Beyond Bow Ties

Analysis of Washington and Lee University’s Coeducation Decision
Beyond Bow Ties

Melissa Coggins ’16 | Kelsey Cotter ’14
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Background

Coeducation
1888 ⇝ 1970s
Falling Academics Trend Among Peers
President Wilson
The Problem
Not Central
Not Easily Accessible
Why Coeducation
Understand success through controversy
Centralize disparate information

Create a database to reflect on and learn from the coeducation decision
Goals
Short & Long Term
Short-Term (Course) Goals

- Acquire Skills
- Scalable Model
- Recover Knowledge
Long-Term Goals

☐ Academic Resource
☐ Comprehensive
☐ Inspire Other Projects
Questions
Coeducation
Question 1
How did the coeducation decision affect social and academic environments in the years preceding and following implementation on the Washington and Lee University campus?
Question 2

How can our research, collaborative ideas, and use of technology reveal an important aspect of Washington and Lee’s history that can be used to better address difficulties in the future?
Hypotheses
Coeducation
Hypothesis 1
The greatest proportional dissent to coeducation was from alumni residing in the Southern states.
Hypothesis 2
Survey data will reveal that support for coeducation was substantial, despite outspoken dissent in published media.
Hypothesis 3

Text analysis of the Ring-tum Phi will show that coeducation was the leading issue during the years 1984, 1985, and 1986.
Methodology

Coeducation
Demo

What we’ve found
Questions in Review

Coeducation
Question 1

How did the coeducation decision affect social and academic environments in the years preceding and following implementation on the Washington and Lee University campus?
Answer to Question 1

Incited Discussion
Cirrus Revealed
President Wilson
Students Vocal
Overshadowed Quiet Minority
Question 2

How can our research, collaborative ideas, and use of technology reveal an important aspect of Washington and Lee’s history that can be used to better address difficulties in the future?
Digital Humanities?

A Collaborative Project

Curated & Built for Interpretation

Multi-Disciplinary/Professional

Digitized & Born-Digital
Answer to Question 2

DH Allows Broad Scope
Project Accessible
Permanent
Hypotheses in Review

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Document
W&L’s History
Moving Forward
W&L Alumni Affairs
Special Collections
Future DH Classes
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