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Research Paper

Burning Men in Effigy:

Lindenwood Ladies Confront Changing Gender Ideals

Lindenwood was founded in 1827 as a women's college and it took 142 years to break this tradition. In the fall 1968 semester returning students came back and found a big surprise. That year the first men came to campus and changed Lindenwood forever. Periodically men could be found in any given year that were part of the theater program but it wasn't until 1968 when men were admitted and given a dorm. In 1969 Lindenwood expanded as a coordinate college with Lindenwood I and Lindenwood II and later became a single college, as it is now. This seems like a simple change but it was not an easy one. This was breaking Lindenwood tradition, so not everyone was in support.

This paper examines the attitudes of women on campus at the time and why these attitudes were present. Students were divided and it is clear that the opposing side did not hate men but felt that the process of this major change was wrong. The process which was orchestrated by the president at the time, John Anthony Brown, was not handled correctly and caused some women to be against the men coming to campus and their complaints were valid. Research for this paper was taken from the Lindenwood newspapers during this change, the reports from President Brown and the board of director's minutes, and two interviews of students from this time. Interviews were conducted as a class with Marsha Hollander and a private interview with Mary Clark, both were students here before and during the change and gave the best insight on this period. There is also a national context for this issue to be placed in and to

look at how students of other colleges responded to change from single-sex to coeducation. It was a time of change and without it, men would not be at Lindenwood as they are now.

A Brief History

Women's colleges were founded in the 19th century and they were needed in order to give woman a higher education. Men were allowed in colleges but women were limited and had social expectations that limited an education. The founders of women colleges were "believers in women's intellectual abilities and advocates for their participation in society."¹ Vassar, a women's college, was known as providing an education that was the "best method to perfect her intellect."² As time went by more and more women's colleges opened and some were coordinate colleges with other male colleges, for example Sarah Newcomb College was a female college that was coordinate with the all-male, Tulane College. However in the mid 1900s there was a dramatic change.

Women's colleges began to have financial problems, because students began to go to public schools and they responded in many ways including becoming coeducational, merging with other colleges and some simply closed down.³ Lindenwood was no different, facing this same stress and responding like many others. It has been estimated that from 1960 to 1986, 81 female-only colleges were closed because of financial troubles, and in part because people felt that these colleges were outdated.⁴ It has been suggested that students saw single-sex colleges as "no longer playing a significant role in higher education because they had not maintained their special historic role and promise."⁵ Some colleges were the exception like Smith and Wellesley

¹Irene Harwarth, Mindi Maline, and Elizabeth DeBra, "Women's Colleges in the United States: History, Issues, and Challenges," *National Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning*, October 28, 2002, <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/PLLI/webreprt.html> (accessed November 7, 2009), 4.

² Ibid., 7.

³ Ibid., 9.

⁴ Ibid., 14.

⁵ Ibid., 14.

who remained single-sex. This was a national change that colleges needed to make and there driving force was not student opinion but financial difficulties and Lindenwood was no different.

Lindenwood Changes

Marsha Hollander attended Lindenwood beginning in 1967 and was at Lindenwood during the change. She remembers that she left the school for the summer in 1968 and came back after summer break to find men; which was a surprise because there was discussion to do this change but nothing was decided when she left for summer break and during the break no word of it was heard.⁶ She also claims that a “town hall” style meeting was held before the break, hosted by the president, and that the students expressed their opposition to men.⁷ The men appearing on campus was a shock but a very understandable one because there was no warning of men going on campus. The *Linden Bark* on September 20, 1968 was not really outraged but did have an article on the men, listing the 15 men that resided in Ayres Hall and it was written by two of the 15 men.⁸ Then the women began to respond and some were not happy.

October 22, 1968 the response heated up and resulted in a protest on campus. Marsha Hollander was at the protest and was holding the burning effigy of a man that the women created. They protested not for the reason that they were men but who the men were and how they were introduced. The men were given Ayres Dorm and this upset the women because when going to college at Lindenwood the students kept the same dorm their entire college career. So when the students returned, the Ayres women were put in other dorms and part of their college identity was taken away.⁹ It was not only Ayres women but also women who had other issues

⁶ Marsha Hollander, interview by Gender in America His315, Lindenwood University, October 2009.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Quentin T. and Bruce B., “Ayres Hall Airs,” *Linden Bark*, October 20, 1968. Mary E. Ambler Archives, Lindenwood University, Missouri, 2.

⁹Ibid.

with the men, but the dorm issue was the driving force behind the protest. Students were quoted in saying:

...our purpose is to show that there girls on this campus who believe that no matter what we say, Brown we'll do what he wants..., no one considers what we want... We've been getting the shaft, not a fair chance... The whole thing is underhanded... Dr. Brown could have informed us that there would be boys on campus before we came... The campus have been infiltrated with boys... We question the quality of the male students... We question the brain power and capability of these boys.¹⁰

The students not only protested about the dorm takeover and having no warning of the men but they also had other issues. They brought up President Brown's ignorance toward student opinion and the quality of the men. Both these issues will be discussed later in this paper. During the protest the men responded by throwing water on them and they were quoted in the *Linden Bark* saying, "I'd like to thank the female population of Lindenwood for noticing us... I think it's a very childish affair."¹¹ They didn't take this protest seriously and just laughed it off. The newspaper also quoted a female student that was dating one of the men, who witnessed the protest, saying that these women were just jealous because there were not enough men for everyone to date.¹² This shows that these women had serious complaints but were not respected. In the issue of the *Linden Bark* reporting the protest, a cartoon featured three students; one from Berkeley protesting war, one from Columbia protesting racism, and a female Lindenwood student protesting men with a question mark by her.¹³ It was a clear critique about the woman protesters and trying to down play their protest especially when comparing them to what other schools who were protesting major social issues of the time.

¹⁰ "Students Protest Tuesday Night." *Linden Bark*, vol. 3 no. 6, October 25, 1968. Mary E. Amber Archives, Lindenwood University, Missouri, 1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹² *Ibid.*, 1.

¹³ "Ban Boys Cartoon," *Linden Bark*, vol. 3 no. 6, October 25, 1968. Mary E. Amber Archives, Lindenwood University, Missouri, 2

No matter what was thought of these women, they still brought up valid complaints that were important to look at. The first of these issues was the men themselves and why the women were questioning the quality of the men. In a private interview with Mary Ratliff-Clark, she described the men in one word, “weird.”¹⁴ It’s a simple description but it was a genuine feeling about these men. She said that they were of a lower standard compared to the women students and were not chosen by the same qualities that the women were. This is a hard thing to prove but it is backed up by Ratliff-Clark and Hollander who said that one of the men was expelled by another college.¹⁵ The *Linden Bark* backed this claim up; in its September 20th article listing the 15 men it mentions that Bruce Brustin, a junior, was “thrown out of Boston [University] for serenading the girl dorms.”¹⁶ It is obvious that this man did much more than just sing to some girls, yet he was allowed to become a student at a college with all women. It’s very doubtful that Lindenwood would have admitted a female student that was expelled for behavior by another college.

Ratliff-Clark also says that the men severely increased the drug presence on campus and were heavy drug users, so they acted “weird.”¹⁷ Out of the 15 men she knew one by the name of Steve, who she says followed this “weird” quality, but they worked together at Lindenwood’s KCLC radio station at the time and became friends.¹⁸ She also claimed that drug use made the men go against the standards of the Linden Lady, which was an image of high decency.¹⁹ Of course their gender went against this standard, but also their quality was not to the Linden Lady standard. This was a strong point that both Hollander and Ratliff-Clark made and they felt that

¹⁴ Mary Ratliff-Clark, interview by Julian Barr, Lindenwood University, October 2009.

¹⁵ Mary Clark Interview, Marsha Hollander Interview.

¹⁶ Quentin T. and Bruce B., “Ayres Hall Airs,” 2

¹⁷ Mary Clark Interview.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

this was a terrible change that the men brought on. They expressed that Lindenwood was known for making sophisticated and educated women and that these men were not sophisticated and didn't take education serious enough.²⁰ Ratliff-Clark also says that they were underachievers and she believes that one of the men didn't even graduate from high school, this something that Hollander also claims.²¹ Men didn't have to follow the same rules that the female students had to follow. Ratliff-Clark points out one major rule that they didn't have to follow which was a dress code.²² Hollander brought up the rule of dorm visitation and curfew. Men could not visit a female dorm but a female could visit a male dorm, creating a double standard.²³ Curfew was another major rule because woman had to be in at a certain time and sign-in and out but the men were allowed to go freely and have no curfew.²⁴ This was really upsetting for the women because they were fine with these rules before the men came and the students expected that the men should be under the same rules. This was the president's decision to do so and he was quoted in saying, "I feel there is a real difference between men and women. Women have different roles in life...men and women don't have to be the same to be equal."²⁵ He had a belief that men and woman were not equal and should be treated differently. It was for these reasons that the women hated the men. So why would the administration bring men to campus in such a way that went so wrong?

As said earlier female colleges were having financial problems and Lindenwood was no different in this experience of financial problems because of being a single-sex college. In President Brown's April 22, 1968 report to the Board of Directors he calls this problem the

²⁰ Mary Clark Interview, Marsha Hollander Interview.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Mary Clark Interview.

²³ Marsha Hollander Interview.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Pamela Niehaus, "The Making of a College, 1969," *The Greater Saint Louis Magazine*, Vol. 5 No. 12, July 1969, 24

“Private College Crisis” and calls it the “plight of the private college.”²⁶ He told the board that private colleges face financial problems because of rising cost, top faculty are going to public institutions instead private, students get scholarships to public more than private, and less student interest in going to single sex colleges.²⁷ This was the financial drive changing Lindenwood. In the same report Brown suggested that Lindenwood needed to become coeducational and that this needs to happen fast but he said that he is considering doing a coordinate system which according to him is backed by the faculty more than the coed option.²⁸ He did not take in student opinion at all in this report and just simply says this needs to happen and his request to make this happen fast explains why there was a lack in the quality of the men. The board approved a coordinate college as the best option and gave Brown the power to completely handle the change.²⁹ A week after this decision Brown told the board that admissions would interview a group of selected male students and he wanted a small group in the fall of 1968.³⁰ He made it clear that he rushed this process and that he really wanted to have men here this would explain why there was so much oversight when selecting the first men. Brown should have taken his time and made sure he was picking the with the same standards and he does say that admissions is using the same standards as when choosing male theater students but he doesn’t say that they are using the same standards as the female students.³¹

²⁶ “Presidents Confidential Report to the Board of Lindenwood College,” April 22, 1968, Lindenwood university, St. Charles, MO, P:/PHuffman/Archive- PublicFolder/Lindenwood Publications_Digital Format/President's Reports/1960-1969(accessed October 7, 2009), 1.

²⁷ Ibid., 2-4

²⁸ Ibid., 6

²⁹ *Lindenwood Female College Minutes*, Jan. 25 1966-May 30 1969, Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO, pccommon.lindenwood.edu - /Faculty Folders/Faculty A-H/HuffmanP/Archive- Public Folder/Lindenwood Publications_Digital Format/Board of Directors Minutes/1961-1971 (accessed on November 10, 2009), 213, 232.

³⁰ Ibid., 232

³¹ Ibid., 232

In Brown's interview with *Greater Saint Louis Magazine*, he said that in response to the protest, a student committee was created to discuss the coordinate vs. coeducation options.³² He says that the committee decided that the coordinate option would be the best and that the woman feared that a coed system would take away woman leadership; however, Brown agrees with the coordinate decision, he talks about female student leadership and says, "I'm not impressed with the idea of feminine leadership. In theory it's a fine goal but in practice, the idea of a woman running a newspaper, not very well."³³ He didn't lie about the committee but he probably expected that the committee would side with the idea of men being on campus because he was the one who personally picked the students that would be on the committee! He did assign them to look at all options including staying the same, going coordinate or going coed.³⁴ It's highly doubtful that he would have chosen any women that were at the protest so this committee is the only student opinion that Brown took in. The *Linden Bark* reported in December 1968 that the proposal was issued for a coordinate college that would create a college for woman and a college for men at Lindenwood, and it's clear that the students wanted a coordinate system not an coeducational system and they also asked that the student governments be separate, there should be one newspaper, separate social clubs, classes did not have to be segregated by sex, there should be no reduction in admission standards and both sexes must have the same admission standards.³⁵ This proposal worked because it took in the complaints of the women and this is why after 1968 the angry tone went done and the women accepted the change. It created Lindenwood College I for women and Lindenwood College II for men.

³² Niehaus, "The Making of a College, 1969," 23

³³ *Ibid.*, 23

³⁴ "Committees to Study Coordinate Alternatives," *Linden Bark*, vol. 3 no. 6, October 25, 1968, Mary E. Amber Archives, Lindenwood University, Missouri, 2

³⁵ "Proposal Issued for Coordinate College," *Linden Bark*, vol. 3 no. 10, December 10, 1968. Mary E. Amber Archives, Lindenwood University, Missouri, 1, 4.

After this proposal was made Brown made another report to the directors in January of 1969. He said that Lindenwood II is just a way to start, meaning that he did believe that in the future it would be different and he did say that he hopes for an equal enrollment of men and women.³⁶ In 1969 the newspaper changed from the *Linden Bark* to *The Ibis*, and its first issue featured an article about the men and woman on campus being coordinate for the first time. The men said that “The girls should keep this in mind that we are here for the same purpose they are...So far they have left us alone” and the woman said, “it’s all right if they’re here to build up their own school and not to change Lindenwood.”³⁷ There was tension still but the angry student rhetoric of 1968 was down and the plan was working. Brown learned that he needed to take in student opinion. It’s obvious that when this transition started there was something wrong and that wrong was not taking in student opinion. As soon as Brown acknowledged student opinion and applied it, then everything was fine. Brown learned this lesson and that’s obvious in 1970 when the school needed another dorm for the men. He gathered the student presidents of the dorms and taking in these student opinions they worked together to make a plan to give men Irwin Hall.³⁸ This way of making a decision when it pits the men against the women was the right way that resulted in a peaceful compromise and no protest.

The National Change

Lindenwood was following a national trend at the time it accepted men to campus. Even before this there was a push around the country to make more coeducational colleges. And at the time that Lindenwood changed the same was happening at Sarah Lawrence, Princeton, and many

³⁶ John A. Brown, President’s Report to Board of Directors and Board of Overseers of Lindenwood College January 6, 1969, Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO, Pccommon.lindenwood.edu-/PHuffman/Archive-Public Folder/Lindenwood Publications_Digital Format/President's Reports/1960- 1969, (accessed September 30, 2009), 8

³⁷ “Confrontation,” *The Ibis*, Vol. 1 No.1, September 29, 1969, Mary E . Ambler Archives, Lindenwood University, Missouri, 1

³⁸ “Irwin Hall only to be given to men next year,” *The Ibis*, Vol. 2 No.2, March 2, 1970 Mary E . Ambler Archives, Lindenwood University, Missouri, 1.

other colleges. There was no college that had a transition that was smooth. Sarah Lawrence was like Lindenwood because it went from female to coeducational and Princeton went from male to coeducational. What makes these two different from Lindenwood however is that both were coordinated with other colleges that were opposite sex.

Before the 1960s there was a push for coeducation but there was a strong opposition. Amy Thompson McCandless, history professor at College of Charleston, did a study of the south and its struggle to create coeducation higher institutions. She found that 66 percent of the nation's women's colleges were in the south and only six universities in the south were coeducational.³⁹ She looked at South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia. At South Carolina University women were admitted but the school did not encourage them to admit and male students would try to stop them from attending school social events.⁴⁰ At the University of North Carolina the school was forced by the legislature to build more dorms for women to attend the university and the University of Georgia tried the same tactic as well.⁴¹ Socially the men and administration in the south tried to keep woman from attending, but these were all state university and were subject to the legislature so they were forced to stop discrimination. This was a long struggle for women that lasted until World War II. After the war there were more coeducational colleges and coordinate colleges but in 1960 single-sex colleges were changing and coming to an end.

Sarah Lawrence was a single-sex female college that became coeducational in 1968. The college started with six men in the 1967-1968 school year and they wanted to make coeducation "creep" in and make the transition smooth and the students in general supported the change and

³⁹ Amy Thompson McCandless, "Maintaining the Spirit and Tone of Robust Manliness: The Battle against Coeducation at Southern Colleges and Universities, 1890-1940," *National Women's Studies Association*, Vol. 2, No. 2, (Spring 1990): 200.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 207.

felt it was being done correctly by going slowly rather than a rapid change.⁴² Students felt that at Sarah Lawrence the change made it possible “for a college to admit men and still maintain a fundamentally women-friendly environment. Sarah Lawrence has been successful at this.”⁴³ Sarah Lawrence, unlike Lindenwood, did not push for men to be on their campus. One man described this by saying that we were “just regular guys who stumbled into it and happened to wind up there.”⁴⁴ Sarah Lawrence clearly made a better transition and their slow process made the women students to be more acceptable of the men. The college did not push for men to be there and simply just let it happen; unlike Lindenwood who got men on campus no matter who they were.

Princeton University was a single-sex male university that became coeducational in 1969. Four years after their change one of the first female students, Jane Leifer, wrote an article for the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* describing what it was like for the first woman at Princeton. She wrote that the men were fine with women but that they really resented the attention the media was giving the woman.⁴⁵ She also said that the problem with the men was that they didn’t “know exactly how to treat us, nor could we give them guidance as to how they could react” and this was because most didn’t have a women in their classes for years because they went to private single-sex high schools.⁴⁶ At Princeton the woman and men just avoided each other and this was their way to handle this transition and this caused a lot of tension but as soon as they became more together there tension went down.⁴⁷ This was might not be the best way to handle this but it worked and it caused a smooth transition for Princeton. Both Sarah Lawrence and Princeton

⁴²Elizabeth Chute, “Coeducation: Sarah Lawrence’s Best-Kept Secret,” *Sarah Lawrence Magazine*, Spring 2006, http://www.slc.edu/magazine/coeducation/mag_coed-features.php (accessed on September 27, 2009), 3.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁵ Jane Leifer, “Trials of the Coed 100- The coeducation of Princeton: four years after,” *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, May 29, 1973, 9.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

went through smooth transitions but it's clear that there was many ways that students dealt with this transition. Lindenwood had more tension and they dealt with it in an angry way, but things got better when they responded with protest.

Conclusion

Lindenwood went through a dramatic change. Men had a hard time at first and when given the nickname "Fabulous 15" it was clear they were hated more than liked. But the women had good reason, they were not just some man-hating feminists they just wanted to keep Lindenwood there's. They weren't being shellfish, they were concerned. They wanted to have their college the way they expected it when they came here. Admitting the men was a major change and it caused some strong reaction. Marsha Hollander put it best when she said that she was heartbroken by this change and she felt that they were bringing the women down to second class.⁴⁸ This was a strong reaction but it was heartfelt and it truly summarizes what the woman felt.

The women were being sidelined by President Brown and he conducted a lot of bad decisions when making such an important change. He was not respected for many reasons and that why he was labeled with the nickname J.A.B which Hollander said stood for Jack Ass Boy, but he made a decision that helped Lindenwood became what it is today.⁴⁹ He should have slowed down the process and chosen men that were better than who they were. It's clear by national examples that a slow transition was the better method. He also should have taken in student opinion right away instead of having to wait until protest erupted. There is a sense of pride that people feel when knowing what these women did and how they didn't just let this issue go. They fought and demanded their voice and it was hard but the women of Lindenwood

⁴⁸ Marsha Hollander Interview.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

ultimately won. And all the men who are here today all should thank the woman for their fight and voice when making Lindenwood accept men.

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