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Moral Citizens: Coeducational Transformation at Stanford

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Introduction

On September 22, 1965, freshmen moving into the all-female Roble Hall were presented with two documents. The first outlined the pre-registration activities—qualifying examinations, meetings with faculty advisors, and house meetings—they would soon take part in. The second detailed the social regulations they were bound by as newly enrolled Stanford undergraduates. In just under a dozen pages, Social Regulations and Procedures exhaustively documented sign-out rules, chaperone policies, and enforcement of rules in campus dormitories. Roble freshmen were permitted twenty-five late leaves during their first quarter, and otherwise were required to return to their dormitory by 10:30 each evening, at which point Roble was closed to men. For each late leave, female undergraduates were required to fill out a card stipulating where they were going, who they were going with, and what time they would return.¹

By the fall of 1969, however, a freshman moving into Roble might have been either male or female. He or she would have moved into a single-sex floor, but would have lived in the same building as upperclassmen on mixed-gender floors. In just four years, Roble had transformed. What was once an historic epicenter of women’s lives at Stanford was by 1969 the site of some of the first coeducational hallways in the country.² The Roble transformation took place against a backdrop of student protest, administrative changes, and shifting expectations of the role of female undergraduates. Though Stanford had accepted female students since is founding in 1891, it was not until the late 1960s that the university became substantively coeducational institutionally, residentially, and academically.

² “Coeducational housing in Roble.” Stanford News Service, October 17, 1969, Box 7295, Stanford University Archives
Changes in coeducational education at Stanford from 1965 to 1969 were concomitant with student activist movements throughout the Bay Area that challenged the student’s place in a university hierarchy. On the Stanford campus, students organized protests and staged sit-ins against the Vietnam War beginning in 1965 and targeted their activism at the university’s institutional ties to the military. At times, anti-war protests turned violent, as in the case of the 1969 arson attack that destroyed part of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. Student protest was also not limited to the Vietnam War. In 1968, members of the Black Student Union took the microphone at a campus assembly following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. and called on the administration to “put your money where your mouth is” where anti-racist policies were concerned. Both anti-war and black student movements challenged orthodox positions on the relationship between students and the policies endorsed by their university.

During this turbulent era, Stanford students renegotiated their relationship with the university as an institution. For female students, it was an era that saw the transformation of Stanford from a nominally to substantively coeducational institution. Over the course of four years, women were integrated into Stanford’s administrative, residential, and academic structures. As their place in the university changed, so too did ideas about student citizenship, about civilized relationships between men and women, and about the role of educated women. This paper uses interviews, archival sources, and Bay Area newspaper articles to analyze the transformation in coeducation at Stanford from 1965 to 1969. It begins by describing the origins of Stanford’s moral regulation systems, tracing their development from the university’s founding to their gradual relaxation in 1965. The second half of the paper takes up the question of

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residential coeducation, arguing that the late 1960s witnessed an unprecedented integration of previously gender-segregated institutions at Stanford. While early conceptions of women at Stanford relied on gendered norms of moral citizenship and community guardianship, coeducational transformation upset these expectations, providing institutional, physical, and intellectual spaces for women to participate as equal student citizens. For men and women alike, the late 1960s upended traditional hierarchies that separated student interests from administrative priorities, creating a more active form of participatory citizenship in the university context.

**Moral Regulation and the Origins of Student Citizenship**

At Stanford, student citizenship had long been defined by two sentences penned by David Starr Jordan, the university’s first president, in 1896. Known as the Fundamental Standard, it states that “[s]tudents at Stanford are expected to show both within and without the university such respect for order, morality, personal honor and the rights of others as is demanded of good citizens. Failure to do this will be sufficient cause for removal from the University.” The Fundamental Standard set forth principles of student self-governance, fashioning the university into a training ground for citizenship. Yet these standards were interpreted differently depending on the gender of the undergraduate. Women’s social regulation was explicitly defined in the context of moral self-governance, with the student handbook noting that regulations were designed to “enable each woman to develop her good judgment and social maturity as a member of the Stanford Community.” While women were expected to regulate themselves, men—who were designated as their chaperones—played a supervisory role.

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5 Associated Women Students.
University paternalism had its roots in the doctrine of *in loco parentis*, which had dominated university life in America since the revolutionary era. *In loco parentis* was originally a legal doctrine that gave universities the right to stand in for parents as guardians of students. This allowed courts to avoid lawsuits over university discipline because it gave wide latitude to administrators as surrogate parents. Universities were able to dictate where students could live, what they could consume, and with whom they could interact under the auspices of *in loco parentis*. In the 1960s, as undergraduates increasingly questioned sources of institutional authority, they also began to chafe at the principle of student-as-child. Stanford administrators acknowledged that there might be discontinuities between the student’s freedoms at home and on campus, acknowledging, for example, that Stanford’s alcohol rules “may or may not be in accordance with…family custom.”

Just as Stanford used its status as parent to establish differential Fundamental Standard protocols via the Men’s Council and Women’s Council prior to 1965, so too did it establish different residential models for men and women. Until the late 1960s, women were subject to two major regulations from which men were exempt: curfews and on-campus living. In 1965, the curfew system was designed to give women progressively more freedom as each quarter passed, an explicitly designed training system that tried to mold well-mannered and self-regulating young women. For example, though a freshman in Roble could only stay out until 2:30 in the morning ten times during fall quarter, a senior woman had unlimited late leaves and could return

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7 Allen, Lucile to Parents of Incoming Freshmen. September 1963. Stanford University Archives, Box 1724/9, Stanford, California.
as late as 6:00 AM. In addition, women, but not men, were required to live on campus for the entirety of their undergraduate education.8

At Stanford, *in loco parentis* and the Fundamental Standard underpinned women’s social regulations, but the status of women at the university was influenced by an additional historical structure: a cap on women’s enrollment that persisted until 1973. In 1899, Jane Stanford made an amendment to the university’s Founding Grant stipulating that only five hundred women could enroll at Stanford, a figure that was later amended further to a ratio of forty percent.9 As a result, the women who did gain admission to Stanford were cast in especially rarified terms, as there were limited places for them at the university. These standards were explicitly articulated in women’s social regulations, which set forth a particular vision of the ends to which women were being educated. In 1927, then-Dean of Women Mary Yost sent a letter to the parents of incoming freshmen expressing her hope that Stanford graduates would graduate as good citizens, a wish she held most fervently for female students, to whom “the University looks for the maintenance of its social standards, since in any community in which they may live later they will be largely responsible for these standards.”10 Her letter sketched the contours of Stanford’s attitude towards is female students from 1899 to 1965. Yost aped the language of the Fundamental Standard, making an argument for the role of a university in training its students for model citizenship. In this vein, women were expected to abide by social regulations in order to demonstrate fidelity to community norms and standards. She closed the letter on the doctrine of *in loco parentis*,

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8 Associated Women Students.
10 Yost, Mary to Parents of Incoming Freshmen. September 1937. Stanford University Archives, Box 1724/9, Stanford, California.
encouraging parents to help their daughters “see [the] wisdom” of Stanford’s social regulations.11

Just as the university was expected to be the parent of students during their time at Stanford, parents were also expected to prepare their children for a new set of rules and regulations.

This symbiotic vision of parenting assumed that the process of raising children didn’t end when students entered university; rather, it argued implicitly that the work of parenting extended until women were themselves wives, mothers, and community members. Some female undergraduates participated actively in the creation of this ideal. In an etiquette handbook published by the Women’s Council in 1963, students disseminated advice on proper dating behavior and on basic manners. The forty-page volume ended with a section entitled After Graduation, which began by saying “it’s only a step from campus to career, to marriage, to one’s place in the community.” The authors went on to cite a Carnegie Foundation report that “revealed that special education counted only 15 percent” for success in business, “against 85 percent for personal traits.” These personal traits, the authors implied, could be honed and refined under the auspices of Stanford’s gendered moral codes. In gesturing towards change, they noted that “women’s place in marriage is no longer in the background,” and that because some businesses ask that wives join their husbands in interviews, “a personable, well-educated, socially-adjusted wife is a definite asset.”12 While Stanford demanded good citizenship of all its students, its social regulations set different standards of citizenship based on gender. These expectations were even brought to bear structurally, as Roble Hall was built with far more

11 Ibid.
common space than its brother dormitories, the idea being that women undergraduates required parlor space in which to entertain.\textsuperscript{13}

Moral regulation in Stanford dormitories was, to borrow Estelle Freedman and John D'Emilio’s formulation, a “crusade for social order” that reflected dominant assumptions about class and race.\textsuperscript{14} Because the predominantly white, upper-class students at Stanford in 1965 were expected to occupy a particular place within their communities after graduating from Stanford, the university argued that it had a responsibility to educate women for a particular type of citizenship. These crusades for order were especially important during times of crisis, providing what Alan Hunt refers to as a moral politics guarding against changing social mores.\textsuperscript{15} At Stanford in 1965, social regulation provided a kind of organizational logic during a decade of extreme upheaval, from civil rights protests to Vietnam War sit-ins.

When students challenged restrictions on women’s education, they were sometimes met with a tepid administrative response that emphasized the many competing demands on the university’s energy during tumultuous years. For example, when Stanford undergraduate Carol Christ wrote to then-President Wallace Sterling in 1966 to advocate for women’s right to live off campus, he cited budgetary concerns and replied “it may not be feasible, given the press of other problems.”\textsuperscript{16} When students inquired about the implementation of coeducational residences, they were met with a similar line, as administrators insisted that plans were being developed without


\textsuperscript{16} Sterling, Wallace to Carol P. Christ, November 23, 1966. Stanford University Archives Box 7295, Stanford, California.
articulating a clear timeline. Stanford administrators seldom argued the merits of separate residential and institutional policies towards women; rather, they acknowledged students’ concerns and deflected them by describing the larger problems facing the university, whether bureaucratic or existential.

In spite of resistance from the administration, students were not completely powerless to change social regulation policies. Curfews were relaxed somewhat in April 1965 in response to a study undertaken by the Social Regulations Committee of the Associated Women Students. The revised policies gave freshman women a midnight curfew and extended the late leave time for juniors and seniors until 6:00 AM. This gradual mode of self-governance gave women some latitude over the regulations they were bound to, though the actual power of student government was still limited. The changes were described to parents in a letter from Dean of Students Donald Winbigler as “increasing freedom of decision as students develop from freshman to senior years and reflect [a] high level of responsibility toward society and themselves.”17 The residential structure of Stanford was thus tied once again to the university’s citizenship-based educational philosophy.

Not all changes were gradual, and one of the most dramatic confrontations between students and administrators over the role of women at the university occurred in the spring of 1965. The Dean of Women scandal was of the first major contestations of the role of women at Stanford. Students challenged the administration over the role of women academically, residentially, and institutionally, and the result was a major reorientation of the university’s administrative structure. In 1965, student self-governance was split between the Men’s Council and the Women’s Council, while the student affairs division of the administration was halved.

17 Winbigler, Donald to Stanford parents, April 29, 1965. Stanford University Archives Box 7295, Stanford, California.
between a Dean of Men and a Dean of Women who jointly oversaw the student councils. However, councils were ostensibly independent and had the responsibility of overseeing, implementing, and enforcing student rules and regulations—including rules about housing and social regulation. In a letter to incoming freshmen in 1963, Dean of Women Lucile Allen informed freshmen women of their membership in the Associated Women Students of Stanford, noting “A.W.S. is important to you.” Moreover, she wrote, “the Women’s Council, elected by students, is responsible for discipline. The Council is respected by both faculty and students.”18

This structure was called into question in February 1965 when Darrell Halverson, a former chair of the Men’s Council, and Nora Crow, a former chair of the Women’s Council, released a report alleging the unnecessary interference of Dean Allen in student affairs. According to Halverson and Crow, Dean Allen claimed that English professors at Stanford were giving students erotic and licentious material. The dean then urged members of the Women’s Council to take note of inappropriate content in English lectures and pass their notes along to her in order to address the situation. Dean Allen also accused the Women’s Council of disloyalty because it attempted to independently clarify an unwritten rule on campus that made premarital sexual intercourse grounds for expulsion for female students. When the students released their report, Dean Allen denied the charges but resigned two weeks later. In the ensuing days, two additional deans in Allen’s office resigned in protest of Dean Allen’s treatment. The university dissolved the Dean of Women’s office and consolidated it with the Dean of Men’s office to form a single student affairs division.19

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18 Allen, Lucile to Parents of Incoming Freshmen. September 1963. Stanford University Archives, Box 1724/9, Stanford, California.
The Dean of Women scandal was a watershed moment in the history of student governance at Stanford. Students challenged Dean Allen (and by extension, the university itself) on three key fronts: academic freedom, student life, and university governance. The immediate impetus for the report was Dean Allen’s alleged interference in freshman English courses, which she perceived as salacious. In the background, however, was a percolating student challenge to university norms of propriety, for the Women’s Council sought to apply moral standards of conduct more evenly by calling into question an unwritten rule about sexual relationships between men and women. Finally, students resisted a governance model that was ostensibly democratic but that ultimately marginalized student input.

Stanford was not the only university that eliminated the Dean of Women position in the 1960s, nor was it the only institution at which the consolidation of the student affairs office was precipitated by controversy. At the University of Michigan, Dean of Women Deborah Bacon resigned in September 1961 after students and alumni accused her of having “severely punished women for visiting with black men after hours and [writing] to a white freshman’s mother to inform her that her daughter had been dating black men.”20 In response to the ensuing uproar, the University of Michigan commissioned a report on the relationship between students and the university, authored by law school professor John Reed. The Reed Report called for changes to the university’s policies towards female students, which Reed viewed as paternalistic. Over the course of the 1960s, the University of Michigan, like Stanford, gradually expanded the boundaries of coeducation by eliminating curfews, allowing women to live off campus, and

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establishing mixed-gender residences, all of which were also major points of contestation at
Stanford in the late 1960s. \textsuperscript{21}

In both student governance and residential life, the model outcome towards which
Stanford was educating its female students was essentially a domestic one. However, in real
terms, college-educated women had more opportunities than ever in the post-World War II era.
A report on women’s education at Stanford in 1967 demonstrated some of the trade-offs inherent
in a college education. The report noted that “an opportunity to make a desired marriage” was a
frequently cited reason by women who dropped out of college, though drop-out rates were
conditional by economic class. \textsuperscript{22} Thus, though as Barbara Solomon argues, the postwar era gave
women unprecedented access to college degrees, class status influenced the freedom with which
they could make economic decisions with those degrees. \textsuperscript{23} The Stanford report also indicated
that “certain majors at Stanford are attractive mostly to women whereas others are attractive
mostly to men.” \textsuperscript{24} In part due to of increasing enrollment in universities nationally, women on
college campuses began to move “from margin to center,” with advocacy movements specific to
women gaining force on college campuses. \textsuperscript{25} This advocacy tended to be class-based, as agency
expanded for a specific subset: college-educated women. Both on Stanford’s campus and outside
of it, competing visions over the appropriate role of women existed simultaneously, and the shift
from nominal to substantive coeducation wasn’t precisely delimited temporally. These

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22} Siegel, Alberta E. “Education of Women at Stanford University,” \textit{The Study of Education at
\textsuperscript{23} Solomon, Barbara Miller. In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and
\textsuperscript{24} Siegel.
\textsuperscript{25} Eisenmann, Linda. \textit{Higher Education for Women in Postwar America: 1945-1965}. Baltimore
competing visions of citizenship and respectability crystallized in the next major upheaval on
Stanford’s campus: the battle over off campus housing and coeducational residences.

Towards a New Coeducational Model

Stanford students had proposed coeducational residence options as early as 1936. In a
letter to the Stanford Daily in February 1936, an anonymous student asked “why are the relations
between men and women on this campus so formal and strained?” The student went on to
propose more informal interaction between men and women, “or even better…why not turn
Lagunita Court into a co-educational dormitory?” The writer of this letter anticipated the
contours of the campus debate over coeducational housing, which reached its apex in the late
1960s. Like its early proponents, supporters of coeducational housing in the 1960s saw it as a
civilized alternative to artificial relationships between men and women. By contrast, opponents
feared it was a harbinger of premarital sex and the deterioration of campus morality.

Students actively petitioned administrators to expedite promised plans for coeducational
housing as early as 1965. Some students took the institutional route, channeling their concerns
through the ASSU, which formed a Housing Commission in the fall of 1966, or via the Stanford
Daily, which had added a Women's Page in 1965 to reflect women’s institutional concerns on
 campus. Still others, like Mark Fogelman, agitated from outside existing university structures.
In March 1967, Fogelman, then a junior, wrote a letter to the Committee on Undergraduate
Education that proposed “limited coeducational living in Stern and Florence Moore,” which were
all-male and all-female, respectively. Fogelman invoked the success of the experimental
coeducational Grove House, then only two months old, and argued that his proposal “would

26 “In Vox Campi.” Stanford Daily, February 7, 1936, Stanford University Archives Box 7295,
Stanford, California.
University Archives Box 7700, Stanford, California.
include a much more representative cross-section of the university community.” Fogelman attached a petition supporting the plan, signed by all fifty male residents of Holladay (in Stern Hall) and all but one of the fifty-one female residents of Loro (in Florence Moore Hall). The administrative response, which turned down the proposal by citing legal obstacles, was characteristic of Stanford’s institutional view at the time. While Stanford administrators would entertain the idea of limited coeducational experiments and promise future changes to housing arrangements, they remained reluctant to actively expand coeducational housing options. In a context of institutional upheaval on racial politics and the Vietnam War, coeducational living was deemphasized as a priority. However, student agitation helped place coeducational housing on the university agenda in the fall of 1966.

Stanford’s first coeducational house, one of the first in the country, represented a reorganization of both the residential and academic structures of student life. The Grove experiment, as Bay Area newspapers dubbed it, came about due to a combination of student activism, cautious institutional support, and sheer happenstance. The immediate impetus for the coeducational project came in November of 1966, when the Phi Delta Theta fraternity was kicked off campus for one year and forced to vacate its house following “an epochal party with a group of Mills girls.” The Associated Students Housing Commission, convened by student body president and anti-war activist David Harris, proposed that the vacant house be used for a unique experiment: coeducational housing. The undergraduate senate approved the plan, as did the faculty committee on undergraduate education. Wallace Sterling, who was president of

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Stanford at the time, took the proposal to the Board of Trustees, which approved the Grove experiment.30

Senior administrators enlisted Mark Mancall, an assistant professor of history, to lead the experiment, and he selected five graduate students to move into the house as resident teaching assistants.31 Mancall had long been frustrated by what he saw as a paradox in Stanford’s residential policies: while men and women lived together on Stanford’s overseas campuses, they were still housed separately on the Stanford home campus. Out of a pool of three hundred interested students, thirty-one men and twelve women moved into Grove House in January 1967. Mancall and Bernard Cohen, a Stanford sociologist, chose the pilot class using a stratified random sample that was designed to guarantee a diverse cohort of students.32 Residents lived in two sex-segregated wings sharing central lounges and a common dining area. The forty-three Grove House residents spanned all four classes at Stanford, though only four were freshmen.33

From its inception, Grove House was designed to be more than just a living space. Mancall imagined it as a community where men and women would be able to “live a life of ideas.”34 According to Mancall, “if our dinner conversation ever concerns last night’s date or next week’s exam, then the house is a failure.”35 The house’s intellectual discourse originally centered on the intentionally broad theme of “development.” Mancall commented that unlike in other dormitories, faculty could talk freely with students on a civil, peer-to-peer level. In an interview with the San Francisco Examiner, Grove resident Jon Reider praised the new

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32 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
residential model, noting that he “wanted a living group where people talked about important things—where intellectual life was part of living.” ³⁶ Education for citizenship began in the classroom, with students given wide latitude over the topics of discussion. Intellectual self-governance, in Mancall’s estimation, forced students to recognize that “intellectual enterprise was larger than any sum of individuals participating in it.” This in turn made students “aware of the need to create for the group the kind of institution within which an individual could participate.”³⁷

For its residents and supporters within the university, Grove demonstrated that civil and humane relationships between men and women were possible in a coeducational setting. The San Francisco Examiner quoted a resident who described the difference between single-sex and coeducational housing succinctly, saying “It’s nice to be able to talk to girls without asking them for a date or spending money on them.”³⁸ This difference wasn’t just rhetorical. In contrast to the Phi Delta Theta House, which had been suspended from campus after multiple infractions, Grove was intended to be a place where men and women could gather communally to discuss meaningful intellectual matters. As an early resident put it, “the first relation between people wasn’t contained in the media of exchange between them, but in something, in some kind of basic faith in each other, some kind of basic willingness to accept another person, just as being, as another being.”³⁹ This assessment fits a broader pattern of discourse in the late 1960s and early 1970s that emphasized interpersonal authenticity. To its supporters, who were engaged deeply with ideas of political and societal authenticity and accountability in their in-house

³⁶ Ibid.
³⁷ The Grove House Movie
³⁸ Madison.
³⁹ The Grove House Movie
seminars, the Grove experiment provided preliminary evidence that gender integration could be an effective model of campus housing.

These changing relationships demanded a new kind of citizenship from Stanford students. Philip Taubman was a freshman in Grove House and moved in after spending a quarter living in an all-male dormitory in Wilbur Hall. Near the end of his freshman year, he reflected on the differences between the two living experiences and noted that while he enjoyed Wilbur while he lived there, his experience in Grove made him realize how limiting a single-sex freshman dorm was. His experience living in Grove with upperclassmen, graduate students, and women gave him “a perspective on the university” that was unlike the dominant mood in Wilbur, where “you were sort of told you were going to be a freshman for the whole year and one should act like a freshman.”

Grove was coeducational in the deepest sense of the word, with men and women sharing a living space and sharing a common intellectual project.

This is not to say that Grove was a utopia. Like any undergraduate residential arrangement, it had its share of roommate conflicts and personal crises. In spite of these conflicts, Grove provided a new model of what university life could be—and of what kind of people Stanford was training its students to become. By piloting a new form of residential education, the Grove experiment, a resident reflected, “went far beyond just a negation of what had gone before.”

The success of the Grove experiment required that students redefine their role within the university. The shared intellectual enterprise coupled with the new coeducational project gave way to a community that transformed self-interest into citizenship. As Mancall recalled during the first experimental year, “originally the students were all of them individuals, interested in their own momentum, in protecting themselves, as it were, protecting their own

\[40\] Ibid.
\[41\] Ibid.
roles, their own images of themselves and unwilling, essentially, to consider the possibility of participating in a larger enterprise." Grove House created this shared enterprise, and to visit it in 1967 was to visit a particular vision of the future, one in which collegiate men and women lived and learned together. To Mancall, the Grove experiment showed “that in almost every possible way the students are mature, can lead mature, discreet, gracious lives.”

The Grove experiment took place at an inflection point for coeducational housing at Stanford. On the one hand, the administration was planning for the eventual construction of coeducational dormitories, but at the same time, Stanford trustees were also refusing to meet with students lobbying for the right of female undergraduates to live off campus. With clear student demand for more liberal residential options, Grove provided a compromise between students, their Associated Student representatives, and the administration. The first coeducational experiment took place in a carefully supervised setting with a clear academic mission, which created a civil alternative to the debaucherous antics of the Phi Delta Theta fraternity brothers. Grove was also unique in that it was finite. In the fall of 1967, the Phi Delta Theta fraternity moved back into their house and the Grove experiment moved to the Stern dormitory. Without a house unto itself, and as new coeducational models—notably the Structured Liberal Education program, which was also led by Mancall—proliferated on campus, the experiment faltered. By the early 1970s, Grove House ceased to exist in its intended form.

If Grove House offered a model of student citizenship based on intellectual discourse and self-governance, the student rent strike, which also occurred in the winter of 1967, provided a blueprint for the student citizen as activist. The Women’s Strike Coalition formed in the fall of

42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
1966 in response to a letter from Richard Guggenheim, chair of the Board of Trustees, to Janet Howell, an undergraduate who had written him in opposition to the rule requiring women—but not men—to live on campus. He replied that Howell had exercised free choice in deciding to come to Stanford, and that he could not “frankly see whatever may be the merits of your position that you can logically expect from your personal standpoint a precipitous change in a condition which has prevailed for many years.” The coalition interpreted this statement as condescending towards student participation in university life, and the strike was born.

On December 7, 1966, the Women’s Strike Coalition, supported by Associated Students president David Harris, wrote a letter to President Sterling demanding that the university allow upperclass women to live off campus, threatening a university-wide rent strike in winter quarter if their demands were unmet. They framed the administration’s refusal to act as a violation of democratic procedures, noting that they had “used every legitimate means to rescind a discriminatory policy requiring off-campus living for all undergraduate women.” These tactics included the circulation of a petition, the involvement of the student legislature, and a student referendum. When they failed, students threatened to withhold rent en masse for the winter quarter in order to pressure the administration to make off-campus housing for women a priority.

Students framed the strike in explicitly political terms and drew on the implicit language of citizenship to make their argument. By paying rent, they argued, students were financially supporting a discriminatory policy, even if they themselves had no desire to live off campus. In the social and financial contract between students and administrators, women were given an

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46 Ibid.
47 David Harris to J.E. Wallace Sterling, December 7, 1966, Stanford University Archives Box 7295, Stanford, California.
unfair bargain. Though women were once viewed as a constituency in need of protection, they now asserted themselves as equal citizens in the university community. Following the threat of civil disobedience, the trustees relented and agreed to allow up to one hundred women to live off campus beginning in the fall of 1967.48

Stanford’s shift from nominal to substantive coeducation took place within two interrelated contexts: the Vietnam War and generational differences over the meaning of citizenship and participation. These contexts were evident in administrative anxieties about Grove House and the student rent strike. Grove House was a statement not only about who young people were, but also about what kind of people they would develop into. The demonstrated maturity of Grove residents was—at least according to Mancall—suggestive of a promising American future in which citizens would participate and contribute responsibly. Though their forms of civic participation were unorthodox—the house cook remarked that most young men didn’t want to join the Army, and seminar discussions focused on fascism, communism, and other political philosophies—these young radicals were nevertheless capable of participating in a common enterprise. The rent strikers, on the other hand, used tactics gleaned from protest organizers to mount their offensive, as they found that participation within the university system was insufficient to achieve their aims.

In spite of these tactical differences, it would be inaccurate to characterize Grove House and the Women’s Strike Coalition as substantively oppositional. One member of the Women’s Strike Coalition framed her desire to move off campus in terms of both privacy and community, emphasizing that she wanted “to have my own backyard and have neighbors who were people,” as opposed to other students. Like the residents of Grove House, this student wanted to

48 The Grove House Movie
participate in a more mature and independent residential enterprise. Moreover, there was considerable institutional overlap between liberal and radical circles on Stanford’s campus, with ASSU President David Harris, also a leading anti-war organizer, actively supporting both Grove House and the Women’s Strike Coalition.

Following the success of the Grove experiment, an increasing number of campus dormitories and houses became coeducational between 1967 and 1969. However, it wasn’t until the fall of 1969 that Stanford piloted coeducational floors in Roble Hall with men and women living in “separate but adjacent” rooms. There was some degree of irony in the fact that Roble was chosen to pilot the new arrangement, for only four years earlier it had been an epicenter of women’s housing and gendered social regulation. Much like the Grove experiment, coeducational floors emerged from a combination of student lobbying, administrative acquiescence, and sheer chance. In a poll in the spring of 1969, a majority of Roble residents expressed support for a coeducational floor (though not all stated that they wished to live on one).49 Students began planning a proposal for the new coeducational arrangement, and later that spring their idea gained administrative traction. While touring Roble, a new administrative dean named Peter Bulkeley happened to see a revised floor plan—one with men and women living adjacent to one another—posted on the wall. Thinking that the pilot had already been given official university approval, he remarked that coeducational floors sounded “like a great idea.” Assistant professor John Palmer, who was the resident director in Roble, agreed to move forward with the revised coeducational arrangement after hearing Bulkeley’s comments.50

49 “Coeducational housing in Roble.” *Stanford News Service*, October 17, 1969, Stanford University Archives Box 7295, Stanford, California.
50 Ibid.
In a press release announcing the coeducational floors, Stanford administrators returned once again to the doctrine of *in loco parentis*. Unlike in 1965, when the university invoked its status as temporary guardian to defend social and residential regulations based on gender separation, Stanford now called upon parents to endorse housing based on gender integration. The article quoted seven parents, each of whom had a child living on a coeducational floor in Roble. Each one expressed hearty support for the project, with several emphasizing that coeducational floors were a more natural arrangement. One parent, Mrs. Anne Huston Gilliland of Corvallis, Oregon, remarked that when she was at Stanford, gender segregated housing “created tension between boys and girls, rather than a natural relationship.”51 A Stanford father named Robert Blees argued that coeducational floors were a necessary preparation for students, since “the more education parallels life today, the better. Men and women work together; it should be more a part of normal existence on campus.” Students, parents, and administrators were all quoted as saying that coeducational floors created more civilized interactions between men and women, with a sibling dynamic prevailing.52

The message communicated by the Stanford press office was clear: coeducational housing was necessary to train students for their post-college lives. This was true not only in a professional context, as Blees contended, but also in a personal one. Joseph Katz, a Stanford psychologist, speculated that the sibling dynamic in Roble may have led to a “partial moratorium on sex.”53 This, coupled with the more “humane” relationships between men and women coeducational floors engendered, could even “result in a profound modification—and strengthening—of marriage,” according to the press release. Like Grove House, which was

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51 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
contrasted with the wild and uncivilized fraternity that had previously occupied the space, the coeducational floors in Roble were framed as a civil alternative to an almost Hobbesian past. One junior, Monica Ploeser, drew a sharp distinction between living in Roble as a freshman, when it was still a women’s dormitory, with her experience living on a coeducational floor in the same building two years later. She recalled a panty raid during her freshman year as not “a fun thing; it was destructive. They knocked down a girl on crutches, and really wrecked some rooms.”\(^5^4\) In relating this anecdote, the press office again emphasized that gender integrated floors were not only an inevitable outcome but a desirable one as well. From 1965 to 1967, Stanford had responded to student demands for coeducational housing by pointing towards an indeterminate future, one in which coeducational residence options would eventually be available. By 1969, the administration had shifted from a defensive to an offensive stance, drafting press releases that actively promoted mixed-gender floors as a civilized and humane housing option.

**Conclusion**

In 1965, the *in loco parentis* doctrine implied that Stanford was the institutional guardian for undergraduates so long as they were away from their parents. By the time of the coeducational floor pilot in 1969, however, this doctrine had weakened considerably. Stanford parent John Pavick, quoted in a Stanford press release, commented, “if the parents have done a good job of raising their children, they’ll trust them; if not, no amount of (residential) segregation can stop them.” According to Pavick, students were not in need of a substitute parent, institutional or otherwise, once they left home to go to college. Even the lone parent who expressed reservations towards the experimental Roble floors couched her “mixed feelings” by

\(^5^4\) “Coeducational housing in Roble.” *Stanford News Service*, October 17, 1969, Stanford University Archives Box 7295, Stanford, California.
noting that the success of coeducational floors would depend “on young people, on how they’ve been trained.” By 1969, however, an era of unprecedented student independence had dawned at Stanford, one that was supported by students, parents, and administrators alike.

Stanford’s residential changes mirrored those of other universities during the late 1960s, but it was much more liberal than peer institutions, particularly those on the East Coast. A *Time* article from 1969 singled out Stanford as a uniquely permissive institution, anticipating many of the comments from the Stanford press release later that fall. While noting that some parents, “especially those with daughters,” were unsupportive of coeducational dormitories, the article framed coeducational residences positively. It quoted a Stanford senior named Pat McMahon who argued that coeducational arrangements encouraged “a more holistic relationship,” noting “it is very important that men and women see each other as more than bodies.” The mainstream press again invoked a spectrum of mixed-gender relationships from base to civil, with coeducational dormitories encouraging civilized interactions.

With new integration came new challenges, and coeducational transformation from 1965-1969 was but one key era in the history of women’s activism at Stanford. With the cap on female enrollment lifted in 1973, women were formally equal to men, but women’s activism would only increase in the coming decades. Throughout the 1970s, women lobbied for services and policies that were responsive to the unique challenges of being a woman on campus, from academic discrimination to access to birth control. They published guides to campus life, called for dedicated academic programming around women’s studies, and established a campus resource center. As students and as citizens, they continued to push for access, resources, and recognition.

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55 Ibid.
Though women’s issues moved from margin to center from 1965 to 1969, changes in residential education occurred within a broader reinvention of the relationship between student and university. As *in loco parentis* weakened, a space opened for a new model of citizenship, one that demanded active participation from students and a relatively laissez-faire approach by the university. In contrast to the first half of the 1960s, when women were mandated to live on campus and check in with their whereabouts each evening, the second half of the decade marked an attitudinal and institutional transformation. Men and women could live together, take classes together, and run student government together. In just four years, Stanford moved from nominal to substantive coeducation, but as subsequent decades of activism demonstrated, the conversation about what it meant to be a student, a woman, and a citizen at Stanford was far from over.