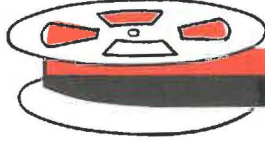


# NEWS from Bennington College

BENNINGTON, VERMONT



COLLEGE NEWS BUREAU / PHONE 802 442-5401 / EXTENSION 247

For Release October 3, 4:00 p.m.

Bennington, Vt.—Bennington College, established for women in 1932, announced today that it would immediately begin to accept applications from men, because, in the words of its president, "we can no longer reasonably continue to deprive men of the unique educational opportunity Bennington provides."

Edward J. Bloustein, Bennington's president, said today that the College plans to become fully coeducational, and that men's applications for admission would be considered equally with women's. He noted that students, faculty and administration had voted overwhelmingly in favor of the change in a recent referendum. The Board of Trustees approved, and a great majority of alumnae expressed approval.

At least thirty male students will be accepted for September of next year. After that, Mr. Bloustein said, men would be accepted on the basis of qualification, with no quota now envisioned. The question of eventual parity between men and women students has not yet been decided by the College. The College in southwestern Vermont, which now enrolls 500 students, has been predominantly a women's college.

He noted that college-age men are increasingly eager to use college as a time of exploration and investigation. "In the past," he said, "men thought of college as preparation for careers. Now there is a greater tendency to extend the educational process beyond the four undergraduate years so that strict occupational training can wait for

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2

graduate school. Bennington's emphasis on educational self-direction is suited to the contemporary student's demand for individual responsibility, regardless of sex."

Other reasons cited by Mr. Bloustein were that "most of our students now come to us despite the fact we are a women's college rather than because of it," and that "the feeling has grown, in contemporary life, that a campus and classrooms without men are an educational liability." He added also that "the age at which young women begin to socialize has undergone a radical shift in recent years."

He noted that in the past few years the number of unsolicited applications to Bennington from men dissatisfied with more traditional institutions has increased ten-fold. "We almost feel as though we're practicing male discrimination," he said.

Miss Rebecca B. Stickney, the College's Director of Admissions, said she anticipates little trouble in finding qualified male applicants. She said that in recent years the Admissions Office has received and by necessity refused a great many applications from men.

Bennington has traditionally accepted a very limited number of male students, usually as special students in the dance and drama departments. There have rarely been more than a dozen at a time, and only about 20% of them have actually received AB degrees from Bennington.