

## APPENDIX B. THE ADMISSION OF WOMEN

*The following remarks were made by the president of the Board Trustees, Mr. Ralph K. Gottshall, at its June 27, 1969 meeting, when the admission of women was approved. (Minutes of the Board of Trustees June 17, 1969, pp. 2160-2161)*

I share with you the desire to have the matter studied objectively, the matter shared with alumni, and the matter given sound and sensible review even under difficult circumstances. I think we have now reached the point where a decision should be made.

You know that I love Lafayette. I loved the College as a student and I have loved it through the years. And during all of that time Lafayette has been a men's college. I am sentimental about that feature of the College and about many other features. And I am certain that you know there is no one who can be more sentimental and more anxious to hold onto fine old traditions than *this* Pennsylvania Dutchman.

But during my career as a business man I have learned to put *personal feelings* apart and to act on the basis of facts of what I believed was best for my company. When *change proved better* than the old ways, we changed. And when the old ways proved better than the new, we continued as we were. So I think we must now put personal feelings aside in regard to Lafayette and reach a decision in the same way that we make decisions in business and professional life. We must act on behalf of the long-range interests of the College and respond with an answer that will allow Lafayette College to continue as one of the best colleges in the country.

As trustees, we must be concerned about a Lafayette that meets the needs of the future. It may be a surprise to you that I have thought for a number of years that Lafayette College should eventually become co-ed. I had planned to present this proposal at the proper time—the faculty action hastened my thinking.

Therefore, gentlemen, having weighed all the evidence and having considered as well the alternatives open to us I have come to the conclusion that it is important for us to approve the recommendation that women be admitted to the degree programs at Lafayette College. I have a number of reasons for feeling as I do.

1. If the objective of Lafayette College is to be excellence—both in terms of intellectual growth and personal development—then I believe the College has a moral commitment to society to strive for excellence without regard to sex. Lafayette College has always adjusted to make its educational experience suited to the society which it serves. Since the role of women in that society is changing at an ever-increasing pace, it seems appropriate that we now change Lafayette to reflect the world in which we live. Those of us who are alumni look back at our years at Lafayette as a truly great experience. I would like to think my grandchildren, whether boy or girl, could enjoy that same experience. I believe a vast majority of our alumni would like to see their children go to Lafayette, whether son or daughter.

2. The records show that there is an increasing number of men who prefer not to attend an all male college. To me this means if Lafayette does not go co-ed it will have an extremely small market to draw from and eventually would experience a decline in the average quality of its students. Lafayette has gained prestige because of its academic excellence and we cannot afford to have a let-down.

3. I was also interested in Table 3 of the Alumni Poll which indicates that the majority of educators among our alumni who returned the questionnaire agree with the recommendation of our faculty. This indicates to me that the education of men and women together is commonly accepted as preferable by those whose profession is education and it indicates further our faculty resolution was not simply an attempt to copy other prestigious institutions. This fact indicates the academic community at large support co-education.

4. I must also say that I have not really heard good educational reasons why we should remain all male. Most of the argument is based on tradition and a natural reluctance to avoid what appears to be the bandwagon. But even those who favor remaining all male cannot argue that it is educationally desirable for young men to have a period of maturation apart from women. Those of you who have children know what I mean.

Reverting to the co-ed bandwagon, I hold no brief for those who feel Lafayette should go co-ed because other schools are doing it. However, the study of the reasons for going co-ed has been enlightening.

5. The matter of increased costs is given as a reason to delay co-education or remain an all male college. Admittedly it is going to cost more money to admit women—for Model C-1960 the additional costs are \$840,000 over a period of 9 years and is not a major consideration. The other models are more expensive. If the decision is to go co-ed, the administration must be charged with the responsibility of a program which would minimize the additional costs and the proposed program approved by the Board. But I also think there are some practical reasons why we must make the decision to admit women. I am frank to admit that in many ways I think we are "boxed in." What I now have to say relates to the 24M Campaign. I have asked Gary Evans, Vice President for Development, for his opinions. The following reflects his and my collective thinking.



- a. If we decide not to admit women at this time or defer action, it is unlikely that we can reconsider the matter for at least 5 or 6 years. You know that the "On Lafayette" campaign has already been interrupted. In fact, the faculty has blitzed our campaign, through their introduction of the co-ed recommendation. But let's face it—the recommendation has been made and we must reply.

It is important that we start the campaign going again and keep it going without further interruption. This means that any decision we make now must stand until the campaign is completed. We might begin to slip educationally and academically within the next few years. But we would be unable to do anything about it until 1974 or 1975 because of the "On Lafayette" campaign. If Lafayette suffers in quality at a time when its costs are increasing and state-supported institutions are more and more acceptable to students and parents, the College may lose ground that will nearly be impossible to recover.

- b. There is a second practical consideration with regard to the "On Lafayette" campaign. While it is quite possible that a decision to admit women might have an *adverse* effect on the campaign, I think it is also possible that the decision not to admit women would have an even greater adverse effect. If we indicate to the faculty and students that we decided not to admit women because of our present priorities and commitment to fund raising, these groups may well call for a re-examination of these priorities. They may ask for reasons why we place fraternity construction, a bookstore, and dormitories, as well as athletic facilities ahead of something they have recommended for educational reasons. As Trustees of an educational institution, we give great weight to the opinions of educators.

Therefore, gentlemen, I conclude that the admission of women to Lafayette College is necessary. The key to my thinking is that our role in society is better filled if our doors are open to all students. We should try to be the kind of institution that young people today consider exciting and meaningful and relevant. Because a decision not to admit women carries with it the possibility of serious consequences for our educational quality and our capital campaign, I think that the trustees of Lafayette College must vote to approve the recommendation of the faculty to admit women to the College. Therefore, we must begin immediately to consider the time and manner in which this should be done so that this decision can fulfill our primary responsibility to move Lafayette College forward.