

Living in a Man's World:
A Study of Tokenism and Female Entrance into Lehigh University

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Abstract

The following analysis studies the first four years of undergraduate coeducation at Lehigh University. Using Rosabeth Kanter's (1977) theory of tokenism, I prove three main points related to women's experience at Lehigh University. First, tokenism was an essential part of the female experience at Lehigh University. Second, women directly served this role through enhancing the University status and social life of its male students. Third, increased female admission to Lehigh University would be the best means to dismantle gender tokenism on campus. My research uses a qualitative design that derives data from several official Lehigh University sources in addition to a small number of in-depth interviews.

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Introduction

Lehigh University became a coeducational institution in the fall of 1971 when it welcomed an incoming class comprised of 123 women and 955 men (Lehigh University Office of the Registrar 1971). Additionally, seventeen sophomore women and five junior women came to Lehigh University that first year. The University had admitted female graduate students since 1918, but they were always a very small percentage of the program, and many commuted to Lehigh rather than living on campus. In 1968, the administration faced protests from student and faculty members belonging to the Committee of Undergraduate Responsibility in Education (CURE) who pushed for social change on the campus. Protesting on the Asa Front Lawn, CURE students made several social and structural demands of the University; implementing coeducation was twelfth on their list (Forcier 2005). At Lehigh University, many referred to coeducation as “the experiment” that would be a great step forward for the social progress of the University, but would also introduce many changes and challenges for the administration and student body. Integrating women into an environment dominated by males would not be a simple task.

I base the following analysis on archival and qualitative research pulled from several student and administrative sources at Lehigh University. The study focuses on the first four years of coeducation in particular, in order to narrow my focus and to study

the years in which women were most “tokenized” (Kanter 1977) on Lehigh’s campus. I apply my data to Rosabeth Kanter’s (1977) theoretical framework on tokenism and make clear comparisons to her workforce data using examples from Lehigh University. With the help of Kanter (1977), I prove three main points related to women’s experience at Lehigh University. First, tokenism was an essential part of the undergraduate female student experience. Second, women directly served their role as tokens through enhancing both the status of the University and the social life of male students. Third, increasing female admission to Lehigh University would be the best means to dismantle gender tokenism on campus.

Literature Review: Coeducation in United States Schools

American women have a long history of struggles concerning equal education rights in higher learning institutions. Myra and David Sadker (1994:15) state, “during Colonial times, viewed as mentally and morally inferior, women were relegated to learning only domestic skills, though they hungered for more.” It was a great paradox that men excluded women from formal education, and yet women were responsible for socializing their children. In order to raise productive future generations of American workers, women needed education in order to be able to “enlighten” their children (Sadker 1994). The first two colleges to admit undergraduate women were Oberlin College (1833), and the University of Michigan (1858). Although women were students at these institutions, they still received separate educations from male students: they were educated using the same facilities, but taught at different times from the men. It was

commonly believed that if men and women learned together in the classroom, not only would their education depreciate in quality, but also that coeducation would “defeminat[e] women and demasculat[e] men” (Sadker 1994:22).

Women’s access to higher education improved after the founding of the all-female “seven sister” colleges, as did the introduction of Title IX, the legislation that made sex discrimination illegal in American schools (Sadker 1994). Despite these progressive establishments, women still faced many obstacles when stepping foot on the campuses of traditionally all-male institutions such as Yale, Princeton, or the University of Virginia (Synnott; Ihle 2004). Male students’ reactions concerning the implementation of coeducation were mixed, but several important themes can be discerned. First, administrators recognized the need to admit women to fill their student quota, attract more male candidates to apply, and not to appear “behind the times” (Synnott 2004:113). Secondly, students and faculty generally accepted the change as long as the female student population did not exceed that of the male; it was important to these universities to maintain their comfortable male environment (Synnott 2004).

At the University of Virginia, however, many students and faculty strongly opposed offering entrance to women. Thomas Jefferson founded the University “with only males in mind,” (Ihle 2004: 182) therefore, the admittance of women seemingly violated his original intentions for the University. The University’s “reverence for tradition is the reason that Virginia was the last state of the former Confederacy and indeed the last state in the nation to admit women unreservedly to its flagship state university” (Ihle 2004:182). Women’s presence threatened the male students because it

would “destroy the university’s honor system...and that they [women] would change the exclusively male atmosphere” (Ihle, 2004:184) that the male students supposedly needed in order to develop their true masculine identities. The University finally admitted women in fall of 1970, after the “American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the National Student Association [filed a lawsuit]...on behalf of four women, and all other women similarly situated” (Ihle 2004:188) concerning the University of Virginia’s gender discrimination. Like other previously all-male institutions, the University of Virginia discovered that women caused a “pleasant change” on campus, and that these new students did not alter many male traditions in the process.

Methodology:

My research uses a qualitative design that derives data from several official Lehigh University sources in addition to a small number of in-depth interviews. Most of my data collection originates from content analyses of *The Brown & White* student newspaper publication (Fall 1971- Spring 1972), four *Epitome* yearbooks dating from 1972-1975, and other pertinent memorandums and administrative letters dating from before coeducation was implemented at Lehigh University. I purposely chose these sources in order to understand the context in which women entered Lehigh University in the early 1970s. I used official University resources to get a sense of the overall climate while trying to analyze tokenism from a student perspective.

For all sources of my data collection, I used the principles of grounded theory to finely analyze and code my findings (Strauss and Corbin 1990). To accomplish this, I

used a system of open coding, axial coding, and then more focused, selective coding to determine the most prominent analytical points for understanding Lehigh's transition into coeducation (Strauss & Corbin 1990). I began the coding process with the first year of *Brown & White* articles.

During this process, I read every issue of the archived newspaper and made photocopies of each pertinent article, editorial, cartoon, or photograph that involved women at Lehigh. I then used the open coding process, handwriting notes in the margins of each article to summarize significant points made by the original author as well as my own research conclusions. Upon completing this task, I began axial coding by organizing and prioritizing the apparent themes shown in my open coded notes. I used the same coding process for the *Epitome* yearbooks, first making photocopies of pertinent pages of the archived books and the compiling my margin notes in my axial coding process (Strauss and Corbin 1990).

In addition to my archival research, I also conducted five in-depth, semi-structured interviews with alumni who attended Lehigh in the early days of coeducation. My small sample of interview participants included four men and one woman who graduated from Lehigh University as early as 1970 and as late as 1980. Participants represented all three colleges at Lehigh University during the 1970s: three were engineers, one a business student, and one an arts and sciences student. Because alumni are dispersed across the country, I completed two telephone interviews in addition to three conducted in person. During each interview, I took extensive notes and subjected those notes to the same process of developing grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin

1990). My interviews took varying lengths of time to complete, but most required over an hour of the participant's time. From my initial key contacts (selected via convenience methods of known alumni), I used a snowball sample to extend the network of interview participants. While not a random sample, this method was appropriate considering the small population of female students during this time at Lehigh University and logistical concerns. Furthermore, these data helped to supplement my primary analysis based on the archival sources.

Finally, I used the same interview guide for all of my interviews in order to ensure consistent collection of data. I asked open-ended questions, which allowed my participants to elaborate on their undergraduate experience at Lehigh University. I began with basic questions, such as their class year, major, and current occupation. However, the majority of the interviews raised questions about gender awareness, such as, "Do you think your gender affected your experiences in the classroom concerning how you were treated?" and whether male students enjoyed having women on campus. In addition, I asked questions relating to the alumni's expectations of their college careers as well as their social involvement with women at Lehigh and from other local colleges and universities.

Theory of Tokenism: A Discussion of Kanter (1977)

Kanter (1977) drew upon Simmel's classic study, which focused on how numerical shifts in populations can affect social interaction. In her analysis, Kanter (1977) briefly describes various types of social groups, such as *uniform* groups, which

include 100% majority population; *skewed* groups, which include 85% majority and 15% minority population; *tilted* groups, which include 65% majority and 35% minority population; and *balanced* groups, which include 50% majority and 50% minority population (Kanter 1977).

The numerical compositions of these groups have important implications for social interaction. Kanter (1977) uses an example from research done by Shelley Taylor and Susan Fiske to demonstrate how the shift in *relative* in-group numbers can affect interpretation of individuals. The researchers,

...played a tape of a group discussion to subjects while showing them pictures of the ‘group,’ and then asked them for their impressions of group members on a number of dimensions. The tape was the same for all subjects, but the purported composition of the group varied. The pictures illustrated either an otherwise all-white male group with one black man (the ‘token’ condition) or a mixed black-white male group. In the token condition, disproportionate attention was paid to the token, his prominence in the group was overemphasized, and his attributes were exaggerated. Similarly, the token was perceived as playing out special roles in the group, often highly stereotypical ones. By contrast, in ‘integrated’ groups, subjects recalled no more about blacks than whites, and their attributes were evaluated about the same (Kanter 1977:211).

The simple shift concerning in-group population can quickly determine the social responses to individual actions and ideas. Despite the fact that the black participant acted the same in both groups, it was his token status as a black male in an all-white group that evoked stereotypical reactions from the participant group viewing the research video. As stated by Kanter (1977: 241), “numbers, especially relative numbers, can strongly affect a person’s fate in an organization. This is a *system* rather than an individual construct – located not in characteristics of the person but in how many people, like that person in

significant ways are also present.” For instance, if there was an additional black male portrayed in the research video, the research participants may not have expressed such stereotypical observations. Alliances, rather than acting alone as single token individuals, are crucial in order to build solidarity within the group, especially in token populations (Kanter 1977).

The skewed group model is the most relevant in the case of women’s entrance to Lehigh University. Within a skewed group, those individuals belonging to the 85% majority population, defined as “dominants,” represent male Lehigh students or male employees in Kanter’s (1977) research. Those students belonging to the 15% minority population, designated as “tokens,” represent female Lehigh students or female professionals in the workforce. Due to their low population, the title of “token” describes how these women are treated as symbols or representatives of a social category, and are not recognized as actual students or professional employees apart from their ascribed status (Kanter 1977). Kanter (1977) details how tokens undergo common experiences stemming from their population membership. Among these experiences are “high visibility,” “social contrast,” and “assimilation” (Kanter 1977).

Much of Kanter’s (1977) theory speaks to the issues faced by female students on Lehigh’s campus. In the incoming class of 1975, there were only 123 undergraduate female students and 955 male students with a total student population of roughly 3,468 undergraduates (Lehigh University Office of the Registrar 1971). Therefore, women constituted approximately 12.9% of the admitted class, but only 4.9% of the total undergraduate population. This ratio clearly placed female students in the token

category. Given that women comprised about one-fourth of the percentage needed for token status, they faced the reality of living on a predominantly male campus with little support from their token population.

Considering how these student populations relate to Kanter's (1977) tilted group models, I wanted to investigate to what extent these women's college experiences mirrored tokenism. Like the women described by Kanter (1977), Lehigh women were highly visible and faced issues of contrast as well as assimilation. Women in a token situation such as this would face "contrast" issues, which involve men emphasizing their gender differences from women and demonstrating ways to exclude women through "boundary heightening." Further, women may have trouble "assimilating" into the university or work environment since they are stereotyped and subjected to role encapsulation in order to be accepted by the dominant social or work climate (Kanter 1977). In the analysis that follows, I will detail the three individual effects of tokenism, (high visibility, contrast, and assimilation) and apply them to the Lehigh University experience among the undergraduate female students.

Overview of Lehigh University: Before Introducing Coeducation

Before analyzing the specific ways in which women experienced tokenism on Lehigh University's campus, it is important to outline the founding of the University and its reputation, as well as its reasons for becoming a coeducational institution. Lehigh University was founded in 1865 by Asa Packer as an all-male engineering school. In the 1960s, coeducation began gaining popularity among colleges and universities across the

United States, which was reflected in the declining amount of male applicants to Lehigh University. It was apparent that all-male schools were limited socially and that more male students wanted to have a “natural” college experience while in the constant presence of women. According to an administrator at Lehigh, “The addition of coeds [would] naturally [cause] an increase in enrollment” (*Epitome* 1973: 94-95). It was assumed that having more women on campus would create an appealing social scene for male students and would create a learning environment that more closely resembled “the rest of the world” (*Epitome* 1972:166). With less male applicants, Lehigh University began losing a substantial amount of funding that usually came from tuition payments. The financial situation was further complicated by a failing economy, which prevented additional families from affording a private education for their sons (*Effect of Admitting Women: Admission View* 1970).

Lehigh University strived to attain “true university” status by improving the College of Arts and Sciences, which loomed in the shadow of an engineering college that was one of the best engineering schools in the United States, behind the California Institute of Technology and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Participant #3 2009). In order to become a “true university” and solve the issue of declining numbers of applicants, the Board of Trustees contemplated the introduction of coeducation. Administrators believed that admitting women would motivate additional male candidates to apply to the University. In addition, proponents believed that the accepted women would choose to enroll primarily in the College of Arts and Sciences, rather than the College of Engineering or the College of Business and Economics. By this logic, the

new group of women would improve the College of Arts and Sciences by increasing the need for skilled faculty, which would further attract qualified male candidates in the future once the programs gained in popularity and prestige. The Board of Trustees made the final decision to become coed on May 30, 1970 (Effect of Admitting Women: Admission View 1970).

Understanding the Environment: Extreme Academics and Extreme Social Scene

In the fall of 1971, integrating 169 women into a student body of 3,299 men (Lehigh University Office of the Registrar 1971) would be a daunting task, and even more difficult in the environment of intense academic rigor and hard social partying found at Lehigh University. As quoted by one alumnus, the University president stated during freshmen orientation, “Look to your left, and right...one of you won’t be here at graduation. So you have to decide which one of you is going home” (Participant #3). As the president suggested then, and still today, Lehigh University emphasized an “unforgiving” academic work ethic and expected true excellence from each of its students. During the week, some students would go as far as destroying library books used for assignments in order to sabotage other classmates. “It was cutthroat! All across campus, it was dog-eat-dog,” remarked the same alumnus (Participant #3).

Some alumni also reported that the faculty was largely unsupportive of the student population and highly “unapproachable” (Participant #4). Unlike today, students felt uncomfortable asking questions in class or meeting professors during their office hours. “The faculty were not involved in student life” (Participant #3) reported one alumnus,

which created an impersonal learning environment. “At that time, in engineering, it was like joining the army. You knew you have to fight no matter what. We all suffered together” (Participant #4) stated one female mechanical engineering alumnus. Students had to rely on each other for academic support, which was even harder for female students to come by since male students tended to band together in their dorms and fraternities more so than women who lived in small isolated groups all across campus.

In many ways, fraternity life was the main source of sociable enjoyment available to students due to the lack of social opportunities in town and elsewhere on campus. As expressed by many alumni, the town of Bethlehem, where Lehigh University is located, had little to offer concerning social activities. It was a steel town that was largely residential, but with very few local shops and restaurants, unlike today (Participant #2 2009). Therefore, the average Lehigh student had the option to join a fraternity and the resulting party scene on campus, or to live a boring existence in the dorm – especially if he or she lived on campus without access to a car. There were organizations and other activities available to students, but these outlets were not nearly as important as the party scene at Lehigh, which was vital for students’ social enjoyment. Most importantly, parties on the “the Hill,” where most of the thirty-eight fraternities were located, were the number one places to meet women from Lehigh, or the *hundreds* of other women that were “bussed in” from local colleges, such as Cedar Crest, Muhlenberg, Moravian, and Beaver College (Participants #1 & #2 2009).

Fraternity life was important to male students on campus; they used it as a means to demonstrate masculinity, brotherhood identity, and a sense of belonging on campus –

all of which was barred to women. There is a vast amount of research concerning the topic of masculinity formation within American fraternities. The creation of both gender and masculinity occurs through interaction with other males and cannot exist at the individual level (Joseph 2004). By interacting with one another, “the men in fraternities build and sustain a group fraternity identity” (Joseph 2004:5) and combine this identity with other “dominant displays of masculinity within American culture as a whole” (Joseph 2004:5). Having this brotherhood identity endows these men with a great sense of belonging on their college campus. The homogenous culture within these groups stresses conformity and loyalty to each population as a whole (Joseph 2004).

Male students at Lehigh demonstrated these very traits within their respective fraternities and bonded together over their duty to create the social scene on campus. As stated by one Lehigh senior, “I should have realized that a pledge party was another of those **‘rites of passage’** and that there was a catch to it” (*Epitome* 1972:99 – Emphasis Added). This remark, among others, demonstrates how joining Greek Life at Lehigh was essential for the male student experience, social pleasure, and demonstration of masculinity (Joseph 2004). There were clear social pressures for men to join fraternities and to conform to certain social stereotypes around campus (Participant #1 2009). One Lehigh senior described these generalizations by saying,

Apartment residences were expected to be non-conformists, fraternity members were expected to ‘make the scene’ and generally be where ‘the action was’ and residence hall people were ‘out of it.’ Of course it wasn’t true, but **the image of the ‘fraternity man’ for the social scene was still strong** (*Epitome* 1972:101 – Emphasis Added).

As a member of the Greek community, Lehigh men had a great sense of belonging to the University due to their important role in its social life. They had to create a social scene equally as intense as the academic pressure on campus. Both the social and learning environments were “unhealthy” considering their extreme nature, but were maintained in an attempt to balance the life of a Lehigh student with an exciting social outlet (Participant #3 2009). Despite the implementation of coeducation, Lehigh University would maintain its reputation as one of the most notorious and “professional” drinking schools in the United States, according to *Playboy* magazine (*Epitome* 1971).

Women: A Positive Force on Campus

With the introduction of coeducation, the University happily witnessed a pleasant “change” on campus concerning positive attitude and a welcome acceptance of the new student body. Although earlier generations of Lehigh alumni, such as the Class of 1950 and before, were displeased with the idea of transforming Lehigh into a coed institution, the majority of students attending Lehigh at that time and those who were newly graduated were thrilled with the admittance of women (Source). In the early 1970s, the United States witnessed expansive social change, encompassing the Vietnam War, the Kent State tragedy, and the Women’s Liberation Movement, just to name a few. As described by an alumna, women were “riding on the coattails of change” (Participant #2 2009) and it was probably one of the best moments in America’s history for Lehigh to become coed due to the sweeping changes occurring in other aspects of society.

Male students and administrators felt that women changed Lehigh University for the better and immensely improved the social scene for its student population. One Lehigh administrator described the changes the addition of women brought to the campus:

This year there is a **forward-looking attitude** about the whole campus. There is a new image of Lehigh moving in the right direction... There has been an **upswing in attitude** toward everything on campus, chapel, lectures, art shows, and athletics. A **positive attitude** is replacing the negative attitude of the past few years. This has been bolstered by the coeds. They are the **bravest pioneers in the history of Lehigh** (*Epitome* 1972:176 – Emphasis Added).

As this example suggests, women “rejuvenated” (*Epitome* 1972:108) the campus social scene and created “spirit” among the students. This administrator’s references to the words “bravery” and “pioneer” also demonstrate his awareness that the integration of women into the Lehigh community would not be a simple task, and these women were to be respected for any hardships they experienced along the way.

It is clear from studying the campus dynamic that tokenism *did* exist on campus, as introduced in the next section, but amidst a social scene that was seemingly accepting of the women. The women largely discount the expansive “change” that occurred on campus, as remarked by male students and administrators, but describe their role as making Lehigh “a little more like the rest of the world” (*Epitome* 1972:171).

Considering the previous summary of campus life, it is apparent that women would feel pressure as tokens from all sectors of Lehigh including academics in and outside of the classroom, the limited social scene of the fraternities, and the demands from administrators to maintain a positive influence on campus.

Visibility:

According to Kanter (1977), high visibility is one of the most obvious effects of tokenism due to the low membership numbers of the group. An important effect of high visibility involves the “law of increasing returns,” which occurs, “As individuals of their type represent a *smaller* numerical proportion of the overall group, they each potentially capture a *larger* share of the awareness given to that group” (Kanter 1977:210). Kanter (1977) details how each token is under more visual and verbal scrutiny than other members of majority populations due to their smaller group membership.

Many token women feel recognized for their appearance rather than their achievements, which can lead directly to a feeling of isolation. In this sense, women are simultaneously highly visible and isolated, which is a seeming contradiction. Women can feel “ignored, and overlooked” (Kanter 1977:212) because their accomplishments and abilities go unrecognized. This is largely due to women’s historical location in the workplace in typically subordinate positions that were “unimportant” and “did not occupy a space in the competitive race to the top” (Kanter 1977:212). For example, a woman could do excellent work in public relations, but it would go largely unseen by male executives in other sectors of the company who worked in higher authority divisions far removed from public relations.

Ironically, token women were the ultimate “individuals” in the workplace and on Lehigh’s campus, but failed to act as *independently* as males in the same environment due to their token performance pressure. Women, as tokens, have an “attention-getting

edge” (Kanter 1977:213) in business or academic circles, which is a peculiar disadvantage. Women would only have their accomplishments recognized because they were “exceptional” token members; a male employee or student with a similar idea or achievement would not receive this same treatment. Instead, senior executives recognize male achievements as accomplishments of the actual *individual*. As one female participant cautioned, “If it seems good to be noticed, wait until you make your first major mistake” (Kanter 1977:213). In order for token women to be successful while under such visual scrutiny, they must do “well” rather than exceptionally well, in order to prevent hyper-positive or hyper-negative attention. This limits the individuality of female members in the workforce and on college campuses because they do not “have as much freedom of behavior as men do” (Kanter 1977:213). Rather than acting as independent and confident employees, like many of their male coworkers, women feel they must obey these controlled performance measures, which ironically inhibit their ability to succeed (Kanter 1977).

Female students at Lehigh were highly visible on campus due to their low numbers, which sometimes made them seem more like exhibits than students. As described in *The Brown & White*, within the first few weeks of class, upperclassmen would stare at them like “new phenomena on campus” (Glickstein 1971:2). “It’s like being put in a goldfish bowl...If there were only more [of us]...” (Frosh survey finds problems 1971:6). This female student demonstrates how women wished there were more female students on campus because it might prevent male students from observing

them so closely. One male Lehigh student described the following introductory exchange between male and female students:

...when you're walking down the hill and your eyes meet a coed's, they'll say 'Hi.' It's natural but most guys don't do that. They'll see a coed at the bottom of the hill and stare at her. When he gets close enough so that she notices him, however, he'll turn his head. Then, when she passes he'll turn around and stare at her again (Glickstein 1971:2).

Similar to the token group described in Kanter's (1977) study, Lehigh women had to "perform their jobs under public and symbolic conditions different from those of dominants" (1977:212). As students, Lehigh women experienced a heightened sense of unnatural visibility that men never encountered. Male students recognized Lehigh women more as outlying social tokens than as equally intelligent college students, like their other male peers admitted at the University.

In addition, the *Epitome* yearbooks indicated how women felt judged and "measured" by male students as if they were on display. After four years of coeducation, one student commented how,

Social life was possibly the largest barrier to overcome for Lehigh women, and it hasn't really been overcome yet...[Men], in their amazement **over seeing women on campus, treated them as an oddity...** There's very few women in my classes and there's no neutral ground. **Girls feel like they're getting picked up if they visit a fraternity'** (*Epitome* 1975:4 - Emphasis Added.)

Although women had an "attention-getting edge" in the social realm, they were also isolated as single individuals due to their low population. Concerning the issues of staring and idolizing, one male student asked, "What is coed at Lehigh? One-hundred-and-some women who are ornaments to brighten up a masculine landscape? Or are they like prized catches in a zoo, over which the Lehigh male can marvel? Or maybe they

simply grace South Mountain for utility” (Fields 1972:2). This student recognized the uncomfortable condition that many women faced on Lehigh’s campus by mentioning their role as attractive objects on campus. In addition to the clear remarks made by female students in *The Brown & White*, Dean Hurley even commented how “the girls feel they are on exhibition” (Swan & Schlerf 1971:4), but that the male students will eventually settle down as the semester moves forward.

Unfortunately, the issue of high visibility would permeate the faculty as well, which further complicated the task of successfully integrating undergraduate women into Lehigh University. For instance, in class, this one male student describes how his professors treated female students:

...some professors attempted to ignore the new situation. Still others joked about it, and another bunch teased. They would ask for the ‘ladies’ point of view’ or a ‘feminine opinion,’ or ‘Why don’t we ask the ladies about a double-standard.’ And there were a few professors who ‘picked on’ the girls and complained (*Epitome* 1972:168).

The fact that women were individually singled out in class to give the “ladies’ point of view,” demonstrates how differentiated female students were when compared to men. Male opinions in class were considered the norm; one would never expect to hear a professor ask for the “gentlemen’s point of view” because it was naturally assumed to be the “main” opinion. Kanter (1977:215) discusses how “regardless of their expertise or interest, they would be asked to provide... ‘the woman’s point of view,’” further demonstrating how “women are treated as symbols or representatives” (1977:215) of their token population rather than as individuals. Professors using this technique

heightened the women's gender visibility by isolating them from their male peers and implied that men and women had radically different points of view, simply based on the distinction of gender.

Aside from this heightened attention in the classroom, women's place in the academic community at Lehigh University also differed from that of their male counterparts in that their failures received more attention while accomplishments often went unnoticed. Kanter (1977:215) stressed how female tokens serve as "symbols or representatives" rather than members of an organization. Where performance pressures and visibility are concerned, if one female token succeeds, she is an exception to her token population, but if she fails, she simply justifies the notion that the token population is inferior to the dominant group (Kanter 1977).

One Lehigh male described the founding of a spirit group that was necessary after the cheerleading squad failed the University: "My freshman year the cheerleaders were in charge of rallies and other spirit activities. They stopped because there was too little support. HOOPLA [spirit organization] was created to fill this vacuum left by the cheerleaders" (*Epitome* 1972:175). By using the word, "vacuum" as though the cheerleaders created a black hole of disheartened morale on campus, this male student implies that organized spirit failed at the hands of women. Considering there were only ten cheerleaders on the squad, the women faced a difficult responsibility in creating spirit among all 3,400 other students. Just as Kanter (1977) suggests, women can fill roles that are potentially powerful, but are also bound to fail, which further allows male students to mock female incompetency when success is impossible.

While their failures were almost universally known, women's achievements, whether they were in academics or club involvement, often went without much publicity. For two years, the Lehigh marching band excluded women from joining the all-male club, addressed in a later section, but accepted women in 1973. As briefly mentioned by a female marching band member, "...women have **proved** that they can 'play and march as well and be just as gross [boisterous] as the guys'" (*Epitome* 1975:4 – emphasis added). Other than this single comment and an article in *The Brown & White*, there was little attention found in my sources given to this great accomplishment of integration in the weeks that followed (*Epitome* 1975). This could partially be explained by the way in which women had to fade into the background of student involvement by acting like "one of the guys" in order to be accepted by the campus community – a defense mechanism mentioned by Kanter (1977). Therefore, the women in the Marching 97' would not receive recognition as women due to their androgynous portrayal and the male identity they fulfilled. Rather than acting as exceptional token women (Kanter 1977), these women were "doing masculinity," which made them seem less visible, and left their accomplishment unrecognized.

In the academic arena, it was known that "women in engineering felt like they had to work twice as hard" (Participant #3 2009), as their male counterparts. Their success in the classroom was ignored by male students, who were largely "confused why women were in the classroom" (Participant #3 2009) in the first place. Second, many male engineers criticized female engineers for "leaning" on their status as gender minorities in order to receive high job placement, despite their actual accomplishments within the field

of engineering (Participant #4 2009). These examples demonstrate how certain male students were uncomfortable seeing women as leaders in the classroom and within prominent organizations. Women's visibility increased through performance pressure because female tokens acted as potential threats (Kanter 1977) that challenged the male students' sense of accomplishment.

Contrast: Isolation & Exaggeration of Differences:

One of the most apparent themes of tokenism on Lehigh's campus speaks to issues of social contrast and isolation, and the exaggeration of differences between male and female students. According to Kanter (1977), "contrast issues" commonly begin when male dominant members outwardly demonstrate ways in which they are different from token populations in order to disassociate themselves from inferior groups. Tokens act as threats to the dominant group by potentially changing the social and working dynamic of the dominant group and by creating discomfort among dominant members who are unfamiliar with the token's work habits (Kanter 1977).

In order to make these contrasting distinctions, men will often participate in "boundary heightening," in which they will actually exclude women or create social boundaries that cannot be crossed unless women demonstrate loyalty to the male population. Boundary heightening can include informal discussions of masculine hobbies, such as hunting or fishing, to which female tokens often cannot relate. Further examples of boundary heightening also include outright demonstrations of male prowess over that of other female tokens through training role-play exercises. Kanter (1977:223)

details several sales training exercises in which “every case involving a woman, the man played the primary, effective roles, and the women were objects of sexual attention.”

These social boundaries are often impossible to cross because women are “doubly deviant.” They are “deviant first because they are women in a man’s world and second because they inappropriately aspire to the privileges of the dominants” (Kanter 1977:225). As mentioned previously, female success can create male resentment if the woman is not first accepted among her male peers.

Similar to the effects of high visibility, the emphasis on difference often makes women feel self-conscious about their gender, which can lead to a heightened sense of isolation. The creation of social boundaries is a continual process that reproduces inferiority between the token and dominant populations. Kanter (1977:224) mentions one example from her research in which a female corporate trainer worked with an all-male group of co-workers who looked “at her for a reaction” when they chose “the [obscurity] of the week” as their team slogan. The female trainer felt uncomfortable with this slogan and chose not to participate in the group’s role-play, which built male solidarity and isolated her in the process. Despite holding the important role of “trainer,” this woman, like other female tokens, faced the masculine boundaries heightened and maintained by the male employees through their patriarchal work environment.

As a defense, tokens like this trainer accept their social isolation and act as “audience members” of the business world rather than actual participants. The women can either be invisible to the company or choose to act like “one of the guys” by demonstrating qualities they share with the male dominant class. Becoming “one of the

guys” can build a measure of trust between the token and the dominant population. However, this simultaneously isolates the token member by forcing her to mold to the dominant culture, while ignoring her own identity and her bond with other token members (Kanter 1977).

Reminders of Gender Difference:

In the fall of 1971, it was noticeable how Lehigh administrators made few changes to the campus social structure and facilities in preparation for the transformation from an all-male school to a coed institution. As stated in *The Brown & White*, after Freshmen Orientation,

“...the University ha[d] not fully adjusted to [the female] presence. At the freshmen convocation all students were requested to wear coats and ties, causing some girls to comply with the wish. Other girls were amused by the prayer at the convocation which referred to the ‘fraternity of men’” (Confusion prevails during orientation 1971:3).

Although this is an administrative example, the first traditional gathering of the University students emphasized a male custom that some women felt pressured to fulfill. The male identity that still permeated campus reminded women of their gender differences. This example of social contrast was uninviting to women, and confirmed how unprepared Lehigh was to integrate women into the social context of the University (*Epitome* 1972).

As the first semester progressed, there were even more complaints and issues that demonstrated structural shortcomings around campus, reminding women of their gender status. After orientation, other women were frustrated that there were not enough female

bathrooms on campus (Participant #3 2009), that they could not reach their mailboxes, and that the dinner tables were too high (Glickstein 1971). As reported by one student, “Many girls here have sensed that Lehigh was designed as an all male school” (Glickstein 1971:2). Considering the lack of female facilities and unsuitable structural components, it is clear that Asa Packer, like Thomas Jefferson and University of Virginia (Ihle 2004), founded Lehigh with only men in mind, which further stressed gender difference on campus. These incidents truly called into question what Lehigh University considered “normal” or appropriate requests. Male accommodations and needs were all that Lehigh students and administration had ever considered normative since its founding in 1865. As a result, the complaints made by women seemed unnatural and illegitimate, which further highlighted the differences between the male and female undergraduates.

Social equality and equal treatment among female and male students was questionable because the structure of Lehigh’s environment constantly reflected their gender differences. One female student stated, “Equal, yes; but different” (*Epitome*, 1972:170) to describe the treatment of women at Lehigh University. As previously discussed, women received much positive attention from male students and administrators that was often labeled as “special treatment” or “special efforts” (*Epitome* 1972:170) to accommodate and welcome female students. Considering this “special treatment,” Lehigh women seemingly had no justifications for questioning whether their gender was second-class to that of male students. In reality, women constantly lived in a “testing” environment that challenged, “how they would respond to the ‘male’ culture” (Kanter 1977:224) that still dominated the Lehigh campus.

This “testing” challenged whether female students could still express their gender differences on campus and be intellectual “equals” or if the women had to emphasize their similarities with males in order to attain equality as Lehigh University students. As Michael Kimmel (2000:496-497) mentions, “In America, we believe that difference leads to inequality and equality means sameness.” Also, it is a common misunderstanding that “there are two ways you can discriminate in law: You can treat those who are the same as if they were different and you can treat those who are different as if they were the same” (Kimmel 2000:497). Therefore, to expect Lehigh women to integrate into the male campus with few structural changes made before their arrival was a form of discrimination because both students were treated the same despite their differences (Kimmel 2000). Additionally, the threat of women attending Lehigh University was a result of their right to equality and not their mere existence on campus (Kimmel 2000).

At Lehigh, the question was whether female students on a predominantly male campus could be intelligent and social while also maintaining their master status as women. As Kimmel (2000) suggests in his research on the Citadel and Virginia Military Academy, female students at these academies could not be successful cadets without sacrificing their womanhood because the traits of a cadet are “masculine” in nature. In an attempt to disarm the female threat on campus, male students would challenge women’s capabilities by emphasizing gender differences as a means to justify social exclusion.

These types of contrast issues closely relate to Kanter’s (1977) description of boundary heightening in the work place. In her study, women often felt like they had no choice but to accept the male culture in which they worked and adapt as best they could.

According to Kanter (1977:230), “Numerical skewing and polarized perceptions left tokens with little choice about accepting the culture of dominants. There were too few other people of the token’s kind to generate a ‘counterculture’ or to develop a shared intergroup culture.” As documented in Kanter’s (1977) research, the structural and traditional shortcomings at the University served as reminders to Lehigh women that they were different from the dominant male population.

Kanter (1977) also reported how men served as constant reminders of gender difference through frequent verbal interruptions. Dominant men often felt obliged to censor their behavior or to interrupt their office conversation to ask if they made the female tokens uncomfortable. By stopping their conversation for the *sake* of the token’s presence, the dominant men in the office reminded female tokens “that they were special people” (Kanter 1977:225), which highlighted their gender differences. The women in Kanter’s study felt unable to complain about such special treatment, which forced them to resort to “play[ing] their game” (1977:226) and acting as audience members in a male dominated environment. Similarly, Lehigh women experienced these dilemmas when their structural *environment*, and interaction among male students, reminded them of their “second class” position in the social hierarchy.

Isolation:

Due to gender contrast on campus, many women experienced social isolation from the dominant male population. In addition to their isolation created through male boundary heightening (Kanter 1977), women also experienced a unique form of isolation

through living groups on campus. Among many issues, the Administration banned women from pledging fraternities within the first year. Dean Hurley felt that “the already small group of female students should not be divided among the many fraternities on campus” (Frey 1971:1, 4). In her opinion, the women needed more solidarity in order to create a female identity on campus rather than diffusing themselves throughout the male social scene.

There were many fragmented living groups spread around campus, which affected all students, and especially women, when attempting to create a sense of solidarity and identity on campus. As one male student put it,

There is an isolating of various groups after that first semester. I don't know if this is just a result of the natural process of finding you're (sic) 'own kind,' or whether Lehigh's residence structure is primarily responsible. I suppose it's open to question as to how fragmented the Lehigh campus is, but there seems to be no mistaking that it is (*Epitome* 1972:99).

The main issue concerning women, however, was that University had female students dispersed among several dorms around campus rather than living together in one dorm. With so few women on campus, this made it increasingly difficult for women to *meet* each other and to create their own sense of belonging and engagement with student life. This further intensified their tokenism by depleting their sense of “critical mass” among the male population (Kanter 1977).

It seems that the most common social opportunity for *all* students was partying on the Hill. This was not always an ideal environment in which to meet people, especially because students were often under the influence of alcohol at these parties. Research has

shown that many, but not all, fraternities can be breeding grounds for sexual exploitation while students interact at informal gatherings involving alcohol (Joseph 2004). At this point in Lehigh's history, these parties provided the only outlet for social activity (Participant #1, #2, #3 2009) due to the limitations of town and lack of other campus activities. Because the small population of women depended on the Hill for social enjoyment, female students and administrators (Participant #3 2009) advised the women to "stick together." One female student explained how "The prevailing thought was – 'There are a lot of boys here, not too many of us. Hmmm. We'd better stick together.' ... [However] as late as springtime, few girls knew coeds outside of their dorms and classes" (*Epitome* 1972:167). From this description, it is clear that the physical distribution of the student body among the dormitories bred isolation throughout the student population, which limited women's ability to integrate into the University.

In addition to female fragmentation in campus dormitories, both deans of students, Dean Quay and Dean Hurley, had opposing ideas about how to improve the social conditions on campus as they related to the successful integration of women at Lehigh University. As stated by Dean Quay, "I have grave misgivings about how far a university should get involved in social life. I don't think we should be in the position of supplying bread and running circuses" (*Epitome* 1973:173). As this statement suggests, Dean Quay opposed the methods of *in loco parentis*, the act of college administrators substituting as "parental" authority figures over the University's student population. This demonstrates the vast disconnect between students and the Lehigh faculty and administration. The lacking support of *in loco parentis* methods, meant Lehigh men and

women had more freedom within their social lives, but this absence also left female students unguided by the administrators responsible for student life on campus. As leaders of a university, administrators, like Dean Quay, did not understand the importance of integrating women in both the academic sphere *and* the social sphere; successful integration includes both areas of the student experience.

In contrast, Dean Hurley firmly believed the necessity of creating organizations for women in order to create a “viable community.” She remarked how

...there’s an identity coming along...But as a political force or as a social force on campus, it hasn’t happened yet. And I think that kind of group identity is needed, if just for communication purposes. The women have no real group to communicate through as the men do (*Epitome* 1973:175).

According to Dean Hurley, there was a great need for a sorority system or more intramural sports available to women in order to start breaking down the exclusively male culture on campus. Although the women had powder-puff football, there needed to be more options available to them to prevent further isolation. She further stressed the importance of creating female traditions at Lehigh that would “not replace the old [traditions], [but would] add to them and combine with them” (*Epitome* 1972:171).

These new customs would play an important part in creating a true coed environment for Lehigh women because they would welcome female involvement instead of forcing a sense of isolation and exclusion as other male traditions, which I discuss in a later section.

Although the fact that women were underrepresented in Lehigh clubs and organizations made some feel invisible or unimportant, there were positive examples of

how Lehigh women began improving their sense of identity on campus through athletics and other popular activities. In the first year of coeducation, Lehigh women established the first all-Lehigh cheerleading squad. In years past, there were cheerleaders in uniform, but they came from Cedar Crest College in order to fill the necessarily female positions since Lehigh was an all-male institution. A sports editorial in the *Epitome* (1972:175) yearbook described how “Coeds wanted to make up the whole squad. That is the major difference this year, the girls have a strong sense of belonging to Lehigh and are very proud of their school.” Although described from a male student’s perspective, cheerleading still seemed like a positive outlet for women to express school pride and a sense of identity on campus. Granted, the role of “cheerleader” is a female social stereotype, and did not compensate for the other groups from which they were excluded, like honor societies and other prestigious organizations. With that aside, cheerleading was still an example of how women were able to make a positive connection to the University.

In due time, the women at Lehigh created more social outlets that allowed female students to build an identity on campus. By 1975, when the first class of women graduated from Lehigh, women participated in several new sports, such as powder-puff football, tennis, lacrosse, field hockey, swimming, and basketball. In addition to developing their identity, the women on these sports teams received positive feedback and support from other male students and administrators for completing successful sport seasons. After four years of coeducation at Lehigh, there were more women on the *Epitome* (1975) yearbook staff than there were men, and there was even a female editor-

in-chief. Despite their obvious struggles as gender tokens earlier in their student experience, these brief examples demonstrate how Lehigh women gradually attempted build a sense of identity on campus.

These informal cases of isolation closely parallel Kanter's (1977) analysis in several ways, and differ in others. To reference the previous discussion of contrast issues, isolation occurs, first, because of dominant males demonstrating gender differences, which can isolate the targeted women. In addition, Kanter (1977) reported cases in which male professionals would hold informal yet exclusive meetings with male employees in order to discuss issues of job performance or loyalty to the company. Kanter (1977:227) discussed how "Many of the women did not tend to be included in the networks by which informal socialization occurred and politics behind the formal system were exposed as researchers have found in other settings." This type of isolation also occurred at Lehigh University in the form of exclusively male study groups, which excluded women from getting help. One female alumnus (Participant #4 2009) commented how she could never miss her engineering classes because no male student would take notes for her. She further added that male students studied together for exams by using compiled copies of tests in their fraternities, while female students had no access to these exams, or an equivalent guide (Participant #4 2009).

What made the token experiences of Lehigh's first female students different from that of Kanter's (1977) research subjects is not only the physical isolation that occurred in the dorms, but also the small success of women creating their own identities, despite their low token population. In Kanter's (1977) study, professional women experienced

isolation by both acting as “high achievers” and receiving social scrutiny as a result, or acting through “double deviancy” as women living in a man’s world while attempting to reap male privileges. At Lehigh, the hardest struggle for women concerned actual exclusion from certain activities and designated all-male organizations, as well as the hardships relating to the structural isolation amidst the dorms on campus (*Epitome* 1972).

These living conditions limited the amount of friends women could make, but clearly did not prevent women from building their own sense of identity. Women in Kanter’s (1977) research often utilized the defense mechanism of accepting isolation or acting like “one of the guys,” rather than creating their own sense of tradition and culture within the work place. Lehigh women, despite their high token status, prospered over the years by starting their own traditions in sports and other clubs on campus, which helped to soften some of the feelings of isolation resulting from gender contrast on campus (Kanter 1977). However, women uninvolved with athletics still had limited spaces in which they could call their own, which was a majority of the token women on campus.

Boundary Heightening: Exclusion and Harassment

The most explosive example of boundary heightening at Lehigh was the prevention of women joining the all-male Lehigh marching band (the Marching ’97). Although the Lehigh administration and local newspapers demanded that women should participate, male members would not consider the issue. The Morning Call newspaper was quoted in *The Brown and White* as stating, “[the band’s] rash action will beget rasher actions” and that “if Lehigh males did not want to allow females full participation in

extra-curricular activities, they should never have gone coed in the first place” (Morning Call blasts band for no coeds 1971:5). Most of the male students’ justifications for such exclusive behavior described how women would be unable to maintain the military precision of the band’s marches, would degrade the morale or “esprit de corps” of the group, and even that the uniforms bought by alumni were specifically for the use of men and not women. One professor stated that “very few women have the lung-power to play in the same league with mature male wind players” (Greene 1971:3)!

All of these examples seem to infer that men and women are naturally *different* and deserve separate social spheres in which they may interact. In this context, it would not be “right” for women to join a club that was intended for the men because they would be “unprepared” for the high demands of the ensemble. This notion, as supported by Professor Greene’s (*Epitome* 1971) comment, implies that women’s biological make-up determines their fate as individuals. For instance, studies have shown that while human genes do not determine intelligence levels, “the media are delighted by images of genetic female inferiority at math” (Hyde 2004:269). These stereotypical images derive from the early 20th century finding that male brain mass is larger than female brain mass, which “must” correlate with intelligence and mental capability. Scientists have since disproved this theory, but the lasting impression of these studies still leaves some individuals believing that women are somehow inferior based solely on their biological condition (Hyde 2004).

One article stated, “band members do not want women to march with them, and they maintain that the rights of the majority should not be sacrificed to those of the

minority” (Marching band refuses females 1971:1). Men in the group refused to accommodate women, and in protest of the University’s demand that they do just that, performed an unannounced “phantom concert” in front of the dorms on campus during which they “voic[ed] the phrase, ‘we’re all male’” (Masculinity of U band is proclaimed 1971:5). It was believed that if women were to join the Marching ’97, it would cause certain male members to leave the group, which would devalue the quality of the ensemble (Coed subcommittee urges band to audition women 1971).

Male Lehigh students excluded women from this ensemble in order to demonstrate superiority over the inferior female token population. By marching around campus proclaiming that the Marching ’97 was “all male,” they dared women to challenge them, which was impossible because the club’s identity was clearly well established and unaccommodating. Even if women were allowed to join the Marching ’97, it was also clear that peer acceptance would still be an obstacle to overcome, since many members threatened to quit the group if women were admitted. By quitting the band, male students would physically disassociate themselves with a “devalued” and “incompetent” musical ensemble, which had been “contaminated” by women. To a large extent, women who wanted to join the band were considered “doubly deviant” by the men because they were women trying to become involved in male traditions, and specifically women trying to join the privileged status of other band members (Kanter 1977). This would explain the men’s reasoning for quitting the ensemble since they felt it would change the dynamic of the group altogether (Coed subcommittee urges band to audition women 1971).

The Marching '97 excluded women from auditioning for another whole year, despite the outward discrimination that was felt by some men and women on campus.

One female student described why women were upset about the Marching '97 situation:

The gripe? **A desire to be treated as equals**, to be awarded the same rights and privileges as any male student. To many, the Marching Band issue became a symbol of more than male chauvinism. It meant being **denied an active role** in campus life. It meant being a girl at a boy's school. It meant **discrimination**. It meant war (*Epitome* 1972:170 – Emphasis Added).

Many female students, like this woman, were cognizant of the outward discrimination that the Marching '97 inflicted on the new female students. Not only was the act unfair and immoral, but it also isolated the women interested in auditioning, as the woman quoted above described it as “being denied an active role in campus life” (*Epitome* 1972:170). Once again, the women failed to attain the same sense of identity on campus outside of athletics that the men established through fraternity life as well as other school spirited clubs.

The opposing men knew that banning women from the Marching '97 was discrimination, but they seemed to get enjoyment out of the “problem” it caused on campus. One band member explained, “The band has always been gross, it's part of their tradition. Grossity is a result of the psych and spirit of the Band...it's fun cause there's no girls” (*Epitome* 1972:174). Here, this Lehigh student is outwardly pleased with the band's exclusivity because it allows the male students to be as “gross,” or boisterous as necessary – something that many men did not believe women could replicate. Lehigh faculty and administrators further supported this by stating how “**that problem** with the

Band going coed really helped to unify the Band. **Everyone** was against it. The march on the Centennial II Quad showed the solidarity and spirit of the Band” (*Epitome* 1972:174 - Emphasis Added). Male members were encouraged by the campus environment to believe that their spirited band was the true *spirit* of Lehigh University, which gave them an enormous amount of power. Not only would men cling onto an all-male “tradition,” but also to what they thought of as the domination of school spirit, which the women could not share.

Though the women’s battle to join the Marching ’97 got the most press, there were also many other, less publicized but no less telling, acts of discrimination performed on Lehigh’s campus during the integration of women. One of the most shocking occurred during the celebration of one of Lehigh’s most sacred of male traditions – the Lehigh/Lafayette rivalry. While preparing for the momentous football game and as a source of immense display of school spirit and pride – a banner hung from Dravo¹, the largest freshmen dorm, stating, “That time of the month for the pussy to bleed _{period}” (*Epitome* 1974:23). In regards to beating the Lafayette Leopards, the male students living in Dravo aimed to insult the opposing rival by using a demeaning reference to female menstruation. The male student shown cheering outside his window seemed proud of his “spirited” banner, despite the obvious disrespect it implied towards women and their bodies. This was particularly offensive considering that the female students who lived directly across from Dravo could read the banner from their dorm room windows (*Epitome* 1974). However, while both the Marching 97’s refusal to admit

¹ See Photograph 1 located in “Tables and Photographs” on page 60.

women and the banner hung from Dravo highlighted women's exclusion, they did so in subtly different ways.

Unlike Kanter's (1977) informal discussions of contrast issues, the Marching '97 conflict was an act of outright discrimination that demonstrated boundary heightening at its worst. Most of the boundary heightening Kanter (1977) witnessed included off-colored jokes, or public discussions of masculine hobbies while in the company of female employees. The banner incident described above more closely resembles the kind of exclusion she describes. The off-color reference to menstruation effectively highlighted the differences between men and women, but did so implicitly. The Marching '97 issue relates to Kanter's (1977) discussion of isolation, which results from social contrast, but the exclusion was committed in a completely blatant and public manner.

Another difference between the boundary heightening Kanter (1977) describes and the Marching '97's exclusion is that the female students did not react similarly to Kanter's (1977) subjects concerning the use of boundary heightening defense mechanisms. Rather than accepting the men's insults concerning female incompetency, or demonstrating gratitude for simply being accepted into Lehigh University (Kanter 1977), female students excluded from the band made a social uproar on campus. They pushed for the opportunity to audition for the Marching '97 in order to *prove* that women were worthy of playing on the field alongside other competent male players (*Epitome* 1972). The small number of women interested in joining the band challenged those who wanted women on campus in order to improve the social nightlife, but did not anticipate them joining all male "traditions."

The male reactions surrounding the Marching '97 conflict mirrored those reactions found in Barrie Thorne's (1993) book, *Gender Play*. Applying Thorne's (1993) findings to the situation, Lehigh men, like the boys in the schools she studied, excluded women because they would contaminate male traditions like the spreading of "cooties." Women were thus seen as a polluting force on Lehigh's campus that infected traditionally all-male realms, such as the Marching '97. In Thorne's (1993:74) study, she found that boys never seemed to give cooties to other male classmates, but that "girls as a group are treated as an ultimate source of contamination." Male classmates often refused to have physical contact with girls because they feared their female "cooties" and pollution potential (Thorne 1993). To recoil in such a way demonstrates the strong sense of superiority established by male classmates (Thorne 1993). The same reflex occurred similarly at Lehigh University concerning the protection of masculine traditions. The social distance created between male and female students demonstrates clear gender contrast and the necessity of boundary heightening in order for male students to disassociate themselves from inferior token women (Kanter 1977).

Overstepping Boundaries: Resenting Women

In the second semester, the administration at Lehigh attempted to accommodate the women by building more housing for female students. In the fall of 1971, women had moved into the Centennials, new dormitories built specifically for their use, since there was not enough room elsewhere on campus for them to live. Once it was apparent that the University needed more housing in order to accommodate women in the fall of 1972,

the administration considered using half of McClintic & Marshall (M&M) for women to share with the male students. To ensure that women would be happy using the dormitory, the administration had female students tour the facilities in order to make suggestions for better accommodations, such as improving the lighting and lowering the height of the medicine cabinets in each room (Mier 1972).

While the women were excited about the prospect of moving into M&M, many male students were furious that women had received “preferential treatment” from the Administration. The idea of women receiving better or altered living accommodations than male students was frustrating to the men on campus. They were used to the administration paying full attention to their needs before female students stepped foot on Lehigh’s campus. The following passages express the men’s opinions on the housing issue:

...why must changes be made in M&M to accommodate girls? M&M is the best of the non-Centennial houses, and men have been living there for years...the girls who have come have received far more than the ‘equal’ treatment the school advertised...It is very difficult to support a school which has forgotten...about 90 per cent of its entering class...The fault does not lie with the coeds. It lies with the University (Aadland 1972:3).

I do not argue about M&M going coed...but it must not be made at the complete sacrifice of other members of the student body. Currently, women are guaranteed residence and better facilities, while upperclass males are not. Cannot prejudice also work against the chauvinist pig” (M&M Resident Cited Housing Inequalities 1972:3)?

Male students, like the ones quoted above, felt slighted that women received all of the attention from the administration. Although these quotes relate the particular views of

two students who blamed the University for catering to these inequalities, they represent shared feelings of the dominant male population.

Men would mock these “necessary items” requested by the women on campus by emphasizing how “men have been living [without them] for years” (Aadland 1972:3). This attitude fostered feelings of animosity and resentment among the student body, which damaged the social progress of the two populations on campus by creating further isolation. Male students bluntly expressed their feelings on the matter in 1973 when a “monumental” brick² with the caption: “1972-1974: Emery (nes) M&M A-3 Screwed Again” was displayed by “displaced” male M&M and Emery dwellers (*Epitome* 1974:255). This statement implies clear resentment of women for taking their residential space due to the increasing female student population and for receiving “special accommodations” that male students did not receive.

These reactions relate back to Kanter’s (1977) discussion of women rising to male superior status and the male resentment that follows. Although it was the Administration and not the women who made these housing decisions, male students expressed discontent with women and their willingness to accept these “gendered” benefits. Women never stopped to think why they should deny the good housing, just like any other group of college students, but men still reserved their “right” to resent these changes and their denial of privilege. Lehigh men felt that “women were supposed to be grateful for getting as far as they had” (Kanter 1977:229) and not press for additional “male” advantages. The women’s rise to power on Lehigh’s campus, through receiving

² See Photograph 2 located in “Tables and Photographs” on page 60.

this “special treatment,” threatened the male status quo and their social sphere on campus (Kanter 1977).

Some male students felt that women negatively affected their traditions and wrongly invaded on their campus territories. This phenomenon does not specifically relate to Kanter’s (1977) research, but parallels Thorne’s (1993) study of male and female student interaction while “at play,” as well as Michael Kimmel’s (2000) discussion of challenged masculinity. These combined analyses demonstrate male students’ need to express dominance over female tokens (Kanter 1977).

Another site of battle was the Air Force ROTC program. Men described women as “penetrating” and “invading” this masculine institution. Many men were confused as to *why* women would want to join the military, and often felt uncomfortable going through drills alongside female students. One male stated how,

It can be quite embarrassing to encounter a line of Lehigh men and have them jokingly snap to attention as a uniformed girl walks by. It is even worse for her to have some muscle man feel her biceps at every step along the way to class (End of tradition – coeds in AFROTC 1971:5).

The source of this discomfort could very well originate from the students’ lack of control. Within the military, as a total institution, all members are soldiers, rather than members of separate minority populations. Therefore, male students in AFROTC could not establish social boundaries to separate themselves from the female members. As the title of this newspaper article suggests, men felt that women’s admittance into the AFROTC program was an “end of tradition” and an unpreventable action decided upon by the Administration. As their own defense mechanism, men could only question the “normalcy” of women joining the military and describe them as overstepping their

bounds by penetrating a male tradition. This challenge relates to women's "double deviancy" as well as the notion of biological inferiority (Hyde 2004); the women were deviant for being in a male space and "incapable" soldiers due to their gender (Kanter 1977).

The female presence on campus threatened the maintenance of Lehigh's masculine environment, which Michael Kimmel (2000) also expresses in his research on women's admittance to the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) and the Citadel. In 1990, prior to women's admittance into these institutions, a lawsuit claimed that the state of Virginia and VMI wrongly discriminated against women and violated the 14th Amendment by maintaining these all-male military institutions. Despite this serious accusation, VMI "denied this charge and claimed that its unique educational methodology served vital state interests" (Kimmel 2000:495).

Rather than serving an actual purpose, VMI's protection of their all-male status was "less to do with women's educational opportunities and more to do with the making of men" (Kimmel 2000:496). Like Lehigh's example of the Marching '97, VMI students and administrators believed the male environment would crumble at the hands of female students and that "their very admission would transform the school into another institution" (Kimmel 2000:499). One Citadel administrator, also a VMI alumnus, stated, "women would be 'a toxic kind of virus' that would destroy the Citadel" (Kimmel 2000:502) if admitted. Similarly to the men in Thorne's (1993) research, men at VMI and the Citadel considered women to be a polluting force that could never benefit the all-male environment.

VMI and Citadel administrators questioned the “normalcy” of women joining the military and learning in such harsh conditions, as did the ROTC students at Lehigh. They held that women’s physical inferiority, their emotional tendencies, and deficient stress thresholds disqualified them from being good cadets. Kimmel (2000) states, “the school cited more than 100 physical differences that resulted in a ‘**natural** hierarchy’ between women and men, with men, of course, at the top” (2000:501 – Emphasis Added). Other institutions of higher education used these similar arguments to prevent the admittance of women, which based their conclusions on “inferior biological differences.” To assume that women need a more nurturing educational setting than men do demeans female learning capabilities and stereotypes women as weak and incapable individuals. Kimmel (2000:502) argues, “while it may be true that most women prefer such a supportive and nurturing educational environment, so too, actually, do most men.” Questioning normalcy, therefore, was a defense mechanism used by VMI and Citadel administrators to resist women and their “destroying” influence on their male institution.

Using another previously mentioned example, the Marching ’97 specifically banned women because it would *invade* on a male tradition; the one point, however, that students and certain faculty failed to realize was that the Marching ’97, as well as other male organizations, were traditionally male only because Lehigh was an all-male institution prior to 1971. One female student eloquently made this same connection by remarking how, “It has been said with some resentment that the girls have broken Lehigh’s traditions, but **I don’t consider being an all male institution a tradition.** All of the old traditions are continuing, Lehigh still plays Lafayette in football and kegs still

roll down the hill” (*Epitome* 1972:170 – Emphasis Added). Lehigh University had never had the option to integrate women in the past; therefore, with the addition of female students in 1971, change would inevitably occur in all sectors of the University

In a similar situation, male members of the Lehigh University Geology Club had a “rude awakening” described by this male student:

The fact of the matter is that girls are **infiltrating** many areas in the university community...The problem seems to be that while the club consisted only of men, apathy was seriously plaguing the organization – plaguing it to such an extent that only one pre-January member has attended a meeting to discover the club’s feminine addition...our mineral and map collections are being renovated by **attractive**, but nonetheless, **non-male, non-Lehigh students** [Muhlenberg and Cedar Crest women] (*Women liberate LU geology club* 1972:6 – Emphasis Added).

Men stopped going to the meetings, which led to a group of women taking over the maintenance of the club and its facilities in the geology department. In the statement above this male student implicitly blames the apathy of male students for the way in which women have “dominated” the club. It seems as though the “irresponsibility” of these male students had “allowed” women to rise to the same status as male students within this particular student organization. This was embarrassing to male students in the way that Kanter (1977) describes when she talks about how men can resent women who succeed without peer acceptance under “double deviancy.” This is also an example of a failed social boundary, one over which male students lost control (Kanter 1977).

Assimilation: Role Encapsulation and Status Leveling

The final effect of tokenism is “assimilation,” which involves the dominant population expecting most members of the token population to fulfill preconceived

stereotypes (Kanter 1977). The assumption that tokens will fill these “limited and caricatured roles” (Kanter 1977:230) oppresses the token population through performance pressure, but is largely helpful to the dominant population. For a dominant member, these expectations can help reduce any anxiety he has concerning the token’s unfamiliar nature by expecting all female tokens to fulfill “familiar” gender roles within the working world. Kanter (1977:231) stresses how “...tokens become encapsulated in limited roles that give them the security of a ‘place’ but constrain their areas of permissible or rewarded action.” For instance, in the working world, men are comfortable having women work as personal secretaries or nurses, but not CEOs or doctors. Although these professions, such as clerical or nursing, are “easy” roles to fulfill, in terms of social expectations, they also limit women from advancing into more professional career tracks alongside men. Ultimately, women in powerful roles, such as those of CEO or doctor, are threatening because they violate gender expectations, making their actions highly unpredictable (Kanter 1977).

Despite women’s success in a business or academic realm, dominant members still commit what is known as “status leveling” when they perceive women as lower class workers based simply on their token membership (Kanter 1977). In this case, dominant members adjust the “situational status” or working role of the token to be in line with the token’s social “master status” (Kanter 1977:231) as a female minority. As described by Kanter (1977), female sales managers were often mistaken for secretaries or even wives of salesmen within the working world. When completing work transactions in the presence of male coworkers and clients, women also “felt themselves to be treated in

more wife-like or date-like ways than a man would treat another man, even though the occasion was clearly professional” (Kanter 1977:231). Even if other coworkers or clients knew the woman’s work position, male equivalents treated her like an inferior minority because her gender status fulfilled an “unappreciated” role in society (Kanter 1977).

In addition to the assumptions made concerning women’s work, some female tokens actually fulfilled certain jobs designated as “women’s slots” (Kanter 1977:232), which perpetuated women’s role encapsulation. If promoted, male executives had female tokens work in replacement of other women in the company retiring from higher positions of authority, but they never filled a position traditionally held by a man (Kanter 1977). According to the dominant males, these job placements made sense because they were places “to put a woman” (Kanter 1977:232). On work committees, women were often put in charge of “female concerns” that gave “them the role in the group of ‘expert on women’” (Kanter 1977:233). These positions, whether voluntary or compulsory, trapped women in roles that prevented them from advancing within the company.

Men also gave women four specific “role trap” titles that stereotyped their roles within the office (Kanter 1977). The role of “mother” includes female figures who often comfort male officemates and who listen to their personal struggles outside of the work place due to females’ “natural” ability to nurture others. The “seductress” describes a sexually attractive woman who may or may not flirt in the office, but is either a “whore” or a source of resentment and jealousy if allied with a single male executive (Kanter 1977). Additionally, the seductress often receives “protection” from others in the work place, which can hinder her own abilities around the office. The “pet” describes women

who are “cute, amusing little thing[s]” (Kanter 1977:235) who often demonstrate complete admiration of the dominant male groups, but never seek to fully join them; they are publically commended over small tasks they accomplish as if the women were little girls trying to make a difference around the office (Kanter 1977). Lastly “iron maiden” is the term for strong women who seek the highest achievement around the office, and are “militant figures” whether or not their demeanor actually reflect this stereotype; due to their confident character, iron maidens often face isolation and abandonment in the office and fail to receive support from others when in need (Kanter 1977).

Role Encapsulation on Campus:

Female students on Lehigh’s campus faced ridicule and stereotypes created by the dominant male population. The most common stereotype during the first year of coeducation was the portrayal of female students as Women’s Liberation Activists. An English professor, who was against women joining the Marching ’97, stated, “...I should hate to see [the Marching ’97] tarnished to satisfy the quasi-sentimentality of a tin-eared ivory-tower verbal activist” (Greene 1971:3). Males implied that the women asking to join the marching band were liberal activists who simply wanted to cause mayhem and destroy a traditionally male group on Lehigh’s campus. Additionally, another article concerning the Turkey Trot of 1971 displayed a picture of a female participant with the following description: “This year...a new element was added when Women’s Lib invaded the race” (Serletis 1971:8). These articles suggest that women involved on

campus were outspoken liberating activists who invaded the comfortable male environment.

These portrayals demonstrate how dominant group members negatively stereotype token group members who challenge their assumed roles on campus (Kanter 1977). Rather than acting as “pets” and fitting the stereotype of passive students who add to the social fun of the University, the women asking for equal opportunity were “overly demanding” students like the “iron maiden” role trap. Female students rejected the passive roles suggested by male administrators, such as Dean Steck’s suggestion of walking the turkeys on leashes before the start of the race (*Epitome* 1972). Placing the “iron maiden” stereotype on these active women allowed men to resent the female tokens since they were irrational “activists” rather than “pet-like” students who knew their “place” in the University’s social scene (Kanter 1977).

Male students often questioned female motives for attending Lehigh University, which further stereotyped the roles that women served on campus. A common belief held by many male students was that women came to Lehigh for the sole purpose of becoming an engineer or *marrying* one (Participant #3 2009). Although it was surprising to some male students that women would want to study engineering, a predominantly “male” field of study, the male students also knew Lehigh was one of the best engineering schools in the United States that now admitted women. As expressed in the alumni interviews, male students often questioned why women wanted to come to the University, especially if they did not hope to pursue a career in engineering (Participant #3 & #4 2009).

If female non-engineering majors actually dated engineers, it validated men's assumptions that women worked toward finding a husband at Lehigh. By dating on campus, women seemed to fill the "pet" role by "depending" on men and not forcing their way into male privileges on campus. If women became too involved in the dating scene, however, they risked the role trap of "seductress" or "whore," which could lead to further social exploitation or resentment among other male students (Kanter 1977). This "role encapsulation confirms dominants' stereotypes and proves to them how right they were all along" (Kanter 1977:237). This kind of behavior heightened women's status as tokens on Lehigh's campus by increasing visible scrutiny and role trapping (Kanter 1977).

Additionally, several male students made generalizations concerning women's social life, and the other playful "pet" roles that women fulfill on campus. One male student made this remark summarizing female involvement:

...coeds spend most of their time gossiping. They talk about boyfriends and make up nicknames for the Lehigh males...The coeds increase their intellectual stimulation by watching 'The Secret Storm,' 'Days of our Lives,' and 'The Doctors' ... The girls are usually setting their hair, just hoping that that one special guy might call up and ask her out (Newman 1972:8).

Many men on campus perceived female leisure as pointless and pathetic, or thought that their ultimate enjoyment was dependent on securing dates with male students. In a manner similar to Kanter's (1977) "pet" role trap, women's social life was a source of humor for male students due to its "lame" premise. Additionally, some women felt pressured to date despite lacking a genuine interest. Kanter (1977:236) highlights how "it was...often easier to accept stereotyped roles than to fight them, even if their acceptance

meant limiting the tokens' range of expressions or demonstrations of task competence, because they offered a comfortable and certain position." If women actually lived this generalized existence, they could feel included in campus life, but such capitulation just served to justify the male notion that women depend on men (Kanter 1977) in order to enjoy themselves; this relationship of dependency directly feeds into a power dynamic controlled by the wants and desires of male students rather than those of women.

Women as Symbols: Adornments on Lehigh's Campus

In a corollary to this apparent "pet" role trap, some men also viewed women as adornments to campus life and the sexual social scene. This theme does not relate specifically to Kanter's (1977) theory, but significantly demonstrates how female students were social assets to the University who served for the benefit of male students. This relates back to the original intent of admitting women to Lehigh in order to increase the rate of male applicants (Forcier 2004) because women, presumably, would improve the social atmosphere on campus. Concerning the adornment of women, a male student wrote the following description of female students who attended the annual Dink Hop Dance:

Many girls were standing around looking awfully bored, and a lot of guys were milling about doing a lot of **'looking over.'** There seemed to be **a girl to fit just about anybody's taste**, and if a freshman wasn't able to **pick up a date** at the Hop then he simply didn't try...It looks like coeducation will bring about **desirable changes in the social habits of the freshmen**...girls were given **the freedom** to leave unescorted, most left with dates...there were many girls who wanted to know why they were **ushered in like cattle** and if their true purpose for being there was to relieve 1000 guys of their **sexual tensions** (Boland 1971:6 - Emphasis Added).

This passage suggests how male students objectified women by perceiving them as merchandise rather than friends or colleagues. According to many students, the addition of women to Lehigh's campus tarnished certain male traditions, but the men also saw how female students relieved their male sexual tensions (Boland 1971) and frustrations with the women at Cedar Crest College. Even the faculty would joke about the advantages of having women on campus. One professor, for example, used the argument that women should play in the Marching '97 so that men could enjoy their "new curvature when viewed from the front, the side, or behind" (Greenleaf-Schutz 1971:3). Although this professor promoted female involvement on campus, he did so in a manner that objectified them; he implied that women are objects for men's sexual enjoyment and mere adornments to the campus.

These depictions demonstrate how women become "symbols and representatives" of their population rather than being valued as individual students or professionals (Kanter 1977:215). Women were weak, sexually available "pets" and "seductresses" or aggressive and radically driven feminists, such as Kanter's (1977) "iron maiden" role trap. Regardless of which role trap the women fulfilled, these "slots" limited their ability to prosper at the University because their adornment status prevented their recognition as successful students (Kanter 1977).

Male students and faculty constantly remarked on the physical attractiveness of women, which they felt improved the social outlook of the University. As one Lehigh senior suggested, "'women should be made to 'wear dresses and go braless' to **improve the looks of the campus**" (*Epitome* 1975:4 – Emphasis Added). Even Dean Missimer,

the Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, commented how “The only difference...in the admissions procedure is that **‘the girls are more pleasant to look at...’** (*Epitome* 1973:94 – Emphasis Added) than the male candidates. These comments imply that women were useful in making the University student population more attractive for the dominant males. Although it was “stated that [the women] were admitted based on their ‘qualifications, not their sex’” (*Epitome* 1973:94), men were not subjected to similar comments made by other students or Lehigh officials (Kanter 1977).

Conclusions:

Through these countless examples, it is clear that female students on Lehigh’s campus were a signature token population that suffered from high visibility, exaggeration of gender differences, and social stereotyping similar to that found by Kanter’s (1977) research in the workplace. By the end of 1972, “Coeducation [was still] a shock which the University ha[d] not...recovered from” (*Epitome* 1972:166). The administration and student body had considered only a minority of the structural and social changes that were required around campus in order to accommodate the new female students, which created a challenging transition. The true “experiment” of coeducation was not how capable female students were in the classroom, but how male students would accept them into the social spheres of campus. By using Kanter’s (1977) theories, as well as the archival findings from *The Brown & White*, *Epitome* yearbooks, and alumni interviews, we can better understand the experiences of women at Lehigh during those early years.

Female students at Lehigh University served their role as tokens by directly benefitting the male student experience and the University as a whole. This purposeful function was the ultimate role trap that framed Lehigh women as “symbols or representatives” rather than respected, intelligent students (Kanter 1977:215). In a note written by President W.D. Lewis (1970:4), he states, “My own loyalty is to Lehigh and not to coeducation. I favor coeducation only because I see in it in today’s world a more realistic means of achieving what we have all been working for [to become a ‘true university.’” This statement demonstrates the original intentions for making the coeducational transition, which do not include equal opportunity between male and female students. Introducing coeducation *would* increase opportunities of higher learning for women, but this was not the main consideration for Lehigh to open its doors to undergraduate women (Forcier 2004).

Concerning student life, the descriptions of women’s success at “rejuvenat[ing]” (*Epitome* 1972:108) and improving the “spirit” on campus, made women seem more like vehicles for improving the life of men, rather than acting in their own benefit as women on campus. This is a similar extension of the cult of domesticity where women take on the stereotypical role as a “haven in a heartless world.” The women transformed Lehigh from a stale all-male climate to a dynamic environment where men could enjoy physically proximity to attractive female students and reap the benefits from improved academic programs anticipated after the start of coeducation (Forcier 2004).

Several years later, administrators were still searching for effective means to assimilate the female student body. In addition to creating female traditions on campus, Dean Hurley, among other women, realized that student interaction outside of the Hill was not “natural” and largely forced in many ways. As reported in the *Epitome* 1973:178) yearbook, “Getting to know the coeds seems to be the biggest stumbling block as far as men are concerned. Dean Hurley suggests that the men take the initiative in order that the Lehigh’s whole social atmosphere be improved.” As the dominant social group, men needed to take the first steps to dismantle their own manly institutions and make the campus more welcoming to the newly admitted female classes. Administrators suggested they invite women up to dinner at the fraternity houses, improve the freshmen orientation program, and create more coed organizations on campus in order to establish a starting point for positive student interaction outside of the Hill (*Epitome* 1973).

Although these seemed like pioneering ideas, interaction remained unnatural and “weird” between male and female students (Participant #4 2009). It seemed that in order to create more peer acceptance in the years to come, Lehigh would need a higher admission rate of women in order to transform the skewed student population to a tilted or balanced model (Kanter 1977). One male student stated that, “only a one-to-one ratio would solve the social problem at Lehigh, and that the students should force the administration to accept more women just as they had forced the administration to accept the first woman” (*Epitome* 1973:170, 172). This notion rests solidly on Kanter’s (1977:207) theory that “as proportions begin to shift, so do social experience.” There were simply too few women on campus in order to create any sense of solidarity despite

Dean Hurley's initiatives to involve women on campus and improvements seen in women's athletics. Women were simply "squeezed into a male campus" (Participant #3 2009) by the administration with little regard to ensuring integration in both academic and social spheres.

Today, Lehigh University has a male to female ratio of 57:43 (Undergraduate - 10th Day Census Spring 2009), which is a great improvement since the beginning of coeducation. However, when looking at the current gender ratios at other institutions that became coed during the late 1960s and early 1970s, Lehigh's student population is still abnormal. Most of the Universities that adopted coeducation around the same time as Lehigh boast ratios that are either completely balanced or even tilted to the opposite side of the spectrum. For example, Princeton University (2009) boasts a 50:50 ratio, while Boston College (2009) has more women than men, with a ratio of 47:53. Nationally, female students outnumber men, filling 58% of undergraduate positions at colleges and universities, which was a trend that began in the late 1980s (Wilson 2007). Now, some universities report how women "dominate" the classroom and how they "tend to be getting [the universities'] academic prizes and fellowships" (Wilson 2007:6), which deprive male students of opportunity and privilege.

Considering these numbers, what is it that keeps Lehigh University behind the national trend? Does the mere presence of the engineering department skew the population? Is it Lehigh's image, as a traditionally all-male school, that affects the gender ratio? These may be explanations for Lehigh, but other traditionally male

schools, such as Yale University, University of Virginia, and Dartmouth College also have engineering departments, and retain balanced gender ratios. This area clearly needs more research in order to determine the causal factor that explains why fewer women attend Lehigh University after 38 years of coeducation. It is important to note, that despite these lower gender populations, Lehigh women today, and alumni from the first years of coeducation, enjoyed their time at Lehigh University. Female students belonging to the Class of 1975 were, undoubtedly, a tokenized population, but many remain actively involved with University affairs and are proud to have paved the way for current female students today.

Tables and Photographs

Table 1: Male and Female Enrollment Statistics for Undergraduate Students, Fall 1971 – Spring 1975

(Lehigh University Office of the Registrar 1971, 1972a;b, 1973, 1974a;b;c, 1975)

Academic Semester	Male Population	Female Population	Total Student Population	% of Female Population
Fall 1971	3,299	169	3,468	4.9
Spring 1972	3,162	205	3,367	6.1
Fall 1972	3,288	362	3,650	9.9
Spring 1973	3,193	344	3,537	9.7
Fall 1973	3,432	530	3,962	13.4
Spring 1974	3,234	530	3,764	14.1
Fall 1974	3,324	714	4,038	17.7
Spring 1975	3,220	689	3,909	17.6

Photograph 1: Lehigh Male Displaying Dravonian Banner: “THAT TIME OF THE MONTH FOR THE PUSSY TO BLEED_{PERIOD}” (*Epitome* 1974:23)

Photograph 2: Brick Displayed by Displaced Male M&M and Emery Residents (*Epitome* 1974:255)

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