine for many students and campus health officials. The oral contraceptive had to be taken daily, whether or not women planned to have sexual intercourse – thus some observers feared that women who used the pill to prevent pregnancy (or to address other health concerns) “simply wanted the pills so they could indulge in sex.”¹⁶² Others echoed this belief; two male students implied in an Ohio State *Lantern* piece that “women on the Pill are promiscuous,” free from “complication” (read: pregnancy), and “having fun” instead of getting married.¹⁶³ “We have decided,” responded a group of coeds, “that such unfair, insensitive, ill-informed and degrading attitudes force intelligent college women’s strongest opposition.”¹⁶⁴ A senior woman also expressed her indignation about the men’s article on the pill, holding that “taking pills indicates nothing

¹⁶² Dr. Samuel L. Gandy, Dean of the School of Religion, Howard University, quoted in “Secret Council Reviewing Policy on Birth Control,” *The Hilltop*, 24 February 1967.

¹⁶³ Bill K. and Mike M., “The Pill: It’s Users and Their Problems,” *The Ohio State Lantern*, 17 October 1969; The Women of Canfield Hall - Three West, “Men without Women?,” *The Ohio State Lantern*, 24 October 1969.

¹⁶⁴ The Women of Canfield Hall - Three West, “Men without Women?.”

conclusive about a girl's ethics."¹⁶⁵ In fact, she argued, "rather than make sex meaningless, as the article implied, birth control pills give a woman the freedom to define its meaning."¹⁶⁶ Many undergraduate women agreed with this sentiment and worked to expand the availability of the pill and other contraceptives.

As planning for sex became less taboo among American youth and more women openly chose to engage in premarital sex and prevent pregnancy, larger numbers of women galvanized the movement to secure in-house prescription services and dispensation of birth control on their own campuses. Students demanded that health services and university policies align themselves with the realities of youth culture and sexuality on campus, because as one Howard coed pointed out, "it is not in keeping with modern times for the school to believe that contraceptives are not needed by young men and women in college."¹⁶⁷

An article by the "Inquiring Reporter" at Howard University in 1966 revealed the state of flux concerning contraception and morality on campus. To the question "Should contraceptives be made available to the students by the University Health Service?," only two of seven

¹⁶⁵ Emily Stonkey, "Pill Story Absurd," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 24 October 1969.

¹⁶⁶ Stonkey, "Pill Story Absurd."

¹⁶⁷ "Inquiring Reporter," *The Hilltop*, 10 November 1966.

students responded in the negative.¹⁶⁸ Interestingly, one student echoed popular arguments to end *in loco parentis* in his rationale, arguing that one's sex life was a "private affair" and that the university did not have the responsibility to provide such services but to "treat students as mature individuals who are quite capable of taking care of their own [contraceptive] business."¹⁶⁹

Other Howard University students offered numerous reasons in support of dispensing birth control at the health center, some qualified by moral statements. Alluding to unplanned pregnancies, one student argued "sex is here to stay," and as such obtaining contraceptives "should be simplified and this would decrease the possibility of problems that arise from diverse situations." More directly, another student argued that though "premarital sex should not be indulged in," people would still do it, "therefore, it is better to prevent a pregnancy than to be dropped by the University."¹⁷⁰ A male sophomore

¹⁶⁸ Admittedly, the bias of the reporter or the campus news editors may have led to the exclusion of more "no" answers. I am not arguing that a majority of students at Howard in 1966 supported dispensation of the pill by the campus health center, but that students presented a wide spectrum of reasons why contraceptives should be available to coeds.

¹⁶⁹ "Inquiring Reporter."

¹⁷⁰ It is important to note that women were more often "dropped" from the university when pregnant and unmarried than their partners (there was no case in the evidence of a male student being expelled for paternity). This policy seems to have changed by the early seventies, when pregnancy was no longer grounds for dismissal. "Inquiring Reporter."

speculated, "it is better to have [a contraceptive] and not need it, than to need it and not have it."¹⁷¹

Just as women's efforts to secure more freedoms on campus wrapped up, public discussion of the birth control pill heated up in the campus media and women's liberation movement. One of the most contentious issues in the birth control discussion concerned the willingness of doctors to prescribe the pill to unmarried students. Since most campus officials did not condone undergraduate sexual activity outside of marriage, then logically unmarried women would not need birth control.¹⁷² Ohio State, Howard, and Simmons health centers did not prescribe the pill to unmarried women (though by 1970, the OSU health center did prescribe to women who were allegedly engaged to be married), but women could obtain the pill from private physicians or from Planned Parenthood Centers.¹⁷³ Planned Parenthood of Columbus, Ohio, offered birth control information and contraceptives to unmarried women, "but if a woman is under age" – 21 years old – "and

¹⁷¹ "Inquiring Reporter."

¹⁷² Massachusetts' law prohibited the dispensation of contraceptives to unmarried women until March 1972, when the United States Supreme Court struck down the state law in *Eisenstadt v. Baird*.

¹⁷³ "Secret Council Reviewing Policy on Birth Control.", McLaughlin, "Turner, Women's Lib Reach Partial Agreement on Gynecology Proposal.", "Singer Speaks on Birth Control," *The Simmons Janus*, 12 February 1971.

not self-supporting, she must have parental permission to receive contraceptives.”¹⁷⁴

Howard University’s health services still balked at student pressure to offer free contraceptive services and prescriptions in 1970. Dr. Samuel McCottry, director of campus health services, refuted the contention made by some students that “if a doctor does not prescribe the pill to his female patient he automatically consigns her to pregnancy.”¹⁷⁵ Such statements contradicted the arguments women had used to secure more freedoms on campus – namely, that they were mature women and would not act irresponsibly.

In a culture of silence and misinformation concerning reproductive health and contraception, and at a time when abortion was illegal in the United States, women’s need for reliable information and medical care also spurred the growing debate on abortion in the late sixties and early seventies.¹⁷⁶ Women’s activism to secure gynecological services and contraceptive information went hand in hand with the issue, particularly women’s right to control their bodies and to make life choices not dictated by their biological clocks.

¹⁷⁴ "Planned Parenthood Offers Free Advice," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 1 October 1969.

¹⁷⁵ Bobby Isaac, "'the Pill' Examined," *The Hilltop*, 30 March 1970.

¹⁷⁶ The U.S. Supreme Court in the decision *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion in January 1973.

An issue of the *Simmons Janus* illustrated this need for information on all aspects of reproductive health. In an in-depth article detailing a talk on "Birth Control and Availability," the author informed students who had not attended the event on the diverse methods of contraception available to women. Representatives of the Senior Nursing Seminar, who hosted the event, suggested that students contact the local Planned Parenthood for more information, including "a list of doctors, their prices, and ... if they will help."¹⁷⁷ In all cases, the speaker emphasized "admitting in advance your own feelings about sexuality" to be better prepared to protect against unintended pregnancy and venereal disease.¹⁷⁸

Alongside the article the *Janus* ran an advertisement for the Women's Referral Service, Inc., a New York-based group to help women secure safe and legal abortions (illegal in Massachusetts until 1973).

If you need an ABORTION you'll need compassion. All you need to do is call us. We'll tell you everything you should and may want to know about safe, legal abortion in N.Y. and if you wish, arrange for the finest medical care at the lowest possible cost for such services. Private chauffeured limousine, a modern suite where you may relax and enjoy refreshments are all part of our fee, which covers everything. Your peace of mind is our foremost concern.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ "Singer Speaks on Birth Control."

¹⁷⁸ "Singer Speaks on Birth Control."

¹⁷⁹ Advertisement, *Simmons Janus*, 12 February 1971.

Students informed about birth control and able to secure doctors willing to provide contraceptives to unmarried women could, barring contraceptive failure, prevent pregnancy. Women who were not so successful could be whisked away in the lap of luxury for the right price to terminate their pregnancies. Or could at least be referred to a “safe” doctor in another state. This dearth of choices was not sufficient for many undergraduate women who did not feel compelled to limit sexual intercourse to marriage but did not want to become pregnant as a consequence. It is interesting to note that in a campus survey a few months after these articles were published, over two hundred of the nearly five hundred Simmons undergraduates questioned admitted to using some form of contraceptive, most prescribed by private physicians.¹⁸⁰

Nonetheless, abortion was a volatile topic on campus in the late sixties and early seventies. Undergraduate women had argued successfully for the end of paternalist policies that limited their individual freedoms and rights on campus by the late 1960s; arguing for more control over their reproductive lives was not a stretch of imagination. As national pressure to repeal abortion laws escalated

¹⁸⁰ Brody, "Survey Shows Need for Gynecologist."

across the country, undergraduate women explored the topic on campus.¹⁸¹

In late 1969 and early 1970, the *Spelman Spotlight* published articles exploring the emotional issue of abortion. Glenda Cloud discussed the dilemma of “Student X,” an unmarried, pregnant student, and shed light on the opinions of some administrators in the Atlanta University Center concerning abortion. If Student X chose to carry her child to term, Cloud wrote, she had three choices: raise the child herself, let a relative raise the child for her, or give the baby up for adoption. Dean of Students Naomi Chivers commented that she had “counseled many girls” in this position, and “under no circumstances do I recommend abortion.”¹⁸² Even if abortion was legal, she argued, she would not counsel that course of action, and “if I found out a Spelman girl had had an abortion, I’d expel her.”¹⁸³ Dean Chivers held

¹⁸¹ For an excellent and thorough treatment of the history of abortion in the United States, see Leslie J. Reagan, *When Abortion Was a Crime: Women, Medicine, and Law in the United States, 1867-1973* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

¹⁸² Glenda Cloud, "Unwed: Coed Faces Toughest Decision of Her Life," *Spelman Spotlight*, September-October 1969.

¹⁸³ Despite the student bill of rights and freedoms agreed upon and published by the Atlanta University Center, Spelman College rules and regulations contained the vague reference to “morally degenerate acts” as a catchall for cases such as Dean Chivers referred to here. Cloud, "Unwed: Coed Faces Toughest Decision of Her Life.", Spelman College, *Student Handbook*, 1970-1971, Spelman College Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.

that the repeal of abortion laws “would lead only to unhappiness” and higher incidents of suicide.¹⁸⁴

Cloud continued with a hypothetical discussion of what a woman who did not want the pregnancy could do, despite Chivers’ comments. The National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (NARAL) advised readers of the safety of abortions performed in the first trimester of pregnancy, but warned about the dangers of illegal abortions and the potential for serious injury or “death at the hands of a back-street abortionist.”¹⁸⁵ In sharp contrast to Dean Chivers, the Administrative Director of Mental Health at Morehouse College (serving the AUC) argued that a student should not be punished for deciding to have an abortion. The director explained that a woman should weigh all possibilities, including her own best interests and the effects her decision would have for her and the child, should she carry the pregnancy to term. “The final decision should be the student’s own.”¹⁸⁶

While Cloud did not resolve the issue for her readers, the *Spotlight* continued to cover the abortion debate in the Georgia legislature in early 1970, where legislators and citizens sought to

¹⁸⁴ Cloud, "Unwed: Coed Faces Toughest Decision of Her Life."

¹⁸⁵ Cloud, "Unwed: Coed Faces Toughest Decision of Her Life."

¹⁸⁶ The author identified the Administrative Director for Mental Health as “Mrs. Conrady.” No first name was given. Cloud, "Unwed: Coed Faces Toughest Decision of Her Life."

legalize abortion with physician consent during the first three months of pregnancy.¹⁸⁷ Wanda Smalls warned in her article that “some [women] will lose their babies, others will lose their lives” to illegal abortions, but “abortions will prevail despite legislation” because “millions of young women who are faced with unwanted pregnancies [will] seek abortion.”¹⁸⁸ Undergraduate women at Howard University, Simmons College, and Ohio State University discussed the issue of abortion as well during 1970 and beyond. These articles covered the broad spectrum of issues in the abortion debate, from more detailed descriptions of abortion procedures to educate women, to first-hand accounts of an illegal abortion, to the opinions of national figures such as Shirley Chisholm, democratic congresswoman from New York.¹⁸⁹

From campus health services to the push for birth control information on campus, undergraduate women in the early 1970s could

¹⁸⁷ Harriett Geddes, "Georgia House Kills Abortion Bill," *Spelman Spotlight*, February 1970.

¹⁸⁸ Wanda Smalls, "Abortions Prevail Despite Legislation," *Spelman Spotlight*, February 1970.

¹⁸⁹ See for example Marianne Boris, "When Contraceptives Fail: Abortion," *The Simmons Janus*, 5 March 1971.; Mary Webster, "Experience Still Haunts Coed: Coed Describes Illegal Abortion," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 13 March 1970; Mary Webster, "Psychiatrist Views Abortions; Finds Present Laws Outdated," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 13 March 1970.; Millard Arnold, "Black Rep. Shirley Chisholm Speaks on Rising Abortion Problem at Conference," *The Hilltop*, 10 April 1970; Theola Miller, "Black Women Unite to Stop Sterilization," *The Hilltop*, 5 November 1971. In addition to campus articles, local coverage exposed undergraduate women at Simmons College to the William Baird case between 1967 and 1972. Baird gave contraceptives to a minor at a Boston University lecture in 1967 to challenge the Massachusetts Crimes Against Chastity, Morality, Decency and Good Order law. Baird was successful on appeal in *Eisenstadt v. Baird*.

agree that the university, while not acting as a parent, had a responsibility nonetheless to provide basic health care and contraceptive information to its female students. Once abortion was legalized in 1973, health centers on each campus also provided information on abortion as a last option for pregnant students. Campus newspapers continued to touch on the topics of sexuality and family planning even after women had successfully obtained the services they desired on campus.¹⁹⁰

By the mid-1970s, the celebration of Women's Week or similar campus activities at each school evidenced a dramatic shift in women's roles in American society.¹⁹¹ These events covered a broad spectrum of issues, reflecting both women's differences and similarities, regardless of political persuasion, through panels, seminars, lectures, and curriculum. Undergraduate women openly raised and discussed issues of health, class, race, work, family, and sexuality. In the wake of the battles to end *in loco parentis* policies on campus, undergraduate women forged new concepts of womanhood and femininity. The

¹⁹⁰ See for example Barbara James, "Clinics Give Birth Control Aid," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 1 October 1973.; Debbi Newton, "Family Planning," *Spelman Spotlight*, November 1974.

¹⁹¹ See for example, Sue Dickman, "Women's Week: People," *The Ohio State Lantern* 1974; "Women's Week," *The Ohio State Lantern*, 3 April 1972.; LaConyeya B. Butler, "New Directions for the Black Woman in the 1970s," *Spelman Messenger*, February 1971.

conformity and moral codes of a previous generation were replaced by more open-ended and flexible definitions of womanhood and femininity that embraced the traditional ideas of an earlier era while accommodating the new economic and cultural realities of the late twentieth century. The uncontested strictures of life as a college girl in the fifties disintegrated when challenged by coeds of the 1960s; what emerged was the college woman of a new era.

CONCLUSION

By the mid-1970s, women had virtually eliminated the role of the university *in loco parentis* at Spelman College, Simmons College, Howard University, and the Ohio State University. The relationship between students and college administrators shifted dramatically between the late fifties and the early seventies. Campus regulations that had once dictated some of the most intimate details of undergraduate women's daily lives, from hygiene to attire, from social permissions to curfews, now provided a very broad and general guide to campus conduct that left women free to determine their own company, clothing, and calling hours. Institutional change does not happen overnight; undergraduate women's struggles herein were no exception. The movement to end women's non-academic regulations spanned more than a decade and included thousands of female students from the graduating classes of the early sixties through the late seventies. The young women who began the *in loco parentis* revolution had long since graduated when the end of social regulations was secured; those who finished the fight likely never met those who began it. The story of women at these disparate institutions reveals a common theme and

narrative in language and tactics among undergraduate women of the era. It also highlights the very unique circumstances women at each college faced in their fight to throw off the administration as parent.

Undergraduate women's struggles to end non-academic regulations must be counted among the important revolutions that took place on many college campuses during the sixties. While other social movements worked to secure civil rights for African Americans, to protect academic freedom and freedom of speech on campus, and to protest the disfranchisement of young men who could fight in a foreign war but not vote for or against the government officials who pressed them into service, young women sought the right of self-determination in their day to day lives. Campus officials encouraged undergraduate women at Spelman College, for example, to participate in the non-violent protests of the civil rights movement in Atlanta, Georgia during the early 1960s but punished those undergraduates that did not return to their dormitories by 6:00 p.m. each evening or violated campus curfews to participate in out of town civil rights marches. Undergraduate women at Howard University harshly criticized the administration's policies and treatment of students; students demanded the respect of campus officials and an end to policies that treated them like irresponsible children. Students at each institution challenged

college administrators to live up to the changes in American society being secured off campus.

In their efforts to end the role of the university *in loco parentis*, undergraduates confronted a two-fold challenge: to redefine both 'student' and 'woman' as mature, independent adult rather than immature, dependent and child-like. Because the reality of young women's lives in the sixties was increasingly at odds with the image of proper womanhood celebrated in American culture after World War II, college women were forced to navigate the ideology of femininity and the reality of economic and educational opportunity. For African American women, the necessity of paid work combined with the feminine ideal in the expectation that black women would be at once feminine in appearance and conduct while also pursuing selflessly careers in the interests of family and community. Parents and administrators – as well as some peers – perceived women who challenged the image of respectable womanhood as a threat to the gender and race systems in their day to day lives.

College officials justified women's non-academic regulations as policies enforced in the best interests of their female charges. Dress codes, conduct standards, and curfews protected young women away from home from the dangers of urban life (and the dangers of Southern racism for Spelmanites), taught women how to conduct themselves as

ladies, and provided women a protected space to develop socially and intellectually before they faced the responsibility of marriage and family. Women at each institution received mixed messages. Professors instructed students to be critical thinkers, to challenge assumptions, to make their own choices, and to pursue academic excellence as a means to independent careers, while *in loco parentis* policies conditioned women to project an image of female passivity and dependence, and to follow pre-established rules.

Undergraduate women's protests against campus dress codes served as an important initial step towards dismantling other *in loco parentis* regulations in the 1960s. By separating feminine appearance from feminine conduct, young women began to undermine the gendered foundations of *in loco parentis* regulations. For some undergraduates, personal choices concerning clothing and hairstyle reflected a desire for comfort or political expression (or both). Campus officials' strident resistance to changes in dress regulations signaled broader concerns about women's adherence to the ideal of the feminine. Parents and college administrators' arguments to preserve non-academic regulations also revealed a growing preoccupation with changes in the sexual mores of American youth. As the number of students enrolled in higher education swelled during the mid-1960s, campus officials at schools such as Howard University and the Ohio State University realized they

could not enforce women's regulations without the complicity of undergraduate women themselves.

If women could be trusted to observe the rules of good taste in the absence of formal campus regulations concerning attire, students argued, why couldn't the university trust them to observe the rules of good taste in conduct as well? Undergraduate women rejected administrators' arguments to preserve *in loco parentis* in the interests of the few over the many. Ultimately, the language of maturity and responsibility proved a very persuasive argument against the continuation of the *in loco parentis* philosophy. At institutions such as Simmons College and Ohio State University, women's self-government served as both an argument for and an agent in the push to end women's social regulations.

Resistance to change from campus administrators galvanized undergraduate women to push for an end to *in loco parentis* regulations. In light of broader national trends and the convincing arguments for more student autonomy and independence, many women downplayed the issues of sex and sexuality in favor of recognition of women's changing roles in American culture and gender equality on campus. Undergraduate women challenged campus administrators to end those policies that treated all women as second-class citizens incapable of making responsible decisions in their day to day lives. Students

demanded that institutions of higher learning teach them not how to conduct themselves as ladies but instead to provide an education that catered to the needs of students in a changing society. Throughout the mid- to late 1960s, college girls demanded to be treated like women. Begrudgingly, campus administrators yielded to women's demands.

Women's efforts to dismantle *in loco parentis* regulations in the sixties established a strong foundation for the women's movement on college campuses in the United States. Women's campus activism to end dress codes, curfews, and the like mobilized women to question larger social constructions of gender and race in America. Activists echoed the language and arguments used to secure an end to non-academic regulations in their critiques of the broader culture. In the aftermath of the *in loco parentis* revolution, undergraduate women demanded that college administrators meet the needs of female students on their terms. Women successfully organized to implement programs and services once deemed unnecessary or too risqué – such as reproductive health centers and birth control – and created a new community for women on campus.

The end of *in loco parentis* regulations signaled a new era for undergraduate women. Regardless of tradition or geographic locale, women at each institution enjoyed similar freedoms and a new right to self-determination. Issues of dress, private conduct, and sexuality were

no longer within the purview of campus authority. Instead, undergraduate women were expected to adhere to basic regulations concerning safety and conduct similar to those in the larger society. Undergraduate women of the 1960s challenged campus officials and the broader American culture to live up to the ideals of democracy and equality espoused in the post-war period. Wittingly or not, they also forced those associated with the academy to confront assumptions concerning race and gender in mid-century and to recognize the complex relationship between race, class and gender in women's lives. This revolution, too long overlooked or relegated to footnotes, forced institutions of higher learning to bring the philosophy of campus administration established in the early twentieth century in line with the new realities of women's lives in the late twentieth century. College women replaced college girls.

APPENDIX A

Excerpt from *Illini Guidelines, 1963-1964*.¹

“One important factor in a successful social life is a matter of appropriate dress. ... Learning to wear the right clothes at the right time is a part of a college education. In general, casualness is the basis of most campus styles. ‘Casual’ does not mean being sloppy or dressing in poor taste.

OCCASION	WOMEN'S DRESS	MEN'S DRESS
New Student Week	Class clothes, cottons or skirts and sweaters, depending on weather, flats (saddles, sneakers, loafers)	Sport shirts, slacks, sweaters, or sport coats and slacks
Classes	Skirts and sweaters or blouses, casual dresses, suits, jumpers, blazers, flats (saddles, sneakers, loafers)	Sport shirts and slacks, sweaters. Sport coats and dress slacks always acceptable.
Football games Band concerts "Coke dates" Coffee hours Record dances Friday night shows	More class wear. Dress warmly for late fall games. Flats with hose or sport shoes and socks.	Class wear with emphasis on sport coats and tie for "date" affairs
Hay rides Picnics	Dress comfortably	Dress comfortably

¹ *Illini Guidelines: A Handbook for Undergraduate Students at the Urbana Campus of the University of Illinois, 1963-1964*, Student Life and Culture Archival Program, University of Illinois Archives, 41/3/0/5, Box 1, Urbana, Illinois, 73-74.

OCCASION	WOMEN'S DRESS	MEN'S DRESS
Sunday night supper club Friday night mixers *Saturday and Sunday night shows *Exchange dinners	Casual dresses, skirts and blouses or sweaters, suits, heels or flats	Suits, sport coats and slacks
Registration dances Saturday night hops Night Lights Star Course University Theatre Sunday church services Open house teas	Date dresses, basic dresses, dressy suits, heels, a hat (only for church and house teas)	Suits, sport coats and slacks
Formal Some house dances Some special dinners	Formals or "cocktail" dresses, as you please, heels	Tuxedos

*May vary according to occasion."

APPENDIX B

Excerpt from *Simmons College Student Handbook, 1962–1963*¹

“See the Director of Students for Permission

1. To enter or leave the campus between 1:30 a.m. and 6:30 a.m.
2. To be out alone regularly after 8:30 p.m. for a job or class.
3. To have a car or an overnight guest with a car.
4. For special housing arrangements for fraternity weekends within the Boston area.
5. For Major Dance curfews.
6. To stay in approved hotels in metropolitan Boston (25 mile radius).

See Your Resident head for Permission

(Students in Small Houses see Resident Head of assigned hall)

1. To be out alone after 8:30 p.m.
2. To take an overnight Monday through Thursday.
3. For cultural permissions.
4. For 2:30 permission for Simmons dances.

See Your Resident Head for Permission

(Students in Small Houses see Student Assistant)

1. To register a guest and get a linen slip.
2. To get a slip for a ‘sick tray.’
3. To have men visit a student’s room.
4. To stay in another hall or house after 12:00 MID. For study purposes.

I. PERMISSIONS

1. No student may be out alone after 8:30 p.m. without special permission from her Resident Head or the Director of Students. Exception: A student may sign out alone to Howie’s [snack shop] after 8:30 p.m. if she goes and returns by the gate between Dix Hall and Simmons Hall. She must write alone on sign-out slip and she must be signed in by 10:30 p.m.

¹ Simmons College, *Student Handbook, 1962-1963*, The Simmons College Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, 78-84.

2. AUTOMATIC PERMISSIONS

	<i>Freshmen</i>	<i>Sophomore</i>	<i>Junior & Senior</i>
Mon. thru Thurs.	9:30 p.m.	10:30 p.m.	1:30 a.m.
Friday & Sat.	12:30 a.m.	1:00 a.m.	1:30 a.m.
Sunday	10:00 p.m.	12:00 MID.	1:30 a.m.
Evening preceding a holiday		– Same as for weekend.	
Night of a holiday		– Same as for Sunday.	

3. EXTRA PERMISSIONS

	<i>Freshmen</i>	<i>Sophomore</i>
Friday & Sat.	Twenty half-hour units per year until 1:30 a.m.	Twelve per year until 1:30 a.m.
Mon. thru Thurs.	-----	Twenty per year Until 12:00 MID.

4. SPECIAL PERMISSIONS

- a. Cultural – Return to residence hall 45 minutes after end of program. Cultural permissions are given by the Resident Head for opera, ballet, plays not presented on weekends, and concerts; and occasional programs at the discretion of the Resident Head.
- b. Special – Individual special permissions for programs required by instructors and church groups are given by the Resident Head at her discretion.

5. ON-CAMPUS PERMISSIONS

- a. Visiting other Simmons students in the evening in other dormitories – It is not necessary to sign out, but upperclassmen must return to their own dormitories by 12:00 MIDNIGHT. Freshmen must return to their own dormitories by:

10:00 p.m. – Sundays thru [sic] Thursdays

12:00 MIDNIGHT – Fridays and Saturdays

If a student has special permission from her Resident Head to stay in another dormitory later than the usual hour for returning, the student must be signed out.

Note: Students who wish to visit other residence halls after 10:30 p.m. must obtain keys from either Simmons or Evans Hall as stated under KEYS. These keys should be dropped in the sign-in box in the dormitory visited or returned to the desk at Simmons or Evans [Halls].

- b. Students going with male guests to an open dormitory in the evening must be signed out according to their curfews.
- c. If a student wishes to spend a weekend night in another dormitory, she must sign out on a blue slip. The Resident Head of the dormitory should be notified.
- d. Bartol Hall – All students using Bartol hall for studying may remain there until 11:45 p.m. They need not be signed out. Smoking in Alumnae Hall is allowed during study hours [sic].
- e. Alumnae Hall – Students may entertain male guests in Alumnae Hall in accordance with their permissions. They should be signed out when they are there with guests. Girls without guests need not be signed out and may use Alumnae Hall during the hours listed for visiting other residence halls.

6. DANCE PERMISSIONS

- a. Major Dance – Four major dance permissions (in addition to Simmons major dances) are allowed all students during the College year for affairs ending after 1:00 a.m. These permissions should be obtained in advance from the Director of Students and may not be taken on Saturday or Sunday nights. Students must return 45 minutes after the dance is over. Students using this permission must sign out and return through Simmons Hall.
- b. Simmons dances – 2:30 a.m. permissions are given for Simmons formals only. If a student wishes to take a 2:30 a.m. permission, she must register in person with her Resident Head (and Student Assistant if she is in a Small house). Students must sign out and leave their slips in a special sign-out box in Simmons Hall. When signing in, they must place their slips in the special “2:30” box. Dates are permitted in Simmons hall until 2:30 when this permission is taken.

- c. For overnight permissions in the Boston area [HOTELS: Permissions may be granted upperclass students to stay in approved hotels in metropolitan Boston (25 mile radius) only with the approval of the Director of Students. No girl may stay alone in a hotel in this area. If a student plans to be with her parents, she should notify her Resident Head.]

7. GUESTS' PERMISSIONS

- a. An overnight guest who is not a student of the college is eligible for the same permissions permitted her hostess. These permissions will not be counted against her hostess. A commuter is eligible for her class permissions.

II. SIGNING OUT

1. EVENING: Whenever a student is to be off campus after 8:30 p.m. or attending an invitation dance on campus, she must sign out at the proper place using a *white slip* [emphasis in original] stating all the information requested thereon.
 - a. A student should sign out for her latest permission. A permission will not be counted unless actually used.
 - b. A student who intentionally signs out for one destination and goes to another may be subject to Honor Board action.
 - c. Students in large halls sign out in their own halls (except when taking major dance or Simmons formal permissions) before 10:30 p.m.
 - d. Girls in Hastings and Turner sign out in Evans Hall. Girls in Longwood sign out in Simmons Hall.
 - e. Two or more upperclass students may sign out for local drugstores and restaurants with each other (not male escorts) until 11:00 p.m. on any night. Freshmen may use this privilege on Friday and Saturday only.
 - f. If another student signs you out on a white slip, she must also put down her name.
 - g. *Simmons College Library Sign-Out*
 1. Every student going to the Library to be there after 8:30 p.m. is to sign out on a cherry-colored Library slip.
 2. Going to the Library alone after dark is definitely to be avoided because of danger. Going to or returning from the Library alone after 8:30 p.m. is an offence. However, it is possible to sign out to the Library alone before 8:30.
 3. A student signed out on a Library slip is to go to the Library only.

2. OVERNIGHT AND WEEKEND: *Blue slips* should be used when signing out for overnight and weekend absences. Exact destination must be stated on these slips.
- a. A student who signs out for one destination and goes to another intentionally or without notifying her Resident Head may be subject to Honor Board action.
 - b. The latest possible time a student may be signed out on a *blue slip* is 8:30 p.m. on the first day of classes following a weekend.
 - c. If a student calls in to be signed out on a blue slip or to change any of the data on a blue or yellow slip, she must call the Resident Head, Director of Students, or Student Assistant.
 - d. Permission for all overnight absences Monday through Thursday is granted by the Resident Head. Student in the Small Houses must obtain permission from the assigned Resident Heads.
 - e. Students have automatic overnight permissions the night preceding the five major holidays.
 - f. All overnight absences are in accordance with the instructions on the permission card signed by a parent or guardian.
 - g. Students returning from vacation or a weekend should sign in on arrival. Upperclassmen returning on a Sunday night may sign in on their blue slips and may sign out on a white slip until 12:00, according to their class permissions. Freshmen returning on Sunday night may again sign out until 10:00 p.m.
 - h. If a student signs out for an overnight she must know that a responsible, adult woman, over 21 years of age, will be her hostess overnight. Any doubts about the situation must be referred to her Resident Head or Director of Students. She may not sign out for overnight with another student for a destination within Boston (25 mile radius) without obtaining permission, in advance.

3. VACATIONS:

- a. A *yellow slip* must be filled out preceding every vacation. The exact final destination and all stops enroute – such as homes of friends, overnight with a relative, etc. – with dates and times of arrival and departure at each stop – must be stated on the yellow slips. The reverse side of the slip should be used to record details, if necessary. The latest possible time a student may be signed out on a blue or yellow slip is 8:30 p.m. on the first day of classes following a weekend or vacation.
- b. During Christmas, Spring, and Summer vacations students are not to return to their dormitories or send any one else for personal belongings.

4. PINK SLIPS: *Pink slips* are for individual use when special permission has been given a student who needs to return to the campus alone after 8:30 p.m. The student must request permission from the Director of Students. It is granted only to those who (1) have a job which requires her to be out after 8:30 p.m. or (2) are attending evening classes.

5. MISCELLANEOUS SIGN-OUT RULES:

- a. Any girl in the company of a male caller on campus after 10:30 p.m. must be signed out, even if she remains in her own dormitory.
- b. Changing sign-out slips: A student may change the name of her escort and destination after 10:30 p.m. The Resident head must be called if a student who is away wants to change the destination or time on her blue or yellow sign-out slip. If the Resident Head is not available, the Student Assistant on duty may take the call. If neither of these can be reached, the student calling must telephone the Director of Students.

If a student who is out for the evening wants to change a white slip, she may call the girl at the desk who may change the slip and must record on the slip the time the call was received and sign her own initials. If the situation is other than routine, she must notify the Resident Head.

- c. Dance on campus: A student must be signed out by 8:30 when going with other students to a dance on campus not in her own dormitory.

If a student is attending a dance in her own dormitory, she need not sign out unless she anticipates leaving the dormitory after 8:30. Then she must sign out before 10:30.

- d. Guests: Overnight guests of students must be signed out in accordance with the hostess' permissions as stated under PERMISSIONS.

III. SIGNING IN

1. Students are responsible for signing themselves in at the hall in which they signed out.
2. Sign-out slips should be cancelled immediately upon return to the residence hall except when an escort remains in the dorm. No sign-out slips may be cancelled until the escort has left. A student may entertain callers in accordance with her permissions only.
3. A student must sign in immediately upon return to the residence hall or house from a weekend or major vacation before going out on a date."

APPENDIX C

Excerpts from the *Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students*,
American Association of University Professors, October 1967.

“Preamble

Academic institutions exist for the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, the development of students, and the general well-being of society. Free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the attainment of these goals. As members of the academic community, students should be encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Institutional procedures for achieving these purposes may vary from campus to campus, but the minimal standards of academic freedom of students outlined below are essential to any community of scholars.

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. Students should exercise their freedom with responsibility.

The responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the academic community. Each college and university has a duty to develop policies and procedures which provide and safeguard this freedom. Such policies and procedures should be developed at each institution within the framework of general standards and with the broadest possible participation of the members of the academic community. The purpose of this statement is to enumerate the essential provisions for student freedom to learn.

...

IV. Student Affairs

In student affairs, certain standards must be maintained if the freedom of students is to be preserved.

A. Freedom of Association

Students bring to the campus a variety of interests previously acquired and develop many new interests as members of the academic community. They should be free to organize and join associations to promote their common interests.

...

B. Freedom of Inquiry and Expression

1. Students and student organizations should be free to examine and discuss all questions of interest to them, and to express opinions publicly and privately. They should always be free to support causes by orderly means which do not disrupt the regular and essential operation of the institution. At the same time, it should be made clear to the academic and the larger community that in their public expressions or demonstrations students or student organizations speak only for themselves.

2. Students should be allowed to invite and to hear any person of their own choosing. Those routine procedures required by an institution before a guest speaker is invited to appear on campus should be designed only to insure that there is orderly scheduling of facilities and adequate preparation for the event, and that the occasion is conducted in a manner appropriate to an academic community. The institutional control of campus facilities should not be used as a device of censorship. It should be made clear to the academic and larger community that sponsorship of guest speakers does not necessarily imply approval or endorsement of the views expressed, either by the sponsoring group or the institution.

...

C. Student Participation in Institutional Government

As constituents of the academic community, students should be free, individually and collectively, to express their views on issues of institutional policy and on matters of general interest to the student body. The student body should have clearly defined means to participate in the formulation and application of institutional policy affecting academic and student affairs. The role of the student government and both its general and specific responsibilities should be made explicit, and the actions of the student government within the areas of its jurisdiction should be reviewed only through orderly and prescribed procedures.

V. Off-Campus Freedom of Students

A. Exercise of Rights of Citizenship

College and university students are both citizens and members of the academic community. As citizens, students should enjoy the same freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, and right of petition that other citizens enjoy and, as members of the academic community, they are subject to the obligations which accrue to them by virtue of this membership. Faculty members and administrative officials should insure that institutional powers are not employed to inhibit such intellectual and personal development of students as is often promoted by their exercise of the rights of citizenship both on and off campus.

B. Institutional Authority and Civil Penalties

Activities of students may upon occasion result in violation of law. In such cases, institutional officials should be prepared to apprise students of sources of legal counsel and may offer other assistance. Students who violate the law may incur penalties prescribed by civil authorities, but institutional authority should never be used merely to duplicate the function of general laws. Only where the institutions interests as an academic community are distinct and clearly involved should the special authority of the institution be asserted. The student who incidentally violates institutional regulations in the course of his off-campus activity, such as those relating to class attendance, should be subject to no greater penalty than would normally be imposed. Institutional action should be independent of community pressure.

VI. Procedural Standards in Disciplinary Proceedings

In developing responsible student conduct, disciplinary proceedings play a role substantially secondary to example, counseling, guidance, and admonition. At the same time, educational institutions have a duty and the corollary disciplinary powers to protect their educational purpose through the setting of standards of scholarship and conduct for the students who attend them and through the regulation of the use of institutional facilities. In the exceptional circumstances when the preferred means fail to resolve problems of student conduct, proper procedural safeguards should be observed to protect the student from the unfair imposition of serious penalties.

The administration of discipline should guarantee procedural fairness to an accused student. Practices in disciplinary cases may vary in formality with the gravity of the offense and the sanctions which may be applied. They should also take into account the presence or absence

of an honor code, and the degree to which the institutional officials have direct acquaintance with student life in general and with the involved student and the circumstances of the case in particular. The jurisdictions of faculty or student judicial bodies, the disciplinary responsibilities of institutional officials and the regular disciplinary procedures, including the student's right to appeal a decision, should be clearly formulated and communicated in advance. Minor penalties may be assessed informally under prescribed procedures.

In all situations, procedural fair play requires that the student be informed of the nature of the charges against him, that he be given a fair opportunity to refute them, that the institution not be arbitrary in its actions, and that there be provision for appeal of a decision.

The following are recommended as proper safeguards in such proceedings when there are no honor codes offering comparable guarantees.

A. Standards of Conduct Expected of Students

The institution has an obligation to clarify those standards of behavior which it considers essential to its educational mission and its community life. These general behavioral expectations and the resultant specific regulations should represent a reasonable regulation of student conduct, but the student should be as free as possible from imposed limitations that have no direct relevance to his education. Offenses should be as clearly defined as possible and interpreted in a manner consistent with the aforementioned principles of relevance and reasonableness. Disciplinary proceedings should be instituted only for violations of standards of conduct formulated with significant student participation and published in advance through such means as a student handbook or a generally available body of institutional regulations.

B. Investigation of Student Conduct

1. Except under extreme emergency circumstances, premises occupied by students and the personal possessions of students should not be searched unless appropriate authorization has been obtained. For premises such as residence halls controlled by the institution, an appropriate and responsible authority should be designated to whom application should be made before a search is conducted. The application should specify the reasons for the search and the objects or information sought. The student should be present, if possible, during the search. For premises not controlled by the institution, the ordinary requirements for lawful search should be followed.

2. Students detected or arrested in the course of serious violations of institutional regulations, or infractions of ordinary law, should be informed of their rights. No form of harassment should be used by institutional representatives to coerce admissions of guilt or information about conduct of other suspected persons.

C. Status of Student Pending Final Action

Pending action on the charges, the status of a student should not be altered, or his right to be present on the campus and to attend classes suspended, except for reasons relating to his physical or emotional safety and well being, or for reasons relating to the safety and well-being of students, faculty, or university property.

D. Hearing Committee Procedures

When the misconduct may result in serious penalties and if the student questions the fairness of disciplinary action taken against him, he should be granted, on request, the privilege of a hearing before a regularly constituted hearing committee. The following suggested hearing committee procedures satisfy the requirements of procedural due process in situations requiring a high degree of formality.

1. The hearing committee should include faculty members or students, or, if regularly included or requested by the accused, both faculty and student members. No member of the hearing committee who is otherwise interested in the particular case should sit in judgment during the proceeding.

2. The student should be informed, in writing of the reasons for the proposed disciplinary action with sufficient particularity, and in sufficient time, to insure opportunity to prepare for the hearing.

3. The student appearing before the hearing committee should have the right to be assisted in his defense by an adviser of his choice.

4. The burden of proof should rest upon the officials bringing the charge.

5. The student should be given an opportunity to testify and to present evidence and witnesses. He should have an opportunity to hear and question adverse witnesses. In no case should the committee consider statements against him unless he has been advised of their content and of the names of those who made them, and unless he has been given an opportunity to rebut unfavorable inferences which might otherwise be drawn.

6. All matters upon which the decision may be based must be introduced into evidence at the proceeding before the hearing committee. The decision should be based solely upon such matters. Improperly acquired evidence should not be admitted.

7. In the absence of a transcript, there should be both a digest and a verbatim record, such as a tape recording, of the hearing.

8. The decision of the hearing committee should be final, subject only to the student's right of appeal to the president or ultimately to the governing board of the institution.”

APPENDIX D

Charter for the African and Afro-American Society¹

“We, the Black Women of Spelman College are striving to:

1. promote the study of Afro-American or African history, literature, and culture;
2. study and learn what it means to be black within the social, political and economic structure of the United States;
3. aid all people, both on the campus and in the community who are concerned with Afro-American history and all factors affecting and pertaining to black people;
4. promote better relationships and more understanding of and among student on this campus;
5. further the aims of black people in the community

and for the following goals:

1. investigating the dynamics of race relations in this country, so as to define the roles and responsibilities of black women in our society;
2. furthering intercollegiate cooperation of black students throughout the nation.

Membership:

Membership will be open to all students who are interested and ready to spend their time and energy to the promotion of Black Consciousness and awareness on our campus and in our society.

Leadership:

For purposes of communications and expedience, one person will be acknowledged as “chairwoman.” Authority will be loosely structured. Responsibilities will be delegated by the chairwoman with the consent of the group. Each individual member is held responsible for the continuance of the Afro-American Society.

We shall call ourselves ‘Sisters In Blackness.’”

¹ Sisters in Blackness, *Charter for the African and Afro-American Society*, March, The Spelman College Archives, Box 164, *Student Organizations*, Atlanta, Georgia.

APPENDIX E

Letter to parents and guardians of Spelman College students¹

“November 13, 1968

To Parents and Guardians of Spelman Students,

Spelman College administration, faculty, and students were engaged in extensive deliberation for two days on issues involving student welfare on campus. The students of Spelman have asked for more student voice in the making of policies which affect us. We do not wish to usurp the powers of the administration, but we do want more student power. The issues with which we are concerned at this time include problems in curriculum, social and cultural affairs.

Our concern with curfew is the same as those of college women throughout the United States. We feel that Spelman Women are just as capable as women at Bryn Mawr College, Vassar College, Mount Holyoke College, or any of the other Ivy League Colleges and we ask the same privileges. It is the consensus of students, faculty, and administration that we be granted freedom of choice in the areas of curfew, destination determination, and dress. However, because of legal technicalities, it is necessary that we obtain parental permission for unrestricted curfew.

The members of the student government association requests that you give careful consideration to your decision.

Spelman Student Government Association”

¹ "Proposals Revised," *The Spelman Spotlight*, November 1968.

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