THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ROYAL VICTORIA COLLEGE,
McGILL UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis traces the history of the Royal Victoria College of McGill University and contrasts its role as a women's college with that of its sister colleges of the eastern American states.

The first chapter examines nineteenth century concepts of woman's nature, her role in society and her educability.

The second chapter studies the foundation and development of the women's colleges of the eastern United States including Vassar, Smith, Wellesley, Mount Holyoke, Bryn Mawr, Radcliffe and Barnard. This section examines the various options that existed for women in higher education and the rationale behind the establishment of separate colleges.

The third chapter outlines the history of the Royal Victoria College with the focus on its changing role as a residential women's College within McGill University.

Chapter four examines the current issues in the separate education versus co-education theme. Reviews of contemporary studies of women in both systems are cited in order to determine what might be the modern role of the women's college today.

In the conclusion it has been found that the women's college has risen to the challenges presented in recent times, particularly that of co-education, and that the institution has a positive role to play in the education of all women.

RESUME

Cette thèse fait l'histoire du Collège Royal Victoria de l'Université McGill et compare son rôle en tant que collège de femmes à celui de collèges semblables dans l'est des Etats-Unis.

Le premier chapitre analyse les idées du dix-neuvième siècle sur la nature féminine, le rôle de la femme dans la société et son éducation.

Le second chapitre étudie la fondation et le développement des collèges de femmes dans l'est des Etats-Unis, comme Vassar, Smith, Wellesley, Mount Holyoke, Bryn Mawr, Radcliffe et Barnard. Cette section présente les options variées qui existaient pour les femmes en éducation supérieure ainsi que les raisons ayant amené à l'établissement de collèges séparés pour les femmes.

L'histoire du Collège Royal Victoria est présentée dans le troisième chapitre où l'accent est mis sur l'évolution de son rôle comme collège de résidence pour femmes au sein de l'Université McGill.

Le quatrième chapitre analyse les questions actuelles: éducation séparée ou mixte? On y cite les études contemporaines sur les femmes dans les deux systèmes afin de voir ce qui pourrait être le rôle moderne d'un collège de femmes aujourd'hui.

La conclusion constate que les collèges pour femmes ont su répondre aux défis qu'ils ont dû récemment confronter et en particular à celui de la mixité et que ce type d'institution peut jouer un rôle positif pour l'éducation de toutes les femmes.

PREFACE

The women's college was an institution which came into existin the nineteenth century. It was selected as the educational system in several regions for basically two reasons. Firstly, the women's college solved the problem of providing women with the same opportunities in higher education as men already had, and secondly, it satisfied the wishes of those who were against co-education. In particular, there were seven institutions of the American east - Vassar, Smith, Wellesley, Mount Holyoke, Bryn Mawr, Radcliffe and Barnard which distinguished themselves as classical examples of the women's college. Royal Victoria College of Montreal was a similar institution but it began as a women's college linked to McGill University. It developed along its own unique lines almost from its inception and its history affords a contrast with that of its sister colleges to the south. The women's college as an institution has survived until present day, but has undergone significant transformation as a result of economic and societal forces. Its continued existence depends as much upon its early history as it does upon its ability to flex with the demands of time.

Apart from brief mention of R.V.C. as a part of McGill University in histories of higher education, there are a very limited number of sources dealing specifically with the history of the College. Dr. Muriel Roscoe, a former Warden of R.V.C., wrote The Royal Victoria College: 1899-1962: A Report to the Principal, (1964). This is an historical account of the growth of the R.V.C. including enrolment figures, admissions and activities of the students and the various changes made to the College at different stages of its development.

Donna Ronish submitted an M.A. thesis The Development of Higher Education for Women at McGill University from 1857 to 1899 with Specific Reference to the Role of Sir John William Dawson (1972). She examined the entrance of women into McGill and concluded with the opening of R.V.C. Dr. Stanley Frost recently published a history of McGill in McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning (1980). In part of one chapter he discussed the education of women at McGill with the emphasis on the benefactions of Donald Smith and the personalities of John William Dawson and John Clark Murray involved in the co-education versus separate education controversy. To date, the most specific examination of R.V.C. is found in Dr. Margaret Gillett's We Walked Very Warily: A History of Women at McGill (1981). Two chapters are devoted to the history of the College where the focus is on personalities and events. The struggles and accomplishments of the personnel involved with R.V.C. are placed within the greater perspective of the text which is women's contribution to McGill and to society.

In the present work, a large quantity of primary source material has come from the McGill University Archives. The collections of the personal papers and correspondence of J.W. Dawson, Principal William Peterson and several of the Wardens of R.V.C. are available for reference. Official notarial deeds are held at the Archives as are minute books of Senate and Board of Governors' meetings, scrapbooks, University calendars, announcements and yearbooks. Minutes of meetings of Senate and Board of Governors pertaining to the last two decades of R.V.C.'s history were found at the offices of the University Secretariat. Access to many entries had to be specifically requested and supervised by university

personnel. Interviews with the last two Wardens of R.V.C. and publications such as the McGill News and McGill Reporter provided additional invaluable material. The research on the women's colleges of the American east derives mainly from secondary sources - books and journals.

In recent years there has been renewed concern for the position of women in institutions of higher learning. Women still feel that they have not attained full equality with men and are looking for answers in the kinds of educational options that exist. The women's college and what it can provide for women is being considered as one of the solutions to women's problems today in education in much the same way it was regarded as a solution to a problem in the nineteenth century. In order to determine what the present function of the women's college might be, the history of R.V.C. as a women's college must be told and the role of R.V.C. and the separate women's colleges of the nineteenth century must be assessed.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	i
Preface	iii
CHAPTER I	
Introduction	1
Concepts of Woman's Role in Society in the Nineteenth Century	5
The Nature of Woman	5
Woman's Role in Society	11
Woman's Educability	18
Woman May and Should be Educated	18
Woman Has Limited Abilities and Needs for Education	24
References	27
CHAPTER II	
The Separate Women's Colleges of the Eastern United States	32
Towards Collegiate Education For Women	34
Thrust for Collegiate Education	34
Co-education Versus Separate Education	37
The Separate Women's Colleges	42
The Benefactors	42
Orientation and Personality	47
Status and Accomplishments of the Women's Colleges	52
Co-education: A Threat To Separate Education For Women	54
References	60
CHAPTER III	
The Royal Victoria College	65
Towards Higher Education for Women at McGill	68
The Benefactor	70
Statutes and Policies Regarding the Separate Education of Women	73

Table of Contents (cont'd) Page

CHAPTER III

The Royal Victoria College 76

The Wardens of R.V.C. and Their Perceptions of a College in Transition. 76
Orientation and Personality. 88
Enrolment at R.V.C. and Professional Advancement 93
R.V.C.: Residential College or Residence?. 96

References 98

CHAPTER IV

The Women's College and the Challenge of Co-education. . . . 103

Co-education Versus Separate Education: A Recurrent Theme With New Issues. 106

Co-education and Educational Equality. 106
Current Studies on Women in Co-educational and Separate Colleges 108
The Women's Colleges and the Challenge of Co-education . 110
R.V.C. and Co-education. 113

Conclusion 115

References 118

Bibliography. 120

INTRODUCTION

The nature of the education offered to woman beginning from the nineteenth century, when her formal education was becoming a more common occurance, until present times, was related to the way in which she was perceived by society and the role she was expected to fill. The nineteenth century marked a period of great experimentation in the education of woman. Early in the period she was receiving only rudimentary educational skills so that she could assist in her children's learning. By the end of the century however, woman had gained access to the higher education formerly available only to man. These gains were not accomplished without struggle, disappointment and humiliation. While there were members of both sexes who believed that woman should be educated on an equal footing with man, there were others who refused to accept woman as man's equal in the educational sphere.

The stumbling block to equality in education in the developmental stages of the experiment throughout the century was society's concept of the nature of woman and the role she should fill. Man and woman were assigned dissimilar roles in society which, according to popular nineteenth century thought, were designated according to the distinctly different 'natures' of the two sexes. Woman, who was to reign over the home, was given only the education which would assist her in her duties as wife and mother. However, as society industrialized and urbanized, woman's role changed. She no longer had to perform all the household tasks herself. More women were leaving their homes to take jobs. It

became acceptable for middle and upper class women to cultivate interests outside their domestic domains and for single women to teach to support themselves. Society's conception of woman was changing so that newer educational opportunities were made available to suit woman's broader roles.

The institutions which were established reflected society's view of woman. As the final stage of the experiment approached, which was collegiate education for woman, a controversy concerning how this education should be provided raged on the North American continent as well as abroad. The problem of reconciling the nature of woman and higher education remained at the centre of this uncertainty. As a result, several solutions were formulated. In some areas complete co-education was established, giving woman access to the same educational facilities as man and under the same roof. In other cases, completely separate institutions for woman were founded which paralleled as closely as possible the all-male bastions of higher education. A third solution was found in the co-ordinate college where woman was educated in a separate institution which was linked in a variety of ways to an already established male college or university.

The higher educational facilities open to woman in the latter half of the nineteenth century adopted one of or a variation on these schemes. The ideal of woman's education had, according to many, been attained at long last: equal educational opportunity for woman as for man. But once woman became an integral part of this educational network she realized that she had had access only to a limited part of it. Society was willing to allow woman to go only so far in using her new

educational skills. Woman was now in a position to ask the troubling question, "Education for what?" Although she had the same educational qualifications as man, she found it very difficult to advance herself beyond the academic sphere into the professional one. Society was not ready to conceptualize woman on an equal plane as man in professional life. Both the co-educational institutions and the separate colleges developed in ways which mirrored society's view of woman. Because woman was expected to follow traditional patterns in terms of selecting a career, that is to enter the 'female' professions such as teaching and nursing, these educational bodies encouraged her only in that direction. It was considered a threat for woman to study in what were considered the 'male' fields. Equal access to education was not synonymous with equal opportunity.

In recent decades, society witnessed social and economic upheaval. This affected society's views on the relationship between the sexes in all phases of life. Higher educational institutions not only had to adjust to mass education but also to the call for co-education. While many single-sex institutions yielded to this co-educational wave, others did not. This provided a rich environment for those who wished to perform comparative studies on woman's educational status and her chances for professional advancement in either of these educational systems. Although this was a difficult period, it was an enlightening one as well. Many academicians and social scientists examined woman's position in society and took advantage of studying her in co-educational and single-sex school settings. They became aware of the inequalities which existed. Once again this brought heightened awareness of the

consequences of both co-education and separate education for woman and of the relation between woman's role in society and her professional advancement.

CHAPTER I

Concepts of Woman's Role in Society in the Nineteenth Century

The Nature of Woman

Historically, the positions of woman and man in society have been polarized. Woman, for the most part, had been designated a position subordinate to man's. The major areas of woman's life were regulated by man, and as de Beauvoir stated, prominent male members in society have striven to show that woman's inferior position was, "...willed in heaven and advantageous on earth."[1] In 1970 the Royal Commission on the Status of Woman was published in Canada. It stated that woman is still identified with the stereotype role as housewife, and that because she is essentially conditioned to be passive, she continues to assess her status and role in society as being a traditional one.[2] It can be seen then, that the division of roles in society according to sex did not begin in the nineteenth century nor did this practice end then. However, it was during the nineteenth century that patriarchal societies in Western cultures first addressed themselves to the issue of woman and her condition in the patriarchy.[3]

In the Western cultures of North America and Britain, thoughts on the nature of woman during the nineteenth century were closely related to the popularly held belief that man and woman each had his designated 'sphere' in life. These spheres were determined by the inherent sex differences between male and female in temperament and physique and they defined in a broad sense the separate domains of man and women in society. This differentiation was especially common in patriarchal societies where members of both sexes were socialized by

basic patriarchal norms so that it was not a system of force but one of mutual assent.[4] Distinctive male and female temperaments were expected. However, temperament was not so much the product of biological difference as of conditioning. Temperament involved the

> formation of human personality along stereotyped lines of sex category...based on the needs and values of the dominant group and dictated by what its members cherish in themselves and find convenient in subordinates: aggression, intelligence, force, and efficacy in the male; passivity, ignorance, docility, "virtue", and ineffectuality in the female.[5]

The difference in physiques was more clearly a matter of nature than nurture, but this too had its socialized aspects. The physical strength of man was often used as an argument to assert his superiority over woman in all contexts.

Man's sphere related to the world outside the home. He encountered the active, brusque world, performing work of a hardening nature. It was believed that man's power was in creating and defending and that his intellect was best suited for speculation and invention.[6] On the other hand, it was commonly believed that the inferior strength and sedentary habits of woman confine her to the home where she would be kept aloof from the stirrings of the world outside.[7] According to John Stuart Mill, one of the nineteenth century's champions of women's rights, the nature of woman's upbringing further encouraged the separation of the spheres. It was the common morality that a woman's ideal should be opposite to that of man. It was a woman's nature and duty to live for others and to assume submissive roles. Woman was expected to abnegate herself so that the sole source of meaning and purpose in her life remained the caring for her husband and children.[8]

In making a very definite distinction between the spheres of man and woman, nineteenth century society assumed the attitude that each sex was in its rightful place according to its God-given attributes. Accordingly, justification had to be given for the positions assumed by man and woman. In the case of woman, two contradictory concepts emerged in justifying her sphere: woman as a superior being and woman as an inferior being. There existed as well, a minority who spoke out for the notion that woman and man are equal who refuted the concept of spheres entirely.

The concept of woman as a superior being essentially arose out of man's idea of how a woman could best serve society given her particular constitution. Woman was seen as being spiritually and morally superior to man so that she was considered "...too good, too pure to be permitted contact with the sordid world of politics and business."[9] Freud saw women as members of the weaker sex but he regarded them as "...finer and ethically nobler than men."[10] The supporters of the 'superior being' concept saw women as "...the originators of civilization, having developed, through their love for and care of offspring, the values of altruism and peace that made social evolution possible."[11]

In performing the rightful duties of her sphere, woman was expected to make the home a comfortable place in which to live, and attend to the needs of her husband and children. This position, given to woman as a result of her specific nature, was elevated to a level bordering holiness. Principal Dawson of McGill University expressed this concept well when he referred to woman as being "...the high priestess of the family, earth's holiest shrine - the ruler of the well-regulated

household, which is the sole possible basis of any sound public morality and true prosperity...."[12] Woman's domesticity was glorified so that she was seen as being capable of wielding great power in her domestic realm. J.F. Stearns, a clergyman, expressed this thought in saying, "We all know, by experience, what a charm there is in the word HOME, and how powerful are the influences of domestic life upon the character."[13] Woman was seen as being the only person capable of providing tranquility in an otherwise turbulent world. By glorifying her sphere, woman was kept close to home and very dependent upon man.

The concept of woman as an inferior being in the nineteenth century was essentially put forth by those who argued in favor of the superiority of man. The supporters of this view often implied that because woman's bodily frame was smaller than a man's, her mental abilities were weaker. Her status became that of a plaything. The Letters of Lord Chesterfield exemplified the prevailing attitude.

> ...Women, then, are only children of a larger growth; they have an interesting tattle, and sometimes wit; but for solid reasoning, good sense, I never knew one in my life that had it; or who reasoned or acted consequentially for four-and-twenty hours together...A man of sense only trifles with them, plays with them, humours and flatters them...but he neither consults them about, nor trusts them with serious matters.... No flattery is either too high or too low for them.[14]

In Of Queen's Gardens, John Ruskin discussed the status of womanhood. It was his belief that one sex could not claim superiority over the other. Because man and woman each had his own natural traits, one could do best what the other could not.[15] In assigning man and woman their duties based on their natural characters and abilities, Ruskin named woman "Queen." This in fact relegated her to a position inferior to that of man because, as he saw it, woman's intellect was not for

invention or creation "...but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision."[16]

The advocates of sex equality were relatively few in the nineteenth century, but they had made their impression in society nonetheless. Many of the liberal attitudes were affected by the work of Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), an Englishwoman, who lived and wrote at the end of the previous century. Wollstonecraft asserted that woman was not recognized because she had not yet attained the full rights of man. She depicted woman's social position meaningfully and attempted to alter the status quo, claiming that woman was expected to aim at attaining a very different character than man.[17] Men have various pursuits which "...engage their attention, and give character to the opening mind; but women, confined to one, and having their thoughts constantly directed to the most insignificant part of themselves, seldom extend their views beyond the triumph of the hour."[18] Although it was common for society to view woman as being innocent, Wollstonecraft believed that men who applied this term in describing a desirable trait in women, were only using a civil term for weakness.[19] She asserted that this 'innocence' in woman was a man's way of keeping the other sex ignorant and dependent. Woman's dependency upon man had caused her to behave as a child, which further diminished her value in man's esteem. Wollstonecraft claimed that "...women are not allowed to have sufficient strength of mind to acquire what really deserves the name of virtue."[20] Woman, she said is taught from infancy to use "...cunning, softness of temper, outward obedience, and a scrupulous attention to a puerile kind of propriety..."[21] to secure the protection of a man.

At a later time, Margaret Fuller (1810-1850), an American, corroborated this view in saying that women "...are so overloaded with precepts by guardians, who think that nothing is so much to be dreaded for a woman as originality of thought or character, that their minds are impeded by doubts till they lose their chance of fair, free proportions."[22] Fuller's own life was exemplary of a woman, who as a reactionary, author and teacher, attempted to liberate herself from the yoke of a repressive society through self-education and the education of other women.

Emily Davies, another nineteenth century author and supporter of equality for woman, claimed that a dual theory existed which established different forms of excellence for man and woman. Whatever man's ideal was, woman's was decidedly the opposite. Davies ridiculed and refuted this theory in her work The Higher Education of Women. John Stuart Mill believed too in the equality of the sexes. In his Subjection of Women he decried the fact that woman was raised to accept voluntarily the rule of man and to believe that her ideals should be opposite to that of man.[23]

The concepts of woman as a superior being or as an inferior being were similar in the respect that they stressed the importance and maintenance of woman's sphere. However, these two concepts were paradoxical and can be explained by considering several theories concerning woman in patriarchal Victorian society. So strong was the notion of separate spheres that by 1830, the ideal for a woman was "...the sanctified duty to create a home...."[24] Frankfort explains that while this ideal elevated woman spiritually, it simultaneously degraded her because it was based on the fact that the higher sensibilities of woman made her poorly suited for the world outside the home.[25] O'Neill believed that

the Victorians created a mystique regarding the domestic duties of woman so that she was glorified by being told that she was morally pure and that her spiritual genius would find its highest expression in the home. This, O'Neill claimed was compensation for giving woman more domestic responsibilities and at the same time was a way of guaranteeing woman's inferiority.[26] Eva Figes asserts that the standard of womanhood was set by men for men and not by women.[27] "It was a common ploy to disarm woman with flattery, and get her safely out of harm's way by placing her on a pedestal.[28] This design enabled man to keep woman in a position in which she could not threaten his own. According to Millett, misogynist literature has equated women with children and has directed "...its fiercest enmity at feminine guile and corruption...."[29] By telling woman she was in a special class in society and treating her as such, the Victorian attitude promoted the idea that woman should not perform duties outside her sphere. And because woman had little choice but to accept her position, society deemed her unfit and incapable of doing anything but her domestic tasks.

These contradictions in nineteenth century attitudes towards woman continued to be significant determinants in the role she occupied in society throughout the course of the century.

Woman's Role in Society

The prevalent concept of woman's role in society related directly to the domestic duties she was expected to fulfill within her sphere. However, as Ann Douglas states, the concept of woman's role was surrounded with some confusion during the crucial years of transition

between 1820 and 1840.[30] As nineteenth century society was industrializing, woman had to work at home or outside it, therefore performing several tasks at once. Although woman was expanding her sphere, society did not easily accept the gravitation from traditional roles. The old roles of wife and mother, plus "ornament" of the household persisted as the new roles of worker and professional emerged.

The role which the majority of young girls in the nineteenth century were raised to fill was that of wife and mother. An observation of Basil Hall in his Travels in North America confirmed that the wifely and motherly occupations predominated among women.[31] It was expected that woman completely surrender her will to that of her husband and that she have no life except for ministering to the needs and comforts of her husband and children.[32] A woman who was not fulfilled in submitting herself to the will of a husband was seen as someone who was going against nature.[33] In fact, so dependent was a woman in her role as wife that Martha Carey Thomas, a one-time president of Bryn Mawr College, considered the role as one of base servitude.[34] In general, however, it was not only expected that a girl become a wife and mother, but that she be truly contented in this role. It was feared that if a woman performed any other kind of work, the chores of her domestic sphere would be neglected and the family would disintegrate.

Woman, conceptualized as an ornament, was essentially a member of the financially comfortable class of society. Ideally, she was provided for and protected. A woman did not manage the affairs of the family outside the home, nor was she expected to do rough menial labour inside the home.[35] A husband of this rank would reject the idea of his wife's

working outside the home since this would reflect on his own ability to provide the good things of life.[36] A woman in the role of an ornament was a symbol to the rest of society of the success and wealth of her husband. His success, status and ego were at stake, not her interests or concerns.

The protection afforded the female "ornament" proved to be costly to any married woman regardless of her social class or the privileges she may have enjoyed as a result of her husband's wealth. Another of the paradoxes of nineteenth century life enters here where on one hand society asserted that woman was well-cared for by her 'natural protector', yet woman's legal status was quite contradictory to what the social code or 'polite' version of the law claimed it was.[37] According to British Common Law in the early nineteenth century, woman underwent 'civil death' upon marriage. She lacked control over her own earnings, she was not permitted to choose her domicile, she could not manage any property that was legally her own, nor could she sign papers or bear witness. The husband owned both her person and her services. He could rent her out and keep the profits. Except for owning her own property, the single woman had just as few rights. Widows received nothing of their husband's properties. Men even owned their children.[38] For the upper class woman, being her husband's "ornament" made life somewhat easier but it was nonetheless confining.

While the Victorian ideal did not endorse work outside the home, the real world did not reflect this. In North America and abroad, the nineteenth century marked a period of urban growth where men and women moved from the country to populate the towns. Woman especially, was

not given much opportunity for earning a living in the rural areas.[39]

Domestic work was popular before factories were established. But once manufacturing developed into a large scale industry, woman became the mainstay of its labour force.[40] In fact, Cross states that in Montreal there was a shortage of servants in the later decades of the nineteenth century because girls preferred factory work to domestic work. Working in a factory gave woman the opportunity to be her own person where she did not have to abide by the rules of a particular household twenty-four hours a day.[41] This independence however, was accompanied by some serious drawbacks. The "millgirl," as the female factory worker was called, worked long hours in deplorable conditions with very low pay. At the beginning of the century the working woman was exploited to a greater degree than her male co-worker. She was in essence entrapped much in the same way as when she stayed at home.

> Pet or beast of burden: such is woman almost exclusively today. Supported by man when she does not work, she is still supported by him when she works herself to death.[42]

Consideration of the working woman's plight by the rest of society was paradoxical. The strain which the competitive careers such as commerce, manufacturing and banking was thought to place on woman would result in disaster or grave deterioration in her health.[43] Yet the laborious hours of factory work did not elicit such comments because, as some female reformers would argue, factory work was not as threatening to men as the more competitive fields. Despite the working woman's condition, de Beauvoir explained that because woman left home to enter an industry which depended so heavily upon her participation, her lot

in life had been transformed and a new era would open for her.[44]

The idea of woman leaving the home to become a professional was received by the rest of society with much reservation. Countless times it had been argued that woman's sole profession was the ministering of the home and family. However there were women of middle class backgrounds who, from economic necessity, had to work. Teaching was one of the first professions that a woman who had some education could enter with enough justification to leave home.

Teaching, for a woman, was justified on the basis that is was a "waiting station"[45] until she had a chance to marry and it provided the best preparation for the role of mother.[46] A quarter of a million school teachers in the United States comprised the only other large group of women who worked outside their homes.[47] Women began replacing men in teaching in the 1830's and this trend gained momentum as American men were called to fight in the Civil War and their positions were left vacant. In Lower Canada the trends were similar, where more than half the total number of teachers in that province were women by 1850.[48]

Teaching and domestic work offered woman almost equal pay. The two occupations were frequently compared and the female teacher was considered to have the same social and educational level as spinster and household servants.[49] The reasons for woman having been afforded such a low status as a teacher were two-fold, and related to two important developments in the teaching profession. Towards the latter half of the nineteenth century, schools were being organized into school systems and at the same time there was increasing concern that the status of teaching as an occupation should be raised.[50] While the former

development aimed at reducing costs by grading large groups of children, the latter brought with it the demand for increased salaries. The employment of female teachers was considered as a solution to the problem because a woman would teach for less pay than a man; the financial considerations having taken precedence over the professional ones. Woman, it was thought, cheapened the profession in another way since she expected to teach only temporarily. By the time she became proficient at her job, she left it, leaving a position vacant for another novice. American society was becoming increasingly concerned that its schools were becoming "feminized." The term given to this phenomenon was the "woman peril" which embodied certain evils as perceived by society as a result of woman's predominating in the teaching profession. In places such as New York, legislation was enacted to limit the number of women teachers by disqualifying married women from teaching.[51] A Canadian educator in Nova Scotia claimed that education would deteriorate because some areas wanted cheap schools.[52] Despite these allegations to her inferior status, it was clear that woman's desire to work and accept new roles outside the home was so strong that she was willing to accept less pay than a man for the same job. Her perseverance opened new vistas in the professional world.

Nursing had long been seen as another extension of women's role as mother. By 1890, a census had shown that there were approximately forty thousand nurses and midwives in the United States but not many were paid for their services.[53] It was not among the most desired careers, but rather a form of martyrdom for an educated woman.[54] Up until the end of the century, private nurses were on duty twenty-four

hours a day, seven days a week.[55] In Montreal, as well as in other American cities, being in the nursing profession was equated with being a servant.[56]

According to Eleanor Thompson, attempts of woman to enter the medical profession were not seen as an educational movement but as an attempt to extend her sphere and thus as a threat to man.[57] The prevailing attitude which thwarted woman's efforts in medicine included prudery and the notion that woman should not study anatomy, especially in the presence of man.[58]

Woman's first serious attempts to enter the medical profession in Canada began after 1850, while in the United States and Britain medical schools were already accepting her by mid-century.[59] One argument advanced for woman to be permitted entrance into the medical profession focused on the idea that the care and healing of women and children ought to be entrusted to a woman.[60] As a result, the women physicians who stayed in North America directed their efforts towards the service of women and children.[61] Historians today, explain that from a professional standpoint, this was a step backward for the female doctor. She was placed in a "job ghetto" which emphasized her subordination in the world of work. In working with women and children, the woman doctor was put in a traditional role which was not competitive with the assignments of the male doctor.[62]

The situation in the legal profession was similarly tainted with patriarchal attitudes. One argument proposed against having woman enter law was that "...woman must not be sullied by the harsh and degrading aspects of legal practice."[63] In Quebec, it was only in 1942 that

woman was admitted into the Bar.

Employment patterns of women in Canada and the United States were changing by the 1870's and 1880's and women were being encouraged to develop roles which suited their "...unique capabilities and ultimate roles as mothers."[64] However, professional women who had proven themselves, such as Dr. Augusta Stowe-Gullen, Canada's first female medical school graduate, helped stress the importance of woman's becoming independent and self-supporting. She argued that society made little or no attempt to protect woman from the "over-pressure" of being a housewife; but once woman chose skilled and well-paid labour, then outbursts adverse opinions were heard.[65]

Woman's Educability

Woman May and Should be Educated

Despite the fact that the educated woman in the nineteenth century was seen as being unfeminine and the learned wife was not sought after,[66] "a few inspired souls saw woman as a human being, entirely apart from any sphere. To them, woman's mind, like man's, was capable of growth, and, like a man, she should be given the opportunity."[67] To notables such as Henry Barnard, Horace Mann and other educational leaders, there was no question of woman's intelligence and no doubt that she should be given educational opportunities.[68]

The nineteenth century marked a great experiment in the education of woman. The dame schools, seminaries and academies offered the meager rudiments of an elementary education of girls. The pioneers who founded these institutions expended a great amount of energy in the hope that

they could raise the level of education of woman. In the middle decades of the century, the female academies and seminaries trained teachers for the countries' schools. These schools did not stress the subjects which encouraged independent reasoning, as the ladies were seldom introduced to the subjects of mathematics, theology, Greek and natural science which the boys were taught in their schools.[69] However, these institutions essentially fulfilled the patriarchal concept that education for woman should help her teach the young and perform her duties at home. The concepts of woman's educability varied according to the purpose for which society thought she should be educated and therefore determined the nature of education which was offered her.

To someone such as Reverend Robert Sedgewick, woman was seen as an equal to man. But because he would have her stay within her sphere, Sedgewick thought the proper education for woman should emphasize housekeeping.[70] The movement towards domestic training was in response to the needs felt by society and in accordance with the changing ideas on education.[71] Domestic training became a feature of nineteenth century life for two reasons. Mothers left homemaking to become wage-earners and as a result, girls no longer had the home as their model for learning domestic skills.[72] Another reason was that the ladies of the middle and upper classes, who had increasingly more leisure time, required the help of servants so that they could devote themselves to charitable causes. In 1860 in Montreal, the Home and School of Industry trained girls for domestic service. Kitchen Gardens, an idea which originated in the United States and came to Montreal, were classes which were organized for little girls under the age of seven.[73] Domestic

courses were offered in many of the female academies and seminaries which sprang up in the early part of the nineteenth century in the United States.

Two of the leading American pioneers in female education, Emma Willard (1787-1870), and Catherine Beecher (1800-1878), stressed the importance of domestic training in their writings. In her Plan for Improving Female Education published in 1819, Emma Willard wrote that if a woman was not qualified to discharge the duties of her sex in the areas of regulating a home, then she cannot be expected to be a good wife, mother, or mistress of her family and is therefore a bad member of society.[74] Willard stated that housewifery could be improved by being taught through practice and theory.[75] Catherine Beecher decried the fact that woman, who performed domestic work either for wages or in her own home in the capacity of a cook, maid, or nurse of children, was looked upon as having a lowly profession.[76] She claimed that with proper training in the domestic sciences, woman would be prepared for her profession and her duties would attract the honor they deserve.[77] It was during the time that Beecher was in charge of the Western Female Institute that she began writing her books on domestic economy. They are considered to be one of her most significant contributions to the education of woman.[78]

In the pre-Civil War period, a great number of domestic 'how-to' manuals flourished: One such book, The Frugal Housewife, written by Abolitionist and reformer Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880), was "... designed to ease the tension of economic transformation by rationalizing the middle class woman's new domestic identity...."[79]

It was at least until the middle decades of the nineteenth century that middle class American girls were educated essentially to be home-workers.[80] While the conservative members of society were content to see that this education did help to broaden woman's sphere so that she could better perform her duties at home,[81] it was, as Ann Douglas stated, education for exile.[82] She explained that the domestic education given to woman at this time only helped her update her domestic methods in a modernizing society.[83] Margaret Fuller was not satisfied in seeing that the education of women prepare them to fulfill a specific role. "Too much is said of women being better educated, that they may become better companions and mothers for men. They should be fit for such companionship....But a being of infinite scope must not be treated with an exclusive view to any one relation."[84]

Educational opportunities for an American woman in the early part of the century were offered in dame schools and in female seminaries and academies. While these schools offered young women the opportunity for a more solid education than ever before, they were usually not free and were widely scattered.[85] Alongside the better academies there grew the private female seminaries, which to the displeasure of the pioneers in women's education, were meagerly financed, poorly equipped and staffed with ill-educated women.[86] These early educators set themselves to task in two major areas. One was in urging gentlemen in political circles to endow these institutions so that they might have some permanence in society. The other task was to train teachers adequately so that the nation's newly established schools would have a corps of properly trained personnel.[87] Catherine Beecher devoted her life's work

to the conviction that woman's true professions are those of mother and teacher and that she be properly trained to fulfill them.[88]

In the service occupations of teaching and nursing, woman made considerable advances. Because public schooling was becoming better organized, educators saw the need for better trained teachers. Since teaching for woman was seen as a logical extension of her work at home, she was admitted to the teacher training institutions. Advancements in nursing education were made in 1873 when cities such as New York and Boston built lodgings for the nursing trainees adjacent to hospitals so that the women could receive their instruction under the direction of physicians.[89] In Montreal, numerous attempts at establishing a school of nursing failed to materialize between 1874 and 1890. Finally, Gertrude Elizabeth Livingstone, a graduate of New York Hospital's Training School for Nurses, came to the Montreal General Hospital to open such a training programme for nurses.[90]

Cultural education was permitted out of the concern that woman cultivate formal gentility and the social graces to enhance her social value through a variety of accomplishments.[91] The early female academies and seminaries in the United States paid attention to the ornamental branches of instruction. Subjects such as art, elegant penmanship and grace of motion were taught. In one address, Rev. Robert Sedgewick stated that a smattering of French, Italian, German and Dutch would help a woman enliven a drawing room conversation which would amuse and please guests at a party.[92]

While woman made considerable advances in rudimentary academic education and in two of the service professions closely associated

with her sphere, society became alarmed when she demanded the right to enter an institution of higher learning which infringed upon man's domain. And, although there were many who believed that woman should be educated, they did not necessarily entertain the thought of having her use this education for a specific career other than the accepted ones of teaching and nursing. Principal Dawson of McGill University stated that men attend colleges to prepare for certain professions. On the other hand, with the exception of women who train for the teaching profession, "...a great majority of those who obtain what is regarded as higher culture, do so merely as a means of general improvement, and to fit themselves better to take their proper place in society."[93] Furthermore, the acceptance of a woman to university and the completion of a programme did not carry the right to enrol in the professional faculties on the same basis as the male students.[94]

The idea of having a career in the professions was very much out of line with the domestic cult operative in the mid-nineteenth century. America's first woman doctor, Elizabeth Blackwell, applied to several schools of medicine before she was accepted to one in New York in 1847.[95] In Canada, opportunities for woman to enter the medical profession were equally difficult in the same period, but on the other hand, medical training was more easily attained than law or theology because of its appeal to woman's nurturing instincts.[96] It was only towards the end of the century when progress in higher education for woman was made that more women entered the professions. However, woman continued to encounter professional inequality long after she gained educational equality. This problem plagues even the present day professional woman.

Woman Has Limited Abilities and Needs for Education

There was an element in nineteenth century society which embraced the notion that woman would not benefit from formal education and therefore did not require it. This attitude was rooted in the belief that woman's functions were child-bearing and management of the home. The argument against educating women gave birth to a variety of theories, all supporting the cult of domesticity.

The education of woman in Canada, the United States and Britain until the mid-nineteenth century related to her condition as wife and mother.[97] Her education was like that life,"...simple, prosaic, narrow."[98] Since woman had no intellectual function to fill in society, it was thought that she did not have the mental capacity to benefit from an education.[99] This cyclic pattern of thinking perpetuated the domestic role that woman was designated and made it very difficult for her to break away from it.

This patriarchal attitude was one which was held by even the most venerated members in academic circles. Charles Eliot, president of Harvard University in the late nineteenth century, "...claimed that women had neither the intelligence nor the need to study the great traditions of learning inherited from the past."[100] Eliot believed that woman ought to pursue her natural duties which inevitably confined her to the home. Others argued that even if woman could intellectually profit by formal education, her health would decline, she would become less fertile and less refined. Dr. Edward H. Clarke, a noted physician in the nineteenth century, wrote on the subject of women and had considerable influence on the opinions of many. He espoused the theory that if woman was educated in the same method as man, her health would fail seriously.

He predicted that a system of education which did not give special consideration to a woman's physiological organization, would invariably contribute to the degeneration of the entire race.[101] Clarke was not only in favor of educating girls separately from boys at all levels of learning, but advocated that the education of each of the sexes follow different directions. So much influence did Dr. Clarke have, that Martha Carey Thomas (1857-1935), claimed that women who went to study were "...haunted by the clanging chains of that gloomy little specter, Dr. Edward H. Clarke's Sex in Education."[102] When she considered higher education as an option in life, Thomas was filled with doubt "...as to whether women as a sex were physically and mentally fit for it."[103]

According to an article on "The Woman Question" written in 1879, the argument that woman would injure herself has always been used against permitting her to widen the sphere of her activity.[104] "Every change in her condition has been met with objection."[105] So stifling was society's approach to woman in higher education that the professional options open to a collegiate woman were pitifully few. The home, more so than teaching, was seen as being the ultimate goal of the lives of college educated women.[106] Margaret Fuller perhaps captured the feeling concerning educated woman in a story she recalled of a father speaking of his young daughter. "If she knows too much, she will never find a husband; superior women hardly ever can."[107]

By the second half of the nineteenth century, woman in Western cultures encountered few obstacles in obtaining elementary and high school education as society, for the most part, agreed that she should have the rudiments of reading and writing. However useful this and

other educational benefits were, woman was incapable of expanding her sphere to any great extent. The next few decades witnessed attempts by woman to secure a collegiate education equal to her male counterparts. Much discussion and controversy resulted as woman was gradually entering a traditionally male-dominated sphere. The most serious questions raised by the male world were: a) Of what use was such an education to woman? b) By what means could this education be made available? and c) What effects would this higher learning have on the rest of society? The answers would be put forward by some remarkable individuals. The thrust for collegiate education for woman marked the last stage in her educational experiment. It was not without its struggles, but the rewards followed.

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CHAPTER II

The Separate Women's Colleges of the Eastern United States

By the second half of the nineteenth century industrialization was easing the burden of women's domestic chores. The public school system was developing so that girls were being offered greater educational opportunities in the elementary and high schools. This trend, together with the growth of the seminaries created a need for professional teachers and further stimulated the advancement of higher education for women. The emphasis in the education of women was gradually shifting from one which merely enhanced their domestic life by stressing accomplishments[1] to a more academic programme which would allow them to broaden their horizons. The idea of collegiate education for women however, was not universally accepted for various reasons. The questions often raised concerned the purpose of such an education, the effects it would have on women's physical and mental states, and how such an education might be offered considering that the universities were exclusively male dominated.

While universities across the United States were slowly admitting women into their programmes, the institutions of the East will be the focus in this thesis. It was in the north eastern states that the inclination towards the separate education of women appeared to be the strongest. Therefore the higher education of women saw its expression in the establishment of separate women's colleges and coordinate colleges alongside the universities which admitted women into co-educational programmes. The separate colleges include: Mount Holyoke, Vassar, Wellesley, Smith and Bryn Mawr. The coordinate colleges associated with Harvard and Columbia were Radcliffe and Barnard respectively.

Because of the eastern preference for separate education, the women's colleges had to provide an environment similar to that in the already existing colleges and universities. In this way, women could disprove the doubts that shrouded their debut into collegiate life. The goals of the separate colleges were essentially directed toward offering women equal educational opportunities to those of men. The manner in which the schools accomplished this was to mirror as closely as possible the standards and curricula of the prestigious male universities. This became an all-encompassing feature of the women's colleges and as a result they developed a similar academic elitism to that of the Ivy League universities. The short term effects of this position proved to be advantageous in the sense that it put women on the same educational level as men and helped them demonstrate their intellectual equality. But in the long term, this close imitation of the men's liberal arts curricula was a disadvantage. In accentuating such a traditional programme, the colleges neglected the needs of women once they acquired their new educational skills. The characteristic academic timidity of the colleges prevented them from providing the training women required which would have enabled them to work alongside men in the professional sphere.

The separate education of women was financed and remained popular long after co-education was widely implemented and accepted. The separate colleges provided women, perhaps falsely, with the notion that they had attained equality with men in what used to be their own domain. But the female graduates, with the same academic training as their male counterparts, could not as easily obtain a position in medical or law schools or in other professions.[2]. Baker blames the colleges for having failed

to advance woman beyond the world of women and for having done so little for her status in the larger society.[3] The fact that the colleges failed to make the professional advancement of women one of their aims was an unfortunate feature of their personality and was characteristic of their overall orientation. Rather than becoming forerunners in the educational and professional advancement of women, the colleges, throughout their histories, sat back and watched as women struggled to make gains in their status.

While the womens' colleges can be discussed in great detail with reference to their administrative organization, entrance requirements, courses of study and student activities, it is not within the scope of this chapter to examine and compare the schools in all these areas. The approach will be to focus on three main problems: 1) How the separate colleges evolved from the time of their inception until the last decade and the rationale behind strategic developments, 2) The aims and orientation of the schools as established by their founders and the individuals closely associated with them and 3) Their status and accomplishments in the area of professional advancement for women.

Towards Collegiate Education For Women

Thrust for Collegiate Education

True collegiate education opened to women in the period just following the Civil War. Old traditions had been broken down and women were filled with a growing sense of accomplishment. Because women were "...barred from the society of man..."[4] they had been organizing on a local level during the thirties and forties in

community groups, charitable organizations and missionary societies. Their role in the abolitionist movement was a significant one which further imbued them with a greater sense of purpose. The more they accomplished, the more they wished to do; applying pressure where they met resistance. Education was one area which expanded as a result of this new strength.[5]

The women whose names are most frequently mentioned in the campaign for higher education for women are Emma Willard, Catherine Beecher and Mary Lyon. Their greatest work was in establishing seminaries which were mainly designed to advance professional training among women. Until the later years of the nineteenth century, professional training for women almost invariably meant teaching. As the seminary movement progressed and higher education became more in demand, two schools of thought concerning the appropriate institutions for this new education developed: There were those who believed that the seminaries should remain as they were, stressing certain subjects that women needed in order to fulfill their traditional duties more meaningfully. Emma Willard favoured this approach in seminary development. Catherine Beecher and Mary Lyon, however, continued to work toward the ideal that women should have broader professional aspirations.

They were in favour of creating a new kind of institution for women similar to the colleges for men.[6] Beecher believed that these new schools should stress "...scientific domestic economy...."[7] While she endorsed a new kind of institution for women, Beecher was against the idea of a women's college being fashioned along the exact lines of the colleges for men because it would draw women away from

their sacred vocation in the home as wives and mothers.[8] Beecher's philosophy was that women's colleges should offer an education equal to the men's schools but different. She believed that this education should not qualify women for the male professions but should train them for their own kind of business.[9]

Although Mary Lyon also regarded professional training as being important for women, she did not stress domestic training as much as Beecher and did not plan to have the students perform domestic tasks in the new college she founded once adequate finances would take care of domestic affairs. Mount Holyoke Seminary was founded almost single-handedly by the untiring efforts of Mary Lyon in 1837.[10] In its early years the seminary operated as a normal school which sent out trained teachers to all parts of the world. Lyon's seminary taught religious and health education and, while it only offered a smattering of college subjects, it was her hope that the school would eventually become an accredited women's college. This it did by 1888, but Lyon did not live to see it.

The efforts of the forerunners in the seminary movement helped lay the basis for higher educational institutions mainly by preparing society for them.[11] By 1870, when educational statistics began to be collected, only 2% of all seventeen year olds were graduating from high school. According to Newcomer, more girls than boys were being prepared for college because of their numbers in the secondary schools and many were meeting the requirements for college admission.[12] Following the Civil War, the number of colleges and universities which opened their doors to women proliferated. However, the kinds of

of institutions available were not identical throughout the country due to differences in opinion and ideology concerning how this education should be dispensed.

Co-education Versus Separate Education

In the Midwest, co-education became the rule.[13] Filled with ideals of equality, particularly after the Civil War, women found ways of raising money and bought their way into universities which could otherwise not afford to admit them.[14] The Morill Act of 1862 encouraged the growth of state universities and taxpayers wished their daughters to benefit as well as their sons.[15]

In the East, only one university, Cornell, allowed women to enter. It was also a case where women's place in academe had to be bought. Henry Sage donated 250,000 dollars for women's education so that four years after Cornell opened its doors in 1872, women entered.[16] However, co-education in the East was not universally accepted and other academic options for women developed. One such option was the separate women's colleges. These were privately endowed institutions which came into existence when their benefactors, usually individuals, either searched for a charitable cause to endow or were convinced of the validity of women's higher education. There were five such institutions. While the earlier ones had difficulty establishing collegiate status, by the time the last one came into existence, all had attained high academic ranking even among the best colleges for men and universities in the region.

The second option to co-education in the East was the coordinate

college. These colleges, based on the English model, were organized for women but operated in a parallel manner alongside a men's college. Barnard College, which opened after a long struggle in 1889 was a coordinate of Columbia University and Radcliffe, which was Harvard's coordinate, opened in 1893, although it had offered classes to women long before that. It has been stated that Harvard established a co-ordinate college more as a compromise than an earnest educational venture in order to satisfy the female friends of the university.[17]

The arguments for and against co-education involved moral and financial issues. Nowhere were the moral issues against co-education stated more emphatically than in the writings of Dr. Edward H. Clarke. His ideas which refuted and discarded co-education as a viable option in which to educate women loomed in the minds of many. He warned about the ill-effects women might suffer as a result of following an identical course of study as men. He foresaw defeminized women coming out of a co-educational programme where they would have to apply themselves with the same persistency in study and work as required of men.[18] Similar fears were aroused when President Barnard of Columbia University waged his campaign for co-education in 1879. Some trustees worried about the effects a rigorous college course would have on the female brain. Others however, approved of such an education but not at an insitution which men attended.[19] The coordinate colleges then, were established as a comprise between those who advocated co-education and those who opposed it, but believed women should have equal educational opportunities as men.[20]

In contrast to Clarke, and despite the far-reaching effects of

his statements refuting the idea of co-education, there were those who espoused this system on moral grounds. Andrew D. White, Cornell's first president, was one who favoured co-education and he looked to the already existing institutions where co-education functioned successfully. In his arguments, White stated that in the common schools, high schools and academies, boys and girls studied well together and he therefore proposed that this method should work equally as well in a university.[21]

Two women, Alice Freeman Palmer and Martha Carey Thomas, who distinguished themselves as academicians and later as leaders of prestitious women's colleges, chose for their own educations co-educational colleges. Although both espoused ambivalent feelings about co-education later on in their careers, their reasons for having chosen co-educational schools for themselves were quite definite. Palmer felt she was fortunate in having chosen the University of Michigan in 1872. Co-education, she believed, was a natural way for boys and girls with similar interests in higher education to associate. "She did not think it made girls boyish, or boys girlish; but merely that it brought good sense and a pleased companionship to take the place of giddiness and sentimentality."[22] Thomas, on the other hand, chose Cornell in 1874 over a separate women's college such as Vassar. She believed that the latter was not quite up to the standard of the best men's college which was what she very much desired. When she graduated, Thomas wrote home saying, "I have a degree that represents more than a Vassar one."[23] Still, she was somewhat disappointed in the women at Cornell who did not seem to share in her determination not to be just a pioneer in the co-educational

experiment but to perform beyond the academic requirements, to do better than the men, and to behave "...not only with decorum, but with marked decorum."[24] For Palmer, co-education was a natural way for men and women to express and share in their desire to learn. For Thomas, it provided a common territory so that women could prove their intellectuality on equal grounds with men. The ideals and ideas of these two women differed greatly, nevertheless, both of them made a strong impact upon the institutions they served.

The financial considerations of co-education versus separate education were hardly disputed. Financially, the separate colleges were at the greatest disadvantage. Because professors in various disciplines had to be hired, the expenses to the colleges were greater than at any other kind of institution. In many cases the separate colleges 'borrowed' staff from the male universities. In the case of Vassar, the large endowment was enough to supply the material necessities of the college but left little for the operating expenses.[25] This in fact made the struggle to maintain standards even more difficult.[26] When Sophia Smith's bequest to found a women's college was announced in the June 17, 1870 publication of the Springfield Republican, the sentiment was expressed that she should have donated a smaller sum to an already existing college because women not only need an equal education to that of the men, but an education in the same classes as them.[27] The article stated that no girls' college would have the same intellectual standard as the best of the existing colleges for many years to come.[28]

While President Barnard of Columbia University saw co-education as the most practical arrangement, he did not believe it to be the only

possible one. In trying to secure for women the education they desired, Barnard did not favour a separate college because of the difficulty other such colleges were having in rising to collegiate level.[29] Barnard examined Harvard's approach to the 'problem' of educating women. There, courses were offered from 1879 in what later became the Annex. Barnard emerged with the idea of a coordinate college for Columbia. After a ten year battle, Barnard College was opened. There, women had their own building which was used solely for the purpose of instruction given by professors from Columbia.[30] At Barnard, the first students had access to the university libraries and soon after, the university faculties opened up to the senior girls. These advantages however were not made available to their Radcliffe counterparts.[31] At Barnard, commencement ceremonies were held in conjunction with those held at Columbia and the women received the Columbia degree.[32] At Radcliffe, commencement was a separate affair from Harvard's and the degrees were from Radcliffe and not the parent university.[33]

It is easy to see why those proponents of co-education had a sound argument in claiming that their system was the most economical means of educating men and women. The same buildings and facilities such as libraries and laboratories could be used as well as personnel. However, these same enthusiasts also argued that co-education was a means in which to educate men and women equally.[34] This aspect of their argument was to meet with serious challenge in later decades.

Despite the drawbacks, the three kinds of institutions flourished for a great number of years, each making a place for itself in the academic world.

The Separate Women's Colleges

The Benefactors

By the 1860's, higher education for women had changed from being merely an ideal to becoming more of a reality as ideas on the subject solidified into actual practice. Still, collegiate education for women required a considerable amount of wealth in order for it to become a permanent venture. Because of the skeptism surrounding it, collegiate education was not the ideal target at which wealthy members of society directed their fortunes. Yet, the notion of founding such institutions appealed to several such benefactors and materialized into a number of separately endowed women's colleges in the eastern United States. Why did these people support colleges for women at such a time? The existing literature on philanthrophy in the nineteenth century offers very little concerning the motives of this small benevolent group.[35] Perhaps a study of the benefactors themselves would provide a greater understanding of their interest in women's higher education.

The founders of women's colleges, with the exception of Mary Lyon, who was a schoolteacher, "...were an assorted, improbable and often inadvertent lot,"[36] and "...were perhaps the most unlikely collection of people ever to create a set of closely related institutions."[37] Matthew Vassar came to Poughkeepsie in 1796 from England. His family were farmers and dissenters. He ran away from home to avoid becoming a tanner's apprentice but returned to work in his father's brewery business where he remained and prospered. His contact with education was through his schoolteacher niece, Lydia Booth. With Vassar's financial assistance they bought the Cottage Hill Seminary. When

Booth died, Vassar sold the school to Milo Jewett, an educator and a fellow Baptist.[38] During his life, Vassar showed little interest in women so that some of his closest acquaintances were not even aware that he was married. "Childless, narrow-minded, provincial and somewhat misogynistic, he was the last man anyone would have expected to found a women's college."[39] Vassar had originally intended to found a hospital. But Jewett was instrumental in discouraging this idea. The latter, anxious to realize his own dream of being a leader of a great woman's college, appealed to what he thought were Vassar's fantasies.

> If you will establish a real college for girls and endow it, you will build a monument for yourself more lasting than the Pyramids; you will perpetuate your name to the latest generations; it will be the pride and glory of Po'keepsie, an honor to the State and a blessing to the World.40

Vassar College was conceived in 1861, but between then and the time it opened in 1865,Jewett's resignation was requested due to a complexity of factors.

Ten years after Vassar opened, Sophia Smith became the first and only woman among nineteen American benefactors to will her wealth to the founding of a college for the members of her sex. Coming from a farming family, she had few ambitions in life and was for the most part unworldly. Her family was quite prosperous but had the reputation of being miserly.[41] When her father died he left ten thousand dollards to each of his four children. All except one of her brother remained unmarried so Sophia and the others lived in the homestead. When she became deaf at age forty, Sophia's family had to care for her. However, her relatives predeceased her and she was left with a large fortune. Due particularly to the parsimonious

life led by her brother Austin, Sophia decided to dispose of this wealth in a most lavish way. To the astonishment of the townspeople of Hatfield, Sophia built a grand mansion which was filled with every imaginable luxury. She turned to her pastor, the Rev. John Greene when she had difficulty disposing of the rest of her wealth. Greene originally suggested the founding of a true woman's college but after consulting with the presidents of Harvard, Yale, Amherst and Williams, warned that higher education for women was still a "dangerous experiment."[42] Greene then suggested Smith open a school for deaf mutes. By the time she considered this option, one was already in the making. Sophia Smith decided to will a women's college saying that she did not wish to render her sex "...any less feminine, but to develop as fully as may be the powers of womanhood and furnish women with means of usefulness, happiness, and honor now withheld from them."[43] Smith bequested $393,105.00 and Rev. J. Greene was among several notables who dedicated Smith College in 1875 in front of a large crowd, three-quarters of whom were women.[44]

Wellesley College opened in the same year as Smith. Its benefactor was Henry Fowle Durant who followed in his father's footsteps to practise law. Durant was an astute and highly successful lawyer. He was married to his cousin and they had two children. Their daughter died at two months of age and their son died at the age of eight. After the loss of his son, Durant's life changed abruptly. Because he could not reconcile law with religion, he devoted the rest of his life to preaching and philanthropy.[45] Durant became a trustee of Mount Holyoke Seminary and so directed his attention to the higher education

of women. He and his wife decided to consecrate their country home in Wellesley having three hundred acres of land, together with the buildings they erected to the Board of Trustees of Wellesley College.[46] Durant was unique in the sense that he did not want the College to bear his name nor was his name mentioned in the charter. The only office he assumed in connection with the college was that of treasurer.[47] The Wellesley cornerstone was laid without ceremony. It bore an inscription from the Bible. Durant expressed what was most likely his religious motive in establishing such a college. "I do feel thankful for the privilege of trying to do something in the cause of Christ."[48]

Joseph Wright Taylor became the last individual to endow a woman's college in the East. His life, as well as his motives, were as in the case of the other benefactors, quite unique. Taylor became a physician as had his father. Having had difficulty attracting a clientele in a town which supported a large number of doctors, Taylor became bored with medicine.[49] He boarded a merchant vessel sailing for India. There he became involved in commerce and because it was more exciting and profitable than medicine, decided to join his brother's tannery business in Cincinnati. Once retired, Taylor moved back East where he renewed his interest as a member of the Society of Friends and as a trustee of Harverford College. Taylor was determined to found a woman's college because it was consistent with Quaker principles that Quaker girls should have the same facilities for higher education as was provided for men.[50] Taylor had heard of some of the difficulties women were experiencing in co-educational institutions and felt that there had to be other places where they could be educated without the risk of suffering

indignity. While Taylor's interest in founding Bryn Mawr was partly religious, he wished that his college would be "...preeminent in cultivating the intellectual as well as the spiritual interest of the rising generation of women."[51] Taylor supervised the construction of the college in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, when at age sixty-nine he had to ride a horse from the country into town, take a train, change to a ferry to cross the Delaware and race to get a trolley to catch another train for Bryn Mawr. The pace proved to be too strenuous. Joseph Taylor died before he could see his college open in 1889.

The founders of all the women's colleges shared the expectation that their schools would offer the same educational opportunities to women as men had been receiving. Converse said of Durant that he wished "...to give the teachers and students of Wellesley an opportunity to show what women, with the same educational facilities as their brothers and a free hand in directing their own academic life, could accomplish for civilization."[52] In his first communication with the Board of Trustees of Vassar, Matthew Vassar stated, "It occured to me that woman, having received from her creator the same intellectual gifts as man, has the same right as man to intellectual culture and development."[53] Of all the five separate colleges, only two, Vassar and Wellesley were established during the lifetimes of their founders. Vassar took on its character more from its first two presidents than from its founder. Durant, however, was foremost in directing the development and determining the nature of Wellesley.[54] The other colleges were influenced, like Vassar, by the individuals who took charge of their direction. In a few cases the influential people were women who gave the colleges

their individual personalities.

Orientation and Personality

In the early days of their existence, the women's colleges took great pains to ensure that the social and academic environments they created were well suited to women's nature and their ideals. The reputations of the schools were at stake as a skeptical society watched closely. The goals of the schools were two-fold. Firstly, it was of utmost importance to the founders and college presidents that women's physical well-being was maintained during their involvement in this educational experiment. Critics of the same genre as Dr. E.H. Clarke feared that women's health would suffer under the strain of a collegiate programme and so the schools adopted stringent measures to avoid any event which would confirm these fears. Secondly, the success of the colleges depended upon their academic standard which at that time could only be measured against the curriculum of the established men's colleges such as Yale, Harvard and Amherst. Fulfilling this ideal would place women on the same academic level as men and would then enable them to prove they were intellectually equal. The colleges made every attempt to mirror as closely as possible the liberal arts course of study of the elite men's schools. This however had serious implications as far as preparing women for the professional world.

In the early years of all the colleges, close attention was given to areas of hygiene, nutrition and exercise. The development of the whole person was the concern of the leaders of these institutions.[55] The individuals at the helm of Vassar during its early years were

occupied in proving that women could be educated, that their bodies would not disintegrate under the strain and that their loveliness and charm would not be sacrificed in the process.[56] To effect this womanly ideal, Matthew Vassar appointed a lady principal who was in charge of overseeing all moral aspects of the girls' lives. The first woman to occupy this position was Hannah Lyman, whom Vassar personally chose. She was a graduate of Mount Holyoke and had taught at a seminary for young girls in Montreal for sixteen years, beginning in 1850.[57] During that time, Lyman had accompanied several of her students to lectures at McGill University on the invitation of Principal Dawson. This was the first presence of women in men's classes at that university.[58] At Vassar, the daily routines of the women were carefully scrutinized so that Lyman oversaw the girls' attire, their callers, their shopping lists and even the number of baths they took per week.[59] Lyman was a figure to be feared at Vassar. Ellen Richards, a student there for two years between 1868 and 1869, who later became the first woman at M.I.T., reported that although she had little to fear, she dreaded being called to meet with Lyman.[60] In her diary Richards wrote, "The only trouble here is they won't let us study enough. They are so afraid we shall break down and you know the reputation of the College is at stake...."[61] So important in fact was women's health to the college administrators that the issue was being echoed ten years later. Clark Seelye, Smith's first President, addressed an audience in 1875, just before that college was scheduled to open saying, "Woman's health is endangered far more by balls and parties than by schools."[62]

Because the colleges were residential and women had to come from great distances to attend, the college leaders felt responsible for disciplining the students according to the socially accepted standards of the day. To enforce these practices the schools adopted an 'in loco parentis' regime. The college environment was rigid and controlled. While he was alive, Mr. Durant ruled Wellesley autocratically and absolutely.[63] When he died, Alice Freeman became its vice-president and later its president. She had formerly taught at Wellesley. Her term serving in all these capacities was rather brief, spanning the years 1879 to 1887. She maintained a very close contact with the students because there was no dean. She lived among them and made herself available to them for consultation.[64] Freeman continued to have the same despotic control over the college as had Durant but injected a definite aura of love and approval.[65] The climate which she fostered was one where her will became law although "...her authority did not rest on bare will; on knowledge rather, on study, poise, and a large way of handling business."[66]

Religious worship at the colleges was an important part of each day. The religious content varied from college to college. At Vassar, Richards stated that the required prayer time, religious exercises and silent time on Sundays was excessive.[67] At Wellesley, religion was far more a part of college life than elsewhere. Silent time was held daily, prayers were conducted daily by teachers and Bible classes were also held daily.[68] At Smith all instruction was influenced by the spirit of the Christian religion.[69] At Bryn Mawr, President Dr. Rhoads conducted Quaker meetings daily and concentrated on morality

and social problems. Bryn Mawr's Dean, Carey Thomas tolerated these exercises as long as she saw that they did not interfere with the progress of the college as an institution of learning.[70] Thomas' major area of concern was not so much promoting the feminine ideal in collegiate life as had Freeman, but rather the feminist ideal[71] because of the conviction she had that women could learn and compete with men in all fields.

The basic academic aim and ultimate goal of the colleges was to reach the standards of the best men's colleges. Even by 1880 however, fifteen years after Vassar had opened, critics suspected that "...another glorified seminary for young ladies..."[72] was in the making when Dr. Taylor submitted his plans for the establishment of Bryn Mawr, the last separate women's college in the East. When Vassar and Wellesley opened, their leaders were clearly disappointed in discovering that the students were not adequately prepared to follow a complete college curriculum. As a result, the schools were obliged to open preparatory departments so that the students would eventually reach the academic level of the men's colleges.[73] Professor Mary Whitney said of Vassar's first President Raymond's early years, "My impression is of a struggle to keep the standard of Vassar to a fairly collegiate standard, against the unfortunate opinions prevailing in the public mind...."[74] Smith was the first of the women's colleges to open without having such a preparatory department.[75] It was not until the 1890's that all the colleges were able to abolish them and could actually claim they were operating on an academic level in accordance with their original aims.

Once the women's colleges fulfilled their original academic aims

of providing women with the same means of educating themselves as men, the question to be raised remained whether the colleges had professional goals for their students who were equipped with new skills. The ideal for Vassar, according to President Raymond, was to follow the pattern of the men's colleges until it was an accredited college.[76] In Smith College's early announcements, it was clear that the school had not intended to prepare women for teaching or homemaking. "The college is not intended to fit woman for a particular sphere or profession, but to perfect her intellect by the best methods which philosophy and experience suggest."[77] Durant wanted instruction in religion and health at Wellesley and was concerned with the training of teachers.[78] Bryn Mawr became the only college to establish a graduate school so as to provide women with not only an education equal to men, but to prepare them in becoming well-prepared teachers.[79] While the women's colleges attempted to imitate the men's system so closely, it is interesting to note how they differed with regard to their professional aspirations. The aims of the early men's schools was training for the professions. The women's colleges aimed to train specifically for one profession-teaching.[80] The colleges' aims for their graduates reflected the current traditional views concerning acceptable careers for women. Their reluctance to upset the status quo put them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the men's colleges and the co-educational institutions.

The women's college proved that women could cope with the same academic rigours as men. However, shortly after this had been accomplished, people began to measure the success of the schools in

terms of new sets of criteria. Had the colleges effected a change in women's traditional role and how well had they prepared their students for new roles which they were now equipped to hold?

Status and Accomplishments of the Women's Colleges

Once the colleges proved what they had set out to prove, they were criticized for not considering the needs of the students.[81] In stressing a liberal arts curriculum, the schools projected the sentiment that women did not need to spend their time training for a profession. Although several of the college leaders professed an interest in teacher training, there existed a rift between the ideas of the normal school educators, who were responsible for teaching over half the women who continued their education beyond high school, and the women's colleges. The latter rejected the suggestions of educators to offer courses in education. The colleges might have given such little attention to education courses as offering them under the philosophy or psychology departments. They were not prepared to train students specifically for teaching.[82] On the other hand, the large universities had established departments of education and some even had complete teacher training colleges.[83]

The women's colleges attempted to introduce some professional courses in home economics. This was met with failure. At Wellesley, the home economic programme lasted for two years between 1891 and 1892. Although the colleges realized that this field even more than teaching was women's sphere, the domestic sciences were thought to be of lower intellectual importance than the subjects studied by men.[84] Because the colleges were on trial, they realized that this presented an

equivocal situation and decided to solve the problem by favouring tradition.[85] While the co-educational institutions were providing women with something different,[86] the colleges were stifling their approach to women's higher education.

According to Baker,

> ...if a college education gave a woman stature among other women, it did little for her status in the larger society, a consequence which served not only to reinforce her own self-image of inferiority, but which began to work on the institutions themselves, endowing them ultimately with an appearance of academic as well as social timidity. 87

Although the women had the same educational qualifications as the men, the same professional opportunities were not available to them. And, the women's colleges did not do their share in trying to alter this course.[88] The early graduates of the colleges could only find jobs as teachers. Even the women graduates of M.I.T. did not go into the "men's" field of engineering, but rather into household science and food chemistry, "These fields quickly developed a status similar to the service professions. They became areas of study with a low research content requiring minimal levels of institutional support...."[89] The colleges did broaden their course of study throughout the years and adopted a system of course electives, but according to Baker, their graduates still filled the same positions as had their mothers and grandmothers.[90]

It would seem then, that although the women's colleges satisfied their initial policies of providing women with equal educational opportunities as men, they fell short as far as developing professional goals were concerned. Of the separate colleges, Bryn Mawr was the only one which rose above the undergraduate level and established a graduate

school. A major part of the problem was the academic timidity of the colleges and the imitative style they clung to in following closely the curricula of the Ivy League schools. The men received the encouragement they needed to pursue a wide range of professional options once they graduated from college. The social conditions were not ripe for women to get the same kind of encouragement nor the same kind of acceptance once they applied to graduate or professional schools. Had the women's colleges been more aggressive, their curricula would have become more innovative and oriented toward the professional needs of women. At the same time, the colleges might have realized that the social milieu had to be changed in order for women to achieve greater acceptance in the professional world and could have taken the necessary steps to initiate such change. However, had the colleges presented themselves as being more daring, Baker suggests that they would have lost their clientele, which was for the most part conservative, the men who ran them such as the trustees, presidents and faculty, as well as the financial assistance of Harvard, Yale and Amherst husbands. As institutions, they were content in "...mortgaging their own aspirations for a traditional kind of security..."[91]

Co-education: A Threat To Separate Education For Women

The decade of the 1960's produced a considerable amount of turmoil such that few social and political institutions escaped the turbulence of the period. In the field of higher education, several factors were responsible for the upheaval experienced by colleges and universities. Firstly, the problem of mass education put a great strain on these

institutions in terms of finances, space and personnel. It was difficult for these schools to make rapid changes which would accommodate the growing numbers of students as a result of the baby boom. Secondly, the social revolution encouraged a reassessment of values and patterns of living. Students' preference of residence changed from either living at home or in residence to co-educational living. Thirdly, student bodies had become very assertive in assuring their voices were heard and their strength felt in participating in many areas of university affairs. The particular area which the remainder of this chapter will deal with is the wave of co-education throughout the continent that menaced the existence of the single-sex colleges.

The course followed by the women's colleges remained the same until the 1960's when the call for co-education came. Behind this wave lay the philosophy that co-education must be natural education because the world is co-educational.[92] According to Alan Simpson, President of Vassar during the sixties, the number of co-educational institutions in the United Stated rose from 1533 to 2226 in which colleges and universities for women dropped from 259 to 193 and the number of institutions for men decreased from 236 to 154.[93]

Ironically, the earliest of the women's colleges founded in the East, Vassar, was the first to yield to the pressures of co-education in 1971. Its president, Simpson, claimed that the social aspect was an important one in the change because the students found it unnatural to be educated separately.[94] The conversion to total co-education for an exclusive women's college was a difficult move. Recruiters who visited

high schools and prep schools were often ignored and ridiculed. Vassar had to make some concessions to encourage male students offering them scholarships, deemphasizing S.A.T. scores and providing the kinds of recreation they thought the men wanted. Key male administrators were hired in an attempt to change the image of the college. The faculty had to become masculinized so that the number of full-time faculty women had dropped appreciably, as had women department chairpersons.[95]

Although President Simpson supported co-education on social grounds, saying it would restore the natural education of both sexes together, his reasons for making Vassar co-ed have been challenged. Liva Baker states that Vassar, as well as the other male colleges which became co-educational institutions, did so not because of the ripe social conditions which facilitated such a change but rather because of finances.[96] She states that by the mid-sixties, the greater accessibility and general improvement of educational equality plus the cost factor made public education more attractive.[97] The separate women's colleges were having difficulty raising money as taxpayers were already contributing quite heavily to the increasingly more popular public education.[98]

Although they altered their formats considerably and yielded in a variety of ways and degrees to co-education in the classroom and in the dormitory, the other separate women's colleges did not go as far as Vassar in becoming completely co-educational. They each managed to maintain in some sense their distinct and individual characters and remained colleges for women.

At Smith, students and faculty were polled during the late sixties concerning their interest in co-education. In 1969, a sociologist who

conducted a detailed survey on this subject warned Smith's administration and faculty that the college would encounter problems holding superior faculty and maintaining the quality of the student body if it did not admit men.[99] The kind of concessions Smith made to co-education was known as the Five-College Incorporated which was a regional cooperative venture including Smith, Mount Holyoke, Amherst College and New Hampshire College.[100] Certain advantages of this union were made available to students without the expense and recruitment problem which total co-education would have presented. Students were bussed to either of the five campuses and were permitted to cross register in courses.[101] Perhaps the sentiments of Smith's president, Thomas C. Mendenhall expressed most clearly what were the remaining colleges' rationale for maintaining their separateness. He stated that co-education was a more serious undertaking for a women's college than a man's ".. because there are women for whom Smith is the opportunity to have a first-rate education slightly apart from competition. We must decide to what extent we have the obligation to maintain that option."[102]

At Wellesley, the subject of co-education was deliberated and the general feeling was as one trustee claimed, "I do not wish to preside over the liquidation of a first rate institution."[103] In 1967 Wellesley and M.I.T. announced a five-year experimental programme based on a loose exchange of students permitting them to take courses at either institution. There was cross registration and some faculty exchanges. By 1975, the administration of both institutions decided to expand upon curriculum coordination.[104]

Bryn Mawr and Haverford, a male college, joined in their own

reciprocal agreement so that by the early 1970's they called themselves a Two College Community. A shuttle transported men to classes at Bryn Mawr and women to classes at Haverford. Extracurricular activities were integrated and by 1975 students from each institution could run for office at the other campus. In the 1969-70 session the two colleges experimented with co-educational dorms[105] and there was interdepartmental cooperation on different levels, some more loose than others. The administrations of both colleges found this arrangement provided students with a greater number of options and expanded facilities requiring a minimum amount of expenditure.[106]

In 1971, Mount Holyoke decided to remain a single-sex college although it joined with Smith in the Five College Incorporated. Its president, David Truman stated, "As some recent converts to co-education are discovering, you don't meet the needs of todays young woman merely by treating her as another of the boys."[107]

By the 1960's, Radcliffe and Barnard remained women's colleges in name only, as they were already co-educational.[108] Harvard and Radcliffe combined their admission offices under a policy of equal access to all university faculties for both sexes by 1980.[109] Barnard, having been more autonomous than Radcliffe, joined closer ties with Columbia, though it did not hand over total control of finances and educational administration. It was a cooperative association where some departments operated autonomously while others combined certain functions.[110]

The decision to remain single-sex was not an easy one for any of the four colleges which chose to do so. The colleges made their choices with the knowledge that they would face a decline in enrolment, losing

women who ordinarily would have chosen a women's college to the formerly elite male colleges which became co-educational such as Yale or Princeton.[111] But as difficult as it was for these institutions to maintain their separate status, most authors agree that Vassar was placed in the most difficult position. It was quite a different matter for a women's college to go co-ed than for an all-male college. While Vassar had to make a large number of concessions to attract a sizeable male student body, the transition at Yale to co-education was much less eventful and required much less effort. The male institution merely went on with the business of education without having the problems of attracting women. Yale did not make the same effort as did Vassar to have a proportionate number of faculty as the number of incoming students of the opposite sex. The administration added one woman professor to the two already there, totalling three women out of three hundred men faculty members.[112]

Whether the separate women's colleges retained their separate status or became completely co-educational as a result of the social upheaval, the fact remains that all the institutions had undergone some revision. These changes however did not preclude further discussion on the subject of separate education for women. The very fact that some of the colleges remained single-sex to some extent gave rise to challenging new questions and fresh ideas on the subject which will be examined in chapter four.

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CHAPTER III

The Royal Victoria College

As has been demonstrated in the previous chapters, the kinds of higher educational institutions developed for women in the latter half of the nineteenth century were varied. Once the basic idea of higher education for women was accepted, the focal problems remained the manner in which they should be educated, whether separatedly from men or alongside them and the purpose for which they should be educated.

At McGill University in Montreal, there was a controversy over the best way to provide the same educational opportunities to women as to the men who were already attending the University. There were those who proposed full co-education whereby the University should open its doors equally to women as to the men. One supporter of this view was Professor John Clarke Murray. Murray believed women should have exactly the same educational opportunities as the men and should be educated alongside them.[1] The Principal of McGill, J.W. Dawson, upheld a more traditional view of women which was consistent with the Victorian concept that their role as wives and mothers was an all-important consideration in determining the kind of education they should have. Dawson believed that the higher education for women should be separate but equal to the education of men. He claimed that the physiological and mental considerations "...render it inexpedient that women should compete with men in the hard and rough struggle of college life,...."[2] This education should be "...based on a higher ideal of aesthetic, intellectual, and moral culture."[3] Dawson stated too, that the professional direction of men's education is not suitable for a girl in a society which views them not as a future doctors

lawyers, politicians, or even teachers, but as a future mothers.[4] While none of the personalities involved in this controversy denied that women should have access to higher education, the struggle had a strong effect on the way in which women were to be educated at McGill.

The system of education for women finally adopted was a unique combination of the various existing systems. The original arrangement, unusual as it was, changed over time and led to confusion. This history needs to be clarified.

McGill could not finance higher education for women until the necessary monies were made available as was the case with the admission of women into universities in other countries. Donald Smith, later to become Lord Strathcona, championed the cause of women's higher education in Montreal. His first donation was for the sum of fifty thousand dollars, given to Principal Dawson in September, 1884, for the express purpose of admitting women into a Special Course within the University. Smith had the intention of founding a college for women shortly after making this gift. However, from the time women entered McGill in October, 1884, which was several years prior to the opening of the Royal Victoria College (1899), they took courses not only at the University but in some cases with men. When the College opened, this pattern continued so that over the years women were increasingly attending mixed classes held at the University and not at the College. The degrees awarded to women were conferred by McGill, not the College, but all women undergraduate students were students both of R.V.C. and of McGill.

The planners of the Royal Victoria College studied the models

provided by the British and the Americans in their attempts to provide for women in higher learning. While many of the features present in the existing colleges were incorporated into R.V.C., the Montreal-based institution differed in one very significant respect. The separate colleges of the American east remained as they were intended, at least until the late 1960's, separate institutions devoted exclusively to the education of women. The women's colleges, Newnham and Girton of Cambridge retained their separate identities. R.V.C. on the other hand, was ideally intended to be a college of McGill University for the separate education of women but in reality could not fulfill this ideal. As co-education became a more acceptable means of educating women at McGill, R.V.C. was gradually transformed from a residential college to a residence. Even though it ceased to be a place of instruction, there were those who argued that it was still a college and fought to retain for R.V.C. its collegiate status. This led to confusion which made the role and status of the College difficult to define.

How R.V.C. came to develop this unusual and often misunderstood arrangement, as opposed to the more clearly defined status of the models upon which it was built, is an important consideration in understanding the nature of the College. Once the appropriate statutes pertaining to R.V.C. are identified and defined, it is hoped that insights will be gained as to its orientation, its role within the greater university and its status as a college for women. But because the College did not in reality develop according to the principles upon which it was founded, one cannot explain R.V.C.'s character solely on the basis of the statutes. Its historical evolution was largely determined by the

Wardens, the women who were closely involved with the administration of the College. It is therefore valuable to examine the College as seen through the eyes of its Wardens and the problems they encountered due to the unusual position of R.V.C.

In examining what R.V.C. was intended to be, a separate college for women, and comparing this to what it was in reality, it will be easier to understand how the original ideals were gradually compromised to financial considerations and therefore to co-education. This chapter will attempt to answer two basic questions: 1) What has been R.V.C.'s status-residential college or residence? 2) How was the College able to maintain some semblance of collegiate life in the face of gradual co-education? The period to be studied includes the years between 1899 and the early 1980's.

Towards Higher Education for Women at McGill

Women had been admitted into McGill University since 1884, although the Royal Victoria College had not yet been built. Once the Montreal High School for Girls opened in 1875, the city's women were being prepared for the province-wide exams which could have led to college admission. It was not until 1884 that several girls from the High School for Girls approached Principal Dawson asking that the University assist them so that they could proceed to the examinations for the Senior Associate, the equivalent of the two-year university programme.[5]

The admission of women into a collegiate programme at McGill arrived only as soon as an endowment was made available specifically for that purpose. Fortunately for those brave girls, Donald Smith was in

Montreal later that year and met with Dawson concerning the establishment of collegiate classes for women. When McGill accepted Smith's gift of fifty thousand dollars in the fall of 1884, the Special Course for Women was created.[6] The endowment allowed women to become students in the Faculty of Arts and provided them with an education equal to that given to the men at McGill. Close attention was paid to ensure that the women were educated separately from the men and adjustments were made so that there was the space for this. The separate education of women however, was not entirely fulfilled because laboratory classes were mixed and classes in optional subjects in the third and fourth years were co-educational as well. The principle of separate education endured long after the practice. Between 1884 and 1888, the year in which the first women students graduated from the Faculty of Arts, Smith made other donations to further the education of women and planned to erect a college.

Because Donald Smith was not an educator, one cannot overlook the possibility that he relied upon Dawson, the person to whom he had made his original offer, for guidance in establishing a college for women at McGill. Before Smith presented himself to Dawson, the latter had been interested in women's education and studied the various kinds of institutions open to women in England and in the United States. Dawson analysed the qualities of the separate women's colleges, the affiliate college, such as Radcliffe was to Harvard and the university colleges as Newnham and Girton were to Cambridge, in the hope of combining the advantages of each once McGill would be in a position to found such an institution for women. With the establishment of the Special Course,

Dawson based his recommendations for an ideal college upon the comparisons he drew between the college systems he visited and studied and that which was operating at McGill. He found that there was more economy in the university connection because it removed the need to duplicate staff.[7] Girton, Newnham, and the Harvard Annex which was to become Radcliffe, all required a small number of staff members by virtue of their relationship to a larger institution. He felt too, that the degree of the separate college was less esteemed than was one from a college which was affiliated with a university.[8] Dawson expressed his hopes saying "...we may yet see established in Montreal a college absolutely independent in all but university powers, and enjoying at the same time the whole of the benefits derivable from the appliance of the university, and from the teaching of the eminent specialists it may gather from it."[9]

Dawson's strong preference for the separate education of women was initially victorious. Smith made separate education a firm condition of his subsequent gifts to the education of women at McGill.

The Benefactor

Like the benefactors of the American women's colleges, Donald Smith, whose monetary contributions brought women to McGill, appeared to be a very unlikely candidate for such involvement in the sphere of education. While Dr. Joseph Taylor ventured to India, Smith sought adventure in Canada's wilderness. Unlike his munificent counterparts, Smith was married and had one daughter. From the manner in which his life unfolded, it would have been difficult to predict that Smith would invest so heavily in women's higher education.

The place and date of Donald Smith's birth is doubtful, but on his own authority he was born in Forres, Scotland in 1820.[10] Smith came from a poor family. His father was an unsuccessful tradesman.[11] Smith was sent to study law but his dream of coming to Canada persisted so that in 1838 he made the long voyage. He joined the Hudson's Bay Company where the various positions he held ranged from minor clerk to being appointed Resident Governor of the Company in 1869.[12] He married Isabella Hardisty whose father was a Company officer. They had one daughter. Smith's perilous adventures in Canada's barren wilds took the family to numerous outposts from Labrador to Hudson's Bay and to the Rockies. Throughout his Canadian experience, Donald Smith became involved in almost every aspect of the country's life. His influence can be seen in the development of Canadian railways, banks, hospitals and educational institutions. Up to 1880 he represented various constituencies in the Dominion Parliament. Smith had become a very influential figure in both political and financial circles.

Although he had not stated publicly what were his motives for founding a college for women, it had been mentioned that Smith was prompted by the cherished memories he held of his late sister, Margaret. Had there been such a college for women, Smith believed his sister would have seized the opportunity to attend. Therefore the suggestion that R.V.C. was erected in her memory. Smith initially endowed the Special Course for Women in 1884, but both his attachment and his gifts to McGill grew so that in 1889, he was inaugurated Chancellor of the University and made further monies available for the erection of a college. The Royal Victoria College opened in 1899, and by this time Smith acquired the

title of Lord Strathcona.

Lord Strathcona was described as having been kindly whose manner was, "...full of courtesies...often simple and direct, without pretense or affection."[13] In contrast to this reserve, Strathcona marked the opening of R.V.C. with a party where fifteen hundred notables were his guests. Such a great event did he intend this to be that it was described as "...one of the most brilliant social functions that has taken place in Montreal of late years."[14]

While he was a man of few words and had not spoken much about his intentions for the College to the two women he had personally chosen as Wardens, Lord Strathcona made it perfectly clear that he was not merely providing a dormitory for out-of-town students.[15] Even before the College was constructed, Lord Strathcona appointed trustees to act in his interest in transacting with McGill the legal documents which defined the nature of the education to be given to women under his endowment. The manner in which his trustees negotiated the Charter for R.V.C. is indicative of their client's strong perference for separate education. One can only assume that this preference was a result of the influence of the close relationship Strathcona had with Dawson. From the time he donated his initial endowment of fifty thousand dollars until the time of his death in 1914, Lord Strathcona donated a total of one million dollars to endow R.V.C. in addition to the college buildings and the site which cost approximately four hundred thousand dollars.[16] This sum was equal to that which James McGill had given to found McGill,[17] and is recognized as one of Strathcona's greatest single benefactions.

Statutes and Policies Regarding the Separate Education of Women

The study of the statutes of R.V.C. is important because it will have significant bearing upon the orientation of the College, its role within McGill and its eventual fate. Such clauses and pieces of correspondence to be examined will relate specifically to the ideal of "separate education" and the degree to which this ideal was incorporated into the relationship between McGill and R.V.C.

It would seem that Donald Smith was in accord with Dawson's views on the separate education of women at McGill. In the Deed of Donation, which was drawn on October 16, 1886, which was later incorporated into R.V.C.'s Royal Charter, Smith agreed that the education of women be conducted in the buildings of McGill College itself only until a separate building for that purpose was constructed. The donation became known as The Donalda Endowment for the Higher Education of Women.[18] The Deed specified that "...due provision shall be made by the Governors and Corporation of McGill University for the conduct and management of classes for women, entirely separate from the classes for men, and that no portion of the endowment hereby granted shall at any time be applied either directly or indirectly to sustain mixed classes of the two sexes."[19] The Deed stated that the standard of education for women in the course should be the same as that for men and that the degrees granted to women be on the same conditions as to men. The women undergraduates were to have the same options to enter honour classes in the third and fourth years on the same terms and conditions upon which men may do so.

While the academic standards for women's education were agreed

upon by all parties, the concern on the part of Lord Strathcona and his trustees over the separateness of classes became the major cause of delay in the final incorporation of the College. Negotiations, which spanned a number of years even after R.V.C. was opened, had to be transacted with a new administrator, Principal Peterson, who took office in 1895. While it was Strathcona's express wish to have all classes for women held separately from those of the men, Peterson wrote to him detailing the financial problems presented to McGill by the maintenance of such a scheme.[20] Peterson advocated separate classes for the first two years, but because a variety of options were offered in the third and fourth years, he suggested two alternatives to keep costs down. Either the women be limited to the number of optional courses offered if separate classes were to be maintained, in which case they would not be receiving identical education to the men, or that any third and fourth year student in good standing attend any special optional course in the Faculty of Arts at McGill College with the recommendation of the Lady Principal and the consent of the professors concerned. Peterson was careful to mention in his letter that Dawson, who had so strongly advocated the separate education of women, suggested the latter recommendation of having mixed classes in the third and fourth years.[21]

When John W. Sterling, one of Lord Strathcona's trustees, wrote to Peterson requesting that an additional clause be made regarding the complete separate education of women in the first and second years. Peterson claimed that this would be artificial because the laboratory classes would be difficult to hold separately if an insufficient

number of women opted for them. Peterson mentioned too that the University had instituted "Advanced Sections" connected with a new curriculum in the hope of raising the standard at McGill. He stated that if the classes had to be held separately, it might result in dropping these sections for women students. Peterson asked, "Why should we specify the first two years? ...another generation might wish to revise the new curriculum, and might be in a position to provide for absolutely separate instruction (including labs) in every branch of an undergraduate course. This is what is now being accomplished between Barnard College and Columbia University, though Barnard started by separating only the classes in the earlier years."[22]

An interim letter from Sterling to Peterson declared that Lord Strathcona might be willing to yield to certain recommendations made by the University. "While Lord Strathcona began with insisting upon separation all through, he now expresses a willingness to modify the strictness of the rule in the third and fourth years."[23]

The Draft Charter was the culmination of this correspondence formalized on September 23, 1899. This document governed R.V.C. until its incorporation in 1921 and was itself incorporated into the Royal Charter. The following are the pertinent clauses for this study:

> The object of the College shall be the higher education of women; and mainly to qualify women to take Degrees in Arts, including Pure Science, and to provide them with instruction in those branches of a liberal education...
> Except in courses of practical instruction in the laboratories of McGill University...so far as the income of the said endowment shall permit...the conduct and management of classes for the students of the College shall be separate from men.
> ...due provision shall be made by the Board of Governors of

the College for such separate lecture classes in the first and second years. 24

Where classes were small, the Draft Charter endorsed the combined teaching of men and women. The Statutes of R.V.C. stipulated that no portion of the endowment should be applied to the instruction of mixed classes. The revenues of the endowment were to be applied for residential, classroom and other accommodation and facilities required to maintain the education of women.[25]

Once the policies had been satisfactorily formulated and ratified by all parties one may ask what of the ideal of separate education? Unlike the models upon which R.V.C. was based, separate education was respected only in principle. The financial aspects of maintaining such a system seemed too difficult for McGill to sustain. It was Principal Peterson's task to alert Lord Strathcona to the essential truth that the endowment could not cover entirely separate education for all women throughout their undergraduate years as had been the ideal. Separate education was maintained for quite a number of years during the first two years of the undergraduate programme, however other variables, including the increased demand for residence space and the nebulous status of the College as a teaching institution eroded even further the original compromise.

The Royal Victoria College

The Wardens of R.V.C. and Their Perceptions of a College in Transition

As was mentioned earlier, R.V.C. was a unique type of institution because it could not and did not exist in strict accordance with the principles and statutes upon which it was founded. The basic principle

its founder wished to preserve was the separate education of women in a college of McGill University along with the ideas that it should "...retain its own corporate identity and separate administration and government, in order to conserve and develop its own resources and accomplish the intentions of the Founder on the lines indicated by him."[26] R.V.C. could not maintain the separate education of women basically for financial reasons. As a result, women's higher education at McGill yielded very gradually to co-education. Where this placed the College was in fact in a very obscure and almost undefinable position right from its inception.

The ambivalent position of R.V.C., whether it should exist according to the Statutes and will of its Founder or according to the way in which successive McGill administrations saw fit, presented some very difficult problems, both real and philosophical, to the Wardens. In their minds, at least to those Wardens who served the College until the nineteen sixties, the ideal of R.V.G. being a women's college was something for which to strive and perpetuate. The reality however, was completely different, so that the question in the back of their minds was whether they were directing a residential college or merely a residence. A study of the observations and problems the Wardens had in trying to consolidate the reality with their ideals will provide a necessary contrast to the foregoing examination of the Statutes. More complete conclusions can then be drawn regarding the status of R.V.C.

It was R.V.C.'s founder himself who personally selected its first two Wardens. The criteria Lord Strathcona used as a basis for his choices were that the women be outstanding in character and scholarship.[27]

Although future appointments of the Wardens remained the responsibility of the Board of Governors, it can be said that the women chosen for the position fit the qualifications which Strathcona originally stipulated. It was Strathcona's desire that the students have daily contact with such gentlewomen, therefore the Wardens lived in residence and shared a common lifestyle. The relatively small number of students at the College in its early years permitted the functioning of such a close academic interrelationship. Hilda Oakeley, R.V.C.'s first Warden 1899-1905, saw that a rare opportunity had been put into her hands, "...of helping to form as the principal single factor in the matter-the spirit and ideal of a residential college.[28] Miss Oakeley visited the American women's colleges including Wellesley, Vassar, Radcliffe, Smith, Bryn Mawr and Barnard to find solutions to the questions of the best way of ordering the life of a residential college and of the relation of a women's college to the University to which it belonged.[29] Originally, the title given to the head administrator at R.V.C. was Lady Principal, however it was Hilda Oakeley's suggestion that the name be changed to Warden.

As early as a few years after R.V.C.'s founding, Hilda Oakeley, claimed that, "The place of the College in McGill University was not originally clearly defined, and hence the speculation and uncertainties in regard to its significance and destiny."[30] While the number of women students in the early years did not present any administrative problems, Miss Oakeley's perceptions materialized into reality when R.V.C.'s next Warden took over.

Ethel Hurlbatt became R.V.C.'s second Warden from 1907 to 1929,

with a few interruptions during this long period due to illness. Miss Hurlbatt was a scholar whose academic interests inspired her students. She was an active member of Alliance Francaise and in 1918 received the merit of Officier de L'Instruction at the suggestion of the Consul General of France. During her Wardenship, the number of students increased greatly and she was most concerned with the academic standing at the College. Miss Hurlbatt made every effort to extend the hospitality of the College to interesting visitors.[31] She believed that R.V.C.'s position was exceptional in Canada, as women receive separate education in their early years as well as the benefits of all other lectures in their later years. Ethel Hurlbatt saw the College's place in the University as being one where a "...real student spirit can be fostered without isolating its students from the breadth and richness of an education, which can alone be afforded by a university."[32]

Problems began when the original idea of R.V.C. accommodating only Faculty of Arts women did not hold up. Miss Hurlbatt was concerned that if R.V.C. were to extend its bounds beyond the provisions of the Charter, which provided for the instruction and housing of only Faculty of Arts women, then certainly some part of its function would be compromised in housing all women students. She stated that if the University were to consider using the College to provide residential and social facilities to all women, then adjustments should be made to R.V.C. "...leaving instructional facilities for the Faculty of Arts as hitherto and safeguarding them from disadvantages due to development of use of the building for other purposes."[33] When women were combined

with men in the first and second year classes, Miss Hurlbatt wrote Dean Moyse in 1916 asking for a clarification as to what was to be required of the College "...in the matter of separate education and as to how far the Faculty of Arts is to be called up to pay attention to meet these requirements."[34] Eight years later, in 1924, Miss Hurlbatt wrote to Acting Dean MacKay suggesting that a return to holding separate classes in some subjects could easily be made. "This obligation, the holding of classes in the College...undoubtedly represents the will of the Founder to give McGill a College and not merely a residential or a recreational centre for women. It is, I believe, unique in Canada and, it is my belief McGill and the Faculty of Arts would forfeit an exceptional opportunity if they failed to maintain to the utmost the teaching aspect of the College."[35] Unfortunately, Ethel Hurlbatt's suggestions went unheeded. Her successors were obliged to make similar recommendations.

Susan Cameron Vaughan became R.V.C.'s third Warden in 1931 and served the College until 1937. Her association with McGill dated to the time when she was a tutor in English at R.V.C. and a member of staff in the English Department. She was Acting Warden for the years 1905 to 1906, and 1928 to 1931. As Warden, she supervised not only the College but the first wing which was added to it. Along with her duties at R.V.C., Mrs. Vaughan assumed the position of president of the Canadian Federation of University Women.

It was during Mrs. Vaughan's term that the administration seriously altered the tuition structure, so that collection of fees was another area in which the independence of R.V.C. to control its affairs was

usurped. In December of 1930, the Board of Governors decided that the University would take the tuition fees of the R.V.C. students and pay the salaries of the professors. Previously, the College handled its own accounts and was billed for the tuition of its students.[36]

Being the first McGill graduate to hold the position of Warden, it was not unusual that Susan Cameron Vaughan would come to the defense of women students of R.V.C. when the need arose. Women were increasing in numbers at McGill and wanted representation on the Students' Council. They found the male members unsympathetic due to the fact that the Constitution of the Students' Council, drawn in 1908, stipulated that its members should be male.[37] At the time, the University community expressed the view that R.V.C. women were not members of the University, but were affiliated with it through enrolment in the College.[38] Mrs. Vaughan requested a prominent legal firm in Montreal to define the exact status of women students of McGill.[39] The legal opinion, based on the examination of the Statutes and of Lord Strathcona's will, reinforced the idea that R.V.C. was a college of McGill University and not an affiliate of the University. Perhaps this exercise served a useful purpose in that it reminded those to whom R.V.C.'s role had become obscure.

Maude Parkin Grant was Warden for a short period from 1937 to 1940. She was a member of the first class at R.V.C. and graduated in 1903. Mrs. Grant made her opinions known concerning the fact that the College's role as a teaching institution was diminishing.

In March, 1939, Mrs. Grant wrote the Principal deploring the fact that a large number of women did not use the R.V.C. building. "The intention

of our Founder was that we should be a separate teaching College for women, but as you know, that has never been practical politics."[40]

In her personal notes Mrs. Grant stated,

> "The system of carrying on separate teaching soon broke down owing to the small number of women students and to the complete lack of scientific equipment in the College. There has since been progressive reduction of classes in the R.V.C. till now only a very small amount of teaching is done there....The School of Physical Education (thirteen students) is carried on for the most part in the R.V.C. The classes in Physical Education for all women students are also held there."41

Mrs. Grant asked that the Senate Committee make a survey of the situation due to the "...breakdown in the practical working out of our Founder's intention for us...."[42] A joint committee of Senate and Board of Governors was appointed to investigate the status of the College. It concluded that separate grade sheets, separate class sections and separate courses be abolished.[43]

Muriel V. Roscoe came to R.V.C. with credentials of great academic accomplishment. Her term at the College spanned twenty-two years from 1940 to 1962. During this time, she not only held the position of Warden but taught concurrently in the Botany Department where she became a full professor and chaired the Department for seventeen years. Although the increasing student enrolment made great demands on her time, Dr. Roscoe resisted having her teaching and research compromised. Muriel Roscoe strongly sensed the passive position in which R.V.C. had been placed due to a variety of administrative changes. Her awareness of this fact was heightened perhaps because of the increased number of

girls coming to the College and the rather minimal control she had on their selection.

According to Dr. Roscoe, the records did not show when or how admission procedures were changed, but a few years prior to 1940 admissions were handled by the Registrar. As a result, the College was not aware of the qualifications of its applicants or of those who were accepted as students. "The results were somewhat chaotic, both as to the total make-up of the College and as to the residence. Perhaps inevitably, both the academic standards and the morale in general were impaired."[44] "It had been my hope that we should arrive at a place where we could sift applications and stiffen standards to the point where R.V.C. would have reached an enviable reputation in the country."[45]

Dr. Roscoe quoted from Lord Strathcona's will to emphasize the fact that the College was responsible for the education of women. She advocated a division of duties so that R.V.C. would regain responsibility for admissions and administration of its finances, thereby reversing the 1930 decision of having fees paid to the University. In her Memorandum to Principal James of November, 1943, Roscoe claimed that, "...in practice the chief function of R.V.C. at present is the providing of residence for students accepted by McGill Faculties. If R.V.C. is to continue to have its present limited responsibilities, jurisdiction and function, the facts should be faced and consideration be given to its operation purely as a women's residence of McGill."[46]

Dr. Roscoe's efforts secured for R.V.C. several measures of

control in the area of academic eligibility. All women undergraduate students, resident and non-resident, were to be the responsibility of the Warden of R.V.C. The Warden was also given a voice in the development of the admissions' policy in the case of all girls.[47] Despite these gains, Dr. Roscoe claimed at the end of her Wardenship that there was an overall lack of knowledge and serious misconception as to the status and responsibilities of the College among the students, staff and perhaps among some members of the Administration as well.[48]

Helen Reynolds was Dr. Roscoe's successor in 1962 and held the position for seven years. She came from Dalhousie University in Halifax[49] after serving as Dean of Women and Warden there. Alongside her duties as Warden of R.V.C., Miss Reynolds lectured in chemistry at McGill. Upon her arrival at the College she supervised the construction and furnishing of the Roscoe Wing which opened in 1964 to accommodate more women residents.

As Warden, she recognized that one of her most important functions was to assist women students, resident and non-resident, with their academic problems.[50] But as her term progressed, other problems surfaced which made Miss Reynolds' job increasingly more difficult. Both the University and the College were entering a difficult period marked by student activism. Miss Reynolds recognized the need for change particularly with regard to R.V.C.'s residence regulations and its 'in loco parentis' orientation. In 1963, she initiated the ruling that third and fourth year women be permitted to live out of residence with their parents' permission.[51] By 1969, women students were asserting their rights to greater independence so that Miss Reynolds recommended

to Senate that parental consent no longer be required for a student to live out of residence.[52] Despite her attempts to make changes to the rather rigid structure of R.V.C., Helen Reynolds claimed that, "Any of us in the Administration have suffered disappointment and disillusionment in the last three years with student activists."[53] This statement was made toward the end of Miss Reynolds' Wardenship and reflects a certain malaise within the student body and the administration. Unfortunately, the changes in residence regulations were not an adequate measure to arrest the further consequences of this discontentment.

In 1970 Mary Robertson, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Pharmacology, was appointed the next Warden of R.V.C. For the first time in its history, the duties of the Warden of the College were to be shared between two women: the Warden and a Dean or an Associate Dean of Students. The Warden was to be responsible for R.V.C. and the women in residence while the female Dean or Associate Dean of Students would take responsibility for non-resident women students and she would also replace the Warden on certain academic committees. The announcement of Mrs. Robertson's appointment in the McGill Reporter included the statement that "Until now the warden of R.V.C. has had wider responsibilities than those of directing a residence. Originally, the Warden was to advise and assist all women students on all matters affecting the progress of their educational training."[54] As a result of this dilution of the duties of the Warden, Mrs. Robertson's tasks then included overseeing the operation of R.V.C., the Health Services for all women and the athletic programme.[55] Mary Robertson was not concerned that the academic responsiblity of the Warden was weakening.

She was aware that R.V.C. was becoming unpopular among the students due to its past rigid administration.[56] She believed that the College was "...a little nineteenth century enclave in a ~~modern~~ institution..."[57] and was ready for change. Mrs. Robertson resigned from the position of Warden after holding the post for only one year.

The position of Warden was vacant until the middle of the school term of 1971. During the summer a drastic physical transition was made to R.V.C. to accompany the administrative changes which were made in recent years. The R.V.C. of old was now the Faculty of Music, so that when a new Warden would be appointed, she and her students were to occupy what used to be considered a 'wing' of R.V.C. The Wardenship was declared to be a part-time position and the University was willing to consider applications from "...the wives of faculty or from women in the community with other kinds of association with academic and student life."[58] What this meant, in fact, was that for the first time in its history, the College might not have a Warden holding the high academic qualifications which were traditionally required for the post.

Dr. Donna Runnalls was appointed the eight Warden of R.V.C. in January 1972 and retained the position for seven years. She was not merely a 'woman from the community'. She was a member of the McGill staff, being an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Religious Studies. The beginning of Dr. Runnalls' wardenship witnessed further deterioration in the position. The Warden's seat on the University Senate was abolished and the reporting structure was altered. Whereas the Warden used to report to the Principal, Dr. Runnalls was asked to report to one of the Vice-Principals.[59]

Dr. Runnalls realized that the sixties brought a considerable amount of unhappiness to R.V.C. and attributed this to the fact that the College did not move fast enough in response to the issues.[60] In retrospect, Donna Runnalls observes her contribution as having been to assist the students of R.V.C. in coping with growing up, with the university experience and with financial crises. As for her contribution to R.V.C., Dr. Runnalls feels she helped the "...institution adjust to its very much reduced role in the university...."[61]

When Donna Runnalls resigned as Warden in 1979, the university was again placed in a position where it could not find a Warden for R.V.C. In searching within its own community, the administration asked Mrs. Florence Tracy, the Nursing Coordinator at the Student Health Service, if she would consider the position of Acting Warden for one year until a permanent woman was found. Although she accepted the position, Mrs. Tracy was told that she could not become its permanent Warden because of the Charter which stipulated that the post had to be filled by an academic. A year later, the administration changed its attitude and accepted her application for the permanent position.[62]

In her first year at R.V.C., Mrs. Tracy observed a further change in the administrative structure of the College. The Warden was no longer to be its chief administrative officer as all the residences were amalgamated under one individual, the Director of Residences. What this meant was that the Warden was no longer responsible for her own budget or the food services at the College. She merely was to oversee the rules of behaviour and other aspects of student life.[63] In spite of the further reduction in the role of the Warden, Florence Tracy

expressed the hope that R.V.C. would be considered a college as well as a residence where it could serve all women students at McGill. She intended to hold seminars and courses and involve the students in decision-making.[64]

After she was appointed Warden, Mrs. Tracy became the Director of Residences. This was an important position for a woman to hold because, according to Florence Tracy, it boosted the status of the position of Warden. Although as Director she had to treat all residences equally from a budgetary standpoint, she fears that R.V.C. might have been reduced to a residence merely providing essential services had she not taken the position.[65]

Mrs. Tracy's ties with R.V.C. date to 1967 when she was Nurse-in-Charge for two years at the R.V.C. infirmary. It was there that her loyalties to the College were established. In her present capacities as Warden and Director of Residences, she tries to uphold the special status of the College, for it does have a slight edge over the other residences in terms of facilities and services. Florence Tracy believes in the importance of interested parties to maintain concern for the College and would be satisfied if she could put R.V.C. in a holding pattern in history.

Orientation and Personality

Because the Wardens had to grapple with the ambivalent position of R.V.C. within the University, it is important to realize that as certain measures were effected to change the orientation of the College, its personality was also being transformed.

Lord Strathcona's endowment allowed women to enter and graduate

from the Faculty of Arts on the same terms and conditions as the men at McGill. Examinations were identical with those for men and the women had the same privileges as the men with regard to Classing, Honours, Prizes and Medals.[66] The high academic qualifications demanded of the Wardens satisfied Lord Strathcona that the students would have contact with distinguished gentlewomen. In addition, the college hired tutors to supplement the teaching staff. The tutors resided at the College as well. At the opening of R.V.C., the tutors included one for philosophy and history, one for English and another for mathematics.[67] Over the years the number of classes given at the College decreased so that by 1940, the women were attending most of their courses at McGill. Separate classes in the first and second years no longer existed and by 1951, men and women were no longer listed separately in the McGill Year Book in the Arts, Science, and Commerce Faculties. Co-education had become the dominant system at McGill.

R.V.C., like other colleges which were established before the turn of the century, was intended to be a genteel institution. While the same fears concerning woman's health did not take such prominent importance in the minds of McGill's administrators as it did among those in the American east, close attention was paid to strict adherence to 'in loco parentis' principles. Students who were not residing in Montreal with their parents had to apply for residence at R.V.C. up until 1943. After that time the administration drew a list of approved boarding houses where women could reside. Only in exceptional cases was an undergraduate permitted to live out of one of these accepted residences.[68]

The Wardens were responsible for exercising their right to initiate controls regarding leaves, curfew, visitors and entertainment. When Susan Cameron was Acting Warden in 1905, she recommended to the Students' Entertainment Committee that every effort should be made to do away with dances in the middle of term because she was convinced that each large dance was the cause of "...indifferent work for two or three days among the majority of students...."[69] In the early 1920's, evening activities of R.V.C. girls were under surveillance and students were expected to return to residence immediately after 'God Save the King' was played and by a fixed hour.[70] There was a penalty of overstaying an evening 'leave'; twenty-five cents for each fifteen minutes late.[71]

For the first several decades, the women of R.V.C. were an exceedingly privileged lot. Their rooms were cared for, they were called in the morning and had maids on telephone duty when they were away. The girls were served coffee by waitresses, having tea in the afternoon and milk and biscuits in the evening.[72] The students became very active in extra-curricular activities. Athletics clubs developed and the women's Athletic Association received grants from the Undergraduate Society for their various ventures.[73] Public speaking and debating societies flourished. The Assembly Hall in R.V.C.'s early years was the centre for lectures, concerts and University gatherings. Receptions, 'Charity Balls' and convocations were also held there. Distinguished scientists and writers came to speak. "Lord Strathcona brought the world to McGill."[74] In an article written two decades after the birth of R.V.C., the personality of the College was described as follows:

> It was to be more than a residence, something more than a social and residential centre. It was to be a place where student and staff could meet-together as teacher and taught, where undergraduate and graduate student and some members of the teaching staff should share a common life, its privileges and its responsibilities. 75

This type of milieu did not exist indefinitely at R.V.C. Changes in society were brought about over the next few decades by the two World Wars and the Depression which dissipated the genteel aura of the College. More and more, women were attending college so that such numbers could not be catered to in this manner. Getting an education began to take on a purpose rather than being something which women spent their time doing until they got married. Women hoped to make use of their acquired educational skills in the form of some work or career.

Because the number of women at university was rapidly increasing, the demands upon R.V.C. were changing. Since instruction ceased to be given at the College, the available classroom space was converted into residence facilities. New wings were added so that in 1931, the West Wing opened. Oddly, the monies for this additional structure came from the funds provided in Lord Strathcona's endowment which was being used toward the provision of housing quarters for women and not classroom facilities.[76] In 1939, the College converted eight rooms to accommodate students applying for residences,[77] and this trend continued through to 1960. In 1949, the East Wing was erected and in 1964, the Roscoe Wing opened.

As a result of the social revolution of the 1960's, women demanded greater equality with men in all areas of life. In spite of the fact that the women at R.V.C. were co-ed in the classroom, the demand at this time was for more liberal residence regulations and for greater options in university community living. McGill had no co-ed dormitories or

student co-ops. Surveys were conducted to tap students' feelings on the most desirable mode of living and a majority of respondents agreed that some residences should be co-educational.[78] In 1970, co-education came to a male residence and the suggestion was made that a similar policy for R.V.C. "...would help free the residents from their present sheltered environment and at the same time make it more a part of a 'residence community'."[79] A referendum taken at R.V.C. in 1970 showed that 64% of the women replying were interested in living in a co-ed residence and 89% wanted co-education for the College.[80] The administration decided to maintain the status quo at R.V.C. for yet another year. The Charter, which stipulated that R.V.C. was to be for the exclusive use of women, was a serious stumbling block in any major change to the College.

In the meantime, changes in residence regulations came very slowly to R.V.C. 'In loco parentis' practices to which the College clung rather tightly have been blamed for the overall student discontent there. Women were struggling to exist on a more equal footing with men and yet their college was, by imposing parental restrictions in the way in which the women were permitted to live, hampering women's ascent to the freedom they demanded. The concessions made to the male residences were more liberal than in the case of R.V.C.[81] In the male residences, a seven-day open-house policy was accepted, whereas R.V.C. conceded only to a three-day open-house. This period of unrest affected the number of women students opting for residence.

R.V.C. was blamed for not moving fast enough to satisfy the growing demands of its students for co-educational living. However, it was

not as easy for McGill to effect this as it was for the women's colleges to the south. The Charter protected R.V.C. for women so it could not become co-educational. But the strain of the situation had to surface somewhere, and consequently the institution was moved to smaller quarters, leaving the Strathcona Building to the Faculty of Music. Residence regulations were finally becoming more in tune with the lifestyles of the day. It is interesting to note a parallel which developed between the greater assertiveness of women students and the declining role of the Warden. As women were becoming more liberal in their thoughts and in their habits, the College was becoming more of a residence and the duties of the Warden were being eroded. Was there no longer a need for a women's college at McGill?

A report on R.V.C. conducted by the McGill Reporter in January, 1980, stated that proposals coming from various women's groups at McGill including the Senate Committee on Women, The Alumnae Society, The McGill Women's Union, The Women and the Law, The Women Associates and the McGill Committee for Teaching and Research on Women put forth the view that R.V.C. should not be merely a residence but a true women's college.[82] It was their hope that the institution would encompass the academic and cultural life of all women on campus where they would feel they belong. Whether R.V.C. can readopt this orientation is essentially up to the administration of the university in providing the financial support- the moral support is already available.

Enrolment at R.V.C. and Professional Advancement

Despite the fact that R.V.C. gradually ceased to be a teaching

institution, the numbers of women applying to the College continued to grow. Originally, enrolment in R.V.C. was restricted to all women in the Faculty of Arts and Applied Science. However, as co-education became more widely accepted and as women were entering other faculties, greater demands were placed on the College and its Wardens to handle admissions, residence requests and provide facilities for these women.

Although the enrolment of women in the undergraduate faculties grew steadily over the years, the number of women in the professional degree courses such as Bachelor of Commerce, Engineering and Architecture had fewer students than the more traditional women's professional fields such as Physical Education, Physical and Occupational Therapy, Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Bachelor of Education.[83] And, while the numbers of women in graduate and professional schools increased over the years as well, it is evident that a great number of the women undergraduates were not entering post-graduate fields of study or the traditional elite male professions. The enrolment of women in the Faculty of Medicine had risen very slowly between the years 1918 and 1958, from 8 to 34. But in two decades the number rose sharply, so that by 1978, there were 188 women in Medicine.[84] A similar pattern was followed by women entering Law, Architecture and Engineering. In Law, the largest increase of women occurred in the decade between 1968 and 1978, from 25 to 117 students enrolled. In the Faculties of Architecture and Engineering, the number of women students did not rise appreciably until the sixties and seventies where the total enrolment in 1958 was 23 and by 1978, it was 159.[85]

Unlike the separate women's colleges of the American east, which,

in adhering to a strict liberal arts curriculum, sacrificed professional training, the women at R.V.C. were students of McGill and had access to a broader selection of programmes offering professional options. Why then were they clustering into the few traditional women's areas? A Report of an R.V.C. Survey of 1931 addressed the question, "Are there a sufficient number of careers open to women to encourage them to take university training?"[86] The Report stated that thirty-three percent of the graduates marry and of the remainder many do not have professional standing. It found that university women usually serve the community whether salaried or not. A large proportion of unmarried graduates were found in one of the vocations open to women, with the largest number in teaching. "The cold fact is, that outside of the fields of matrimony and school teaching, careers for women of superior education in Canada, are few and difficult to obtain."[87] It is clear that this trend continued for several more decades even in a co-educational institution such as McGill. In the sixties and seventies there was heightened awareness of the need to further the ideal of achieving greater equality between the sexes in academic study and choice of employment. At the end of her term of office, Muriel Roscoe made some very significant recommendations as to the future orientation of R.V.C. regarding the graduate training and professional advancement of women. She stated that the College had a responsibility to stimulate and encourage women to enter advanced fields of study. She recommended too, that a programme be devised for Canadian academic and professional women along the lines of the Radcliffe Institute for Independent Study.[88] The ability of co-educational institutions as compared to single-sex colleges in effecting this ideal

will be discussed in the next chapter.

R.V.C.: Residential College or Residence?

Once instruction ceased to be given at R.V.C., one could no longer call it a college in a strict sense. Yet, it was not merely a place for women to live while they attended classes at McGill. Until the radical change of R.V.C. in 1971, the Wardens made the greatest effort to raise the College to a higher level beyond what it had in reality become-a residence. In handling academic admissions, in overseeing the academic performance and the health and welfare of their students and in sitting on Senate and various other academic committees, these women tried to perpetuate some degree of collegiate status so that the residence would be more and mean more to its own students and to the students on campus. Perhaps it is because the Wardens made this tremendous effort to retain for R.V.C. this 'collegiate atmosphere', that the idea of it still being a college for women lingered in the minds of so many for so long. When the McGill administration so hastily pushed the College into smaller quarters and made serious administrative changes in the way in which it was to function, it created very mixed feelings in the university community. To those in the administration who had to deal with the financial deficits of a college no longer fulfilling its primary role, it was a move that was long overdue. To others, especially former alumnae, staff and Wardens, it was observed as the demise of R.V.C.

R.V.C could not continue to be the type of institution it was in the past in the same way the separate women's colleges of the American East could not be the elitist schools they once were. But one important

difference between R.V.C. and the women's colleges which must be noted, is that the former never yielded totally to co-education. This was to a great extent due to the nature of its Charter which stipulated that the College must serve the needs of women only. And, when pressure was high to make R.V.C. a co-educational residence, the Administration negotiated with the heirs of Lord Strathcona to reduce the size of the College rather than go co-ed. R.V.C. has had a unique character in that it has found itself in a transitional state several times over its long history. Yet, it remains an institution of women for women. Those who were offended at the closure of the original College might yet be able to applaud R.V.C. as a college once more if the aspirations of the women's groups at McGill today are fulfilled.

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CHAPTER IV

The Women's College and the Challenge of Co-education

In the second half of the nineteenth century, when the experiment in educating women was approaching the stage of higher education, the merits of co-education versus those of separate education was the issue which was hotly debated. Women clamoured for equal educational opportunities with the men and this meant having access to the same educational institutions. While many universities and colleges admitted women, separate colleges were established to assist them in achieving their educational goals without having to deal with the discriminatory practices of the all-male institutions in keeping women out and in an environment which many thought would be more suited to the nature of women. Both co-educational institutions and the separate colleges were able to grow and flourish alongside each other over a long period of time, each nurturing and developing its own particular qualities.

During the 1960's, a powerful trend demanding almost universal change to co-education altered the balance between the two systems of education. It was a period when administrators, faculty, students and alumni "...endorsed the concept that justice and equity of treatment require that both sexes be educated together."[1] It became common for students to seek co-educational living arrangements rather than live at home or in

single-sex residences, and the idea of being educated together had more appeal and was seen as being more natural than being educated separately. As a result, many single-sex institutions underwent varying degrees of change in the late sixties and early seventies as has been discussed. Some colleges yielded totally to co-education, such as Vassar, while others such as Smith, Bryn Mawr, Wellesley and Mount Holyoke only made superficial adjustments to the new trend by allowing members of the opposite sex on campus and in the residences, but retained their separate administrations and identities. At this time R.V.C.'s residence enrolment was declining in the face of the wave of co-education. While structural changes were made to the College and attitudes toward male visitation were relaxed, the institution did not go co-ed.

Co-education did pose a serious threat to the separate women's colleges. People in the educational field had begun to question the need for the colleges to exist due to a variety of reasons. The original function of the women's college in providing higher education for women had long been fulfilled. There were problems of declining enrolments and funding because greater numbers of women opted to attend co-educational institutions. Many other single-sex colleges had reacted in a way in which the separate colleges of the American east refused to follow- that is, they became completely co-educational. In the case of R.V.C., many wondered why it continued to be a female residence and suggestions were made to make it co-ed so that its space would be filled. In previous chapters, the reasons why the colleges opted to remain predominantly single-sex were discussed. But the question that remains is how the institutions could resist the pressures that were upon them

as a result of co-education. The answer partly lies in the contradictions inherent in the system of co-education. At the time when the social revolution spirited ideas of equality between the sexes, co-education became the password for educational equality. However, once the dust settled after the period of upheaval, educators and particularly women academicians scrutinized the co-educational system more carefully and discovered that they were not so sure that it was the best system in which women would attain the kind of equality they desired.

Studies were conducted that debunked many of the merits attributed to co-education for women. But though the outcome of such research aroused greater concern for the existence of the women's college, certain problems remained. How could the women's colleges, with a past history of being characteristically imitative and non-assertive, satisfy women's needs and educational expectations today? If the colleges do change, can society afford to return to separate systems of education for both sexes, and if not, what are the alternatives? The issues in the current separate versus co-education theme are not as simple as those of the nineteenth century which centered around the main problems of helping women achieve greater equality in the educational sphere. This chapter will examine two main ideas central to the modern-day issues: 1) How the ideal of educational equality has been compromised even though it was considered basic to the ideology of co-education as it was defined in the 1960's, and 2) Can the separate women's colleges redefine their function in order to suit the present day educational expectations of women?

Co-education Versus Separate Education: A Recurrent Theme With New Issues

Co-education and Educational Equality

In the nineteenth century, the separate versus co-education controversy centered around the issue concerning the appropriateness of a higher system of education for women. The goals of the proponents of either system were similar in the sense that both the separate colleges and the co-educational universities provided more women with greater access to the higher learning which men were getting. Today, the issues are quite different even though they focus on the same ideal of equality. In the nineteenth century, equality meant merely sharing in the learning experience. Because a career was not considered to be compatible with society's perception of women's role, the orientation of the institutions, either co-educational or separate, were not as career-directed for women as they were for men. The strong bias against qualified women who sought careers parallel to their male counterparts demonstrated this.[2]

Today, women are still conscious of the need of pursue their struggle for equality but in much broader directions. Women are seeking to expand their horizons which would enable them to lead more self-determined and independent lives. Educational equality means having an equal share in all areas of academic and professional life including proportionate representation of women to men in graduate and professional schools, on university faculties and in the professions.

According to Adele Simmons, it is only a recent phenomenon that women have equated the limitations of opportunity with sex discrimination.[3] Co-educational schools have been found guilty of misogynistic practices. Elizabeth Cless attributes this to the fact that, "The masculine attitudes

that govern the procedures and structures of American higher education are not consciously vicious, merely unexamined, discriminatory by inheritance."[4] It is believed that graduate schools continue to stereotype in their selection of candidates. The number of women enrolled at the masters level is substantially lower than at the undergraduate level. The Royal Commission Report on the Status of Women found that graduate women students never rose above 20% of the total enrolment in Canada[5] and that the proportion was higher in the 1920's and 1930's than in the 1950's and 1960's. In the early 1970's in Canadian universities, women represented only 38.7% of the full-time undergraduates and 24.3% of the graduate students.[6] Gillett points out that even though the number of scholarships are awarded evenly, male students receive more money in loans than women.[7] Cless suggests that on one hand masculine heads of graduate departments or professional schools praise the ability of their few women students, yet openly sanction a discriminatory admission quota.[8]

The success rate of women entering the elite professions is directly related to their experience in graduate school.[9] It has been stated that women who pursue careers in the 'male' professions of law, engineering and medicine run the risk of masculinizing themselves in the eyes of others. It seems that Dr. Edward H. Clarke's nineteenth century ideas are never too distant. In 1971, only one percent of the American nation's engineers, dentists and surgeons were women. By the mid-1970's, women in Canada represented more than one-third of the labour force yet they were "...practically invisible in the higher professions and politics."[10] According to Jencks and Reisman, graduate

and professional schools regard getting married and having a family as a risk in educating women because they will not utilize their education in assuming a professionally respected role.[11] It seems women are still dependent upon male-governed bodies in universities and in the professional world for acceptance and recognition in a career role. Co-education, then did not obliterate the myth of differences between the sexes.[12]

Current Studies on Women in Co-educational and Separate Colleges

Perhaps the most definitive and most often quoted study on the position of women in co-educational institutions as compared to women in single-sex colleges was that done by M. Elizabeth Tidball, Professor in Physiology at the George Washington Medical Centre, in 1973. In a study of women achievers taken over a period of three decades, Tidball found that the women's colleges had a significantly higher output of achievers than did the co-educational institutions.[13] She discovered an important dimension in single-sex education which was the presence of a greater number of female models of high rank in an academic environment. How the female academics were treated by their colleagues and how they related to the students were found to be determinants of the future success of the women students. Professor Tidball found that there were almost twice as many women faculty per one thousand women students in women's colleges as compared to co-educational institutions. She found that the number of women faculty and the number of women achievers were highly and positively correlated.[14] Further, as the percentage of male students increased, the output of women achievers decreased proportionately.

Therefore, male students and women faculty were found to be primary determinants in the number of women achievers. "The fact that women's colleges have none of the former and more of the latter than co-educational institutions, explain their significantly greater contribution to the wider society of career-successful women during the past fifty years."[15]

In a study done in 1980, Tidball found that the graduates of women's colleges were more than twice as likely to have received research doctorates in all fields combined as were the women graduates of co-educational institutions.[16] In this study she also found that because women faculty were more supportive of issues that concern women than were male faculty, women students in single-sex colleges were given the greatest opportunities for leadership experiences and were encouraged to study in fields not traditionally entered by women.[17] High expectations were held for students "...by the large number of women faculty who themselves exemplify achievement."[18]

The results of an extensive study done in the late 1970's, based on the responses of 3,347 men and women students from Barnard, Dartmouth, Wellesley, Princeton and State University of New York at Stony Brook, were released at a Brown University conference on co-education. It found that women students were at a disadvantage in a co-educational setting because they underestimated their abilities and had lower aspirations. The data suggested that women "...encounter subtle problems that impede their higher education and narrow their career options."[19] It found that because more men worked for faculty members as laboratory research and teaching assistants than did women, the former received more career-directed attention from faculty members. This may explain

why women were more likely than men to delay graduate study for two or more years.[20] More men than women indicated a confidence in being prepared for graduate or professional school, while significantly more women than men responded positively to a question regarding whether they were made uncomfortable by what they perceived as an intellectual 'put-down'.

The Women's Colleges and the Challenge of Co-education

When the eastern American separate colleges were founded, it was the intention of their benefactors and administrators to create a system of education where women could prove themselves men's equal intellectually. So intent were the institutions in furthering this ideal, that the way in which they sought to accomplish it was to imitate as closely as possible the academic structure of the elite liberal arts colleges. This however, gave outside oberservers the impression that the colleges were so similar to their models that they lacked their own character and initiative. However, in their sameness there were more subtle qualities which were being nurtured that no other kind of institution could or did provide. This set the colleges apart from any other institution of higher learning.

According to Jill Conway, President of Smith, the early co-educational colleges both assumed a male definition of the usefulness in females and encouraged marriage. The women's colleges however turned out several generations of graduates "...whose special experience in college had required them to develop talents for leadership and to define higher standards of performance for themselves."[21] Education was viewed as

an end in itself rather than a preparation for marriage.[22] It was perhaps due to this purist view of education that the separate colleges were able to maintain their popularity for so long even after co-education gained wider acceptance.

But the emphasis in education has changed over time, especially in the last two decades. The philosophy embraced by the colleges until the 1960's would not be acceptable to today's women who seek more than just an exclusive liberal arts education. Certainly they wish to be well-educated, but it is important for their education to be career-oriented, providing them with the skills which will enable them to compete for top positions in non-traditional fields. At the same time, it is necessary for women to develop skills in juggling careers, marriage and families. The women's colleges have come to their own defense in deciding to remain single-sex and are providing the skeptics with proof of their ability to change.

Co-educational institutions have been blamed for not providing women with the necessary encouragement and motivation to enter traditional 'male' areas of study such as the maths and sciences, which women would require if they wished to enter certain professions. The women's colleges defend their positions in saying that at a separate college, women can choose majors without stereotyping.[23] At Smith College, the three graduating classes beginning in 1976, had from 29% to 32% of its women majoring in maths and science. This percentage was three times higher than the number of women in the Ivy League co-educational colleges.[24]

Once women were admitted to co-educational universities "...it was relatively easy to establish new streams in professional education that prepared female graduates for acceptable subordinate and non-

intellectual roles."[25] Instead of being encouraged to enter medicine or law, women were provided with such options as social work, home economics and public health nursing.[26] But the women's colleges, from the nineteenth century on, provided women with the opportunity of experiencing the same academic programmes as the men in the best colleges had. As for the present-day colleges, one admission officer at Smith claims that the students are heavily careerist and are defensive about the peer pressure to attend co-educational colleges.[27] This would suggest that the college is satisfying the professional aspirations of its students. Furthermore, Jill Conway is strong on vocationalism. She has however met with adverse reaction by the faculty which she claims is due to elitism.[28] She intended to establish accounting as a major, but was blocked in her efforts. She was successful however, in implementing a shared programme in engineering with the University of Massachusetts.[29] Conway also hoped that Smith would house a small research institute. Again, the faculty argued that the college should emphasize teaching, not research. What its president did secure was a grant from the Mellon Foundation to set up a three-year interdisciplinary research programme for studies relating to women.[30]

According to studies, women at co-educational institutions were found to be at a disadvantage because of the lack of sufficient female models in ranking academic positions. For over three generations there have been qualified women to fill academic posts, yet the peak years for female representation on university faculties were during the 1870's and 1880's. There was a decline after that period and a sharper one after 1950.[31] At the 1979 annual meeting of the presidents of the Seven

Sister women's colleges, including the separate colleges of the American east, Radcliffe and Barnard, the relation of female faculty to male faculty at women's colleges was discussed. It was found that the women's colleges were able to maintain higher percentages of women at all levels: 46% of faculty members were women, 45% were trustees, 60% were presidents and 71% were academic deans. Compared to this, only 8% of faculty members in major research institutions were women.[32]

Many co-educational universities have assisted women wishing to combine study with a career or family by offering a number of their courses in the evening and have provided the means for part-time study. The presidents of the women's colleges came to a consensus that, "Helping female students juggle career and family decisions will be one of the main challenges facing women's colleges in the 1980's...."[33] This demonstrates not only an awareness on the part of the colleges of the problems facing women, but a commitment toward solving them.

R.V.C. and Co-education

Having been linked with a university from its beginnings, R.V.C. was placed in a position of dependence early in its history. As co-education became more accepted, it was not difficult for the McGill administration to remove the teaching function of the College during the 1940's. Then, it was not a question of yielding to a popular trend, but was rather a matter of economics. There were not sufficient funds available to maintain even separate education for the first two years of the undergraduate programme. Secondary to the financial considerations was the fact that the co-education versus separate education controversy

was never really resolved even when R.V.C. opened. Many individuals associated with the College in its early years believed that co-education was still the better system even though they administered the institution according to the principles of separate education.

From the 1940's onward, the principle of women being separate from men was upheld only in the residential sense. But co-education in the 1960's threatened even this aspect of R.V.C.'s character. R.V.C. has been faulted for not moving fast enough in response to the pressing issues facing women. The College clung to 'in loco parentis' practices longer than necessary, so that as women demanded greater independence in their living arrangements, the position of R.V.C. and the role of Warden were threatened. There were suggestions to make it a co-educational residence, but stipulations in the Charter prevented this from occurring.

As the period of upheaval passed and the major administrative and structural changes to R.V.C. were completed, women at McGill were able to take a more objective look at the institution. Like the separate women's colleges, R.V.C. could never return to its former style. But in view of the fact that it did not become co-educational, the potential for it to continue to serve women still exists, and the ways in which it may do so are being explored. The problem today, as it was over eighty years ago, is one of finances. But the strength of the College, as it was over three-quarters of a century ago, lay in its Wardens and the people who worked and studied there. Mrs. Florence Tracy, currently serving as the Warden, the students at R.V.C. and the women's groups at McGill have all recognized the importance for women to have a place of their own. With this ideal in mind, it should not be too difficult to

restore a greater function to R.V.C.

While co-education on one hand threatened the colleges, it also forced them to re-examine their positions and begin making the necessary changes in their orientation. The research on women in co-educational institutions bolstered the decision of the colleges to remain single-sex and facilitated their search for a renewed function. While separate education for women cannot be supported on a large scale, nor is it the best kind of system for all women, separate colleges are the only educational models to which the rest of society can look to find superior conditions under which women can be educated. The separate women's college must exist as an alternative to and as a model for co-educational institutions.

Conclusion

R.V.C. and the women's colleges began as champions of women's higher education in the mid to late nineteenth century, providing for women what universities in their regions at the time could not. Reflecting what society's general views on women were, these institutions prided themselves on being able to provide a special and protected environment for women in which to pursue their studies. Built in an era when women's role in society was rigidly defined, the colleges themselves were not programmed to accommodate change easily and became rigid in their own structure.

It was only when the social revolution affected all institutions and when women rebelled, that one could actually observe a definite change in the structure and attitudes of these colleges. By this time however,

there were those who argued that the separate colleges were obsolete, segregating women from the real world and emphasizing the fact that women still needed special consideration. "From the beginning...the ultimate goal of the women's colleges has been to put themselves out of business."[34] "The Sister colleges were peculiar to another time and place...in a...sense that no longer applies."[35] Donna Runnalls explained that by the time she left R.V.C. in 1979, she felt, "...quite frustrated about trying to see a significant future role for the College in the University."[36]

These doubts as to the need for the separate colleges to exist, coupled with the effects of co-education, registered a tremendous blow to these institutions. While it was a difficult period, it cannot be seen as being destructive in the history of women's separate education. Firstly, it was a time when the women's colleges were forced to reconsider the direction in which they were moving, encouraging them to broaden their curricula to meet women's educational and career expectations and to modify their Victorian attitudes regarding the amount of protection women actually required. Secondly, the alignment of co-education with the ideal of equality left co-educational systems open for close examination. Through research, it was found that they were not meeting this ideal. This enabled the women's colleges to rework what would be their new function in society and to rise to the challenges of the times.

While the separate women's colleges and R.V.C. have been forced to change considerably in the last two decades, it is important that the colleges remain as alternatives to co-education and that R.V.C. maintain a holding position until the women of McGill find the necessary

resources to restore a broader function to the institution. Moreover, in order for these colleges to continue to exist, they must keep a more 'open' view of what is happening to women in the greater society and assist in the process of making all spheres of life more equitable for them.

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