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**DOMESTIC ARTS, DATES, DRUGS, AND DRESS CODES: SCRIPPS COLLEGE'S  
EARLY ATTITUDES TOWARDS GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN'S  
EDUCATION**

**by**

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**SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS**

**PROFESSOR JESSICA CHRISTIAN**

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**DIRECTOR OF DENISON LIBRARY JENNIFER MARTINEZ WORMSER**

**April 29, 2022**

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## Introduction

Scripps College, named after newspaper owner and philanthropist Ellen Browning Scripps, was founded in 1926 with the purpose of educating young women. Scripps College established the undergraduate portion of the Claremont Colleges consortium, an idea that came from the abundance of highly qualified women applying to Pomona College.<sup>1</sup> Scripps' first academic year began in 1927, and the first class graduated in 1931.<sup>2</sup> But the college's first aims were not merely academic; the Board of Trustees also wished to offer each Scripps student an education designed to "train her for the fullest and richest life that she herself may have, as well as the chance to give to society her greatest contribution."<sup>3</sup> The Board of Trustees, notably around fifty percent women, created an Education Committee, which determined that certain academic subjects were more suited to women's interests, such as psychology, sociology, humanities, and art.<sup>4</sup> When announcing the curricular aims of the college, the trustees wrote that "the upperclass years should provide...a liberal program of pre-professional courses other than those leading to the profession of teaching. It is regarded as important that the curriculum be so framed as to prepare women for the demands and responsibilities of the life of today."<sup>5</sup> Part of women's education at the time was inherently tied up in their "full, rich lives," which the board assumed would include marriage, family, and other aspects of cisheteronormative female gender roles. Because of this, Scripps College was not founded just for students to learn about

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<sup>1</sup> Horowitz, H. L. (1993). *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-century Beginnings to the 1930s*: Vol. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 339.

<sup>2</sup> About Scripps. "College Timeline." Accessed December 12, 2021. <https://www.scrippscollege.edu/about/college-timeline>.

<sup>3</sup> Allen, Ethel Richardson. "Report of the Special Committee on Vocational Training at Scripps College," June 21, 1928. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Horowitz, H. L. (1993). *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-century Beginnings to the 1930s*: Vol. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 341.

<sup>5</sup> "Scripps College Bulletin: Announcement, 1927-1928." Scripps College, January 1927. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

philosophy, literature, or history, but also to shape their relationships to sexuality and gender and prepare them for society's expectations for them. Moving through Scripps' history from the 1920s through World War II, it is clear that the college administration, faculty, and students all had different perspectives on these aims. By focusing on the prior history of other women's colleges, curricular aims, architectural plans, written rules and regulations, and student accounts of their experiences at the college, this thesis will aim to make it clear that in the interwar period Scripps attempted to regulate gender roles and sexuality among the students to support the students' survival in the world they lived in and to keep its reputation as a women's college clear, but students did not always fall in line. Clashes at Scripps about the students' gender and sexuality demonstrate the many criticisms and changes that this school, and women's colleges generally, faced in the interwar period.

## Women's Colleges and Their Development

To understand the beginnings of Scripps College, it is necessary to understand the earlier development of women's colleges. The first women's college that has stayed in operation as an institution of higher education for women in the United States is Mount Holyoke College, originally Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, which was founded in South Hadley, Massachusetts in 1837.<sup>6</sup> Over the course of the nineteenth century, the rest of the Seven Sisters (Vassar, Wellesley, Smith, Radcliffe, Bryn Mawr, and Barnard) were founded in the Northeast, and their development ushered in a new commitment to women's education. The nineteenth and early twentieth century changed women's education from very strict, regulated seminary schools like Mount Holyoke that were meant to produce teachers to a liberal arts experience closer to men's colleges, but for mostly white, upper-class young women.<sup>7</sup> Notably, the origins of the first women's college west of the Rockies, Mills College in Oakland, California, were similar to Mount Holyoke's, as it was a seminary school that became an academic degree-granting institution in 1885.<sup>8</sup> The women's colleges at the time still differed in many ways; for example, Radcliffe and Barnard were annexes to well-known men's colleges, and did not provide the same on-campus college experience that the other women's colleges did. Still, each of the Seven Sisters was inspired by the other women's institutions during their development, and Scripps was in turn inspired by them. However, Scripps had a much different history because it was founded after World War I, a period in which the Seven Sisters went through significant changes regarding curriculum, student life, and women's rights as a whole. Prior to World War I, the

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<sup>6</sup> Mount Holyoke College. "History," April 18, 2012. <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/about/history>.

<sup>7</sup> Horowitz, Helen Lefkowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993.

<sup>8</sup> Mills College. *Mills College, 1852-1937; A Statement Covering the History, Present Position, Plans, and Needs of the Pioneer College for Women on the Pacific Coast*. Place of publication not identified, 1937, 6.

women's college was predominantly an all-female environment for the students and focused on the student community and their social life there, but after the war, this energy went outward to the men that were playing an increasingly large role in their college experiences (whether academically, with an increase in male faculty, or socially, with an increase in interactions with men at other colleges).<sup>9</sup> One notable postwar shift was that female sexuality came into question, especially the idea that it could be directed towards other women, and the idea of the women's college as a space of female intimacy became less popular because of these concerns.<sup>10</sup> Many students also advocated for heterosocial experiences at college themselves.<sup>11</sup> Women's colleges faced changes in views of female sexuality and gender roles, and as these changes were occurring at other women's colleges, Scripps was born. Its aims and design reflected the shifts in women's higher education and demonstrated that women's colleges could not be communities separated from the outside world, despite seeming like it at times.

Mills College in Oakland, California was an important predecessor to Scripps, as it became the first women's college on the West Coast. The college originally was founded in 1852 as a seminary school for young women, as California did not have a strong public high school system until the end of the 19th century.<sup>12</sup> This lack of secondary education for girls meant that colleges would not have the highly educated students coming to them that they wanted, and as women's colleges were not widespread on the East Coast until the late 19th century anyways, it did not make sense to make Mills a college. By 1885, the college had grown and the California education system had developed enough that Mills applied for and was granted a charter to be a

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<sup>9</sup> Horowitz, Helen Lefkowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993, 284.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 288.

<sup>12</sup> Keep, Rosalind A. (Rosalind Amelia). *Fourscore and Ten Years: A History of Mills College*. [Rev. ed.]. Calif.: Mills College, 1946, 13-14.



women's college.<sup>13</sup> It was clearly influenced by the development of women's colleges on the East Coast, especially because many of the women involved in the development of the college had gone to women's colleges or seminaries themselves. One of those women in Mills' administration who also was an alumna of Mount Holyoke, Mary Atkins, wrote "I owe more than I can express to Mary Lyon," who was the founder and first president of Mount Holyoke.<sup>14</sup> While there were many men involved in the funding and administration of the college, it is important to note that Susan Tolman Mills became president of Mills College in 1890, at age 65, after she had been deeply involved with the college from the time that she and her husband purchased it.<sup>15</sup> The strong role of women in Mills College's early history mirrors that of other women's colleges, including Scripps. As education improved in California and Mills' college program became more well-known, the number of students seeking college degrees grew. In 1920, they even opened a Graduate Division, and the first masters degrees were conferred in 1921.<sup>16</sup> Rosalind Keep, who wrote a history of the college, argued that "being three thousand miles from other colleges for women, it was still a pioneer in the first decade of the twentieth century...Mills has the prestige of having grown up with the state [of California] through its formative and pioneer years."<sup>17</sup> Mills set an important precedent for Scripps College and many other institutions serving women on the West Coast, and its relatively faraway location in Oakland allowed for Scripps College to be established in Claremont without competition.

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<sup>13</sup> "Timeline | Mills College." Accessed February 23, 2022. <https://www.mills.edu/uniquely-mills/history-traditions/timeline.php>.

<sup>14</sup> Keep, Rosalind A. (Rosalind Amelia). *Fourscore and Ten Years: A History of Mills College*. [Rev. ed.]. Calif.: Mills College, 1946, 37.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>16</sup> "Timeline | Mills College." Accessed February 23, 2022. <https://www.mills.edu/uniquely-mills/history-traditions/timeline.php>.

<sup>17</sup> Keep, Rosalind A. (Rosalind Amelia). *Fourscore and Ten Years: A History of Mills College*. [Rev. ed.]. Calif.: Mills College, 1946, 108.

While Mills College was an important predecessor of Scripps College, an arguably even more influential relationship was that of the Claremont Colleges and their development after Pomona College was founded. Pomona was founded in 1887, and the first class graduated in 1894.<sup>18</sup> As the college developed, so did the dreams of those involved; James Blaisdell, who became Pomona's president in 1910, was a large force behind the creation of the consortium. The Claremont Colleges were founded much later than Pomona's beginnings, in 1925, with the intention of following Blaisdell's goals to create a "cooperative group of small colleges of the Oxford type." At the same time that the consortium was founded, so was Claremont Graduate University, and Scripps College followed only a year later.<sup>19</sup> Because of the large population boom in southern California at the time of Scripps' founding, Pomona was facing pressure to admit more and more students, but did not wish to for multiple reasons.<sup>20</sup> One of these, according to Scripps' first president, Ernest J. Jaqua, who had been working at Pomona as the Dean of Faculty, was that Pomona College wanted its gender ratio to continue being more men than women. Jaqua specifically notes in his oral history interview that Pomona had many more qualified women applying for college than men at the time of Scripps' founding, but Pomona did not wish to accept them because "no man wanted to graduate from a college if there were more women than men."<sup>21</sup> (He disagreed with this viewpoint.) There was also an imbalance in education available to women in the immediate area, as the California Institute of Technology was an all-male institution at the time.<sup>22</sup> Given these factors, it made sense for Ellen Browning Scripps' money to go towards an institution dedicated to women's education. The Claremont

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<sup>18</sup> Pomona Timeline. "Home," September 16, 2020. <https://www.pomona.edu/timeline/home>.

<sup>19</sup> Pomona Timeline. "1925." Accessed March 29, 2022. <https://www.pomona.edu/timeline/1920s/1925>.

<sup>20</sup> Jaqua, Ernest J., Caroline Bennett Fogle, Enid Hart Douglass, and Claremont Graduate School. Oral History Program. *The Founding and Development of Scripps College*, 1966. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 2.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

Colleges also shared a trustee, Jacob C. Harper, who was the chair of Scripps' Board of Trustees and the lawyer and agent of Ellen Browning Scripps herself.<sup>23</sup> With Blaisdell's vision of a group of colleges, the population boom and growing demand for women's education in Southern California, and previous connections to Ellen Browning Scripps and her wealth, the founding of Scripps College was a no-brainer.

As the Claremont Colleges were developing, sexuality became a site of tension at early women's colleges the farther along that the schools evolved, especially post-World War I. The Seven Sister schools were heavily female-dominated communities, even when the administration, faculty, and trustees were mostly men, although this depended on the school (Wellesley had a largely female faculty and administration, for instance).<sup>24</sup> This led to a homosocial environment, even as the schools often encouraged their students and alumna to conform to traditional gender roles and be prepared for a heterosexual life. Some of the Seven Sisters, most notably Vassar and Barnard, experienced the rise of "smashes" or "crushes," in the late 19th century, which were intense and loving friendships between students, usually between an underclassman and an upperclassman. Smashes were the earlier iteration at Vassar, while crushes were the phenomenon that happened at Barnard during the turn of the century. While these were not seen as romantic relationships at the time, the way they are described mirrored language used in that era to describe heterosexual relationships, like a quote from 1873 about smashes that described "When a Vassar girl takes a shine to another, she straightaway enters upon a regular course of bouquet sendings, interspersed with tinted notes...and many other tender tokens, until at last the object of her attention is captured, the two become inseparable,

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<sup>23</sup> Pomona Timeline. "1926," September 15, 2020. <https://www.pomona.edu/timeline/1920s/1926>.

<sup>24</sup> Palmieri, Patricia Ann. *In Adamless Eden: The Community of Women Faculty at Wellesley*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, xiii.

and the aggressor is considered by her circle of friends as—smashed.”<sup>25</sup> Not only does this sound quite intense, it is interesting to note that one of the students is labeled the “aggressor” in this situation, and this appears to be a common interpretation of these relationships. The use of “aggressor” implies that these queer(ish) relationships were seen as somewhat predatory, even though its usage here seems relatively playful. It is clear that smashes and crushes demonstrated that intense, intimate relationships between female students were an integral part of the homosocial women’s college community for a long time. Crushes were so common at Barnard that student publications are filled with references to them, but Wilk argues that after World War I and the introduction of Freud’s work to the wider public, “intimate relations, including ‘crushes,’ came under increased scrutiny and suspicion.”<sup>26</sup> Scripps College was founded in 1926, which was after this increased scrutiny of women’s relationships to each other and the rise of sexual behavior being seen as a permanent identity.

Another area of scrutiny that women’s colleges faced was the reputations of women faculty and their relationships with each other. As women’s colleges were often homosocial environments for the women faculty as well as the students, this meant that as concepts of “abnormal” female sexuality developed, the single female faculty’s sexualities came into question. Palmieri writes about the strong relationships between early women faculty at Wellesley in her book, *In Adamless Eden*. During the early years of women’s colleges, being an unmarried woman teacher was praised, and many women faculty had strong relationships with each other, but after the turn of the century, concerns arose related to marriage rates and the

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<sup>25</sup> Wilk, Rona M. “‘What’s a Crush?’ A Study of Crushes and Romantic Friendships at Barnard College, 1900-1920.” *OAH Magazine of History* 18, no. 4 (2004): 20–22.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

sexualities of students and faculty.<sup>27</sup> The marriage rate of alumnae from women's colleges was lower than the general populace average, and this concerned eugenicists and other people who were worried that lower marriage rates of Anglo-Saxon women would result in "race suicide." Palmieri notes that placing this blame on solely unmarried women for the changes going on ignored the many other economic and sociopolitical factors influencing the country.<sup>28</sup> The number of married women faculty at Wellesley was low,<sup>29</sup> and this was true of other women's colleges as well. Because of new psychological ideas introduced by Freud, "After 1905, intellectual women were stigmatized... When single women were viewed in sexualized terms, the possibility of their homosexuality challenged the heterosexual marriage norms of middle-class morality."<sup>30</sup> At Wellesley specifically, Palmieri describes how the school recruited married men to the faculty to lessen the stigma around their predominantly unmarried women faculty.<sup>31</sup> She sums up nicely the two prongs of attack that women faculty at all sorts of higher education institutions faced: "The eugenicists condemned single faculty women for not marrying and reproducing; and the psychologists attacked them for their possible lesbianism, suppressed sexuality, or sexual inversion."<sup>32</sup> As women's colleges developed, there was always criticism of their aims, and women faculty were an easy target for these panics about morality and womanhood at women's colleges. Intellectual women who were unmarried, like most early women faculty members in higher education, threatened the status quo that was developing from the 1900s-1920s, and this trend of suspicion towards them certainly influenced Scripps' early development.

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<sup>27</sup> Palmieri, Patricia Ann. *In Adamless Eden: The Community of Women Faculty at Wellesley*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, 219-220.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 230.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, xix.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 230.

## Scripps College's Curricular Aims

Much of the early curriculum-building at Scripps focused on what a women's education meant and necessitated and still relied on sexist ideas about women's aptitudes at times. While the trustees acknowledged that the differences between women and men are not necessarily inherent, Ethel Allen Richardson, a very early Scripps trustee, wrote that "The feminine tradition has a weakness which is common to all mankind which the education of women should attempt to eradicate. Women, to perhaps a greater degree than their brothers, lack objectivity and the capacity for critical judgment and independent thinking."<sup>33</sup> What better institution could "eradicate" this weakness from students and teach them independent thinking than Scripps College? Despite this fairly shocking assessment coming from a woman trustee, the report also notes the "strength in the feminine condition," i.e., women's care for creative efforts and human relationships.<sup>34</sup> Helen Horowitz, a historian and former Scripps professor who wrote on the development of women's colleges, analyzed the Board of Trustees' position as "Caught in the marriage-career dilemma of their own time, the women trustees, hoping to enable women to enjoy families and make contributions to society, sought a curricular solution that accepted the reality of discrimination — women's work — rather than one that gave women the intellectual ammunition to fight it."<sup>35</sup> This was clearly not the most radical position the College could have taken. However, it was not far from what other women's colleges were doing; while Vassar's aim at its founding was to provide the same education a man would receive at an elite college, in 1924, the college started the Euthenics program, which adapted arts and sciences to

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<sup>33</sup> Report of the Special Committee on Vocational Training at Scripps College, June 21, 1928, Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 2.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>35</sup> Horowitz, H. L. (1993). *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-century Beginnings to the 1930s*, 341.

homemaking.<sup>36</sup> That being said, Horowitz asserts that “The efforts to bend to the spirit of the times [with home economics programs] at Vassar and Mount Holyoke found no followers among the other Seven Sisters.”<sup>37</sup> Like Vassar, in its early years Scripps College wanted to make sure its students were prepared for society as it was, not for radically changing society. The report also quoted a man named Langden Davis saying “It was not when women began to desire men’s work, but when men began to usurp women’s work that feminism was born.”<sup>38</sup> This is an interesting (although flawed) take, because it posits that the demeaning and usurpation of women’s work was the real issue of oppression that women faced, not simply the existence and enforcement of gender roles in the first place. Scripps trustees assumed women would work within the system and not fight it, but they did acknowledge that women’s work was highly valuable to society and should not be demeaned.

Ernest J. Jaqua was the first president of Scripps, and his transcribed oral history interview illuminates interesting dynamics in the relationship between Pomona College and Scripps’ founding, the contributions of women to early Scripps history, and his opinions on women’s education. When looking at his interview, it is clear that he did not agree with the philosophy that Pomona College should keep its gender makeup skewed towards men; he said “I didn’t believe in that. I thought you should take them all right straight through on the basis of ability.”<sup>39</sup> He also notes that this gender imbalance remained true for every class of Pomona students up to the time of the interview, which was done in 1966.<sup>40</sup> Jaqua himself seemed to

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<sup>36</sup> Horowitz, H. L. (1993). *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women’s Colleges From Their Nineteenth-century Beginnings to the 1930s* 295.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

<sup>38</sup> Report of the Special Committee on Vocational Training at Scripps College, June 21, 1928. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 3.

<sup>39</sup> Jaqua, Ernest J., Caroline Bennett Fogle, Enid Hart Douglass, and Claremont Graduate School. Oral History Program. *The Founding and Development of Scripps College*, 1966. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 1.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

acknowledge the importance of women's education and the ridiculousness of men wanting to graduate from a co-educational institution only if there was a greater number of men, and he also emphasized the important contributions of women who influenced Scripps in its early years. However, he also said that before he became Scripps' president, he "didn't have any special interest in women's education or in the methods of women's education, and I was no revolutionist and no fanatic about the thing."<sup>41</sup> This non-revolutionist attitude is reflected in some of his early actions as president; for example, the women trustees wanted him to appoint an evenly male and female faculty, but he ended up focusing on bringing prominent male scholars to teach and increase the reputation of the college.<sup>42</sup> He later promised to make the gender ratio better, but many of the women he hired were in lower-level, lower-paying positions.<sup>43</sup> A well-known female architect, Julia Morgan (who had designed Mills College) was originally considered to design the first buildings to be built for Scripps, but in the end for unknown reasons the trustees decided against her and chose Gordon Kaufmann, another well-known architect.<sup>44</sup> This was a somewhat contentious decision, as the women trustees on the subcommittee "actively promoted her consideration."<sup>45</sup> Jaqua ended his discussion of the founding of Scripps by saying he joined the project "first, because I felt that the college that ought to be established should be a women's college...another reason was that women have a little harder time in college than men. When a man goes to college there is only one problem for

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<sup>41</sup> Jaqua, Ernest J., Caroline Bennett Fogle, Enid Hart Douglass, and Claremont Graduate School. Oral History Program. *The Founding and Development of Scripps College*, 1966. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Horowitz, Helen Lefkowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993, 341.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 341-342.

<sup>44</sup> Scripps College. Blueprint Committee. and Historic Resources Group. *Scripps College Landscape & Architectural Blueprint*. Place of publication not identified: Scripps College, 2004, 14.

<sup>45</sup> Belloli, Jay, Lauren Weiss Bricker, and Lang Art Gallery. *Johnson, Kaufmann, Coate: Partners in the California Style*. Claremont, Calif.: Scripps College; 1992, 87.



him really and that is his career...A woman has two interests, one of them is career and one of them is marriage.”<sup>46</sup> Jaqua was not a radical feminist by any means, but he did see the value in women’s education and believed that men’s sexist ideas about devaluing women’s education were conceited. His attitude about women’s education, especially as it relates to women having interests both in career and marriage, is a very significant one to consider when exploring Scripps College’s early aims and curriculum.

The many trustees who were women had a large impact on the beginning of the college, though, and it was not just Jaqua’s work and attitudes that were influential. One of the reasons that women were chosen to be on the Board was that Jaqua argued to Pomona College’s Board that he would not be stealing revenue streams from their school, as he would be working with previously untapped sources of money—women.<sup>47</sup> It is important to note that many of the early female trustees were widows with interesting career paths, like Susan Miller Dorsey, who Jaqua notes was a widow and had experience with marriage, “but she had been a teacher for many, many years.”<sup>48</sup> Similarly, Jaqua described Janet Jacks Balch as “strong, independent, what most people would call a dowager.”<sup>49</sup> This status allowed them to have proper status as a female figure because they were part of a socially accepted life path (marriage), freeing them from any concerns of deviant sexuality or refusal to follow the status quo, and it also often gave them the time and monetary resources to pursue trusteeship, as they controlled their own finances. Jaqua also said that he “wanted women of brains, and what I regarded as independence, on the Board, and also of sharply different types of experience.”<sup>50</sup> While Jaqua revealed that he had not

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<sup>46</sup>Jaqua, Ernest J., Caroline Bennett Fogle, Enid Hart Douglass, and Claremont Graduate School. Oral History Program. *The Founding and Development of Scripps College*, 1966. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 6.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

intentionally picked women for their professional training and experience in the educational field, it is clear that having a variety of life experiences as women was hugely beneficial to the Board of Trustees. The original women on the Board of Trustees all came from different types of educational institutions; some had gone to other historically women's colleges, some were educated abroad, some had gone to co-educational institutions, and at least one was not formally educated.<sup>51</sup> Mrs. Denison, who was not a trustee but was an important figure in Scripps' early years, notably included in the conditions of her donation to build a library that "it should be dedicated to the greater education of women."<sup>52</sup> And Ethel Richardson Allen was described by Jaqua as "one of the wisest women I have ever known."<sup>53</sup> Looking at President Jaqua's account of the women involved in Scripps' development, it is clear that many of them were invaluable to the formation of the college and its curriculum, especially because of their varied experiences in education and life.

The aims for Scripps as outlined by the Board of Trustees played a huge role in curriculum development determining what was important for women's education at a women's college. In one of the first meetings of the Board's Committee on Education, "Dr. Munro suggested that the faculty of Scripps College...should make a careful study of the most promising vocations for women, and the last two years of the Scripps curriculum provide careful training in a few (two or three) of these fields, e.g. Homemaking, Personnel work, Secretarial work, Public health."<sup>54</sup> While this was a relatively open-ended suggestion, clearly the Committee expected that the "most promising vocations for women" would end up being fields that were

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<sup>51</sup> Jaqua, Ernest J., Caroline Bennett Fogle, Enid Hart Douglass, and Claremont Graduate School. Oral History Program. *The Founding and Development of Scripps College*, 1966. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 24.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>54</sup> "Minutes of Discussion of the Committee on Education, of the Board of Trustees of Scripps College for Women," June 30, 1926. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

already female-dominated. Scripps was not the only women's college attempting to address home economics as a form of women's education; Vassar College's Euthenics program, as mentioned previously, was also an interesting initiative. Many Vassar faculty opposed this move because "Euthenics threatened to return college education back to the home, tainting the disciplines with domestic usefulness," but it continued on anyway, and Scripps similarly aimed for home economics education.<sup>55</sup> A proposed curriculum for homemaking majors at Scripps from August 1926 emphasized that multiple types of students have to be considered: non-majors who still want to learn some amount of homemaking, students who are excited to have their own home, students that want to teach such subjects, and students who want to work for a social service job.<sup>56</sup> Notably, this does not include students who do not wish to learn homemaking at all. This could be because the curriculum was meant for homemaking majors, but given that the document considers that there would be non-majors taking homemaking classes, it seems more that they assumed it was much more common for students to want to learn homemaking. This aligns with Jaqua's statements that women going into college were worried about both their marriage and their career, unlike men, and it is clear trustees assumed that these goals, although conflicting at times, would both affect their education.

This expectation to learn some homemaking skills continued as the college's curriculum developed. A later report after the college had been in operation for eight years demonstrated that while homemaking classes were not a graduation requirement for all students, "the personal life of the student was to be made in every way integral in her college training...Corrective training

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<sup>55</sup> Horowitz, Helen Lefkowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993, 298.

<sup>56</sup> Kerr, Mary Nicholl. "Report on Homemaking Curriculum," August 7, 1926. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 1.

was provided as needed. Both of these were placed under the direction of trained leaders”.<sup>57</sup>

While official documents do not show us much about what specific instances in which the trained leaders, seemingly the faculty, administration, and head residents, provided “corrective training,” it does accentuate that Scripps students did not come to college as perfectly formed women, at least according to the standards of the college. In the last section of this description, the report says that Scripps students should not only receive support in intellectual pursuits, but also “the many which arise from social and public affairs, from the development of careers, the cultivation of the arts, and especially for women from the conduct of family life.”<sup>58</sup> The early aims of Scripps College were heavily involved in the students’ personal lives, attempting to shape the young women into proper members of society, which often related to homemaking and traditional gender roles.

These gender expectations did not just include learning “women’s work;” the curriculum was, after all, still focused on traditional collegiate fields of study in the arts and humanities, and students therefore mostly focused on traditional academics. Interestingly, Ellen Browning Scripps’ lawyer and early trustee, J.C. Harper, wrote a letter to a few of the trustees advocating for education related to the government to be part of the curriculum. He asserted that “I am one who believes that women have a distinct contribution to make to Government and public affairs generally,” and specifically notes this is because of their recent enfranchisement.<sup>59</sup> Of course, this recent voting enfranchisement mostly just extended to white women in practice, because of poll taxes, literary tests, and other exclusionary measures, but the college was not especially

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<sup>57</sup> “Scripps College Aims and Needs, Part II: Notes and Formulations.” Scripps College, n.d. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, i-5.

<sup>59</sup> Harper, J.C. “Letter from J.C. Harper to Ethel Richardson, W.B. Munro, and E.J. Jaqua,” July 12, 1926. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

concerned with Black and Brown women's rights at this time. Harper's support of political education, and the support of the college in the 1930s, affirms the College's commitment to educating women in all aspects of life in which that they could create change, including the social institutions that had taken over traditional areas of women's labor, such as childcare and social work institutions.

Despite many takes on women's education that were conformist at best and sexist at worst, Scripps did take some more progressive stances about preparing their students for adulthood and careers. The mid-1930s report on aims and needs states "Any development of curriculum which does not take into consideration the long struggle of women for an opportunity to receive a liberal education identical with that available to men, is fundamentally unsound... truth must be presented to women as truth, not as truth adapted to women."<sup>60</sup> Scripps acknowledged that women's education was a huge struggle to achieve and that curriculum development had to recognize some disparities women may have previously faced in their education previously. Furthermore, the assertion that "truth must be presented to women as truth, not as truth adapted to women" emphasized that their education was no good if it was dumbed down because they were women. Scripps had a responsibility to provide a truthful and equitable education for the women that attended. Although the College's aims necessitated controlling the students' behavior to keep their reputation as proper young women, they acknowledged women as equal learners to men and deserving of the same opportunities. Society was changing, and Scripps acknowledged that whether their students became professional women, homemakers, or both, their education needed to include truthful insight into "public economy, government, and for those social institutions which have taken over much of the traditional home work of

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<sup>60</sup> Scripps College Aims and Needs, Part II: Notes and Formulations. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, v-1.

women.”<sup>61</sup> In some ways, this connects back to the idea that feminism was born when women’s work was destroyed. Scripps aimed to educate the female students for this “traditional home work” so that the women could take part in the institutions that had taken over this responsibility. The report also underlines the importance of a health education class called “The Life and Care of the Body”; while the description does not explicitly mention sexual education, it does say it should “introduce the student to fundamental biological laws of living organisms,” which could have included sexual education on reproduction, although it is unclear.<sup>62</sup> The College’s take was that women frequently had responsibilities to family and public health, the nurturing and education of children, home life, and public welfare, and that the students’ education should prepare them for contributing to these parts of society. While teaching women how to fulfill their expected role in society was by no means radical, its combination with intellectual education demonstrates that the College was attempting to have a realistic view of its students’ future lives and prepare them accordingly.

Another important aspect of Scripps’ curriculum-building is how World War II marked a dramatic shift in women’s education and roles in American society, which Scripps did not escape. Despite wartime pressures, there were fewer changes to the college experience at Scripps than at co-educational or men’s institutions. Scripps remained firmly committed to its humanities focus and to the value of a liberal arts education. However, there were still efforts to support the war, whether it was through training with the Red Cross, war majors, minors, and classes at nearby Pomona College, dances with military members, or on-campus victory gardens.<sup>63</sup> War

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<sup>61</sup> Scripps College Aims and Needs, Part II: Notes and Formulations. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, v-2.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, v-3.

<sup>63</sup> Dorn, Linda Jane. “Scripps and the War,” 1985. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

majors, which were majors that could be used for future war-related fields, such as engineering, were not a designation or requirement at Scripps, but students could still take many of those classes cross-campus at Pomona. Scripps' curriculum was established as a liberal arts education with a focus on the humanities, but its unique aim to provide for the "fullest and richest life" meant that there were already some existing courses of study that prepared women for careers prior to the onset of the war. A thesis written by Linda Jane Dorn '85 concluded that at Scripps, "Many of these [courses] could be adapted to meet war and post-war needs."<sup>64</sup> As women's colleges were not suffering from a lack of enrollment to the same degree as men's colleges, they had an easier time keeping the liberal arts curriculum and not adding war majors or converting to more vocational education.<sup>65</sup> Dorn specifically argued that Virginia Judy Esterly, who was the Assistant to the President at the time, was a large force shaping Scripps' preservation of the liberal arts curriculum, even as the school and students joined in on war efforts. This was because Esterly viewed war as a much more temporary institution compared to "the enduring strongholds of liberal arts education and [wartime efforts] should not be permitted to obliterate the accumulated centuries of knowledge and traditions of colleges and universities."<sup>66</sup> Scripps' position as a women's college and its administration's commitment to liberal arts education meant that the school was not as deeply institutionally affected by World War II as many others in the country, although there were still robust wartime defense efforts from the Scripps community. The pre-war aims of women's education and the recognition of women in the workforce had to change, which ushered the college and the world into a very different era.

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<sup>64</sup> Dorn, Linda Jane. "Scripps and the War," 65.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

Scripps maintained its original dedication to the humanities and liberal arts education even as the war pushed many colleges and universities to prioritize war-related fields of study.



## Architecture and Residential Life

When Scripps first published pamphlets attempting to attract potential students, the college notably focused on its first building and residence hall, Toll Hall, as an important attraction of the school. A publication created circa 1927 about Toll describes the college's aims



“Toll Hall Dedication.” Accessed April 28, 2022.  
<https://ccd1.claremont.edu/digital/collection/ccp/id/3746/rec/51>.

with residential life as “The residential idea is fundamental in Scripps College. All the girls must live in their college homes and no girl will be accepted for whom her college home is not ready.”<sup>67</sup> The publication really emphasizes that

the purpose of the residence hall is

to be a home, and specifically differentiates itself from the idea of a “dormitory” and being “institutional” later in the piece.<sup>68</sup> This description points towards the college's emphasis on women in the home, connecting with the community in a home context and not in an institutional way. The author's frequent use of the term “girl” to refer to the students also shows the infantilization of Scripps students by the administration. This frequent usage is not just found in this publication; it occurs again and again in both front-facing publications, like the *Scripture* and the *Bulletin*, and in more private sources, such as correspondence and education policy committee minutes. Given that this is a front-facing publication presumably meant to advertise the beauty of Scripps to potential students and their families, the combination of “girls” and

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<sup>67</sup> “Scripps College, Claremont.” Scripps College, circa 1927. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

“homes” indicates that the administration viewed the students as very young and in need of protection. The protection of the “girls” also came up early in the college’s lifetime when the students living in Toll became concerned about the possibility of someone getting into the dormitory through the second-floor loggia. Architect Gordon Kaufmann’s response to this concern was to say “Possibly if all the girls at Scripps College were less attractive it might solve the whole problem, however, that it will be difficult to find enough homely ones to fill the College.”<sup>69</sup> Kaufmann implies that if the Scripps students were less attractive, they wouldn’t have men trying to clamber up into their dorm, implying that the potential intruders would want to get at the women for purposes of sexual assault. This comment places the motivation and blame for sexual assault on the women’s beauty, and it is especially a strange comment to come from Scripps’ first architect, who was presumably not the man in charge of protecting Scripps students. However, the students’ request demonstrates that concerns about protecting the women did not just come from the administration and parents, but also from the students themselves, although it was unclear what type of danger the students were concerned about. Kaufmann and others emphasized the ways that architecture could influence the students’ femininity, both in terms of domesticity and in terms of the need for protection.

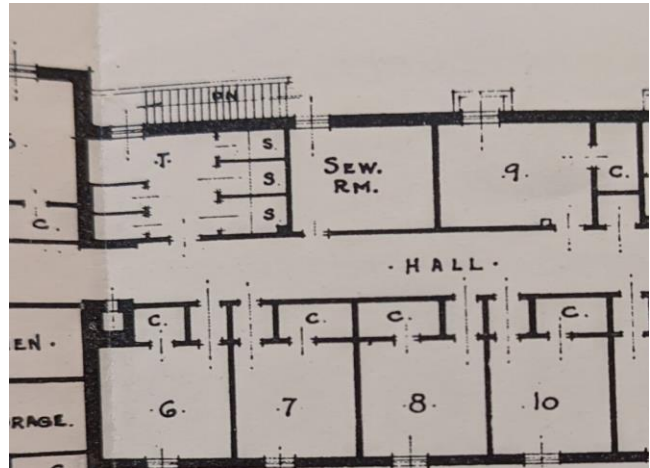
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<sup>69</sup> Kaufmann, Gordon. “Letter from Gordon Kaufmann to Dr. Ernest J. Jaqua,” August 14, 1931. President Jaqua’s Office Files. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

Another interesting aspect of the first architecture on campus and its relation to gender is how Toll Hall was planned. Similar to women's colleges like Smith and Mount Holyoke, Scripps aimed to create a "house plan" for the dormitory where the common spaces (dining room, dating rooms, living room) were at the front of the building and distinctly separated from the student living quarters.<sup>70</sup> Along with the common

spaces and their purposes, the initial plan also included guest rooms, a small apartment for a Dean, and sewing rooms. Interestingly enough, one of the sewing

rooms is my current dorm room (plans to the right), explaining the signs that it was converted into a bedroom much later than 1930 and its slightly smaller size.<sup>71</sup> My estimate about



when the room was converted would be sometime in the 1960s, as that is when Kimberly Hall was designed and the current fixtures in other halls are similar to those in Kimberly. The next time the sewing rooms were mentioned in architectural records was in the "Suggested List for Scripps College Furnishing" by Margaret Fowler. She recommended that Scripps buy for each of the rooms an electric sewing machine, an "ordinary" sewing machine (presumably a treadle machine, which is foot-powered and not electric), an iron and ironing board, and clothes baskets.<sup>72</sup> After studying student publications and diaries that mentioned sewing, it appeared to me that students did use the rooms for sewing for at least the first decade of the college, but it is

<sup>70</sup> Horowitz, H. L. (1993). *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-century Beginnings to the 1930s*: Vol. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 346.

<sup>71</sup> "Scripps College, Claremont." Scripps College, circa 1927. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>72</sup> "Suggested List for Scripps College Furnishing". Fowler, Margaret. N.p., n.d.

unclear when they were converted into bedrooms. A map found in a student scrapbook from 1936-1940 also shows that Grace Scripps Clark Hall, built in 1928, also had a sewing room on each floor.<sup>73</sup> Regardless, the inclusion of a sewing room in the original plans demonstrates the college's aim to prepare women for the homemaking activities the administration and faculty assumed they would do post-graduation. In a similar vein, Scripps has always had kitchens available for student use in the residence halls. Until about twenty years ago, instead of one centralized dining hall, each residence hall had its own kitchen and dining staff, and this space was used to feed students. Early plans of Toll show that there were small kitchens available for use in the same small rooms the student kitchens exist in today,<sup>74</sup> which is yet another example of the college aiming to provide a homelike environment that the young women students could use to practice their own homemaking skills outside of a classroom setting.

A major part of the surveillance and regulation of students on campus were the head residents in each dorm and the apartments meant for faculty and staff that were built (and still are used) on campus. For example, the original plans for Toll Hall show a small set of rooms, including a living room, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, and closets meant for the Dean.<sup>75</sup> These rooms were used by the first Dean, Isabel Fothergill Smith, who was an influential figure in early Scripps history and in the field of geology.<sup>76</sup> Dr. Smith was in charge of students' well-being, and student accounts show that she was often the figure dealing with student misbehavior such as staying out too late.<sup>77</sup> Her specific rooms have been converted into student rooms now, but

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<sup>73</sup> Hilton, Eleanor. "Hilton, Eleanor (Class of 1940). Scrapbook, 1936-1940," 1936-1940. Scripps College Scrapbook Collection [D.Mss.0981]. Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>74</sup> "Scripps College, Claremont." Scripps College, n.d. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Schneiderman, Jill Stephanie. "Growth and Development of a Woman Scientist and Educator." *Earth Sciences History* 11, no. 1 (1992): 37-39.

<sup>77</sup> Kleinsmid, Hildreth Green von. "Diary of Hildreth Green." Hildreth Green von Kleinsmid Papers. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

apartments meant for staff members (who were usually single women, and still are predominantly women) still exist, and at least the one in Kimberly Hall is still lived in by a member of the Residential Life staff. While we no longer have this position, the head residents looking after the students were often older, sometimes married women, who helped provide guidance about womanhood and regulated student behavior. Many former head resident apartments have now been converted to student housing and seem like part of the distant past, but when looking at historical sources from the start of the college through the 1940s, it is clear that the head residents were a large part of the community of each residence hall. Most of the yearbooks from this time frame include pictures of the head residents either on their own staff page or on the pages created for each dorm.<sup>78</sup> Some of these women were married and some were unmarried, but regardless of marriage status most appeared to be older women, “what most would call a dowager” as President Jaqua might have said.<sup>79</sup> It is unclear if any were widows, and if so, how many. Many of these women remained head residents for years. Students noted the good memories they had of their dorm experiences in their yearbooks, and sometimes this included mentions of their head residents: for example, “Mrs. Benedict’s cakes...” were part of the 1947 list of good memories from Columbia House, an off-campus house that around 5 students lived in.<sup>80</sup> These women often played motherly roles to the students, and while they were part of the regulation of students, they were also valued members of the Scripps College community. It is interesting to note that while head residents were included in the yearbooks, other staff members who did not live on campus, such as the housekeepers, were not. This may have to do with the head residents’ class status being higher than that of the housekeepers, as

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<sup>78</sup> Scripps College. “La Semeuse,” 1931-1949.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Scripps College. “La Semeuse,” 1947.

most appeared to be of similar upper-middle-class backgrounds as the students. Instead, students recognized housekeepers in other ways, such as a column in *The Scripture* giving small biographies of each housekeeper and a couple of the morning cooks.<sup>81</sup> The relationships between residential staff and students are an interesting lens through which to look at the regulation of women college students as well as the community-building going on in the residence halls.

Toll Hall's relationship to the students' education was further elucidated by the speeches given at its dedication, which explored issues of women's rights. They notably had one of the women trustees speak about women's education at the hall's dedication, Margaret L. Rishel Sartori (although in the documentation of her speech she was called by her husband's name, "Mrs. Joseph F. Sartori").<sup>82</sup> She asserted that "Now that they [women] suffer but few social and legal disabilities...women of today are concerned more and more as to how women shall be advanced as women—how they shall perform the women's task."<sup>83</sup> This was clearly not the case; many women faced social and legal disabilities in the way of their equality, especially women of color, who did not have as many opportunities for education, political rights, or any of the other things she named as recent triumphs for women. Women of color were also not included as faculty or students for much of Scripps' early history, although it is a little bit unclear as people's races were not recorded, so this is an assumption based on names and photographs. The one student of color that I identified was Esther Wu, a student from Shanghai whose family immigrated to the United States when Japan invaded China in 1937.<sup>84</sup> However, Sartori's assertion of women's rights does point towards the idea of women being "advanced as women,"

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<sup>81</sup> "A Reporter Investigates People Behind the Scenes," October 20, 1936. Scripps College Archives.

<sup>82</sup> Sartori, Margaret Lambert Rishel. "The Dedication of Eleanor Joy Toll Hall." Post Printing and Binding Co., 1927. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> "Esther Wu is Entered as Scripps Freshman," *The Scripture*, February 22, 1938.

and that being more desirable than women taking on the roles of men, which hearkens back to the administration quoting “It was not when women began to desire men’s work, but when men began to usurp women’s work that feminism was born.”<sup>85</sup> To the early administration, women’s rights meant women’s rights to have a good life performing their assigned gender roles, and the design of its first building reflected that. However, the aims of the college were not easily or immediately put in place through architecture and curriculum; they had to create rules and guidelines for these young women to reach their goals.

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<sup>85</sup> Report of the Special Committee on Vocational Training at Scripps College, June 21, 1928, 3. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

## Rules and Regulations Governing Scripps Students

The Scripps student handbooks from the 1930s and 40s describe many of the rules and regulations students lived with, and changes over time reflect conflicting student and administrative sentiments about said rules. The very first Handbook, for the 1935-1936 school year, states towards the beginning that “The affairs of each hall of residence are the private affairs of the residents.”<sup>86</sup> That being said, there were still many guidelines that constrained the “private affairs” of the students. The residence halls had curfews of 10:30 PM all nights except Saturday, which had a curfew at midnight. However, students could get late permits to stay out any day until 1:00 AM (except first-years, who could only use them on Fridays and Saturdays), and everyone got two 2:00 AM permits each semester.<sup>87</sup> This control over student movement indicates that the College saw the safety and actions of the young women as an integral part of their education at a residential college. The first-years especially were restricted, perhaps as a way of proving their responsibility to earn late permits later in their college career. By the 1942-43 school year, the Student Handbook showed that restrictions were slightly relaxed, with eight 2:00 AM permits allowed per semester, although freshmen and sophomores were still restricted in when and how many times they could take 1:00 AM permits.<sup>88</sup> And by the 1947-48 academic year, curfew and late permits still existed in much the same way as previously, although the handbook finally lists what penalties students face. These infractions could result in either a case judged by the Hall Council, which was a student-run judiciary force, or even “encampment,”

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<sup>86</sup> “Student Handbook, 1935-36.” Scripps College, 1935. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 7.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>88</sup> “Student Handbook, 1942-43.” Scripps College, 1942. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 11.



where students would face a much stricter curfew (6 PM-6 AM).<sup>89</sup> It appears this wasn't uncommon, as one student, Sarah Jane Stauffer, noted in her scrapbook that a memento was from her "1st encampment," implying there were other times she got that punishment.<sup>90</sup> Scripps students had some control over their "private affairs of the residents," as originally outlined in the first handbook, but they still faced threats of disciplinary action if they stayed out late--presumably because nothing good happens at night, only illicit trysts with romantic or sexual partners, alcohol and drug use, or potential crimes that would harm the students.

Along a similar line of restriction, the handbooks discuss rules and regulations regarding alcohol and drug use. For instance, the 1935-1936 student handbook notes that "Smoking is permitted only in the definitively designated loggias in each hall. The privilege of smoking is extended to the campus at scheduled dances and to the Friday evening."<sup>91</sup> However, the restrictions on time and location were voided when men were invited as guests for dinner, at which times, "the students have the privilege of smoking with their guests in a designated court."<sup>92</sup> This differentiation between appropriate locations and times was determined specifically by the presence of male guests. This implies that providing men a space to smoke was an essential part of hosting, and women's smoking was more acceptable under the guise of them making connections with men. Smoking and whether to allow it was a common conflict at earlier women's colleges, but by the late 1920s, Horowitz asserts that "to continue the rule in the face of widespread student disobedience seemed to threaten the standards of civility necessary

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<sup>89</sup> "Student Handbook, 1947-48." Scripps College, 1947. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 20-21.

<sup>90</sup> Stauffer, Sarah Jane. "Stauffer, Sarah Jane (Class of 1938). Scrapbook, 1934-1938," 1934-1938. Scripps College Scrapbook Collection [D.Mss.0981]. Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>91</sup> "Student Handbook, 1935-36." Scripps College, 1935. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 11.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

for communal life,” and the Seven Sisters had loosened smoking-related rules.<sup>93</sup> Scripps’ rules regarding smoking in the 1942-43 handbook are mostly similar to the 1935-36 handbook, although they also interestingly added on Sicilian Court as a permissible site during 3-hour examinations.<sup>94</sup> By 1947-48, the list of places that students could smoke was expanded. Interestingly, they do add in that “Special emergency privileges for smoking shall be granted at the discretion of the head resident.”<sup>95</sup> While “special emergency privileges” seems like a frivolous note to tack on to official rules, it does acknowledge that the rules cannot cover every circumstance around smoking (especially as tobacco is an addictive substance!), and that the head residents had the authority to regulate student smoking as they saw fit. Smoking was simply part of the college experience for many women, and Scripps’ regulations of when, where, and in what company it could happen indicated they tried to disincentivize it unless it interfered with social activities with men.

Alcohol, however, did not receive the same treatment in the rules as smoking; alcohol was expressly forbidden on campus at least through the 1940s, and students even faced disciplinary action. The 1935-36 handbook asserts that “Students are not to be seen in “beer parlors” (if there be such) within a radius of three miles of the campus.”<sup>96</sup> Not only was on-campus student drinking forbidden, it was also especially important that they were not seen in public partaking within a certain proximity to the campus, indicating that the reputation of Scripps women in public was more important than the actual act of drinking. This was

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<sup>93</sup> Horowitz, Helen Lefkowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women’s Colleges From Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993, 292.

<sup>94</sup> “Student Handbook, 1942-43.” Scripps College, 1942. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 14.

<sup>95</sup> “Student Handbook, 1947-48.” Scripps College, 1947. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 23.

<sup>96</sup> “Student Handbook, 1935-36.” Scripps College, 1935. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 13.

emphasized by the next bullet point, which said “It is considered good taste for students to conduct themselves at all public places in such a manner which will not cast a bad light upon Scripps College.” Given that Scripps was trying to foster a strong academic environment that prepared women for their future vocations, consumption of alcohol could not support their aims for the female students or the school’s reputation. If a student broke these rules, or the night watchman caught anyone returning to campus and reported them as “having had too much to drink,” they could be expelled.<sup>97</sup> This in fact did happen at least once, when a student in the 1930s was asked to withdraw from Scripps because she was reported to have alcohol in her room that she drank with a friend. (The friend did not get asked to leave, as she did not possess any alcohol herself, so there was no proof of any rule-breaking.)<sup>98</sup> The 1942-43 Handbook seems to have a less harsh policy than the 1935-36 year, as it does not prohibit students from drinking off campus, but it does note the laws prohibiting underage drinking and drinking in cars and says that “A student who appears on the campus or at any College function showing the effects of drinking is acting against the traditions of the college.”<sup>99</sup> Importantly, this does not threaten disciplinary action, despite the disapproving tone. The 1947-48 handbook indicates that drinking was still prohibited on campus and explicitly says that “unseemly behavior under the influence of liquor anywhere in public during the time college is in session or while a student is under the jurisdiction of the college” could result in disciplinary action.<sup>100</sup> This extends the college’s role into the public sphere very explicitly, and emphasizes how the College was acting as a parental

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<sup>97</sup> “Student Handbook, 1935-36.” Scripps College, 1935. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 13.

<sup>98</sup> Rudisill. “Minutes of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Student Interests Committee in the Office of the Chairman, 12 March 1937,” March 12, 1937. President Jaqua’s Office Files. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, .

<sup>99</sup> “Student Handbook, 1942-43.” Scripps College, 1942. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 14.

<sup>100</sup> “Student Handbook, 1947-48.” Scripps College, 1947. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 24.

figure and was very invested in the students' reputations. Scripps girls were not supposed to appear "unseemly"; they were supposed to be model young women socializing in acceptable ways, even after they were old enough to legally drink alcohol. The very teetotalist position of the college regarding alcohol contrasts with the permissive attitude regarding smoking; alcohol was considered completely unacceptable for young women and resulted in strong disciplinary action, while smoking was acceptable in some circumstances, especially when in the company of male guests.

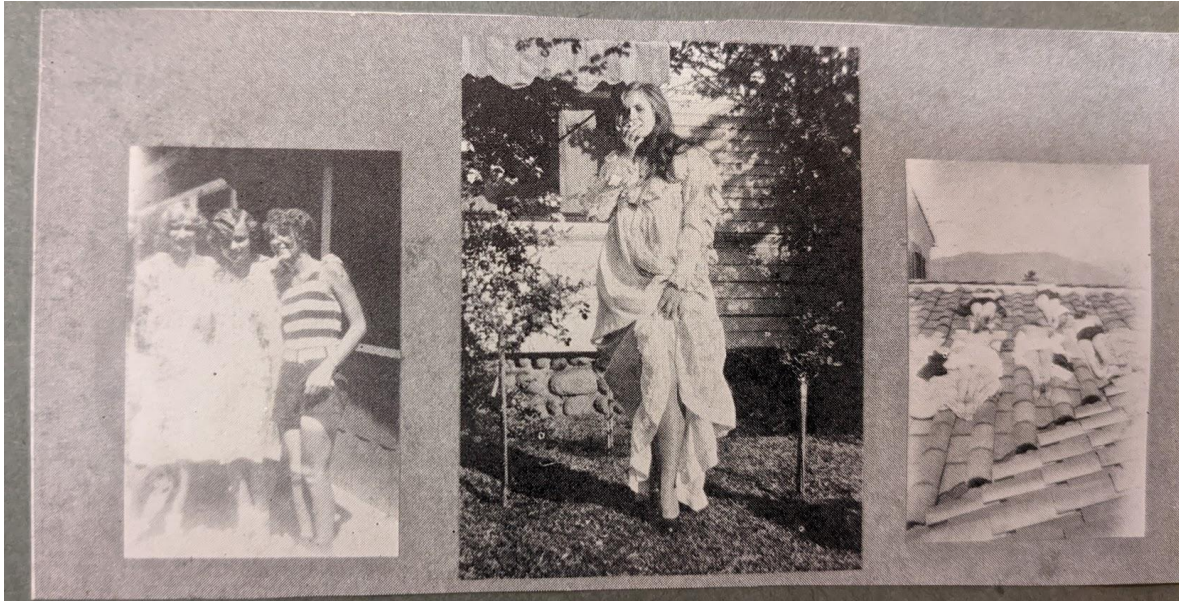
Students certainly partook in drugs and alcohol, but given the rules and regulations on campus, one has to look at the student-created sources to find out what the culture around them was like in practice. *La Semeuse*, the yearbook, and *The Scripture*, the student-published newspaper, do not contain references to alcohol usage by students, but it is clear that smoking was a large part of student life during the first two decades of Scripps history. Looking at a scrapbook made by one of the first graduates of the college, Ida Swint, there were no photographs of alcohol or tobacco usage in her chronicle of her time at Scripps, but there was a letter regarding student smoking at the formal.<sup>101</sup> The person who wrote this letter (only identified as "The Secretary," so potentially someone involved in student government) reported that "Dean Smith said...it would be necessary for you to see Dr. Jaqua regarding student smoking during the formal. Personally she does not object, but several faculty members have expressed averse opinions...If you wish to know my personal opinion—please furnish asbestos paper! Of all the narrow minded [the last sentence of this letter becomes unreadable]."<sup>102</sup> While we do not have the full length of this student's opinion, it is clear that students reacted very

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<sup>101</sup> Swint, Ida. "Swint, Ida (Class of 1931). Scrapbook, 1927-1931," 1927-1931. Scripps College Scrapbook Collection [D.Mss.0981]. Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

strongly to faculty attempts to limit smoking, even in formal settings. Another member of the first class, Ada Watkins, did have alcohol and drug-related images in her scrapbook, but the photo relating to alcohol appeared to be a fake speakeasy-themed bar set.<sup>103</sup> The only other drug-related image in her scrapbook was an image of a woman smoking a cigarette, set next to pictures of students sunbathing on the roof, as shown below.<sup>104</sup>



Watkins, Ada E. "Watkins, Ada E. (Class of 1931). Scrapbook, 1926-1931."

The yearbooks from the first two decades of Scripps also show some tobacco usage, although for the most part, there were only one or two such instances in the entire yearbook each year.<sup>105</sup> The yearbooks from this era were more formal records of the academic year than later yearbooks and therefore included more posed portraits and written pieces reminiscing on the year, so it seems that candid photos of women students smoking were not quite proper enough to be part of this portrayal of Scripps. However, in quite a few issues of the yearbook there are mentions of

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<sup>103</sup> Watkins, Ada E. "Watkins, Ada E. (Class of 1931). Scrapbook, 1926-1931.," 1926-1931. Scripps College Scrapbook Collection [D.Mss.0981]. Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Scripps College. "La Semeuse," 1931-1949.

smoking-porches as being a big part of social life. Toll Hall's page in the 1941 issue notes "We live in Toll! We have a blue fountain and a parrot-tree and a new smoking-porch!"<sup>106</sup> Clark Hall's page lists some important memories from the year and says "Then the littler things to remember: Bridge on the smoking-porch, talking til two..."<sup>107</sup> Lucia Stevenson's description in the 1940 yearbook says "Will we ever be able to forget 'Tutu' with the inevitable pencil and cigarette behind her ear, and her double-trouble with Cupid?...It will be many a moon before we'll forget our fun-loving smoking-porch companion."<sup>108</sup> Interestingly, I did not find any images of men smoking in the yearbooks from this time period; most pictures of men were faculty portraits, men in theater productions, or pictures of students dancing, and not in such a casual setting as smoking. While images of the women students smoking may have been too unladylike to include often, or maybe were seldom even taken in the first place, it is clear that smoking was a large part of campus culture in the 1930s and 40s, even as administration sought to regulate and reduce it.

Another major site of Scripps' regulation of students, especially in regard to sexuality, was how students dressed. In 1935, the handbook only mentioned such rules in regard to dressing for dinner and college hour.<sup>109</sup> The college hour was a weekly gathering of all students to listen to a speaker, and all of the seniors were expected to wear caps and gowns.<sup>110</sup> This was not unique to Scripps: Horowitz describes a tradition in Bryn Mawr's early history where the sophomores attempted to steal the caps and gowns of the freshmen, and Vassar also had rules

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<sup>106</sup> Scripps College. "La Semeuse," 1941.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Scripps College. "La Semeuse," 1940.

<sup>109</sup> "Student Handbook, 1935-36." Scripps College, 1935. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 32.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 17.

about changing dresses for dinner.<sup>111</sup> At Scripps, the manner in which the students should dress for dinner is not specified, but presumably students understood dinner to be a formal meal because of this expectation to dress for it, and other guidelines in the section on the dining rooms support this assumption. While the 1942-43 handbook does not include any information on dress codes, the notable lack of any cap and gown requirement for college hour indicates that the rule was phased out.<sup>112</sup> In general, the lack of official dress code indicates that the college did not feel it necessary to create rules, but by the 1947-48 handbook, dress codes were very specifically outlined. This again included an expectation to dress for dinner every day except Friday and Sunday, as well as many rules about robes at breakfast and whether jeans or shorts were acceptable in different locations.<sup>113</sup> Interestingly, in Denison Library students were told “Jeans allowed only in the basement and on Saturday.”<sup>114</sup> The dress code extended past campus; in Claremont, “No jeans or shorts in daytime; Moore’s [an eatery] excepted, but should be clean.”<sup>115</sup> As with the College’s control of the young women’s behavior regarding alcohol, the dress code was a matter of the students’ and the College’s reputations within the wider community. Dinner was a time to teach proper etiquette to the women who were expected to be hostesses in their future home lives, and dress was part of their education in this realm and others. Even going to the library to study required a certain amount of decorum from the young women. The handbook transformed over time from just a few explicit rules to no rules, and then to highly detailed rules, which demonstrate how Scripps’ administration increasingly felt the need to officially regulate women’s gender expression and sexuality through their dress.

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<sup>111</sup> Horowitz, Helen Lefkowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women’s Colleges From Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993, 172 and 39.

<sup>112</sup> “Student Handbook, 1942-43.” Scripps College, 1942. Scripps College Archives, 17.

<sup>113</sup> “Student Handbook, 1947-48.” Scripps College, 1947. Scripps College Archives, 27.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

## Breaking Heterosexual and Heterosocial Norms

One area of analysis in which I disagree with Helen Horowitz's interpretation of women's college history is how she approaches the history of queerness at women's colleges.

Horowitz argues that:

Feminist historians committed to defending lesbian alternatives have claimed them [faculty women at women's colleges] ... This approach distorts the past. It poses a dichotomy unfamiliar to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, dividing human beings into those who are heterosexual and those who are homosexual. It presumes that within each category those who choose each other as loving partners freely express themselves sexually. A nineteenth-century professional woman did not necessarily see herself as a person with sexual needs demanding fulfillment. Her primary concerns lay in different directions.<sup>116</sup>

While I agree that it is inaccurate to label these women with lesbian identities before that was even a way people would have conceptualized sexuality, I also think it is highly problematic to dismiss queer analyses of these women entirely. Yes, these faculty women who had close, intimate friendships and lived in "twosomes" would not have called themselves homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals, or queer. But they were going against the norms of gender and sexuality of the time, and people noticed. Horowitz herself later notes "Conservatives had taken to calling unmarried women reformers "the third sex," suggesting that in their single state they were neither male nor female."<sup>117</sup> This also extended to calling them "asexual," which at the time meant they lacked male or female sex, not that they experienced a lack of sexual attraction. Women faculty and students in the all-female community of early women's colleges often adopted masculine roles (both in the literal theater and in the theater of day-to-day life).<sup>118</sup> It is clear that women faculty frequently queered gender and sexuality norms and provided an

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<sup>116</sup> Horowitz, Helen Lefkowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993, 188.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.



alternative example of womanhood to their students. Furthermore, Horowitz's assertion that calling them lesbians "presumes that within each category those who choose each other as loving partners freely express themselves sexually" ignores the fact that lesbian relationships do not inherently include sexual activity or attraction. Thus, calling a relationship "lesbian" does not actually inherently presume they were "express[ing] themselves sexually," it just means that they were women in queer(ish) partnerships with each other. It also ignores the fact that they could absolutely have been expressing themselves sexually in private, and we will just never know such private details of their lives! The second edition of Horowitz's *Alma Mater* came out in 1993, so it is understandable that she did not consider the more recent identity terms of aromanticism or asexuality in her analysis of their relationships. However, without using any such anachronistic labels for the faculty women of late nineteenth and early twentieth century, I believe it is important to consider a lack of interest in sexual or romantic relationships as part of the ways that female faculty may have queered the women's college environment, not just through identities relating to romantic or sexual attraction to and relationships with women.

A framework that I think is more useful than Horowitz's when looking at potential queer histories is the framework Patricia Palmieri uses in her book on early women faculty at Wellesley, *In Adamless Eden*. Palmieri agrees with Lillian Faderman's argument of "conscious construction of a lesbian sexual identity as possible only *after* the new category was created. By the 1930s a lesbian subculture was beginning to emerge out of this new sexual recognition."<sup>119</sup> While Scripps College was being developed in this era, because it was a conscious identity label, I do not think it is appropriate to use "lesbian" to describe women who broke norms regarding sexuality through relationships with other women. Instead, I would like apply Palmieri's

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<sup>119</sup> Palmieri, Patricia Ann. *In Adamless Eden: The Community of Women Faculty at Wellesley*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, 137-138.

argument to Scripps' early years; she argued that "it is best to consider Wellesley as a community of women-committed-women, because this approach acknowledges the elements of love, physical affection, and openly sexual behavior in some Wellesley marriages and reserves the term *lesbian* for women who have consciously claimed that identity."<sup>120</sup> I think this is a good way to acknowledge that there were many women who were committed to each other and had stories alternative to what we may imagine as typical early twentieth century sexuality and gender roles. Queer analyses of "romantic friendships," "Boston marriages," "crushes," "smashes," "Wellesley marriages," and other unlabeled same-sex intimate friendships and relationships can provide very useful information on how women working, studying, and/or living at women's colleges challenged the heteronormative roles prescribed to them. I will also use the term "women-committed-women," as it acknowledges the difficulties in placing identity labels on historical figures while still acknowledging that queerness has a history much longer than the length of time that identity labels such as "lesbian," "asexual," or "aromantic" have existed.

Although it is important to consider queer analyses of women's college history, much of early Scripps social and academic life still revolved around heterosocial community. Scripps' involvement in students' personal lives had an influence on the classroom, especially because of the Claremont Colleges consortium connecting them to Pomona College and the heterosocial expectations that came along with that connection. In a letter to Janet Jacks Balch, cited by the *Scripps College Landscape & Architectural Blueprint*, Jaqua wrote "Many visits to women's colleges have impressed me with a strange unreality and artificiality and maladjustment to many aspects of life... Yet college life should have all the elements of reality... [for instance] men,

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<sup>120</sup> Palmieri, Patricia Ann. *In Adamless Eden: The Community of Women Faculty at Wellesley*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, 138.

either on the social or intellectual side.”<sup>121</sup> It is clear that he thought men should be involved at Scripps to some degree, or else the college would perpetuate “strange unreality and artificiality” of a wholly female community, as he accused other women’s colleges of doing. This connects to the general move at women’s colleges in this era towards engaging with men more frequently. The Board of Trustees’ Education Committee also had a complicated discussion in 1929 on whether or not Pomona men should be allowed in Scripps classes, as Scripps and Pomona women were allowed to attend classes at either school easily.<sup>122</sup> Committee members (many of whom were faculty) pointed out the assumed reciprocal nature of the colleges, with shared resources like the Claremont Colleges Library, and suggested potential solutions to the issue. One trustee, J.C. Harper, specifically noted that “Scripps girls will want to go to men’s college to be established.”<sup>123</sup> Pomona’s educational reputation had already been set at this point, and the trustees knew Scripps students would be relying on the colleges’ relationship for academic establishment and to supplement their education. This crucial decision would set up the relationship between the Claremont Colleges for years to come.

In response to this question, Mary Nicholl Kerr, an early trustee, sent Dr. Jaqua a report from faculty stating their support of allowing Pomona men in Scripps classes. Reasons provided by faculty included that parents knew their daughters would not be fully isolated from men because of the consortium, Ellen Browning Scripps presumably wanted the students to not be isolated as well, and that Scripps students constantly engaged with Pomona men anyway.<sup>124</sup> Kerr specifically affirms that “there is constant association of young men and women here and it

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<sup>121</sup> Scripps College. Blueprint Committee. and Historic Resources Group. *Scripps College Landscape & Architectural Blueprint*. Place of publication not identified: Scripps College, 2004, 73.

<sup>122</sup> “Minutes of the Education Committee of the Board of Trustees of Scripps College,” March 13, 1929. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Kerr, Mary Nicholl. “Letter from Mary Nicholl Kerr to Ernest Jaqua,” April 3, 1929. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 1.

cannot be prevented without falling back upon a degree of paternalism--or should we say maternalism?--which we fear, under the circumstances, would be disastrous.”<sup>125</sup> The correction from “paternalism” to “maternalism” reveals that the college’s power over women was often of a feminine nature; in many ways, the college was there to teach women what their mothers might teach them, like domestic arts, proper dress, or how to appropriately interact with men. The trustees were aware that Scripps women had minds of their own and wanted to engage with young men, although the phrasing of “disastrous” leaves some to the imagination. Would it be disastrous because students would be upset and break rules regarding when they could see men? Or was it disastrous because isolation only with women could result in lesbian relationships? Given the histories of older women’s colleges, like the crushes and romantic friendships in the early histories of Vassar and Barnard, and the reputation that women faculty broke gender and sexuality norms, it could be either.<sup>126</sup> Early Scripps student publications do not have references to “crushes” or similar romantic friendships between women, and instead often mention Pomona or Caltech men.<sup>127</sup> At the end of the debate on allowing them in Scripps classes, to make the consortium relationship equal and to appease (and even encourage) the heterosexual desires of the students, Scripps College decided to let Pomona men take classes at Scripps in 1929. This allowance by the trustees and faculty signifies the importance they placed on men and women’s interactions and relationships as part of a young woman’s proper education, departing from the pre-World War I women’s college all-female model of community.

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<sup>125</sup> Kerr, Mary Nicholl. “Letter from Mary Nicholl Kerr to Ernest Jaqua,” April 3, 1929. Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, 1.

<sup>126</sup> Wilk, Rona M. “‘What’s a Crush?’ A Study of Crushes and Romantic Friendships at Barnard College, 1900-1920.” *OAH Magazine of History* 18, no. 4 (2004): 20–22. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25163697>.

<sup>127</sup> *The Scripture*, 1931-1949.

One fascinating example of an early Scripps student confronting the social norms and rules governing student behavior was Hildreth Green, class of 1933. Hildreth, also known as “Hiddo,” was a bit of a wild child within her social life; she was very socially active and had many different men in her life, some steady partners, like her eventual husband, Walter von Kleinsmid, or some that she only went on one or two dates with. Many of her short diary entries reflect that, such as this entry from her first semester of her first year: “Ray came up in afternoon. Charles left me a note and came up in evening for a few minutes.”<sup>128</sup> At some points, she did not manage to follow all the Scripps rules about staying out late at night: “Went to Pomona with Ray, Ranny + Ray. Almost got home late. 10:31. What a ride!”<sup>129</sup> This indicated that Scripps students were interacting plenty with men, both as friends and as dates, and that she was aware of the risk in staying out late, although this instance did not result in any issues. She also clearly wanted to stay out late more than she was able, as she noted at least once that she could not get a late permit when she wanted.<sup>130</sup> But most notably for our purposes, she chronicled her experiences with disciplinary action. On January 14, 1930, she wrote: “Went to see the Dean (by request) – Got note to-nite from her. Encampused for a week. Hell! Ray called then came tearing up thru rain to see me. Called Benny at L.A.” She also kept the note from Dean Isabel Fothergill Smith that notified her of the encampusement, which was for skipping classes on the last day



Hildreth Green, geni\_family\_tree. “Hildreth Adaline von Kleinsmid.” <https://www.geni.com/people/Hildreth-von-Kleinsmid/5534919138450125297>.

<sup>128</sup> von Kleinsmid, Hildreth Green. “Diary of Time at Scripps,” October 17, 1929. Hildreth Green von Kleinsmid Papers, Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., October 10, 1929.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., December 11, 1929.

before Christmas vacation.<sup>131</sup> Clearly, Hildreth was unhappy with the encampment, but it did not prevent her from seeing the men she was dating.

Later on during her time at college, Hildreth noted “Found out Watchman didn’t count me late. Such luck.”<sup>132</sup> The watchman at Scripps received mentions in a few student-written sources, like Hildreth’s diary and the *Scripture*, but otherwise is an enigmatic figure in accounts of student life. His function primarily seemed to be protecting the campus and reporting to the administration which students had been late or who seemed intoxicated, which it seems that he did not always notice or care enough to report. It is unclear in Hildreth’s note if he had purposefully not counted her or not. Notably, while she got in trouble for being out too late with men, she did not get in trouble for having sleepovers with her friends. She notes multiple times throughout her diary sleepovers with friends such as, “Margot slept with me.”<sup>133</sup> It appeared to be normal for Scripps students to sleep together on their balconies, the sleeping porches, or in their rooms, from Hildreth’s account of her social life. While Hildreth gave no indication of any sort of lesbian or women-committed-women relationships happening at Scripps, it seems that women were much less supervised when they were together compared to when they were around men, and it is easy to imagine that in those circumstances women-committed-women relationships could have been possible to participate in and conceal. Scripps students’ movements and social lives were highly monitored and controlled in regard to their off-campus whereabouts and interactions with men, but they did not face the same scrutiny amongst themselves in the residence halls. Despite the fact women’s relationships and potentially

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<sup>131</sup> Smith, Isabel Fothergill. Correspondence to Hildreth Green, circa 1930. Hildreth Green von Kleinsmid Papers. Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, Claremont, California.

<sup>132</sup> von Kleinsmid, Hildreth Green. “Diary of Time at Scripps,” November 9, 1930. Hildreth Green von Kleinsmid Papers, Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, January 12, 1930.

“deviant” sexualities were more criticized post-World War I, in practice, Scripps College did not appear to enforce bans strictly or officially on queer(ish) relationships between women, especially if they were actively participating in the heterosocial environment.

Hildreth also spoke about her reluctance to become engaged and married while still a student, writing in 1931 about her relationship with Dick Miller, “I can’t consent to a ring in June. My mind is not made up.”<sup>134</sup> At this point, Hildreth was only a sophomore in college, and appeared reluctant about marriage, indicating that the frequent pathway of marriage while still a student was not the one that she wished to take. According to her son, who compiled her diary entries alongside the letters she received while at college, this reluctance to get engaged continued until her senior year; she did not agree to marry her future husband, Benny, when he graduated, but instead insisted on waiting until she finished her college education, too.<sup>135</sup> Her peers also were aware of her romantic exploits; in the issue of the *Scripture* commemorating the class of 1933, a poem about the class said about Hildreth: “There are those who seem so quiet / That you’d not suspect a riot / They insist they’re wearing men’s pins “just for fun” / You know, of course, who I mean... / Secretive Miss Hildreth Green / And the Dorsy [sic] darling, Margaret Livingston.”<sup>136</sup> Hildreth was not the only girl within this category of wearing men’s pins for fun, so her style of dating many men at once and not being serious was not an anomaly in the Scripps community. And it was known among her peers, to the point that they would publish it in the school newspaper as a way to remember her personality (student gossip in the newspaper was much more usual in the *Scripture* then than it is in today’s student publications). Even if she

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<sup>134</sup> von Kleinsmid, Hildreth Green. “Diary of Time at Scripps,” April 12, 1931. Hildreth Green von Kleinsmid Collection, Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>135</sup> von Kleinsmid, Hildreth Green and von Kleinsmid, Richard. “Hiddo’s Diary: An Education at Scripps College, 1929-1933,” 2018. Hildreth Green von Kleinsmid Collection, Scripps College Archives, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California, iii.

<sup>136</sup> “The Class of Thirty-Three Kisses its Hand to the Campus.” *The Scripture*, June 12, 1933.

seemed “so quiet” to other students, the dating lives of their peers was something they knew plenty about at such a small school. Hildreth had a deeply interesting story of her time as a student, and her nonconformity to the school’s ideal female student exemplifies how the early mission of Scripps to make proper young women often was not fulfilled, since each student had her own individual personality and goals.

The Scripps newspaper in the early days of the college, the *Scripture*, had other hints at Scripps students engaging in relationships in ways the college probably did not sanction as proper feminine behavior. For example, a 1936 gossip column mentions “And we are afraid to reveal the name of the Freshman (!) who received a package from a movie and stage actor—containing her bathrobe and slippers. Explanations are in order.”<sup>137</sup> This implies that the unnamed actor could have been in some way intimately connected to her, since bathrobes and slippers were not normal appropriate attire to see a woman in. The writer was especially interested by the fact that it was a freshman who received this attention—from a movie star, no less. An issue later, the *Scripture* included, “This, our first item, is ancient history, but still we would like to know the identity of the gentleman in tuxedo who was seen wandering through the North Gate the morning after the Christmas Dance. Question: Where did he sleep?”<sup>138</sup> Given Scripps’ gated campus and the night watchman, to avoid being discovered it appears he must have slept in a student’s room, which was very much against the rules; men weren’t supposed to go inside their rooms at all. And as it was “ancient history,” the gossip must have spread far before it was published, further demonstrating the close-knit social circles between students. Other issues mention students dating multiple boys at once, upsetting breakups, and thrilling engagements. One freshman wrote a poem about her college experience, ending it with

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<sup>137</sup> “Nondescripps.” *The Scripture*, December 15, 1936.

<sup>138</sup> “Nondescripps.” *The Scripture*, January 12, 1937.



“Someday I know / That I will grow / To womanhood and wisdom– / But in between, / For goodness’ sake, / Let me–be seventeen!”<sup>139</sup> Clearly, the students were aware of their own youth, and wanted to hold on to some girlishness and fun before they had to grow into responsible women. This demonstrates the ongoing tension between administration, faculty, students, and the general concept of young adulthood, since Scripps students were at once expected to be proper young ladies but still treated as children in many ways. This double standard where Scripps women were infantilized and also supposed to be proper and upstanding shows the expectations put on women at that time, even as they were students in higher education.

Furthermore, just because they were not supposed to and it was not openly discussed does not mean that students never had heterosexual sexual relationships. An article from the *Claremont Courier* in 1970 about the former Pomona College publication *College Humor* recounts how while he was a student, Pomona alum Fred Graeser ’30 got in trouble for making a joke in the publication “that a foundling home be established between Pomona and Scripps College.”<sup>140</sup> Apparently, this concerned the Scripps administration because “it turned out that a Scrippsie recently had become impregnated. Scripps was then only in its second year of existence...and the administration was ‘antsy’ and ‘terrified of scandal.’”<sup>141</sup> Graeser was apparently “called up before the entire faculty of the college.”<sup>142</sup> This must have occurred in 1929, as that was the second year that students attended Scripps and it matches up with Graeser’s time working on the *College Humor* publication. I found no other reference to such a scandal in the Scripps archives, but it is entirely possible that it the administration covered it up or references to it are only in confidential records, especially since the administration was “terrified

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<sup>139</sup> “A Freshman’s Plea.” *The Scripture*, November 9, 1937.

<sup>140</sup> “Ha ha Whatever happened to COLLEGE HUMOR?” *The Claremont Courier*, September 24, 1970.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

of scandal” and it was a very private affair. Pregnancy would certainly have been a scandal at the time! The article in the *Claremont Courier* was also published forty years after Graeser experienced this, so it was no longer too personal or private to mention that such a scandal had happened. Records from the 1930s show that students left Scripps for numerous reasons, disciplinary, personal, or financial, and these reasons were not normally publicly mentioned.<sup>143</sup> This reference to an early scandal at Scripps demonstrates the fear of the Scripps administration that their school would develop an unsavory reputation regarding its protection of students from sexual misbehavior, and the fears for their students’ reputations, too. Pregnancy out of wedlock was not taken lightly at this time, so heterosexual behavior was not supposed to go past a certain point in students’ lives.

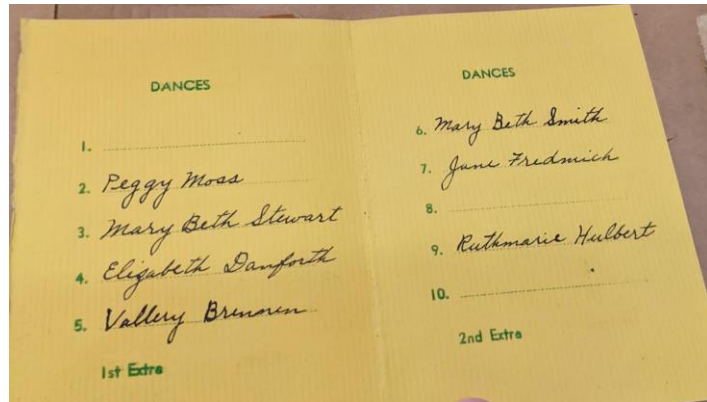
While there were many tensions surrounding student behavior, dating culture still changed over the first few decades as the world changed along with the Claremont Consortium. World War II had a massive effect on the social circles of Scripps women, as fewer men attended Pomona or Caltech (the main schools they interacted with), and social events became centered around men in the military. When Hildreth Green was a student, dating culture was alive and well for many women—extra lively for Hildreth when she juggled multiple dates!—although she was noted as dating “just for fun” in a way that differentiated her from most other Scripps women.<sup>144</sup> Accounts in the yearbooks and student scrapbooks prior to World War II indicate that many women dated men from nearby schools and sometimes hometowns, seriously or more casually, and formal dances involved these male partners. Interestingly, the dance cards kept in student scrapbooks from the 1930s indicate that at some campus events, Scripps women danced with each other. For example, Eleanor Hilton (class of 1940) kept in her scrapbook multiple

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<sup>143</sup> *The Scripture*, 1931-39.

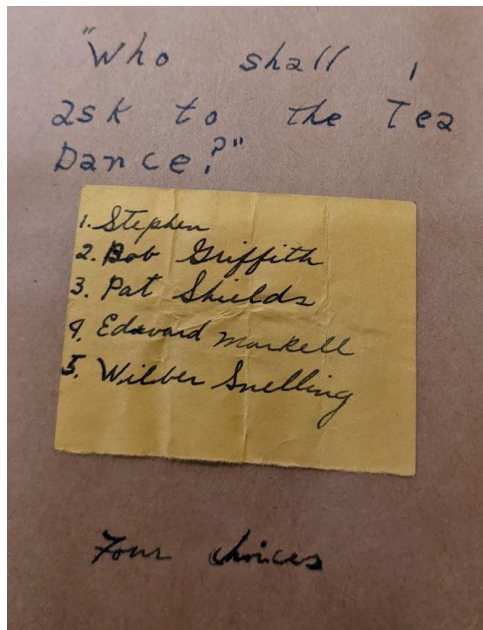
<sup>144</sup> “The Class of Thirty-Three Kisses its Hand to the Campus.” *The Scripture*, June 12, 1933.

dance cards that were filled with women's names, as shown to the right.<sup>145</sup> This harkens back to the homosocial traditions at early women's colleges, such as the Freshman Frolic at Smith, where



sophomores would ask freshmen to the dance and be their “cavalier” or “partner” for the night.<sup>146</sup>

The Scripps students didn't describe these traditions in quite as romantic ways as the accounts from late nineteenth century women's colleges do, but the homosocial environment and women dancing with each other indicate that Scripps students did not completely avoid adoption of male



roles, especially since many dance styles had explicitly male lead and female follow roles. When dances were formal and men were invited, however, it did not appear that Scripps students danced with each other (or at least, they did not write it down on dance cards or take photographs of it). The Scripps environment could transform from homosocial to heterosocial in different circumstances, and the pre-World War II world demonstrated the dual commitment of Scripps students to

A note in Sarah Jane Stauffer's scrapbook contemplating which man she wanted to ask to the Tea Dance. Stauffer, Sarah Jane. Scrapbook, 1934-1938.

their “Scrippsie” community and to their heterosexual dating obligations.

<sup>145</sup> Hilton, Eleanor. “Hilton, Eleanor (Class of 1940). Scrapbook, 1936-1940,” 1936-1940. Scripps College Scrapbook Collection [D.Mss.0981]. Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>146</sup> Horowitz, Helen Lefkowitz. *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges From Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*. 2nd ed. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993, 162.

During the war, though, dating culture shifted dramatically because the heterosocial community structures at the Claremont Colleges experienced upheaval with so many men leaving college for military duty. Yearbook photographs of dances quickly started to include many men in uniforms, and the pages about clubs include the Defense Council of the Scripps Service Organization.<sup>147</sup> At Pomona and Scripps, various academic fields were designated as war majors or minors,<sup>148</sup> and Pomona adopted an accelerated program to allow men to complete their degrees faster before entering service.<sup>149</sup> The draft age was lowered to 18 in 1942, so in 1943, hundreds of enlisted men from the Air Force and Army came to Pomona to study meteorological work, engineering, and modern languages. Pomona College cites that “By the autumn of 1943, almost half of the students on campus were in the two military programs, and the number of civilian male students was down to about 60.”<sup>150</sup> This meant the male population at the Claremont Colleges was significantly more transitory and stayed around for shorter periods of time. In 1944, Pomona women and Scripps women joined forces to establish a Date Bureau, where women students would be paired with men in the military programs.<sup>151</sup> Still, there were not many men around, and women students at Scripps took note, as their own education was affected. While there is no certain number of women who left Scripps during the war for marriage, vocational education, war work, or military service, for the class of 1945, only 34 members of the original 91 were pictured as graduates in the yearbooks, three of whom graduated in 1944 due to the accelerated program.<sup>152</sup> Twenty-four Scripps alumnae had entered the military, as well.<sup>153</sup> Scripps students were faced with much different pathways than before

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<sup>147</sup> Scripps College. “La Semeuse,” 1941-1945.

<sup>148</sup> Dorn, Linda Jane. “Scripps and the War,” 1985, 29.

<sup>149</sup> Pomona Timeline. “1942,” September 15, 2020. <https://www.pomona.edu/timeline/1940s/1942>.

<sup>150</sup> Pomona Timeline. “1943,” September 15, 2020. <https://www.pomona.edu/timeline/1940s/1943>.

<sup>151</sup> Pomona Timeline. “1944,” September 15, 2020. <https://www.pomona.edu/timeline/1940s/1944>.

<sup>152</sup> Dorn, Linda Jane. “Scripps and the War,” 1985, 58.

<sup>153</sup> Dorn, Linda Jane. “Scripps and the War,” 1985, 62.

the war, both in terms of their own education and career pathways and in terms of their relationships with men, whether that meant marrying early or having fewer social opportunities with men.

Student engagements to be married and talk of marriage in general were a common feature of student publications like the *Scripture* or student scrapbooks. An interesting aspect of these engagement announcements was that it seems many women told their friends and peers about their engagements through fun surprise notes, not just formal announcements in the local newspaper.<sup>154</sup> Wedding invitations could be quite formal; for example, one wedding invitation saved in a scrapbook says “Mr. and Mrs. George Dawson request the pleasure of your company at the marriage of their daughter...”<sup>155</sup> Engagement announcements in the newspaper, however, were more casual: “Come to Dorsey Hall and get engaged!...It seems to be guaranteed. Not only Jennie Phillips and Kay Buschman, but now Catharine McGinnis has that raptured look in her eyes, as she feels the fourth finger of her left hand... We’d better take lessons girls.”<sup>156</sup> Not only was this announcement portraying engagement as rapturous for these students, it is also pointing to these engaged women as examples for other students to look towards and follow. Other engagement announcements are similar: just a couple months later, “Another Dorseyite with a sparkling ring! Hi Lee has joined the ranks of the engaged, and seems to be spending her time blissfully.”<sup>157</sup> Engagements did not just affect social status; the newspapers also mention a cooking class for which to participate in, “a girl must be a senior who is engaged or has great possibilities. However, Connie Rickard has been admitted to the class.”<sup>158</sup> It is intriguing that a

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<sup>154</sup> *The Scripture*, 1931-1938.

<sup>155</sup> Swint, Ida. “Swint, Ida (Class of 1931). Scrapbook, 1927-1931,” 1931 1927. Scripps College Scrapbook Collection [D.Mss.0981]. Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.

<sup>156</sup> “Kaleidoscope.” *The Scripture*, January 18, 1938.

<sup>157</sup> “Kaleidoscope.” *The Scripture*, March 22, 1938.

<sup>158</sup> “Cooking class begins with five members.” *The Scripture*, October 6, 1936.

class had such requirements of engagement or the possibility of engagement and assumed that this group of students were the ones to prioritize teaching. But each student's marital status was clearly known, as they make the comment that Connie Rickard is in the class, implying that she is not engaged or close to it at all. While there were guidelines regarding marriage, there was still rule-bending in this circumstance. Engagement and marriage were undoubtedly a large part of the students' social life and gossip, and student-produced sources such as the *Scripture* and scrapbooks exemplify that. Even faculty and staff were concerned with such matters, as demonstrated by the cooking class's prerequisite of engagement or a serious relationship.



A picture of the 1936 cooking class. Scripps College. "La Semeuse," 1936.

In terms of individual female figures and their relationships to marriage, Ellen Browning Scripps was one of the most important and interesting unmarried women associated with a women's college. While she never had a recorded close friendship with a female roommate as often occurred with female faculty at women's colleges, her single status throughout her entire life is an important factor in her identity as founder and funder of Scripps College. I am not

claiming Ellen Browning Scripps was a lesbian or queer in some other way; we would not be able to know that. I am, however, arguing that she broke gender and sexuality norms of women at the time, and her support of a women's college demonstrated her commitment to women's communities and education. She supported women's communities at other times, too, such as her support for more general movements such as women's suffrage and labor rights, or more specific endeavors like the La Jolla Women's Club.<sup>159</sup> It is important to note that Ms. Scripps' wealth is what made it possible for her to live an independent and philanthropic lifestyle, as her money, time, and philanthropic decisions were not tied up with a husband. And Ms. Scripps was not the only early unmarried female member of Scripps College's history: Isabel Fothergill Smith, the first dean of Scripps College, also never married. She had strong connections to women's colleges before she came to Scripps, as she was a graduate of Bryn Mawr and had a close relationship to her mentor in geology, Florence Bascom, who was the first woman who was appointed to the U.S. Geological Survey.<sup>160</sup> Smith retired after serving six years as Dean, but continued to teach geology at Scripps and Pomona until 1954.<sup>161</sup> And there were quite a few head residents who were unmarried while they lived at Scripps, many of them whom were older women who may have been considered spinsters. Unlike at other women's colleges pre-World War I, there are not known stories of "Boston marriages" or partnerships that women faculty of Scripps may have had, but the dedication many of these women had to their community show the importance of spaces devoted to women and their education. These women dedicated their lives and time to supporting and uplifting young women, and the examples they set for their students

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<sup>159</sup> San Diego History Center | San Diego, CA | Our City, Our Story. "Ellen Browning Scripps (1836-1932)." Accessed February 24, 2022. <https://sandiegohistory.org/archives/biographysubject/ebscripps/>.

<sup>160</sup> Schneiderman, Jill Stephanie. "Growth and Development of a Woman Scientist and Educator." *Earth Sciences History* 11, no. 1 (1992): 37.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

as unmarried career women undoubtedly affected the early college students' attitudes and aims. They were truly women-committed-women, regardless of sexuality or relationships, as they were committed to all types of relationships with women and defied heteronormative gender roles for women.

Of course, the women involved in administration, faculty, and staff are not the only women-committed-women who defied gender and sexuality norms in Scripps history—students and alumnae could also fit into this category. One interesting early alumna of Scripps is Carlotta Welles. Welles, a member of the class of 1939, worked as an occupational therapist for decades and helped found the Southern California Occupational Therapy Association.<sup>162</sup> Her work in occupational therapy was incredibly important to the field's development and her dedication to her career was especially interesting in a time where many of her classmates ended up unable to seriously pursue careers once they married and had children. She even noted in a letter about Scripps that she had learned to do plumbing and repair her house, yet another example of her defiance of gender roles.<sup>163</sup> Welles also lived with a friend, Florence Cromwell, for over sixty years, until Welles' passing in 2010.<sup>164</sup> Traces of her life in the Scripps archives demonstrate she was an engaged member of the Scripps community both during her time as a student and even after she graduated. Ms. Welles was even listed on one of Sarah Jane Stauffer's dance cards, a great example of the homosocial environment of Scripps, as women danced with each other at events.<sup>165</sup> While there is not a great deal of public information about Ms. Welles and her personal life, it is safe to say that throughout her life she was a woman-committed woman, both in her

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<sup>162</sup> "100 Influential People in Occupational Therapy: Carlotta Welles, MA, OTR, FAOTA." Accessed March 31, 2022. <http://www.otcentennial.org/the-100-people/welles>.

<sup>163</sup> Welles, Carlotta. "Correspondence to Scripps College," n.d.

<sup>164</sup> Legacy.com. "Carlotta Welles Obituary (2010) Los Angeles Times." Accessed April 6, 2022. <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/latimes/name/carlotta-welles-obituary?id=21627679>.

<sup>165</sup> Stauffer, Sarah Jane. "Stauffer, Sarah Jane (Class of 1938). Scrapbook, 1934-1938," 1934-1938. Scripps College Scrapbook Collection [D.Mss.0981]. Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, California.



dedication to her Scripps College community and in her decades-long dedication to Florence Cromwell. She is just one example of a Scripps alumna who provides an illuminating glimpse into how students and alumnae broke away from gender roles and expectations placed on women regarding marriage and sexuality.



Students sunbathing on the Browning roof terrace. Scripps College. "La Semeuse," 1944.

## Conclusion

Scripps College was meant to be a safe place for women's education, physically, socially, and intellectually. It grew from the history of other women's colleges and the desire to create the Claremont Colleges consortium, so it was naturally affected and informed by earlier criticisms of women's education and the development of colleges in California. A large part of the criticisms were related to new concepts about female sexuality, namely that female college students and faculty were faced with much more suspicion of homosexuality. Curriculum planning and discussions of men's roles at the college emphasize that the early trustees wanted to provide equal education to women, but often still focused on traditional heteropatriarchal roles when imagining the students' futures. Early administration also was acutely aware of the fact that most women wanted to get married, and social life with college men would be a necessary part of Scripps students' social lives. Many of the vocations the school initially promoted for students were related to traditional women's roles serving men in some capacity, such as secretarial work. And despite that the initial composition of the Board of Trustees was half women, some still questioned women's aptitudes while developing curriculum. Scripps' first two decades or so were not radically feminist as an institution, and instead worked with what the world looked like for young women at the time. Although Scripps intended to teach the students how to be proper young women, and sexist attitudes were evident in some early documents, in many respects this was from a place of practicality and wanting to prepare women for many ways to have a full and rich life. Early trustees did acknowledge the difficulties women had historically faced to achieve an education, and promoted teaching women truthfully and honestly, even in subjects that women historically were dissuaded from, like politics.

Scripps, as an institution, regulated young women's sexuality and gender roles to prepare them for a very specific experience of womanhood, namely the expectations of upper-middle-class white American womanhood. The college also enforced many rules and regulations on the students, often acting in a maternal role, like forbidding inappropriate private interactions with men, deciding where and when they could consume drugs and alcohol, and telling them how to dress appropriately. Much of their efforts to restrict the students inadvertently focused on men: smoking was more permissible when men were around to entertain, and dress codes focused on propriety especially when off-campus and more subject to the male gaze. But students also responded to these restrictions with their own opinions, protests, and rule-breaking. The dating culture thrived between Scripps, Pomona, and Caltech, until the United States joined World War II. Scripps students smoked, dated, gossiped, and made their own decisions. They switched between heterosocial and homosocial environments with ease, and despite the push for heterosexual gender norms, many Scripps community members broke away from them and made their own pathways during college and in the rest of their lives. Compared to other women's colleges that existed at the time, Scripps had a distinctive development and first two decades of its existence. The interwar period is one of the less studied periods of women's college history, but Scripps College's story of its first couple of decades exemplifies many of the clashes over gender and education that both institutions and students faced.

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