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COEDUCATION AT CHICAGO—WHOSE AIMS?

Welcome to and within the University of Chicago, men and women of the College Class of 1998. I am happy to have this opportunity of greeting your entry into this remarkable institution. And I am sobered as well as honored by the responsibility given me by Dean Boyer this evening, to address you on the aims of education. Let me start, because English is my academic specialty, by inviting you to consider the plural form of the phrase, ‘the aims of education.’ Why ‘aims’? Perhaps the quickest answer would be, Because there is more than one purpose for educating anybody. This is a plural of the facts of the matter—in grammatical terms, an objective genitive. But a less quick answer might proceed by first asking another question. The ‘aims of education’—whose aims? ‘Whose aims?’ takes this plural to be a so-called subjective genitive, and it assumes a perspective that I want to take in speaking to you now. I hope it will also carry over into the colloquia that we will be having afterwards in the College houses.

The ‘aims of education’ is a proper plural, for the persons who have these aims are multiple. There are your aims for education here, and your parents’ aims in the support they are providing for you at Chicago. There are this institution’s aims for your educations—another plural—for there will not be just one education offered you at Chicago—and there are the aims for education that I hold, as the other faculty and administrators do. There are also the educational aims of our society at large. The democratic process of the United States presupposes—indeed, it requires—citizens who can think independently, analyze issues, and judge soundly by standards that others can accept as sound. Let me add a few more general remarks. This aggregate of the ‘aims of education’ clearly cannot be reduced from the plural to the singular, but the aims cannot be completely at odds either, if any of them are to find realization. This is so because education is a social, not a solitary activity. Its aims operate in partial congruence and partial conflict with one another. They are also subject to change through time, and the time factor can be highly variable. Some aims are temporary—say, devised to meet a national emergency—while others have had such a long hold that they are regarded as more or less permanent rationales for an education—for example, studying history, or learning to speak and write effectively, or investigating nature. But there is no aim of education so constant as to be unaffected by social change, which will alter its outcome and possibly its very character, the point of pursuing the aim in the first place. ‘Whose aims?’

remains the question for me and I hope it will become so for you because it demands that we think about education in terms of specific persons and institutions, with interests and motives arising in a given time and place. Tonight I am going to get specific about the aims of education by considering the history of coeducation at the University of Chicago and focusing on the roles of women within that history.

Please keep the question of ‘whose aims’ in mind as I introduce you to Demia Butler, a first-year College student in the first year of the University of Chicago, by way of the diary she kept in 1892-93.¹ More than a week early, Demia and her sister “Betz” came from Indianapolis to the brand-new College, with “Papa” accompanying. They were directed to “The Beatrice,” the temporary lodging for the women students of the University since their residence halls were not to be ready until the next spring. Nor was “The Beatrice” ready. “Carpenters, lock-smiths, painters, etc. were still at work all over the building,” noted Demia, but “mattresses piled on top of each other on the floors, answered for all sorts of furniture” when the first young women arrivals congregated to get acquainted during the day. They nicknamed themselves “the aborigines”—good Latin for ‘those who were there from the beginning.’ The Butlers stayed at “The Vendome,” a Hyde Park hotel, for a week, during which, Demia records, “the examinations for entrance to the University began. Papa staid with us till Friday evening, walking over to Cobb Hall with us, and coming back again after us, when the examinations were over for the thy. Then, finding that he could not learn the results of the examinations any earlier by remaining, he decided to go back to Indianapolis.” Here is one short-range aim of education thwarted, a father’s eagerness about his daughters’ admissibility to Chicago, although Mr. Butler would twice more indulge his pride and interest that year when he came up on business and stayed an extra day or two visiting on campus.

Meanwhile on the evening in question Demia and Betz sat around on the mattresses with the growing numbers of other young women, conversing with each other as well as with the Dean of Women, Alice Freeman Palmer, and the Assistant Dean and resident head, Marion Talbot. “The evening’s talk was full of interest to us all. It was the first talk of any length we had had with Mrs. Palmer and from then on we loved her,” Demia enthuses. But her next entry records somberly, “The five or six days intervening between the examinations and the opening of College were full of suspense.”

“Wednesday September 28. We learned the results of the examinations, and proceeded to matriculate at once. Gradually ‘The Beatrice’ has become, or is becoming settled. . . . Friday afternoon President Harper met with the students of the Academic College. Professor Judson [Dean of the Faculty] and Mrs. Palmer addressed us, and afterward President Harper spoke of the aims of the College, and explained some of its methods to us.” End of this entry. So much for a total lack of specificity from Demia regarding the first “aims of the College” address delivered by President Harper himself. Obviously, from the very beginning, first-year College students at Chicago have been hard to impress with an aims of education address!

Another brief entry records the start of autumn quarter 1892: “Saturday October first, College opened. Classes met, work was assigned, and some methods of study were explained.” On the evidence of her diary, Demia is attending to the mechanics of her College orientation, but her own aims, her personal engagement, has a differently paced momentum. Demia’s aims of education begin to show in the longer and livelier diary entries about participating in College activities. She feels she belongs to an institution so new and open that, even as a first-year student, she can share in its self-definition.

“Sometime this week,” runs Demia’s postscript to week one, “which day I cannot remember, we girls went over to hear the discussions about a College ‘Yell.’ None definitely decided upon. The favorite however was

Chi cá go! Chi cá go!
 Chicá- gó-gó—
 Gó it Chi cá, Gó it Chi cá
 Gó it Chicá— gó!”

I can chant the yell so confidently because Demia sets off her lines like verse, breaking words between syllables and adding hyphens, dashes, and accent marks. In fact, in the course of her first College year Demia Butler becomes an intense student of poetry in English, Latin, and French as well as (the new addition that gives her much anxiety) “German lyric,” working late many afternoons in the departmental libraries in Cobb Hall. I cannot prove but I strongly suspect that her diary breaks off on Saturday, April 15, early in spring quarter, because she “began to write” her what she calls her “English thesis” just one month earlier, without giving up any of her many collegiate activities and tastes of big city culture—concerts, theater, shopping, sightseeing. The diary just lost the competition for Demia’s time, I gather. But I am getting ahead of her in her own story.

On Monday, October 24, Demia attended a meeting for the so-called Academic College, that is, the first- and second-year students, convened by the students themselves. Its purpose was to discuss what kind of constitution should be drawn up for their student government. Over the next month and more, this question grew heated, and before it was resolved Demia would reflect at length in her diary about it. Meanwhile her studies and socializing continued at a rapid pace, and with them the meetings on a constitution for the Academic College’s student government. On November 11 there was a yes vote on the question, “Shall we wear caps and gowns at class meetings?” all the while that the faculty were debating what the style of the University of Chicago’s academic garb should be. On November 30 Demia records a meeting between the Executive Committee of the Class of 1896—this is her class of first-year students numbering “an hundred and twenty-five or more”—and the Executive Committee of the Class of 1895—the second-years, “some thirty or forty”—“to talk of a Federation of some sort, of the two classes.” But “the Sophomores, as they call themselves[,] demand the Presidency and

equal representation on all committees. The Class of '96 does not favor the terms," Demia comments crisply, on behalf of the much more numerous first-years. On December 2 and 17, representatives of the two classes met further to discuss how their union might go forward. She records strong initial differences in student reactions to the announcement that "The President of the College as well as its faculty consider the present organization of two distinct classes in the Academic College as not in the Spirit of the University." But she then adds: "Most of the Students have begun to see it in the same light" The next cluster of diary entries documents Demia's close involvement in the struggle to form the Academic College's student government and gives us her reflections on the principles at stake:

"Monday December 19. . . . The question of eligibility to the Presidency is raising some warm discussion, for the Sophomores think that office should only be filled by a Second year man. The First year Students, taking a broader view, think the only condition, should be ability. — Since in this University there is no such thing as a Freshman—a Sophomore—They are all together Academic Students.

"Tuesday afternoon December 20. . . . At four o'clock the Academic College met. The first half of the Constitution was accepted after much hesitation[,] discussion and even disturbance. Then the meeting adjourned—Some of the most impatient Students making it almost impossible to conduct the meeting with any order at all. Mr. Stone [a boyfriend who would soon give her the first University of Chicago insignia pin as a Christmas gift] walked home with me. We were all somewhat disappointed and distressed at the way the meeting had gone—for the union of the two years really ought to go through—and that without any restrictions to either side as a body—The students should all enter as individual students—not as members of the first or second year.

"Wednesday December 21. The Academic College met again to complete the organization begun December twentieth. The meeting was not so disorderly as the day before. The Constitution was amended and accepted as a whole; and the Meeting adjourned. Election of officers for the Winter Quarter occurs the Second Tuesday of that Quarter." Success at last!—the aim of union has been accomplished. But what is clearly an afterthought has been inserted after this entry, for it is in darker ink and Demia's flowing handwriting is more compact. Looking back from some later point, she strikes a note of yearning; "— As Freshman Class we did have such dear times!—"It seems there were losses as well as gains from overriding class divisions and forming a single student body.

Demia Butler's diary impresses me as a really stellar credit to her as a first-year student and to the College of the new University of Chicago. Here she is, finding herself and expressing herself in new thoughts, new feelings, and new awareness, particularly as a fully and equally participating member of the Academic College Union, which is how the student government that she had helped to organize became known. But consider the broader context. Demia is

eagerly discussing and voting in a mixed political body of young men and women even though women would not receive the vote in the United States until the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution in 1920, twenty-eight years later. The aims of Demia's education were futuristic in the area of student government, anticipating both the shape of things to come and the role that she might play within them. Her diary highlights a significant implication of the question 'whose aims?' when asked within a specific time frame. It demonstrates how educational arrangements and experiences could not just foreshadow but indeed prepare participants like Demia and her fellow College students at Chicago to recognize and enact their roles in positive changes in American society. What I have to say about the aims of education this evening takes as its point of departure the momentousness of the commitment to coeducation that was a condition of the existence of the University of Chicago. I want to consider some instances of how this institution's workings have benefited from initiatives for constructive shapings of the future that have come, specifically, from its women members.

By any standard, one such member was Marion Talbot, who began her association with Chicago as assistant to the Dean of Women, Alice Freeman Palmer, and after three years became Dean of Women in her own right. She would occupy this position for three decades and she would be its only occupant. Like Demia Butler as a College student, Talbot as a faculty member and administrator felt energized by her sense of new beginnings and new opportunities at the University of Chicago.² It is to her, moreover, that we owe the only surviving report of the first meeting of the Chicago faculty on October 1, 1892. Apparently Charles R. Henderson, the University Recorder, was so overcome by the historic occasion that he failed to take notes. Dean Talbot made some brief jottings. "Prayer by Pres. Harper," she wrote. "Remarks. The question before us is how to become one in spirit, not necessarily in opinion. . . . Lines of separation between senate, council and faculty. Not wholly defined as yet Flexibility the characteristic."³ Here, as Talbot reports the words of the first president and chief architect of this institution's character, is the emphasis sounded by Demia Butler from her perspective. The University undertakes to achieve a union in commitment and community that will sustain the flexibility to accommodate, honor, and be enriched by individual differences.

A final witness to the heady sense of promise which women members felt in the inaugural year of the University of Chicago is Elizabeth Wallace, who entered as a first-year graduate student, going on to earn a Chicago Ph.D. and become a Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures in this institution. Wallace was encouraged to apply to Chicago by a family friend, Professor Harry Pratt Judson, then of the University of Minnesota. He was recruited by President Harper as the first Dean of the Faculty and eventually became the University's second president. In her autobiographical memoir, *The Unending Journey*. Wallace records:

"Mr. Judson told me that he had accepted the position of Dean of the Faculties at the university-to-be and would soon be leaving to work out plans. He added that it was planned to emphasize graduate work. . . . To encourage qualified students to come, they planned to bestow

fellowships. In answer to my blank look he told me that fellowships were grants given to students to enable them to pursue their studies. These fellowships amounted to from three hundred to five hundred dollars annually, for which the recipient would be expected to render some slight service. I was dazzled by the idea. What! to be paid for the joy of learning! I had never heard of such generosity.

“Mr. Judson may have seen the light in my eyes, for he said casually, ‘Why don’t you make application for one of these fellowships? They are open to women as well as to men. In fact, Mr. Rockefeller has made it a condition of his gift that women are to have equal privileges with men.’ I gasped at the prospect that opened out before me.

“With little assurance, but with great hope in my heart, I toiled over a thesis. I cannot remember now its subject, but it had to do with South America. It was sent in, and some time in the late spring of 18921 received an official document stating that I had received an appointment as Fellow in History in the University of Chicago and was to please present myself there on the first day of October following, as registration and classes would begin then,”⁴

Elizabeth Wallace, too, experienced “The Beatrice” with its piles of mattresses and eager camaraderie, finding herself assigned a first-year College student as a roommate even though she was a graduate Fellow in history. She writes of that adjustment: “We minded [our] little inconveniences not at all and got along together beautifully.... The Memphis freshman who was.. my roommate. . . wrote home a letter that became a classic in University history: ‘There are many strange and interesting things in this new institution. I am living in the improvised dormitory, and I am rooming with a fellow. But it is all very pleasant.’”⁵ The horrified parents in Memphis who received this letter required a long, elaborate soothing from Deans Palmer and Talbot, the gist of which was the special academic terminology of “Fellow” and the female sex of their daughter’s roommate. Even given my declared interest in the forward-looking experiences of women, it remains unthinkable now, in 1994, that the College would assign a young woman and a young man to room together. How much more unthinkable it was in 1892!

Elizabeth Wallace also tells how the University of Chicago’s innovative stress on learning through immersion in primary research worked in her case:

“My fellowship had been awarded to me in the department of history; therefore my first task was to call on the head of that department so that I might get to work immediately. I found Dr. Hermann von Hoist in his office on the third floor of Cobb Hall....A German scholar from Freiburg, Dr. von Holst was a specialist in two subjects—American constitutional history and the French Revolution. When I told him that my interests were in Latin American history and asked whether he could give me his distinguished advice on what courses to follow, he looked at me blankly, . . . and finally he exploded into strongly accented Teutonic speech: ‘Vy did you come to me? I know notings von tose countries. For me tey do not exist Tey are tead!’ Then

seeing my dismayed look, he went on more gently: ‘But tey may be interesting, fery interesting. I tell you vat you do. You read und study all you vant about dem, den you come und tell me und I will gif you a degree.’

“This was my first realistic experience of specialization. None of us students had come very closely in contact with it as yet, and it was stimulating.... Dr. Harper’s influence was being felt! I carried my problem to Dr. Harper, and he was delighted. He liked nothing better than to find an unexplored field. This was an auspicious year to further the study of Latin America. Did we not have the inspiration of the Columbian Exposition...? Mexicans and South Americans and those from Central America would be coming in swarms. It was a new world opening up. He would make an appropriation for books, they should be ordered immediately. I should give a course on Latin American history and institutions in the spring quarter, and we should be the first institution in the country to initiate such studies.

“I came away from the interview slightly dazed but tingling with the excitement of a new project, uplifted by a vision of ultimate possibilities, vibrating with a sense of power, for a brief moment feeling indomitable. That was the effect that Dr. Harper had on those with whom he came in contact.”⁶

Let’s pause now to consider the defining features of the University of Chicago at its founding. What kind of educational institution did it aim to be? The American Baptist Education Society, its original sponsor, declared in a set of preliminary resolutions that it was to be a college with the potential to become a university for educating faculty for smaller colleges in, especially, the Midwest and West; that it was to be located within the city of Chicago and not in a suburb; that it was to be coeducational with men and women admitted to all its privileges on equal terms.⁷ Whose aims of education were these? Well, obviously those of the American Baptist Education Society, a body of progressive clergy and laypersons committed to founding a major, urban, coeducational institution in the Midwestern heartland of the United States. These also quickly became the aims of John D. Rockefeller, who on the basis of these resolutions made a start-up pledge of \$600,000 with conditions for matching funds, and who by 1910 would donate \$35,000,000 to the University of Chicago—a figure that must be multiplied at least by 20 to estimate its equivalent in today’s dollars.⁸

Above all these became the aims of education for William Rainey Harper, the first president, who stamped the plan for the new institution in Chicago with several more key features. They included an immediate rather than longer-term insistence on “the university idea”—“not a college, but a university”—for the advancement of research and scholarship. The “chief purpose” of the new University of Chicago, in Harper’s words, was “not to stock the student’s mind with knowledge of what has already been accomplished in a given field, but rather so to train him that he himself may be able to push out along new lines of investigation. Such work is, of course, of the most expensive character. Laboratories and libraries and apparatus must be

lavishly provided in order to offer the necessary opportunities.... Freedom from care, time for work, and liberty of thought are prime requisites in all such work.”⁹

To implement these aims of education on the faculty side, Harper recruited a distinguished roster from the United States and Europe. He made simultaneous provisions for a University Press and learned journals in which the faculty would publish results of their work, for University Libraries, Laboratories, and Museums, and for an annual allotment of time for faculty research without teaching assignments. To implement these aims of education on the student side, Harper instituted the quarter system with admissions and awarding of degrees four times a year to accommodate differences in students’ rates of progress as well as in their means for financing continuous study. Most importantly, Harper defined the basic unit of formal academic work at the University of Chicago as the so-called “major.” A major was a single subject on which a student concentrated by taking eight to ten classroom or laboratory hours a week, not counting other study time devoted to that subject outside of class or laboratory. At most two majors—later, three—could be taken at a time, and the time to do that would be at the beginning of one’s University work. Harper stipulated that the major system would be enforced most rigorously in the Academic College (the first two years, as we know from Demia’s diary) so that a student would start right off by trying out and either changing or confirming a prospective field of specialization. Once confirmed, a specialization would no longer need to be enforced by required registration in courses. Harper had an absolute assurance that the commitment to a field of learning gained through immersion would translate into a lifelong sense of how to go on learning productively and dealing with one’s learning constructively.¹⁰

And who were the students whose educational aims were met or shaped by the innovative institution designed by Harper, the University of Chicago? They were from middle-class families, predominantly ones in which the fathers were “achievers in professional and business enterprises.”¹¹ In 1890 college-going women made up 2.2 percent of their age group, and college-going men made up 4.2 percent of theirs—an elite fraction of the society. In Chicago’s first group of 746 students, there were just under 100 women.¹² They constituted 24 percent of the enrollment of the College. By 1890, however, more girls than boys were graduating from high school. Within one decade of its opening, the percentage of women enrolled in the College rose to 52 percent, and between 1892 and 1902 women received a majority (56.3 percent) of the Phi Beta Kappa awards.¹³ By far the most marked trend in this University’s early years was its rapidly increasing numbers of highly qualified women students.

Why were women so drawn to Harper’s University of Chicago? Here is one good reason. It was the only ranking university in the United States that both admitted women at all levels and defined itself according to the research model by which leading educators were responding to the revolutionary growth of science in the nineteenth century. Chicago’s chief competitors as self-styled research universities at this date—Johns Hopkins and Clark—did not admit women

at any level.¹⁴ The College of the University of Chicago also had unique advantages among coeducational institutions, whether private or public. It offered not only high-quality undergraduate training but graduate training as well (as, say, Oberlin did not); it was a research university (as Stanford and Northwestern were not). And it had residence halls with organized provisions for social life and student-faculty interaction (which the Ivy League and the “Seven Sisters” colleges had only for one sex or the other, and the great Midwestern and Western state universities did not then have at all).

These formal provisions for social life and student-faculty interaction were the province of the Dean of Women at the University of Chicago, making hers a position of great responsibility but also, potentially, of great power and influence—as demonstrated by the long, distinguished career of Marion Talbot. She made a list of aims and priorities for Chicago’s extracurricular activities and student organizations which she evolved over years of experience. It is still a statement offering wisdom for the present and future. Here are Talbot’s words: “The social life is to be so ordered as to 1) contribute to and not impair the intellectual efficiency of the students; 2) be a source of physical recreation and not of bodily exhaustion; 3) add to the social resources of students and to their ease and enjoyment in meeting difficult social situations; 4) develop a sense of social responsibility and dependableness; 5) aid in establishing reasonable standards of money expenditure; 6) include as many students who need it as possible.”¹⁵ Especially notable is the application of this policy statement without differences, across the board, to both sexes.

This sort of statement points to what at the time was a crucial consideration for a young woman and her parents—the University of Chicago’s commitment to equal access to both sexes at all levels of instruction and social interaction—for this commitment involved quite different treatment than that of a single-sex college, the other option. Alice Freeman Palmer, former President of Wellesley and Dean of Women at Chicago from 1891 to 1894, has an illuminating essay on the different institutional construction of undergraduate women under the two arrangements. The East Coast, she says, has a “more conservative” policy of separate education, which she characterizes as follows: “The requirements for the two sexes are thought to be different. Girls are to be trained for private, boys for public life. Let every opportunity be given, it is said, for developing accomplished, yes, even learned women; but let the process of acquiring knowledge take place under careful guardianship,...with graceful women, their instructors, as companions, and with suitable opportunities for social life. Much stress is laid upon assisting girl students to attain balanced characters, charming manners, and ambitions that are not unwomanly.”¹⁶

By contrast, says Palmer, “coeducation involves, as its name implies, the education of a company of young men and women as a single body. To the two sexes alike are presented the same conditions of admission, of opportunities during the course, of requirements for the degrees, of guardianship, of discipline, of organization. The typical features are identical

classrooms, libraries, and laboratories, occupied at the same time, under the same instructors; and the same honors for like work. . . . In . . . coeducational institutions the principle has from the first been assumed that students of both sexes become sufficiently matured by eighteen years of home, school, and social life. . . . to undertake a college course, and. . . to order their daily lives. . . . The strengths of this system, accordingly, are to be found in its tendency to promote independence of judgment, individuality of tastes, common-sense and foresight in self-guidance, disinclination to claim favor, interest in learning for its own sake; friendly, natural, unromantic, non-sentimental relations with men. . . . The coeducationists think it wholesome that [a young woman] in her later teens and early twenties. . . should be subjected to an impartial judgment, ready to tell her as freely when she is silly, ignorant, or indolent as her brother himself is told.”¹⁷

Of course, it is an obvious fact of our own times that by the mid- 1970s coeducation became the one mode, adopted by more than 90 percent of American colleges.¹⁸ However, in the pros and cons of coeducation we confront the question of an aim of education relative to a particular time. For, even at the University of Chicago, coeducation was not treated as an immutable arrangement. In 1902 President Harper, alarmed by the size of women’s enrollments, sought to retrench. His plan was to “segregate”—his term—by sex the course work of students in the Academic College, thus dismantling along a curricular axis the union of first- and second-year students to which Demia Butler and her contemporaries had given so much effort. The third and fourth years, that is, the University College, and the graduate programs would remain coeducational—for the time being. In the wake of Harper’s proposal came many meetings, much correspondence, even printed leaflets—evidence of high feelings and strong convictions.¹⁹ Why had Chicago’s coeducation come under attack?

The most outspoken document, a pamphlet that two women graduates of the College circulated under their own names, purports to list all of what they see as the flimsy reasons for wanting to segregate men from women in classrooms and laboratories. Two of these have a circumstantial ring that gives a sense of the situation at Chicago, where coeducation had been in effect for a decade. This is one mason: “Boys will not endure rivalry with girls, who always beat them, consequently many do not work at all.” This is a reference to age-related differences in academic achievement that then was bothersome. Now, in our more sophisticated present, it is simply taken in stride as a developmental phenomenon— isn’t it? Another reason is: “Appeal to approval (financial and otherwise) of many persons..., especially persons of wealth, who want their girls treated from [the] ‘society’ point of view, and their boys from the fashionable Yale-Harvard standpoint, as they conceive this.”²⁰

The faculty were deeply split on Harper’s segregation proposal. While a majority favored it, fifty men and all eight women who then held faculty appointments signed a letter to the President and Trustees arguing that segregation by sex “leaves untouched the real danger point, i.e., social relations, and destroys. . . one of the most unequivocal advantages of the system, i.e.,

the steadying influence of intellectual association in the classroom,” The faculty letter of protest continues: “Moreover, so far as true, the asserted inability of men to compete successfully with women in junior college work would seem to indicate the wisdom of seeking more rather than less of such competition as a stimulus to the men. . . . That the measure will . . . set back the cause of woman’s education wherever the University’s influence is felt, that it will be a constant menace to the self-respect of women students, and will repel from the University some most admirable women. . . are consequences to be feared.”²¹ The Board of Trustees, however, voted in support of Harper’s plan, and in approving it they also voted in favor of accepting a large gift to construct separate men’s and women’s campuses for the Academic College (although this was never carried out).²² In the event, the limited measures that were approved did not last very long. The sex-segregated course sections caused equipment shortages, reduplication of faculty effort, scheduling problems, and increased instructional costs. Already faltering in 1907, segregation seems to have disappeared altogether by 1918.²³

How can we understand today an impetus to alter the founding aim of coeducation at Chicago in 1902 when women students and women honors students had become more than half of the total? In 1957 Bernice Neugarten, now emeritus Professor of Human Development in the Department of Behavioral Sciences, coauthored a book entitled *Society and Education* with the late Robert Havighurst, Professor of Education. Their discussion of the relation between the two terms of their title casts some telling light on the sex segregation proposal. Havighurst and Neugarten reason as follows: “The two goals of education, social stability and social fluidity, should be sought within the framework of certain basic realities about human beings and about society. One of these realities is the fact of individual differences in ability and temperament.... Another basic reality is that society has a structure based upon a division of labor. This means that there are positions of greater or lesser responsibility and prestige, greater or lesser reward, positions requiring greater or lesser ability and energy.” The third reality is the presence of “some kind of upper-status group. . . in any complex society. The society will be served best if it seeks out and trains the most able people to become the elite, and if it rewards them by giving them prestige. At the same time, the society must have enough stability so that parents with high social status can give their children a favored start in life. People live as much for the welfare of their children as for their own welfare.” Havighurst and Neugarten then draw these conclusions: “A successful democracy should have enough fluidity in its social structure to permit able and industrious persons to move from low status positions to higher status positions; at the same time it must have enough stability for higher-status people to pass on their advantages to their children. In other words, those at the top must have some assurance that their children will have a good chance to remain at the top, but those at the bottom must have a chance to compete with those above them for good positions.”²⁴

Applied to the Chicago situation in 1902, this reasoning finds that coeducation served social fluidity, as young women who excelled through competition in an elite institution came into a

majority. But that social fluidity entailed an unacceptable cost in social stability. What made the cost unacceptable, however, is not revealed by Havighurst's and Neugarten's reasoning, which has nothing to say about the factor of gender. Among the elite of the middle class who could afford a college education, men—fathers and sons—were firmly a higher-status group, both occupationally and financially. As a new, privately funded institution with an expensive mission of scholarship and research (I have quoted Harper's words about expense), the University risked alienating the Chicago benefactors—the industrialists, businessmen, and philanthropists—who were its literal lifeline if it allowed itself to be identified as a predominantly women's institution, even a prestigious and rigorous one. The aim of coeducation could not too far suspend the actualities, the inequalities, of larger gender relations, or the University of Chicago would not have a viable coeducation to offer the prospering middle class from which it drew its students. This in turn meant that coeducation would have to be better tailored to serve the interests, present and future, of the men at Chicago.

The crisis over segregation is worth pondering, for it starkly exposed an uncertainty about the place of women in higher education that can still be felt, even though it has abated with the expanded opportunities for women's equality in education and employment that began in the 1970s. This crisis was not the old uncertainty, of the form, Why should women get a college education? By the turn into the twentieth century much of the force had gone out of that question, as statistical studies of women's college enrollments have shown.²⁵ This was a newer uncertainty, of the form, Should a difference be drawn between women and men in higher education? If so, what should the difference be, and how should it be implemented institutionally? Palmer's essay quoted above made a timely formulation of these questions while declining, interestingly enough, to take any definite position on them. Her hesitation shows the deep difficulty at that time of working out the relation between education and society with regard to college women. This, moreover, was a national issue; it was not by any means just the University of Chicago's dilemma.

The crisis over sex-segregation set in motion many subsequent engagements with the question whether sexual difference could or should result in institutionalized differentiation. The answers took varying forms—from tacit changes of policy to implicit assumptions to overt statements and enactments of principle. Some of these merit our notice.

Until the segregation crisis, there was one catch-all College of Arts, Literature, and Science. Now incentives got underway to make the College of the University of Chicago competitive with Ivy League institutions for men students. These included the establishment of the School of Medicine, the School of Law, and the College of Commerce and Administration, as well as the building of Hitchcock Hall, Bartlett Gymnasium, and Hutchinson Commons as a men's dining facility and club house. Both in the curricular offerings and in the building program, sexual difference was inflected to serve masculine interests and preparation for what were then

heavily male-dominated professions. By 1918 Dean Talbot recorded that men constituted 60 percent of the enrollment in the Junior College and 61 percent of the total University enrollment.²⁶

Noting the preferential policies that fostered the ascendancy of a masculine sphere of studies and pursuits, Chicago's women faculty showed how difficult the question of institutionalizing sexual difference was by reacting in divided ways. On public University occasions they simply contested it—arguing, for example, against turning the honoring of Jane Addams of Hull House in 1904 or the granting of an honorary degree to Marie Curie in 1921 into ladies-only events, which is how the plans for the celebrations were going.²⁷ But where the fabric of University life was concerned, the women faculty largely accepted the institutionalizing of sexual difference and sought to wring from the arrangement some benefits for women students. One triumph in this line was the building of Ida Noyes Hall in 1914-16 as an outstandingly well appointed center for the women of the University. In the central matter of the curriculum, moreover, a determined group of women faculty saw an opportunity in Harper's emphasis on major subjects as a mechanism for study leading to specialization and research.²⁸ In keeping with national trends toward establishing schools of education and departments of home economics, these women faculty worked on creating courses and programs that would give women students specialized preparation for the life roles that awaited them in society, whether career or domestic. Marion Talbot's teaching had been housed in the Department of Chemistry, Alice Peloubet Norton's in the Department of Sociology, and Sophonisba Breckinridge's in the Department of Political Economy. Talbot, Norton, and Breckinridge led a finally successful drive to organize a Department of Household Arts, later called Household Administration. While the School—subsequently the Department—of Education also played a part, Household Arts was the leading site of organized efforts to make female sexual difference count positively in the research and professional mission of the University of Chicago.

Because it is all too easy to get the wrong idea about a department named Household Arts, let me characterize some of its significant and—indeed—farsighted aims. This department undertook to set its educational priorities, laboratory research, and field work within an explicit context of cultural values, thus emphasizing that pure investigation can never be severed from its effects and implications in the social world. While developing proficiency in the prestigious mode of quantitative studies, as shown by the publications of its faculty and students, Household Arts also affirmed its qualitative concern with the human impact of developments in science and technology. Here is Alice Norton writing in 1902: "It may not always be feasible that . . . colleges establish departments of domestic science, but they should add to their teaching of pure science training in the application of science. They should recognize the dignity of everyday problems. . . Household applications of bacteriology should receive at least as much attention as industrial applications. . . Domestic science is only the application of sciences, of sociology, psychology, physics, chemistry, biology, to. . . the study of home itself,

its evolution, its function; the problems of the family. . . the welfare of the family; the whole great food problem; . . . the physical, moral and intellectual training of children; the division of the income and the economics of distribution. Certain phases of this subject should form part of the education of every woman and every man.”²⁹

From the vantage of a present-day perspective on subsequent social change we can see that the organization of the Department of Household Arts was too closely tied to then prevailing notions of domesticity and family as the women’s sphere for it to survive indefinitely as an academic unit (dissolved in 1933, it was succeeded by the newly created School of Social Service Administration). In its time, too, the Department of Household Arts bore a negative burden as part of its success, as did home economics departments across the nation, The separateness of a women’s academic sphere began to loom large, with 60 percent of women professors in coeducational schools holding appointments on home economics faculties in 1911.³⁰ Nonetheless, the pioneering educational aims of the women faculty of this University’s Department of Household Arts remain impressive and thought-provoking today. Talbot’s courses in what she called “Sanitary Science”—from Latin ‘sanitas’ meaning health, soundness—were clear forerunners of today’s concerns with pollution control, environmental quality, and wise management of the earth’s ecological balance. The exceptionally capable Breckinridge—commemorated in the name of Breckinridge House—combined her expertise as a lawyer with a Chicago Ph.D. in political economy to develop a course, “The Legal and Economic Position of Women,” which has been hailed as an “imaginative foreshadow[ing of] women’s studies.”³¹

Let me conclude this emphasis on the forward-looking contributions to the aims of education advanced by the women faculty of this now defunct Department by quoting from a transcript of a conference they convened in 1916 to consider new curricular initiatives. Here is Marion Talbot speaking from the context of the horrendously numerous combat fatalities and the deadly influenza epidemic of World War I: ‘last Thursday the general faculty met here, and after some debate, most interesting, adopted a program for the introduction of military training in the University. There was a very strong group of people who do not think it is the function of the University of Chicago to do that thing. They were out-voted. The plan as adopted, I think’—here Talbot permits herself some calculated irony—’is as innocuous as anything could possibly be. I do not think it is leading anywhere except to aligning the University of Chicago with those institutions that believe in contributing to the maintenance of war as a system of adjusting social differences. Now those of us who feel deeply aggrieved by this action are wondering if. . . we might not come forward with a program of an entirely different nature for the University—for the consideration of methods of securing social justice between nations on a different basis, for securing preparedness of our own people on different lines. It just occurs to me—because we are talking about, we are thinking about, asking the university to provide its students with instruction, maybe in the form of general lectures,—might we not ask them to provide a course in the training of fathers and mothers for the bringing of children into the

world to be. . . good, well born. . . citizens of this country? Would that seem to you a suitable thing to propose? With the point in view that we would not merely be preparing in a military way, but in other ways to extend the knowledge that people are thinking about other methods of adjusting difficulties.” An unidentified speaker immediately asks: “I wonder if you mean that it should come from the department of household administration?”³² That down-to-earth question and Talbot’s utopian imagining stand side by side in the record. Taken together they epitomize the practical obstacles and the far-seeing social engagement of the aims of education pursued by Breckinridge, Talbot, and their associates. We see how uneasily their separate-spheres approach coexisted with the dominant masculinist priorities of the University of Chicago.

Thus far my theme has been the multiple cross-cutting of the aims of education—gotten at by asking whose aims—and the further complexities that such aims take on when they are examined in the context of their time and place. I have concentrated on the heady energy and optimism of the earliest era of this institution. And I want to end on a note of heady energy and optimism as well. To get to the present—your and my present—I will need to draw my picture in quicker, broader strokes. I am encouraged to do so by the thought that I am traversing comparatively more familiar territory. The picture I will draw of the aims of education in the College between Harper’s time and now is one of a double oscillating movement—basically, a swing away from specialization into so-called general education and a compensatory or corrective swing back toward more emphasis on specialization again. The latter began in the mid-1960s and continues to have its effect on this institution’s aims for college education in the present. I will have almost nothing more to say about it here.

The swing away from Harper’s stress on a student’s efficiently finding an all-absorbing specialization did preserve his method of concentrated study, but applied it to an opposite aim. This was the earlier twentieth-century aim of general education, again in keeping with national trends, that would assure the competence of every graduate of the College in four required fields—English composition and literature, foreign language, social science, natural science and mathematics—and in a fifth, elective one.³³ Under Presidents Ernest DeWitt Burton and Max Mason in the 1920s, the Chicago faculty formulated a general education program for the College. It verified mastery of any of the specified fields by comprehensive written examinations taken at the student’s behest, thus also sustaining Harper’s idea of providing for individual differences in knowledge and rates of learning. The aims of Chicago’s liberal arts program for undergraduates were spelled out as early as 1924, in the report of President Burton’s Commission for the Future of the Colleges.³⁴ When he became President in 1929, Robert Maynard Hutchins endorsed these aims as well as the constellation of four major fields when he charged the College with “the work of the University in general higher education” and distributed the graduate programs across four Divisions: Biological Sciences, Humanities, Physical Sciences, and Social Sciences.³⁵ Hutchins’s aims for undergraduate education became firmly identified with the so-called Great Books program that he developed with Mortimer

Adler and associates. The basis for this identification is laid resoundingly in Hutchins's book, *The Higher Learning in America*, where he asks "What shall the curriculum be?" and gives this answer: "A course of study consisting of the greatest books of the Western world and the arts of reading, writing, thinking, and speaking, together with mathematics, the best exemplar of the processes of human reason. If our hope has been to frame a curriculum which educes the elements of our common human nature, this program should realize our hope. If we wish to prepare the young for intelligent action, this course of study should assist us; for they will have learned what has been done in the past, and what the greatest men have thought. They will have learned how to think themselves....If we wish to secure true universities, we may look forward to them, because students and professors may acquire through this course of study a common stock of ideas and common methods of dealing with them. All the needs of general education in America seem to be satisfied by this curriculum."³⁶

Many persons of both sexes have found compelling the educational vision of the 1920s, 30s, and 40s that became synonymous with the name of Hutchins. Its implementation coincided, however, with the lapsing of formal provisions for women's concerns and interests in the University and College—for instance, the disbanding of the undergraduate degree program in Household Administration, the elimination of the position of Dean of Women.³⁷ In the absence of such provisions by which Talbot, Breckinridge, and others had exercised their influence and registered female (or feminist) points of difference, a sweepingly masculinist atmosphere soon came to prevail at Chicago. Its formulations and language could be quite surprisingly unself-critical: for example, the University's fund-raising literature began to talk exclusively in terms of the "men" who had been students here and the "great men" on the faculty.³⁸ Similar formulations and language imbue the Hutchins program: note, for example, his equation between concern with "the elements of our common human nature" and "what the greatest men have thought"³⁹ In apparently reaffirming its aim of coeducation by dismantling the various mechanisms of its one-time separate-spheres approach, the College of the University of Chicago in fact reverted to the priority that had triggered sex segregation in the first place—the priority of educating men.

What I mean is that the premium laid on general, liberal arts education posed special problems for intellectually serious and ambitious women students during the five decades from the 1920s to the 1960s. In the first place, as opposed to the present-day social engagement that characterized the work of Talbot and Breckinridge, the Hutchins program mandated an immersion in the wisdom of the past—in humanities, in science, and in all else. Secondly, this was proclaimed "the knowledge most worth having," learning for its own sake, and specific career aspirations were subjected to a certain lofty condescension. Now—to return to the relation between society and education—such attitudes could only make sense within a framework of male expectations. Obviously the study of the liberal arts did not deter men from making professional choices after college. Every male student of these generations knew and

acted on the knowledge that such an education at Chicago or a comparable institution led toward a future in a profession or business or public life.

His female counterpart was left to make do with the considerably vaguer message that liberal education enabled a woman to deal with any situation that life could present, but was not intended to train her for any specific one. Young women were urged to take the Great Books as seriously as young men did, but with the implication that seriousness in a woman bore no clear or easy relation to professionalism. Since it also looked askance on specialization, the Great Books approach tended to inhibit young women from taking that approach in their education. Through the 1960s, the net effect of these influences was to enhance—or at least, not to alter—standing cultural associations of women with private and domestic life. If I were to generalize my criticism of the Hutchins College, I would say that its abstraction of intellectual effort away from contemporary social realities fostered a species of not-so-benign neglect, and that this, in turn and by default, tended to confirm the status quo of American society. Meanwhile, an increasingly professionalized and industrialized society created new demands for university training of a more specialized character for men and women alike. These demands, as I indicated above, have again turned the swing of the pendulum and are affecting the aims of your college education at Chicago.

Now this is not at all to say that women were only done a disservice by the Hutchins program at Chicago or by liberal arts education elsewhere. There is no more truly distinguished or brilliant graduate of the Hutchins College than the philosopher, critic, and (lately) novelist Susan Sontag, who in fact got into the Great Books well before arriving here. In a recent interview she recalls, “When I was about ten years old, I discovered the Modern Library in a stationery store in Tucson. And I sort of understood these were the classics. I used to like to read encyclopedias, so I had lots of names in my head. And here they were! Homer, Virgil, Dante, George Eliot, Thackeray, Dickens. I decided I would read them all.” “With absolutely no encouragement?” her interviewer marvels. Sontag responds: “People couldn’t encourage me, since they didn’t understand what I cared about I very quickly located the source of judgment completely outside my life—from the great dead. If somebody said, ‘Oh, you’re very smart,’ . . . compared to the standards I was setting myself, I didn’t think I was so smart. I thought that I cared more than other people. If they cared as much, they could do what I was doing.” Consequently, as her interviewer reports, when Sontag was fifteen, “after one term at Berkeley, she enrolled at the University of Chicago, which at that time [1949] had a set curriculum and no electives. She took exams when she entered and placed out of most of her courses. She had already done the reading.” Sontag enthuses, “I audited classes in the graduate schools, and that was wonderful. I would start at nine in the morning and go all day. It was a feast.” It surely was nourishing food for the thought of the polymath Sontag, whom Richard Poirier, longtime editor of the *Partisan Review*, has praised as “one of those rare creatures who knew about what was going on in the universities and in European criticism, who had the courage and the force

of will and character to challenge the men in the intellectual community to pay attention to these things.”⁴⁰

If I return to the realm of academia which Sontag abandoned when she became a professional writer, I can readily enlarge the list of women who received a liberal arts education between the 1930s and the 1960s and moved successfully into positions on the faculty of the University of Chicago. I will simply confine myself to women who have preceded me in delivering the Aims of Education address. Nancy Helmbold, professor emeritus of Classics, spoke of the mental discipline and humane comprehension gained from the study of Latin language and literature and the applications she could make of these strengths in times of trial during and after World War II. Wendy Doniger, professor in the Divinity School, South Asian Languages and Literatures, the Committee on Social Thought, and the College, evoked her own expansion of horizons in moving from the study of Western Great Books to Sanskrit, to Indian and comparative mythology; she issued a challenge to “learn other people’s stories,” to tap the human richness and wisdom that a multicultural approach to education affords. Above all, and most recently, Hanna Holborn Gray, Renaissance historian and, when formerly a faculty member, a major mainstay of our College’s Western Civilization sequence, delivered an Aims of Education address as President of this University.

President Gray had many wry, witty, and incisive things to say about the current state of American higher education from her executive position of leadership, authority, and policy-making. I won’t purport to summarize all these, but only to tell you her chief and reiterated theme—that those who have thought most productively about the aims of education have been those who thought best about the future, about the contributions that educated persons could make within and to this society’s future, and the world’s future. I remain much impressed with her point and agree with it completely—that education, well aimed, is education for the future—but I was puzzled to find her citing Erasmus and Thomas More as examples of such thinking.⁴¹ I cannot do better than reemphasize Gray’s important point—that the best education looks to help shape a better future world for, among other things, the best use of an education in that world. And, as you have now heard at some length, I honor the record of constructive futurism that has been a conspicuous feature of women’s contributions, very much including President Gray’s, to the institutional life and the educational mission of the University of Chicago.

Hanna Gray’s fifteen years as President witnessed the continuation and consolidation of decisive social changes in the United States with respect to women’s futures—changes in educational opportunities, changes in professional and other employment opportunities, changes in reproductive rights and control—that have made the noble ideal of coeducation much more practicable and far better practiced than at any earlier time in this institution’s history. These changes can be traced well beyond what-if or if only thoughts about educated women’s futures in the actuality of Gray’s appointment as the first woman president of the

University of Chicago (and, for that matter, the actuality of my appointment as the William Rainey Harper Professor in the College⁴²). That such possibilities can become actualities should matter to all of you, women and men alike, who have chosen to attend this university founded on the principle that education shall be open at all levels, to both sexes, on an equal basis.

Whose aims, then, are served by your coeducation at Chicago? Prospectively and optimally, I would say, all of yours, to the extent that you take yourselves and your college education here equally seriously. But doing just that entails continuing to ask of yourselves and of the University, at the many junctures when you will reevaluate your sense of purpose, direction, and commitment, Whose aims of education? Whose education? As I have tried to show tonight in some specificity, these questions apply at least as trenchantly to a society and its institutions as they do to any individual within them.⁴³ You should understand your options and your limits accordingly. I wish all of you all the best through the challenges and the gratifications of your upcoming four years at Chicá- go!

1. All quotations are from Demia Butler's Diary, Miscellaneous Archives Collections, Box B, preserved in Special Collections, Regenstein Library, University of Chicago. I have reproduced Demia's spelling, punctuation, and capitalization; any interpolation on my part is enclosed in square brackets. All further citations of archival materials will be noted as being from the Marion Talbot Papers or the Presidents' Papers housed in Regenstein Library's Special Collections. I am grateful to archivist Daniel Meyer for permission to use these materials and for help with their indexes.

2. See Marion Talbot's letter to her parents in Boston, cited in *One in Spirit: A Retrospective View of the University of Chicago on the Occasion of Its Centennial*, text by Robert E. Streeter (Chicago, 1991), p. 19.

3. Document photographically reproduced as frontispiece of *One in Spirit*, p. ii.

4. Elizabeth Wallace, *The Unending Journey* (Minneapolis, 1952), pp. 75-76.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-83.

7. On the Educational Society's Resolutions of December 1888, see Thomas Wakefield Goodspeed, *The Story of the University of Chicago. 1890-1925* (Chicago, 1925), pp. 21, 56; on the University's Articles of Incorporation of June 1890, see Streeter, p. 11. A further significant provision stated that, while the president and two-thirds of the trustees were to be Baptists (a specification later lifted), no religious test or religious membership would ever be required for admission as a student or for appointment as a faculty member.

8. I infer by comparing the current minimum wage, \$4.40 an hour, with a table in Sophonisba P. Breckinridge, *Women in the Twentieth Century: A Study of Their Political, Social and Economic Activities* (New York and London, 1933), p. 217, indicating that women industrial workers in the United States earned between 9.29 cents and 17.44 cents an hour in 1909. On Rockefeller's total contributions to the University, see Goodspeed, *Story*, p. 182.
9. Thomas Wakefield Goodspeed, *A History of the University of Chicago: The First Quarter Century* (Chicago, 1916), p. 145.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-43, where Harper's rationale for this approach to education is given more fully in his own words, See p. 152 on the adjusted concept of the major.
11. Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America* (New Haven and London, 1985), p. 65. See pp. 64, 46 for the figures that follow.
12. Goodspeed, *History*, pp. 193-94. At this time also, there were 9 women among a total of 120 faculty (p. 214).
13. Solomon, p. 58.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 51, 134.
15. Marion Talbot Papers, Box IV, Folder 1; text identical with one in Box V, Folder 11.
16. Alice Freeman Palmer, "Three Types of Women's Colleges," in George Herbert Palmer and Alice Freeman Palmer, *The Teacher Essays and Addresses on Education* (Boston and New York, 1908), p. 317.
17. Palmer, "mite Types," pp. 319-20, 323. Compare Dean of Women Marion Talbot's advice to President Harper, April 7, 1903, in answer to his question whether the University should prepare a list of approved off-campus lodgings to accommodate overflow from the residence halls. She counsels sharing the responsibility for finding suitable housing and not acting *in loco parentis* for, as she remarks, "In spite of ignorance of conventionalities, our students are universally characterized by a high degree of self-respect" (Marion Talbot Papers, Box II, Folder 5).
18. Solomon, pp. 43-44.
19. The delicacy and depth of the segregation issue were such that the University's first official historian both disparaged its significance and felt compelled to include it in a chapter entitled "Some Important Events" (Goodspeed, *History*. pp. 405-08).
20. "Segregation of Sexes at the University of Chicago" [1902], signed by Angeline Loesch (U. of C. '98) and Theresa Hirschel (U. of C. 1900), in Presidents' Papers, 1889-1925, Box 60, Folder 11.

21. "Segregation of the Sexes in the Junior Colleges. Memorial to William Rainey Harper and the Board of Trustees, July 26, 1902," in Presidents' Papers, 1889-1925, Box 60, Folder 11.
22. "Statement Concerning the Subject of Providing Separate Instruction for the Sexes in the Junior College Subjects of the University of Chicago" [ca. 19 18-19], Marion Talbot Papers, Box IV, Folder 2. The San Francisco *Chronicle* (April 24, 1904), p. 22, reported the amount of this proposed gift as \$3,000,000; clipping preserved among Presidents' Papers, 1889-1925, Box 54, Folder 5.
23. Solomon, p. 59; "Statement" (n. 20); compare Dean Marion Talbot to President Schurman of Cornell University, May 3, 1916: "We hear very lithe here of segregation" (Marion Talbot Papers, Box II, Folder 8).
24. Robert S. Havighurst and Bernice L. Neugarten, *Society and Education* (Boston, 1957), pp. 268-269.
25. Solomon, p. 63, reproduces a table prepared by Mabel Newcomer for the U.S. Census Bureau, National Center for Education Statistics, which shows that women were 36.8% of those enrolled in higher education in 1900, 39.6% in 1910, 47.3% in 1920, and 51.8% in 1980. The discrepant low in this period was 30.2% in 1950.
26. "Segregation of the Sexes" (n. 19); Talbot, "Statement" (n. 20). Unlike Stanford, which concurrently coped with its burgeoning enrollments of women by setting numerical limits on their admission, at Chicago no quota was ever set on the admission of women or, indeed, of any specifiable gender or ethnic group—an honorable and very important fact of this institution's history to record. But the policy of women's equality in competing for fellowship aid was put on hold for a time; see Solomon, pp. 59, 72.
27. On Addams, see Harper-Talbot exchanges of Oct. 31, Nov. 2 and 9, 1904, in Presidents' Papers, 1888-1925, Box 24, Folder 12, and Wallace, pp. 131-32; on Curie, see Box 30, Folder 15, of the same series, and Wallace, pp. 135-36.
28. See the draft notes on how majors in household technology and home economics could fit within existing course work in the Junior and Senior Colleges in Marion Talbot Papers, Box V, Folder 5.
29. Alice Peloubet Norton, "Women's Education: The Lack of Domestic Science in Women's Education," clipping from a Boston newspaper of February 1902, in Presidents' Papers, 1888-1925, Box 39, Folder 7. Marion Talbot offers a comparable statement of educational aims for the Department of Household Arts; see her Memorandum to William Rainey Harper, February 1904, in Presidents' Papers, 1888-1925, Box 39, Folder 7. Compare, too, Talbot's statement in the *University of Chicago Record*, December 4, 1896: "It is a curious fact that it is not the women of the country, but the men, who are most actively engaged in applying the results of scientific investigation to domestic administration. . . . It certainly seems true that not only do men have a better knowledge of right sanitary conditions than women have, but the proper feeding of soldiers, athletes, prisoners, the sick and the insane is receiving more scientific study from men than the food of children and families is

receiving from women, in spite of the fact that this has long been considered woman's special sphere.”

30. Solomon, pp. 86-87.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 87. Breckinridge was the first woman to be admitted to the bar in Kentucky. Among her several books, *Women in the Twentieth Century: A Study of Their Political, Social and Economic Activities* (New York and London, 1933) remains authoritative for the time span it covers. As further evidence of Breckinridge's farsightedness in curricular matters, consider these informal remarks of hers, made in 1916: “I recall that a number of years ago I was tempted to develop a course on certain aspects of commercial law, and the law school people made fun of me. They said that nobody with a knowledge of the law would think that could be done. I gave that up, but stuck to the idea of organizing certain other aspects. Now, ten years later, they have put in one of their distinguished graduates to do just that for the college. Of course, ten years ago I was not quite as persuaded of the value of it, —I mean, that kind of thing is being built up because there is a demand for it” (Transcript of a Conference in the Department of Household Arts, University of Chicago, June 6, 1916, pp. 21-22, in Marion Talbot Papers, Box V, Folder 6). Eventually, from 1951 to 1974, the distinguished professor of commercial law in the University of Chicago's Law School would be a woman, Soia Mentschikoff.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

33. Because of Harper's identification of “the university idea” with research and President Judson's intensification of this in according much greater importance to the graduate programs, the move toward a coherent plan of undergraduate general education came comparatively late to Chicago. For further particulars see Chauncey Samuel Boucher, *The Chicago College Plan* (Chicago, 1935). Solomon, pp. 78-82, discusses the development of plans for liberal arts education devised by various colleges in the early twentieth century using the distinction between required courses and electives.

34. This report affirmed the centrality of general education, defined as “the attainment of independence in thinking in which civilized societies of the past and of the present have done and are doing their thinking;... independence in appreciation of the fine arts, and the absorption of the fine arts into the individual's life; . . . independence in moral living.” Cited from Streeter, *One in Spirit* pp. 83-84.

35. Reuben Frodin, “Very Simple, But Thoroughgoing,” in *The Idea and Practice of General Education: An Account of the College of The University of Chicago by Present and Former Members of the Faculty* (Chicago, 1950), pp. 47, 50.

36. Robert Maynard Hutchins, *The Higher Learning in America* (New Haven, 1936), p. 85. The book was the text of a series of lectures at Yale in that year. For a wonderfully readable, circumstantially rich, and unflinchingly candid account of Hutchins's presidency and impact, see William H. McNeill, *Hutchins's University: A Memoir of the University of Chicago, 1929-1959* (Chicago, 1991).

37. See Edith Foster Flint's memorandum to James H. Tufts, January 21, 1925, on how this deanship might be dissolved by reassigning its (underenumerated) functions, Presidents' Papers, 1889-1925, Box 24, Folder 12.
38. A. Evelyn Newman, Dean of Women, Colorado State Teachers College, Greeley, wrote to Burton on March 5, 1925, protesting a circular that had been sent to alumni/alumnae: "In this letter, you state that you are sure that we are more interested in the 'Men' of the University than in anything else concerning it. But, dear President Burton, almost half of the graduates of the University of Chicago are women, are they not?" (Marion Talbot Papers, Box V. Folder 11). About 1937 a lavish outside booklet was sent to potential donors of named professorships with a covering letter from Hutchins about the "Great Men" who have constituted the faculty (Presidents' Papers, 1925-50, Addenda, 85-14, Box 6). The accompanying photographs of faculty are all of males except for Sophonisba Breckinridge.
39. My check of the outlines of Chicago Great Books reading programs in Regenstein Library turned up one that includes no work by a woman on the primary list of 113 works or on the supplementary list of 18 more; another lists 151 masterworks, with contributions by just five women—George Eliot, Isak Dinesen, Virginia Woolf (twice), Eve Curie, and Rachel Carson. See, respectively, "A List of the Great Books," in Mortimer J. Adler, *How to Read a Book: The Art of Getting a Liberal Education* (New York, 1940), pp. 373-90, and the lists inside the front and back covers of Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer J. Adler, *Gateway to the Great Books*, Vol. 1 (Chicago, 1963).
40. All quotations from Leslie Garis, "Susan Sontag Finds Romance," *The New York Times Magazine* (August 2, 1992), pp. 21-23.
41. As I read these Christian humanists, both of them indicated that their world would go forward only if it could be made to go back and regain the spiritual purity and social vitality of a vanished past, best identified with the apostolic phase and communitarian organization of the Church as described in the New Testament. See their respectively most famous works, Erasmus's *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* [Handbook of a Christian Soldier] (1503) and More's *Utopia* (1516). Compare "Vallas *Encomium of St. Thomas Aquinas* and the Humanist Conception of Christian Antiquity," in Three Essays by Hanna Holborn Gray. *Issued by the University of Chicago Press in Celebration of Her Inauguration as President of the University*. 6 October 1978 (Chicago, 1978), pp. 24-40.
42. When President Hugo Sonnenschein summoned me to his office in December 1993, we met for the first time. He greeted me with a warm smile and a handshake: "I believe I have the pleasure of speaking to the William Rainey Harper Professor." After I looked bewilderedly to each side of me, he chuckled and said: "Come in. Sit down. I want to talk with you about sexism in the academy." In the conversation that ensued, he came off the more cautious optimist of us two.
43. Muriel Beadle, wife of George W. Beadle, President of the University of Chicago from 1960 to 1968, has worked as hard as anybody to think about the individual and institutional ramifications of these questions within the specific time frame of the 1960s and thereafter, see her *Where Has All the*

Ivy Gone? A Memoir of University Life, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1977), especially the two epilogues (pp. 388-405).