HARVARD-RADCLIFFE CLASS OF 1966

Dear Classmates, May 2023

Here is our May newsletter.

Last Thursday was Commencement Day in the yard. Weatherwise, a beautiful day. Not too hot, but full sunshine. the ceremony is on You Tube at this link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kT-qpJF2WQ&t=58s.
As you will recall, Tom Hanks was our speaker. But many other interesting honorands.

Ann Peck:

Upshot of Radcliffe Institute protest:

As many of you know, our challenge to the name change and mission shift of the Radcliffe Institute was unsuccessful. The wheels had been put in motion more than twenty years ago and the administration was not open to discussion, so we were never able to learn what prompted the "branding" overhaul in the spring of 2021. Nevertheless, we believe that the Class of 1966 made its voice heard; 215 classmates ratified our concern (those who did, we thank you again). We have given the archive of our correspondence to the Schlesinger Library, including the text of some of our classmates' individual letters. We hope that, with hindsight, future historians sorting through the evolution of the Institute will recognize that its path has not always been uncontested.

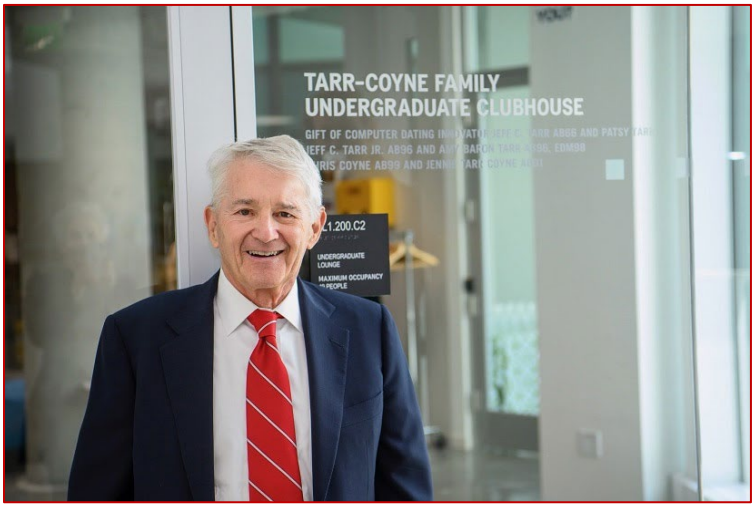
We were so glad to work on this and are grateful for your support.

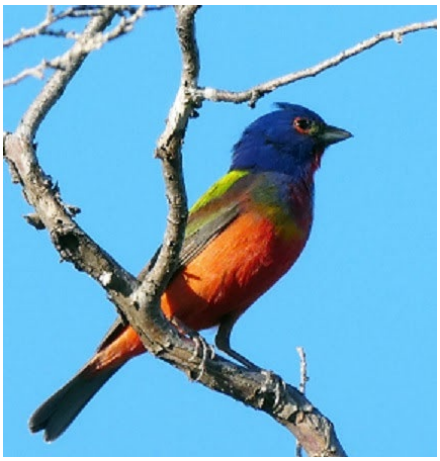
Ellen Leopold
Ann Peck
Rosalind Williams

Jeff Tarr:

In April we dedicated at SEAS an undergraduate clubhouse, for the first computer dating service, Operation Match.

We started it to have fun, and little did we think it would become a big business.





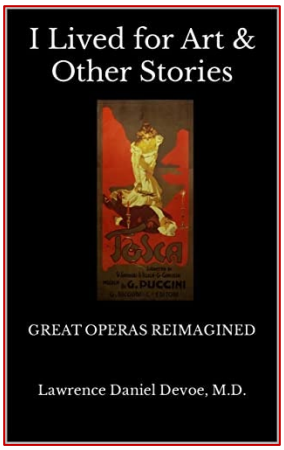
William Neaves:

Photographing wildlife at our mesa-top home in Northwest Texas continues to distract me from less pleasant matters.

A painted bunting appeared on 16 May 2023

Lawrence Devoe:

I just had my third book published.



Cathleen Cavell:

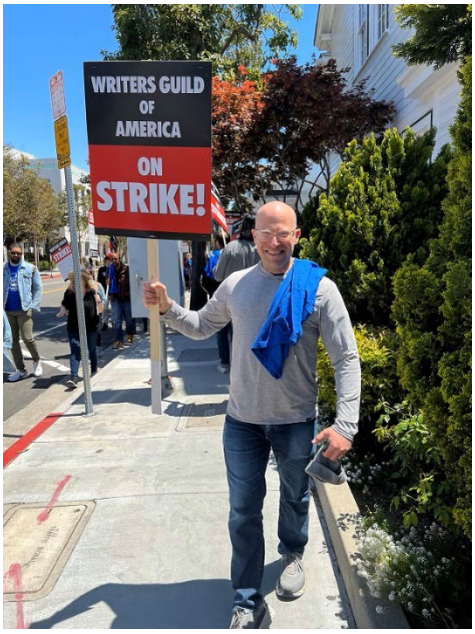
Here is my younger son David's tweet yesterday. I'm also very proud of my other son, Ben, who is a TV writer and show-runner, on the picket line in attached photo. I couldn't resist.

Best to everyone in these difficult times,

Tweet: At long last updating with some overdue *personal news*: I'm honored to be head speechwriter for @VPHarris on the incredible Biden Harris team. This is my personal (mostly Red Sox related) account — for work stuff, I'll be at @DaveCavell46

> Vice President **KAMALA HARRIS** has a new chief speechwriter.
>
> **DAVE CAVELL**, who most recently wrote speeches for climate envoy **JOHN KERRY** and worked as a speechwriter in the final year of the Obama White House, has joined Harris' office, people familiar with the move told West Wing Playbook. The vice president and her team were attracted to his resume, including his past experience writing for Massachusetts Attorney General **MAURA HEALEY** and former Massachusetts Gov. **DEVAL PATRICK**. But another selling point Cavell brought with him is that he's a lawyer like both Harris and her husband.

Ben Cavell:



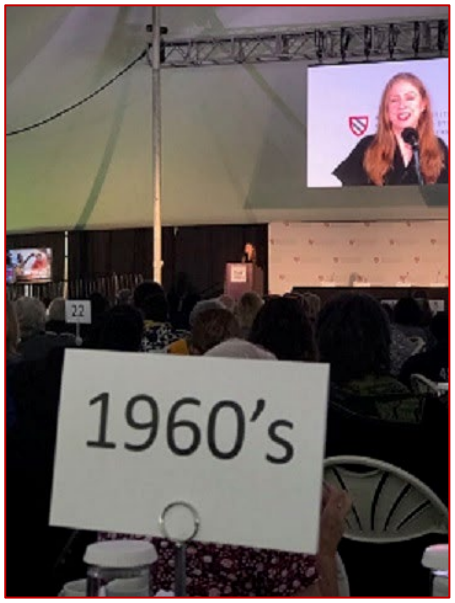
Elayne Archer:

I spent my career as a teacher of adult ed and then as an editor. This meant that I was constantly asking/nagging students or colleagues to get in papers or parts of reports for me to edit. It is therefore difficult for me not to respond to Tom Black when he asks for items for the HR1966 monthly newsletter. **Therefor, I submit a revised essay** I wrote in 2010 called *Before Everything Changed: My Radcliffe Years*. The title echoes the 2009 *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to the Present* by Gail Collins. When I read the early chapters of this book, I realized that the early years described – the early 1960s -- described exactly how things were during our Radcliffe years, 1962-1966. I rewrote this essay early this year to make certain editorial changes and to add some new content. I submitted both versions to the Schlesinger Library because I was told that the library had little material on the young women who went to Radcliffe during this time. I apologize if, when any of you open it, the formatting goes wild. It tends to do this in other people's computers, with different "styles" choices.

(Ed. note) The opening secsions of the essay are at the bottom of this newsletter.

Cathy Hughes (co-class secretary):

Radcliffe Day 2023



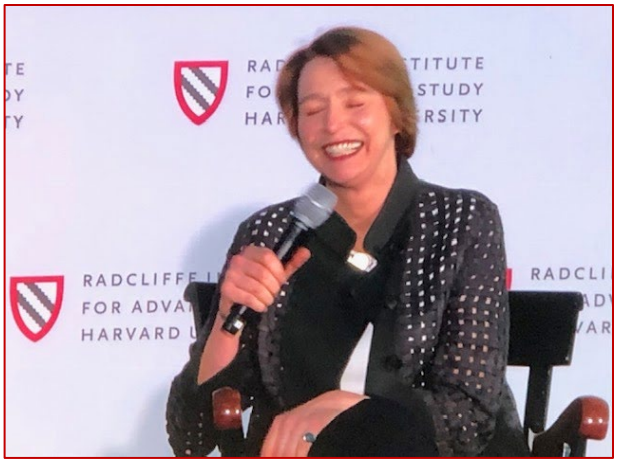
Tables this year were organized by decades; there were several to choose from across the tent interior for 1960s graduates.

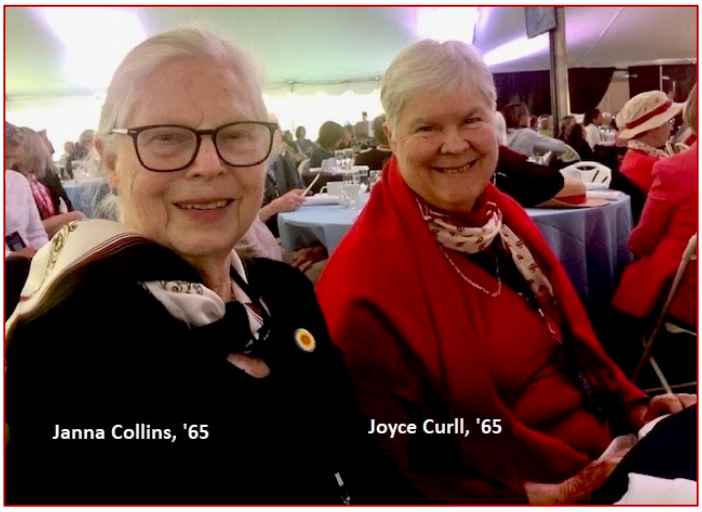
Chelsea Clinton introduced and highly praised this year's recipient of the Radcliffe Medal, Ophelia Dahl, who has spent her career helping to set up functioning community-based health care systems in third world countries. Chelsea thanked Ophelia repeatedly for her optimistic spirit and her persistence in doing this important work on behalf of others.

The Radcliffe Medal 2023 recipient, Ophelia Dahl! The daughter of Ronald Dahl, the writer, and the actress Patricia Neal, Ophelia became deeply involved in finding ways to provide health care for those in need after a transformational year spent in Haiti when she was 18. Aware of the extreme

health care availability disparities around the world, she ultimately partnered with Paul Farmer to help many in under-developed countries, particularly in the Global South. Key points she emphasized were: the need for trust, which is augmented if the providers are community-based, and above all to listen (sometimes it is not just health care that is needed, but money, food, or even just a donkey to bring the sick person to the clinic). Ophelia's determined persistence in trying to find ways to solve problems was lauded over and over by the many experts there!

All in all, a fun and inspiring day for those who attended!





In Memoriam:

Maxwell Evans sent me the following a year ago, and I missed it! I'm including it here for the record: A memorial service for our classmate, **Richard G. Hudak**, was held on May 6, 2022 at the Quantico National Cemetery. Hudy served as an officer in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War and his service included a tour of duty in Vietnam. The memorial service was attended by a number of Dick's Harvard friends as well as his family members and many others whose lives he had touched.

'65 Robert Esterhay	1/25/23	Louisville, KY
'66 Paul Mohl	2//15/23	Dallas, TX
'66 Philip Dearborn	3/14/23	Chicago, IL
'66 Charlotte Riley	1/15/23	
'67 Andy Kydes	3/15/23	Vienna, VA

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Black
co-class secretary

Elayne Archer's Essay:

Before Everything Changed

My Radcliffe Years
1962-1966

Elayne Grant Archer 2023

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Introduction

This essay describes my four years at Radcliffe, from fall 1962 to spring 1966. It also describes very briefly my family history and how I ended up at Radcliffe. In addition, this essay briefly describes political and other current events, as well as issues and customs pertinent to being a girl during these years. (I say "girl, because, while Harvard boys were often called "young men," girls were never called anything but "girls"—except "Cliffe's" and sometimes "chicks.") The title of this essay, "Before Everything Changed," echoes the title of the book by *New York Times* columnist Gail Collins, *When Everything Changed.*

My Family

I was born on April 20, 1943 in Romford, Essex, just north of London. My parents both came from working-class families. After leaving school at fifteen to help support his family, my father, Charles Frederick Archer, worked as a rail clerk, then as an assistant to a theater magnate in the west end of London, and then as a journalist. My mother, Phyllis Ashton Grant Archer, also came from a working-class family but with a difference. She was born out of wedlock, as they said at the time, and raised by her mother, Adeline Goulden Grant, who worked as a domestic. This meant that my mother lived much of her childhood in somewhat grand homes. My mother also received a better education than many girls of her class. For secondary school, she attended a good private school for girls. The tuition was paid by her father, whom she never met. My mother graduated from secondary school at 17 and started her working life, as a file clerk and typist in an office in Westminster. Her last job in London before the war was as a secretary at the *Daily Mail (*The *Mail* was always a conservative newspaper but when my mother worked there it was not as rightwing as it is now).

My parents were married in late August 1939, a week before the second world war started. My brother, Rodney, was born in July 1940 just before the Blitz. My father enlisted in the RAF in late 1940 and died in Malta in May 1943, a few weeks after I was born. Although not college-educated, both my parents were quite well read—they had read the nineteenth century classics, many plays

and much poetry. One of the most vivid memories of my childhood was that my mother had a quote for many occasions—often from Shakespeare. They attended many theatre productions, especially given my father's second job, and went to the opening of Stratford-upon-Avon every spring for a decade in the nineteen thirties. They were also quite well travelled—all over the British Isles and in Europe. Being cultured was important to them.

A year after our father died, my mother took my brother and me to Toronto to make a "clean break," as she wrote in her memoirs (In 2019 I published my mother's memoirs, *Crossing Troubled Waters: The Memoirs of an English War Widow*. I edited the memoirs lightly and expanded them based on my vivid memories of the years after my mother's memoirs ended. These memoirs are available from my website www.elaynearcher.com or directly from Amazon). Our early years in the city were difficult. Jobs and apartments were scarce and went first to returning veterans. Furthermore, women with children did not work—it was very frowned upon. After a year, my mother got a job as a journalist on a weekly liberal news magazine, but, since there was nothing in the way of childcare and we had no family in Toronto, she was forced to put my brother and me in foster homes and boarding schools. I first lived with my mother full-time when I was nine and attended the local public school. For secondary school, I attended (on full scholarship) an Anglican day school, St. Clement's School, for five years. (Ontario at that time had a grade 13.) I was head prefect of my school and graduated in June 1962. I had intended to follow my brother to Trinity College at the University of Toronto.

How I Ended Up at Radcliffe

My brother Rodney graduated from the university in spring 1962 and was going to London on a fellowship to study at the London Academy for Dramatic Art. My mother was also talking of returning to London—she had been sick and unemployed for over a year at this point. I did not want to be alone in Canada—I had never become a Canadian citizen—and thought of applying to colleges in other places. Essentially, I applied to Radcliffe on a bet—egged on by an American boy who assured me I could never get into an ivy-league college. (This young man was one of several Americans who came to Toronto every year to take grade 13 at a good private school to improve their chances of getting into an Ivy the second time around.)

I remember quite vividly taking the SAT. I arrived late because the streetcar I took broke down in the snow; I did not have number 2 pencils when I finally arrived; and I had never seen a multiple-choice exam. On top of that, there were various cultural references—to "Poor Richard" and "Walden Pond" —that I had no clue about. Convinced that I would never be accepted, I decided I might as well see the place. I came to Cambridge for the interview rather than go to Buffalo to be interviewed by an alumna.

I remember nothing of the bus trip to Boston nor of getting to Cambridge, but I do remember coming up the stairs and seeing Harvard Square for the first time. It was snowing lightly. I walked up Garden Street past the old burial ground and church and into Radcliffe Yard. It was so beautiful. The kind woman who interviewed me commented on how far I'd come—I imagined she thought Toronto was at the North Pole.

After my interview, I walked down Brattle Street and into Harvard Yard. It had stopped snowing and mine were the only footsteps in the snow. It was so quiet. The weathervane on the top of Memorial Church shone amber in the late afternoon light. The snow-covered steps of Widener rose to my right and Sever Hall loomed across the way. I thought, "If I am accepted I will definitely come to this beautiful place."

Obviously, I was accepted, and, equally, if not more important, I received almost full financial aid. I could never have attended Radcliffe without this aid: the full tuition, room, and board were almost half my mother's annual salary at the time. (For the first year, only $250 being a loan; after that, my mother had to pay $250 a year and $250 was a loan.) I still remember the thrilling feeling that my life was going to go in a very different direction than I imagined it would. In those days, coming to the United States was viewed very positively in Canada (maybe not so today!), and of course, going to Harvard-Radcliffe was very prestigious. Growing up, my mother had always comforted my brother and me during difficult times, that things would take a "turn for the better," they would "turn out all right in the end." This was obviously a turn for the better!

The rest of this essay describes my four years at Radcliffe. This is a personal essay, but many of the challenges I faced—being overwhelmed by the work, trying to learn how to study effectively, money issues, relationships with boys, friendships with girls—are similar to those experienced by my classmates and, perhaps, by many students today. Other issues described in this essay highlight the times and/or lessons I learned from the experience that guided me later in life.

Freshman Year: 1962-1963

In my freshman year, I lived at 100 Walker Street in Cabot Hall. My room number was Cabot 52, on the fourth floor; I believe the room had been Helen Keller's when she was at the school (but I may misremember this). My roommate was Katy, the daughter of a Harvard professor, who lived in a lovely old house a few blocks away (Spellcheck has informed me that the use of the word "freshman" violates the notion of "inclusivity." Nevertheless, I have chosen to keep this term because it was the word we used then and for many years afterward).

I found myself surrounded by smart, smart girls, many from New York and New England. (Far fewer students travelled across country to college in those days—flying was not as common and fares were relatively expensive.) So many of my classmates seemed to have gone to much better schools than I and were really grounded in one or two subjects; I felt I had a little knowledge in more areas perhaps, but no real depth. For example, I had studied both French and German (and Latin) but I was not fluent in either, while some of the girls had studied abroad and so spoke a language fluently. (One girl even recommended reading Dostoevsky in German—much better than in Russian, she assured us!) But despite this, and perhaps more than many students, I felt I could "keep up," in the humanities at least. I had read widely enough, knew enough about art and music, and had travelled to Europe the previous summer (After eighteen years in Toronto, in the summer of 1962, my mother borrowed money from a finance company to take us to London to meet our English family. Along the way, she decided we might as well go to Europe, and so the three of us went to Rome, Florence, and Paris).

I remember how intimidated I was by many of my fellow students, but I put up a "good front" and, as I found out over the years, many of my fellow Cabot freshmen saw me as quite self-assured. This was partially based on my participation during orientation week in several discussions of the two books it was recommended we read over the summer. One was *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous Fourteenth Century,* by Barbara Tuchman, and the other was a book on some then-current problem like the "population bomb." I do remember standing up to talk once or twice, petrified, but feeling I had to say something. However, despite outward appearances, I was very timid about speaking up in class and approaching professors—I mention this in several letters home. Coming from an all-girls high school, with all women teachers, having boys in the class and only male professors and instructors, really intimidated me.

My first letters from freshman year describe many details of orientation week, many Radcliffe customs, and the challenges I faced once classes had begun. I spent much time away from the dorm, trying to find a good place to study and trying always not to waste time by talking too much with friends or to boys on the phone (In total, I wrote eighty-nine letters to my mother during my four years at Radcliffe, many written during freshman and sophomore years on long, yellow legal pads (which I called "foolscap" pads). I donated these letters to the Schlesinger Library with a short introduction in which I wondered if I had more in common with a young woman entering Radcliffe fifty years after I did in 2012 or fifty years before in 1912. I wrote letters like the young woman of 1912, while young women in 2012 would email, text, or call their parents. But apart from that, I think I decided that I had more in common with young women of 2012, especially in terms of issues related to women's reproductive health and sexuaity).

In fact, there were many calls from boys during the first few months. Boys perused the Freshman Register, with photographs of all the girls in the freshman class. This book contained information about where we were from, our secondary school, and contact information at Radcliffe. Many of us liked to joke about getting calls from boys who had decided what "type" we were based on our photo in the Freshman Register. My photo showed me looking quite proper in my school uniform. Like many other girls, I knew that any boy who called me based on that photo was probably not one I really wanted to go out with.

I was clearly trying to make friends—being generous, especially with food in my room. In one letter, I describe myself and a friend next door as “feeding the floor.” In another I describe myself as sometimes “bitchy.” I find this hard to believe, given how much I wanted to make friends and how kindly everyone remembered me from Cabot at our most recent reunion. Nevertheless, that is how I thought, or perhaps feared, I sometimes was.

I Discover I’m a WASP

During my first week of college I found out I was a WASP. I had never heard this term until a Jewish girl from New York, with whom I was walking to the square, exclaimed how straight my hair was, even though it was starting to rain and her hair was starting to curl. (My so-straight, fine hair had always been the bane of my existence in my foster homes and boarding school. In high school I cut my hair very short so that I could look more presentable, especially as a prefect.) As further proof of my “Waspness,” during my first semester, I was taking riding lessons—what was Waspier than that? And so, my “Waspness,” my having been to Europe, my seeming self-assurance, and my being from Toronto so that no one could quite place me—added to people’s sense that I was quite “together.” In addition, I never talked of being poor and my mother gave me about $20 a week “walking-around money”—quite a bit of money in those days.

Gracious Living in Cabot Hall

Cabot Hall was known for its atmosphere of “gracious living.” Part of “graciousness” was interpreted as being “lady-like.” In the first few weeks in the dorm all of us ate at least once at the dean’s table on a dais at the front of the dining room. The day I ate at the high table, as it were, we had ice cream for dessert. The dean informed me that the way I stirred my ice cream (to soften it) was not ladylike. In one of my early letters I mention an upcoming East House dance to which boys were to be invited by written invitation only!

Another part of “gracious living” was the dress code, which was not much different from the expectations about what women could wear generally—that is, skirts and dresses (and stockings). We could wear pants in our rooms and while studying in the sitting rooms or in the “smokers”—smoking was allowed both in the dorms and in all classrooms—but we could not wear pants to dinner or outside the dorm, even in the coldest weather.

I remember once studying for a final in the January exam period, realizing that I was going to be late for the exam, and running off to Harvard Yard to take it. As I approached Sever Hall I realized I had not changed into a skirt. I simply turned away, went back to the dorm and wrote a note to the professor that I had been sick and asked to take a make-up exam. I look back on this in amazement—why did I not just enter the building and take the exam? But it was just not done. (A girl I met later told me she has been chided for coming down to breakfast without a bra, although she donned a bra and a skirt when she went off to class. Of course, this was also part of the informal dress code for women—women wore bras, no matter how small-chested they were.)(I returned to Cambridge in spring 1968 and saw that all the young women were wearing pants. I asked several people if the dress code had been changed or, quite simply, girls had started wearing pants and nothing was said about it. No one seemed to know. Thus, things change and those who benefit do not know that things were ever different).

Look What’s Happening at Radcliffe: Some Aspects of Being a Girl at Harvard Radcliffe

During orientation week there was a “tag sale” in the Radcliffe Quadrangle—mostly it consisted of sophomores and juniors selling furniture, books, clothes etc. A photographer from *Look* (or maybe *Life*) magazine was taking pictures of girls—pretty girls, he told me as he took a photo of me trying on a dress. The article appeared two weeks later under the headline “Look What’s Happening at Radcliffe.” The main point of the article was that there were now some attractive girls at Radcliffe—that is, not all Cliffies were plain, bluestocking bookworms from New England schools. Girls could, it appeared, be both pretty and smart. Of course, we were called “girls” or Cliffies, and sometimes, even in class, “chicks.” There was absolutely no sense one could object to such names. I do remember trying to convince a “section man,” as we called them, that “chick,” while not as bad as some words used to describe girls, was not that good.

Restricted Hours

Of course, there were restricted hours: I believe girls had to ask permission to be out past 11 up until Thanksgiving of our first semester and after that to be out after 12 or perhaps one. (Most libraries closed at 11.) In one letter, I refer to using up all my "ten o'clock," which I assume means we were checked in when we came back later. And there were "parietals"—hours when boys could be and not be in the dorm and rules about the door being open or closed. In one letter I state that boys were allowed in our rooms on Sunday afternoon for three hours—"so naturally they want the beds made"––and accordingly every Sunday morning our rooms were inspected.

Limited Access to Buildings

Of course, in those days girls were not allowed into certain buildings—notably Lamont Library and the Freshman Union. (Boys, of course, could come to Radcliffe Library and take out the few books on reserve, although Lamont had far more.) At a reunion, one classmate described having a mathematics section upstairs on the third floor of Lamont. She was told to enter the building by an exterior staircase, which was not much better than a fire escape. She refused to do so. On the first day of the section, she entered the building by the front door with a male friend and saw immediately all the women working there. These women chased her and her friend out the door. After this she requested a new section in another building. Another classmate had a similar experience. Somehow, she managed to get to her biology section in the basement of Lamont, but as soon as she entered the room, the instructor said, "Shit, we've got a chick in the class. We'll have to move." And for the rest of the semester the instructor and the boys in the class grumbled at her for the much smaller, darker room that the section was moved to.

No Place to Eat

Girls could also not eat in the Freshman Union, which meant there was really no convenient place to have a quick lunch in an hour between classes (unless you went to a restaurant in the square and paid for it). Some girls biked back to the dorm but I did not have a bike (nor know how to ride one). You could go to the Radcliffe Graduate Center just north of the Radcliffe Yard—not that convenient, but closer than the dorms. There you could have lunch or pick up a box lunch. I think one had to arrange this ahead of time.

Few Places to Pee

Most older buildings had no bathrooms for women, so between classes you ran into a newer building—Burr Hall, for example, where many girls clustered in the women's room with their box lunches. In one letter, I mention that Boylston has a "nice washroom." (I believe that Marilyn French's novel *The Women's Room* is about a woman trying to find a bathroom in Sever Hall.) At our fiftieth reunion, one classmate described taking a final exam in Lowell Lecture Hall; she was having her period, and "began to leak badly." She had to sign out, go across the street to the women's room in Memorial Hall, "get fixed up and return to Lowell." She had lost at least 15 minutes and asked the exam proctor for permission to make this up at the end. He refused. To me, this example epitomizes just how little, if at all, Harvard—the professors, the administrators, the instructors—took the experience of girls into account.

No Place to Rest

Further, there was really no place to go if one had a few hours between classes, except a library—no place to rest, that is. But, actually, there was such a place—the basement of Memorial Church. This was not a "finished" basement—quite the contrary. It was dark, completely bare of any ornamentation or furniture except a few army cots, and it was hot, hot, hot—it was just off the furnace room. I do not recall if there was a door on the room or

just a curtain, nor if there was a bathroom. I went there a few times during one winter exam period when I lived in a distant off-campus house and had exams two hours apart. One afternoon I fell asleep and, at some point, I awoke to the sound of a man standing above me breathing hard and making gasping noises. I lay there petrified. I am not sure what would have happened had another man not entered the room and said something. I jumped up immediately and ran out and never returned to this dreadful space.

(I once described this place to a Radcliffe alumna from the class of 1948, whom I met at the Harvard Club in New York. She replied that, while this miserable room may have seemed to me a sign of how

badly girls were treated at Harvard-Radcliffe, this space was the result of much struggle on the part of girls of her time to have anywhere in the yard they go to relax between classes other than a library.)

Violence Against Women

This was the era of the Boston Strangler, who killed thirteen women—from very young to very old—over a two-year period from winter 1962 to winter 1964. Most of the victims were sexually assaulted and many were strangled with nylon stockings, which, of course, were readily available since we all had to wear them. One murder, in May 1963, took place in Cambridge near Mt. Auburn Street. I remember nothing ever being said about violence against girls, or of being warned not to walk alone or in certain parts of Cambridge after dark. I do remember leaving the Radcliffe Library at eleven, closing time, and being terrified at the shadows and any small movement in the numerous bushes along the way on my walk back to the dorm.