

The Dartmouth Animal



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PROLOGUE

What is the “Dartmouth Animal”? The short answer is that it comprises the institutional, social, and cultural factors that created and perpetuated rape culture at Dartmouth.

Where did this “animal” come from? The available evidence paints a picture of a college community that, even prior to coeducation, had a well-established culture of violence and hostility toward women and individuals of marginalized identities--anyone who wasn't white, male, and upper class.

Change came slowly to Dartmouth. By and large, the community failed to support and welcome its changing student demographics. Ultimately, Dartmouth's evolution forms a story of courage; of resistance. It is also a remarkable story of how an antagonistic climate can be preserved—through the actions or inactions of individuals, administrators, and the cult of Greek life.

This investigation includes dozens—if not hundreds—of individual accounts of pain and hardship experienced on the Dartmouth campus. This harm was, and continues to be, real. I urge you to remember this fact as you read this. Many of these stories have been boldly and bravely told, and I feel both honored and burdened by the prospect of carrying them forward.

I want to be clear, however, that this history is by no means complete. Many stories never made it to the historical record, and are still held in secret by the individuals who endured them.

I was asked by my advisor and friends numerous times if reading this material “gets to me.” Is it difficult, in other words, to read so many upsetting stories?

I am reminded of a moment during my research in which I discovered one particularly heinous incident of harassment from the first year of coeducation. Immediately after seeing this, I found a letter to the editor of *The Dartmouth*, written by a female undergraduate. She was angry at the men who committed this act, she wrote, but she also admitted she “must feel compassion for these sick souls who can never know the ecstatic beauty of shared love.”

I was simultaneously struck by two conflicting feelings. At first, I was viscerally repulsed by the Dartmouth students who committed this act. Next came a much more potent feeling: respect and admiration for this woman—and others before and after her—who endured these abuses, who stood strongly against them, and who united with their peers to create meaningful change. I felt immensely grateful: to be able to discover these stories, try to make sense of the fraught journey from heterogeneity to increasing diversity at Dartmouth, and to share what I have learned.

I sat with these intense feelings for as long as I could, until I could no longer hold them. I walked downstairs to the basement bathroom in Rauner and bawled for five solid minutes. Then I splashed water on my face, dried my eyes with paper towels, took a deep breath, and headed back upstairs, where my research was waiting for me.



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Prologue (top): Open Forum, November 5, 1979

Prologue (bottom): Adrian Bouchard

I. THE ANIMAL BEFORE COEDUCATION



Winter snow sculpture, 1969.¹

“The world’s troubles are your troubles.”

-John Sloan Dickey ‘29, president of Dartmouth 1945-1970.²

¹ Snow Sculpture 1969, 1969, Digital by Dartmouth Library,
<https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/PhotoFiles/PhotoFiles-Icon1647-1712-0000012>.

² Irene Wielawski, “Taking Charge.” *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, September-October 2009.

As an undergraduate, Leonard Glass '65 cried only twice. Both times, he hid his tears. Men, he knew, did not cry; and at Dartmouth, he had to be a *man*.

Later, as he recalled in *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, "Anger or physically threatening behavior was tolerated and, to be truthful, even displayed with tacit pride." Affection and intimacy were "problematic," he said, revealed only under the influence of alcohol, sports, or fraternity life. "Outside of these, we learned to tread carefully."³

This was as true in Glass' time as it was nearly thirty years earlier. William Wynkoop, a 1938 graduate, considered Dartmouth to be a "very much a gung-ho macho college."

"These are he-men," he said in an interview. "You've got to be a he-man."⁴

What both men describe is the Dartmouth *ethos*, the unspoken, guiding standards and cultural norms of this place. Before coeducation, Dartmouth functioned as a kind of fraternity, where these off-kilter, dysfunctional traditions could flourish, enforced by the hegemonic pressure of the group.

The community was small, monolithic, and tight-knit, united by tradition. In his senior thesis, Allen Arthur Drexel '91 pointed to the lyrics to the alma mater, "Men of Dartmouth," as reflective of this fraternal community: "Stand as brother stands by brother/Dare a deed for the other Mother."⁵ As two journalists described it in 1960, the College functioned as, respectively, a "male stronghold," or a "fortress for the male ego."^{6 7}

As a *de facto* fraternity, Dartmouth prior to coeducation was ruled by the "Dartmouth Animal." As Glass recalled, this was a cultural ideal, a hypermasculine man, virile nearly to the point of violence; a heavy drinker whose relationships with women consisted entirely of either sex or animosity.⁸

Implicit in this ideal was the collective marginalizing, or "othering," of women. In his thesis, Drexel referenced anthropologist Peggy Sanday's work on fraternity life. Specifically, Sanday asserts, "Cross cultural research demonstrates that whenever men build and give allegiance to a mystical, enduring, all-male social group, the disparagement of women is,

³ Leonard Glass, "The Dartmouth Animal and the Hypermasculine Myth." *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, September 1980,

<https://archive.dartmouthalumnimagazine.com/article/1980/9/1/the-dartmouth-animal-and-the-hypermasculine-myth>

⁴ Allen Arthur Drexel, *Degrees of Broken Silence: Dartmouth Man, Gay Men, and Women 1935-1991*, 1991, 19 (D.C. History LD 1441 .D74 1991, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

⁵ Ibid, 33.

⁶ James Morisseau, "Dartmouth to Admit Women, in Summers." *Valley News*, July 7, 1960, quoted in Andrea Jaresova, *Let the Old Traditions Fail: How Understanding the History of Male Traditions at Dartmouth Can Help Us Create the Best Strategies to Prevent Campus Sexual Assault*, 2012, 24 (DC History Honors 2012, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

⁷ "Girls Stormed Dartmouth Walls." *Associated Press*, January 1969, quoted in Andrea Jaresova, *Let the Old Traditions Fail: How Understanding the History of Male Traditions at Dartmouth Can Help Us Create the Best Strategies to Prevent Campus Sexual Assault*, 2012, 25 (DC History Honors 2012, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

⁸ Glass, "The Dartmouth Animal and the Hypermasculine Myth."

invariably, an important ingredient of the mystical bond, and sexual aggression the means by which the bond is renewed.”⁹

To say that Dartmouth men had a skewed relationship with women would be an understatement. Drexel noted that “the Dartmouth man earned his “butch” credentials, at least in part, by having—or proving to others that he had—copious sex with women.”¹⁰ Glass affirmed this sentiment of his understanding of Dartmouth’s “hypermasculine myth”: “At Dartmouth the guys are tough, virile, and unbelievably horny, barely contained until their infrequent orgiastic encounters with women. That much was the verbalized common wisdom. The unspoken corollary was: And there is no sexual life or feelings in between, except as part of the build-up for the next blast.”¹¹

Examples of Dartmouth students living this myth litter the historical record from this period. Wynkoop recalled that in the 1930s, a favored ritual of Dartmouth students was a road trip to a nearby bar called “Bucket of Blood.” At this dive, local folklore claims, nude waitresses “had been trained to pick up the tips off the table using their vaginas.” Its popularity with Dartmouth students was simple: “It was a place to get drunk and also to pick up girls.”¹²

According to Glass, the Dartmouth man’s ambitions with women were addressed in the “real words” to “Dartmouth’s In Town Again”: “...Our pants are steaming hot, We’ll give you all we’ve got. Virgins are just our meat, Rape, rape, rape!” He called this song “a sort of cultural ideal, albeit not to be implemented literally.”¹³

The vulgar, oversexed “Dartmouth Animal” ethos, combined with the sheer lack of exposure to women on campus, promoted a distorted view of gender to the impressionable young men. Dartmouth men, wrote Glass, tended to dichotomize women in a “madonna/whore” split. In this view, he explained, women are placed into only one of two rigid stereotypes: “The madonnas are maternal, idealized, and sexually unexciting. The whores are held in contempt; they are good for sexual conquest and as audiences for exhibitionistic display but unthinkable as mothers, sisters, or daughters.”¹⁴ This view afforded no room for fulfilling, long-term romantic partnerships with women. Rather, women were viewed in an exaggerated dichotomy, a perfect complement to the caricatured idealism of the “Dartmouth Animal.”

In a 1992 article in *Spare Rib*, a student publication, Robert Overton, member of the class of 1965, admitted that during his college years, he maintained a similarly distorted, if slightly more nuanced, view of women. He explained that his understandings of women were “composed

⁹ Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood, and Privilege on Campus*, 1990, quoted in Drexel, 7-8.

¹⁰ Drexel, 27.

¹¹ Glass, “The Dartmouth Animal and the Hypermasculine Myth.”

¹² Drexel, 30.

¹³ Glass, “The Dartmouth Animal and the Hypermasculine Myth.”

¹⁴ Ibid.

of wildly diverse and contradictory concepts”: Object of Fantasy, Angel, Bitch, Confidante and Challenge.¹⁵

Overton, too, credited this view to “simple lack of contact.” Dartmouth men saw women on Big (“or small,” added Overton) Weekends, when the women were shuttled up from nearby all-women’s colleges in buses men referred to as “meat wagons” or “fuck trucks.”^{16 17} Of these visits, Overton wrote:

The main purpose of the Big Weekends (or any other weekends) was, of course, to get laid. The standard Dartmouth approach to this goal was to show one’s date what animals we were, with our wild, beer-drenched parties, foul language, and general vulgarity (it was not unusual to see Dartmouth students impressing their women by peeing in the bushes while the poor dates stood around waiting for them to finish.) Whether this approach ever succeeded, I don’t know. It certainly never worked for anybody I knew, but that didn’t keep legions of Dartmouth students from trying.¹⁸

Dartmouth men employed their “Dartmouth Animal” behavior to impress and—intentionally or unintentionally--also intimidate their dates.

He writes further that it was said the Dorm Mothers at Connecticut College would counsel their female students to not spend their first Big Weekend in Hanover. They would urge the women to try Yale or Williams first, and only later take on Dartmouth. “The truth of the story is irrelevant,” wrote Overton. “What is important is that the tale was part of our oral tradition, an item of pride.”¹⁹

This image of the Dartmouth Animal was so strong that, years later, there was no doubt in anybody’s minds about what college was being portrayed in the book and, later, the movie *Animal House*.²⁰

Indeed, Chris Miller, one of the creators of *Animal House* and a member of the Dartmouth class of 1963, said in an interview about his time at Dartmouth, “Women were something to be attacked and swallowed on weekends.”²¹

Wrote Overton: “The amazing (and depressing) thing is that not only were we proud of this reputation, but the College as a whole endorsed it. Students perpetrated numerous acts of insensitivity and humiliation toward their dates, and the administration certainly knew about them, but did little or nothing to stop this behavior.”²²

¹⁵ Robert Overton, compiled by Lisa Overton, “Sending His ‘Little Girl’ to the Big Green.” *Spare Rib*, 2, no. 1 (1992) (DC History LH 1 D3 S63 Spare Rib, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹⁶ Andrea Jaresova, *Let the Old Traditions Fail: How Understanding the History of Male Traditions at Dartmouth Can Help Us Create the Best Strategies to Prevent Campus Sexual Assault*, 2012, 27 (DC History Honors 2012).

¹⁷ Andy Merton, “Hanging on (by a jockstrap) to tradition at Dartmouth.” *Esquire*, June 19, 1979, 63, 5 (DC History LD 1441 .M477, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹⁸ Overton, “Sending His ‘Little Girl’ to the Big Green.”

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Marianna Jacobbi, “Boys Will Be Boys; the trouble is, at Dartmouth they expect women to be boys, too.” *Boston*, 1983 (DC History LD 1438.8 .J32 1983, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²² Overton, “Sending His ‘Little Girl’ to the Big Green.”

One of the biggest of these weekends was Winter Carnival, an annual event that began in 1910.

College women flocked to Dartmouth--on the so-called meat wagons--for a few days of winter sports events and socializing. This was the largest influx of women the campus would see all year.

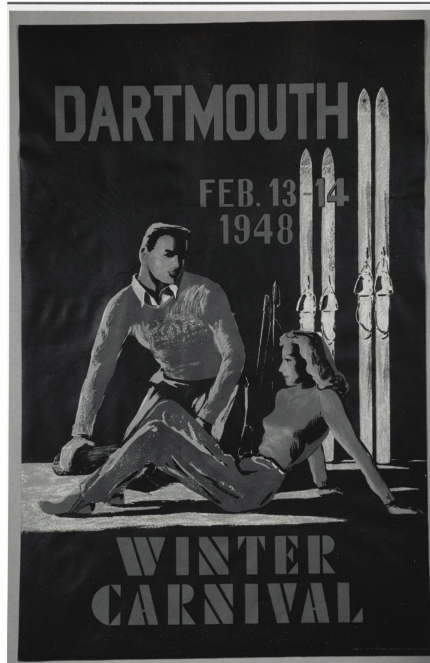
For a half century, from 1928 to 1972, a highlight of the weekend was the crowning of the "Queen of Snows." This was essentially a beauty contest, wherein a number of prominent members of the Dartmouth student body (referred to as "snatches") selected Carnival Queen candidates out of the pool of female visitors.²³ It functioned as a sort of public objectification, a chance for Dartmouth men to ogle the women.

Reflecting on these visits, Overton wrote that in retrospect, "it seems amazing that any of us ever formed solid lasting relationships with members of the other sex, or indeed with anyone who didn't smell vaguely of wood smoke and take inordinate pride in his reproductive and excretory functions."²⁴

It is perhaps not surprising to see that this "Dartmouth Animal" mindset, in which masculinity and sex are inextricably linked, coupled with a community only exposed to women not as fellow human beings but as objects of conquest on party weekends, might create and perpetuate a rape culture, an environment noticeably hostile to women.

²³ "The Rise and Fall of the 'Queen of Snows.'" *Rauner Special Collections Library Blog*, March 4, 2016, <https://raunerlibrary.blogspot.com/2016/03/the-rise-and-fall-of-queen-of-snows.html>.

²⁴ Overton, "Sending His 'Little Girl' to the Big Green."



Winter Carnival poster from 1948. From the slightly risqué position of the woman, it's easy to see how sex and sexuality were core elements of this "Big Weekend."²⁵



Winter Carnival "Snow Girl" contestants 1945.²⁶

²⁵Winter Carnival Posters, Displays, 1948. Digital by Dartmouth Library.
<https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/PhotoFiles/PhotoFiles-icon1647-2011-0000010>.

²⁶ Winter Carnival Queens 1940s, 1947, Digital by Dartmouth Library,
<https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/PhotoFiles/PhotoFiles-icon1647-2016-0000013>.



Dorothy Gardner, winner of the “Snow Girl” title in 1939.²⁷



Betty Glendinning, 1932 Snow Queen, standing beside Theta Chi’s snow girl, which won first place in snow sculpture.²⁸

²⁷ College News Service, Winter Carnival Queens 1930s, 1939, Digital by Dartmouth Library.
<https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/PhotoFiles/PhotoFiles-icon1647-2015-0000057>.

²⁸ Glendinning, Betty, Winter Carnival Queens 1930s, 1932, Digital by Dartmouth Library,
<https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/PhotoFiles/PhotoFiles-icon1647-2015-0000004>.

II. THE COEDUCATION DECISION



Snow Sculpture, 1969: "Coeducation: the End of Flaming Dartmouth Animal!"²⁹

"‘When our fathers were here there were no women,’ the [Dartmouth] men used to tell me. ‘When your grandfathers were here there were no electric lights,’ I told them back. ‘Things get better.’" Gina Barecca, Class of 1979³⁰

²⁹ Snow Sculpture 1969, 1969, Digital by Dartmouth Library, <https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/PhotoFiles/PhotoFiles-Icon1647-1712-0000007>.

³⁰ "A Women's Place." *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, 1977, 8 (DA-820 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records. Folder "Women's History," Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

Even before the Dartmouth Board of Trustees officially voted in favor of coeducation in 1971, the Dartmouth community included some women. Unfortunately, however, their numbers were small and their presence did little to mitigate the gender divide on campus. In 1965, for instance, 12 women were enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses at the College. One of the grad students, who conducted lab sessions for male Dartmouth undergraduates, complained that men would occasionally “arrive ‘drunk,’ and would ‘try to press close against’ her when asking her a question.”³¹

The years 1968 to 1969 saw other women join the Dartmouth student body. Seven women were accepted as “special students” that year, invited to campus as actors to fill women’s roles in drama productions.³²

In 1969, five women from Skidmore College came to campus through an exchange program, although they weren’t allowed to eat in the dining hall or stay in college housing. “The ratio of 2,300 men to five women is unhealthy,” admitted Dean Thaddeaus Seymour.

“A ratio of 2,300 to nothing was sick,” *The Dartmouth* retorted.³³

During that same academic year, well over a thousand women from 18 different colleges attended Dartmouth’s second “Coed Week.” A January 1969 article entitled “Girls Stormed Dartmouth Walls” in the *Associated Press* wrote that Dartmouth was “reeling under an assault by an upwards of 1,500 miniskirted coeds”³⁴

The following academic year, 1969-1970, more women came to Dartmouth as exchange students from nearby women’s colleges. But it didn’t appear to go smoothly. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that men spent the first weeks of the term “either ignoring or harassing” the new female students.³⁵

Indeed, reflecting on their yearlong experiences at Dartmouth years later, some women students recalled unsettling incidents. Karen Crawford (then Karen Goodman), here during the 1970-1971 school year, wrote that her least favorite Dartmouth experience was eating in the dining hall: “Jeers, cat calls and food fights were the norm when a co-ed entered the hall.”³⁶

Katherine Rines (then Katherine Duff), here for that same year, wrote that a challenging experience for her was “never knowing when the guys would stage an event” to demoralize, denigrate, terrify or simply annoy the women. Her third night on campus, for example, she said she was “blindfolded and kidnapped with a fraternity pledge class, and left in the middle of a field with the pledge class.”³⁷

She described another event from the spring term that further tested her strength. At around one a.m., as she was studying in the 1902 Room in the library, a cherry bomb went off

³¹ Drexel, 32-33.

³² “Timeline of Coeducation at Dartmouth.” *Dartmouth Coeducation at 50*, <https://coeducation.dartmouth.edu/timeline-coeducation-dartmouth>.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ *Associated Press* in Jaresova, 25.

³⁵ “Timeline of Coeducation at Dartmouth.”

³⁶ (Alumni Transfer Student Surveys in “Women of Dartmouth” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College)

³⁷ Ibid.

underneath her chair. She quickly tried to clear the area, but her foot got caught on her chair, and she tripped into the wall. Afraid to “lose it” in a room filled with men, she just “smiled bravely.” Telling them she needed to leave to catch her breath, she managed to just make it out the door before she burst into tears. “We were constantly tested,” she said of the incident.³⁸

The following academic year, 1971-1972, saw about 75 women exchange students on campus.³⁹ With the greater number of women came more harassment, particularly as the prospect of full coeducation appeared increasingly likely. Anne Ellis (then Anne Andrews), recalled men coating the toilet seats of Cohen Hall (where many female exchange students were staying) with honey. In another episode, they displayed an ax in the door of a dorm hall where women were housed.⁴⁰

In April of 1971, the Dartmouth faculty voted 111 to 18 in favor of coeducation. Also around this time, students wrote a petition demanding that the Board of Trustees commit to coeducation by the following fall.⁴¹

On the weekend of November 20th, 1971, a special meeting of the Board of Trustees was called. “The most fascinating part of the board’s discussion at the meeting centered on the question of the role of women in the future of American society,” said former President John Kemeny in his oral history. Dartmouth trains leaders, they concluded— so Dartmouth “should train women as well as men for leadership roles.”⁴²

President Kemeny recalled that 74 percent of students were in favor of coeducation, with only 26 percent opposed. Unfortunately for the women, much of that 26 percent, Kemeny noted, felt “violently” opposed to the prospect of female integration. Those students were centered in a small number of fraternities.⁴³

President Kemeny himself had been convinced that coeducation was “absolutely necessary,” even before he became Dartmouth president. “I did also feel that there was a strong danger that we’d be turning out a generation of male chauvinist pigs who would not be able to work with women as equals in their professions,” he would say later in his oral history.⁴⁴ His remarks seem prescient in retrospect.

On November 21, 1971, at 6:30pm, President Kemeny announced on the College radio station that the Trustees had voted for the matriculation of women.⁴⁵

On November 22, 1971, the trustees’ decision in favor of coeducation would make the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Boston Papers*. Fifty television stations aired

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Merton, “Hanging on (by a jockstrap) to tradition at Dartmouth,” 58.

⁴⁰ (Alumni Transfer Student Surveys in “Women of Dartmouth” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College)

⁴¹ “Timeline of Coeducation at Dartmouth.”

⁴² John G. Kemeny Oral History, 1984,

https://www.dartmouth.edu/library/rauner/archives/oral_history/oh_interviews_pdf/KemenyInterview.pdf.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ “Timeline of Coeducation at Dartmouth.”

Kemeny's announcement, and the Dartmouth admissions office was flooded with requests for applications.⁴⁶

The *New York Times*, reporting on the story, wrote that the divisions between those in favor of and opposed to coeducation "went deep." One trustee was quoted as saying, "To some alumni, going coed is like telling their mothers they need to redo their hair. They love their mothers the old way."⁴⁷

In September of 1972, the first full-fledged "Women of Dartmouth" arrived on campus. There were 251 of them: 177 first-year students and 74 transfers.⁴⁸ The ratio of men to women, then, was still poor, with nine men for every one woman. This reflected a similar ratio in the faculty, with only 26 women faculty members out of 315 total that year.⁴⁹

This lopsided gender ratio among the student body was deliberate—partially a compromise, partially intended to appease those alumni and students who "violently" opposed the integration of women, and partially intended as an "easy exit plan" to change their minds. The limited number of women would make it easy to reverse the decision.

In his senior thesis, Allen Arthur Drexel argues that this ratio, in conjunction with the fact that Dartmouth was the last among the Ivy League colleges to go coed (save Columbia, although it had an adjoining women's school), "demonstrated the great reluctance with which Dartmouth alumni and college officers relinquished their school's all-male heritage."⁵⁰

At the Convocation address in September of 1972, President Kemeny addressed, for the first time, official Dartmouth students of both genders. He spoke first to the male students on campus:

I have heard many of you complain for years that the kinds of relationships you develop where you see women only as dates, and most often during hectic weekends, are unnatural relationships between men and women in this day and age. You argued this point very eloquently and very convincingly, and you won your arguments. Now you have to prove that you meant it. If you treat Dartmouth women as curiosities, or simply as more easily available dates, you will make a mockery of that which has been said over the past three years.⁵¹

He then implored the entire class of 1976 to "find the relationship we are all looking for, the natural relationship of men and women working side by side and treating each other as equals. In the last analysis the question of whether the women of Dartmouth will feel fully

⁴⁶ "A Women's Place."

⁴⁷ M. A. Farber, "Dartmouth to Go Coed in '72 and Operate All Year." *New York Times*, November 22, 1971, <https://nyti.ms/42oNSM0>.

⁴⁸ "Timeline of Coeducation at Dartmouth."

⁴⁹ Jaresova, 58.

⁵⁰ Drexel, 40.

⁵¹ John Kemeny, "Convocation Address September 1972" (DA-820 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records. Folder "Women's History," Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

accepted as members of the Dartmouth community will depend on the attitude of the student body.”⁵²

“This is a special year,” he said to the assembly. “You can almost feel it in the air. Frankly I would not miss this year for anything.”

He knew they would make mistakes. He knew, too, that there might be chaos, and he acknowledged that the campus had already seen some of it. But better some chaos than Dartmouth remain a single-sex institution: “I must confess that I would rather be connected with an institution that is moving forward where there is excitement, where there are new ideas, and where there is chaos than to be connected with an institution that is stagnating.”⁵³

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

III. CHAOS, STAGNATION



“KEEP SAGE ALL MALE,” “No COEDs,” “HELL NO WE WON’T GO,” and “It’s a damn commie plot” banners hanging from Russell Sage Hall, 1974.⁵⁴

“[Dartmouth] women had to be tough as nails. The men really gave them a rough time... women weren’t treated as people, they were treated as women. They were sex objects and were typecast as either prudes or prostitutes” John Myer, ‘78.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Russell Sage Hall, 1974, Digital by Dartmouth Library, <https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/PhotoFiles/PhotoFiles-Icon1647-1513-0000013>.

⁵⁵ Jacobbi, “Boys Will Be Boys; the trouble is, at Dartmouth they expect women to be boys, too.”

Chaos.

A few vocal, sometimes violent male students had viscerally negative reactions to women on campus. As Kemeny himself admitted in his oral history,

Several of the [male Dartmouth students] took it on as a sort of mission to make life miserable for women students when they first arrived, in a wide variety of different ways, from verbal abuse to sort of raids on women's dormitories and just by doing everything possible that a minority of students can do to make the women feel unwelcome...⁵⁶

Women, greatly outnumbered on campus, struggled to gain equal footing with men. Victor Zoanna, a 1975 graduate of Dartmouth, recalled that alumni and undergraduates feared that women would "dilute the pool of manhood...the whole context for the decision of coeducation was one in which the women would hurt the school in some way..."⁵⁷

Martha Hennessey, who matriculated with the first coeducational class in 1972, echoed Myer's sentiment in her oral history. The daughter of an alumnus who later became an administrator, she had been acquainted with the College from her childhood in Hanover. Once she became a student, she felt a clear change in how the institution and students responded to her presence. "It was made very clear to us all at the time that [...] You are supposed to act like the guys. You're supposed to laugh at our sexist hurtful jokes. You're really not supposed to stick out. We don't really want you here, so pretend like you're not here."⁵⁸

Particularly in that first year, harassment was widespread and varied in method. Banners proclaiming messages of hate and bigotry, like those in the image of Russell Sage at the beginning of this chapter, were not uncommon. In her oral history, Grant Williams, a Black woman from the first coeducational class, even recalled seeing "*Death to co-ed signs*" hanging from Russell Sage.⁵⁹

Three years later, Gina Barecca, class of 1979, remembered newly painted "Better Dead Than Coed" banners hanging on fraternity row.⁶⁰

According to Hennessey, rocks painted with messages saying "Cohogs go home" were thrown through dorm windows. ("Cohogs" being a portmanteau of "coeds" and Quahogs, the Atlantic clam). Men put old fish in Hinman Boxes with notes that read "Guests and fish stink after three days."

"I mean, things like that were happening enough that it felt threatening," she said.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Kemeny Oral History.

⁵⁷ Drexel, 45.

⁵⁸ Toben Oliver Clark Traver, "*Slings and Arrows*": *Women's Oral Histories of Coeducation at Dartmouth College*, December 2022, 18.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 37.

⁶⁰ Gina Barecca, *Babes in Boyland: A Personal History of Co-Education in the Ivy League* (Lebanon, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 2011, 4-5.

⁶¹ Traver, 39.

Women were rated on scorecards numbered 1-10 as they walked into the dining hall.⁶² “They would hold up the numbers like judging figure skaters, you know, for how ugly the women were,” Nancy Jeton remembered of the public objectification. “So I would only go there with a posse of friends. It was not the most pleasant experience.”⁶³

Robin Barnett, who came to Dartmouth in 1973, also remembered seeing a booth at Summer Carnival one year that had a dart game whose target was the outline of a woman with balloons for breasts.⁶⁴

Much of the harassment was centered around dorms, places that should feel safe and most like home. Betsy Morse recalled men rifling through the Freshman portrait book, circling the most attractive women, then searching for their dorm rooms.⁶⁵

The first year, fraternity men would frequently surround women’s dorms and yell obscenities at them. Occasionally, rooms were broken into and vandalized.⁶⁶ Women would sometimes return to their rooms to find Wastepaper baskets full of vomit.⁶⁷ Mary Ellen Donovan, who entered Dartmouth in 1972, recalled, “It was not uncommon—I’d say it happened several nights a week—for drunk guys to come by and scream, ‘Hey you cohogs [ie, coeds]! Get out here and spread your legs. That’s all you’re good for, anyway!’ They did things like pee on our bicycles. There was a lot of trashing.”⁶⁸

Butterfield, a dorm that housed women and backed Fraternity Row, was a notable target for this harassment. In 1973, Beta Theta Pi was placed on social probation for “selectively carousing through the women’s floor” in this hall.⁶⁹

Naomi Baline Kleinman, another member of the first coeducational class, said in her oral history that men would punch out the panes of glass on the door to the dorm, or would come to the women’s hall and kick in trash cans, yell and scream at the women, and once or twice, set a memo board on fire.⁷⁰ Stephanie Valar, a member of the class of 1976, recalled one of these raucous, mess-making “raids” from Beta fraternity men in the early hours of the morning: “I mean it was an attack. I don’t know what else you’d call it.”⁷¹

Fraternities were largely hostile spaces. Susan Dentzer, who came to Dartmouth in 1973, remembered a spring evening her freshman year, when she was in a fraternity basement listening to a jukebox with some friends. A member of the hockey team came up to her with two beers, and proceeded to pour each of them over her head. “This is for being a fucking cohog” he said.

⁶² Drexel, 43.

⁶³ Traver, 30.

⁶⁴ Jacobbi, “Boys Will Be Boys; the trouble is, at Dartmouth they expect women to be boys, too.”

⁶⁵ Traver, 52.

⁶⁶ Merton, “Hanging on (by a jockstrap) to tradition at Dartmouth,” 59.

⁶⁷ Jacobbi, “Boys Will Be Boys; the trouble is, at Dartmouth they expect women to be boys, too.”

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Drexel, 48.

⁷⁰ Traver, 51.

⁷¹ Ibid, 51.

And “This is for being a fucking woman at Dartmouth.”⁷² Hennessey agreed that “being in the basement of a fraternity felt very threatening.”⁷³

In her oral history, Annie Triplett Johnson ‘76 recalled visiting a fraternity basement on a Saturday, when women from other colleges would typically come visit. One of the men asked her where she went to school. “Well, I go to Dartmouth!” she responded.

He looked at her and said, “Well, you might be a perfectly nice person, but I wish you’d get your goddamn ass off my campus.”

She turned around, walked out of the basement, and never went back. Martha Hennessey, recalling a similar incident, said “If I had a nickel for each time this happened, I could have paid my tuition.”⁷⁴

Even outside of the physical fraternity building, the Greek system affected women negatively. “We all have bad memories from those years,” said Donovan in an interview with *Boston* magazine. She recalled sitting in a computer center cubicle on “Hell Night,” a particularly brutal night for fraternity hazing. She turned around in her seat to find a guy painted in green, wearing only an open bathrobe and exposing himself. “Dartmouth was intimidating for everybody” she added.⁷⁵

Reports of assault at fraternities were not uncommon. Hillary Smith ‘78, recalled hearing stories of friends and acquaintances being gang raped in fraternities. “I mean in some cases it was clear that we were just being ignored, but it was also—I felt under siege.”⁷⁶

Toben Traver writes, in his 2022 Master’s thesis that some men on campus, fueled by alcohol and angry at the feminine “invasion,” “turned to sex as a means of exacting vengeance.”⁷⁷

Conversations about rape and sexual assault on campus, by contrast, were limited. Kleinman ‘76 recalled waking up one summer night to find a woman sitting in her dorm’s hallway, sobbing. “I mean, I called the campus police and got her to the infirmary, but I was sufficiently clueless to not really understand what was probably going on.”⁷⁸

Hennessey, too, remembered hearing stories about women gang raped in fraternities, but she never really knew about it. “I went places I knew,” she said. “But still it never really felt safe. It felt like I was prey.”⁷⁹

Hennessey recounted her own assault in a fraternity her senior year.⁸⁰ A drunk fraternity brother grabbed her keys and wouldn’t return them. “He turned into an animal,” she recalled. He picked her up and threw her against the fireplace. “I was really beaten up.”

⁷² Jacobbi, “Boys Will Be Boys; the trouble is, at Dartmouth they expect women to be boys, too.”

⁷³ Traver, 37.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 75.

⁷⁵ Jacobbi, “Boys Will Be Boys; the trouble is, at Dartmouth they expect women to be boys, too.”

⁷⁶ Traver, 43.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 75.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 75.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 75.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 75.

No one intervened. No one watching said anything.

When she finally escaped, physically and emotionally traumatized, she decided not to name her attacker, for fear of retribution from fraternity brothers. But word of her assault got to her father, who was a dean at the College, and through him to President Kemeny and the Board of Trustees.

As she feared, the male students *did* turn on her. “It was my worst nightmare... I was the bad guy. ‘How dare you pull rank, when somebody beats you up, and go to the Trustees. That was the message I was getting [...] So it was... It very nearly broke me. It was pretty horrible.’”⁸¹

April 1973 brought one of the most brazen instances of harassment from those first few years. It was the morning after “Sink Night,” the culmination of rush, when pledges commit to their fraternities. A letter addressed to “C***s” was slipped under the door of every room in the all-female Woodward Hall.⁸² It demanded that women make certain changes in order for “all of us to live in harmony.” Among the demands:

1. Women go topless in the dining hall (“Perhaps you consider this unreasonable – well, f*** you”);
2. Women’s “services” be made available at all times;
3. The women’s softball team play naked on the green (“C***s with large floppy tits may wear bras. The butt area must remain uncovered”); and
4. Women perform oral sex on President Kemeny, so that he might “lose his f** tendencies.

The letter further commanded women to “reform accordingly” or “deal directly with the syndicate.” “These are not idle threats,” it warned. “Our movement is large.”

On April 11th, three days after the incident, a letter titled “Reaction to Sink Night Letter” was published in *The Dartmouth* by junior Barbara Dills.⁸³ She condemned the Woodward letters as acts of violence as “manifestations of a deep and serious disease, which it seems the fraternity system as it exists at Dartmouth tends to perpetuate.” She added: “Along with my anger, I must feel compassion for these sick souls who can never know the ecstatic beauty of shared love.” Dills then boldly announced that she was “not the least bit intimidated,” writing, “I openly challenge every ‘man’ involved in this act to express these sentiments put forth in the circular to my face. If no one ‘rises’ to this challenge, I shall be convinced, as I already suspect, that their sickness is merely compounded by weakness and cowardice.” She ended the letter simply and powerfully: “I live in 309A So. Topliff.”

In April of 2023, exactly fifty years later, I spoke to Dills about her time at Dartmouth. She was on campus for only one year, 1972-73, through an exchange program that Dartmouth coordinated with Smith and other women’s colleges. She spoke of Dartmouth fondly, but also vividly recalled the hostility and resentment that certain members of the Dartmouth community directed toward female students.

⁸¹ Ibid, 75.

⁸² Jaresova, 128, Appendix D.

⁸³ Barbara Dills, “Reaction To A Sink Night Letter.” *The Dartmouth*, April 11, 1973.

When I asked her about “Reaction to a Sink Night Letter” and her decision to disclose her dorm location, she told me she didn’t run the idea past anyone; there was never hesitation in her mind. “I just kind of boldly did it... I don’t know if it was a combination of naiveté and strength. But I think what I wanted to do was call their bluff.”

Around midnight a few days later, Dills was sitting in her small dorm room in Topliff when she heard a pounding on her door and recognized loud male voices. Despite the racket, Dills wasn’t scared. She opened the door to two extremely drunk men hurling the c-word at her and referencing her letter in *The Dartmouth*.

Dills responded, “Why don’t you come in and sit down?”

The two men seemed shocked that Dills didn’t scream back at them. “I completely disarmed them,” she recalled. “They were like two little puppy dogs.” Dills felt she was “in her power.” Stunned, they walked in and took a seat.

“I just said, you know, ‘So what right do you think you have to treat people like this?’” The men didn’t have an answer.

“It was like they were just sitting in front of their mother scolding them... They just became these completely different people,” Dills told me. “We had a short conversation and then they just kind of went away with their tails between their legs.” After the two left, she remembered thinking, Did that just happen?

Dills was never threatened again, and didn’t recall any similarly offensive letters during her time at Dartmouth. This incident just confirmed for Dills the suspicions she had already voiced in her letter in *The Dartmouth*: “It was so revealing of how basically impotent the force was against [coeducation] at Dartmouth.”

In another response to the Woodward letter, some women also circulated a response.⁸⁴

It was a letter addressed to “Dicks” and it expressed their apologies that the men regard them as enemies. “Our aim is to please you,” it read. But “we have been made unable to achieve this aim. It is impossible to cream over a limp dick.”

“Before we can comply with your demands, our own demands must be met.” The list ended with a simple request: “There are several copies of Master’s and Johnson’s Human Sexual Inadequacy on reserve in Baker Library. Please share those and read chapters 4 and 5, pp.63-135.”

“Those are our demands. If you are unable or unwilling to meet them, then fuck you.”

⁸⁴ “Dear Dicks,” Letter, April 10, 1973, (“Women of Dartmouth” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

Sunday, April 8, 1973

CUNTS:

Your status as a co-hog compels our organization to treat you as an enemy. Your mere presence at this institution is in direct confrontation to the goals we consider sacred. Your active or passive participation in the countermovement is not in question. Your presence here is enough. We must take action.

Before the syndicate moves in, we can offer you two alternatives. The first is in accordance with many of the reforms that your alleged leader – Ruth the dildo Adams – has attempted to implement here. That is, for all of us to live in harmony. But for us to live in harmony with you, several changes must be made.

- A. The upper part of your body must remain naked before our eyes when you eat in Thayer. Perhaps you consider this unreasonable – well, fuck you.
- B. Your services must be made available at all times. The syndicate will arrange times, places, etc.
- C. The co-hog softball team must also play naked on the Green. Cunts with large floppy tits may wear bras. The butt area must remain uncovered.
- D. One of you must give the mad Hungarian a blow job. Perhaps he will lose his gay tendencies.

These are only a few of the demands. But we feel you can become a viable member of our community if you reform accordingly. Your other alternative is to deal directly with the syndicate. You will then be contacted at a later time. These are not idle threats. Our movement is large. Things must change.

** This letter was slipped under the door of every room in all-female Woodward Hall early Monday morning – Sunday was fraternity sink night. (The D – April 11, 1973)
Transcribed by Janelle Rulley, 2000

Woodward Hall letter, April 1973.⁸⁵

April 10, 1973 Tuesday

Dear Dicks:

The harmonious state at Dartmouth has become a matter of concern for us, too. We are sorry that you regard us as enemies; we are not here to challenge your religious beliefs or to frighten you in any way. Our aim is to please you.

However, we have been made unable to achieve this aim. It is impossible to cream over a limp-dick. Therefore, before we can comply with your demands, our own demands must be met:

- A. All fraternity raging must cease. You may only be indulging in innocent drunkenness with the bro. However, a large amount of sexual energy mysteriously dissipates during this carousing. The result has been chronically soft dicks.
- B. From now on we will see you in groups. With encouragement from your brother limp-dicks you may be more able to get it up.
- C. There are several copies of Master's and Johnson's Human Sexual Inadequacy on reserve in Baker Library. Please share those and read chapters 4 and 5, pp. 63-135.

Those are our demands. If you are unable or unwilling to meet them, then fuck you.

Transcribed by Janelle Rulley, 2000

Women's Response to the Woodward letter.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ "Cunts," flyer, April 8, 1973. (DA-857, Case 11, Women of Dartmouth. Rauner Vertical Files, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

⁸⁶ "Dear Dicks", Letter, April 10, 1973, ("Women of Dartmouth" Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

IV. "THE WHOLE CARROLL BREWSTER PROBLEM"



Dean of the College Carroll Brewster.⁸⁷

"Do you want me to get into the whole Carroll Brewster problem? ... Since, really, it's inextricably connected with coeducation—coeducation and fraternities, where he would undercut me continually." President Kemeny, in his oral history.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ *The Dartmouth*, May 12, 1975.

⁸⁸ Kemeny Oral History.

“Where the hell was the administration?” Wendy Shepherd remembered thinking, when she saw anti-coeducation banners flying from a dorm room.

And where *was* the administration? After the Woodward letter, Iris Gowen visited the Dean’s office, and had a “wonderful experience” with a woman who worked there, Britta McNemar.⁸⁹ She connected Gowen with a male student, and together, the two of them organized a symposium on hate mail. Still, no disciplinary action was taken with the Woodward letter, nor with many other instances of blatant harassment from the first few years.

While women found a few allies in the faculty and staff, they found little in the way of concrete support for women. Rather, women had to create their own support systems.⁹⁰ They knew to stay with a posse or with their boyfriends when going out at night. They learned how to protect themselves and their dorms. Joanne Conroy, class of 1977, remembered learning to “do the Heisman and shut your door to your dorm, so a guy didn’t try to get in your room when he was walking you back home.”⁹¹

Women were also afraid of calling out men who harassed, afraid of potential repercussions from friends or fraternity brothers.⁹²

President Kemeny, for his part, acknowledged that he hadn’t done enough for early Dartmouth women.

In his 1973 Valedictory Address, President Kemeny made two appeals to the women of this first coeducational graduating class. First, he implored them to be honest to prospective female students: “I hope you will tell it as it is, both the good and the bad”⁹³

“Also,” he said, “as the first women of the first coeducational class in the history of the College, I know you felt like pioneers and may feel your work is now over. However, I hope you will be willing to work with the alumni clubs of the College to prepare them for the coming hundreds, and eventually thousands, of alumnae who will follow you.”⁹⁴

Other administrators actively limited the strides made by coeducation.

Carroll Brewster, Dean of the College at the time, was notoriously hostile to women and sympathetic to the debauchery of Greek life.

President Kemeny disliked him. In his oral history, he revealed that he felt his efforts to protect women and to clamp down on fraternities were “sabotaged” by Brewster.⁹⁵

He described an incident in which a fraternity “took a truly outrageous set of steps,” raiding a woman’s dormitory, waking the women up in the middle of the night and “doing all kinds of outrageous acts.” As the dean, Brewster would ordinarily respond to this kind of

⁸⁹ Traver, 65.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 60.

⁹¹ Ibid, 53.

⁹² Ibid, 51.

⁹³ John Kemeny, “Valedictory Address,” June 1973 (DA-820 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Women’s History,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Kemeny Oral History.

misconduct. However, he was out of town at the time, so the Dean of Freshmen took on a temporary disciplinary role.

The freshman dean wanted to put the fraternity on probation for a year, which was a severe penalty. “Carroll got back into town and reversed the action,” said Kemeny.⁹⁶

Some students, seeing Carroll Brewster more as a peer than an administrator, called him “Brew Deanster.”

“I would, unfortunately too late, find out that Carroll loved spending substantial amounts of time at very rowdy fraternity parties and would often participate in some of the anti-women songs and remarks that were made there,” Kemeny said.⁹⁷

Lu Martin, who worked in President Kemeny’s office, described Brewster as a “male chauvinist,” working to destabilize coeducation.⁹⁸

He had a similar reputation among students.

Martha Hennessey ‘76 worked closely with Brewster on the Committee on Standing and Conduct (CSC) in disciplinary hearings. She remembered how he “would try to put his hand on my leg and rub it up my leg during the time I was there.”⁹⁹

Brewer Doran, too, recalled a song about Brewster at the time: “‘Little Carroll Brewster running through the forest, scooping up the coeds and biting them on the ass.’ That was a common chant, my freshman and sophomore years.”¹⁰⁰

His notoriety was set in stone in 1975 with the annual inter-fraternity “Hums” contest, an a capella competition held during Green Key weekend.

The brothers of Theta Delta Chi performed their original song, “Our Cohogs,” to the tune of the nursery rhyme “This Old Man.” “Cohog,” a portmanteau of “coed” and “quahog,” a type of clam, was an allusion to female genitalia and a derogatory term some Dartmouth men regularly used for women.¹⁰¹

*Our cohogs, they play four
They’re all a bunch cf dirty whores
With a knick-knack, paddy-whack
Send the bitches home
Our cohogs go to bed alone.*

Lyrics also alleged that Dartmouth women “all love those Tri-Kap dicks” and that they all “belong in a big pig pen.”¹⁰²

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

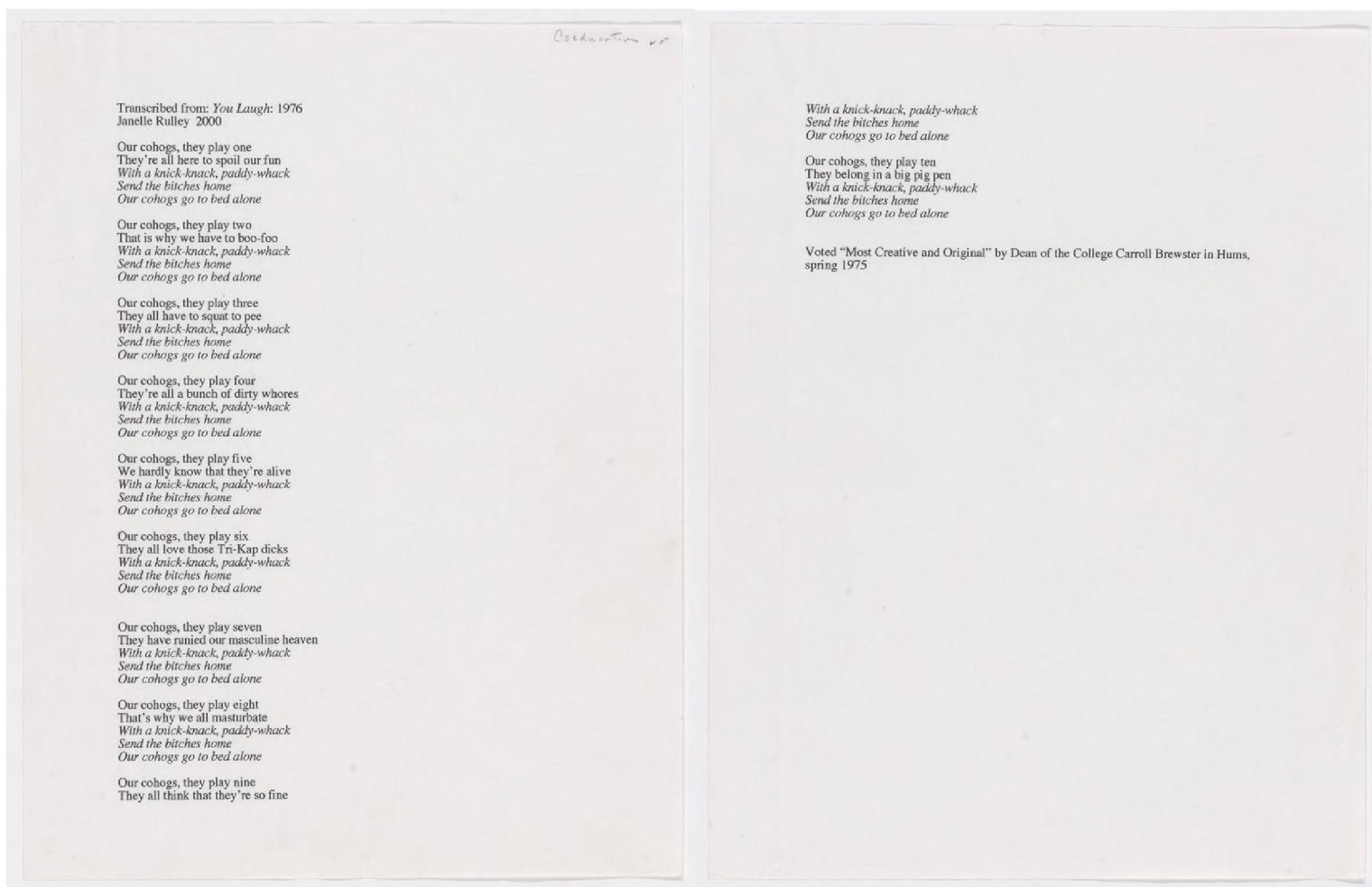
⁹⁸ Traver, 66.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 66.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 66.

¹⁰¹ Jaresova 35.

¹⁰² Ibid, 35.



"Our Cohogs" lyrics.¹⁰³

Hillary Smith '76 heard the song and was "completely appalled."¹⁰⁴ "They've got to be kidding. This is too much," she thought. At the end of the contest, she remembered Carroll Brewster getting up and "laughing hysterically." She thought he was a student.

Brewster, the judge of the contest, voted the song most creative and original.¹⁰⁵

"I walked away," wrote Smith. "I burst into tears; I walked away. Apparently a lot of other women did too, but we didn't know it at the time."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Transcript of song lyrics, "Our Cohogs," 1975 ("Coeducation, 1972-1979" Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College.)

¹⁰⁴ Drexel, 47.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 35.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 47.

Notably, Carroll Brewster himself was an alumnus of Dartmouth—a product of the “Dartmouth Animal” culture. As an administrator, he had the unique power to preserve that culture from the top down.

Kemeny eventually fired Dean Brewster. He admitted in his oral history that if the Board of Trustees hadn’t backed his decision to fire Brewster, he likely would have resigned.¹⁰⁷ His portrait still hangs in Baker Library’s 1902 Room.

The following year, for his next act, Brewster became president of Hollins University in Virginia, an all-women’s school.¹⁰⁸

Unfortunately, removing problematic administrators was not a perfect solution.

The next year, 1976, rumors spread that Theta Delta Chi was planning on singing “Our Cohogs” at Hums again. This time, they were prepared. Martha Hennessey remembered that a group of women sat in the second row, right behind the faculty and Deans serving as judges. They brought a petition with thirty names on it and rotten tomatoes to throw during Theta Delta Chi’s performance.

She remembers the new dean who had replaced Brewster turning around with a warning: “‘If you throw a tomato when they sing this song’ —By the way, we had handed in a petition that had maybe thirty names on it—‘we will make sure you’re suspended. You’ll be thrown out of college if you throw a tomato.’”¹⁰⁹

Once again, Theta Delta Chi was awarded first place.

Leslie Moore, a high school junior visiting Dartmouth, was in the audience that day in 1976.

After the contest, she wrote a letter to the editor in *The Dartmouth* entitled “Despair Over Fraternity Hums.” She wrote that upon hearing the song, the girls sitting near her “reacted with laughter, anger, embarrassment, etc.”:

On the application to Dartmouth, I saw that one question was: “What one aspect of Dartmouth appeals to you most?” I was thinking that I would answer that Dartmouth seemed to be just the right size to have a special spirit and feeling of community. Now I am not so sure. Maybe I am just seeing you at a bad time but can a school where there are such vehement feelings between two groups of people be united and spirited?¹¹⁰

The “vehement feelings” were palpable. Iris Gowen remembered feeling that “everything [was] a battle.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Kemeny Oral History.

¹⁰⁸ Merton, “Hanging on (by a jockstrap) to tradition at Dartmouth.”

¹⁰⁹ Traver, 67.

¹¹⁰ Leslie Moore, “Despair Over Fraternity Hums.” *The Dartmouth*, May 10, 1976.

¹¹¹ Traver, 68.

“There weren’t enough of us to be resisting,” she said.

Without systems of support from the administration, women were largely on their own. Indeed, in their oral histories, many women from the first coeducational classes referred to themselves as “pioneers”:

- Nancy Jeton: “I think for many of the pioneer people at Dartmouth— students—it was rough going. It really was.”¹¹²
- Iris Gowen: “I got tired sometimes. I got worn out sometimes, but I did feel that I was flying the flag. I was a pioneer, fighting for a better Dartmouth.”¹¹³
- Martha Hennessey: It’s almost like I served in World War II. It’s like—we were pioneers. There’s no question about it. For co-education to happen, a group of us had to come in and make it happen, and we had to... we had to navigate a river with crocodiles, you know, we had to try to figure out how to survive with very, very little help.”¹¹⁴
- Martha Beattie: “It’s kind of like the pioneers going west on the Oregon Trail. Is Oregon going to be a great place for families? You know, probably not.”¹¹⁵

In her memoir about her experience at Dartmouth, Gina Barecca ‘79 reflected that the early women of Dartmouth “learned exactly what girls and women are still learning today: how to challenge institutions of power from within and how to invent a site for yourself even when no blueprint exists for you inside a granite-hard establishment.”¹¹⁶



Theta Delta Chi singing in the Hums competition.¹¹⁷

¹¹² Ibid 106.

¹¹³ Ibid 106.

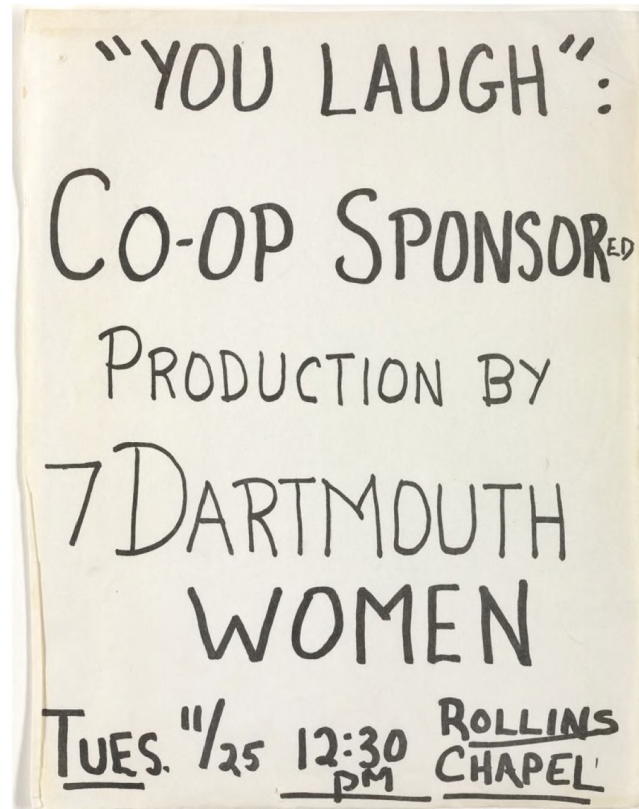
¹¹⁴ Ibid 106.

¹¹⁵ Ibid 106.

¹¹⁶ Barecca 6.

¹¹⁷ *The Dartmouth*, May 12 1975.

V. "YOU LAUGH": EARLY RESISTANCE



Poster for *You Laugh*, 1975.¹¹⁸

"I'm tired of being your scapegoat. Dartmouth women are being treated as an unsuccessful experiment in improving the education of the Dartmouth men." You Laugh Script.¹¹⁹

"Sixty-four percent of Dartmouth women said they had been made uncomfortable by 'a sexual joke told by a peer of the opposite sex' as compared with only 41 percent of women at other schools...seventy-five percent of Dartmouth women recorded experiencing discomfort because of an "intellectual put-down" by a peer of the opposite sex as compared with forty-six percent in aggregate." The Dartmouth.

¹¹⁸ November 1975 (MS-1288 Papers of Elizabeth Kadin Box 1 folder 2, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

In November of 1975, a group of ten women staged the first public protest of their experiences at Dartmouth.

They wrote and performed a play, titled *You Laugh*. The show was a 35-minute series of skits that showcased the harassment and discrimination they felt on campus. *You Laugh* was performed once at the Hop and twice at Rollins Chapel, and the first show was given exclusively to Dartmouth women.¹²⁰

“We are no longer afraid to speak out,” one of the women announced at the beginning of the show. “We are fed up with the hostile and sexist behavior and tired of spending energy trying to cope with it. Together, we can make it known we are not going to put up with it. Together, we can put an end to it.”¹²¹

Each skit showcased a different complaint the women charged against Dartmouth men. These included the “Our Cohogs” at 1975 Hums; the way men would sing parodies of “Men of Dartmouth” outside of women’s doors in the early hours of the morning (“Men of Dartmouth give a rouse, for the coed on the pill”); Winter Carnival 1975, when one fraternity allegedly held a contest to see which dates had the biggest and smallest breasts.¹²²

Reactions to the play ranged from sympathetic to hostile. After the premier, a front-page headline in *The Dartmouth* noted “Women’s Play Stirs Opinions.” In one performance, a group of fraternity brothers sang “Men of Dartmouth” during one skit denouncing the bonfire. The show went on, undeterred.¹²³ One cast member said a student told her his fraternity had decided she and the others involved in *You Laugh* “should never step foot inside our house again.”¹²⁴

For the women involved, *You Laugh* “became more than just a script.” “We were all invested in it,” one woman said. Through the performance, they were able to find other women and Dartmouth students who shared their concerns. One cast member described it as a “feeling I had community.” Another reflected, “I was finally able to integrate myself into the College.”¹²⁵

Effects from *You Laugh* would last well into the future. Through the discussions following each performance, the seeds of a women’s center and women’s studies department were sown.¹²⁶ In a letter to one of the cast members, Alexander Fanelli, executive assistant to President Kemeny, wrote that he was “very much impressed” by the show. But his own impression, he noted, was less important than that of the Trustees, who saw a videotape of the performance and were “much moved by it.” Fanelli told Kim: “I just wanted you to know that

¹²⁰ November 1975 (MS-1288 Papers of Elizabeth Kadin Box 1 folder 4, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹²¹ (MS-1288 Papers of Elizabeth Kadin Box 1 folder 2).

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ November 1975 (MS-1288 Papers of Elizabeth Kadin Box 1 folder 3 Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹²⁴ (MS-1288 Papers of Elizabeth Kadin Box 1 folder 4).

¹²⁵ (MS-1288 Papers of Elizabeth Kadin Box 1 folder 3).

¹²⁶ Ibid.

your efforts were important to Dartmouth's future in a way that you might not have dreamed possible when you undertook the project."¹²⁷

President Kemeny, too, sent a letter to the play's director, Paula Selis:

It is very encouraging to find a group of women who are willing to speak up on issues that are so often accepted in silence because of a fear to make the spokesman unpopular. I find it encouraging that the eight of you were willing to take the time and effort required to put together a significant statement. Dartmouth College is in your debt.¹²⁸

For others, the performance struck a deeply personal chord. For Marianne Hirsch, a professor of French and Italian, the performance was resonant of an incident that occurred during her first year teaching at Dartmouth.

It was 1974, and she was only 24 years old. She was chaperoning a French Language Study Abroad in Bourges, and the group of 20 men and 10 women was riding back from sightseeing. The day had been hot and sunny, and Hirsch had fallen asleep to the lull of the bus.

All of a sudden, still in half-sleep, she realized she was crying. "I'm in this sort of daze, and as I'm waking up I hear them sing, 'Send the bitches home.'"¹²⁹

The entire bus had erupted into a chorus of "Our Cohogs," the song Theta Delta Chi performed at Hums. "You just can't figure out what you've done wrong to be talked about and sung about in this way," she recalled. "I'm slowly waking up, the lyrics are still going on, and I'm sitting in my seat on the bus crying. And I'm the professor."¹³⁰

Some of the students saw that the songs had upset her and apologized. But, Hirsch said, "I felt at that moment that our trust had been completely broken, and that I was in an alien universe. I didn't know how to situate myself." And after speaking to some of the women on the bus, she realized that they were feeling just as "unwelcome and upset and defeated" as she was.¹³¹

At a *You Laugh* performance, Hirsch heard the women singing "Our Cohogs" onstage, the same song she had heard in the bus in Bourges. "It was a powerful form of mimicry, in a very challenging way, to the campus," Hirsch recalled. "They were able to express their anger on stage. Sitting in that audience and seeing these powerful women was a form of healing for me from this moment of breach on the Bourges bus."¹³²

¹²⁷ Letter from A. Alexander Fanelli to Roberta Kirn, November 1975 (MS-1288 Papers of Elizabeth Kadin Box 1 folder 7, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹²⁸ Letter from John Kemeny to Paula Selis, January 9, 1976 (MS-1288 Papers of Elizabeth Kadin Box 1 folder 5, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹²⁹ "Claiming their Rightful Place: Coeducation at Dartmouth 1972-1997, 1998 (DC History LC 1601 .C 63 1998, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹³⁰ Ibid.

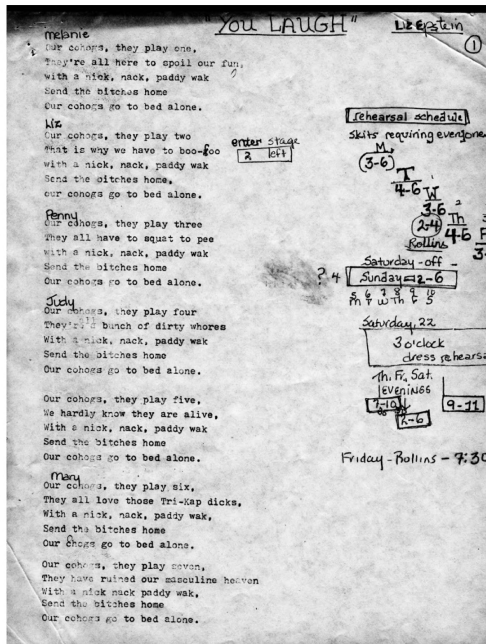
¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

But she hasn't fully recovered from that experience: "Still, when I hear the song today it brings back those tears. It really hasn't fully healed. It is a kind of bodily memory."¹³³



The cast of *You Laugh*, including the director, Paula Selis.¹³⁴



"Our Cohogs" lyrics in the script of *You Laugh*.¹³⁵

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ (MS-1288 Papers of Elizabeth Kadin Box 1 folder 2, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹³⁵ Ibid.

VI. FRATERNITIES ON TRIAL



A protest of the Hums competition, 1979. ¹³⁶

*“Can we as a body initiate radical change, do we have the will, do we represent anything?”
Epperson asked the faculty at the conclusion of his speech.”¹³⁷*

¹³⁶ Merton, “Hanging on (by a jockstrap) to tradition at Dartmouth.”

¹³⁷ Kevin Lynch and Mary Ann Marcinkiewicz, “Faculty Votes 67-16 to abolish frats.” *The Dartmouth*, November 7, 1978.

In November of 1978, the Dartmouth faculty held a vote on the abolition of the fraternities.

The crusade against fraternities was led by English professor James Epperson. He pointed out the racism, sexism, and “general barbarism,” and “intolerance of the rights of others” fostered in these spaces.^{138, 139}

He hoped, at a public meeting that month, to convince the faculty members that fraternities were actively harming campus life. Proponents of Greek Life would also be speaking at this hearing, attacking his case and arguing for their own.

To understand this referendum, one must understand Dartmouth's palpably charged social climate in 1978.

Despite six years of established coeducation, gender dynamics were far from functional. The admissions office still enforced a gender ratio of three men to every one woman, contributing to the ostracization many Dartmouth women felt.

In July of 1978, the Dartmouth Admissions Office surveyed students on the school's gender dynamics. This survey, more than almost anything else I'd found in this research, showed me the truly tumultuous state of Dartmouth in the 1970s.

In response to a question asking “how coeducation is working at Dartmouth,” one woman responded, “It's no --put it back to all-male and save womankind from a fate worse than death.”¹⁴⁰ Another woman wrote, “Women can exist and even be happy at Dartmouth, but only by accepting their oppression or by so totally bucking it that they spend their lives fighting.”¹⁴¹

One survey question told students to imagine that they were speaking to a female prospective student. “What would you tell her about being a woman at Dartmouth?” it asked.

“Don't be,” one woman wrote.¹⁴²

“Be strong,” said another.¹⁴³

“Are you ready for a baptism of fire?”¹⁴⁴

“That you, at times, need to muster up a great deal of inner strength.”¹⁴⁵

“If you like conversation of any import, forget it, especially with the opposite sex - they only want you with your pants off.”¹⁴⁶

¹³⁸ “Paradise Lost or Paradise Regained?” *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, December 1978,

<https://archive.dartmouthalumnimagazine.com/article/1978/12/1/paradise-lost-or-paradise-regained>.

¹³⁹ Randy Kennedy, “A Frat Party Is: a) Milk and Cookies; b) Beer Pong.” *The New York Times*, November 7, 1999, <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/11/07/education/a-frat-party-is-a-milk-and-cookies-b-beer-pong.html>.

¹⁴⁰ Dartmouth Admissions Survey, 1978 (Robert Sokol papers, RecordsManagement MS 1366 Box 11, Folder 13, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

“It is a frustrating, and unnecessarily painful experience. I’d tell her to wait until the [gender] ratio changes - or else purport herself to be discriminated against, ridiculed, and victimized by the double standard.”¹⁴⁷

“It’s hard, and the rewards are dubious at best and negative at worst...I’ve learned about loneliness here.”¹⁴⁸

“It’s difficult - at best it’s a challenge, as Dartmouth is a challenge to any individual, regardless of sex. At worst, it is a shattering, alienating experience of how insensitively humans and institutions can treat other humans.”¹⁴⁹

“It is not always easy being a woman at Dartmouth - I’ve had times of confusion, pain, frustration, anger at people’s attitudes and actions. Yes, this happens anywhere but often I feel that Dartmouth is certainly more sexist than many other places.”¹⁵⁰

And how is the College’s social situation, asked another survey question?

“It’s pretty sexist - most guys view girls as meat to be had, and if they can’t get it, they verbally abuse women who happen to be around.”¹⁵¹

“Be prepared to accept yourself first as things opposed to men, as individuals second. There is a good deal of chauvinism, some of it very subvert. This school has not yet mastered the job of developing woman as having her own integrity.”¹⁵²

Many women described the gender dynamics in terms of war— a “huge battle” that would require great fortitude. A woman here is a “fighter,” one that either can or cannot acquiesce. You could lose this battle, or you can win. “Someday I’ll write a book,” said one woman. “[Dartmouth] can break you down or make you tough.”¹⁵³

Another woman echoed this dichotomy. She said that being a woman at Dartmouth is “hard and potentially dangerous”: “Those that reject Dartmouth’s hostility to women can either be strengthened or destroyed by dealing with it – and those who do not reject it may internalize it to the degree where they feel such hostility is warranted.”¹⁵⁴

Yet another woman spoke about the “myth” of Dartmouth being crime-free. “My freshman year some women showed a movie called “Rape Culture” and then broke the audience into ‘rap’ groups—we found that 12 women in the small audience had been raped while here – either in fraternities or otherwise. Whether or not they reported these rapes—I think it indicates something about Dartmouth’s receptivity to women.”¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

“Fraternities are the dominant social force,” wrote another, “and they are degrading and often dangerous to women.”¹⁵⁶

Men surveyed responded similarly. When asked what they might say to a prospective female student at Dartmouth, one wrote, “Expect a test. It’s not easy (or does not appear so) lots of rough and rude treatment from guys.”¹⁵⁷

From another: “It will be damned hard.... You will be harassed by men who want only your body. Things will be more difficult in the classroom. Think about transferring.”¹⁵⁸

And another: “I’d tell her about the girls I know who have been raped, I’d tell her about the male orientation of the school... she’ll have few female acquaintances and mostly men, as acquaintances, NOT friends. She’ll be hassled constantly by ass-searchers.”¹⁵⁹

“Frankly, I don’t know why any woman would willingly subject herself to the abuse women encounter here.”¹⁶⁰

“Good luck! It will be tough.”¹⁶¹

“You’ll never be left alone.”¹⁶²

“Few, if any, will be really happy here.”¹⁶³

“It is extremely difficult!”¹⁶⁴

“Don’t do it.”¹⁶⁵

“Go to Cornell if she values her sanity.”¹⁶⁶

“The guys want sex and all too often it is their first, though not only, interest.”¹⁶⁷

“Speaking from the male point of view, I’d tell her to be prepared to take a lot of abuse, to be treated as a second-class citizen, and only to be regarded for her physical attributes.”¹⁶⁸

“She’ll have to put up with the “female as prey” attitude of a majority of male students.”¹⁶⁹

“Good luck! Be prepared to defend your virginity if you still have it, all the time. If you’re ugly and want to get laid, you came to the right place.”¹⁷⁰

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

It was largely understood that fraternities contributed immensely to the artificial, hostile environment these students complained of. But there was one other incident that Epperson cited in his speech that more explicitly connected sexual abuse and fraternity life.

There is a great deal of mystery surrounding this incident and the string of events that led up to it. Most of my information comes not from Dartmouth sources, but from articles in *Esquire* and *The Rolling Stone*, which called the incident “hushed up.”¹⁷¹

According to *Esquire*, which provided the most detail, in the spring of 1978, a woman in her late thirties or forties arrived at the William Tally House in White River Junction. She had taken the bus from somewhere in the South to attend her daughter’s graduation from a nearby school. She had a history of mental illness and was on leave from a mental institution to attend the ceremony.¹⁷²

Also in the Tally House were three Dartmouth seniors.

It is unclear what occurred in that moment—the Dartmouth men alleged the woman approached *them*. But “what happened next has been established beyond doubt,” wrote *Esquire*.¹⁷³

The men drove the woman to their fraternity house on Webster Avenue, and performed various sexual acts with her, apparently “sharing her with their brothers.” They then sent her to a second fraternity, and then to a third, at which point, *Esquire* writes, “certain men of Dartmouth introduced light bulbs and fire extinguishers into the action.”

“When campus security officers found the woman, she was wandering down Webster Avenue wearing only a Dartmouth T-shirt.”¹⁷⁴

The Dartmouth corroborates this story only in a brief, one-sentence description in an article about Epperson’s speech in which he advocated for the abolition of Greek Life: “Epperson described an incident involving three fraternity members and a woman mental patient in which the woman ended up performing a strip tease and other sexual acts in several houses before one student saw she was unhealthy and called the hospital.”¹⁷⁵ After combing through *The Dartmouth* archives from January to July of 1978, this was the only mention I could find of this occurrence.

Epperson was quoted saying of the men, “It’s as if those men have been blocks of granite indeed, over which the education and the civilization we have tried to give them have spilled out without effect.”¹⁷⁶

In November, the faculty voted on the question of fraternity abolition. Epperson raised the motion, which was then seconded by Government professor Charles McLane. McLane, a

¹⁷¹ Eric Konigsberg, “The Fall of Animal House.” *Rolling Stone*, September 17, 1992 (DA-673 29804 Dartmouth College, Upper Class Deans Records File “Residential Life-CFS Issues” 1992-1993, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹⁷² Merton, “Hanging on (by a jockstrap) to tradition at Dartmouth.”

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Merton, 57.

¹⁷⁵ Lynch and Marcinkiewicz, “Faculty Votes 67-16 to abolish frats.”

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

member of the Dartmouth class of 1941, said that he himself had been a member of a fraternity while an undergraduate at the College. He described several “mostly failed” attempts to reform fraternities since the 1920s. “Reform is no longer a remedy,” McLane said.¹⁷⁷

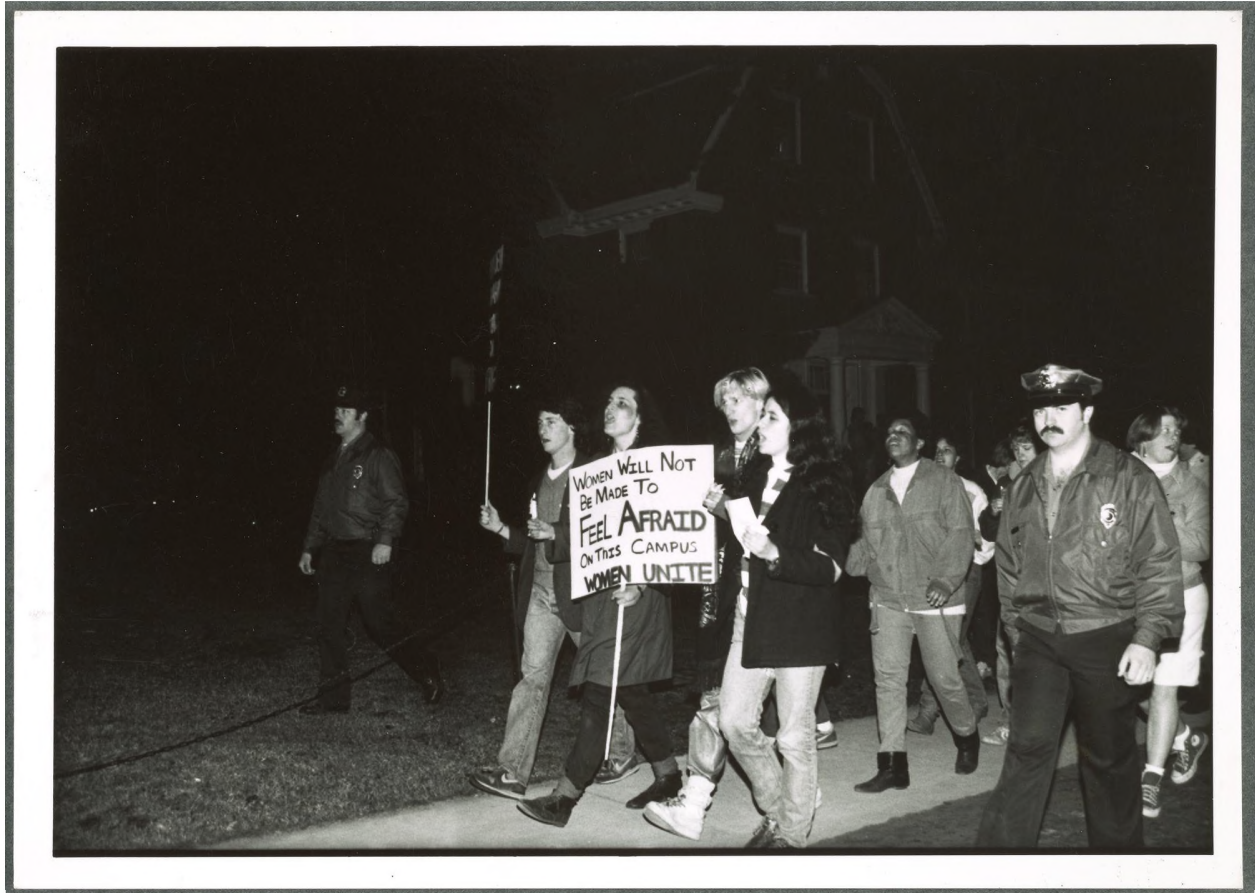
The faculty eventually voted 67-16 in favor of abolition. But at a Board meeting a few months later, in February, the Trustees decided to not vote on abolishing the fraternities. Instead, they adopted a seven-part statement encouraging the houses to shape up.¹⁷⁸

Greek Life would be preserved, at least for the time being.

¹⁷⁷ “Paradise Lost or Paradise Regained?”

¹⁷⁸ “The Social Default: The Fraternities.” *A Sense of Community*,
<https://journeys.dartmouth.edu/socialalt/social-default/#fnref-97-18>.

VII. “WOMEN WILL NOT BE MADE TO FEEL AFRAID ON THIS CAMPUS”



Dartmouth “Take Back the Night” march, likely from 1986.¹⁷⁹

“She was walking down the hallway of a fraternity house when she spotted a computer printout tacked up on a door. It stopped her cold. Mary Hegarty, who graduated from Dartmouth College this spring, remembers clearly what the printout said. ‘Steve: Did you read the definition of date rape that the D (the college paper) put out? By that definition, do you know how many women I’ve raped here?’” Valley News, 1989.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ Student Protests Women's Issues, 2017, Digital by Dartmouth Library, <https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/PhotoFiles/PhotoFiles-Icon1647-1800-0000018>

¹⁸⁰ “Date Rape: A Campus Issue.” *Valley News*, November 10, 1989 (“Sexual Assault and Abuse 1” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

Near the end of the 1970s, women seemed to be growing slightly more outspoken, particularly on issues surrounding gender-based violence.

For instance, April 8th, 1979 (that year's fraternity Sink Night) saw the first "Take Back the Night March," a protest down fraternity row that would become nearly annual. Part of a national "Take Back the Night" movement, this march was intended to publicize the dangers to women on Webster Avenue by "reclaiming" these spaces.¹⁸¹

Although many incidents led up to this protest, three well-publicized Hanover assaults that occurred the previous month may have proved the tipping point..

On March 2nd, at around 10:20 pm, an undergraduate woman was returning alone to her dorm with a bag of groceries when a man pretended to accidentally fall into her. He helped the undergraduate woman up, picked up her knapsack, and then attempted to slip a scarf around her neck. She was able to flee when a passerby arrived.¹⁸²

The second incident occurred the next day at 1:30 am. An undergraduate woman, also returning to her dorm, was attacked from behind, grabbed by the throat and knocked to the ground. The assailant took money from her purse and left.¹⁸³

The third attack was at 11:35 on March 22, and was explicitly labeled an 'attempted sexual assault.' A nurse, returning to her car outside of the Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital (now the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center), was seized from behind by a man who attempted to molest her. The attacker later fled, apparently deterred by the woman's screaming and the arrival of a car.¹⁸⁴

According to the article about the incidents in *The Dartmouth*, one of the three victims who came forward was initially met with skepticism by the Hanover Police. She said she felt harassed, was asked to take a lie detector test and was continually reminded it was a felony to falsely report an assault to the police.¹⁸⁵

The College and the Town of Hanover began holding more public discussions about rape and assault.

On April 4, 1979, the captain of the Hanover Police Department, William Moore, and Linda Sanford, author of the book *In Defense of Ourselves*, held a panel discussion on rape. Sanford encouraged assertiveness, eye-contact, and use of the word "no," during incidents of potential rape.¹⁸⁶

The talk was attended by sixty students. A third of those attending indicated that they knew a Dartmouth student who had been raped.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸¹ Sue Hemeren, "Torch-Bearing Marchers Hit Frat Row on Sink Night." *The Dartmouth*, April 9, 1979.

¹⁸² Peter Mulvihill, "Suspect Identified in One of Three Hanover Assaults." *The Dartmouth*, April 4, 1979.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Dorothy Houston, "Rape Discussed by Police, Author." *The Dartmouth*, April 4, 1979.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

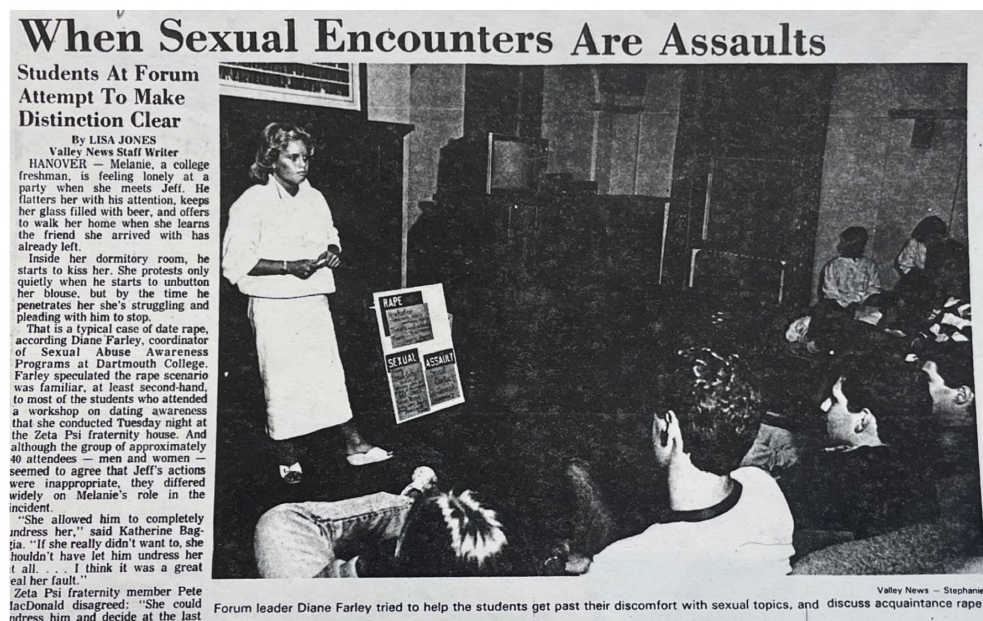
One student suggested to Moore that he explain to fraternity members what legally constitute rape. Another added that Dartmouth men have “no conception of consent,” and “think they’re inside the law.”¹⁸⁸

Sanford noted, “We’re led to believe that Dartmouth men couldn’t be rapists, but a lot can manifest itself in violence and rape, it’s not just in the inner city.” Those participating in the discussion called for the establishment of a center for rape emergencies, counseling and more information related to assault.¹⁸⁹

Around this same time, Dartmouth Coordinator of Sexual Abuse Awareness Programs, Diane Farley, was also holding a number of workshops on sexual violence.¹⁹⁰

In these sessions, which were usually held in fraternities and attended by mixed-gender audiences, Farley stressed the importance of communication and assertiveness in sexual encounters.

These seminars were well received by men and women, who acknowledged it was helpful to talk about gender relations and sexuality, subjects often taboo at Dartmouth.¹⁹¹



Diane Farley in a discussion on acquaintance rape.¹⁹²

More conversations about rape and gender-based violence then paved the way for the first Dartmouth Take Back the Night march on April 8, 1979. Around 200 students, faculty members, and townspeople participated, walking down fraternity row with lighted torches and candles. The

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Lisa Jones, “When Sexual Encounters Are Assaults.” *Valley News*, July 30, 1980 (DL-15 11791 Dartmouth College, Affiliates Files Folder “Diane Farley,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

event was sponsored by Women at Dartmouth, the Afro-American Society, and Native Americans at Dartmouth, all groups representing identities that experienced harassment and abuse at the College.¹⁹³ The group sang “Fight Back” and “Harbor Me” and listened to speeches given by student organizers.

“We hereby declare fraternity row a danger zone in need of being reclaimed by female members of the community,” Ornstein ‘79 said in a speech she co-wrote with Paula Sharp ‘79. “An attitude which is not merely chauvinistic, but overtly abusive toward women is institutionalized” in fraternities, Ornstein said. “Women have reported having their shirts ripped off by men they don’t know when walking down fraternity row, or of being purposely urinated on or vomited on while in fraternities.”¹⁹⁴

While this behavior is not universal, Ornstein said, fraternities were responsible for keeping the incidents secret. “Even if [fraternity members] do not abuse women themselves, they tolerate such abuse on the part of their brothers.”¹⁹⁵

The marchers were not an ideologically unified group, as not everyone was in agreement with statements made in Ornstein’s speech. While Ornstein spoke about the threat to women at Dartmouth, Mary Moore ‘80, veered the conversation to a slightly different topic, recalling women who have been burned as witches. Moore painted her face black and white for the march, symbolizing the “nine million women burned as witches and heretics for 300 years.”¹⁹⁶

Reactions to the march varied. Most fraternity members watched the event quietly from their windows or porches. Some members of Kappa Kappa Kappa (now Kappa Pi Kappa) applauded the march, while other individuals tried to disrupt it, yelling “Go home witches!”¹⁹⁷

Organizers of the march stressed the importance of communication and cooperation with the fraternities. But Dave Kollmorgan ‘80, then-president of Phi Delta Alpha, felt that the marchers were “really trying to agitate.” Despite this sentiment, many fraternity members were told by their leadership not to hassle the group.¹⁹⁸

Around 15 members of Alpha Phi Alpha, an all-Black fraternity, joined in the march. The president of that fraternity, Victor Hodgkins, said they joined because “We are supporting these women, and, like them, we are being abused.”¹⁹⁹ He also wanted to “let the community know we’re different” from other fraternities, he said, referring to Alpha Phi Alpha members.²⁰⁰

Following the march, in May of 1979, the Dartmouth Women’s Alliance (DWA) compiled a list of demands that “were felt to be of great importance to women at the College.”²⁰¹

¹⁹³ Hemeren, “Torch-Bearing Marchers Hit Frat Row on Sink Night.”

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Rob Eschman, “Participants, Frat Presidents React to March.” *The Dartmouth*, April 9, 1979.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ *Open Forum*, May 21, 1979 (DC History LD 1434.5 .O64 Open Forum, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

Among the list, which included active recruitment of minority women, an expansion of the Women's Studies Program, and free daycare facilities, was the demand for a "crisis facility and grievance procedures for rape and other forms of sexual harassment and abuse of women."²⁰² They wrote:

Rape is a problem at the College which has long been pushed aside. Although members of the community are well aware of the occurrence of rape on campus, the extremely low number of reported rapes testifies to the inadequacy of current procedures. A rape crisis center is an absolute necessity.²⁰³

The DWA organized a "Take Back the Afternoon" march that May, in protest of fraternity Hums, which had a tradition of performing songs degrading to women and marginalized identities (like "Our Cohogs").²⁰⁴

They tried to hold a banner reading "Frats Still On Trial: Racist and Sexist Humor Is Not Funny"; a group of men attempted to block the message by standing in front of the sign and getting on each other's shoulders when the DWA group attempted to hold up the banner.²⁰⁵

Some protests were less formal, and utilized other media to express outrage or voice complaints. For instance, grievances, arguments, and discussions were often aired through letters to the editor in *The Dartmouth*.

In one example from May 11, 1979, senior Eleanor Shannon submitted a letter to the editor titled "A Step Backwards." In it, she wrote that she had rarely felt unwelcome and never directly insulted or harassed while at Dartmouth.²⁰⁶ But that impression had been "suddenly challenged" the day before:

As I walked past Sigma Nu Delta exchanging "hellos" with some friends on one side of the yard, another brother yelled from a crowd on the porch, "Hey c—, take your clothes off." I have to wonder what motivates this kind of intolerable behavior. Furthermore, I am sorry that individuals keep setting Dartmouth back decades just when we are at the point of moving forward.²⁰⁷

Four days later, she wrote another letter to the editor. "I would like to thank many of the brothers of Sigma Nu who have apologized to me for the words of a thoughtless individual and made it clear that they do not condone this kind of behavior."²⁰⁸

Six days after that, a new letter to the editor appeared in *The Dartmouth*, this one from the brothers of Sigma Nu Delta: "The brothers of Sigma Nu Delta would like to apologize for the

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ken Mackenzie, "DWA Offended, Hums Reactions Mixed." *The Dartmouth*, May 11, 1979.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Eleanor Shannon, "A Step Backwards." *The Dartmouth*, May 11, 1979.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

regrettable incident that was mentioned in Eleanor Shannon's letter of May 11. The person who was responsible for shouting at her was not a brother in Sigma Nu, but we were able to silence him after his initial outburst."²⁰⁹

Other discourse in the College newspaper was more combative. For instance, the 1980 Take Back the Night march prompted some complaints in *The Dartmouth*. This march, held April 11, was slightly more confrontational than the previous year's march. Maybe the protesters were beginning to feel more emboldened, while those opposed to coeducation were digging their heels in more deeply. As 55 students and townspeople walked down fraternity row, people standing in front of Sigma Nu Delta sang "Men of Dartmouth" and other students followed the protest drinking beer and laughing.²¹⁰ Some other fraternity brothers and students in North Massachusetts screeched and shouted obscenities at the group.²¹¹

In an April 14 Letter to the Editor entitled "Mellow Out," William Barnum '81 wrote, "It was really quite amusing to see the torchlight 'Take Back the Night' parade make its self-righteous way down frat row on Friday night, I am really surprised they found time out from their war on nuclear power and the military-industrial complex."²¹²

Everyone takes himself "far, far too seriously," wrote Barnum. "MELLOW OUT PEOPLE!"²¹³

Prior to the march, Paula Sharp, who co-wrote the speech at the 1979 Take Back the Night march, told *The Dartmouth*, "We aren't animals and we shouldn't be caged. If I get out there alone, I will be raped."²¹⁴

Cathy McGraph '80 apparently felt the opposite. In response to Sharp's statement, the following day Mc Graph wrote a letter to the editor titled "Get Real, Paula." She stated she was "both appalled and shocked at the irresponsibility of Paula Sharp's statement."²¹⁵ Webster Avenue is "one of the safest areas on campus," wrote McGraph, due to its concentrated population, accessible refuge, and street lighting. "Moreover, I am enraged at Sharp's careless condemnation of those students who live on fraternity row. A quick look around campus proves that the fraternity system includes and encourages dedicated and responsible student leaders rather than drooling, animalistic perverts."²¹⁶ Rather than march down fraternity row, McGraph implored Sharp to instead "march around truly unsafe places like Occom Pond."²¹⁷

What McGraph did not seem aware of, however, was that Sharp was speaking from direct personal experience: a little less than a year prior, Sharp alleged she had been assaulted on

²⁰⁹ Brothers of Sigma Nu Delta, Letter to the Editor. *The Dartmouth*, May 21, 1979.

²¹⁰ Dinesh D'Souza, "Marchers Protest Dangers to Women." *The Dartmouth*, April 14, 1980.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² William Barnum, "Mellow Out." *The Dartmouth*, April 14, 1980.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ D'Souza, "Marchers Protest Dangers to Women."

²¹⁵ Cathay McGraph, "Get Real, Paula." *The Dartmouth*, April 15, 1980.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

fraternity row. In early May of 1979, about a month after the first Take Back the Night march, Nastri and Grant allegedly entered Foley House, where Sharp and a friend, Gary Dmytryk '79 were hanging out. Nastri grabbed Sharp's hands and attempted to kiss her, in addition to throwing beer in her face. Grant allegedly sprayed a fire extinguisher at both Sharp and Dmytryk.²¹⁸ On May 15 of 1979, two senior men, Joseph Nastri and Robert Grant, were arraigned on assault charges.

Marysa Navaro, a professor of History since April 1969 and one of the first two women to become full-fledged Dartmouth faculty members, noticed clear changes in the time that she had worked at Dartmouth. "There has been suffering," she said. "There has also been progress. In 1975, there were not enough women, and there were no support systems; if you wanted to get along, you either acquiesced completely or you isolated yourself."²¹⁹

In 1979, she reported, the norms were shifting: "Now, through their strength, the women have become irritants. That is my explanation for what is happening on this campus now. Instead of being dismayed, we should be encouraged."²²⁰

Perhaps the largest and most public protest came seven years later, in April of 1986.

It seemed to start at Beta Theta Pi fraternity on a Saturday night, when Carol Caton '86 alleged that Lenny Fontes, a Beta brother, slapped her buttocks and made an offensive remark (which Fontes denied).²²¹

The following Tuesday, Caton and Fontes both happened to be dining at Bentley's Restaurant in downtown Hanover. Caton approached Fontes to discuss the incident, and after arguing for a period, Caton slapped Fontes for making, according to Caton, "an offensive remark."

Fontes then grabbed Caton by both arms and pushed her back against a wall, at which point the restaurant staff likely broke up the dispute.²²²

A few hours later, at around 2:30 am, Caton was walking by Butterfield dorm, directly behind Beta Theta Pi, in the direction of Webster Avenue. A tall, thin male with brown hair suddenly jumped from behind a tree and struck her on the left side of her face.^{223, 224} The attacker then ran off toward the Rockefeller Center.²²⁵

Caton reported the attack to Campus Police and the Hanover Police Department, and was taken to Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital where she was treated for a facial wound.²²⁶

²¹⁸ Cathy Camp, "Seniors Charged with Assault of College Coed." *The Dartmouth*, May 17, 1979.

²¹⁹ Merton, "Hanging on (by a jockstrap) to tradition at Dartmouth," 66.

²²⁰ Ibid, 66.

²²¹ Tim Rumberger, "Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March: Caton Attacked Early Wednesday Morning." *The Dartmouth*, April 17, 1986.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Dartmouth College, Public Affairs News Releases (DA-747 Box 967, folder "Student Crime/Assault/Violence," Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²²⁵ Rumberger, "Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March."

²²⁶ Public Affairs New Release.

In a statement released the following day, Dean of the College Edward Shanahan called the incident “shocking and reprehensible,” saying that it threatened “all members of the community.” If they found the student responsible, he said, “the only reasonable response is separation from the College.”²²⁷

While Caton’s description of her attacker did not match Fontes, some accused another Beta of punching Caton for retribution. Beta president Richard Pepperman ‘87 denied these accusations, saying “Beta Theta Pi would not condone any violent attack such as last night’s... We would urge the person responsible to come forward...”²²⁸

By 3pm, only 11 hours after the assault, posters went up around campus informing students of a Take Back the Night march that night, starting at midnight. At 9pm, seventy members of the community, disturbed by the Caton incident, met to plan the march. Someone asked how many people in the room had been attacked or harassed, or had close friends who had been. Almost everyone raised their hand.²²⁹

At midnight, an estimated 500 people met on the Green for a brief vigil. Chris Robinson, writing in an op-ed in *The Dartmouth*, noticed that just after the start of the vigil, a station wagon full of people “whooping and yelping” passed the Green. He wrote that one person screamed out the window, ““Hey, Take Back the Night: %#@& YOU! %#@& YOU!””²³⁰

The Take Back the Night group, chaperoned by both Campus and Hanover Police as “safety monitors,” traversed a 90-minute path around campus that covered virtually every dormitory building.^{231, 232} As they passed the Fayerweather dorms, a few students yelled “Go home!” and “Go to bed!”²³³ From a Wheeler dorm, one student jeered “Shut up!” At Russell Sage, the dormitory that, in the 1970s, had boasted signs reading “No Coed” and “Male Only,” three residents stood on the fire escape, singing “Men of Dartmouth.”²³⁴

At the corner of Massachusetts Row, noticed Robinson, a group of men blared music out of their dorm room in an attempt to drown out the marchers who were holding candles and singing “We Shall Overcome” and other protest songs.^{235, 236}

When they finally reached Webster Avenue, the size of the group had expanded to nearly a thousand students.²³⁷ “*Women, unite, take back the night! People unite, take back the night!*” they chanted.²³⁸

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Rumberger, “Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March.”

²²⁹ Kelley Ellsworth, “One Thousand Candles Are Not Enough.” *Womyn’s Re/view*; June 1986 (DC History HQ 1101 .W669 Womyn’s Re/view Winter 1990, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²³⁰ Chris Robinson, “Sitting in Complacency.” *The Dartmouth*, April 18, 1986.

²³¹ Public Affairs News Release.

²³² Keith Boykin, “Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March: Over 500 March.” *The Dartmouth*, April 17, 1986.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Robinson, “Sitting in Complacency.”

²³⁷ Boykin, “Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March: Over 500 March.”

²³⁸ Ellsworth, “One Thousand Candles Are Not Enough.”

As they walked down the Row, Caton walked in the front. Near her, a student carried a sign reading “Dear Dean Shanahan: Thanks for Nothing.”²³⁹

“People have been very supportive but everyone is very angry,” Caton told *The Dartmouth*. “There’s a feeling that they didn’t just hit me, they hit all of us,” referring to everyone involved in the protest. “Women will not be made to feel afraid on this campus.”²⁴⁰

The Dartmouth reported that two dozen individuals stood on the lawn of Beta Theta Pi as the marchers went past, some watching, some throwing footballs. Fraternity brothers at most houses greeted the marchers with applause--a welcome change. Some house officers warned their brothers not to be confrontational.²⁴¹

It was proposed that fraternity and sorority members join the march to condemn violence against women, but several presidents disagreed, considering the march to be hostile to the Greek system.²⁴² In a statement released the following morning, the Women’s Issues League said that there had already been two assaults against women reported to campus police that term, and the administration of not acknowledging the “seriousness and of the continued verbal and physical assault and harassment.” They participated in the Take Back the Night “to protest the constant threat perpetrated by the silence on this campus and to demonstrate our solidarity.”²⁴³

Kelley Ellsworth, in an *Womyn’s Re/view* article a few months later, asked, “What does that turn-out say about the situation at Dartmouth if, at 1 a.m. on a Wednesday night, nearly 1,000 people gathered to protest violence against women?” Answering her own question, she wrote, “Clearly there is a problem here that is usually unaddressed.”²⁴⁴

²³⁹ Boykin, “Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March: Over 500 March.”

²⁴⁰ Rumberger, “Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March: Caton Attacked Early Wednesday Morning.”

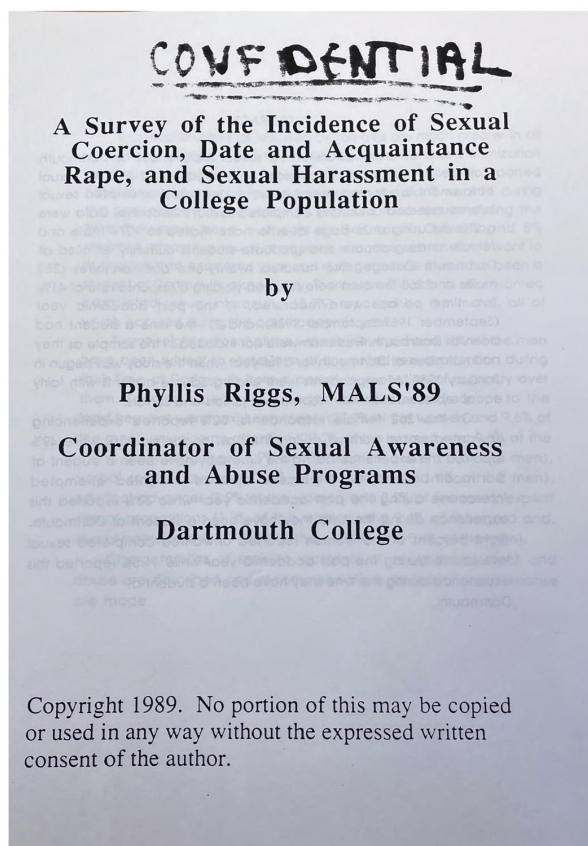
²⁴¹ Boykin, “Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March: Over 500 March.”

²⁴² Rumberger, “Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March: Caton Attacked Early Wednesday Morning.”

²⁴³ Boykin, “Assault on Female Student Sparks Midnight March: Over 500 March.”

²⁴⁴ Ellsworth, “One Thousand Candles Are Not Enough.”

VIII. THE INSTITUTION BEGINS TO RESPOND



1989 Dartmouth survey on sexual violence.²⁴⁵

"Get running, girl... yeah, we're coming to rape you." Overheard male voice yelling outside of Theta Delta Chi, October 29, 1993, as recorded in *Spare Rib*.²⁴⁶

"When I leave, I'm going to be very proud to say that I am a woman and I went to Dartmouth. I think that shows a lot of strength." Pamela Ashe '94.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ Phyllis Riggs, *Survey of the Incidence of Sexual Coercion, Date and Acquaintance Rape, and Sexual Harassment in a College Population*, 1989 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files Folder 4 Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁴⁶ "Spare Ribbings." *Spare Rib* 3, no. 1 (November 1993). (DA-680 Box 9109, "Dartmouth College, Center for women and gender Student Advising and Support," Folder: "Past Issues," Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁴⁷ Pamela Ashe, "Voices Feminarum." *Spare Rib* 3, no. 1 (November 1993). (DA-680 Box 9109, "Dartmouth College, Center for women and gender Student Advising and Support," Folder: "Past Issues," Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

Following the 1986 Take Back the Night march, the College began taking a closer look at its student culture, as well as its procedural responses to sexual assault and harassment.

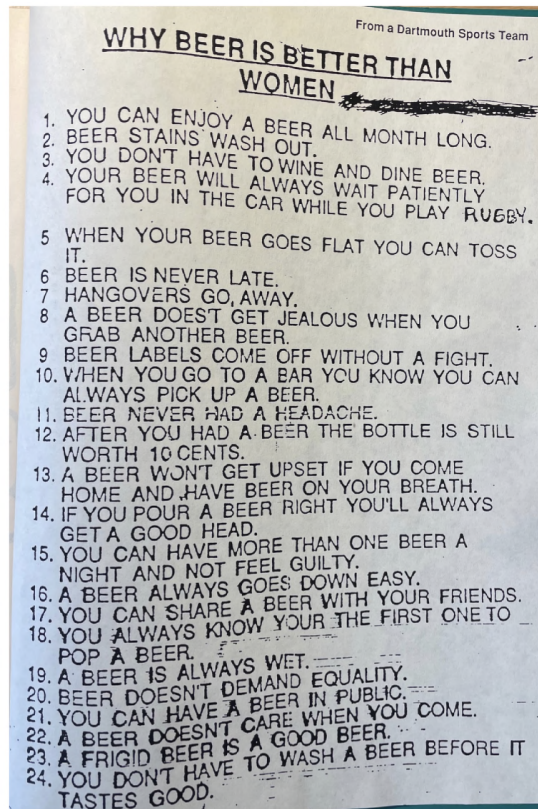
In April of 1987, in the Women's Support Task Force Report, the administration revealed that it undertook an "assessment of the needs of Dartmouth women and a review of the programs provided by a number of other institutions across the country."²⁴⁸ The report summarized its findings:

Despite fifteen years of coeducation and eight years of single-pool admissions, a strong sexist ambiance continues to exist on the Dartmouth campus. Sexist language pervades official College publications. The "Dartmouth" Review continues to damage individuals and groups within the community. We feel that the pervasiveness of the Greek structure, a structure within which women are at a particular disadvantage, is also exercising a harmful influence. Moreover, women feel uncomfortable in dormitories; sororities and women's residences are vandalized and individual women are harassed. It is our feeling that past administrative responses to incidents of sexism have been neither adequate nor sufficiently forceful.²⁴⁹

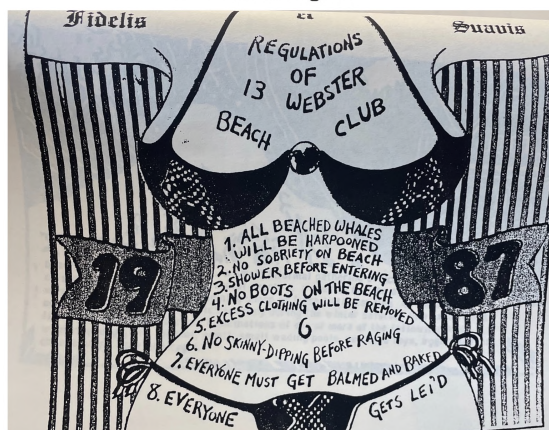
Also included in the report were the two images below:

²⁴⁸ The Women's Support Task Force Report April 1987, (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, loose files, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁴⁹ Ibid.



This poster, from the Dartmouth Rugby Team, lists reasons why “Beer is Better than Women,” including “After you have a beer, the bottle is still worth 10 cents” and “beer labels come off without a fight.”²⁵⁰



This poster, advertising Alpha Chi Alpha’s Beach Party, reads “Excess clothing will be removed,” “Everyone gets lei’d,” and “All beached whales will be harpooned.”²⁵¹

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

1987 also saw the creation of the Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Committee. Chaired by Mary Turco, the Committee was responsible for “reviewing College policies and protocols in this area, for guiding all educational activities concerning sexual assault and harassment, and for helping students access the resources of the College.”²⁵²

That first year, the SASH Committee recommended that “a survey instrument be developed as quickly as possible which will provide accurate, scientific data on the incidents of SASH cases at Dartmouth.”²⁵³

Under this directive, Phyllis Riggs, the Agenda Officer for the SASH Committee, released “A Survey of the Incidence of Sexual Coercion, Date and Acquaintance Rape, and Sexual Harassment in a College Population” the following year.

She surveyed 262 female Dartmouth undergraduate and 259 male Dartmouth undergraduates and found that 33% of women surveyed reported unwanted attempted intercourse during their time at Dartmouth and 49% of women surveyed reported unwanted sexual contact during their time at Dartmouth.²⁵⁴ The survey estimated that 1,234 young women experience unwanted sexual intercourse at Dartmouth each year. The survey also concluded that the actual numbers of incidents were severely underreported, estimating that no more than a tenth of women who had experienced “nonconsensual completed sexual intercourse (a polite term for rape) had contacted the coordinator of sexual awareness and abuse programs.”²⁵⁵ These incidents occurred most frequently in residence halls and fraternities, often with an acquaintance, non-romantic friend, or a casual date.²⁵⁶

From the 259 men surveyed, Riggs found that 5% reported having sexual contact with a woman against her will during the past academic year and 11% reported this behavior during the time they had been at Dartmouth. Three percent reported attempting sexual intercourse when the woman did not give her consent during the past academic year, and 3.5% reported engaging in unwanted *completed* sexual intercourse during the past academic year.²⁵⁷ This reveals that at least a portion of the men were aware that their actions were wrong.

Notably, wrote Riggs, “the men’s lack of appreciation of the physical, and especially the psychological trauma that women experience as a result of unwanted sexual experiences is disturbing.”²⁵⁸ More than half of the women reported being psychologically injured as the result of unwanted completed sexual intercourse. By contrast, only four men thought that women might be psychologically injured from this experience; 86.2% of men surveyed believed women suffered no consequences from unwanted sexual contact. Nearly half reported their belief that unwanted completed intercourse results in no harm of any kind to the women involved.²⁵⁹

²⁵² Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Committee, November 9, 1987 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 3, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁵³ Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Committee Annual Report, 1989-1988 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files Folder 3, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁵⁴ Riggs.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

This marked the first time any data had been collected on this subject at Dartmouth. Mary Turco, SASH chair and Dean of Residential Life, said: “Nobody had been officially recording the number of students with this sort of thing [sexual assault and harassment] happening, like most institutions.”²⁶⁰

The SASH Committee also worked to disseminate more information on sexual assault and harassment to the student body. Clearly, education was in order, particularly of the men.

In January of 1988, a “fact-myth” tickler was initiated, featuring educational facts about sexual assault or harassment.²⁶¹ In October of 1988, a pamphlet entitled “Sexual Harassment at Dartmouth College: A Problem You Can Do Something About” was sent to the entire student body, providing myths and realities about sexual harassment.²⁶² They also created a “Bathroom Blitz” by putting stickers on small bulletin boards in bathrooms.²⁶³ Also in 1988, Phyllis Riggs started a peer education training program called “Great Sexpectations,” which would hold discussions and information sessions on relationships, intimacy, sexual exploitation, and gender dynamics.²⁶⁴

The SASH Committee also used *The Dartmouth* to publicly acknowledge certain instances of sexual assault or harassment. On March 7, 1990, they published “An Open Letter to the Dartmouth Community from the Committee on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment.” It described how the week prior, residents of the East Wheelock cluster met in an open forum to discuss a male dorm cluster newsletter that referred to women as “whining, sniveling, ignorant, grim chicks.”²⁶⁵

The SASH letter acknowledged other incidents of harassment or offensive publications or actions. “Women and men who speak out against sexist behavior are not overreacting... the use of sexist language is but one specific behavior on a continuum of negative treatment of women which leads to more serious gender-based crimes including sexual harassment and sexual assault.”²⁶⁶ It then invited students to write to the committee with ideas for “campus initiatives to address sexism in our culture.”²⁶⁷

²⁶⁰ Laurie Storey, “Fighting Sexual Assaults: Colleges Confront Issue More Openly than Before.” *Boston Sunday Globe*, September 24, 1989 (DL-15 Box 11790 Record of Dartmouth College, Affiliates Files, Folder “Earle, Heather,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁶¹ Memorandum, January 12, 1988 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 3, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁶² “Sexual Harassment at Dartmouth College: A Problem You Can Do Something About,” letter and pamphlet (“Sexual Abuse and Assault 1” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁶³ Letter from Mary Turco to Beverlie Conant Sloane, April 29, 1989 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 3).

²⁶⁴ Poster, January 1, 1988 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 5 “Programs, Posters, Events, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁶⁵ Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Committee, “An Open Letter to the Dartmouth Community from the Committee on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment.” *The Dartmouth*, March 7, 1990.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

The SASH committee took on many activities providing information— pamphlets, posters, workshops, forums, stop-rape videos and counseling— to ensure everyone had a shared understanding of what constitutes rape and harassment, and how to respond when you or a friend have been raped or harassed. “It’s not a prank. It’s not just an issue of mis-communication. It is a crime,” Judith White, director of the Women’s Resource Center told the *Valley News*.²⁶⁸ Women often feel guilty after they are raped by someone they knew, said White. Education can help prevent this. “To leave people ignorant is to leave them vulnerable,” said Heather Earle, coordinator of sexual awareness and abuse programs.²⁶⁹

Liane Bromer ‘91 recalled that it wasn’t until Heather Earle’s training session for undergraduate advisors on handling assault that she recognized her own rape for what it was. It was only then, she said, that she could finally make sense of the emotional turmoil she had been suffering.²⁷⁰

For their part, many of the staff members involved in sexual assault and harassment prevention made it clear that victims of rape and assault should *not* be blamed. Still, some information on rape and assault from the period provided only suggestions on how *women* can avoid being raped, with advice like “avoid drinking with men you don’t know well.”²⁷¹ While this advice might be helpful in some situations, it missed the mark. Judith White said to the *Valley News*, “It’s ludicrous to say, ‘Don’t ever be alone with a young man you’re attracted to.’ If that’s the kind of advice we give, we can forget about stopping this.”²⁷²

In many cases, information on sexual assault and harassment more explicitly blamed women for assaults committed by men. In 1986, Dartmouth invited Dr. Andrea Parrott, a “human sexuality expert,” to come to campus and give a talk on sexual assault prevention.

Among the pamphlets Parrott brought to post around campus was “Why Nice Men Force Sex on Their Friends: The Problem of Acquaintance Rape.”²⁷³

²⁶⁸ “Date Rape: A Campus Issue.”

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Karen Endicott, “When Things Get Ugly.” *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, November 1992, <https://archive.dartmouthalumnimagazine.com/article/1992/11/1/then-lings-get-ugly>.

²⁷¹ “Date Rape: A Campus Issue.”

²⁷² “Date Rape: A Campus Issue.”

²⁷³ “Why Nice Men Force Sex on Their Friends” flier (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 5 “Programs, Posters, events,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

Why Nice Men Force Sex on Their Friends: The Problem of Acquaintance Rape

The typical image of a rapist is a crazed maniac who jumps out of the bushes, brandishes a knife or gun, and forces a woman to have sex with him. Images like this are strong and lasting, but they mask the essential fact that most rapes are committed by acquaintances and lovers. The false image lives on because few rapes by acquaintances are reported; in fact, those involved often do not recognize that a rape has occurred. The legal definition of rape is a victim having sexual intercourse against her will and without her consent (Burkhart, 1983). Sexual assault is defined as a sexual encounter other than intercourse (such as oral and anal sex) against the victim's will and without his or her consent. In many states only a woman can be legally raped by a man, but the FBI estimates that 10 percent of all sexual assault victims are men. The victim does not have to be threatened with a dangerous weapon or be injured for an incident to be considered rape. Coercion or threat of force or violence are sufficient (FBI, 1982).

Socializing Factors

How can "nice" men with "good intentions" coerce someone to have sex? It is because men and women, in the process of becoming social beings, learn communication patterns that make acquaintance rape likely.

In our culture, men are taught to view women as either virtuous or sexually loose, which contributes to uncertainty about female desires. Men are taught to not take women seriously, that women do not really mean what they say. Young women are taught that males know more about sex than females, so the female should comply with the male's demands. Both males and females feel that certain behavior allows a man to force sex, such as the woman "leading the man on."

These uncertainties are often based on the reluctance of women and men to express their feelings, many times in verbal communication. If something is clearly wrong with a woman (she is crying or slamming doors) and she is asked what is wrong, she may say "nothing," rather than express her true feelings. Men display this same type of behavior, expressing anger or frustration by punching walls, or speaking through clenched teeth, but still saying nothing is wrong. The message is that in a situation where verbal and nonverbal messages are inconsistent, the verbal message is not accurate.

In sexual situations the verbal and nonverbal messages are frequently inconsistent. This inconsistency was often established when a boy was told by his mother, his teacher (usually female), or another woman in a position of authority to do something. If he didn't the consequences would be severe. If the deadline was then extended or the consequence was not severe, he learned that those women did not mean what they said.

Some men do not believe a woman's verbal messages in sexual encounters either. In fact, a man may actually feel he is doing a woman a favor by pushing her sexually; if she says no to a sexual overture, she may really want to say yes but is afraid she will be viewed as loose. He thinks she says no because she is worried about her reputation, not because she really does not want to have sex with him. So if he pushes her, even if she is saying no, they will both ultimately get what they want: she will get sex and he will be satisfied. In this type of interaction the male feels that he is acting as he should and would probably be surprised to find that some women really mean it when they say no.

Women and men also believe that men should know more about sex. If he tells her that "everyone

else is having sex" and that something is wrong with people who don't, she may be willing to have sex with him, even though it is not what she wants to do.

There is also tremendous peer pressure for the male to have sex on a date. Even if he does not want to initiate sex, a man may feel he has to or his date will think he is gay. He is encouraged by other young men to "score" sexually to be considered manly. The woman, even if she does not want sex, may think that the man finds her unattractive if he does not initiate sex. These pressures are responsible for people having sex when neither want it.

It is difficult to reject group standards if one believes that the only way to be a valuable person is to be associated with others who are valuable. A young woman who has low self-esteem may date the captain of the football team in order to raise her value. If the male in this situation uses coercion by telling her he will not continue going out with her unless she has sex with him, she may comply to maintain her status as his girlfriend.

When Forced Sex Becomes "Acceptable"

Some men feel that a particular female behavior permits a man to force a woman to have sex. Charlene L. Muntenhard of Texas A&M University and Richard McFall of Indiana University reported the results of a study in which 106 college students were asked to respond anonymously about acceptable behavior in dating situations.

The subjects were given descriptions of three types of dates that varied in respect to who initiated the date, where the couple went, and who paid. They were then asked if there were any circumstances in which forced sex was justified. Men rated intercourse against the woman's

Handout from Andrea Parrott, PhD.²⁷⁴

Among the explanations Parrott provides as to *why* "nice men force sex on their friends" is that, in sexual situations, verbal and nonverbal messages frequently clash. As the pamphlet notes:

This inconsistency was often established when a boy was told by his mother, his teacher (usually female), or another woman in a position of authority to do something. If he didn't the consequences would be severe. If the deadline was then extended or the consequence was not severe, he learned that those women did not mean what they said.²⁷⁵

In other words, according to Parrott, "nice men force sex on their friends" because they believe women "do not mean what they [say]." When, in a sexual situation, a woman says "no," they might *actually* mean "yes." Why do they believe this? Because of their mothers' inconsistent parenting or their teachers' inconsistent teaching. In other words, men learn behavior from women in their childhoods that inspires them to be violent against women in their adulthood. The solution to this dilemma, Parrott writes, is that "adult females who influence

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

male children must be clear about messages, truthful about feelings, and consistent in disciplining.”²⁷⁶

Parrott’s talk oddly continued the societal trend of identifying more ways to blame women for their own assaults. She laments the “tremendous peer pressure for the male to have sex on a date.” If he doesn’t initiate sex, she argues, he may worry that his date will think he’s gay or unattractive.²⁷⁷ And for another solution to “the problem”: “Women should be aware that their assertive actions may be interpreted by men as justification for rape.”²⁷⁸

While Parrott’s “Acquaintance Rape Prevention Manual” seemed to have some useful information, other details were more random or flat-out bizarre. For instance, she includes “The Penis Song” by Georg Morgan:

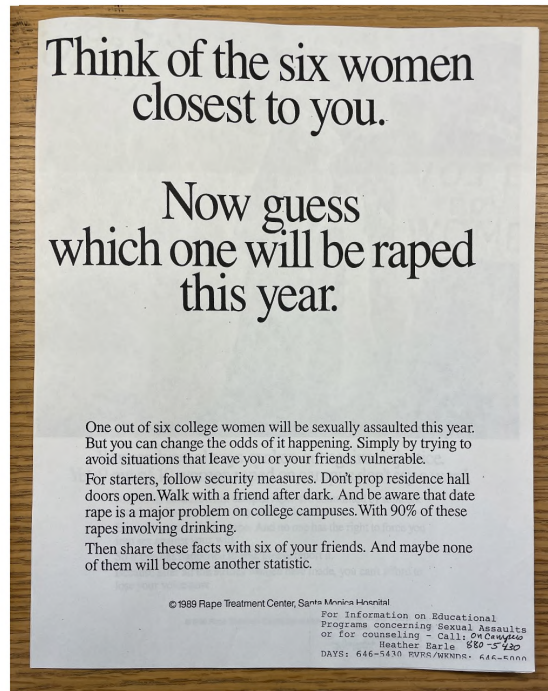
What’s that hanging down between my legs?
Looks like a sausage between two hardboiled eggs
Usually sculptures got it covered with leaves
I wonder what it could be. (Chorus):
It’s my penis, my penis
you see how much has truly come between us
oh my penis, my penis
Let’s start again, this time be friends
Some say a symbol of power and hate
some say a weapon to dominate
nobody smiles when they get that king of screwed
Lord, how you’ve been used
(Chorus) You’ve got a lot of uses besides “masculinity”
you can draw in the snow with my yellow pee
a gentle caress you give ammonia cream
I shake and dance and you still drip in my jeans
we’ve needed to talk, a little penis to heart
on the same body, yet so far apart
an even though I’m talking to you
we’re really one, not two.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ “Acquaintance Rape and Sexual Assault Prevention Training Manual,” 1986 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, loose files, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).



1989 poster.²⁸⁰

Other pamphlets and posters were intended to spread more awareness about the occurrence of rape and assault. For instance, the poster above:

One out of six college women will be sexually assaulted this year. But you can change the odds of it happening. Simply by trying to avoid situations that leave you or your friends vulnerable. For starters, follow security measures. Don't prop residence hall doors open. Walk with a friend after dark. And be aware that date rape is a major problem on college campuses... then share these facts with six of your friends. And maybe none of them will become another statistic.²⁸¹

While this poster, and others like it, somewhat successfully tried to spread *awareness* of sexual assault, it completely ignored men's responsibilities for their actions, while perpetuating a victim-blaming mentality that reflected many attitudes toward sexual assault in the 1980s and 1990s.

None of the messaging is aimed at individuals who might rape, or who have raped. It's not saying "Don't rape." Instead, the message is: "Don't *let yourself* be raped." It is directed at women, informing them of steps they should take to avoid being raped. This continues to place the burden of being raped on the victim, who cannot control and cannot be responsible for the actions of the perpetrator.

²⁸⁰ "Think of the Six Women Closest to You" poster, 1989 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 6 "1989-90 annual report," Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁸¹ Ibid.

Later in the 1990s, the College offered “Women’s Self Defense and Rape Prevention Classes” for a small fee.²⁸²

At some point, these courses were offered through the “Rape Aggression Defense” program:

In recognition of the fact that women need to develop cognitive and physical preparedness to defend themselves against sexual abuse by both strangers and acquaintances, the Department of Safety and Security offers training through the Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) program. For a small fee, two certified RAD instructors, Rebel Roberts and Mark Lancaster, instruct students in basic techniques of assertiveness, physical alertness, and self-defense.²⁸³

The course was also available for PE credit.

In May of 1992, the self-defense classes were taken over by a woman, Linda Ramszy Ranson.²⁸⁴ Ramzy Ranson, a certified second-degree black belt in Ju-Jitsu and chief instructor for self-defense and rape prevention at Princeton, held four three-hour sessions that term.²⁸⁵ In these classes, she taught Dartmouth women how to defend themselves, especially against a sexual assault. She taught them how to target vulnerable areas in the male body and how to fight on the ground and overcome “attempted bed rape.”²⁸⁶

Women had great reviews for the class. “The class was really empowering, it gave you faith in yourself,” Alison Bishop ‘94 said. “Now I have options. This class gives you dignity so you know you don’t have to stand for [abuse]. And you’re not this fragile, little girl.”²⁸⁷

In the student publication *Spare Rib* in 1993, four female students (Jenny Richlan, Katie Driscoli, Jessie Griffiths, and Jen Cambell), reflected on their experiences in the Women’s Survival, Self-Defense, and Empowerment class. The instructor taught them that women “needed to learn what it feels like to hit and be hit... we needed to learn that physically defending ourselves is a choice.”²⁸⁸

They described punching and kicking, bobbing, weaving, and screaming. “Nose!,” “Throat!” “Mother-fucker,” “Balls!” “No!” “Never before had we women been

²⁸² “Miniversity New Offering” flier (“Sexual Abuse and Assault 2” Vertical File,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁸³ (“Sexual Abuse and Assault 1” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁸⁴ (DA-820 Box 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Self Defense,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁸⁵ Yvonne Chiu, “Miniversity Course Teaches Women to Defend Themselves,” (DA-820 Box 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Self Defense,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁸⁶ (DA-820 Box 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Self Defense,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁸⁷ Chiu, “Miniversity Course Teaches Women to Defend Themselves.”

²⁸⁸ Jenny Richlan, Katie Driscoli, Jessie Griffiths, Jen Campbell, “Ballsy Moves.” *Spare Rib* 4, no. 1 (Spring 1993) (DA-680 Box 9109, Dartmouth College, Center for women and gender Student Advising and Support, folder: “Past Issues,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

encouraged to hit something with all of our strength or to scream “ASSHOLE” at the top of our lungs...”²⁸⁹

Controversy arose surrounding the Women’s Self-Defense classes when it was announced that they would no longer be offered as PE credit. In an ironic twist, because they were credit-bearing courses that did not admit men, an administrative committee determined the classes to be discriminatory, in violation of Title IX.^{290 291}

Susan Brison, a Philosophy professor and a victim of a violent rape in which she almost lost her life, sent a blitz to Dean Lee Pelton expressing her confusion at this decision. Acknowledging that the institution’s hands may be tied, she writes that

Philosophically... I’m still puzzled by the position that holds that single-sex sports, male-only fraternities, pregnancy leave policies, and other institutionally supported programs and policies that discriminate on the basis of sex are NOT discriminatory, in any invidious sense, while a women’s self defense and rape prevention class is.²⁹²

“If Dartmouth offered no self-defense courses for men,” she went on to say, “I would be concerned about excluding them from this one, but I believe our PE program offers them five or six per term that are more geared to their needs.”²⁹³

She then points out that students get PE credit for the football team– “Does the football team not discriminate against women?”

One way to resolve this issue, she writes somewhat sarcastically, “would be to tell men they’re eligible for the women’s self defense course, but then require everyone to try out for it, and let the instructor decide who gets admitted.”²⁹⁴

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

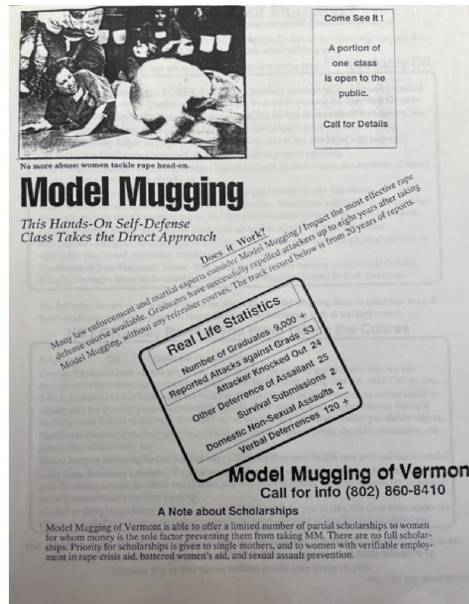
²⁹⁰ Blitz from Susan Brison to Lee Pelton, January 1, 1992 (DA-820 Box 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Self Defense,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁹¹ Blitz from Lee Pelton to Susan Brison, January 27, 1992 (DA-820 Box 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Self Defense,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

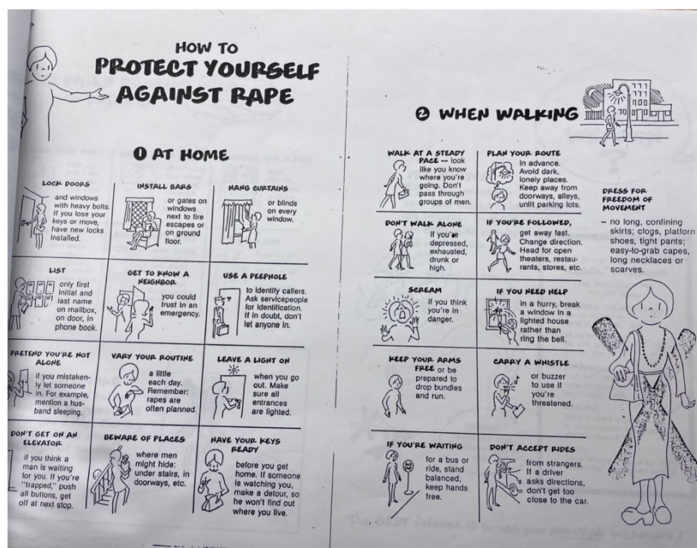
²⁹² Blitz from Susan Brison to Lee Pelton, March 5, 1992 (DA-820 Box 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Self Defense,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.



A few months later, College officials also considered using “Model Mugging of Vermont,” a “self-defense and empowerment program for women.”²⁹⁵



Also included in the “Self Defense” files.²⁹⁶

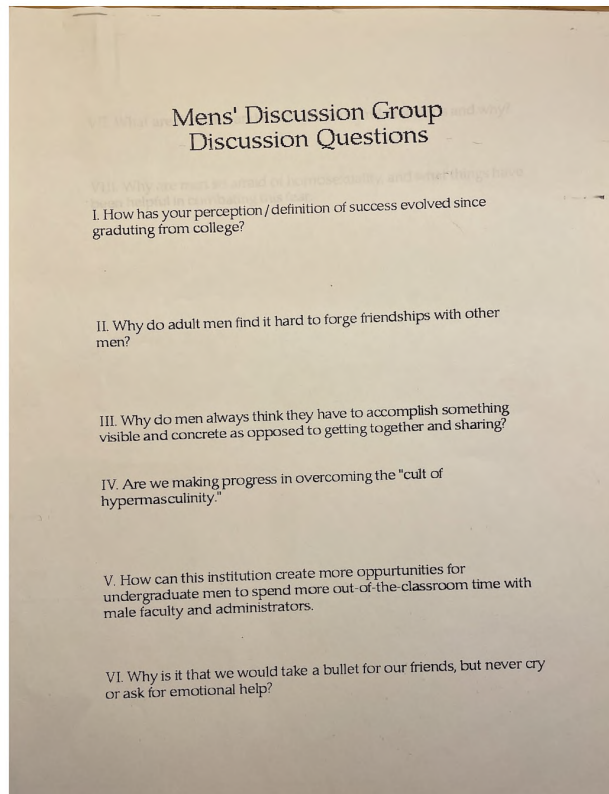
Also around this time, Dean Pelton started the “Men’s Discussion Group.” Comprised of faculty, administrators, and students, this group met to “discuss the role of men in perpetuating and in preventing sexual abuse and to plan occasions when its members can educate the community

²⁹⁵ Letter from “Model Mugging of Vermont” to Holly Sateia, July 8, 1992, (DA-820 Box 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Self Defense,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁹⁶ “How to Protect Yourself Against Rape” booklet (DA-820 Box 13641 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Self Defense,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

about sexual abuse.²⁹⁷ These discussions also took a closer look at masculinity. One list of “discussion questions” included, “Why do adult men find it hard to forge friendships with other men?” and “Why is it that we would take a bullet for our friends, but never cry or ask for emotional help?”²⁹⁸

Unfortunately, these worthy topics did not prove to be a big draw from the men. By the winter term of 1995, few men were participating in the groups. As Georgia Gemmill ‘96 reported in an article in the student publication *The Spare Rib*, only seven men regularly attended.²⁹⁹



Mens' Discussion Group Discussion Questions.³⁰⁰

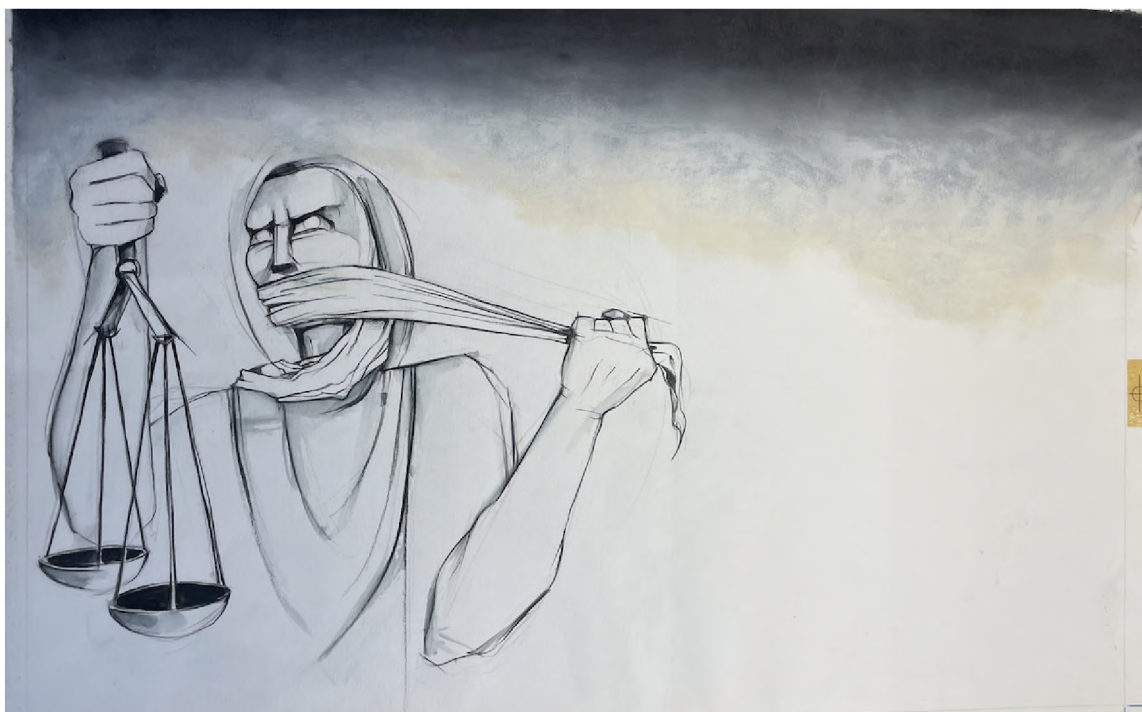
²⁹⁷ SHARE Network (“Sexual Abuse and Assault 2” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁹⁸ (DA-820 Box 13979 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Men’s Discussion Group,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

²⁹⁹ Georgia Gemmill, “Relearning and Relating: The Men’s Discussion Group,” *Spare Rib* 4, no. 1 (Winter 1995) (DA-680 Box 9109, Dartmouth College, Center for Women and Gender Student Advising and Support, Folder “Vol 4, No 1, Winter 95,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁰⁰ (DA-820 Box 13979 Dartmouth College, Collis Center for Student Involvement Records, Folder “Men’s Discussion Group,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

IX. ART AND RESISTANCE



A student's submission for "Expressions of Rage and Pain: Visions of Healing," 1991.³⁰¹

"Should we make them blow us before they go in?" Overheard by a group of men as a group of women walk into the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Saigon party, as recorded in *Spare Rib*.³⁰²

"But I must say, I think that the most important thing I've learned so far at Dartmouth... is that I've learned how to say fuck you." Kirsten Stromberg '94, in *Spare Rib*.³⁰³

³⁰¹ (DA-680 Box 8827 Records of Dartmouth College, Center for Women and Gender Event, Posters and Original Artwork, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁰² "Spare Ribbings." *Spare Rib* 4, no. 1 (Spring 1993) (DA-680 Box 9109? Dartmouth College, Center for women and gender Student Advising and Support, Folder "Past Issues," Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁰³ Kirsten Stromberg, compiled by Lisa Overton, "Sending His 'Little Girl' to the Big Green." *Spare Rib* 2, no. 1 (December 1992) (DC History LH 1 D3 S63 Spare Rib, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

Visual arts and writing were powerful media for students to speak out or share their own experiences.

In 1987, Dartmouth student and hockey player Doug Bowman was accused of raping a 17-year-old visitor to the College. She awoke to him lying on top of her, and “she was too intoxicated to resist him.” The victim was unwilling to testify at a trial, so the case against Bowman was dropped. Bowman later voluntarily withdrew from Dartmouth and transferred to Lake Forest College.³⁰⁴

Three years later, in 1990, an anonymous woman wrote a letter to the victim of Bowman’s rape in the student publication *Womyn’s Re/view*: “I’ve written this in my head so many times, but now that it comes to putting pen to paper, the words have vanished,” she wrote. “Since the day i was told of your rape i’ve thought about you a lot, thought of you and winced at the guilt i feel” (the lowercases letters are in the original).³⁰⁵

She revealed that Bowman had raped her, too, almost exactly a year earlier, “under almost exactly the same circumstances.” She, too, had been drunk. “i think sometimes - if i had only had the courage to break the silence and name it, RAPE... - maybe i would have spared you,” she wrote. “But I didn’t.... Mostly because he was a friend and i couldn’t fathom what that meant to be so totally profoundly violated by someone i trusted.”³⁰⁶

She wrote that initially, she didn’t believe that Bowman had raped a 17-year-old. Believing the story would mean that her own story was real, too. And she couldn’t allow hers to be true, she thought, or “that spring inside me would snap...”

But many years later, when she wrote her essay, she felt she had healed. “i say to you that i’m sorry. I do believe you. I know your pain. I hear your screams especially the silent ones, i feel your rage. I send to you wherever you are, my love my support and my strength as one who, like you, is a survivor.”³⁰⁷

She ended the letter, “In sisterhood!” and signed it, “Anonymous, for now.”³⁰⁸

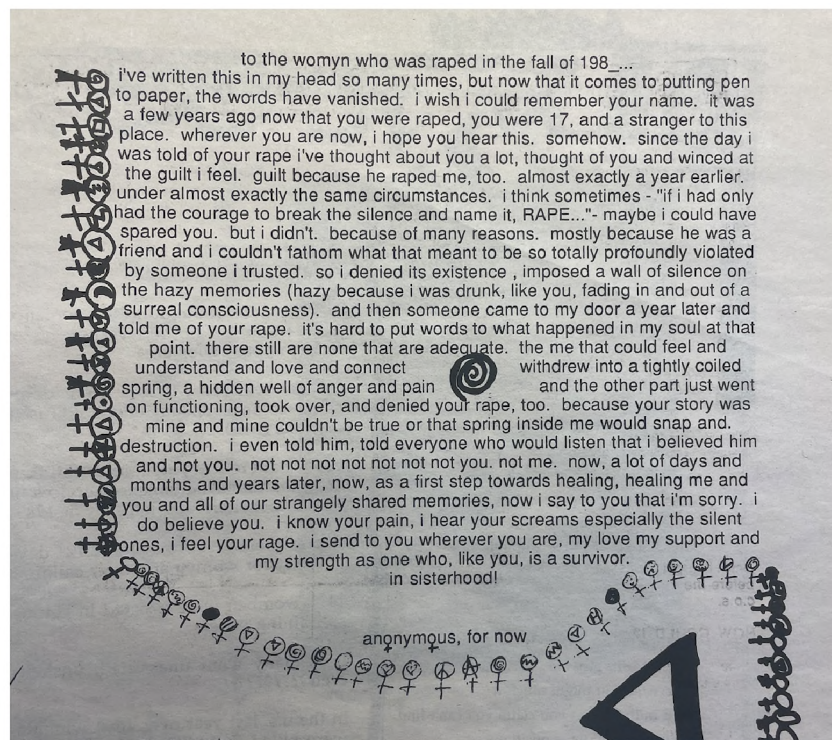
³⁰⁴ “Judge Rejects Student Rape Plea Bargain,” August 8, 1987 (“Sexual Abuse and Assault 1” Vertical File,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁰⁵ “To the Womyn Who Was Raped in the Fall of 198...” *Womyn’s Re/View*, Winter 1990 (DC History HQ 1101. W669 *Womyn’s Re/view*, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.



Article written by “anonymous” to “the Womyn Who Was Raped in the Fall of 198...”³⁰⁹

Other student publications channeled their feelings about sexual abuse and harassment into more viscerally angry publications.

Inner Bitch, a student rag from the 1990s, was particularly radical. “YOU HAVE AN INNER BITCH,” it asserted. “We want to help her grow and become as strong and as bitchy as womanly possible. We want to give her the power to speak her mind. Because silence is a kind of death. It keeps a part of you dormant... And it makes it easier for the next woman to get hurt, and the next and the next.”³¹⁰

This rag included articles like “Protection is as easy as 1-2-3”: “You’re in a frat, and some drunken jerk tries to feel you up. What do you do?”

Step 1 was to wound; to bruise, draw blood, kick him in the balls, cut his hair, tear/burn a hole in his pants. “Distinctive nailfile cuts are very nice, especially if they’re in a stylish pattern.”³¹¹

Step 2 was to mutilate, for the jerk who “still hasn’t learned, and has impolitely suggested a more intimate relationship.” It suggested to mirror marks left and right, “so the job looks full and balanced.” “Of course, certain unsightly organs may get in the way of your artistic creation. Feel free to remove them if necessary.”³¹²

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

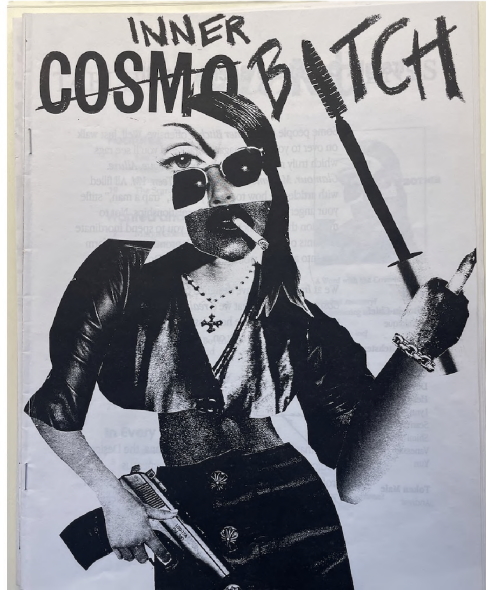
³¹⁰ (DC History LH 1 .D3 I54 Inner Bitch, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³¹¹ Ibid.

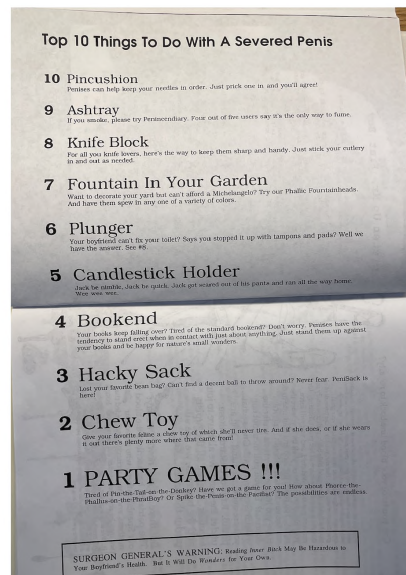
³¹² Ibid.

Step 3, of course, was to kill. “This is a rather distasteful step, to be done only if necessary for self-defense. Remember, it’s far more effective to let him live to tell the tale to his “brothers.” If you have to kill, try to minimize the mess. Blood can be terribly hard to get out of clothing.”³¹³

This rag, while noticeably exaggerated in methodology, was a chance for students to release rage and to take control, and express themselves.



Inner Bitch cover.³¹⁴

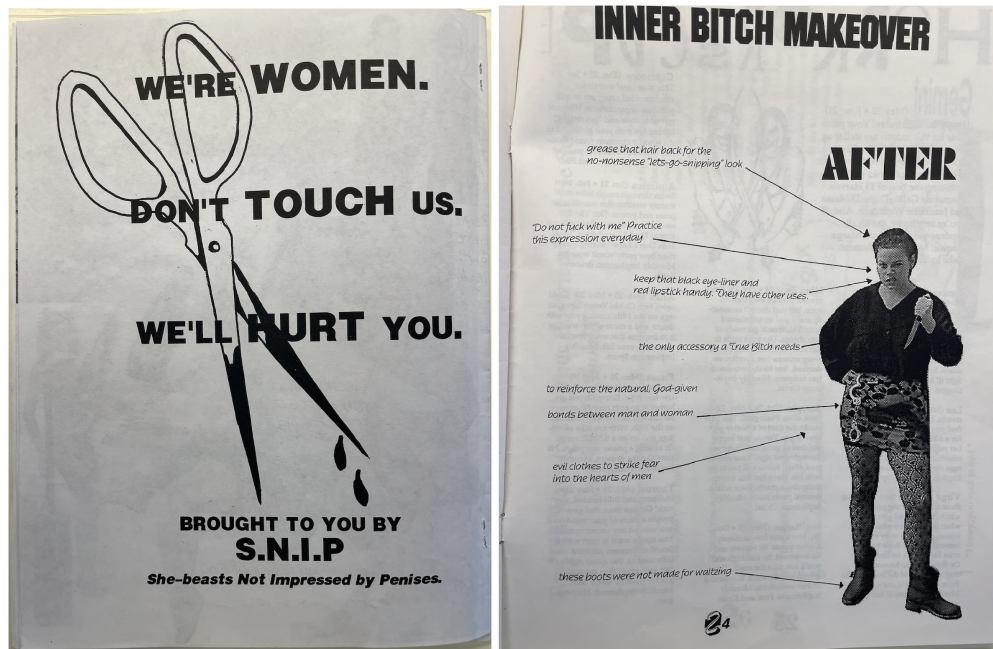


“Top 10 Things To Do With A Severed Penis,” in *Inner Bitch*.³¹⁵

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid.



Also featured in *Inner Bitch*.³¹⁶



Inner Bitch.³¹⁷

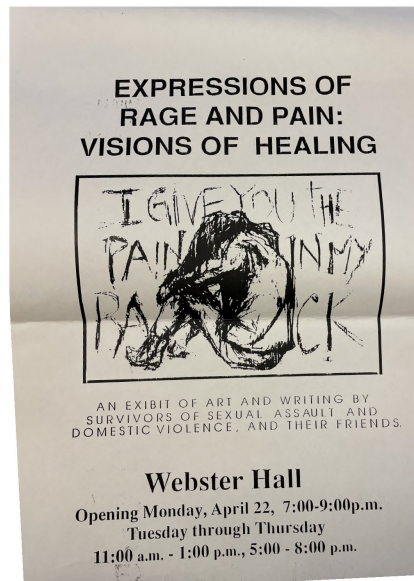
Visual art, too, was a powerful medium for students to express themselves.

In February of 1991, Heather Earle, coordinator of sexual awareness and abuse programs, organized an art exhibit created by survivors of sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse and/or domestic violence and their non-offending partners and friends. It was called “Expressions of

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

Rage and Pain: Visions of Healing,” and was presented during Sexual Assault Awareness Week in April of that year.³¹⁸



Poster for “Expressions of Rage and Pain, Visions of Healing,” from April 22-26, 1991.³¹⁹



Original artwork, “Expressions of Rage and Pain, Visions of Healing.”³²⁰

³¹⁸ “Women’s Resource Center Distribution List,” February 18, 1991 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 4, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³¹⁹ (DA-680 Box 8827 Records of Dartmouth College, Center for Women and Gender Event, Posters and Original Artwork, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³²⁰ Ibid.

May and June of 1988 saw a number of incidents in which women, minorities, gays, and organizations representing them were harassed.

On May 30th, more than ten women students and faculty received an anonymous hate letter containing condoms made to look as though they had been used, with the verse “an eye for an eye, a condom for a tampon” (perhaps a reference to a past protest in which tampons “bloodied” with red marker were dumped on college grounds during a trustee visit to demand more support for women.)³²¹, ³²²The letters included warnings to “get off our campus” and insults like “you disgust us” and “you feminist bitch.”³²³, ³²⁴ Later that week, dozens of other women received obscene and threatening phone calls. The Afro-American Society and Dartmouth Area Gay and Lesbian Organization all received threatening phone calls and/or hate mail. Around this time, feminist papers—including a chapter of a feminist thesis—had also been erased off computer disks, in some cases with “threatening notes” left in their place.³²⁵

Sabine Engel, writing for the *Womyn's Re/View*, noted that the police officer who responded to these incidents was “quick to point out that property violations are prioritized.”³²⁶

Engel wrote that the officer meant well, but that he unwittingly

...made quite explicit what a lot of women have already suspected all the time despite official assurances to the contrary: the harassment of women is considered less serious than property offenses. As long as we are not raped, as long as the damage done to us cannot be measured in strictly material terms, our complaints are considered secondary....³²⁷

In June of 1988, the Women of Dartmouth organization released a “statement of purpose.”

They wrote, “These incidents are only recent examples of the systematic harassment of oppressed groups at Dartmouth, which also includes graffiti, verbal and physical assault, and rape.” In protest, members of their organization wore gags that week, to “symbolize the extent to which women have been silenced when we speak out against subjugation and harassment.”³²⁸ They protested in areas around campus that they thought symbolized the silencing of “womyn”: Dean Ed Shanahan’s office (“Silencing through bureaucracy”); Webster Avenue (“silencing

³²¹ “Obscene Calls, Notes Reported.” *Valley News*, July 9, 1988 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 2, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³²² “Statement of Purpose Women of Dartmouth, June 1988 (“Women of Dartmouth” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³²³ “Obscene Calls, Notes Reported.”

³²⁴ Peggy Grodinsky, “Women at Dartmouth: Improvements Seen, but Still Sought, Too.” *The Upper Connecticut River Valley*, September 24, 1988 (DL-15 Box 11818 Records of Dartmouth College Affiliates File, Folder “White, Judith Simpson,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³²⁵ “Statement of Purpose Women of Dartmouth.”

³²⁶ Sabine Engel, “Systematic Intimidation of Women?” *Womyn's Re/view*, Spring 1988 (DC History HQ 1101 .W669 Womyn's Re/view Spring 1988, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³²⁷ Ibid.

³²⁸ “Statement of Purpose Women of Dartmouth.”

through rape”); the building that houses the Dartmouth *Review* (“silencing through violence and silencing in fear”) and President Freedman’s office (“silencing through patriarchy”).³²⁹

They added, “We are made to feel afraid to report attacks; when we do report them our words are doubted and the reports are filed away into a bureaucratic vacuum.”³³⁰

They denounced the administration for failing to make a public statement about the harassment. “We will not let these actions go unnoticed or unreported any longer. This is our college, too... When the administration wants to act, it does. We demand that they act now.”³³¹

Their demands included:

- 1) “A public statement from the administration against this outbreak of hate-mail, phone calls and assaults;
- 2) A thorough investigation into these attacks;
- 3) A monetary award offered for information about these incidents;
- 4) Fingerprints and handwriting samples from individuals that the targeted women suspect of harassment
- 5) The hiring of a female, full-time sexual harassment and assault officer, and
- 6) A restructuring of COS (Committee on Standards) or an alternative way to adjudicate harassment of women. Student COS members are elected more as a popularity contest rather than through any qualification or understanding of sexual harassment and abuse; COS is clearly not able to adequately address the concerns of women.”³³²

This list of demands was also published in *Spare Rib*. These student publications were powerful platforms for students to have their voices heard on issues of sexual assault and harassment.

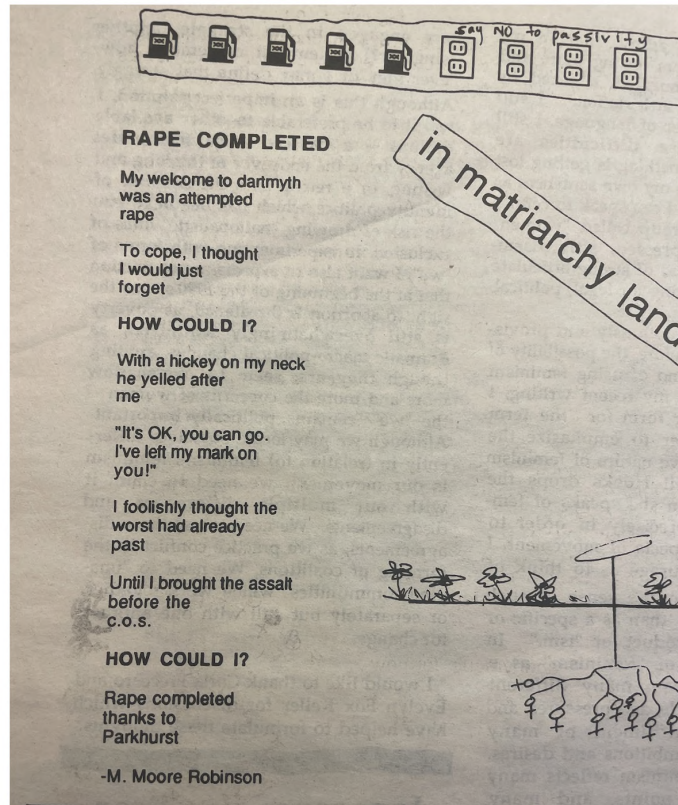
³²⁹ Engel, “Systematic Intimidation of Women?”

³³⁰ “Statement of Purpose Women of Dartmouth.”

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Engel, “Systematic Intimidation of Women?”

X. THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS



M. Moore Robinson's poem in the *Womyn's Review*.³³³

"BITCHES! You know you want it!" Yelled down an all-women's hall, 2:30am, April 7, 1992, as recorded in *Spare Rib*.³³⁴

³³³ M. Moore Robinson, "Rape Completed." *Womyn's Re/View*, Winter 1990 (DC History HQ .W669 Womyn's Re/View, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³³⁴ "Spare Ribbings." *Spare Rib* June 1992 ("Women of Dartmouth" Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

The disciplinary body, called the Committee on Standards (COS), proceedings were often a target of student protest.

These grievances, too, were sometimes expressed artistically.

One woman, M. Moore Robinson, wrote a poem in the Winter 1990 edition of the *Womyn's Review* titled "Rape Completed":

"My welcome to Dartmouth
was an attempted
rape

To cope, I thought
I would just
forget

HOW COULD I?

With a hickey on my neck
he yelled after
me

"It's OK, you can go.
I've left my mark on
you!"

I foolishly thought the
worst had already
past

Until I brought the assault before the
C.O.S.

HOW COULD I?

Rape completed
thanks to
Parkhurst" [administrator building].³³⁵

On the afternoon of March 7th, 1990, a number of students and Dartmouth community members gathered on the steps of Parkhurst, the administrative building, before moving to the

³³⁵ Robinson, "Rape Completed."

Dean's Office, to convey concerns that the incident M. Moore Robinson described was 1) not being heard by the full COS ("i.e., it was preliminarily determined to be a case that would not result in suspension"), and 2) that, in general, the College did not take such cases of sexual assault seriously.³³⁶

A few weeks later, on March 21, 1990, *The Dartmouth* ran a "Dean's Office Statement" likely inspired by controversy surrounding this incident and the COS proceedings. It informed the campus that on February 15, 1990, a student wrote a complaint to the COS alleging that on April 16, 1988, a male student held her against her will, kissed, her, gave her a hickey, and yelled after her—as the poem writes— "It's OK, you can go, I've left my mark on you."³³⁷

On February 28, 1990, a student was officially charged with engaging in "Disorderly Conduct," "Coercion" and "Injurious Conduct." A hearing was held before a dean at the associate level on March 13. The hearing lasted two-and-a-half hours.

The "Dean's Statement" informed the community that "after careful consideration, the dean was not persuaded that a preponderance of evidence (the standard set forth in the Student Handbook) supported a finding of guilt. As a result, she found the accused student not guilty of all charges."³³⁸

Five days later, on March 26, 1990, also inspired by the controversy surrounding this incident, Dean Shanahan himself made a statement in *The Dartmouth*. He wrote that he wanted to "describe briefly the process involved in deciding who hears disciplinary cases at the College... and some suggestions for reviewing our community's approach to sexual abuse issues."³³⁹

He acknowledged that students had concerns about the College's responses to allegations of sexual abuse and harassment on campus. In response, he provided a list of steps that college had taken in the past few years to mitigate these risks. These included hiring a full-time position for a sexual abuse educator and counselor, the creation of the SASH Committee, the 1989 establishment of a formal Sexual Assault Protocol.

But more can be done, he wrote. He listed other measures that the administration were discussing:

- 1) Reviewing language in the *Student Handbook*
- 2) Greater training for COS members
- 3) Establishment of College-wise standards for adjudicating behavior
- 4) Mandating a full COS hearing for all instances of personal assault
- 5) More detailed public reporting of known instances of sexual violence on campus

³³⁶ Letter from Edward Shanahan to all undergraduates, March 26, 1990 (DA-673 Box 29804 Dartmouth College, Upper Class Deans Records, File "Sexual Assault," Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College.

³³⁷ "Dean's Office Statement." *The Dartmouth*, March 21, 1990.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Letter from Edward Shanahan to all undergraduates.

- 6) An informal mediation/arbitration process for those who may be “uncomfortable with, or intimidated by, formal judicial procedures.”³⁴⁰

He said he had asked the SASH Committee to convene its members and review COS standards and procedures, and he also had implored the Student Assembly to organize information and discussion sessions on the COS.³⁴¹

In May of 1990, the SASH ad-hoc committee released its recommendations, including that education related to sexual assault and harassment be mandatory for everyone in the COS process. The members should have “clear, thorough understanding of the issues surrounding sexual assault.”³⁴²

These changes did not appear to make much of a difference. In 1992, Mary Childers, director of the Dartmouth Women’s Center at the time, sent a letter to the SASH COS Sub-committee about “sexual misconduct and related cases.”³⁴³

“The current structure of COS does not serve victims of sexual assault well,” she wrote. “The peculiar difficulties of proving sexual misconduct mean that the student bringing charges needs more support and consistency if she is going to be successful.”³⁴⁴

Childers explained that too many students had told her about “confusing experiences with the COS from their first moments of contact.” Of course, she continued, “students sometimes forget things they are told,” she wrote, “But I think it is scandalous that the accused gets so much more information than the alleged victim.”³⁴⁵

Among her recommendations were:

- 1) To put in writing all steps involved in charging a students and making a good case,
- 2) An advisor to help students in the hearing,
- 3) Providing the students with appropriate prior notice of the actual date of a hearing, “so that she can identify witnesses, adjust her academic schedule, and secure her advisor for the hearing.”³⁴⁶
- 4) Most importantly, she emphasized that the COS should be “only one part of the piece of at least decreasing sexual assault on campus.” Because so few students might want to go through a COS proceeding, other methods are necessary to support victims and “inform young men about the unacceptability and criminality of their behavior.”³⁴⁷

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² “Report of the Ad Hoc Committee Reviewing Standards and Procedures Regarding Sexual Abuse at Dartmouth,” May 22, 1990 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 4, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁴³ Letter from Mary Childers to SASH COS Sub-Committee, 1992 (DA-673 Box 29804 Dartmouth College, Upper Class Deans Records, File “SASH Subcommittee 1992-1903,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

On April 21 of 1992, many of these sentiments were echoed more publicly in a rally outside of Parkhurst. About a hundred people attended the rally, congregating in a chained-off area, declaring it a “Safe Space” for women.³⁴⁸ Women speaking at the rally complained of the COS procedure, which was used for all student discipline, from plagiarism to alcohol violations. They handed out fliers with seven demands for changes regarding the COS process. Women often feel intimidated by an overly legalistic COS structure. “The COS system does not work,” said English professor Ivy Schwietzer in *The Dartmouth*. “It has proven unsatisfactory.”³⁴⁹

The rally was inspired, in part, by the way the committee handled one particular sexual assault complaint, after four widely-publicized sexual assaults occurred in March of that year. An undergraduate woman accused a fellow student of sexual molestation. She said that the undergraduate affairs officer, Steven Blum, told her he believed her story but there wasn’t enough evidence for the COS to convict her attacker. College officials denied her account, and the COS process eventually ruled the man she accused not guilty.³⁵⁰

The woman said she had not been prepared to describe to the COS what had happened to her. “I’ve blocked a lot of it out,” she said. “I have to bring a lot of it back.”³⁵¹

Following the rally, Dean of Students Lee Pelton sent a blitz to some members of the administration and other staff. “I thought that I should inform you of ‘agreements’ reached yesterday afternoon between me and the student ‘organizers’ of the sexual assault rally.”³⁵²

Dean Pelton agreed to some short-term changes, and said he would consider more substantial changes. He said he would create a pool of faculty and students to serve as advocates for victims, who would help the women go through the process. He also said that Dartmouth would consider having a separate COS body for sexual misconduct cases.³⁵³

In one rare and significant case from 1992, the COS *did* find a student guilty, but some undergraduates decided to take matters even further into their own hands.

In May, 600 letter-sized, black and white posters with “Warning! Warning! Warning! Warning!” appeared in residence halls.³⁵⁴ “Warning! Scott Russell ‘92 was found guilty of sexual misconduct by COS last month... he’s not allowed on college property! He now lives in Sigma Nu (an off-campus fraternity) so please exercise caution when in that building,” the signs read.³⁵⁵ The posters included a picture of Russell and urged readers to “call Safety and Security immediately” if they saw him on campus. Russell, a senior and former president of Sigma Nu,

³⁴⁸ “Hearing Process to Change: Dartmouth Rallies Protest Handling of Sex Assault Cases.” *Valley News* April 22, 1992 (“Sexual Abuse and Assault 2” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Blitz from Lee Pelton to Steve Blum and others, April 22, 1992 (DA-673 Box 29804 Dartmouth College, Upper Class Deans Records File “Sexual Assault,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁵³ “Hearing Process to Change: Dartmouth Rallies Protest Handling of Sex Assault Cases.”

³⁵⁴ David Herszenhorn, “Posters Warn of Alleged Assaulter.” *The Dartmouth*, May 14, 1992.

³⁵⁵ Nicole Reboe and David Cohen, “Scott Russell and the Politics of Sexual Assault at Dartmouth College.” *The Bug* 1, no. 3 (June 1992) (DC History LH 1.D3 B65 Bug Volume 1 Issue 3 June 1992, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

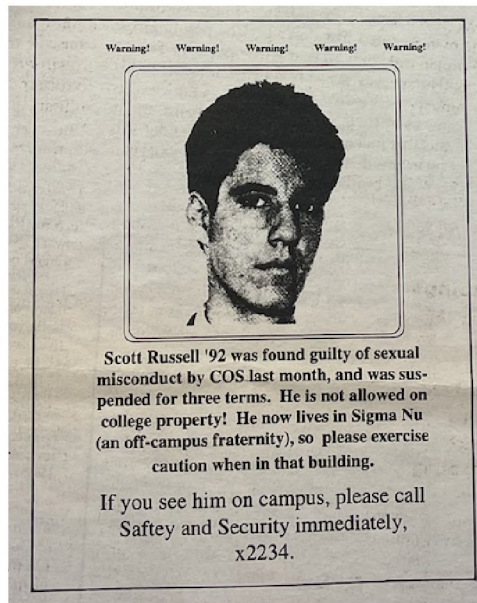
had been indicted in the Grafton County Superior Court only two weeks prior on six counts of providing alcohol to minors. Hanover police had been investigating an allegation of aggravated felonious sexual assault when they had discovered the alcohol crimes.³⁵⁶

COS hearings are closed, and the proceedings and rulings are kept secret as required by law, but students eventually discovered that the posters' claims were accurate.³⁵⁷ According to the Student Handbook at the time, suspended students were required to leave the campus within 48 hours, and were not allowed on College property, including fraternity housing, for the duration of their suspension.³⁵⁸

Sigma Nu had broken ties with the College in late February, and independent fraternities were not considered College Property. When *The Dartmouth* tried to call Russell's phone number, an answering message said he could be reached at a number in southern Florida. But when they called that number, a woman answering said, "I know the message said he can be reached here but he is at school."³⁵⁹

A few sophomores, part of a small group of "concerned students" who were friendly with the victim, said they were responsible for the posters. The following day, the posters had been taken down by Sigma Nu brothers. "This is the result of the mass hysteria on campus," said Sigma Nu president Jeff Edwards '93 in *The Dartmouth*, denouncing the posters.³⁶⁰

A day later, the posters appeared again. This time, they had been placed under each room's door in every residence hall across campus.³⁶¹



The poster about Scott Russell that circulated in May of 1992.³⁶²

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Nicole Reboe and David Cohen, "Scott Russell and the Politics of Sexual Assault at Dartmouth College."

³⁶² Ibid.

A week after the posters went up, Scott Russell '92 himself wrote an op-ed in *The Dartmouth* titled "I Was Made the Victim." In it, he revealed that the Hanover Police conducted a two-month investigation, but that he was never arrested and a grand jury failed to indict him ³⁶³

After being exonerated by the State of New Hampshire, I was convicted of sexual misconduct by the Committee on Standards earlier this term after a two-hour-long hearing that dwelled on meaningless information. This conviction was based solely on the false accusations of a single person and was completely unsubstantiated by fact. ³⁶⁴

He argued that he had done nothing wrong, that the decision by the COS "made" him the victim. "My only regrets are that the facts of this case did not prevail over hysteria and mob mentality and that members of the Dartmouth community accepted blatant falsehood instead of seeking the truth." ³⁶⁵

Nicole Reboe responded in an article in the student publication *The Bug*:

Sigma Nu's protection of Russell reveals the true meaning of the fraternal brotherhoods. The brothers of Sigma Nu did nothing to remove Russell from the house since he was convicted. They were comfortable with his remaining in the house, living there for the rest of the term, partying there on weekends, and potentially threatening the safety of women entering the house while he was there... ³⁶⁶

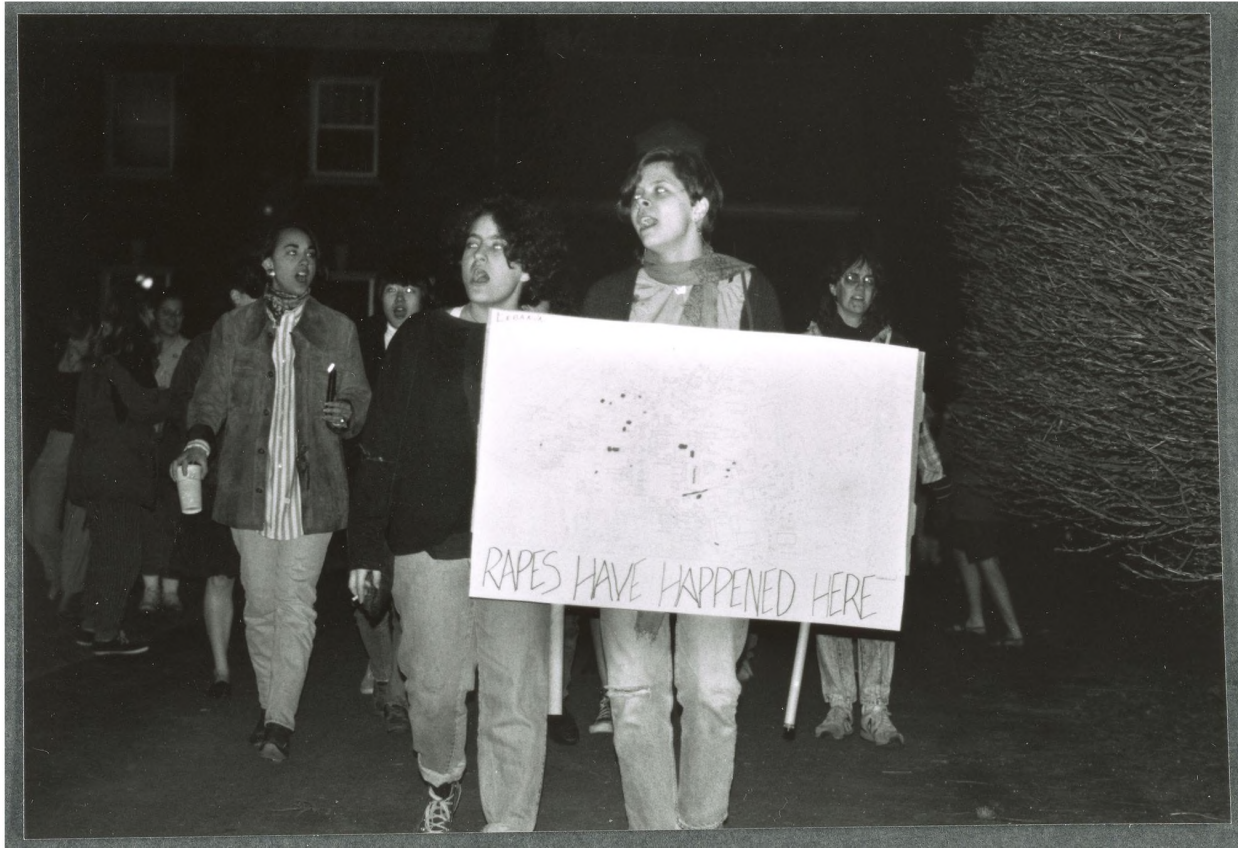
³⁶³ Scott Russell, "I Was Made the Victim." *The Dartmouth*, May 20, 1992.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Reboe and Cohen, "Scott Russell and the Politics of Sexual Assault at Dartmouth College."

XI. “BREAK THE SILENCE AND END THE VIOLENCE”



Taylor Martin '91 holding a sign reading “RAPES HAVE HAPPENED HERE” at the March 28, 1991 Take Back the Night march.³⁶⁷

“I wish I’d known, coming here, that rape happened as often as it does. That one in four women will be raped while they are here. That now, as a senior, almost every one of my women friends have been raped here. The only advice I can give is that partners listen to each other, and listen hard.” Lisa Walker ‘91 in *Spare Rib*, after being asked what “words of wisdom” she might offer to younger or incoming students.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁷ Student Protests Women's Issues, 1991, Digital by Dartmouth Library, <https://collections.dartmouth.edu/archive/object/PhotoFiles/PhotoFiles-Icon1647-1800-0000019>.

³⁶⁸ *Spare Rib*, 1992 (“Women of Dartmouth” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

Much changed between the 1970s and 1990s. Students saw less violence and harassment targeted at women, Dartmouth offered more support structures to women, and the community was holding more discussions about sexual assault.

However, the campus climate was still far from perfect. In March of 1992, a *Valley News* reporter approached a random woman in a student cafe. She described how, in her first week at Dartmouth, she was pinned down on a bed by a senior she had met less than half an hour before. The second woman the reporter approached told of an acquaintance following her into the bathroom of a fraternity, trying to push her into a stall and forcing himself on her. “Every female student interviewed on a recent day had a story to tell, from being fondled at a fraternity party to being raped by an ex-boyfriend at Dartmouth,” the article stated.³⁶⁹

Senior Kelly Kruse, quoted in the story, told the reporter that “Almost every woman on this campus has experienced some kind of sexual harassment or sexual assault.”³⁷⁰

Four reported sexual assaults in the short span of the month exacerbated this feeling. The reports prompted Dean Pelton to send a letter to the Dartmouth community informing the campus of the on-going campus safety programs, including emergency telephones, an inventory of campus lighting, and the establishment of a task force on campus safety.³⁷¹

On campus, this prompted ribbons, movies, lectures, teach-ins, including single-sex and coed discussions, and “Frats Rape” stickers.³⁷² Four female students performed student-written poetry and vignettes about sexual assault.³⁷³ Two male seniors organized a group they called Greeks Against Rape, to educate fraternities and sororities about assault. Some men wore pins that proclaimed “Another Dartmouth man against rape.”³⁷⁴

Students wrote *Dartmouth* opinion pieces and articles in student publications. Molly Phinney ‘92, wrote in an op-ed, that “Men and women must understand that rape does happen here so that we can all be allowed to legitimize it as a phenomenon and get angry about it.”³⁷⁵ She argued that the College needed to provide more guidance on how to respond to assaults, to clarify rules and definitions surrounding the term. “Date rape becomes clichéd out of existence and we need a shock to the system to realize that any rape is painful, degrading and demoralizing to the entire community.”³⁷⁶

Finally, the entire campus seemed to be talking about assault.

³⁶⁹ “Dartmouth Women Say Sexual Assault Is Prevalent.” *Valley News*, March 16, 1992 (“Sexual Assault and Abuse 1”) Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ Letter from Lee Pelton to the Dartmouth Community, March 9, 1992 (DA-673 Box 29804 Dartmouth College, Upper Class Deans Records, File “Sexual Assault,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁷² Dave Murphy, “Educating Men.” *Spare Rib*, June 1992 (DA-673 Box 29804 Dartmouth College, Upper Class Deans Records, File “Sexual Assault,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁷³ Endicott, “When Things Get Ugly.”

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Molly Phinney, “Vigil Leaves Questions Unanswered.” *The Dartmouth*, March 10, 1992.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

In some cases, this advocacy provoked conflict among students. There were reports of men tearing down posters meant to educate students on sexual assault. One woman also said a few men responded “Who gives a fuck?” or “You deserve it,” or “Why is she into this whole rape thing? Is she a lesbian?” when she was stationed at an assault awareness booth in the Hop.³⁷⁷ Clearly, the College community still had a ways to go to achieve real change.

Another woman, while she was hanging a poster saying “Do you give a fuck if a woman is raped?” said she heard several men laughing. Later, she walked back to where she put the poster and found that it had been ripped down. She picked it up and re-pasted it to the bulletin board.

“So you’re the bitch who put this shit up,” they accused her, clearly hostile.

“Yes,” she responded, and asked how he would feel if she were raped.

“You just need a good rape. You need to get raped until your cunt bleeds and you get AIDS,” he said.³⁷⁸

The woman was so shocked she couldn’t respond. She went into her dorm room and locked the door.

The events also sparked a number of rallies and vigils.

One vigil held on March 9th, 1992, brought together more than 200 students and community members, including Dean Pelton. The vigil apparently reached its “emotional peak” when a woman, partly screaming and partly crying, identified a man who she said assaulted her—the same man who allegedly pushed the Dartmouth student into the bathroom stall.

“I want the motherfucker to burn in hell! I want everyone to know who the motherfucker is!” she yelled.³⁷⁹

She asked the crowd if they, too, had been assaulted by this student. Six women crossed the circle and went over to her. Students interviewed later in the *Valley News* said it was a very powerful moment. “It was a few moments until anybody spoke.”³⁸⁰

Several speakers addressed the need to inform freshmen women about assault at Dartmouth, referencing their personal experiences being raped during their freshman fall terms.³⁸¹

As *The Dartmouth* reported, “Many women who spoke out were cut off by tears, as they publicly acknowledged, some for the first time, that they had been raped.”³⁸²

Susan Brison, a philosophy professor and the woman who had emailed Dean Pelton about the Women’s Self-Defense classes, spoke about her own violent rape experience. “Speaking out is the first stage and I urge you not to be silent against the fear, not to be silenced by the ignorance of those around you,” Brison said. “Break the silence and end the violence.”³⁸³

³⁷⁷ Murphy, “Educating Men.”

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Ken Davis, “Vigil on the Green Condemns Rape.” *The Dartmouth*, March 9, 1992.

³⁸⁰ “Dartmouth Women Say Sexual Assault Is Prevalent.”

³⁸¹ Davis, “Vigil on the Green Condemns Rape.”

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Ibid.

One sophomore interviewed said that as she was leaving the vigil, three men came up to her. “You’re just a bunch of weeping women wanting some attention,” said one.³⁸⁴

“The people who were outside the vigil—that’s who we have to reach,” said another sophomore, Shannon Sullivan, who said she had been sexually assaulted by two male acquaintances while at Dartmouth.³⁸⁵

Another vigil was held just under two weeks later, on March 28th.

About 120 demonstrators, almost equal numbers of men and women, sat in a circle outside of Dartmouth Hall.³⁸⁶

“A woman or man raped on this campus is basically alone,” Taylor Martin, the organizer of the march and a senior at Dartmouth, after announcing that she had been raped. “Rape is not the survivor’s problem. It should be the problem of the person who committed it.”³⁸⁷

“I’m angry,” said an unnamed Dartmouth ‘91 student. “I’m angry and I can’t take it anymore. You scraped the insides out of me.” She paused, crying.³⁸⁸

“You’re a survivor,” someone shouted.

“We’re here for you,” shouted another.

“You are not alone.”³⁸⁹

“That’s what it’s about. It’s about healing,” said a woman who worked for the College about the march.³⁹⁰

A ‘91 student who called himself Daniel also identified himself as a survivor of sexual assault. “Most men think the only thing they have to worry about is getting caught if they [sexually assault someone].” But it can happen to anyone, he said.³⁹¹

“I am mad that I had to transfer out of this school to not have to see my assaulter smirk at me at least once a week,” said another woman, who’d transferred from Dartmouth to Brown University.³⁹²

When the vigil ended, they marched down Mass Row, to Webster Avenue and the President’s House, then back to Rollins Chapel and Dartmouth Hall.³⁹³ In the front of the march was Taylor Martin ‘91, holding a map of the Dartmouth campus with the words “Rapes have happened here.” Red dots on the map pinpointed where victims had said they had been raped.

³⁸⁴ “Dartmouth Women Say Sexual Assault Is Prevalent.”

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ “Marchers ‘take back night.’” *The Dartmouth*, April 29, 1991 (DA-165 Box 7696 Dean of the Faculty Subject Files, Folder 2, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁸⁷ Nancy Roberts, “UNH’s Rape Prevention Program Touted: Dartmouth Encourages Reporting of Sexual Assaults to Deal With Problem.” *Valley News*, June 1, 1992 (DL-15 Box 11790 Record of Dartmouth College, Affiliates File Folder “Earle, Heather,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

³⁸⁸ “Marchers ‘take back night.’”

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Ibid.

“However we dress wherever we go, yes means yes, no means no!”

*“Hey hey, ho ho, sexist frats have got to go.”*³⁹⁴

Many say things are improving. “Two years ago, women were discouraged from pressing charges because it would embarrass the college,” said senior Sharry Fisher. “Their track record has been deplorable.”³⁹⁵

Colleges had just started learning how to deal with rape and assault cases, said Mary Childers, director of Dartmouth’s Women’s Resource Center said.³⁹⁶ The vigils, in particular, prompted more support, and sparked more conversations. “What happened recently was a big eye-opener for people,” said nineteen-year-old Dartmouth student, Honor Sachs. “Since the vigil, 20 or 30 people that are friends of yours will come forward and tell you, ‘I’ve been assaulted.’ It just floors you.”³⁹⁷

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Roberts, “UNH’s Rape Prevention Program Touted: Dartmouth Encourages Reporting of Sexual Assaults to Deal With Problem.”

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ “Dartmouth Women Say Sexual Assault Is Prevalent.”

XII. DARTMOUTH TODAY



I took this photo outside of Novack and Sigma Alpha Epsilon on May 23rd, 2023. It reads “DART PROTECTS RAPISTS,” and is a remnant of the graffiti from this past summer.



I took this photo on August 16th, 2022. On the side of Baker Library, the graffiti reads “ABOLISH GREEK LIFE.”

“Now, twenty years later, women are still trying to make their own place on this campus. And still it is a battle fought by individuals on a campus which never embraced the arrival of women.... Dartmouth women have often been made to feel belittled, unacknowledged, unheard, harassed, and unimportant. While the situation is certainly better than it was twenty years ago, it is clear that we still have a long way to go.” Editor’s Note, in *Spare Rib*.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁸ Editor’s Note, *Spare Rib* 2, no. 1 (December 1992) (DC History LH 1 D3 S63 Spare Rib).

These rallies, vigils, posters, discussions, and other outreach sparked a conversation throughout the campus community. They inspired more advocacy, encouraged more survivors of sexual assault to come forward, and put pressure on the administration to change guidelines, policies, and procedures.

But assaults, as well as advocacy, did not stop there.

The years following 1992 saw students dumping manure piles on Beta Theta Pi and Alpha Chi Alpha lawns in response to assault allegations, anonymous publications about sexual assault, and an “invitation to frat culture night” sent to all First-Year women with a second red flyer sent to one in four women to represent the one in four women who are assaulted during their lifetime.³⁹⁹

A number of policies are in place at Dartmouth today because of advocacy work started in the 1980s and 1990s. Progress has been glacial.

The Committee on Standards no longer hears sexual assault cases— a special committee does— after nearly two decades of complaints and student protests. Students can now request dorm changes and academic accommodation for sexual violence and harassment, an idea that arose from Mary Childers’ recommendation to the SASH sub-committee in 1992.⁴⁰⁰ Sexual Assault Peer Alliance (SAPA), a group of Dartmouth students who provide empowerment-based support to survivors of sexual assault, started in the spring of 1992.⁴⁰¹

Interestingly, Greek Life still plays a large role in our campus culture, despite decades of attempts to abolish it. To be sure, Dartmouth now has a few coed houses, Greek parties are open, houses post lists of contact information for SAPAs, and will sometimes host discussions with sororities about sexual assault and harassment. But much has remained frustratingly, *gallingly*, the same, after more than half a century.

Greek Life persisted after Epperson’s crusade to disband Greek life and the faculty cast their votes in agreement. Even Kemeny admitted that the fraternities were to blame for the “miserable behavior of some fraternities” and their members. He said in his oral history, “We made major attempts at reform, but—I have talked about this before—not terribly successful ones. So that’s an area I’m afraid I had to leave to my successor to deal with.”⁴⁰²

During the first year of the SASH Committee, the members wrote themselves a list of suggestions and goals, which included “establish a committee to determine when the Greek system should go co-ed.”⁴⁰³ Not *whether* the Greek system should go co-ed; “*when*.”

³⁹⁹ Antha Williams ““Over 200 Years of Sexism at Dartmouth: The Lessons We Can Learn from Coeducation.” *Uncommon Threads*

⁴⁰⁰ Blitz from Lee Pelton to Steve Blum and others

⁴⁰¹ “Sexual Assault Peer Advisors,” Spring 1992, (DA-673 29804 Dartmouth College, Upper Class Deans Records, File “Sexual Assault,” Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

⁴⁰² Kemeny oral history.

⁴⁰³ Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Committee Annual Report, 1989-1988

Former Dean Edward Shanahan likewise made it clear he supported a radical change in the Greek system—either coeducation or abolition.⁴⁰⁴ Mary Turco, former Dean of Residential Life, said that, in her belief, “people come here without sexist attitudes and they learn them here... They learn them from their peers who have those attitudes, and they learn them in the Greek system.”⁴⁰⁵ When, at a Parkhurst rally in 1992, students demanded the “abolition of the fraternity system,” Dean Lee Pelton gave a stiff and long-winded answer:

I understand that this recommendation flows from the assumption that the College’s coed, fraternity, and sorority system supports a student culture which makes acquaintance rape possible. I trust that you will agree that this assumption is not self-evident and that reasonable and well-intentioned individuals may disagree about the validity. Greek-letter organizations have a long-established tradition at Dartmouth College. Several major studies on the impact of these organizations have been conducted. The last such review was undertaken in 1980. The overall conclusion reached by these studies has been that these groups have the capacity to influence in positive ways the quality of student life. The College expects that each organization will make significant contributions to the personal growth of its undergraduate members.⁴⁰⁶

He went on to explain that the abolition of the Greek system would be an “exceedingly complicated exercise which would require the investment of human and financial resources that are already committed to other priorities, such as maintaining need-based financial aid, constructing (long overdue) new academic facilities and maintaining an excellent faculty.”⁴⁰⁷

Yet it’s clear that fraternities have historically contributed to an unsafe social climate for women at Dartmouth. This was the case in the 1980s, when it was customary for frats to have a newsletter circulating among the house that described sexual encounters with pledges using the names of women and called them “victims,”⁴⁰⁸ apparently lacking both the compassion and sufficient self-awareness to recognize the tragic irony of the self-incrimination. This was the case in the 1970s, when one woman described a situation in which a male friend, a fraternity brother, came home from his fraternity upset because one of the brothers had brought a female cadaver into a party there. She said what was done to the body was too upsetting to discuss.⁴⁰⁹

As Peter Fischer, a former fraternity brother wrote in a 1979 op-ed, “In fraternities of my experience (Psi U, Theta Delt, Bones Gate, Delta Chi, Kappa Sig, Phi Delt, etc.) women are Objects of Conquest, medals signifying successful sexual campaigns. They are molested if

⁴⁰⁴ Anne Bagamery, “Daughters of Dartmouth.” *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, November 1988, <https://archive.dartmouthalumnimagazine.com/article/1988/11/1/daughters-of-dartmouth>.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ “Sexual Assault Demands,” Letter from Lee Pelton, May 12, 1992 (“Sexual Assault and Abuse 1” Vertical File, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Jaresova, 65.

⁴⁰⁹ Antha Williams, ““Over 200 Years of Sexism at Dartmouth: The Lessons We Can Learn from Coeducation.” *Uncommon Threads*, no. 2 (Fall 1996) (DC History LH1.D3 U53 Uncommon Threads, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College).

‘attractive’ and scorned if ‘unattractive’ (in a vernacular, ugly pigs, sweaty hogs, whores, bitches, etc.)”⁴¹⁰

Fraternities have fostered this culture. Fischer wrote about the many young men who did as he did: “running around trying to be ‘smooth’ or macho, trying to get laid, overdosing on liquid courage.” He wrote, “I wonder how many are unwittingly being indoctrinated to the system, and I wonder how much pain they unwittingly cause others and themselves.”⁴¹¹

In particular, he wrote about the violence at these houses. “If all the anger that must be buried in the hearts of women who have suffered the abuses of the frat system over the years was unleashed at one time, I doubt there would be many houses left standings (sic)... If it were logistically possible, rape would be a perfect initiation ceremony, the ideal physical expression of the psychological violence that is nurtured in the fraternities.”⁴¹²

Thirteen years later, Scott Straus ‘92 would echo Fischer’s sentiment in an article titled “An Argument Against Fraternities: How Fraternities support and perpetuate sexual violence” in student publication *The Bug*. Straus had been a member of a fraternity until he left in 1989. He wrote about watching the vigil on the Green in March and being “struck by the consistency with which fraternities were associated with instances of sexual assault... Fraternities were named as the location of assault, as the inhabiting structure of (male) assaulting consciousness and male domination, and as the foreground for assault. Fraternities, it was suggested by some, pose a constant threat to women at Dartmouth.”⁴¹³ He continues::

... As they are currently constituted... fraternities are designed to entitle and empower men and to instill heterosexist, masculinist ideologies. Women are excluded from membership, meetings, residence, and party-planning. Excluded from these central aspects, they are figured and permitted inside the fraternity either as objects whereby brothers can prove their masculinity and fraternal loyalty, or as a brother’s girlfriend who is off-limits to the others.⁴¹⁴

Straus points to fraternity initiation–hazing–as the method by which these institutions instill men with masculine ideologies and enact the “othering” of women. In these rituals, pledges are stripped of their individuality, are humiliated, infantilized, and have their egos deflated by those in greater power. They are told to do whatever the brothers demand– be it clean after a party, bring brothers a beer, or participate in questionable activities.

In the cultures of these houses, women and anything “feminine” are dehumanized. Pledges, notes Straus, are called “girls,” “weak,” “wimps,” “faggots” and “a host of other names

⁴¹⁰ Peter Fischer, “Oppressive Social Life.” *The Dartmouth* March 30, 1979.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Scott Straus, “An Argument Against Fraternities: How Fraternities support and perpetuate sexual violence.” *Bug* 2 no. 1, (May 1992) (DC History LH 1.D3 B65 Bug, Rauner Special Collections, Dartmouth College).

⁴¹⁴ Scott Straus, “An Argument Against Fraternities: How Fraternities support and perpetuate sexual violence.” *Bug* 2 no. 1, (May 1992) (DC History LH 1.D3 B65 Bug, Rauner Special Collections, Dartmouth College).

referring to female genitalia.”⁴¹⁵ Sex is a core part of this ritual, a means by which men may connect to each other and exert a masculine power. Straus writes that in several fraternities, pledges are locked in a room, required to watch porn, and in some cases they are naked.⁴¹⁶

For instance, in 1978, Nick Stonnington ‘78 created a short film about his fraternity for a class. In one scene, several brothers lay naked on their stomachs; a pledge, head shaved, came into the room with a hot dog in his mouth. The pledge then dipped the hot dog into the anus of each brother.⁴¹⁷

Another recording of a Dartmouth fraternity eventually made public was Alpha Delta’s 1988 Hell Night tape of the “Sex Room.” At some point, the tape was smuggled out of AD and made its way to the deans. Dartmouth student Liza Veto heard the recording and wrote an article revealing parts of the transcript in *The Bug*. She explained that each intoxicated pledge is blindfolded and brought into the room, one at a time, confronted by several brothers who ask him to pull down his pants and underwear and sit on a block of ice. Each pledge is questioned in detail about his past and present sexual activity:⁴¹⁸

“The brothers have been wondering... We never see [pledge] with any girls. Are you a virgin? Are you a virgin, [pledge]?”⁴¹⁹

“No.”

“Would you tell us how you lost your virginity? To who [sic]? What’s her name? Did she lick your dick?”

Some interrogation was even more prying: “Did she moan? Did she like it? Did she wrap her legs around you? Did she arch her back? Did she claw at your back?”⁴²⁰

They were asked about current sexual partners, forced to give names and review those sexual encounters. They were asked about masturbation.

In another instance, a brother asks, “Do you have any sisters, pledge?”

“Yes”

“How old?”

“Twenty.”

“Do you ever fantasize about having sex with your sister?”

“No.”

“Have you ever seen your sister naked in the last three years?”

“Nope.”⁴²¹

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ Merton, “Hanging on (by a jockstrap) to tradition at Dartmouth,” 60.

⁴¹⁸ Liza Veto, “Testing... this is the sex room.” *Bug* 2, no. 1 (March 1993) (DC History LH 1.D3 B65 Bug, Rauner Special Collections, Dartmouth College).

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

At some point, pledges are forced to perform fellatio on some phallic object. “Well, in the Sex Room, we try to let you kinda experience what a girl goes through when she sucks your dick. So... tilt your head back... open your mouth...” a brother said.

““This isn’t gonna hurt, pledge, caress it with your tongue.”

“Open your mouth... relax your throat...”

“Pledge, you look like you’ve done this before. You’re sure you’re not a homo...”⁴²²

Straus writes that because pledges are treated as “feminine,” during initiation, brothers “act out and support abuse and coercive behavior toward women and the ‘feminine.’” To avoid this label, to “empower themselves again,--i.e., to prove their manliness--pledges must demonstrate their hypermasculinity in terms of “heterosexual conquest, alcohol consumption, and disinterest in or animosity toward women.”⁴²³

In this way, brothers are “institutionally sanctioned to be abusive.”⁴²⁴ In hazing, the concept of consent is irrelevant. Pledges are forced to be abused and be humiliated in order to join an “exclusive” social club. This is one clear way that sexual violence is ordained by fraternities. It is baked into the entrance rituals of these communities.

Even after initiation, writes Straus, the othering of women is continued through the fraternity’s everyday culture. At Wednesday night house meetings, brothers’ share their sexual experiences—which brothers record and celebrate as “scores” or “scams,” commodifying women’s bodies in terms of personal conquest.⁴²⁵

I believe a great deal of change has been made in fraternities since Straus, Stonnington, and Fischer were brothers. I have seen this in conversations with current fraternity members, with the active efforts some houses make to welcome all visitors, to make everyone feel safe and comfortable, and to educate themselves on sexual assault and harassment. While these more recent examples suggest that nothing has changed, I want to emphasize this point: these institutions have clearly improved.

To be clear, peculiar initiation rituals—or at least persistent rumors of them—persist. It seems, at least to me, that fraternities and fraternity culture serve as a “last frontier” of the “Dartmouth Animal.” Fraternities still are the prime social spaces on campus and still host the majority of events. At least, three nights a week, women and individuals of other marginalized identities—often intoxicated themselves—pour into spaces that are largely run by men. As I have seen from graffiti around campus, as I have heard first person from friends and acquaintances, rapes still happen at Dartmouth, and survivors are still silenced by individuals and institutions.

I hope that you heed this history as advice of Dartmouth’s past missteps and successes. I hope it provides an insight to the culture of this institution. This is a culture that has had two sides: the

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ Straus, “An Argument Against Fraternities: How Fraternities support and perpetuate sexual violence.”

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

first has historically perpetuated hypermasculinity, gender-based violence, and other harms; the other has rallied together and fought back against this violence, and has proven resilience and strength.

Over the years at Dartmouth, Dartmouth has started educating all its students—individuals of all gender—about sexual assault and harassment prevention. It has more programs and staff members in place for the specific purpose of preventing assault and supporting students who have been assaulted. Much of this *is* the result of vocal protest, of truly courageous students, faculty, and staff, who advocated for change. This research revealed that advocacy work became increasingly common throughout the decades; women are more outspoken, creative, and defiant. The Dartmouth student body must continue this practice.

I hope that this work informs future generations in the ways that they choose to make Dartmouth safer and more welcoming for all individuals, particularly for those of marginalized identities. I think this history shows that the Dartmouth community—students, faculty, staff administrators—must continuously be growing, be thinking critically, be self-criticizing, and take radical—but thoughtful—steps to improve this institution.

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