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Turning Points: Women at Gettysburg College from 1965-1975

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Abstract

This poster is a summary of Christina Noto's summer research. The research focuses on the experiences of Women at Gettysburg College from the Fall of 1964 to the Spring of 1975. While women attended Gettysburg College, they faced discrimination in all aspects of college life-- in the classroom, athletics, activities, their social lives and housing. This poster focuses on the housing discrimination women faced. Women had much stricter housing regulations. For example, women had to sign in and out of their dorms. Women also had mandatory dorm hours (certain times they had to be in their rooms). While some students were frustrated with the College's policies and some women noticed discrimination; others did not, or were not frustrated by it. As more and more women questioned the way they were treated, particularly with regards to women's hours, they planned a sleep-in on March 15, 1969 in the Student Union Building (SUB). This event can be viewed as a turning point for women's rights at Gettysburg College.

Keywords

Gettysburg College, Women's History, Sleep-In

Disciplines

Higher Education | Liberal Studies | Social History | Women's History

Comments

This project was conducted as part of the author's Kolbe Fellowship at Gettysburg College during the summer of 2016, and later presented at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association on October 8, 2016.

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Turning Points: Women at Gettysburg College from 1965-1975

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Kolbe Fellowship, Gettysburg College



Research and Methods

The goal of the project was to understand the experiences of Women at Gettysburg College from 1965-1975. All areas of student life were examined: academics, activities, Greek Life, clubs, athletics and residence life.



W.S.G.A. 1968 Spectrum, 133. Gettysburg, PA: Gettysburg College, 1968.

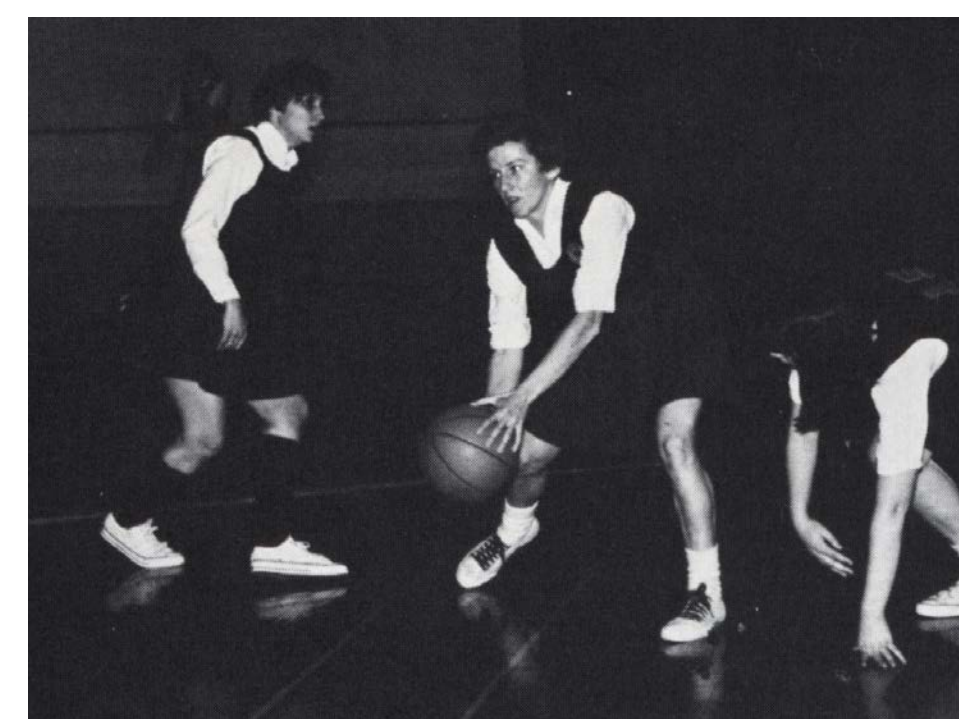
Field Hockey. 1968 Spectrum, 189. Gettysburg, PA: Gettysburg College, 1968.

Introduction

Between the Fall of 1964 and the Spring of 1975, 2,399 women attended Gettysburg College. The number of men was 4,812. While women attended Gettysburg College, they faced discrimination in many aspects of college life. A Sleep-In was organized on March 15, 1969. This event can be viewed as a turning point for Women's Rights at Gettysburg College. During this period, Gettysburg College was relatively conservative, politically and socially. Students were affected by the changing cultural climate, but Gettysburg College was nothing like Berkeley, Columbia or Kent State.



Women in the Dorm. 1965 Spectrum, 45. Gettysburg, PA: Gettysburg College, 1965.



Women's Basketball. 1968 Spectrum, 191. Gettysburg, PA: Gettysburg College, 1968.

Women's Hours (Curfew) Before the Sleep-In

Freshman Hours:

- Monday-Thursday- 10:30 pm
- Friday and Sunday- Midnight
- Saturday- 1 am

Sophomore-Junior Hours (Also Seniors without extended-hour permission):

- Monday-Thursday, Sunday- Midnight
- Friday- 1 am
- Saturday- 2 am

Senior Hours:

- Every night- 3 am (with parental consent)

"I actually appreciated them for the most part as it helped me balance my studies with my social life."

~Judith Coke Hoffman '66



Judith Cooke. 1966 Spectrum, 67. Gettysburg, PA: Gettysburg College, 1966.



Women's Student Government. 1970 Spectrum, 85. Gettysburg, PA: Gettysburg College, 1970.

"[the rules were] unfair, too strict, singled [women] out from men. I understand the desire to keep women 'safe,' but seriously!! Women were coming from homes with no such regulations. Hours were 'over the top!'"

~Jill Drew '71

The Sleep-In

On March 15, 1969, Donna Schaper and other students held a Sleep-In in the Student Union Building. It started as a protest against Women's Hours, but it evolved into something even more important. It became a symbol for student power. The students acted in a peaceful manner to make their voices heard.

"It opened the door . . . because it was so obvious socially that the women just didn't have the same kind of permission and rights that the men had."

~Kate Zurich



Kathleen Zurich. 1971 Spectrum, 243. Gettysburg, PA: Gettysburg College, 1971.

Complaints, Opinions Aired At Student-Prof Bitch-In

The Gettysburgian, March 14, 1969.



Donna Schaper at the Sleep-In. Courtesy of Special Collections and College Archives, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, PA.

"You know, apparently I was [the organizer], but I would not have known it then. We acted as a team. It was very collective . . . I did most of the secretarial work, and publicity work, and the making it happen work. But the guys did most of the speaking. But on this particular night that we had the student sit-in everybody kind of collapsed, and [it] became very very chaotic and I ended up speaking, I think more at the last minute." ~Donna Schaper

The Moratorium

As a result of the Sleep-In, the Residential Life Commission was established. Not only did it review women's policies, but other campus policies such as the college drinking policy. Changes were implemented on a gradual basis between 1969 and 1975, ultimately establishing a more equal system of rule for men and women students.

Moratorium Plans Prove Concern; Students Seek Redefined Power

The Gettysburgian, April 4, 1969.

"we seek, in general, the right to determine, to a much greater degree, our personal and institutional destinies. . . . We believe . . . that we have shown by our active and constructive pursuit of a goal, a new and increased desire to take upon ourselves a much greater burden of responsibility."

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