

Class of 1978 History

1974 to 1978 was a time of great transition, not only here at Franklin and Marshall, but throughout the world. We were the sixth class to include women. Of the 570 of us that arrived on campus in September of 1974 a full 40% of us were female which helped lead to the change in the Alma Mater to include Daughters as well as Sons. The presence of women was no longer a novelty. Women proved to be as aggressive and successful in the classroom, on the athletic fields and in the all other aspects of college life as their male counterparts. The fear that women would only be interested in the humanities was proved to be false. One professor interviewed by the *College Reporter* noted the only difference between the men and women was that the women were generally better prepared. The inclusion of so many women probably contributed to our having the best average SAT scores of (587 Verbal, 621 Math) of any class to that date.

The fact that there were 570 of us, a full 40 people above the targeted class size, also led to some interesting situations. The basement Schnader barracks were used for the first and only time in school history. It also contributed to the need for the housing lottery as the decision for many of us to move off campus in our sophomore year was not always by choice.

The college was changing in many ways. The College Center was opened in the spring of our sophomore year, East Hall and the beloved, but very dangerous, Hartman Hall were torn down after our Freshman Year. Several women's sports were elevated from club to varsity status as a result of the extensive participation by our class of women, and American and European Studies majors were added to the curriculum by the Board of Trustees.

On a day to day basis we went to class, studied in the library stacks or reading rooms and ate sandwiches from Dino the Hoagie man where everything he sold cost 85 cents. We went to the House of Pie or Dempsey's Diner for off campus snacking and drank where ever we could including such places as the fraternities, our dorms, the Fulton, and of course Hildy's. The film series tickets were a buck a piece and included such classics as 5 Easy Pieces, Clockwork Orange, Reefer Madness, and the Bergman spoof The Dove. On warm afternoons we filled the quad with Frisbees and music and when it rained we slipped and slid our way across the Hartman dust bowl boardwalks.

And while all of this was happening on Campus the world around us was changing also. The Watergate era ended for a second time when Gerald Ford pardoned Richard Nixon just as our classes got underway, prompting Sid Wise to sigh and say I thought I was done talking about this before spending the next 50 minutes discussing it in great detail.

President Ford also declared an end to the Vietnam Era, which was a relief to all the men of our class as we were the last group of 18 year olds who got Draft lottery numbers. Gerald Ford would later visit the campus after losing the election to Jimmy Carter in 1976.

Current New York Congressman John Hall also visited, but as a member of the rock group Orleans.

The Garfield and Cathy comics first appeared in the national newspapers and while we were blasting CSNY or the Beatles into the quad the top pop hits in America were Barbara Streisand's *The Way We Were* and the Bee Gee's *Saturday Night Fever* Soundtrack.

Our years were truly a period of transition. The turbulence of the 60s was finally put to bed and the great expectations of the 80s lay just ahead. We were fortunate to have been a part of both.