

3 May 2018

Coeducation at MIT: 1950s–60s

Robert M. Gray, MIT '64

Professor Emeritus, Stanford University

Prologue: The 1870s through 1951, women at MIT

The Hamilton Committee: 1950s —1960s

Epilogue: The 1970s & Recent

<https://ee.stanford.edu/~gray/Stanford5-3-18.pdf>

You can read details later.

Last edited May 3, 2018.

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 Karpati '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 Sherr '56, 10. Doretta Binner '56. Forward Area, seated on floor: 1. Renata Egone '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

Pop Quiz: How many MIT alumnae in the audience?



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 1970]

Prologue — The 1870s through 1951



1861 MIT is founded in Boston

(Boston Tech)

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

Excerpts 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 (BS 1873, Chemistry)



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"

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 Swallow Richards (ESR) 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 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 Eta Sigma Mu ($H\Sigma M$) Society founded,
first club for MIT women students.

Begun as secret select social organization. Soon dropped secrecy and actively recruited members, eventually inviting all women students to join. ESR elected an honorary member. In 1895 name changed to *The Cleofan*, officers and members first published in 1897 *Technique*. Strong overlap with *Young Women at the Institute* list in same book. Cleofan lasts into spring 1934.

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



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 after 1970.

**1899/1900 MIT
Women's Association
(MITWA) founded**
“to promote greater
fellowship among Institute
women”

— specifically alumnae.

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

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 — member of Cleofan — graduates (Biology). Marries Stanley McCormick — son of Cyrus McCormick. Major supporter and *fundraiser* for MIT women. Her endowment valued at \$51 million in 1997, then the largest from an individual donor.

1913–14 MIT Technology Matrons founded as an organization for professors' wives as a social service organization. In 1975 the name changed to MIT Women's League. In 1922 Technology Dames formed for the wives of MIT students. In 1986 the organization opened to the MIT community, married or not.

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

New Margaret Cheney Room — 1920



1923 MIT appoints Florence Stiles ('23, Architecture) to an unofficial post as adviser to women students. She becomes Librarian of the Arthur Rotch Library of Architecture in 1931, President of MITWA in 1935, and official "advisor to women students" in 1939.

1934 5/5 *The Tech* Final mention of Cleofan activity.

Coeds To Meet Today In Attempt To Revive Dormant Sisterhood

Representation On Inst. Comm. Is Among The Aims Of Group

In an effort to revive Cleofan, a coed organization which thrived several years ago, the Technology coeds will have a meeting Tuesday afternoon at five o'clock in the Emma Rogers Room.

Coed leaders, who include representatives from the architectural students as well as from the science students on this side of the river, are hoping that the plan for the new society will be approved by the general meeting Tuesday. If the new move is adopted, the coeds will be organized in a unit for the first time in more than three years.

Aims of the new organization will include representation on the Institute Committee for the frailer engineers. Thus far, no coed has ever been elected to a seat on the undergraduate governing body. In addition the new society will run dances and other social events for the women students of the Institute and their guests.

This is one more instance of the coeds attempting to strengthen their position in Institute life, the last innovation was the coed fencing team.

1937
11/16
The Tech

1938
Association
of Women
Students
founded.
Constitution
approved by
INSCOMM
(2/11
The Tech)
2/15
The Tech →
Announced in
*MIT
Handbook*

Coed's Club Gains Institute Approval

Association Will Try To Obtain Suitable Housing For Girl Students

Elections for officers were held by the newly-formed Association of Women Students at M. I. T. at the last meeting of the club. At the same time the constitution of the club was voted on and accepted.

Officers for the coming term are: Margaret Whitecomb, '39, Pres.; Frances Emery, '40, Vice-Pres.; Ida Rovno, '39, Treas.; Edith Cameron, '40, Sec'y; Phyllis Winter, '42, and Janet Norris, '42, Representative at large.

The club was organized in an effort to have the coeds in the Institute become more closely associated with one another, and to solve mutual problems more quickly and easily through the cooperation of all the women students. The most important problem now facing the Association is the investigation of the matter of co-operative housing for the coeds.

It is hoped that a satisfactory house can be found soon which will be able to accommodate the entire coed group. If such plans mature, the proposed house will be more in the nature of a Girl's dormitory and will not associate itself with any national sorority.

1945 Margaret Compton (Mrs MIT President Karl Taylor Compton) works with MITWA, Technology Matrons, & 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 (later 20). 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.*

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

Choses 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.



1948 Dorothy (Dotty) Leaman Bowe begins work as a secretary to Professor F.H. Norton in the Metallurgy Department.

Quickly expands her acquaintances beyond her Department to include students, faculty, and President Compton.

Advises students, coaches for exam preparation, connects students with faculty having similar interests, and becomes familiar with problems facing women students and becomes an advocate.

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

1951 Emily receives PhD in Chemistry at MIT. 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. Unhappiness at Women's Dorm because supervised by Women's Advisory Board, not by the Dean of Undergraduates and Student Affairs (Dean of Students).

Ad Hoc Committee on the Place of Women at MIT

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.

1953-55 MITWA survey of alumnae shows strong success rate

1954 Dean Bowditch writes MIT President John 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 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

1956 John Rule replaces Bowditch as Dean of Students.

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

- heavy attrition and poor graduation rate
- “women’s education should be left to ‘specialists in the field’ such as Wellesley and Mount Holyoke” and Radcliffe and Smith, . . .

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, argues that the women students would receive “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.”

Alvord then asserts that “. . . 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.”

Some context: Many complaints were made to the administration regarding Alvord’s lack of support for and interest in dormitory residents.

But the most extreme letter in the Archives regarding continuing to accept women students comes from MIT medical director and psychiatrist Herbert I. Harris, MD, 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 the excellent (but not easily available) article by Evelyn Fox Keller [Keller 81]:

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.*

But in 1986 when the files on women students were transferred from the President's Office to the recently created 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.

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

CONFIDENTIAL

Copies to:

XEROX 458K 4-17-86

*This so-called "report" was submitted to
Dr. 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 was 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
7-18-86

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

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.

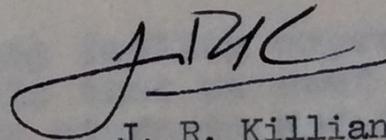
Memo. to Dr. Stratton

- 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.

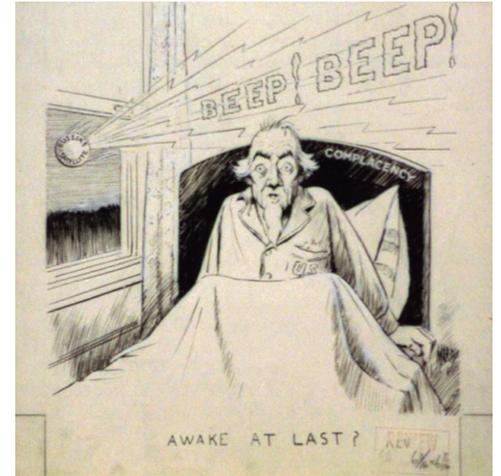
Since it is considered unwise and improper for the Institute to admit Freshmen women beyond its ability to accommodate them, plans have now been made for housing 14 Freshmen in the present Women's Dorm at 120 Bay State Road, with 3 upper-classmen in residence as unofficial advisors. An additional number 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. Bottiglia 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
“Last spring, Chancellor Stratton said that, ‘Women are here to stay,
and it is our hope to make them feel more a part of the MIT
community.’ To many, it would seem that the latest Institute
Committee action lacks the ring of hospitality.”



1959 Emily appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science at MIT.

20 women in the 120 Bay State Dorm.

MIT releases document *The Woman at MIT* arguing the need for additional housing for women students.

Julius Stratton becomes MIT President.

1960 Emily *only* woman faculty member at MIT outside of Humanities

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.

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

“[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. Title changes to Dean of Student Affairs in 1962.

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

1963 Stanley McCormick Hall opens, attracting national publicity. Wadleigh hires Radcliffe Associate Dean Jacquelyn Mattfeld as Associate Dean of Student Affairs, responsible for women's program.

248 women students

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

The 1st tower of McCormick Hall houses about 125 women, significantly increasing the number of women admitted.

120 Bay State Road and Bexley cease to be women's residences.

Undergraduate women required to live in McCormick or with parents or close relatives.



Mrs McCormick, Dr. Killian, President Stratton, Mrs Killian, Mrs Stratton, Margaret McVicar '64, and Mrs Compton



McCormick Hall

Emily becomes the first woman at MIT promoted to a tenured position from within the faculty ranks.



Left: In her office, Right: Talking with students in McCormick Hall

1964 Emily decides to learn more about other aspects of MIT. Signs up for the Committee on Student Environment, where she meets Dean Wadleigh.



Dotty Bowe appointed secretary to Mattfeld when Prof Norton retires, moves into Dean's office.

AWS, headed by Margaret MacVicar '65 (BS '64), sponsors a national symposium "American Women in Science and Engineering" with Carol Gustafsen Van Aken '65 as chairman.

MITWA, faculty members, and Dean Mattfeld provide support.

MITWA becomes the Association of MIT Alumnae (AMITA).

1965 "... 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).

Mattfeld leaves MIT in the spring.

After discussions with Dotty, Wadleigh chooses Emily Wick as the new Associate Dean of Students with responsibilities for women's programs.

Emily joins another new Associate Dean of Student Affairs, future Chancellor, President, and strong supporter of diversity —

Paul Gray '54

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 . . . She and Emily worked with Professor Millie Dresselhaus when she came to MIT for the Abby Rockefeller Mauze Chair.”
[Bowe Bio]



1967 Women finally admitted to the MIT Athletic Association, but not to the Varsity Club.

Women's sailing and crew designated "varsity teams" retroactive to 1963, all other women's sports considered "club sports"

Undergraduate women finally permitted to live off campus without the requirement that they live with family, provided they were over 21 or secured parental permission

1968 McCormick Hall East opens. Mildred 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)

1969

There are 217 women in a class of 3955: 5.5%
3% of School of Science faculty are women

Professor Daniel Nyhart, an expert on finance in the MIT Sloan School of Management, replaces Wadleigh as Dean of Student Affairs.

Dean Nyhart decides an Associate Dean focused on women's affairs is *no longer necessary and*

informs Emily and Dotty of intention to dissolve office! 

Epilogue: The 1970s and Recent Years

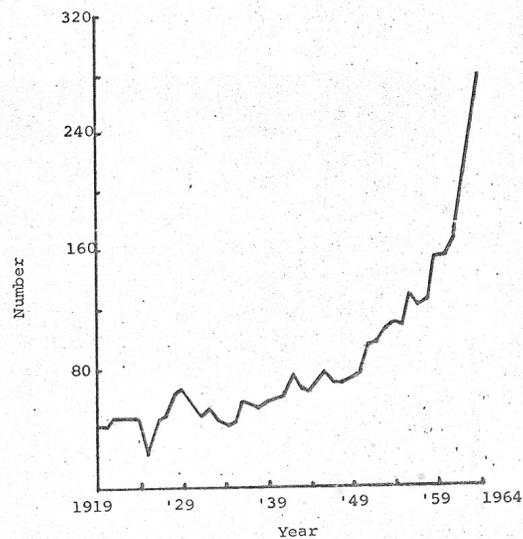
1970 In March Emily Wick submits *Proposal for a new policy for admission of women undergraduate students at MIT* arguing that admissions requirements should be made the same for women as for men — no longer limit the number of undergraduate women by the number of on-campus beds. Includes a history of of women at MIT backed by extensive statistics on performance, housing, activities, athletics, and contributions.

Recommendation adopted by MIT in 1971

249 women housed on campus

In September Wick releases a shorter report *Women Students at M.I.T.* including many of the same ideas. [Wick 9/1970]

Figure 2.
Total Enrollment of
Women Students
1919-1964



From The President's Report 1963 - 1964, M.I.T.

Table II. Graduation and Attrition Data for Men and Women
in the M.I.T. Classes of 1960-1969

Class	Number Entering Class ¹		Percent Graduated (BS) ^{2,3}		Percent Disqualified (D ₁) ^{2,4}		Percent Withdrawn ⁶	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
1960	22	914	36	89	27	*	36	*
1961	16	883	56	87	12	*	31	*
1962	18	923	66	85	22	*	11	*
1963	21	915	62	90	9	*	28	*
1964	25	874	84	86	4	*	12	*
1965	23	885	87	90	0	*	13	*
1966	23	869	91	92	0	11	9	0
1967	39	889	92	94	0	10	8	0
1968	46	861	87	86	0	11	13	3
1969	50	918	100	82	2	8 ⁵	0	10

* Unknown

¹ From Presidents Reports. Women Students Classified by Years; Classification of Students 1956-69.

² From Records in Office of Dean for Student Affairs. Transfer students included.

³ From Presidents Reports, Degrees Awarded 1959-1969. Transfer students included.

⁴ From Committee on Academic Performance, Policies and Procedures, May 1969.

⁵ From Committee on Academic Performance, February 1970.

⁶ Calculated by difference.



1971 Emily steps down as Associate Dean. Room 5-108 closed. Dotty promoted to staff position and moves to Financial Aid. Emily recommends that someone be appointed to continue her work.

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 outcry, decides to appoint **another** Ad Hoc Committee — on the Role of Women Students at MIT

Meanwhile, Emily, Mildred Dresselhaus, and Paula Stone organize a meeting for women students in January to discuss issues of common interest, *but they forget to put "students" in the title of the flyer.*

1972 Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972:

“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.”

First meeting chaired by Dresselhaus and Stone draws over 100 women (and two men). Brings in women from all aspects of MIT life and raises awareness of the immense needs and frustrations of women at MIT. Named the *Forum of Women*, begins regular meetings. Part of this group is appointed as the official Ad Hoc Committee on the Role of Women Students at MIT.

Committee produces report *Role of women students at MIT* by the end of spring:

“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.”

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 of Student Affairs in response to another recommendation by Ad Hoc Committee

Students on Ad Hoc Committee win a Karl Taylor Compton Prize

Emily Wick receives a Bronze Beaver Award from the MIT Alumni Association. Cited as an “advocate and model for a generation of women students at MIT from a handful to an abiding presence”



1973 Emily leaves MIT to become Dean of the Faculty at Mt. Holyoke College. Ad Hoc Committee prize used to fund a women’s intercollegiate sailing trophy in her name. *Presented in appreciation for her efforts on behalf of women students at M.I.T. June 1973*

Presented for AWS by Paula Stone on June 7

Aside: Boat is *Beaver II*, Emily’s Herreshoff-designed Bullseye

Mary Rowe appointed as [special assistant to the president and chancellor for women and work](#).

In *A Century of Women Students at M.I.T.*, June 3 1973, Emily describes the accomplishments and progress during her time as Associate Dean of Students.

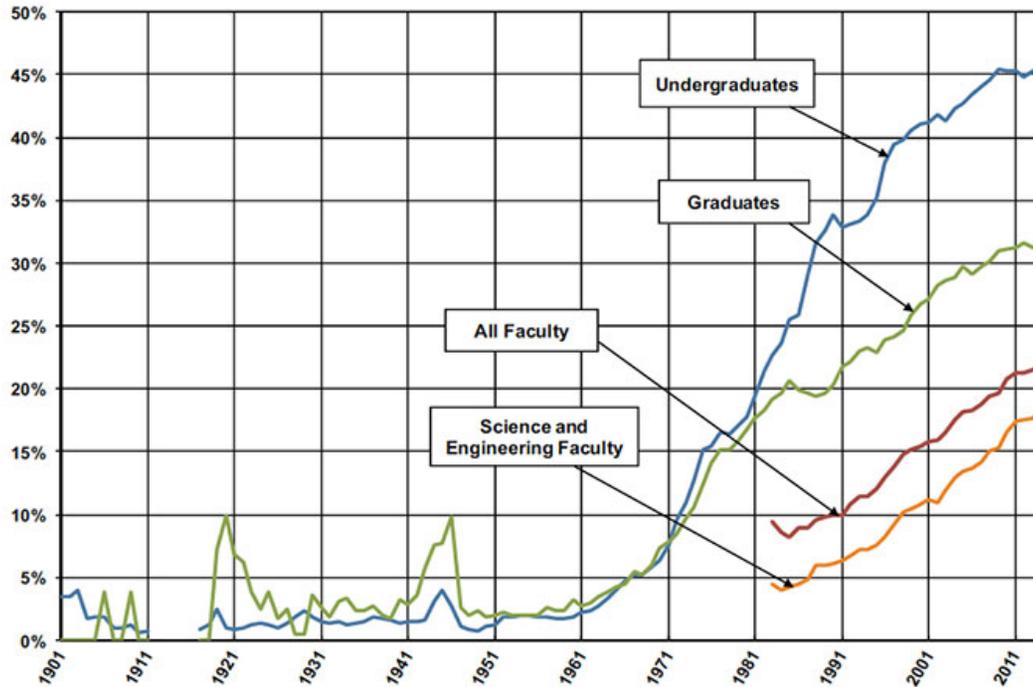
Remaining tasks include:

“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.
. . . ”

2014 Women at MIT from MIT web site

<http://web.mit.edu/fnl/volume/264/numbers.html>



Large discrepancy from undergraduates to faculty!
⇒ A problem in growing the number of women students in engineering: small number of women faculty of engineering

Too few women faculty, role models, counselors, advisors!

Probably out of time by now, but the following slides are included for your consideration: 4 slides on the final comment + acknowledgements + sources

Parting Thoughts on the Bottleneck Facing Women in Academic Engineering

Percentage of Women in a few EE/ECE/EECS Faculties in 2002

University of Delaware	0%	UC Berkeley	11%
UCSD	2%	Penn State	11%
USC	4%	Stanford	11%
Cal Tech	5%	Cornell	13%
UT Austin	5%	University of Washington	20%
Princeton	7%	Duke	30%
University of Michigan	7%		

By 2010,

Institution	% women	total faculty
CalTech	19.2%	13
Duke	18.5%	27
University of Washington	17.5%	40
UCLA	13.0%	46
U Wisconsin	13.0%	38.5
RPI	12.8%	39
MIT	12.0%	151
Georgia Tech	11.4%	114
Texas A&M	11.1%	72
Princeton	10.9%	27.5
Purdue	10.8%	83
Rice	10.0%	20
U Michigan	9.8%	71
UC Berkeley	9.8%	40.5
Top 50 Average (2007)	9.7%	
Cornell	8.8%	34
Stanford	8.6%	41.5
Carnegie-Mellon	8.2%	49
U Illinois	8.2%	85
Northwestern	7.8%	51
NC State	7.4%	54
U Maryland	6.8%	62
UT Austin	5.0%	68
USC	4.9%	61
UCSD	3.8%	52

↑ 10.5%, 42.5 in 8/2010

Serious problems of **pipeline** and **pool**.

Small increases \Rightarrow large %, more role models, more diverse experience, more effective faculty \Rightarrow *draw more students*

Are things any better NOW? I don't know, I retired in 2013, — *but*

School of Engineering
 Department of Electrical Engineering
Faculty Demographics by Gender
 September 1, 2015

School of Engineering				
School	Rank (broad)	Female	Male	Total
Engineering	Assistant Professors	11 22%	40 78%	51 100%
	Associate Professors	9 18%	41 82%	50 100%
	Professors	18 11%	139 89%	157 100%
Total		38 15%	220 85%	258 100%

Department of Electrical Engineering				
Department	Rank	Female	Male	Total
Electrical Engineering	Assistant Professor	3 38%	5 63%	8 100%
	Associate Professor		5 100%	5 100%
	Professor	2 5%	36 95%	38 100%
Total		5 10%	46 90%	51 100%

UCSD $5/52=9.6\%$ \uparrow

vs. e.g. Caltech $3/19=15.8\%$ \downarrow

U Washington 17% \downarrow

(actually it's $5/51=9.8\%$ \downarrow)

What works?

★ Active faculty recruiting across a wide spectrum:

Fair and open and active searches (Denice Denton '82 wrote the book.)

The richer the pool discovered in a search, the better the final candidates. (Basic principle of optimization)

*It's a search committee,
not an envelope-opening committee.*

Denice Denton

Leadership challenge — dealing with residual and often unconscious bias, educating search committees (who too often see no problem reproducing themselves)

— Schools with best records had activist Presidents and Provosts!

lip service not enough

Acknowledgements

Material draws heavily from the papers of Emily L. Wick in the possession of her niece, Laura Hallowell (Wellesley '64), *The Technique*, *The Tech*, *Technology Review*, *The MIT Handbook*, and the MIT Museum and MIT Archives, the articles and book of Amy Sue Bix, and the old Web pages of the Association of MIT Alumnae (AMITA) beginning at <http://alumweb.mit.edu/groups/amita.old/esr/swallow.html>

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Original slides of MIT October 2017 talk are available at ee.stanford.edu/~gray/TitleIX.pdf

These slides available at ee.stanford.edu/~gray/Stanford5-3-18.pdf

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