

1 August 2019

Emily Wick and Coeducation at MIT

& Sailing at MIT

Bob Gray '64

Context: Women at MIT: 1871–1951

Ad Hoc Committee on The Place of Women at MIT: 1952–1957

Emily: 1959–1973

Epilogue

Slides https://ee.stanford.edu/~gray/SBYC_Wick.pdf

Last edited 08/05/2022 at 21:19:45

Photo courtesy 1956 MIT *Technique*

Read from left to right (from couch to chairs). Rear area, seated on couch or chair: 1. Audrey B. Buyrn '58, 2. Martha Karpoti '57, 3. Vivian H. Goldman '57, 4. Emma Duchane '57, 5. Nancy Greig '57, 6. Barbara Rogers '55, 7. Mary Roan '57, 8. Marcia Adams '56, 9. Cynthia Sharr '56, 10. Doretta Binner '56. Forward Area, seated on floor: 1. Renata Egane '57, 2. Phyllis Jenkins '57, 3. Ella Paton '55, 4. Joan Costello '58, 5. Marcia Keilson '55, 6. Wendy Drew '56.

ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN STUDENTS



Harriet Fell, '64, from the MIT Museum archives. Published in March 14 2014 issue of *Science* review of [Bix 2013] by Maria Klawe.

Caption: “On the leading edge of a wave. The 25 women who entered MIT’s class of 1964 matched the graduation rate of their 874 male classmates.”

1960 was a pivotal year

“Until the Institute could commit itself to educating women in significant numbers, and could provide suitable living conditions, coeds were not overly ‘successful’. . . . Before 1960 women entered MIT at their own risk. If they succeeded – fine! If they failed – well, no one had expected them to succeed. In 1960 the Institute committed itself to the education of women as well as men The class of 1964 entered in 1960 knowing that MIT believed in women students. It was the first class in which coeds, as a group, matched the proportion of B.S. degrees earned by their male classmates!”



Emily L. Wick [Wick:70]

Prologue — The 1870s through 1951

1861 MIT founded in Boston

(*Boston Tech*)



1871 Ellen Henrietta Swallow (BA Vassar 1870, Chemistry): 1st woman admitted to MIT — as an experiment as a “special student” — *no tuition, hence no official record before graduation, allowed to take fewer classes*

Excerpt from Records of the Meetings of the MIT Corporation

December 14, 1870

It was voted to confirm the recommendation of the Committee on the School of Industrial Science that Miss Ellen H. Swallow be admitted as a Special Student in Chemistry — it being understood that her admission did not establish a precedent for the general admission of females.

*first woman graduated from MIT (SB 1873, Chemistry)*¹

Vassar granted her a MA upon submission of her MIT SB thesis, Smith granted her an Honorary ScD in 1910.

¹Probably first American woman to receive a science degree anywhere. [Clarke:1973]



1875-76 Swallow marries MIT Professor Robert Richards, *raises funds* from Women's Educational Association (WEA) of Boston (founded 1871) for women's facilities (lab and reception room)

MIT changes admissions policy to admit "special students" for "advanced instruction in Chemistry . . . without distinction of sex"

1878 Ellen appointed Assistant Instructor *becomes Fellow of AAAS*

1879 Women given privilege of being examined for a degree under the same conditions as men. *(admissions another story)*

1882 Original women's lab scheduled for demolition, Ellen and WEA *raise funds* for new lab and "suitable toilet rooms . . . and a reception room somewhere in the building"

MIT decides to admit women as *regular* students (*chemistry only*).

1884 Ellen appointed Instructor at MIT²

Margaret Cheney (1855–1884, '82) Reading Room established, provides “oasis”, “refuge”, “haven”

9/1/2005 *Technology Review*: “Everybody came there, it was our place. The rest of MIT wasn’t too welcoming.” Emily Wick

1890 1st club for MIT women students founded *Eta Sigma Mu* (HΣM) Society.

Begins as secret select social organization. Soon drops secrecy and actively recruits members, eventually inviting all women students to join. In 1895 name changes to *The Cleofan*

Cleofan lasts until spring 1934.

1893 2/11 *Institute Committee* founded, undergraduate student governing body.

²She held the title until her death.



1893 Women at MIT

[WOM5.200, Courtesy MIT Museum]

Margaret Cheney Room

1897 Around 6% of the 1187 MIT undergraduates are women.

Percentage not achieved again until 1970.

1899/1900 MIT Women's Association (MITWA) founded "to promote greater fellowship among Institute women"
— specifically alumnae.

Ellen fears that MITWA "will never be a success, because we have no dormitory life, no campus, and hence no college spirit"

so she is elected President

1900 *The Tech* 1/3/1901

Tech Alumnae Association.

The first annual meeting of The Association of the Women of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was held Saturday afternoon, December 29th in the Margaret Cheney room. The lunch tables were decorated with flowers sent in memory of Miss Marion Cheever. Mrs. Henry S. Pritchett, Mrs. William B. Rogers, Mrs. Edna D. Cheney, Miss Laura B. White and Miss Pike were the guests of honor.

Remarks were made by Mrs. Cheney, Miss White, Miss Pike, Dr. Elizabeth Pickford, Mrs. De Lancey, and Miss Forrest.

The Association was formed last June of the non-graduates or special students, and already numbers eighty members. It was decided to invite the seniors to each annual meeting and also to admit graduates to membership.

The following is the list of officers elected: President, Ellen H. Richards, '73; Vice-Presidents, Mabel W. Sawyer, '94, and C. Belle Kenney, '86; Recording Secretary, Nettie M. Willey, special; Corresponding Secretary, Sarah H. Bovesteele, '94; Treasurer, Isabel F. Hyams, special; Auditor, Matilda A. Fraser, '89; Executive Commit-

tee, Alice B. Tyler, Lillie M. Kendal, Mabel D. Clapp, together with the officers of the Association.

It was voted that each Saturday during the year a table should be set apart in the lunch room for the use of the Association.



1904 Katharine Dexter '04 (Biology), member of Cleofan, marries Stanley McCormick — son of Cyrus McCormick. KDM a major supporter and *fundraiser* for MIT women.

Her endowment valued at \$51 million in 1997, then the largest from an individual donor.

Prominent activist for women's right to vote and birth control.

1906 NCAA Spurred on by President Teddy Roosevelt, the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS) founded to regulate football and “other collegiate athletics.” All early documents refer to participants as “young male,” “boy,” or “young man.” Sports, athletics, and physical education are aimed at “the needs of young white males who they envisioned would be the country's leaders.” [Carter:2006]

Women and minorities are invisible.

Name changed in 1910 to *National Collegiate Athletic Association* (NCAA). In the Constitution, By-Laws, and Executive Regulations, women are *explicitly prohibited* from competition with men in sanctioned events.

Not changed until **1982** in reaction to enforcement of 1972 Title IX.

Sailing never falls explicitly under NCAA regulation, but spurred by NCAA threats and power, **many individual programs, colleges, and universities adopt NCAA rules in the 1960s for all intercollegiate sports!**

1913 Institute Committee becomes *Undergraduate Association* with INSCOMM as legislative and executive branch. Activities approval.

1916 MIT moves from Boston to Cambridge. *About 1% women*



1923 MIT appoints Architecture Librarian Florence Stiles '23 to an unofficial post as advisor to women students.

President of MITWA in 1935, *official* “advisor to women students” in 1939.

1917 *Committee on Women’s Athletics* founded by physical educators with a goal of standardizing rules for women’s sports. Along with similar organizations evolves in 1971 into the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW). Ignored by NCAA.

1930 *Intercollegiate Yacht Racing Association (ICYRA)* established
No *explicit* gender-based restrictions.

Changes name to *Intercollegiate Yacht Racing Association of North America (ICYRA/NA)* and, in 2000, to
Intercollegiate Sailing Association (ICSA).

1935-6 Led by Walter “Jack” Wood '17, MIT Sailing Pavilion built and opened. First fleet of wooden Tech Dinghies, designed by MIT Naval Architecture Prof. George Owen & built by Herreshoff Manufacturing Company — founded by Nathanael (Nat) Greene Herreshoff (MIT 1870) and his brother John in 1878, Bristol RI.

Tech Dinghy 1936



1938 February: Cleofan revived as *Association of Women Students* (AWS), approved by INSCOMM

1945 Margaret Compton (Mrs MIT President Karl Taylor Compton) works with MITWA, Technology Matrons³, & Florence Stiles to establish first MIT Women's Dormitory at 120 Bay State Road in Boston — over 1.2 miles from MIT campus. 14 beds

Stiles states that dormitory should help improve the esprit de corps of the women students, and hence the graduation rate — women performed well in class in comparison with men, *but only 1 in 20 typically graduated.*

MIT admissions for women limited by availability of on-campus beds + approved housing with family

³MIT Technology Matrons was founded in 1913-14 as a social service organization for professors' wives. In 1975 the Matrons merged with the Technology Dames (founded for wives of MIT students in 1922) to form the MIT Women's League. In 1986 the League opened to the MIT community, married or not.

1946 Emily Lippencott Wick comes to MIT as a PhD student in chemistry from Mount Holyoke (BA chemistry, 1943, MA organic chemistry, 1945)

Chooses MIT because it has a good chemistry department, her Dad is an alum, and it is near

Lives part time at 120 Bay State Road.



Rockport on Cape Ann.

1947

STUDENT No. **1951962913** No. R 282

Wick, Emily L. G
PRINT - (LAST NAME) (FIRST NAME) (MIDDLE INITIAL) (CLASS)

120 Bay State Road, Boston Cir. 2646
(TERM MAIL ADDRESS) (TELEPHONE NO.)

384 S. Belle Vista, Youngstown, Ohio
(HOME ADDRESS) (TELEPHONE NO.)

M. I. T. SAILING PAVILION
1947-1948
TO APRIL 1, 1948

A Crew Lawley
Helmsman Coxswain **MAR 26 1947**
Racing Skipper Bosun

COMPLETE AND PRESENT CARDS AT SAILING PAVILION

1948 Dorothy (Dotty) Leaman Bowe begins work as an MIT secretary. Meets students, faculty, and President Compton. Advises and coaches students, especially women, and becomes their advocate.

Women students were ignored or harassed by some faculty, staff, teaching assistants, and students; both in person and in print.

1949 March 26: *New England Intercollegiate Sailing Association* (NEISA) formed in Cambridge as part of ICYRA.

Leonard (Len) M. Fowle, yachting editor of the *Boston Globe* and correspondent for the *New York Times*, is a founder and leader of both NEISA and ICYRA.

1951 Emily receives PhD in Chemistry at MIT — one of only 19 degrees awarded to women. Becomes Research Associate at MIT, then goes to work at Arthur D. Little.

Rumblings and rumors increase of poor treatment of women students by faculty, staff, and other students.

1952 Dean of Students E. F. Bowditch suggests MIT should either “eliminate women students, at least undergraduates; or decide we really want women students, plan an adequate set-up, and then deliberately go out and get more good girls.”

Ruth L. Bean appointed Assistant Dean, given responsibility for women students in 1955.

2nd Generation Tech dinghies (fiberglass, Cape Cod Shipbuilding)

1953-55 MITWA survey of alumnae shows strong success rate, 93% were employed and active in their specialized fields.

1953 Revised ICYRA regulations make explicit that member institutions must be either all male *or coeducational* and that women-only institutions are not allowed.

ICYRA attempts to explicitly follow standards of the NCAA “with possibly some modifications.”

Ad Hoc Committee on the Place of Women at MIT

1954 Dean Bowditch writes MIT President James R. Killian suggesting an *ad hoc committee on the place of women at MIT* to consider all aspects of admissions, housing, and student life. Killian writes Chancellor and Provost Julius A. Stratton asking him to bring together a group of representative people to do this.

1955 In January Stratton appoints committee: (with no alumnae!)
Professor Leicester F. Hamilton '14 (Chair)
Assistant Dean of Students Ruth L. Bean
Suzanne Z. Deutsch, Technology Matron's representative
on Women's Advisory Board (Mrs Professor Martin Deutsch)
Assistant Professor of History Elspeth Davies Rostow
(Barnard '38, MA Radcliff '39, Mrs Professor W.W. Rostow)
Associate Prof. Kenneth R. Wadleigh '43

Women students

For some time this office has felt the need of an extensive study of the place of women students at the Institute and for a closer integration of women students into the whole educational program for undergraduates. The special committee appointed by the provost and chaired by Professor Leicester F. Hamilton is now at work, and its recommendations should contribute immeasurably to the general welfare of women students.

from 1955 President's Report

— *unfortunately overly optimistic prediction*

December: Director of Athletics writes to Athletic Administrative Board and Committees for the Planning of Athletic Facilities and Program regarding “basic assumptions that it is felt must be made in considering the need for additional athletic facilities at M.I.T.” including:

2.0 That we plan in the Athletic Program to include facilities for approximately 200 women.

2.1 **That there be no intercollegiate program for women.**

2.2 That there be a limited **intramural program for women**, such as badminton, archery, bowling, etc.

2.3 That there be no required program for women.



After several discouraging attempts to participate in MIT sports, Antonia (Toni) Deutsch (later Schuman) is welcomed by Jack Wood and Hatch Brown at the Sailing Pavilion — provided she can handle a Tech Dinghy and a 110 and tie the prerequisite knots. In 1956 following her crewing in several regattas she becomes the first woman to receive an MIT Junior Varsity letter. AWS President in Junior Year, namesake of MIT *Toni Deutsch Regatta*.

— *but women still not allowed in the Athletic Association or Varsity Club!*

1956 John Rule replaces Bowditch as Dean of Students.

Strong sentiments expressed in publications, classrooms, rumors, letters, meetings — against admitting women undergraduates.

Harvard Crimson chimes in:

Coeds, Even Few people are aware that M.I.T. is a coeducational institution. Indeed, to Most Harvard students, the idea of a feminine mind concerning itself with electrochemical engineering or mining and metallurgy seems somewhat revolting.

from March 2, 1956 *Harvard Crimson*

6/21/1956 Letter from Margaret Alvord, Housemother of 120 Bay State Rd, to Hamilton:

In reply to your request for a statement of my opinion as to whether girls should attend M.I.T. or not, I can say in confidence that over the period of years that I have been Director of the Dormitory, **doubt as to whether they belong in the undergraduate school has grown into certainty that they do not.** . . . they would receive a a more rounded education under more normal conditions in any of a number of good colleges . . . Then if they still are serious about it, they could come to M.I.T. as graduate students . . . if, as Dr. Killian asserts in his annual report, we are committed to produce as many active scientists as possible and to maintain the standards of excellence expected of us, then **there is little in the records of the girls who have lived in the dormitory in the past ten years to justify their continuance in the undergraduate school.**

Years later in **1970** Alvord writes to Emily

While I was still at 120 orders came around I suppose from Killian, for us to take a stand on should we or should we not continue to have girls — and I found myself in distinguished company — Elspeth Rostow & Dr Herbert Harris & I opposing undergraduate coeds. **We drew such immature lulus now and then that I felt a girl could get her undergrad work or at least 1st or 2 years just as well at Wellesley or Holyoke.**

Context: Many complaints made regarding Alvord's lack of support for and interest in dormitory residents.

I found *no supporting evidence* in the Archives that Elspeth Rostow opposed undergraduate coeds.

Dr Herbert I. Harris MD was a psychiatrist and MIT medical director and wrote in his 7/31/56 letter to Hamilton:

The business of raising a family takes from five to fourteen years at a minimum. During this time, **had a male student had her place, he could have been contributing profitably in his professional capacity.** At this time, when there is such a **shortage of engineers**, one wonders if we are justified in taking positions away from male students for female . . . With so much conflict at an emotional level, it becomes plain that their intellectual efficiency must almost inevitably become impaired . . . **I think that the presence of women students in the student body has a definite leavening effect and their presence is almost universally welcomed, I believe, by the faculty and the student body. My concern is for their own welfare, however, and not for the pleasure and ornamentation they can contribute to MIT.**

Arguments against continuing coeducation are countered by referral to the MITWA alumnae survey of 53-56 and by AWS and others with **statistics of successful careers by women MIT graduates in research, teaching, medicine, law, business, and government.**

Many observe that *the graduation and attrition rates would improve if the resources were provided to improve the academic and personal environment for women students.*

Killian prods Stratton to prod Committee: Stratton to Hamilton

“There is now a very strong feeling expressed by the President and by Jack Rule that *we must come to grips with the problem of women students*, and arrive at some early decisions . . . Even though your report may be still incomplete, may I not have whatever is ready . . . *I should particularly like to have an expression of the views of the several members of your Committee on what course the Institute should follow. It is not all necessary that these should be unanimous.*” 10/17/56

Hamilton submits a confidential memo to the President, which becomes known as the *Hamilton Report*.

Much of the understanding of the “report” and its impact follows “New faces in science and technology” by Evelyn Fox Keller [Keller:81]

Key excerpt:

The committee's deliberations continued until the early fall of '56, culminating in a report recommending that M.I.T. cease accepting women students as undergraduates. *No copy of the final report is available*, but some of the correspondence affecting the final recommendation is. . . . **In retrospect, it appears that the Hamilton Report marked a crisis in the relations between M.I.T. and its women students.** The report itself produced a vociferous reaction. Many were disturbed by its conclusions; even more were disturbed by the picture it portrayed¹ . . . The choices were clear: either to discontinue the admittance of women undergraduates or to strive to improve their circumstances. **The Record shows that the former alternative was unequivocally rejected, and gradually, efforts were begun to effect the latter.**

¹ By at least one account, *the reaction was so acute that all copies of the report were ordered burned.*

That's the legend, but it's only partially true.

In 1986 when the files on women students were transferred from the President's Office to the Archives, another story emerged:

There was no formal committee report, Hamilton provided *his own* statistics and *his own opinions* arguing that women undergraduates have no place at MIT. Subsequent correspondence between Stratton and committee members suggests they were unaware of the contents of Hamilton's confidential memo supposedly representing the committee deliberations.

*There is no public evidence that the committee ever met,
much less "deliberated."*

From MIT Archives AC132, Box 18, *Women Students* Folder:

CONFIDENTIAL

Contees 10:

10/21/56 4-11-56

*This so called "report" was submitted to
by Stratton following his letter to
Hamilton of 10/17/56 and prior to
10/22/56*

Reference will be seen in this file to a "Hamilton report." This was not really a report at all of the committee of which he was chairman but was an assemblage of confidential statistics and information about women students collected by Hamilton. When JAS pressed him for progress on his committee's review of the status of women students at M.I.T., he produced these statistics. The Hamilton Committee per se apparently never did submit a report. Nor were any statements prepared by the committee members, as far as can be determined. Because of their confidential nature, this collection of statistics is filed in the safe.

LHM

Note for files: When Dr. Stratton's files for this period were being transferred to the Archives the section containing the above-mentioned confidential statistics were removed from the report and filed in a restricted folder. What remains is the so-called "Hamilton Report." *A complete copy of the report is in the restricted file.*

LHM
7-18-56

LHM was Loretta H. Mannix, Stratton's highly regarded Administrative Assistant.



The location of such a "restricted file," or if the file even exists, is not public.

To continue the story:

Memorandum to Dr. J. A. Stratton:

Dear Jay:

May I venture some suggestions for clarifying policy with respect to women students at the Institute?

Since the Hamilton Committee has failed to come through with anything helpful, I would suggest that we seek to make administrative decisions, first, by reaching some tentative conclusions in our top administrative group, and then reviewing these with the Academic Council. These administrative conclusions should, I suggest, deal with both the long term and the short term problems, and I shall make some observations about each.

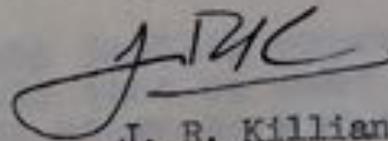
Memo. to Dr. Stratton

- 3 -

October 22, 1956

I would venture the concluding observation that I do not see how the Institute, having admitted women for so long, can now change its policy, nor do I feel that even if such a change were practical we should do it in view of the growing feeling that women should have access to our great universities.

Yours sincerely,



J. R. Killian, Jr.
President

1957 Stratton proposes new policy on undergrad women and Academic Council approves, summarizes policy at an informal tea for resident women students 4/24/57.

The Tech article 4/26/57

More Coeds Later, But Fewer In Fall, Sees Stratton At Tea

"Women are here to stay, and it is our hope to make them feel more a part of the MIT community" is the Institute's official policy on Tech coeds as voiced by Dr. J. A. Stratton at an informal tea given at Moore House on April 24 for resident women students.

Dr. Stratton and Dean Fassett explained to the coeds that their place in the MIT community has been under serious consideration for some time and it has now been decided to expand and amplify facilities specifically for women as rapidly as means can be found.

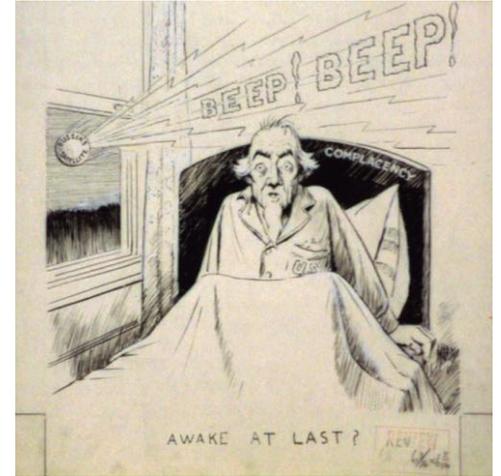
Since it is considered unwise and improper for the Institute to admit Freshmen women beyond its ability to accommodate them, plans have now been made for housing 14 Freshmen in the present Women's Dorm at 120 Bay State Road, with 3 upper-classmen in residence as unofficial advisors. An additional number of women commuters meeting the required academic qualifications may also be admitted to the Freshman class.

Also, a separate section of Bexley Hall will be made available to 33 undergraduate women in September with Prof. and Mrs. William F. Botiglia as faculty residents.

Girls who would like to live in Bexley next September are asked to sign up in room 7-102 as soon as possible.

Emily returns to MIT as Research Associate

4 October Sputnik Launched
Shortage of engineers noted



1958 February 25 *The Tech*: “Coeds Fight Expulsion From INSCOMM, Seek Status as a Group”:

INSCOMM **removes AWS representation** claiming “the number of coeds at MIT is so small as to invalidate any claim of representation”

Adjacent article “Tech Coeds: Play A Special Role” concludes with “To many, it would seem that the latest Institute Committee action lacks the ring of hospitality.”

ICYRA notes that “where sailing is a regulated sport, it is a part of the athletic program which in most colleges is regulated to some extent by outside groups such as the National College Athletic Association (NCAA). The policy of this and other similar groups does not recognize the participation of women with men” and begins consideration of creating an Affiliate Membership for women’s sailing associations. [Bently:1958]

1958 MIT intercollegiate championship sailing team includes a female crew, Carol M. Dorworth '60.





1959 Emily Wick appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science at MIT — *only* woman faculty member at MIT outside of Humanities.

20 women in the 120 Bay State Dorm.

Julius Stratton becomes MIT President.

Emily's formal responsibilities for MIT women lay in the future, but by default a **role model** and actively talking with women students about the Institute and careers.

1960 Katharine Dexter McCormick pledges \$1.5M for a women's dormitory on campus

“[the dormitory is] an unprecedented opportunity to advance the professional development of our women students. Women have made substantial contributions to scientific and technical progress in the past . . . **Women’s potential for achievement in these fields represents one of the great latent resources of the country.**” ‘ *from 1960 President’s Report*

1961 Kenneth R. Wadleigh becomes Dean of Students in July.

The University of Rhode Island, an NCAA school, announces it will follow NCAA rules in *all* sports and exclude women from all intercollegiate sports and *refuse to play any teams including women.*

NEISA adopts NCAA prohibition (to be effective in 1966), but actively supports formation of the Women’s Intercollegiate Sailing Association (WISA) and the New England WISA (NEWISA) “To encourage and promote women’s intercollegiate sailing; to form college sailing teams; to inspire interest in sailing; to create and instruct sailing groups.”

NEISA provides high level liaisons, advice (led by Len Fowle and Jack Wood), organizational cooperation, and goal of eventual merger.

MIT plays active role as a host and fields a women's team including MIT NEWISA student representative Eleanor (Ellie) Chance.

1962 Sailing and fencing approved as women's club sports, but women had very low priority in using MIT athletic facilities.



Herzbrun: Sailing? Did you [take] advantage of the MIT. . . did they have a sailing team?

Wick: Well, I did. Sure MIT did, but I did not do a lot of it there because I had a boat out here in Rockport and I did not want to use up my goof off time in town. But, when things got thick, I would walk down to the sailing pavilion and smell the fresh air.

Emily Wick Oral History [Wick:92]

1963 Stanley McCormick Hall opens, attracting national publicity. 1st tower of McCormick Hall houses about 125 women, significantly increasing the number of women admitted.

Undergraduate women required to live in McCormick.

Wadleigh hires Radcliffe Associate Dean Jacquelyn Mattfeld as Associate Dean of Student Affairs, responsible for women's program.

(Emily's predecessor)

MIT Catalog mentions "up front" that MIT is coeducational.

Emily is the first woman at MIT promoted to a tenured position.



1964 Emily Signs up for the *Committee on Student Environment*, meets Dean Wadleigh.



Dotty Bowe appointed secretary to Mattfeld, moves into Dean's office.

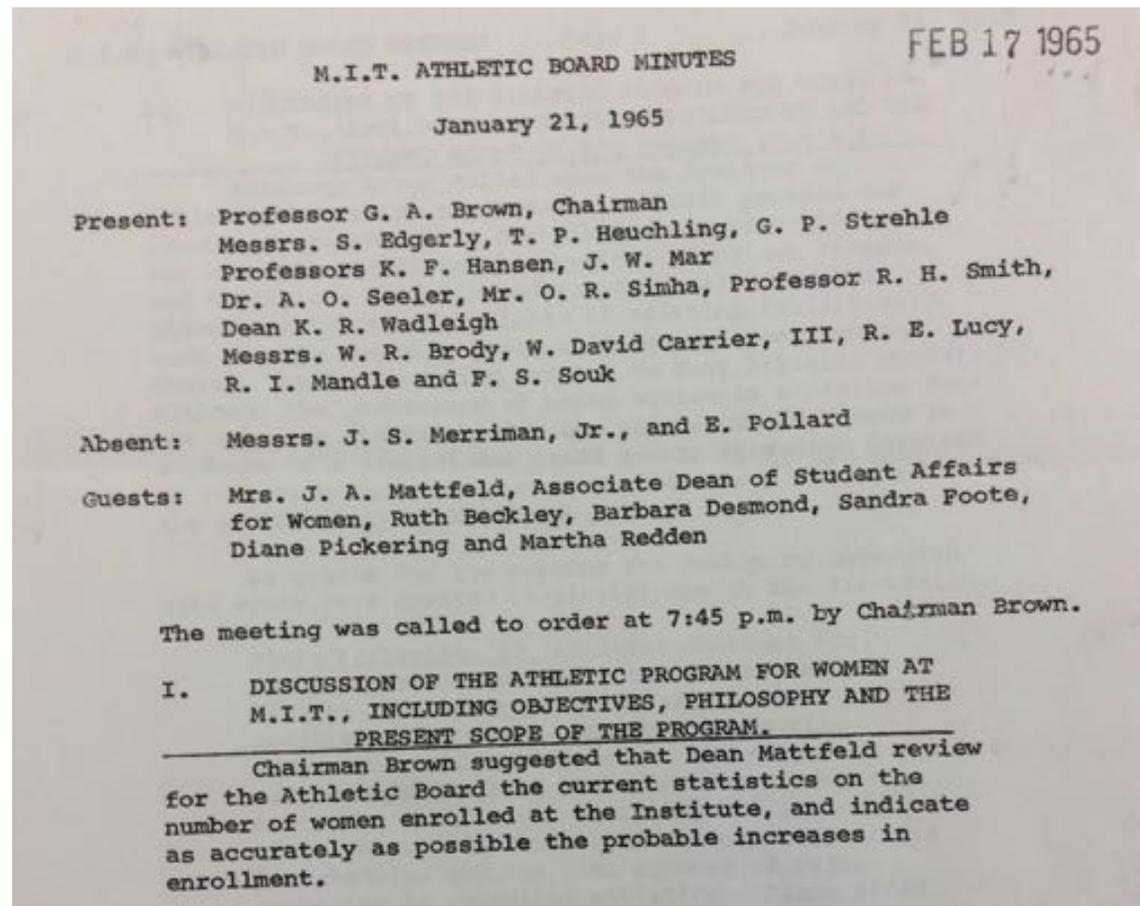
MITWA becomes the Association of MIT Alumnae (AMITA).

A women's athletics program formally established beginning with 44 women students.

WISA incorporates several ICYRA procedures,
Ruth Beckley '67 chairs NEWISA Scheduling Committee.

In response to appeals from women's sports and athletics organizations and its own long range planning committee, **NCAA categorically rejects participation of women in their championship events: "The games committee shall limit participation to eligible male athletes"** [Carter:2006,NCAA:64]

1965



Ruth Beckley '67, Sailing Team. A women's sailing team, organized this past fall, attracted a group of 15 women, mostly freshmen and sophomores. Coaching was provided by the staff at the Sailing Pavilion and several members of the men's sailing team. The team competed in 5 regattas sponsored by the New England Women's Intercollegiate Sailing Association. Highlight of the season was

Note women's sailing team organized in fall 1964, in advance of NEISA enforcement of prohibition of women on varsity team in 1966,

an M.I.T. victory in a regatta of 17 women's college teams on the Charles River on November 7 and 8, 1964.

“... from 1965 when it was an earth shattering first occasion to have *fifty* women enrolled in the first year class”

Emily Wick, *Tech Talk*, 3/28/1973

Academic Council **again** takes up question of women's future at the institute, with some faculty and administrators **still** regarding training women undergraduates as a risky venture.

After much argument, the Council finally endorses *raising the number of women undergraduates to 400, raising the percentage from 3% almost to 9%* (but it takes years to happen).

★ June: Emily succeeds Mattfeld as Associate Dean of Students with responsibilities for women's programs.

Emily joins Dotty in Room 5-108 with the intent of making it a Dean's office which would welcome students at any time. Office always full of students.

"Between 1963 and 1972, Dotty with Emily Wick were the women's program at MIT."

Dotty's "goal was to know every woman student, and she and Emily had an office with an open door " [Bowe Bio]



1966 May 2 Emily writes to the architect (Prof Herbert Beckwith) of the second unit of McCormick Hall regarding the design of the athletic facilities. She continues active involvement in the project through 1967.

Coed sailors host New Englands

Tech's women sailors are ready to defend their New England Intercollegiate title this weekend. The girls will be going for their third straight blue ribbon in the championship regatta, scheduled for MIT's Sailing Pavilion.

The women's sailing team came into existence in the spring of 1962 after the New England Inter-

collegiate Sailing Association announced that they would bar women from competition by the fall of 1966. Under the guidance of coach Stu Nelson, and with the assistance of the Tech varsity sailors, the coeds entered their first competition in the spring of 1965. Since then, the girls have competed in twenty-five New England

Women's Intercollegiate Sailing Association regattas, which have averaged eight schools entered per competition.

Their record in two years of competition has included two New England Championships, thirteen first places, and seven runner-up finishes.

Fourteen schools to compete

By far the most active women's sport at MIT, sailing has attracted over twenty coeds to the intercollegiate competition. Fourteen New England intercollegiate women's teams will be lined up for the starting gun Saturday. Women's sailing teams from Boston University, Connecticut College, Emerson, Emmanuel, Merrimack, MIT, Northeastern, Radcliffe, Rhode Island School of Design, Simmons, Tufts, Vernon Jr. College, and Wellesley are entered.

The MIT girls are hosting the championships and are eager to maintain an unblemished record of having never lost a regatta held on home waters.



The women's sailing team for 1966-67: shown with coach Stu Nelson are (from left) Alix Smullin '68, Sue Downs '68, Maria Karpati '69, Ruth McDowell '67, and Duggie Gordon '68. MIT hosts the New Englands this weekend.



The Tech, 10/22/1966

The Tech, 11/1/1966

“Coeds first in Man Lab Regatta; win trophy for third straight year”

1967 NEWISA and her sister organization, the Middle Atlantic Association of Women Sailors, organize the first women's nationals in 1967.

Excerpts from *Athletics and the Women Students at MIT*, 17 March
Memorandum from Associate Dean Wick to Dean Wadleigh:

The MIT Women's Sailing Team has a distinguished record in that it won the 1966 New England Intercollegiate Women's championship and was undefeated throughout the fall season. . . . Because of their demonstrated activity in athletics and their need for assistance and a structure within which to schedule meets, the question of admitting women students to the MIT Athletic Association was discussed at a meeting of the Athletic Board. Their membership was approved by the Athletic Association in February 1967.

But women are not yet permitted in the Varsity Club.

Fran Charles, MIT Sailing Master (at MIT since 1992), relates stories told to him by Hatch Brown, former MIT Varsity Sailing Coach and Sailing Master, and Stu Nelson, women's Varsity Coach at MIT for 39 years and first full time women's coach for the ICYRA:

During the mid 1960s Emily spent many weekends organizing and hosting New England women-only sailing regattas and was instrumental in founding the New England Women's Intercollegiate Sailing Association when the New England Intercollegiate Sailing Association would not allow their participation in varsity sailing. Emily even organized the do-it-yourself sandwich lunches for the regattas. She also lobbied the Athletic Association for approval of women's sailing as a varsity sport.

Women's [sailing](#) and crew designated “varsity teams” retroactive to 1963, all other women's sports still considered “club sports.”

MIT views the women's Varsity Sailing team as having officially begun in 1969 with Athletic Department funding of a women's coach, Stu Nelson — a decision strongly influenced by Emily.
[Kelly:2013].

1968 McCormick Hall East opens. Women seniors permitted to live off campus.

Mildred (Millie) Dresselhaus moves to MIT with an appointment as the first woman tenured Full Professor. Becomes involved with women students, begins discussions with Emily and Dotty on admissions policy and other issues.

Emily Wick promoted to Full Professor (1st woman at MIT *promoted* to Full Professor from within the ranks)

There are 217 registered undergrad women out of a total 3955 registered undergrads: **5.5%** [68-69 President's Rept]

Professor Daniel Nyhart in MIT Sloan School of Management replaces Wadleigh as Dean of Student Affairs. Decides an Associate Dean focused on women's affairs is *no longer necessary and*

informs Emily and Dotty of intention to dissolve office! 

The office is officially eliminated in 1971.

1969 Senior House becomes first coed living group with 6 women. Residence requirement for men and women becomes the same.

[Wick:69]

1970 In March Emily Wick submits *Proposal for a new policy for admission of women undergraduate students at MIT* arguing that admissions requirements should be made the same for women as for men — no longer limit the number of undergraduate women by the number of on-campus beds.

ICYRA recognizes NEWISA women's nationals and sets policies and procedures.

1971 Emily's report and recommendation adopted by MIT.

Emily writes for the 1971 MIT *President's Report*:

The year 1971 has special significance for women at M.I.T. because it marks the one hundredth year since the first woman enrolled at the Institute. Ellen Richards wrote of her early experience, "I came to the institute in January 1871 . . . I was at that time shut-up in the Professor's private Laboratory very much as a dangerous animal might have been. Whenever the classes came into the 1st year Laboratory the door was kept carefully shut and I was expected to stay in. I was not allowed to attend any classes."

Today the situation is very different. Not only do undergraduate women have a diversity of living groups from which they may choose but they will constitute **more than 10 percent** of the entering class of 1975. . . .

After discussion of advances in women's intercollegiate sports teams, she observes that

A high point in the history of M.I.T. women was reached when Kathy Jones '71 and Maria Bozzuto '73, members of the Women's Varsity Sailing Team, received M.I.T.'s highest athletic award, the Straight T, at the Athletic Association's Awards Banquet.

1st time that women were invited to the annual Awards Banquet!

MIT women win the 1971
ICYRA National Women's Dinghy Championship.



Emily steps down as Associate Dean. Room 5-108 closed. Emily recommends that someone be appointed to continue her work. Dotty promoted to staff position and moves to Financial Aid.

Wadleigh writes to Killian 10/20/1971 that “Emily played the key leadership role in the successful development of a strong identity and character for undergraduate and graduate women at M.I.T. during her tenure on the administration.”

Strong student reaction. Excerpts from 12/7/71 Letter from Carol L. Epstein '72 and Paula F. Stone, '72, to MIT community. Copies to *The Tech*, President Weisner, Provost Gray, Dean Nyhardt, . . . :

To Members of the Institute Community:

We are writing this letter in response to the retirement of Emily Wick from the Deans' Office and the circumstances and issues surrounding her decision. With the demise of Dean Wick's office as of January 1 1972, the women students of M.I.T. will lose an integral, personal representative in the higher echelons of the Institute as well as a congenial, intimate friend who is sensitive to the problems that we, as women, must cope with in a male-run, male-oriented environment.

To our knowledge, after consulting several faculty and members of the administration, no definitive action is being taken to replace Dean Wick. The needs and position of women at the Institute have apparently failed to generate a serious commitment. We are concerned that unofficial policies will remain the same; that they will perhaps be re-examined and discussed, but that nothing will be done; that the urgency for our full recognition as members of the M.I.T. community will be ignored, and the entire white-washed, appeased, and silenced.

A standard argument used against the establishment of a separate office for women at M.I.T. is that women and men are equal, therefore there is no need for such an office. We argue that we are indeed equal, but that we have not been granted equality; although we are intellectually equal, there are parts of the Institute in which we (and our friends) have experienced **personal harassment and discrimination**. . . .

As of January 1, 1972, the office of Dean of Women Students will be empty, and will *de facto* have been abolished . . .

We would also like to set up an Institute Committee on Women's Affairs at M.I.T. as an investigatory body to look into areas of concern to women, especially in response to input from the community. . . .

Administration reacts to strong student outcry, appoints **yet another** Ad Hoc Committee — on the Role of Women Students at MIT

Meanwhile, Emily, Millie, and Dottie organize a meeting for women students in January 1972 to discuss issues of common interest,
but they forget to put the word "students" in the title of the flyer.

1972 January meeting organized by Emily et al. opened with a history of women at MIT by Emily. Draws over 100 women (and two men) from all aspects of MIT life and raises awareness of the immense needs and frustrations of women at MIT. Named the *Women's Forum*, begins regular meetings.

21 January: official *Ad Hoc Committee on the Role of Women Students at MIT* appointed, including Women's Forum members Dresselhaus & Stone '72 (co-chairs), undergraduates Sandra Yulke '74, Carol Epstein '72, Lynn Mahony '72, Christina Jansen '63, as well as graduate students, faculty, a member of the MIT Corporation, administrative assistants, and a psychiatrist from the MIT Medical Department.

Emily provides co-chairs with a collection of relevant documents from 1935 on, including her chronology of women students at MIT along with letters, reports, memoirs, statistics, surveys, and articles.

Spring 1972 Lynn Mahony and Sandy Yulke along with Dean Nyhart and Jon Hartshorn (Assistant to the Dean of Student Affairs) met over breakfast every week for most of the Spring semester to write the job description, review the resumes and interview candidates for an individual to assume Emily's role in the office of the Dean of Student Affairs. Interviewees included Anne Ellison (later Thompson), a former graduate student, Margaret (Meg) Hickey '63, '69, and Anna Bailey '54.

The Committee strongly wanted an alumna.

June 23: Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972

requiring compliance by 1978:

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under **any education program or activity** receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Strongly supported by the AIAW.

 NCAA fights legislation ferociously with lobbying, money, and suits, claiming it spelled the “doom of [men’s] intercollegiate sports.”

Spring: Ad Hoc Committee submits report *Role of women students at MIT*:

A **discriminatory attitude** against women is so institutionalized in American universities as to be out of the awareness of many of those contributing to it. Decisions may indeed be made with no deliberate effort to exclude women — at least at times — *but policy must be judged by outcome, not by pronouncement.* And here we find inadequate numbers of women at all levels, most significantly so at senior levels.

Report praises the work of Emily's office for its efforts in providing the needed services, and emphasizes the need for their *continuation at the Dean's level.*

Committee Recommends:

- active recruitment of women
- publicity about women at MIT
- alumnae Educational Councilors interviewing applicants
- department awareness to admit more women
- a system of women advisors
- more women graduate students

Dean Nyhart hires Anne Ellison as *Assistant Dean*⁴ of Student Affairs.

Students on Ad Hoc Committee win a Karl Taylor Compton Prize

Emily receives a Bronze Beaver Award from the MIT Alumni Association.

Citation:

In your progression through M.I.T. as student, teacher, dean, friend, and mentor to women students at M.I.T., you have made a unique contribution to the life of the Institute; you have been advocate and model for a generation of women students at M.I.T. from a handful to an abiding presence. Your contributions to the growth and spirit of women at M.I.T. have left a lasting mark on the Institute.

⁴An Assistant Dean has significantly less authority, influence, and power than an Associate Dean such as Emily.

20 October 1972: Wadleigh writes Killian quoting the citation and adding his own praise of her work for MIT. He closes his letter with

Emily commutes to M.I.T. every day from a delightful, small, old house on the shore overlooking Rockport Harbor. . . . She is a great sailor, but I don't think she has been able to spend as much time recently as she would like either at Rockport or sailing from our own nautical pavilion.

In a 1976 memorandum *Historical Outline of Women's Athletics at MIT* [Bowe Athletics History], Dottie Bowe reported that during the 1972-73 Academic year "The Physical Education requirement [was] extended to women students," showing an immediate impact of the summer passage of Title IX. The general Physical Education requirement with no exceptions save for medical reasons appeared in the 1973-74 MIT *Bulletin* for the entering class of 1977.

Epilogue



1973 Emily leaves MIT to become Dean of the Faculty at Mt. Holyoke College.

Ad Hoc Committee *Compton prize* used to fund a women's intercollegiate sailing trophy in Emily's name — *Presented in appreciation for her efforts on behalf of women students at M.I.T. June 1973*

Boat pictured in plaque is *Beaver II*, Emily's Cape Cod Bullseye.

MIT women win the 1973 ICYRA National Women's Dinghy Championship.

NCAA changes tactics and moves to take over women's sports, beginning at its convention by *waiving the regulation barring women from men's events*. It begins to use its wealth, political influence, and long history to undermine and eventually absorb and kill the AIAW in 1982, who lose an antitrust suit against the NCAA.

In *A Century of Women Students at M.I.T.* [Wick:73], Emily describes the accomplishments during her time as Associate Dean of Students and ends with remaining tasks:

First, *there must be more women faculty at both junior and senior levels.*

Women students need to observe and to communicate with women who have been successful in their field of study. . . . Such role-models are necessary if women are to be encouraged to seek careers. . . .

Second, *there must be more women students.* M.I.T. — as a leading university in our society — has a responsibility to educate those people whose talents can best be met by the Institute's resources.

2018 Percentage of women in the MIT entering Class of 2022 is slightly under 50.



Women's Sailing Wins Emily Wick Trophy; Coed Sailing Takes Sixth at NEISA Team Race Championship This Weekend
April 07, 2019



Slides available at https://ee.stanford.edu/~gray/SBYC_Wick.pdf

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