

**University Women: Origins, Experiences  
and Destinations at Glasgow University  
1939-1987**

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## Abstract

This study examines the position of female students at Glasgow University during its most recent phase of growth - from 1939 to 1987. The post-war era saw a great expansion in the provision of university places in Britain, fuelled by student demand and government policy; increased demand from female students was perhaps the outstanding development in the pattern of university growth from c1960. Glasgow University reflected this pattern, but there were distinctive aspects to the female student experience there which stemmed from the University's historic role as a non-residential institution. The University drew the majority of its students from the local region and fed them into careers which were often also in the local area. Glasgow, to a greater extent than many other British universities, provided education and training for its own region and played a distinctive role in the production of a West of Scotland elite.

The thesis examines how the University's traditional role shaped the educational and social experiences, as well as career choices, of its female students, but it places their experiences within the context of developments at British universities generally. This highlights the fact that trends at Glasgow were usually similar to patterns of behaviour elsewhere, but experienced with a particular local colour. Comparisons with other British universities are also supplemented by comparisons with male students, to indicate how far gender affected university experiences.

The study presents both a qualitative and quantitative analysis of women's experiences, using a wide variety of source material. Statistics produced by the University are supplemented by material gathered from a postal questionnaire. This questionnaire was sent to a sample of both male and female graduates from the 1940s to the 1980s and provides quantitative statistical material as well as qualitative reminiscences. Archival material, published sources and interviews are also used extensively.

The thesis begins by setting out the pattern of student growth at the University from 1939 and indicates in which subject areas and for which reasons growth took place in numbers of female students. The impact of local and national economic and social factors, demographic factors and the role of government secondary and tertiary education policy are examined and their effects on student numbers assessed. It is shown how a shifting combination of these factors at first produced virtual stagnation in the proportion of female students at the University 1939-c1960, but then sustained impressive growth from the 1960s onwards, when the female growth rate far outstripped that of male students.

The growth in female numbers at the University had implications for student origins and the second theme to be examined concerns what impact the expansion had on the geographical, school and social backgrounds of Glasgow's women. Evidence from the questionnaire, which asked graduates which school they had been to, what their father's occupation was and where they were living when they came to the University, is used to examine to what extent the origins of female students

changed in the post-war period, and gender differences and comparisons with the rest of Britain are also detailed.

The thesis then considers the University experiences of Glasgow's women. This reveals how the existence of a largely home-based student population could cause problems in terms of engendering a 'corporate life' within the University. Nonetheless, it is shown that there were strong student traditions and customs shaped by factors such as the rivalry and fierce independence of the male and female student unions and the vibrant student debating tradition. The chapter emphasises the University's role as a social institution and, using archival sources (especially evidence from the student press and from the questionnaires and interviews), the changing nature of the student experience is explored. The gradual breaking down of patterns of institutional and formal segregation is examined, as is the greater role in student life which women came to play. A separate chapter deals exclusively with the theme of student politics and indicates how the traditions of the University, as well as the large local population, produced a distinctive and often conservative response to national and international political events.

Finally, graduate careers are considered. Using a combination of questionnaire responses, University-produced statistics and University Grants Committee figures, female graduate employment patterns in Glasgow are explored and the impact of local economic and social factors assessed. Again comparisons with male Glasgow students and with graduate employment trends in Britain are drawn to highlight to what extent employment trends for Glasgow's women were similar to, or differed from, trends in graduate employment generally.

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## Introduction

The history of education in the twentieth century is often summed up as a steady progression towards increasing the level of educational attainment of the population. Landmarks such as the 1944 Education Act (secondary education) and the 1963 Robbins Report (higher education) clearly sought to expand educational opportunity. For example, the Robbins Report started out from the premise that “courses of higher education should be available for all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them.”<sup>1</sup> Many historians of the post-war education system have therefore focused on how far these reforms actually expanded educational opportunity for all social groups in society. In particular, the reforms have been examined for their impact upon the life chances of less well-off children. In most cases these measures have been found wanting.<sup>2</sup> Analysis of the educational reforms has also formed an essential part of the social mobility studies of sociologists such as Glass and Goldthorpe, where equality of opportunity in education has been seen as an important aspect of upward social mobility.<sup>3</sup>

These discussions of educational equality and social mobility are essentially *male* discussions with little reference to women despite the overdue but now

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Committee on *Higher Education*, chaired by Lord Robbins (London, 1963), Cmnd. 2154.

<sup>2</sup> See for example Roy Lowe, *Education in the Post-war Years: A Social Survey* (London, 1988), p. 93-113 for an analysis of educational opportunity in the post-1944 education system; A.H. Halsey, A.F. Heath & J.M. Ridge, *Origins and Destinations* (Oxford, 1980), p. 213 for comprehensive schooling, and R.D. Anderson, *Universities and Elites in Britain Since 1800* (London, 1992), p. 62, for the university system.

<sup>3</sup> D.V. Glass (ed.), *Social Mobility in Britain* (London, 1954), John Goldthorpe, *Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain* (Oxford, 1987), J.E. Floud, (ed.), *Social Class and Educational Opportunity* (Connecticut, 1973), Guy Neave, *Patterns of Equality* (Kent, 1976).

considerable surge of interest in women's history.<sup>4</sup> For adequate treatment of gender issues in education, one has to turn away from the mainstream literature to books specifically about women. These works on women in education approach the theme of educational opportunity from a different angle, seeing equality not just as a question of social class but also as a question of gender. Much of this research concentrates on girls' schooling and within this context deals with issues such as problems of sex-stereotyping, the sociological causes of under-achievement and why girls avoid science subjects.<sup>5</sup> At the higher education level, the theme of gender inequality in the post-war education system has received less attention.

The few good studies in the field emphasise three points: the concentration of female students in teacher training colleges or university Arts Faculties; the smaller overall number and proportion of women within the university sector compared to men (until very recently); and the comparatively small number of women academics and their concentration in the lower ranks of academia.<sup>6</sup> However, these studies also highlight quantitative improvement. Taking the university sector, whilst in 1939 there were 10,896 female students (25% of the total British student population), in 1989 there were 143,096 (43%). As for female academics, their proportion in the university sector rose from under 10% in the 1960s to about 20% in 1989. The

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<sup>4</sup> For a criticism of the lack of female representation in these social mobility studies, see Sara Delamont, *Knowledgeable Women Structuralism and the Reproduction of Elites* (London, 1989).

<sup>5</sup> See for example, Rosemary Deem (ed.) *Schooling for Women's Work* (London, 1980); E.M. Byrne, *Equality of Education and Training for Girls*, (Luxembourg, 1979); J. Fewell and F. Paterson, *Girls in Their Prime: Scottish Education Revisited* (Edinburgh, 1990).

<sup>6</sup> S. Acker, *Is Higher Education Fair To Women?* (Guildford, 1984); Shirley Cunningham, "Women's Access to Higher Education in Scotland," in *Women and Education*, S. Acker (ed.), (London, 1984); Jennifer Jones and Josephine Castle, "Women in UK Universities 1920-1980," *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1986.

distribution of female students across university faculties has also become far less arts-centred. However, this improvement in the quantitative position of women in higher education since the war only really began in the 1960s, and here the 1963 Robbins Report, with its assumption of male/female equality, was particularly crucial. As Jane Lewis has noted, “whereas in 1948 blue-prints for girls’ education advocated a separate curriculum grounded in domestic subjects, as conservative as any advocated during the early part of the century, the 1963 Robbins Report on higher education stressed the need to provide equal opportunities.”<sup>7</sup> Robbins legitimised the continued expansion of the higher education system and, with the increased availability of university places, coupled with more girls staying on to the maximum school leaving age, a large-scale shift by women from teacher training colleges to universities occurred.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, A.H. Halsey, in his review of the higher education system in *British Social Trends Since 1900*, sees women as one of the most important expanding areas of the higher education system since Robbins. He notes that:

“summing up the post-Robbins period it may be said that within the framework of expansion, the main feature has not been the growth of full time male undergraduates reading science or technology in universities. The really spectacular growth has been of women studying the arts and humanities or part time students in public sector colleges and at the Open University.”<sup>9</sup>

Many histories of higher education - and more specifically of universities, which is what this thesis will concern itself with - do not go beyond documenting the

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<sup>7</sup> Jane Lewis, *Women in Britain Since 1945* (Oxford, 1992), p.87.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

expansion in numbers of women, and fail to analyse the *type* of women who made up this expanded intake. Were the women who went to university in the 1940s similar in social, school and geographical backgrounds to those who did so in the 1980s? And were they similar in their aspirations and in the kinds of careers they took up after graduation? It is also important to remember that the growth in female student numbers had implications not just for women's equality, but also for the *qualitative* experience of women's university education. For example, to be a female student in a university in 1950 where perhaps four fifths of the students were male, must have been a different experience from university life in the 1980s, with a more or less equal split of the sexes, and a much larger overall student population. Universities are social institutions, and a full analysis of women at university must take into account their lifestyles and social experiences; this allows us to put flesh on the bare bones of matriculation and graduation figures and highlights the importance of adding qualitative analysis to any quantitative investigation.

The need to capture and reflect important changes in the type of student going to university leads us towards a student-centred, case study approach which will allow detailed exploration of the themes outlined. Studies which deal with the position of women in the British university sector as a whole necessarily involve generalisations which do not reflect the variety of experience at different institutions. Meanwhile histories of particular institutions which provide insights into local variations in the pattern of university change and development, tend to obscure the

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<sup>9</sup> A.H. Halsey, *British Social Trends Since 1900* (London, 1988), p. 278.

student experience through their focus on institutional aspects.<sup>10</sup> A case study which places students and graduates at the heart of the story permits in-depth analysis and detailed consideration of a range of themes, and allows the expanding role and importance of women to be viewed within the context of a particular institution and region.

There are several works which have examined the place of women at university from the perspective of a student-centred approach, for example the works by C. Dyhouse,<sup>11</sup> L. Moore,<sup>12</sup> J. Gibert,<sup>13</sup> S. Hamilton<sup>14</sup> and M. Tylecote.<sup>15</sup> Most of these studies have dealt with a single institution.<sup>16</sup> However, they are all pre-Second World War, so are not concerned with the most recent and expansive phase in women's higher education. There are a few studies which cover the post-war years - notably P. Griffin,<sup>17</sup> J. Mellanby<sup>18</sup> J. Howarth<sup>19</sup> and P. Adams.<sup>20</sup> Several of these

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<sup>10</sup> Examples of institutional histories are Ernest Marsden Bettenson, *The University of Newcastle upon Tyne: a Historical Introduction, 1834-1971* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1971); Roger Blin-Stoyle in association with Geoff Ivey, *The Sussex Opportunity: a new University and the Future* (Brighton, 1986); Christopher N.L. Brooke, *A History of the University of Cambridge, Vol. 4 1870-1990* (Cambridge, 1993); Ronald G. Cant, *The University of St. Andrews: A Short History* (St. Andrews, 1992); Thomas Kelly, *For Advancement of Learning the University of Liverpool 1881-1981* (Liverpool, 1981); Donald George Southgate, *University Education in Dundee: A Centenary History* (Edinburgh, c1982).

<sup>11</sup> Carol Dyhouse, *No Distinction of Sex?: women in British universities, 1870-1939* (London, 1995).

<sup>12</sup> Lindy Moore, *Bajanellas and Semilinas: Aberdeen University and the Education of Women, 1860-1920* (Aberdeen, 1991).

<sup>13</sup> Julie S. Gibert, *Women at the English Civic Universities 1880-1920* (PhD thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1988).

<sup>14</sup> Sheila Hamilton, *Women and the Scottish Universities c1869-1939: a Social History* (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1987).

<sup>15</sup> Mabel Tylecote, *The Education of Women at Manchester University, 1883-1933* (Manchester, 1941).

<sup>16</sup> Except Dyhouse, who is essentially concerned with non-Oxbridge civic universities, such as Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester and University College London.

<sup>17</sup> Penny Griffin (ed.), *St. Hugh's: One Hundred Years of Women's Education in Oxford* (Hampshire, 1986).



studies do incorporate a student-centred approach that goes beyond institutional history, but they are all English studies and, more specifically, studies of Oxford colleges. No in-depth study of women has been made at any of the Scottish universities for the post-war period. Therefore there is a need to redress the balance to consider the place of women in the modern Scottish university, the top rung of an education system which has long differed in many ways from the English education system.

At the time of the Second World War, there were four Scottish universities – Aberdeen, St. Andrews Edinburgh and Glasgow. Of these, the decision was made to focus on Glasgow as a case study. A large, historic (founded 1451) urban university, Glasgow was the most locally-rooted of the four ancient Scottish universities and therefore provides an excellent study of a university’s impact upon a particular region, with most of its students coming from the West of Scotland and many remaining in the area after graduation to take up their careers locally. As R.D. Anderson has observed, Glasgow achieved a dominance in its own geographical area unlike many of the English civic universities.<sup>21</sup> The University also has a rich student life and rich traditions, which are apparent, for example, in its proud debating tradition and its distinctive male and female unions, with their different

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<sup>18</sup> Jane Mellanby, *The St Hilda's College Centenary Symposium: A Celebration of the Education of Women* (Oxford, 1993).

<sup>19</sup> Janet Howarth, “Women” in *The History of the University of Oxford Volume 8*, edited by Brian Harrison (Oxford, 1994).

<sup>20</sup> Pauline Adams, *Somerville for Women: An Oxford College 1879-1993* (Oxford, 1996).

<sup>21</sup> R.D. Anderson (1992) op. cit. Anderson notes that whilst the English civic universities were overshadowed by Oxbridge, this was not the case in Ireland and Scotland: “Universities like Aberdeen, Glasgow or Belfast established a dominance in training the professional and business leaders of their regions never quite achieved by the English civics,” p. 29.

atmospheres and jealously guarded independence. The University also has a wider social mix than many universities.<sup>22</sup>

The approach taken is to examine Glasgow University as a social, and indeed socialising, institution during the period of rapid twentieth century expansion. The focus is on women's experiences but their experiences are compared throughout with those of their male colleagues and, where appropriate, with other Scottish and British universities. In this way it is possible to monitor to what extent the experiences of female students were distinct from, or similar to, those of male students and also to examine how the local articulation of women's experiences in Glasgow reflected or differed from broader Scottish and British trends. This involves an assessment of the impact of particular historical and cultural factors at work within the University and the West of Scotland region.

The intention is to provide a rounded picture of the female student experience. This entails examining the social, school and geographical backgrounds of women students, the nature of their social and academic experiences whilst at university, and their subsequent career choices.<sup>23</sup> All this is done for the timespan 1939-1987, incorporating the most expansive phase of growth in the university sector. The

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<sup>22</sup> R.D. Anderson has shown that as early as 1912, 37% of Glasgow's students came from manual working class backgrounds; *Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland* (Oxford, 1983), p. 316.

<sup>23</sup> Time constraints precluded any in-depth study of female staff, a subject on which there has, in any case, been more research recently. For example, M. Rendel, "How many Women Academics, 1912-1976?" in Rosemary Deem (ed.), op. cit.; R. Szreter "Opportunities for Women as University Teachers in England since the Robbins Report of 1963," in *Studies in Higher Education*, 1983, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 139-150; Margherita Rendel, "Women Academics in the Seventies," in S. Acker and D. Warren Piper (ed.), *Is Higher Education Fair to Women?* (Surrey, 1984); E. Kelly, *Women's Careers as Students and Academics*, unpublished seminar paper (Glasgow University, 1995).

outbreak of the Second World War is chosen as the starting point because of the interesting impact the war years had upon the University, particularly in view of the altered gender balance in these years. The finishing year of 1987 forms a logical end in political terms.<sup>24</sup>

In methodological terms, a short questionnaire has been distributed to a sample of female (and male, for comparative purposes) graduates from the 1940s to the 1980s across all faculties.<sup>25</sup> The advantages of a questionnaire approach are numerous. In many cases official university records fall short in some way, either through being compiled for only part of time period under investigation, or through not providing separate male and female statistics. In addition, what a survey allows which official statistics do not, is the ability to chart relationships between variables - for example, social background mapped against degree subject or age of marriage against year of graduation and so forth. The questionnaire also allows questions to be asked which no official statistics cover - for instance, questions regarding club membership and involvement in student life. The provision of an open-ended section at the end gave graduates the opportunity to tell their particular story. These anecdotal responses were of immense value in shedding light on individual

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<sup>24</sup> The Thatcher years are worthy of study because they resulted in a particularly painful squeeze of the university system; 1987 was the year the third Thatcher government came to power, by which time the Tory policies towards higher education had already had a significant effect and the impact on the university sector was clear. In addition, 1987 is the year the old University Grants Committee was scrapped. (The UGC had been created in 1919; it was replaced by the Universities Funding Council and, subsequently, after the abolition of the 'binary divide,' by the higher education funding councils for Scotland, England and Wales).

<sup>25</sup> See Appendix for details of the questionnaire. Information from the questionnaire was entered into a database, referred to throughout the thesis as the Graduate Database.

experiences of the University as a social institution and in gaining insights into the impact the University had on career choices.

The questionnaire approach has proved to be invaluable in this particular project, and is supplemented by a wide variety of archival material - everything from the minutes of the University Court and Senate to student newspapers and magazines - as well as official university and University Grants Committee (UGC) statistics and interviews.

The organisation of the thesis reflects a thematic rather than a chronological approach, but with each theme examined in relation to changes over time. And as already noted, the major themes explored are the origins, university experiences and subsequent careers of the female student body at Glasgow, with the findings supplemented by comparative references to men and by frequent comparative references to other British universities.

An initial chapter presents the basic statistics of growth in female numbers at the University from 1939. It pinpoints in what subject areas and for what reasons female numbers rose, and also highlights some tensions between government and local University policies as the post-war expansion threatened to alter the University's traditional role in the West of Scotland community.

Having set out where and why growth in female numbers occurred, Chapter Two then examines the geographical, school and social origins of these students in depth and looks at how government policy and regional factors influenced student

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A questionnaire approach was also used by the history of Oxford project, for the St. Hugh's Centenary history and is being used by the group looking at Girton graduates - Amy Erickson,

backgrounds. For example, the introduction by the government of universal maintenance grants and the later introduction of differential fees for overseas students had implications for the social and geographical origins of the University's students. Meanwhile, local factors relating to the nature of the schooling system in the Glasgow area, as well as a recent decline in the population of the region, had similar social and geographical implications for the student body. The chapter charts how the University's recruitment policies shifted in response to these factors and documents the changes which took place in the backgrounds of both male and female students from 1939, as well as highlighting the gender differences which were apparent within these changes.

Chapter Three moves from the origins of students to their experiences whilst at the University. Examining both the institutional framework of university life (accommodation provision, the student unions, welfare and careers services, academic provision etc.) and the social side of the University (student clubs, sport, religion, student charity work etc.), this chapter assesses what trends were apparent in student behaviour and lifestyles and considers what impact the increasing number and proportion of female students had on campus life. The growing contribution of female students to the 'corporate life' is examined, as is the gradual integration of male and female student facilities, and the evidence from the student press for harmony or dis-harmony between the sexes. Again the effects of government induced factors and local factors are examined to show how general British trends in student lifestyles were experienced within a distinctive local context.

One of the most important local circumstances which shaped the student experience at Glasgow was the large home-based student population, which seems to have influenced everything from the degree of involvement in the corporate life to the political opinions of the student body. Chapter Four expands upon the latter topic and considers the whole subject of student politics. It seeks to explain in what ways and for what reasons Glasgow's political life was distinct from elsewhere and places the expanding political role played by women on campus within this context. Whilst dealing with the institutional aspects of student politics (such as the Rectorial election, political clubs, student debates and the role of the Students' Representative Council) the chapter also focuses on how the University's students responded to the national and international political scene. The local response to political protests which were articulated at campuses all over Britain (over issues such as the Soviet invasion of Hungary and the Vietnam War) is examined, as is the local response to issues of particular relevance to women (the Women's Liberation Movement, changes to the abortion law etc.). Again, the central question is to establish how far women on campus came to take a role in student politics commensurate with their growing numbers. The chapter also assesses what effects second-wave feminism had on female students in terms of their general behaviour and involvement in campaigns over 'women's issues.'

Having considered student origins and student experiences, the final chapter looks at what happened to Glasgow's women after they graduated. Based largely on data from questionnaire respondents, the chapter examines whole career paths, as well as first job after graduation and contrasts the experience of male and female

graduates and the experience of graduates from different cohorts. Marriage and child-rearing data also permit analysis of how women fitted their economic activities around motherhood and permits exploration of changing patterns since the war. The geography of graduate career destinations is also examined. With a high proportion of Glasgow's graduates - and especially its female graduates - choosing to remain in Scotland (and often within the West of Scotland area), the importance of local economic and social factors are shown to be important in providing distinctive patterns of graduate employment. Comparison with other graduate careers data allows this distinctiveness to be set against broader trends in UK graduate careers.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, the conclusion summarises the main findings of the thesis and considers how these findings can be related back to some of the debates and issues surrounding education history and women's history. This is rounded off with an assessment of some general implications of the thesis for the field of women's university history.

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<sup>26</sup> UGC annual career destination statistics are analysed for comparative purposes, as is the secondary literature on graduate surveys already carried out, such as Judith Hubback, *Wives Who Went to College* (London, 1957), C.E. Arregger (ed.), *Graduate Women at Work* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1966) and R.K. Kelsall et al, *Six Years After* (Sheffield, 1970) and *Graduates: the Sociology of an Elite* (London, 1972).

## **Institutional Development**

On the eve of the Second World War, Glasgow University was the largest non-collegiate university in the country, with 4,288 matriculated students of whom 3,116 (73%) were male and 1,172 (27%) female. The post-war expansion in the university sector ensured that by 1987, the student population had more than trebled to 13,230 and there had been a significant proportionate shift in the gender balance, with 7,223 (55%) of the student population now being male, and 6,007 (45%) being female. These overall figures hide important differences at faculty level - 49% of the Arts Faculty were female in 1939, compared to 22% of the Science Faculty, 16% of the Medical Faculty and only 1% of the Law Faculty. By 1987, the representation of women across the different faculties was far more even.

This chapter investigates how and why these patterns of growth and change were achieved and considers how the implementation of government policy at the local level affected growth in different subject areas and how it affected growth in the numbers of women students. It also reveals that there were often tensions between government expansionist policy and the University's traditional regional role. At the beginning of the period, Glasgow University served its local area and was able to take in virtually all those students who applied for entry. The subsequent programme of expansion - a result of increased student demand and government policy - forced the University to consider issues which had hitherto required little thought. Just how far should student numbers be allowed to expand? And should female student numbers be allowed to equal, or even overtake, numbers of male students? (This issue came to concern the Medical Faculty in particular). Expansion also forced the University to reassess

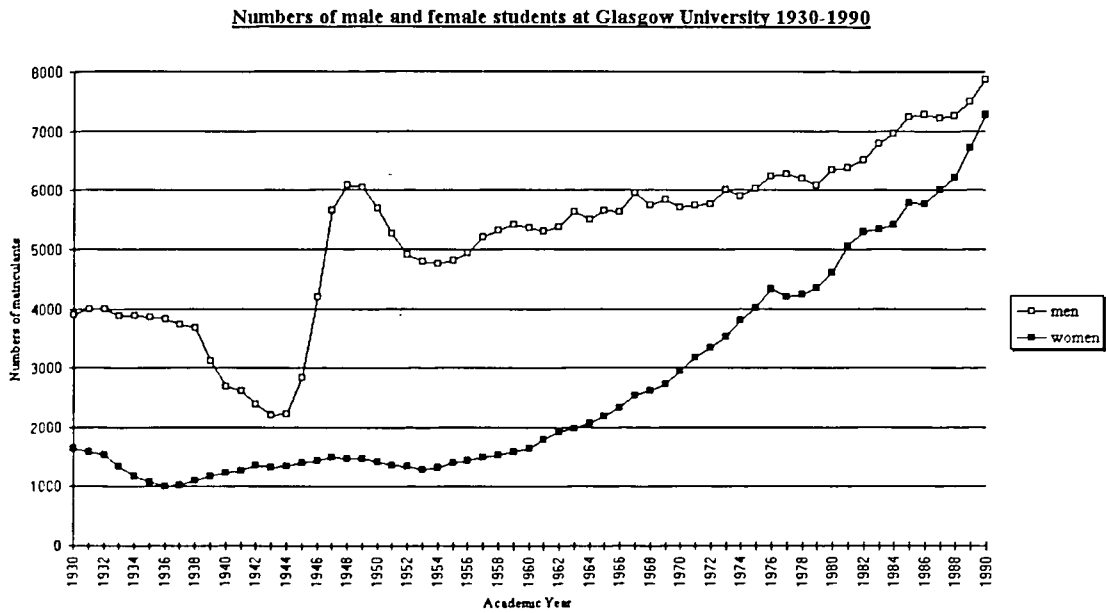


its traditional policy of drawing students overwhelmingly from the local area and brought concerns about recruitment and standards to the fore. As we shall see, the implementation of government policy was often undertaken with a degree of unease in Glasgow.

Nonetheless, the programme of expansion, with all the misgivings it aroused, was to prove generally beneficial to female students, as the figures quoted above suggest. The benefit was not immediately apparent - the proportion of women in the University was no greater in 1958 than it had been in 1938 - but in the post-Robbins era, the growth in female numbers was impressive and sustained (if unevenly distributed across different subjects and faculties).

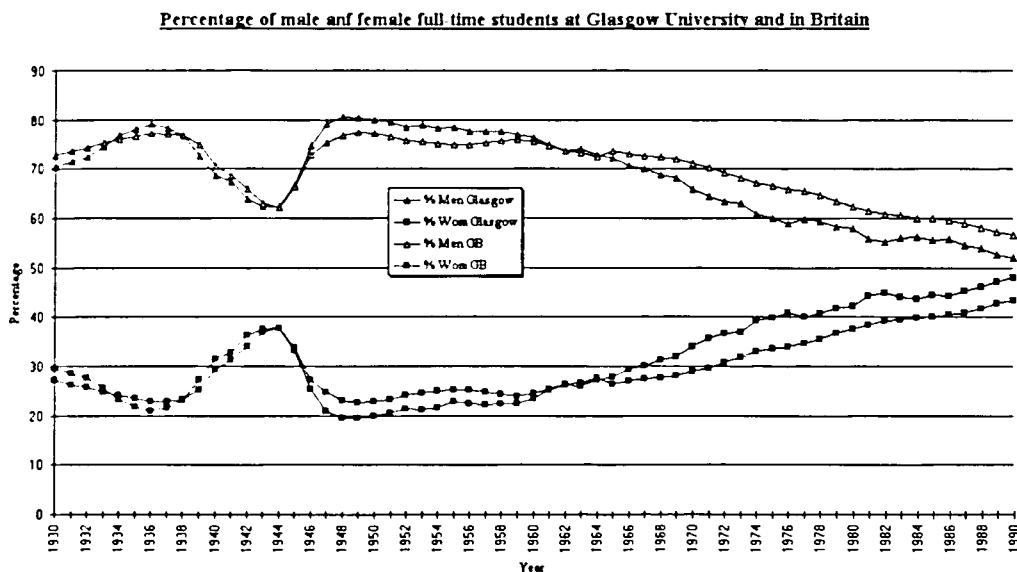
We will now take a look at the overall growth of student numbers in the University, since this provides the best starting point in understanding the scale and nature of post-war expansion. Figure 1.1 below presents the overall growth in male and female student numbers from 1930-1990, in order to give a long-term picture. This is supplemented by figure 1.2, which shows the changes in the gender balance of the student population over the same time-span.

Figure 1.1



Source: General Council Reports

Figure 1.2



Source: General Council Reports

Taking figure 1.1 first, it can be seen that the course of male and female matriculation 1930-1990, although broadly similar, was often characterised by different rates of growth. Beginning in 1930, the graph shows the effects of the depression, with numbers of both men and women falling throughout that decade

- although the fall was greater for women who were hit especially hard by decreasing opportunities in teaching at this time. The war years show, as might be expected, a large drop in male matriculations coupled with a steady rise in female numbers. Then in the immediate post-war years, the effects of the glut of returning ex-servicemen are apparent. Numbers of men in the University rose sharply at this time as school leavers fought for places alongside returning soldiers for whom the Government's Further Education and Training (FET) scheme made a university education possible.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, there was very little change in numbers of women during this period, partly because "only a fraction"<sup>2</sup> of FET award winners were female. Table 1.1 below shows sources of student finance for the post-war period at Glasgow University for all questionnaire respondents and highlights a clear bias in the early post-war distribution of government grants towards male students, particularly in the 1950s.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Roy Lowe notes that universities in the 1940s often encouraged school leavers to complete National Service before university in an attempt to minimise competition for places. Roy Lowe, *Education in the Post-war Years: A Social History* (London, 1988), p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64. For example, in 1947, 26,291 men in Britain but only 1,831 women were in receipt of grants under the FET scheme. UGC, *University Development 1935-47* (London, 1948).

<sup>3</sup> For details of the questionnaire, see Appendix. The questionnaire was sent to a large sample of graduates of Glasgow University who had graduated between 1940 and 1980 and who had a British address. The sample was stratified by degree type, gender and year of graduation. 1,951 questionnaires were returned. The data gathered was entered into a database, referred to throughout as the Graduate Database.

Table 1.1<sup>4</sup>

## Sources of student finance at Glasgow University, all degree subjects (%)

	Friends, family or self		Government grant		Carnegie grant <sup>5</sup>		School Award	
	<i>men</i>	<i>wom.</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>wom.</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>wom.</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>wom.</i>
1940s	75%	90%	34%	14%	32%	31%	2%	5%
1950s	62%	80%	63%	43%	7%	6%	3%	4%
1960s	41%	56%	75%	76%	4%	3%	<1%	<1%
1970s	41%	43%	86%	78%	2%	<1%	0	0
1980s	37%	30%	89%	87%	<1%	<1%	0	0

Source: Graduate Database

During the 1950s, there was an initial decline in numbers of both men and women, but then from the middle of that decade a steady upturn began. The most important reason behind this rise was that an expanding number of school leavers were gaining university entrance qualifications. This was partly a result of the 1945 Education Act (Scotland's equivalent of the 1944 English Act) which created universal secondary education, as well as the raising of the school leaving age to 15 in 1947. Although these measures have been criticised,<sup>6</sup> the reforms at secondary level did result in a tendency for more pupils to remain at school for longer, a factor known as the "trend," and this was compounded in the 1960s by the "bulge" as the post-war baby boom generation reached university age. The 1960s also saw another important policy development at secondary level. Comprehensive reorganisation resulted in the introduction of the free,

<sup>4</sup> Many students received finance from more than one source - for example, a government grant was supplemented by family money. Therefore the percentage totals reflect the fact that a respondent might tick more than one box on the questionnaire. The "Government Grant" category includes all types of government award, whether an FET grant to an ex-serviceman/woman or a grant to a school-leaver (no differentiation between these two grant types is possible from the questionnaire).

<sup>5</sup> The Carnegie Trust had been set up in 1901 by Andrew Carnegie, a wealthy Scottish American steel magnate, to help pay student fees at the Scottish universities. A.L. Brown and Michael Moss, *The University of Glasgow: 1451-1996* (Edinburgh, 1996), p. 72.

<sup>6</sup> See for example, A. McPherson, chapter 3 "Schooling" in A. Dickson and J.H. Treble (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland Vol. 3 1914-1990* (1992, Edinburgh). McPherson notes that after 1945, the separation of 'academic' and 'non-academic' pupils into junior secondary and senior secondary sections continued the bi-partite policies which had been introduced in the 1920s.

neighbourhood comprehensive which finally eliminated the bi-partite division of secondary schooling, with its attendant high wastage rates. There were also important reforms of the exam system.<sup>7</sup> These factors ensured that there was a continued rise in the university population throughout the 1960s, but the rise in numbers of women was particularly impressive and far outstripped the growth in male numbers. Between 1960 and 1970, female numbers in the University rose by 79% and compared to only a 7% rise for men.

Several factors were at work here: female school leavers were beginning to get better exam results than their male colleagues, female aspirations were rising, there were increasing opportunities for women in business and the professions, whilst the introduction of universal grants from 1962 meant an end to the problem of families prepared to pay for a son's, but not a daughter's, education.<sup>8</sup> All of this expansion could not have occurred, however, had it not been underpinned by the more generous provision of places which followed in the wake of the 1963 Robbins Report. This report endorsed a massive expansion of the university system, anticipating that overall there should be about 390,000 higher education places available by 1973-4.<sup>9</sup> Prior to the report, the University Grants Committee (UGC) had agreed that it would not press for Glasgow University to expand beyond 6,500 - although it was accepted that this might be exceeded during the worst years of the 1960s bulge. However, once the Robbins Report appeared, it was recognised that if its assumptions were correct, this could result in a student population of 10,000 at Glasgow by the early 1970s. Both Senate and Court agreed to indicate to the UGC a willingness to expand "in due

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<sup>7</sup> See Chapter Two, *Student Origins*.

<sup>8</sup> Universal maintenance grants were introduced as a result of the Anderson Report, *Grants to Students* (London, 1960), Cmnd. 1051.

<sup>9</sup> Report of the Committee on *Higher Education*, chaired by Lord Robbins (London, 1963),

proportion within the limits set by such increased resources as might actually be made available.” However, this “implied no abandonment by the Senate that expansion beyond 6,000 or 7,000 was unwise.”<sup>10</sup>

It is easy to see why the Senate was concerned. Although it was during the 1960s that the “bulge” and the “trend” began to increase pressure for entry to the University, this pressure was not experienced in the very early years of that decade at Glasgow. Indeed, evidence suggests that even those applicants who did not make the required standard could sometimes still get in. As late as 1961, the Robbins Report estimated that c17% of Scottish students entering universities had less than the normal minimum requirement for entry.<sup>11</sup> So it is understandable that it might not be readily apparent to the Senate that sufficient students of the required calibre would be forthcoming to meet expansion beyond c7,000. However, pressure for entry increased suddenly in the 1960s, with, as we have seen, this pressure coming particularly from women. The 10,000 mark was surpassed for the first time in the 1974-5 session, with the most dramatic growth of the 1970s continuing to occur in female rather than male matriculations, as figure 1.1 makes clear.

This impressive rise continued until checked in the late 1970s by government cuts in teacher training places. Traditionally, many Glasgow graduates took an arts or science degree as a prelude to a postgraduate teacher training course, but cuts in the number of postgraduate places discouraged potential teachers from taking a degree. This led to a noticeable dip in matriculations in the late 1970s. In the 1980s, the growth rate picked up once

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Cmnd. 2154, p. 277.

<sup>10</sup> Minutes of Court 1963-64. Discussion of future student numbers, 21/11 63, p. 73.

<sup>11</sup> Report of the Committee on *Higher Education*, op. cit., *Appendix 1: The Demand For Places in Higher Education*, Cmnd. 2154-I.

more, although growth in this decade occurred somewhat spasmodically, as a result of close government regulation of annual student intakes; whilst the sudden upsurge in both male and female numbers from the late 1980s reflects the recent desire of the Government to expand even further participation rates in the higher education system.

Figure 1.2 shows the impact which the post-war increase in numbers of women had upon the overall gender balance within the University. After the dislocation caused by the war years, the graph shows steady convergence in the relative size of the male and female student bodies. The graph also shows proportions for the whole of Britain and comparison reveals that whilst the trend towards an equal gender balance was apparent nationally, Glasgow's women reached this point sooner, with consistently 5% more women at Glasgow University than was the case in Britain generally from about 1970 onwards. This higher participation rate was not peculiar to Glasgow, but is apparent for the Scottish universities as a whole, with, for example 32% of Scottish university students being female in 1970, compared to 29% for Great Britain as a whole.<sup>12</sup> Reasons for this have been identified by Shirley Cunningham, who has shown that a more open schooling system in Scotland enabled higher participation rates in college preparatory secondary education.<sup>13</sup>

Of course, the post-war increase in student numbers at the University was not spread uniformly across subject areas, and faculties grew and declined in response to student demand and government policy. At the beginning of the

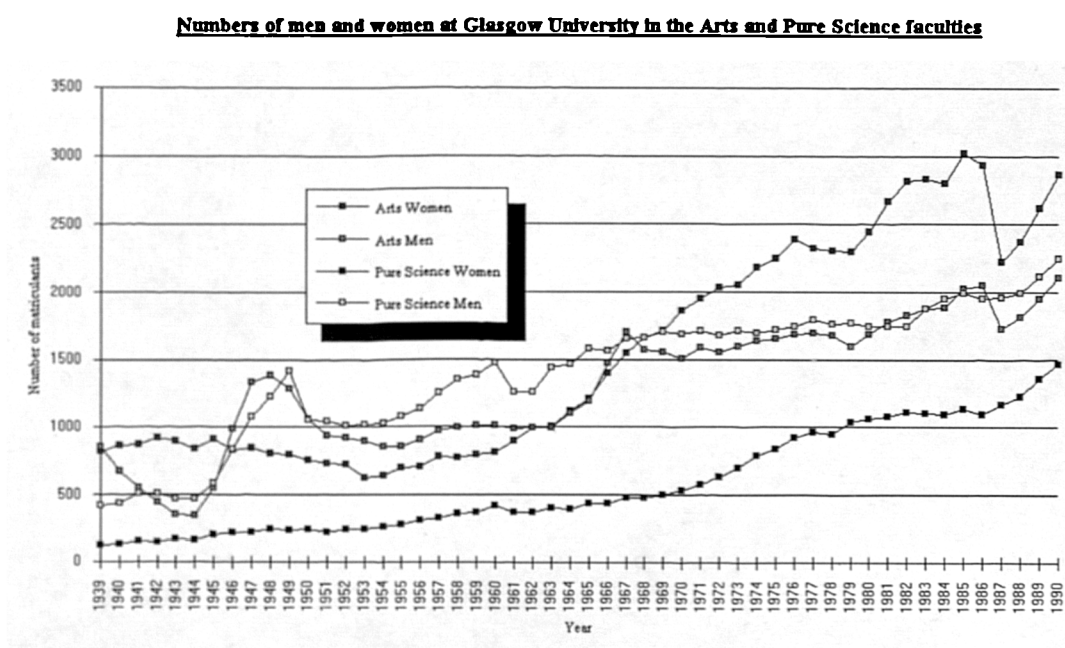
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<sup>12</sup> *Statistics of Education 1970*, Vol. 6, Universities (London, 1973).

<sup>13</sup> Shirley Cunningham, "Women's Access to Higher Education in Scotland," in S. Acker et al, (eds.), *Women and Education* (London, 1984), pp 173-187. Cunningham notes that Scottish female pupils benefited from cheap, co-educational schooling and better access to 'grammar-type' courses than their contemporaries in England. See Chapter Two, *Student Origins*, for a fuller discussion of the Scottish schooling system.

Second World War, the Arts Faculty was by far the largest, being well over twice the size of its nearest rival, Science. This was a common pattern for universities at the time. As John Carswell has noted, “until the great upheavals that began about 1960, the Arts were the core of university studies. Half the students in 1935 were in Arts Faculties.”<sup>14</sup> Figure 1.3 below shows the uneven pace of post-war growth in male and female student numbers in both the Arts and Science Faculties, and this is supplemented by figures 1.4 and 1.5 which show the overall gender balance in arts-based and science-based subjects.

**Figure 1.3**



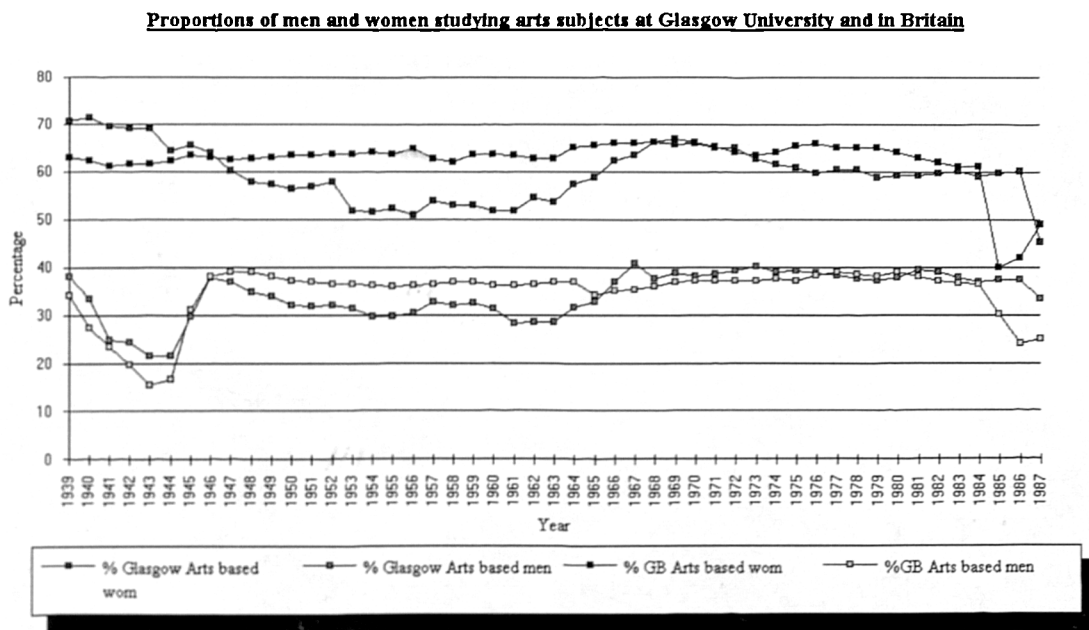
Source: General Council Reports<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> John Carswell, *Government and the Universities in Britain 1960-1980* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> From 1977, the Arts Faculty also includes Social Sciences Faculty which was created in that year.

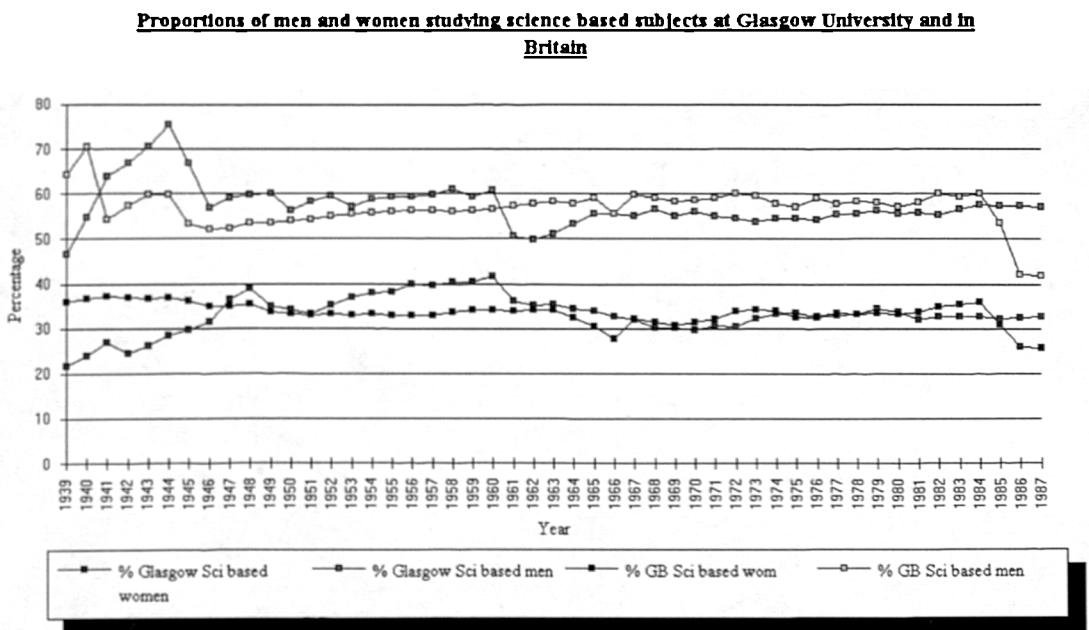


Figure 1.4



Source: General Council Reports<sup>16</sup>

Figure 1.5



Source: General Council Reports<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The Faculties included in this arts-based category are: Arts, Social Science, Law and Divinity.

<sup>17</sup> This includes Pure Science, Engineering and Technology and Medicine. Figures do not include Dentistry or Veterinary Medicine.

We will consider science first, since this was the area upon which much government emphasis was placed during and following the war. The large wartime increase in proportions of students studying science-based subjects at the University and the commensurate decline in arts-based subjects reflects the encouragement given at this time to subjects such as medicine and engineering. These were designated as “reserved” occupations, so students studying for degrees in these subjects were exempt from conscription.<sup>18</sup> After the war, the emphasis on science and technology continued. The Government was very aware of the vital part which had been played by highly skilled scientists and engineers in defeating the enemy - for example by developing the radar system which contributed to the success of the Battle of Britain - and there was a tide of opinion which stressed the need for a vast increase in the number of scientists and technologists.<sup>19</sup> In the words of W.R. Niblett “the war of 1939-45 compelled the nation to see that her universities had become indispensable,”<sup>20</sup> and the Government appointed a bewildering series of committees to look into how best the universities should expand and in which subject areas development would be most beneficial to the country. At the same time, the terms of reference of the UGC were revised to include a specific commitment to meeting “national needs.”<sup>21</sup>

Two important committees were appointed to look at science and technology, the Percy Committee on *Higher Technological Education* which

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<sup>18</sup> During the war, numbers studying medicine rose from 823 in 1939-40 to 948 in 1944-45 and in engineering increased from 344 in 1939-40 to 482 in 1944-5. Numbers taking science increased from 540 in 1939 to 629 in 1944-5.

<sup>19</sup> V. Jones, “Macrocsmographia Academica,” *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1976, pp 27-37.

<sup>20</sup> W.R. Niblett, “The Development of British Universities since 1945,” *The Year Book of Education*, 1975, pp 165-178.

<sup>21</sup> See Ivor T. James, “The University Grants Committee,” in Ivor T. James (ed.) *Higher*

reported in 1945,<sup>22</sup> and the Barlow Committee which reported the following year on *Scientific Manpower*.<sup>23</sup> The Percy Report concluded that “the annual intake into industries of the country of men trained by universities and technical colleges has been, and still is, insufficient both in quantity and quality,”<sup>24</sup> whilst the Barlow Report noted that the sciences were sorely neglected in Britain and called for a doubling of the output of graduates in science and technology at the earliest moment possible.

The Government provided large grants to enable expansion in the sciences to take place and a rapid increase was achieved at universities throughout Britain. The UGC noted that by 1951-2, there were nationally twice as many science and technology students as there had been in 1938-9.<sup>25</sup> Glasgow reflected this picture. Numbers of women in the Science Faculty doubled 1945-60 whilst numbers of men increased even more rapidly. However, it should be noted that although numbers in the Engineering Faculty doubled 1945-1960, the contribution of women to this rise was negligible - with never more than a handful of women studying engineering in any one year.

Expansion in the sciences at Glasgow University did not occur without some concern. Misgivings were expressed on the part of the Science Faculty which, as early as 1945, felt that the University had already accommodated a significant increase in science numbers and should not be required to do any more. What was more “some of these are still unequal to university work. It

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*Education* (Hull, 1975).

<sup>22</sup> Percy report on *Higher Technological Education* (London, 1945).

<sup>23</sup> Barlow report on *Scientific Manpower* (London, 1946), Cmnd. 6824.

<sup>24</sup> Quoted in Michael Sanderson, *The Universities and British Industry 1850-1970* (London, 1972).

<sup>25</sup> UGC, *University Development, 1947-1952* (London, 1953), Cmnd. 8875.

may be that the maximum desirable demand is already provided for.”<sup>26</sup> These misgivings were echoed by Principal Hetherington; in 1946 he agreed with Court and Senate that total student numbers at the University should not exceed 5,000.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, Hetherington’s opinion was that in 1945 the student load was already “as great as the University ought to attempt to carry.”<sup>28</sup> However, the pressure to increase student numbers, and in particular the output of technologists, continued, and in the 1952-57 quinquennium the Universities of Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham were designated by the Government as the main centres for a proposed higher technological expansion. Glasgow accepted this, but the desire of many in the University to consolidate rather than expand is perhaps encapsulated in a comment by a member of staff in the Department of Biochemistry who was worried by “this concentration by the Grants Committee on possible future developments, when there is so much needing to be done to meet existing commitments.”<sup>29</sup> In particular, Glasgow, being an old University, suffered from the obsolescence of many of its buildings. Indeed, Hetherington felt that in many ways Glasgow was “markedly sub-standard,”<sup>30</sup> and saw modernisation as the most important task, rather than expansion.

However, compliance with UGC proposals increasingly came to be seen as the prudent option, largely because of the increasing financial dependence of the University on Treasury grants, coupled with a large fall in the relative importance

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<sup>26</sup> Science Faculty Minute Book, December 1945. Similar doubts were expressed some years later at Aberdeen University where in 1960, Professor E.M. Wright raised the question of the likely low educational attainment of an extended science intake. I.G.C. Hutchison, *The University and the State The Case of Aberdeen 1860-1963* (Aberdeen, 1993), p. 108.

<sup>27</sup> Hetherington was Principal from 1936-1961. Minutes of Court 1945-46, 16th May 1946, p. 146.

<sup>28</sup> Hetherington’s papers, DC 8/799.

<sup>29</sup> Memorandum to Hetherington on the development of technology, 27 01 54, DC 8 634.

of non-state contributions provided by endowments and donations. Income from endowments and donations accounted for almost a fifth of the University's income in 1930, but this proportion had halved by 1950 and was down to 2% in 1970.<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile Treasury income leapt upwards and accounted for three-quarters of University income by 1970. With vastly greater funds at its disposal in the post-war period, the UGC began to make quite specific proposals to encourage individual universities to develop in certain areas and it was able to do this particularly through the use of non-recurrent one-off grants. Post-war initiatives were by no means all suggested by the UGC, but increasingly, proposed developments could only go ahead if UGC funds were forthcoming. For example, proposals for developments in electro-chemistry at the University were able to go ahead because the UGC welcomed innovation in this area.<sup>32</sup> But when the University proposed a Chair in Horticulture, the UGC expressed doubts, and without UGC funding the University was forced to abandon the proposal.<sup>33</sup>

It was in this climate of increased Treasury dependence that Glasgow University responded to the UGC's call for scientific expansion in the 1952-57 quinquennium with proposals for developments in electrical and nuclear engineering, chemistry, biological sciences, pharmacology and natural philosophy (physics). The UGC welcomed most of these and building grants were made available for an extension to the Natural Philosophy Department (1958) and a new engineering building (1959).<sup>34</sup> However, Hetherington was

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<sup>30</sup> Hetherington's papers, DC 8/799.

<sup>31</sup> Income from endowments and donations has revived slightly in recent years, however, and accounted for 6% of total income in 1990. Figures from annual UGC returns.

<sup>32</sup> Minutes of Court 1947-48, 19th February 1948, p. 109.

<sup>33</sup> Minutes of Court 1956-57, 23rd May 1957, p. 190.

<sup>34</sup> Funded by donations from engineering and shipbuilding firms as well as by the UGC. See

aware of the potential conflict between student demand and government policy. In a memo on Higher Technological Education in 1954, he noted that, whilst there was no disputing the necessity to produce more trained technologists for British industry, the numbers of students applying to study technology courses at university were not increasing - a problem which went back to the school level. He did not feel that the solution proposed by the 1954 Memorandum of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee on Higher Technological Education - which suggested that students on other courses, especially arts, should be encouraged to switch from these to science and technology - was particularly helpful, one reason being that "quite half the arts students are women, who will not make an important contribution to the technological deficiency."<sup>35</sup> He was not alone in this attitude towards women. Most employers of science and technology graduates were loath to take on female graduates, and this prejudice in turn reinforced the tendency among women to seek employment in fields other than industry.

This conflict between student demand and government policy was compounded by the recommendations of the 1963 Robbins Report which proposed that the proportion of arts students should remain static, making room for a large absolute increase in scientists and technologists. Carswell has pointed out the flaw in this strategy, which assumed an equal division of the new places between men and women.<sup>36</sup> Therefore it was based on a huge, and unrealistic, increase in female technologists and scientists. As might be expected, some branches of science, and in particular engineering, began to experience problems in filling places at this time. Whilst a series of reports (Dainton, Jones and

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Charles Illingworth, *University Statesman: Sir Hector Hetherington* (Glasgow, 1971), p. 73.

Swann) produced by Sir Willis Jackson in the 1960s, concluded that one of the major weaknesses of the British educational system was its failure to train and keep the quantities of scientists and technologists necessary for an expanding economy, Engineering Faculties across the country struggled to attract candidates of sufficient quality. Empty places in Glasgow's Engineering Faculty in the 1960s prompted the Faculty to improve its school liaison activities and in 1967 it introduced an open week in June with visits by up to 1,000 pupils.<sup>37</sup> The problem continued, however, right through to the 1980s, with successive governments still urging an increase in science and technology places - the "Shift to Technology" - which did not reflect subject choices being made by school pupils. This resulted in lower admissions standards in science and technology than in arts. But by the 1980s, universities were forced to provide the extra science places through the threat of penalties if student target numbers were not met. Government control now extended to issuing exact numbers for each subject area and the compliance of the universities with these target figures was ensured by warnings that if targets fell short to a greater than average extent, the grant would be reduced. However, overshoot was also to be avoided, since if the targets were exceeded, the extra fee income would be deducted the following year.<sup>38</sup> Thus student admissions became a delicate balancing act.

The continued emphasis on technology was responsible for bringing about a massive growth in engineering at the University in the 1970s and 1980s - a growth of 112% between 1970 and 1985 in male engineering students - and right at the end of the period under discussion, numbers of women finally began to

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<sup>35</sup> Memorandum by Hetherington on Higher Technological Education, 26/11/54.

<sup>36</sup> Carswell, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>37</sup> Glasgow University Court, *Annual Report 1967-68*.

<sup>38</sup> Minutes of Court 1979-80, Vol. 2. UGC letter discussed at the meeting of the Academic

show a significant increase. They rose from 10 in 1970 to 91 in 1985 - by which point they made up 6% of the Engineering Faculty.

Emphasis on the sciences did not operate to the total exclusion of the arts, and here too, government education policy set the trend. Although primarily concerned with the sciences, the Barlow Committee had called for a substantial expansion in the number of humanities students, whilst the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) also concluded that if numbers expanded in science, to avoid imbalance, they must also expand elsewhere.<sup>39</sup> In addition to this there were several post-war committees which looked at and recommended growth in specific arts subjects. In particular, the Clapham Committee (1946) looked at facilities for social and economic research and the Scarborough Committee (1947) considered Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies. The Clapham Committee concluded that existing university provision for research into social and economic questions was inadequate and out of relation with the provision being made for the physical sciences. Therefore large injections of money were needed in this area.<sup>40</sup> At Glasgow, developments were made in this field of study - for example, Chairs of Applied Economics (1949) and Economic History (1955) were established along with an enlargement of the Department of Social and Economic Research, which had a reader, four lecturers and an assistant by 1949. However, Glasgow's response was perhaps more important where the recommendations of the Scarborough Committee were concerned. This committee suggested that the necessary expansion in Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies should be concentrated in a comparatively small number of university centres, and for Scotland it was

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Development Committee, 16th October 1978.



decided, and agreed by all the Scottish universities, that Glasgow should set up the only department of Slavonic Studies in Scotland.<sup>41</sup> Initially developments in this field were held up by a shortage of suitable staff, but by 1949 two acceptable lecturers in Czech and Polish had been found, plus native assistants.

As with science, developments in arts were sometimes undertaken in response to UGC recommendations, rather than through any particular desire on the part of the University to develop in that subject area. Thus although the University was not especially keen to develop Oriental and African Studies - a 1947 memorandum commenting that Glasgow already had its hands full with the development of the programme on Slavonic Studies,<sup>42</sup> - some small moves were nonetheless made in this direction with the appointment of a lecturer in African Studies in 1949.

Further stimulus for the arts was provided by the 1961 Hayter Report on Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies which recommended that a small number of "centres of area studies" should be set up for the study of these subjects, and a series of "Hayter" grants were allocated by the UGC to Glasgow University for the development of Slavonic and East European studies.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the Parry Report (1965) recommended the setting up of Centres of Latin American Studies and this led to Glasgow being chosen as one of the five proposed centres for earmarked funding to form an institute of Latin American Studies in 1966.

Therefore steady growth in the arts was endorsed in the immediate post-

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<sup>39</sup> V. Jones, *op. cit.* p. 29.

<sup>40</sup> UGC, *University Development 1935-1947*, (London, 1948), p. 72.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>42</sup> Memorandum on the development of Slavonic Studies, 09/12/47, DC 8 877.

<sup>43</sup> See Sir William Hayter, "The Hayter Report and After," *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1975, pp. 169-72.

war period, albeit with growth planned to take place at a slower rate than in the sciences, and a look back at figure 1.3 shows steady growth in the Arts Faculty for both men and women from the second half of the 1950s. However, this growth paled into insignificance beside the enormous take-off in arts students which occurred in the 1960s, when a huge rise in numbers was accompanied by a swing in the proportion of arts students away from science (see figure 1.4), a trend which occurred in spite of government attempts to promote science. The very fast growth in female arts students at Glasgow University at this time is a reflection of the strength of demand for a university education among female school leavers. Numbers of women in the Arts Faculty increased by 128% between 1960 and 1970, whilst numbers of men merely doubled. Demand was especially keen in the new expanding social science subjects, and many of these subjects began to be oversubscribed at this time.<sup>44</sup> The pressure of applications in arts (by 1966, qualified applicants were having to be rejected in this faculty) meant that, in contrast to opinion in the Science Faculty and the University Senate, expansion was welcomed by the Arts Faculty. This was noted in the University's 1962 submission to the Robbins Committee which recorded that "there is a substantial body of opinion in the University, notably in the Faculty of Arts, which considers that planning for university places beyond the level at present envisaged is urgently necessary."<sup>45</sup>

Of course the Arts Faculty emphasised that it would only welcome expansion provided adequate staff, finance and accommodation were forthcoming. Arts resources were significantly extended in the 1960s - for example, in 1964 the Arts Faculty received by far the largest allocation of funds

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<sup>44</sup> In recognition of the expanding importance of the social sciences a separate Faculty of Social

(£45,000) of all the faculties for staffing purposes and again in 1972, the increase in arts posts was double that for science staff.<sup>46</sup> In terms of buildings, a new Modern Languages building (1960) and a Social Sciences building (1967) were added, but all this was still deemed insufficient and in 1970 the Arts Faculty was still demanding extended accommodation.<sup>47</sup>

Up until the early 1960s, men outnumbered women in the Arts Faculty,<sup>48</sup> but from 1962 women overtook their male colleagues and continued to outnumber men throughout the next two decades.<sup>49</sup> This development does not seem to have caused much consternation, although a lone voice was raised in protest; Christian Fordyce, Clerk of Senate from 1940-1971, suggested to the new principal in 1961 that in future some control might be necessary to stop women swamping the Arts Faculty.<sup>50</sup>

Towards the end of the 1970s, numbers of both men and women in arts suddenly dipped - a result, as already noted, of the sharp reduction at this time in teacher recruitment. This pattern was repeated across Britain and the Secretary of State, worried at the impact in particular on female prospects, appealed to higher education institutions to introduce other forms of vocational training which would appeal to women. In response to this appeal, Glasgow University

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Sciences was created at Glasgow University in 1977.

<sup>45</sup> Glasgow University's submission to the Robbins Committee, March 1962.

<sup>46</sup> Minutes of Court 1963-64, 19th March 1964, p. 246 and Minutes of Court 1971-72, 23rd February 1972, p. 247.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 1970-71, 30th October 1970, p. 55. A new arts building was planned, then postponed, and finally opened as the Hetherington Building in 1983.

<sup>48</sup> Except during the war years.

<sup>49</sup> However, the high proportion of women in the Arts Faculty has been exaggerated by the separation of Arts from Social Sciences in 1977 - men have always been in a majority in the Social Sciences Faculty.

<sup>50</sup> Memorandum to Principal Wilson from Clerk of Senate C.J. Fordyce, on "Robbins Committee matters," 1961, (Robbins Committee file). Charles Wilson was Principal from 1961-1976. The Principal seems to have taken no action with regard to this memorandum.

established a course in Nursing - which started out with 25 entrants in 1978.<sup>51</sup> The University also relaxed standards somewhat in arts to attract applicants.<sup>52</sup>

The 1980s saw arts applications pick up again dramatically, but now their numbers were artificially restricted by government imposed quotas on student numbers. The Arts Faculty report of 1983-4 noted that candidates who would have been accepted only two or three years ago were now having to be rejected. This caused the University much concern. In 1981 the Court acknowledged that the University was having to “fail” the local population, since numbers were being restricted at a time of increasing demand from school leavers. It “noted with great concern the Senate’s conclusion that local requirements could not now be met.”<sup>53</sup> Quotas regulating numbers of students in the arts, plus the diversion of resources into science and technology led to a significant drop in the size of the Arts Faculty in the second half of the 1980s, but towards the end of that decade, as we have already observed for science, government policies to increase overall participation rates in universities led to a rise once more.

We have seen that although arts subjects remained the most popular choices for women (for example, 28% of women were in the Arts Faculty in 1987), nonetheless women came to have a greater representation in the Science, and even Engineering Faculties in the post-war period (19% of women were in the Science Faculty in 1987). Another trend relating to degree choices which must be mentioned is the shift away from the ordinary degree in the post-war period as more women opted to stay on for the additional honours year. Michael

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<sup>51</sup> The Principal commented in his statement in the annual report of the University Court 1978, that “the first batch of highly qualified (nursing) entrants into the course consisted of 24 pretty girls and one very happy looking man.”

<sup>52</sup> For example, in 1978 the Glasgow University *Newsletter* noted that the Arts Faculty had virtually filled its quota of places for the year, but only by admitting more than usual with less than 7 points in their Higher grades, (No. 16, 2nd November 1978).

Moss has noted that this pattern developed unevenly, commenting that “the majority of students in science have taken honours degrees since 1953; in arts only since 1981.”<sup>54</sup> In the 1952-3 session in which BSc honours graduates outnumbered ordinary graduates for the first time, the honours graduates formed 58% of the total that year. This proportion had risen to 62% by 1980 and 78% by 1990.<sup>55</sup> In arts, 1981-2 saw honours surpass ordinary degrees for the first time, with 53% of that years’ graduates leaving with honours. This had risen to almost 70% by 1990. The slower shift to honours amongst MA students compared to their science colleagues is presumably a reflection of the greater tendency amongst arts students to use the ordinary degree as a prelude to teaching and of the greater predominance of women in arts. UGC figures reveal that there was always a higher proportion of women than men who sat the ordinary degree; figures for 1970, for example, showing that of first degrees obtained in that year, 58% of men but 80% of women left Glasgow University with an ordinary degree.<sup>56</sup>

The trend towards staying on for honours was encouraged by several factors, including a harsher jobs market, in which an honours degree might be more attractive to potential employers; the introduction of universal maintenance grants, which removed the problem of an extra honours year proving too expensive; plus, in the case of female students particularly, higher academic and career aspirations. However, the shift to honours amongst female students at Glasgow was slower than at other Scottish universities. UGC figures show that of degrees obtained by women at Scottish universities in 1970, Glasgow had the

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<sup>53</sup> Minutes of Court 1980-81, 15th July 1981, p. 348.

<sup>54</sup> A.L. Brown and Michael Moss, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>55</sup> Figures from General Council Reports and Reports of the University Court, (courtesy of Archie Leitch, Glasgow University Archives).

lowest proportion of women achieving honours.<sup>57</sup> One factor for this was the low proportion of English students at Glasgow. English students clearly favoured the honours degree and the two universities with the highest English representation, St. Andrews and Edinburgh, also had the highest proportion of honours students.

As a final comment on ordinary versus honours degrees, it should be noted that this issue was looked at by a Joint Senate and Court Committee on “Women in the University” which was set up in 1979. The Committee seems to have been the University’s response to the growing feminist awareness of that decade, and its remit was to “investigate whether equal career opportunities exist for men and women in the University and to investigate ways in which women participate at all levels in the academic and administrative life of the University.”<sup>58</sup> In practice the committee appears to have done very little, but it did request in 1980 that a study be undertaken into the reasons for the low percentage of women honours graduates, especially in the Arts and Science Faculties. In its report on the matter, the Arts Faculty noted the concern but said it was taking no further action whilst the Science Faculty commented that although the proportion of female *graduates* which achieved honours was only 59% compared with 68% for men, the proportion of all female *entrants* which achieved honours was 49% compared to 44% for men. Therefore it appeared that a higher proportion of women entrants admitted to the Faculty achieved honours than men, and that women

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<sup>56</sup> *Statistics of Education* 1970, op. cit.

<sup>57</sup> The figures for women who obtained honours degrees in 1970 are: Glasgow 20%, Aberdeen 28%, Edinburgh 35%, St. Andrews 60%. (Although more men at each University took honours, men at Glasgow also had the lowest proportion of honours degrees). *Statistics of Education* 1970, op. cit.  
It should also be noted that the ordinary degree was always more prevalent in Scotland than in England. For example, in 1970, only 12% of women in England left with an ordinary degree, but over two thirds of Scottish women did.

who didn't attain honours were more likely than men to achieve an ordinary degree, rather than to be suspended.<sup>59</sup>

Having considered science and arts subjects, we will conclude our examination of undergraduate numbers in the University by considering the two vocational Faculties of Medicine and Law, which assumed an increasing importance for women in the post-war period. Taking medicine first, this was yet another area which came under the consideration of a government committee in the immediate post-war period. Medicine, and the associated medical areas of veterinary medicine and dentistry all received attention via the Goodenough (1944) Loveday (1946) and Teviot (1946) Committees respectively. These three committees all recommended that their respective subjects be taught within the walls of universities. Their findings were accepted by the Government and resulted in the UGC giving £33,000 to Glasgow University to bring about the amalgamation of two existing medical schools - Anderson's College and St. Mungo's - with the University in 1947-8. This automatically increased the number of medical students at the University. Numbers jumped from 1,069 in 1946/7 to 1,370 in 1949/50, making Glasgow's Medical Faculty the largest in the country. The Glasgow Dental School and the Veterinary School also became part of the University.<sup>60</sup> Goodenough also wanted to see an expansion in the number of full-time Chairs in clinical subjects, and here too Glasgow obliged, with 5 new Medical Chairs between 1957 and 1962. With regard to gender

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<sup>58</sup> Minutes of Senate 1979-80, 11th October 1979, p. 10.

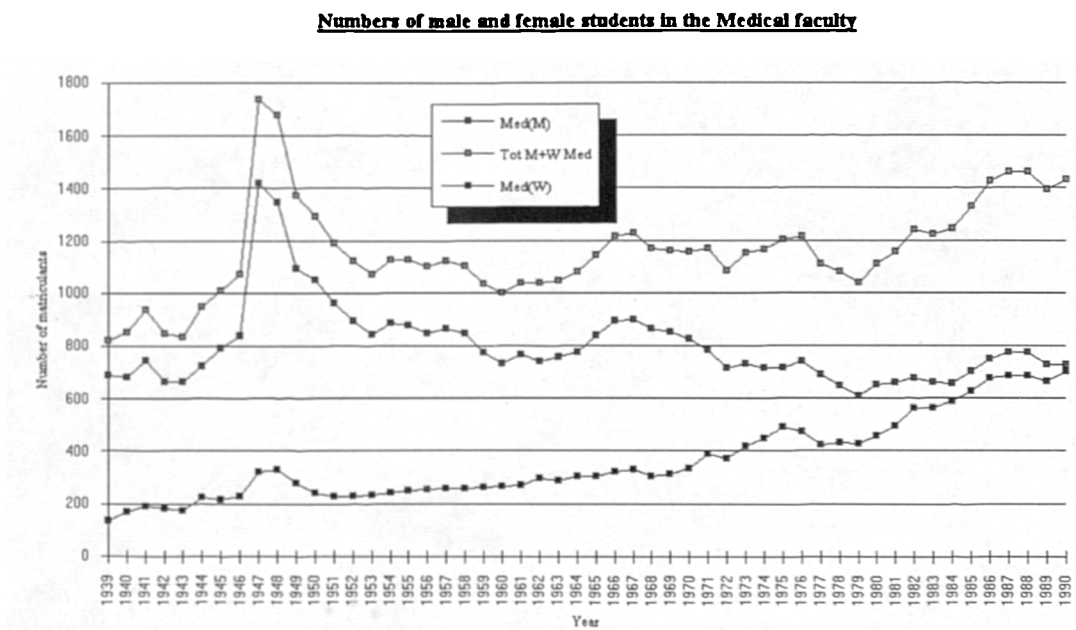
<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 1980-81, 6th November 1980, p. 54. The Faculty report went on to comment that it saw the real problem in science as being, not the honours/ordinary balance between men and women, but the low demand from girls for entry to certain science courses - especially the physical sciences and maths.

<sup>60</sup> Despite the fact that the University expressed no particular desire to establish a Veterinary School. It agreed, however, as long as the necessary finance was forthcoming. Minutes of Court 1945-46, 20th September 1945, p. 9.

balance, the UGC noted that a special committee appointed by the University of London had suggested that more women should be admitted to medicine and that the female proportion should not fall below 15% of the total number of entrants.<sup>61</sup> A look at post-war numbers in the Medical Faculty at Glasgow shows that the suggested percentage of women was always exceeded. Between 1945 and 1960, women always formed over 20% of the Faculty - though this was not achieved as a result of a conscious policy to keep up numbers of women.<sup>62</sup>

During the late 1940s and 1950s, the general trend in student numbers in medicine was downwards (although numbers of women in the Faculty were rising slowly from c1950), as figure 1.6 below indicates.

**Figure 1.6**



Source: General Council Reports

This was a reflection of the fact that, in contrast to science and technology, there was no pressure from the Government to expand medical provision in the

<sup>61</sup> UGC, *University Development 1935-1947*, op. cit.

<sup>62</sup> Rather the reverse, as we shall see below.



immediate post-war years, indeed the reverse was true, since the Willink report of 1957 concluded that the total number of medical students in Britain should fall by about 10%. However, fears of a shortage of doctors followed and in 1961 this decision was reversed, with a 10% increase endorsed by the Ministry of Health.<sup>63</sup> This was followed in 1966 by the Todd Report, which recommended a further increase in the output of doctors and by the release of UGC funds to enable new medical buildings or extensions to be built. As a result, in the 1960s at Glasgow University overall numbers in medicine began to creep upwards, but the proportion of women remained virtually static at just under 30%.

It is interesting to note that whilst the gender balance in other subjects was rarely a cause of much comment, in medicine there seems to have been considerable interest in, and indeed artificial control of, female numbers. In the University's submission to the Robbins Committee in 1962, Principal Hetherington made it clear that, certainly in earlier years, the proportion of women had been maintained at an artificially low proportion, commenting that:

“in the days when the pressure on medicine was greater than it is now, Glasgow tended (for quite familiar reasons) to hold the admission of women to 40 of the 170 available places, when, quite possibly, on strict merit, the 5 or 6 best of the women rejects were better than the 5 or 6 last of the men accepted. But that situation has changed.”<sup>64</sup>

However, the implication that quotas on female admissions were a thing of the past was proved to be false in 1972 when the issue resurfaced as a debate in the *Glasgow Herald*. A letter to the editor made public a decision by Glasgow's Medical Faculty to control female applications so that their proportion would not exceed 40%. The University defended this decision on the grounds that many

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<sup>63</sup> I.G.C. Hutchison, op. cit., p. 119.

women were lost to the medical profession when they left to have families. It cited a study which showed that the average female doctor spent only 7 years practising and noted that Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee Universities were already operating a quota system.<sup>65</sup> Therefore, it is clear that female applicants were still discriminated against as late as the 1970s. But the 40% quota seems to have been relaxed during that decade - possibly influenced by sex discrimination legislation - since by the end of the 1970s, women formed over 40% of the Faculty. Nonetheless, this rising proportion of female medics proved to be a continuing cause of concern as is demonstrated by an enquiry into female medical admissions in 1977 by the Educational Policy Committee of the University's General Council, prompted by a letter from a Glasgow graduate.<sup>66</sup> This graduate advocated a significant decrease in the percentage of women in the faculty, but his wishes seem to have gone unheeded since the proportion of women continued to increase until a virtual equal gender distribution was achieved by the late 1980s.

The increase in female numbers, as well as the increase in their proportion in Glasgow's Medical Faculty, at a time of increasing difficulties in the university sector,<sup>67</sup> is further evidence of the greater ambitions and opportunities for women and the movement towards greater equality between the sexes. This is a development which can also be seen if we consider the Law Faculty, as

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<sup>64</sup> Submission to the Committee on Higher Education by Hetherington, May 1962.

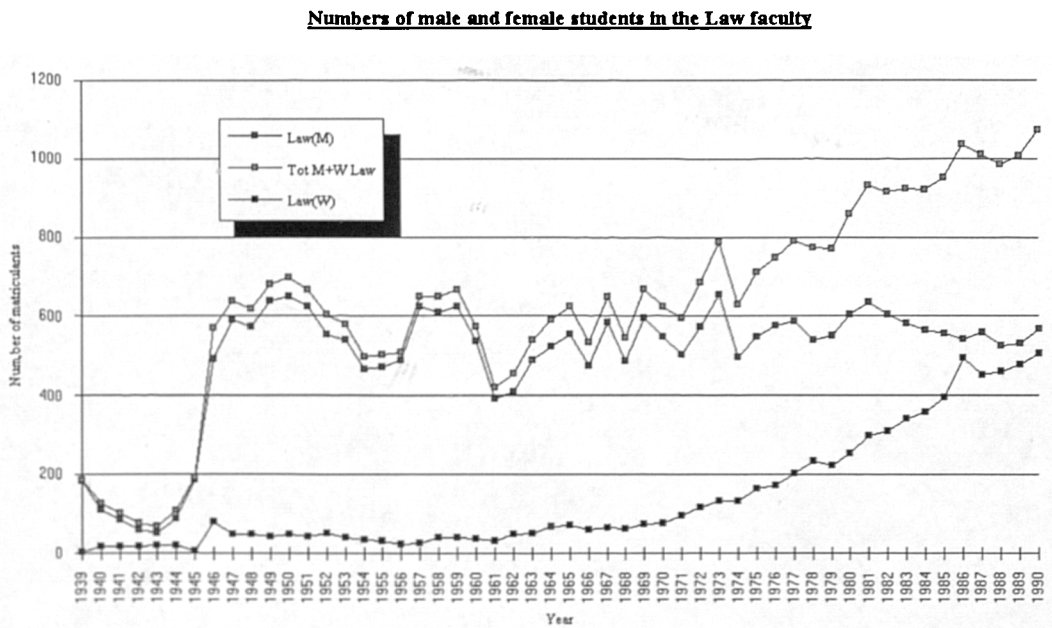
<sup>65</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 29th April 1972.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 13th June 1977. The General Council is an advisory body at the University, made up of the Chancellor, members of the University Court, all professors, readers and lecturers who have been appointed for a year, plus all the University's graduates. It elects the Chancellor and four members of the University Court.

<sup>67</sup> These difficulties were symbolised by events such as the abandonment by the Government of the quinquennial system of funding in 1975 (making any forward planning hazardous) and the advice given by the UGC in 1973 that universities would do best to build up existing departments and be more cautious about starting new ones, (Minutes of Court 1972-73, letter from the UGC, 15/1/73, p. 299).

figure 1.7 shows.

Figure 1.7



Source: General Council Reports

There are two major points worth noting here about the development of Law in the post-war period. The first relates to a change in the nature of the Law degree itself. Since the creation of the LLB degree in 1862, Law students had been required to study for an arts degree as a prerequisite for enrolment in the Law Faculty and lectures in law were combined with study in a law firm. However, in 1960, the prerequisite of arts study was removed and a full-time law degree instituted. This new degree proved to be a great success and matriculations in the Law Faculty expanded greatly in the early years of the new degree. This change is shown clearly in figure 1.7. The other noteworthy change in Law was the increase in women studying for a legal career. This increase occurred slowly at first and D. Walker has noted in his *History of the School of Law* that despite the 1919 Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act which opened the legal profession to women, even after World War Two there were

only enough girls “to fill the front couple of rows in classes.” By the 1980s however, the numbers of each sex admitted were virtually equal and “girls have taken a full, even a more than proportionate, share of honours and prizes.”<sup>68</sup> By 1980, 30% of the Law Faculty at Glasgow University were female, compared to 3% in 1945.

More women undergraduates, studying an increasingly varied range of subjects, had implications for numbers of female postgraduates and postgraduate diplomas and degrees formed an enormous growth area in the post-war period. Study at postgraduate level had been insignificant before the Second World War (only accounting for just over 1% of Glasgow University’s students in 1939), but in the post-war period, the growth in professional careers, coupled with increasing subject specialisation, prompted universities to introduce numerous one or two year postgraduate courses. This development, like so many others, was government led, and was encouraged by the UGC which emphasised in its 1957-62 quinquennial report that it wanted to see more short one year taught courses, rather than lengthy PhDs because a short postgraduate course would provide for any necessary specialisation and would be cheaper.<sup>69</sup> By 1970, 12% of degrees awarded at Glasgow University were postgraduate degrees - one third of these being masters degrees in subjects as varied as engineering, medicine, theology, accountancy and administration. The number of diploma courses in subjects such as Town and Regional Planning and Economic Development, and Educational Psychology also expanded. Available University statistics do not give separate male and female figures, but UGC figures show that in 1970, only 5% of female students at the University were undertaking postgraduate study,

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<sup>68</sup> David M. Walker, *A History of the School of Law* (Glasgow, 1990), p. 89.

compared to more than double this proportion for male students.<sup>70</sup>

There are many reasons why women were less likely to stay on for postgraduate work. PhDs may have seemed too lengthy and would postpone marriage too long, whilst postgraduate awards were more plentiful in the sciences which contained proportionately fewer women. Also, higher degrees are to a large extent determined by the quality of the first degree and women tended to get fewer firsts than men.<sup>71</sup> For example, figures from the Graduate Database show that at Glasgow University between 1940 and 1984, whilst roughly the same proportion of female and male MA graduates in the sample achieved first-class honours (10% and 11% respectively), in Pure Science, where there were more postgraduate opportunities, the proportions were 16% and 28% respectively. The tendency for postgraduate studies to be male-dominated was repeated at other universities. However, Scotland - and within Scotland, Glasgow in particular - was peculiar in continuing to have a particularly low overall proportion of postgraduate students. The Robbins Report found that only 11% of Scottish students were postgraduate - a smaller proportion than at Oxbridge, London, the civic universities and Wales<sup>72</sup> - and this difference was still apparent in 1980 when 21% of students in Britain as a whole were postgraduate, but only 13% in Scotland and 9% at Glasgow University.<sup>73</sup> It is not an easy task to explain why Glasgow had so few postgraduates, but the

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<sup>69</sup> UGC, *University Development 1957-62*, op. cit. p. 83.

<sup>70</sup> UGC, *Returns from Universities and University Colleges in receipt of Treasury Grant, 1970-71* (Cheltenham, 1972).

<sup>71</sup> For a good discussion of male and female degree performance, see Jennifer Jones and Josephine Castle, "Women in UK Universities, 1920-1980," in *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. II, No. 3, 1986.

<sup>72</sup> Report of the Committee on *Higher Education*, op. cit., *Appendix 2 (A)*, Cmnd. 2154-II, (London, 1963), p. 42. The figures for postgraduates given by the report are: Oxford 18%, Cambridge 18%, London 26%, Larger civic 16%, Smaller civic 14%, Wales 14%, Scotland 11%, all universities 17%.

<sup>73</sup> UGC, *University Statistics, 1980, Vol. 1 Students and Staff* (Cheltenham, 1982).

continued emphasis on the ordinary degree certainly cannot have helped to generate potential research students or a research ethos in the University.

The shortfall in postgraduate numbers was one which the University was anxious to rectify, although in recent decades its efforts to increase postgraduate numbers came into conflict with UGC desires. For the first time in 1973, the UGC issued target numbers to each university for the desired number of postgraduates within each faculty. Glasgow, like many other universities, found that it was being asked to accept fewer postgraduates than it would have liked to, the lower numbers being “assessed on the basis both of the likely employment prospects for postgraduates and of the cost of their training when measured against other social needs.”<sup>74</sup> During this decade, an increase in the numbers of postgraduates was also hampered by the twin impact of increases in fees and government cuts to the various funding bodies, such as the Research Councils.<sup>75</sup> In particular, increases in the level of fees for overseas students (which had been higher since 1967, when the policy of discriminatory fee levels was first introduced), exacerbated the situation, because the proportion of overseas students among postgraduates was always higher than that amongst undergraduates.<sup>76</sup> Interestingly though, although Glasgow had a low proportion of postgraduates - only about half the number Edinburgh possessed - a higher proportion of these were women than the average for all British universities. In 1970 just over a quarter (27%) of Glasgow’s postgraduates were female - a somewhat higher proportion than the figure for Britain as a whole (23%). But by

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<sup>74</sup> Minutes of Court 1972-73, UGC letter 15/01/73, p. 299.

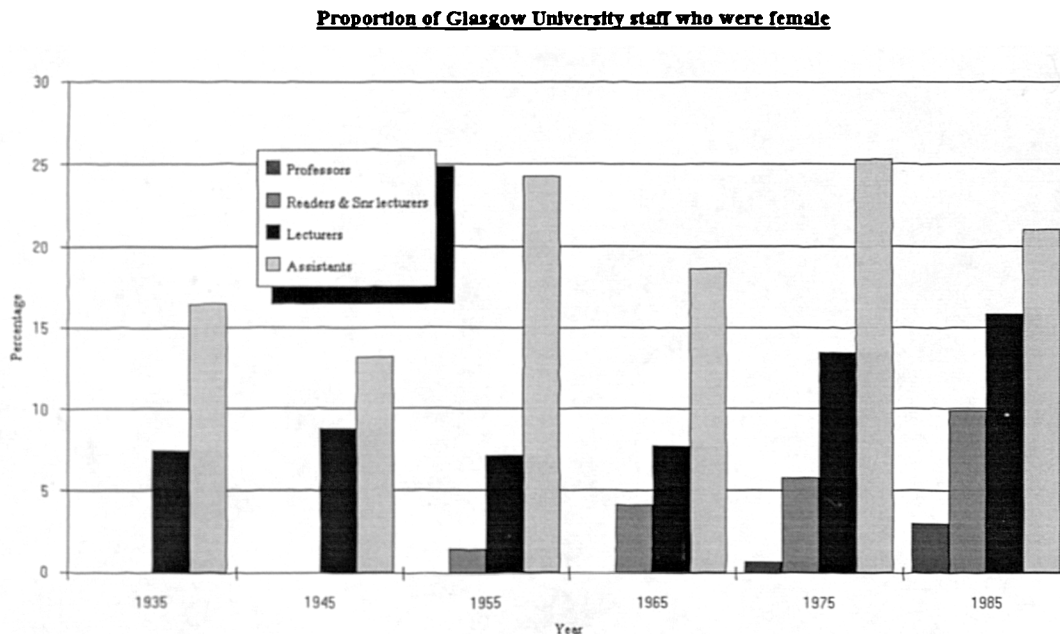
<sup>75</sup> Provisional returns of full-time post graduate numbers in 1977 showed a fall of c10% compared with the previous year, (822 compared with 912), attributed to the new fee levels. (Minutes of Court 1977-78 p. 31, Meeting of the Academic Development Committee, 30th November 1977).

<sup>76</sup> In 1975, c22% of postgraduates were from overseas compared to only c3% of undergraduates,

1980, 31% of Glasgow's postgraduates were women - the same percentage as for the rest of Britain.<sup>77</sup>

The small proportion of female postgraduates is traditionally cited as one of the main causes of the unfavourable representation of women on the staff of universities and we will now briefly consider the position of female staff at Glasgow University. Figure 1.8 below shows the proportions of female staff at the University for selected years from 1935 to 1985.

**Figure 1.8<sup>78</sup>**



Source: Glasgow University Calendars

The graph shows a concentration of women in the lowest staff grades with the highest proportion being employed at the assistant lecturer level in both 1935 and 1985. However, progress is also apparent, with an improvement in the proportion of women in the higher grades particularly noticeable in the 1970s

(Glasgow University's returns to the UGC, 1975).

<sup>77</sup> University Grants Committee, *Returns from Universities and University Colleges in receipt of Treasury Grant* (Cheltenham, 1972 & 1982).

and 1980s. In 1975 over 10% of lecturers were women and by 1985 over 15% were, whilst the proportion of female readers had doubled over the same period, and a small proportion were beginning to make it to the professorial grade (the first female professor was appointed in 1973<sup>79</sup>). It should also be noted that the distribution between different staffing grades changed greatly in the post-war period, with the increase being proportionately much more in the lecturer than the professorial grade. Whilst in 1938-39 professors formed 20% of the staff, in 1961-62 they formed 11% and in 1974-75, 10%. Therefore, women were perhaps doing better than it might seem, in that they were attaining a higher proportion of professorial appointments at a time when the overall staffing balance was shifting away from the professorial grade.

Clearly though, a pattern of female under-representation on the staff of the University persisted, and although the small numbers of women staying on for further academic research after their first degree was undoubtedly a significant cause, other influences were at work in the early post-war years. In particular, there operated what amounted to a marriage bar, with female lecturers expected to resign upon marriage. One female lecturer at the University remembers that in the early 1950s a young female colleague was “getting to the end of the temporary assistant scale and about to be promoted in the French Department to the lecturer’s scale, and in the summer she married an engineer and she just lost her job.”<sup>80</sup> However, the lecturer who recounted this tale had more luck herself, since she was, somewhat grudgingly, allowed to stay on as lecturer after her marriage in 1952. In this way she set a precedent at Glasgow University and she

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<sup>78</sup> The “Assistants” category includes both Assistant Lecturers and Research Assistants. (Figures courtesy of L. Richmond, Deputy Archivist).

<sup>79</sup> Professor Delphine Parrott in the Department of Bacteriology and Immunology. The first female professor to be appointed in Britain was Caroline Spurgeon in 1913.



was also the first woman to become a senior lecturer in the University in the mid-1960s, recalling that her department thought that in promoting her they were acting “with great daring.”

Whilst it has been noted that the proportion of women in more senior grades has increased somewhat in recent years, this process may have been inhibited to some extent by the staffing policies of the late 1970s and 1980s. As a result of successive funding cuts in the 1970s, the University decided it would achieve economies by reducing staff numbers where possible. In an attempt to cut staff numbers voluntarily, it introduced the Premature Retirement Compensation Scheme (PRCS), which had its greatest effect in the arts, where there were more female staff. By 1981, 22 applications for the PRCS were being dealt with, most of the staff losses being in arts, social sciences and divinity. However, at the same time, in the science and technology departments which were more male-dominated, the Government’s continued emphasis on science and technology allowed for the creation of a fixed number of “New Blood” and Information Technology posts for which individual universities were asked to put in a bid.<sup>80</sup> Glasgow’s bids resulted in the allocation of ten new blood posts and one IT post in 1983, followed by eleven new blood and two additional IT appointments the following year. As a result of staffing economies - which included the freezing of all vacant staff posts in 1981 - full-time staff numbers, which had risen in the University from 1002 in 1964/5 to 1612 by 1979/80, had dropped to 1587 two years later. Therefore, from a position of taking on large

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<sup>80</sup> Interview with female staff member, 2nd August 1995.

<sup>81</sup> Plans for the “New Blood” posts were unveiled in December 1982 when the Government announced that it would make available extra funds to recruit some 230 new lecturers in 1983-4, mainly in science, technology and medicine, with an upper age limit of 35. A further 349 New Blood posts were planned for 1984-5. Seventy IT posts were to be created in 1983-4 and 46 in 1984-5.

numbers of extra staff to cope with the student expansion in the early post-war decades, the staffing position was transformed in the later 1970s and 1980s with endeavours to cut staffing levels made in many subject areas. Inevitably student/staff ratios suffered - the *Newsletter* noting in 1984 that staff student ratios in almost all subjects had considerably worsened since 1979-80.<sup>82</sup>

In this new climate of austerity, economies also spilt over into building projects which often had to be scaled down or postponed (for example, we have already noted the postponement of a new arts building until it finally opened in 1983), and the University came to sound more and more desperate in its communications with the UGC. In 1981, Principal Williams commented in a letter to the UGC that “our own position seems so hopeless. Even with an over generous estimate of income from overseas students, our preliminary calculations show that by 1984 we shall have sustained a 15.8% cut in income.”<sup>83</sup>

Despite all these difficulties, the UGC was still able to stress that it had gained the impression of a “great and successful University,” after its visit in 1983 and it mentioned that it was particularly impressed with the student group which seemed to be “a responsible body conscious of the need to share in the current burdens of the University.”<sup>84</sup> But what kind of student made up this responsible student body? We have seen in this chapter that the post-war years saw the University expand its intake greatly and that, from about 1960, the expansion in female numbers was particularly noteworthy. We now need to go beyond the statistics of growth to examine the impact of increased recruitment on

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<sup>82</sup> Glasgow University *Newsletter*, No. 69, 10th May 1984. Student/staff ratios in science had been 9.66:1 in 1979-80 but were c12:1 by 1983-84, and in engineering had changed from 8.86:1 to 12.4:1 over the same period.

<sup>83</sup> Minutes of Court 1980-81, letter to Dr. Edward Parkes, Chairman of the UGC, 20th July 1981, p. 393. Alwyn Williams was Principal from 1976-87.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 1983-84, report by the UGC following its visit to the University on 25th November

the *type* of student who came to the University. The next chapter considers this issue and does so through an examination of the geographical, school and social backgrounds of Glasgow's students.

## Student Origins

A typical Glasgow University student in 1940 was likely to be middle-class, to have come from the city of Glasgow or its surrounding area and to have attended one of the local Education Authority (EA) or private schools. By the 1980s, it becomes far less easy to talk about a “typical” student. Although still drawing heavily on the local area, the University was more cosmopolitan than it had ever been, although the majority of its students still tended to be middle-class.

This chapter traces both the changes and consistencies in the origins of students, using official statistics and data from the questionnaire.<sup>1</sup> It is divided into three sections dealing with geographical, school and social background, although there is much inter-relation between these themes. We will begin by looking at geographical origins, since it was here that the most dramatic change occurred in the post-war era.

### Geographical background

At the start of the period, Glasgow University, more than any other in Scotland, and indeed Britain, served its local population. Figures compiled by the UGC show that in 1940 as many as three out of every four students at the University came from within a 30 mile radius of the city of Glasgow, and although the catchment area was to broaden out over the years, by the mid 1980s, over half (58%) of the student population still came from within this 30 mile radius.<sup>2</sup> Most universities in Britain had initially served their local area, but by 1940, in Britain as a whole, only about half of the total university students still came from within

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for details of the questionnaire. Data from the questionnaire was entered into a database, referred to as the Graduate Database.

<sup>2</sup> The decline in the local student population has continued, with recent figures for 1995-6 showing only 44.4% of students from within 30 miles (University of Glasgow, *Facts and*

30 miles of their chosen university.<sup>3</sup> The proportion was higher for Scotland, but even within a Scottish context Glasgow was especially local at this time, since only about two thirds of students in Scotland as a whole came from within the 30 mile zone.

As a result of its large local student population, Glasgow had correspondingly fewer students from more distant parts of Scotland, the rest of the Britain and from abroad. In 1940-41 it had (along with Aberdeen) the lowest proportion of overseas students in Scotland - 2% (compared to 7% in Edinburgh and a 6% average for Britain), as well as the lowest proportion of students from other parts of Britain - 21% (compared to well over a third for all the other Scottish universities).<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, the “within 30 miles” category provided by the UGC in its annual statistics stops in 1964, so it is not possible to make comparisons with the whole British university population after this date. Nonetheless, even by 1964, the trend nationally for students to travel further afield to university was clearly apparent, with under a quarter of British students now being recruited from a “local” area. Taking Scotland separately, the same decline in local recruitment was noticeable, but to a lesser extent: about 50% of Scottish students still lived locally; but again this hides substantial differences. St. Andrews and Edinburgh were the most cosmopolitan Scottish universities, with a local student population of only 20% and 37% respectively. Glasgow and its new neighbour Strathclyde retained stronger local connections, with 77% and 63% respectively coming from

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*Figures 1996).*

<sup>3</sup> University Grants Committee, *Returns from Universities and University Colleges in receipt of Treasury Grant, Academic Year 1940-41* (London, 1942).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

within 30 miles.<sup>5</sup> This local bias meant that the proportion of overseas students and students from other parts of Britain at Glasgow University remained the lowest in Scotland - 7% and 20% respectively in 1960, for example (compared to a 10% and 36% average for Scotland).

So it can be seen that Glasgow remained as unusually reliant on the local area for recruitment in the 1960s as it had been in the 1940s. More recent figures for the 1970s and 1980s compiled by the University show that this local bias persisted until the 1980s, but throughout that decade there was a significant drop in local recruitment, from just over 70% in 1980 to under 60% by 1985.<sup>6</sup> The period since 1970 has been one of great expansion (from 8,662 students in 1970 to over 13,000 in 1985), but this size increase has been almost entirely made up of students coming from outwith the local area. So although the proportion of students drawn from within 30 miles has declined in the 1980s, figure 2.1 shows that the actual *number* from the local area was only slightly lower in 1985 than it had been in 1970.<sup>7</sup> The overall population of the city of Glasgow and the Strathclyde region was declining at this time, so it can be seen that the popularity of Glasgow University for local applicants actually kept up well.<sup>8</sup>

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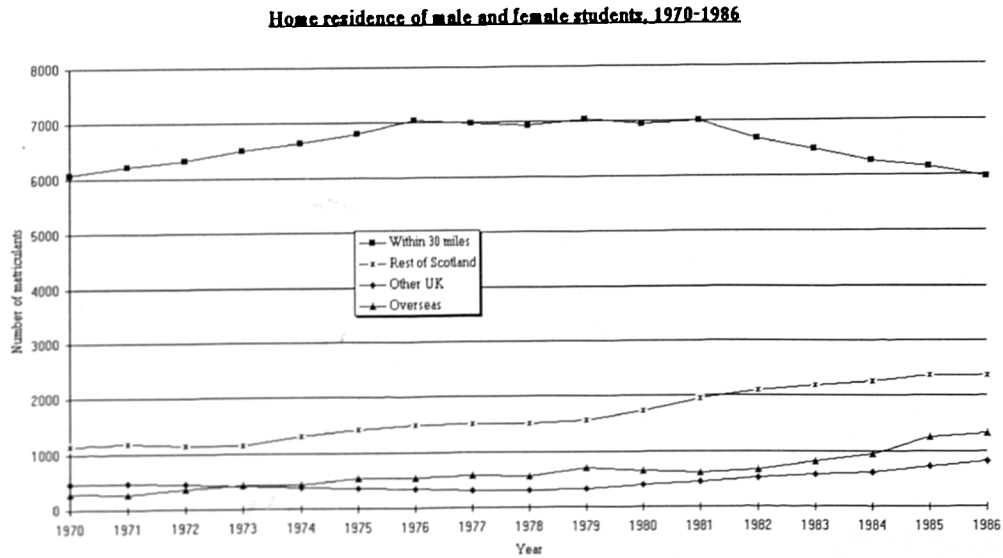
<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 1964-65, Cmnd. 3106 (London, 1966). Strathclyde received its university charter in 1964.

<sup>6</sup> Glasgow University Court, *Annual Reports*.

<sup>7</sup> Recent figures on geographical background show an increase in the local population, from 6,139 in 1985 to 6,796 in 1995, (University of Glasgow, *Facts and Figures 1996*).

<sup>8</sup> The population of the city of Glasgow declined from 982,315 in 1971 to 733,794 in 1985, whilst the population of the Strathclyde region declined from 2,575,514 to 2,358,727 over the same period. *Scottish Abstract of Statistics*, No. 1, 1971 (Edinburgh, 1971) and No. 16, 1987 (Edinburgh, 1987).

Figure 2.1



Source: Annual Reports of the University Court

All the geographical statistics presented so far have grouped men and women together, but it would be interesting to note whether there were any gender differences in terms of geographical background. One might expect, particularly in the early post-war years, that women would tend to be more local than men as a result of a reluctance on the part of parents to send daughters away from home for their education. UGC compiled figures are not divided along gender lines so it is not possible to determine from UK statistics to what extent this was the case. However, figures from the Graduate Database suggest that gender made very little difference in the early post-war decades at Glasgow University, with 84% of male and 87% of female graduates in the sample 1940-61 having parents who lived within 30 miles of the University.<sup>9</sup> Statistics on geographical background for the whole University population by gender are available for more recent years, and show broadly similar trends for men and

<sup>9</sup> These figures relate only to home graduates since the questionnaire was not sent to those living abroad, therefore they are higher than figures for the whole University population would be. The questionnaire asked graduates "where did your parents/guardians live when you came to Glasgow University?"

women, as figures 2.2 and 2.3 demonstrate.<sup>10</sup>

Figure 2.2

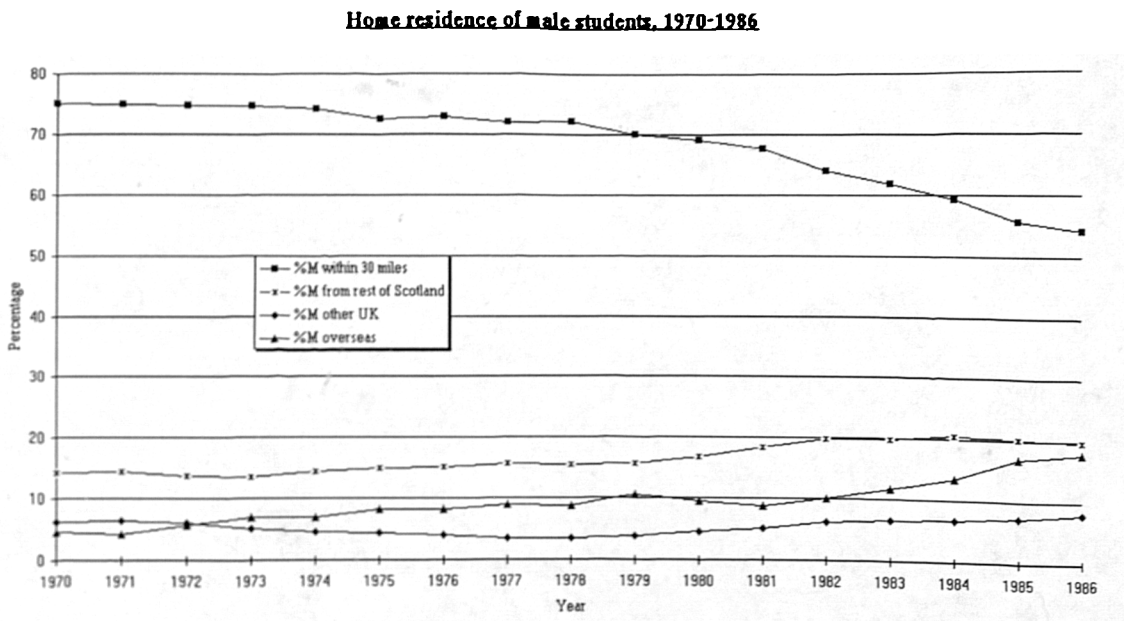
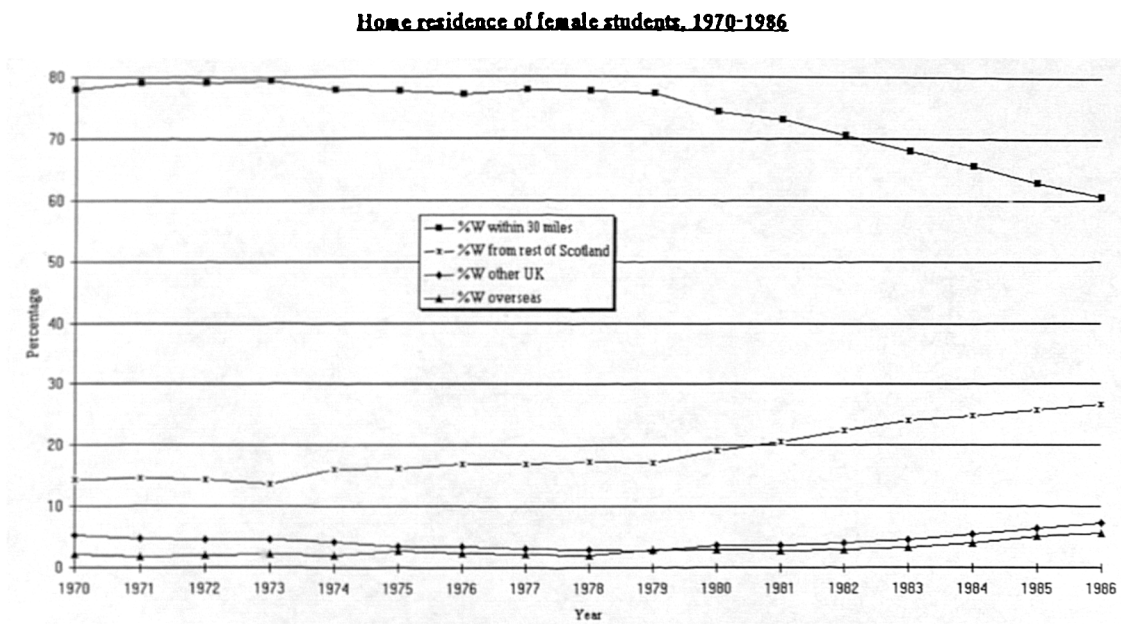


Figure 2.3



Source: Annual Reports of the University Court

It can be seen that for both men and women there was an increasing proportion of students coming from the three categories of: Scotland beyond the

<sup>10</sup> The annual report of Glasgow University Court provides figures on home residence by gender from 1970 to 1986.



30 mile radius, the rest of the UK and overseas. However, within these broad trends there were important gender differences, notably, women remained more local than men. Thus in 1986, over 60% of female students still came from within the 30 mile radius, compared to 54% for men; women were also more likely to come from the rest of Scotland - 27% doing so (20% for men). It can also be seen that the University's overseas recruitment drive was having more impact on men than women, with 18% of men and 6% of women coming from abroad in 1986 - this no doubt being a reflection of the sort of subjects popular with foreign students, particularly engineering.

These then are the broad statistical trends regarding the University's geographical recruitment. The University was following British trends generally towards increasingly national and indeed international recruitment, but at a much slower rate than elsewhere.<sup>11</sup> A distinctively local colour was retained even into recent decades, and it is important to try and pinpoint why this should have been the case.

The answer is not hard to find in the immediate post-war decades. Financial considerations constrained choice because Scottish local education authority grants were only made available for attendance at the local university. G.S. Osborne notes that:

“until the recommendations of the 1960 Anderson Committee brought about greater uniformity with England, the Scottish bursary regulations allowed education authorities to give an award for attendance at any university, but to limit the amount of the grant to the sum which would have been paid had the student attended the university nearest to his home.”<sup>12</sup>

Grants tended to be small, which also encouraged students to stay at home, as did

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<sup>11</sup> With the exception of Strathclyde University which also remained very dependent on local

the very poor residential provision at the University.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, poor residential provision was a feature of all the Scottish universities at this time, with the exception of St. Andrews, which had established an Oxbridge residential collegiate model.<sup>14</sup>

These factors made it difficult to choose any but the local university. Nevertheless, had the University been perceived as a poor or inferior institution, students would have made the effort to go elsewhere, so the issue of reputation is an important one. Several comments made by questionnaire respondents make it clear that in the early post-war decades, Glasgow was seen as an institution with a high reputation and a Glasgow degree as a useful credential. A 1940s graduate noted that “at the time of graduating, Glasgow University had a very high international reputation. This reputation was extremely helpful in obtaining employment overseas...,”<sup>15</sup> whilst another from the 1950s recalled that “Glasgow’s law degree was considered one of the best in the country, a help in one’s career.”<sup>16</sup>

Therefore, in the early post-war years, with a well respected institution on one’s doorstep and a strong financial incentive to go to it, there seemed little reason to look elsewhere, especially if, as we shall see in the next section on school background, all one’s friends from school were going to Glasgow. What needs more explanation is why the University should have continued to remain so locally-based after the introduction of universal grants in the 1960s, which

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recruitment.

<sup>12</sup> G.S. Osborne, *Scottish and English Schools* (London, 1966), p. 236.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 3, *Student Life*, for more on residential provision.

<sup>14</sup> In the mid 1960s, St. Andrews was able to provide accommodation for over 60% of its students, compared with under 7% at Glasgow University. (Glasgow University Court, *Annual Report 1964-5*).

<sup>15</sup> Male (ordinary) arts graduate, 1947, from questionnaire, No. 1379.

<sup>16</sup> Female (ordinary) arts and law graduate, 1955, from questionnaire, No. 1428.

eliminated the need to go to the nearest university. Certainly both Senate and Court were apprehensive about the effects of the new and more ample arrangements for student finance and for the first time the prospect of large numbers of students using their grant to take them to a university elsewhere in Scotland, or even South of the border, seemed a realistic and worrying prospect. Suddenly, Glasgow's paucity of student facilities - in particular, its small stock of residences looked worrying. Principal Hetherington commented that "considerations of cost will now make it easy for West of Scotland students to seek admission to other universities...we are bound to recognise that Glasgow is not well placed in view of the social experience of incoming students."<sup>17</sup>

However, as we have seen, there was no mass exodus of West of Scotland students to universities in England and other parts of Scotland. In explaining why students continued to opt for the local university several factors can be identified, not least of them being the weight of tradition. For school leavers whose parents or other relatives had been to Glasgow University, the influence of family tradition could often be a powerful one. These traditions could often involve very extended family networks indeed - as is shown by the following comment from a 1960s graduate:

"I was a third generation female to attend (Glasgow University) and was following considerable family tradition. I had three cousins in my year and others followed. My children also graduated from Glasgow University. I think my son was about the 21st or 22nd member of the family at the University."<sup>18</sup>

And as another graduate from the same decade put it "there was never any doubt as to which university I would go to - my father and his brother went to Glasgow

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<sup>17</sup> Hetherington's papers, 1961, DC 8/ 791

- so did my brother and cousins, and now in turn my two elder daughters.”<sup>19</sup> Indeed, figures from the Graduate Database show that in every post-war decade, a significant proportion of graduates had fathers and/or mothers who had preceded them to Gilmorehill. In each decade from 1940 to 1980, 16-18% of graduates in the sample had had a parent at the University, although the proportion dropped quite significantly in the 1980s to 10%. Therefore a fairly constant proportion of graduates would have had the influence and advice of a parent who had been to the University right up into recent decades.

In the next section we will also see that strong links between many of the “good” local schools and the University were maintained up to the present, perpetuating a tendency for whole sixth forms to come up to the University together. The following two comments were made by graduates who had been at Glasgow as recently as the 1980s: “as with many local pupils, Glasgow University was the first choice - reflecting a long tradition of commuting daily to university,”<sup>20</sup> and “I attended university with most of my friends from school. It was a natural progression for us.”<sup>21</sup> This tradition may have been strengthened by the formation in 1976 of the Schools Liaison Committee, set up to increase contact between the University and schools. Possibly lack of information about other available options also played a part, one 1978 graduate commenting that “it was the only University I’d really heard of. You just went to the one up the road.”<sup>22</sup>

D. McCrone highlights an additional factor which may have been

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<sup>18</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1962, from questionnaire, No. 1366.

<sup>19</sup> Female (ordinary) science graduate, 1965, from questionnaire, No. 1661.

<sup>20</sup> Male (honours) geography and archaeology graduate, 1982, from questionnaire, No. 436.

<sup>21</sup> Male (honours) social sciences graduate, 1984, from questionnaire, No. 616.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with novelist Janice Galloway, who graduated from Glasgow University in 1978, in *Avenue*, No. 21, January 1997.

influential. He notes that both Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities tended to take in higher proportions from fifth year, and it may be that younger entrants prefer to live at home and attend their local university to a greater extent than slightly older students.<sup>23</sup> It was also the case that continued poor residential provision militated against an influx of students from further afield. By 1979, all the universities in Scotland, apart from Strathclyde and Glasgow, had over a quarter of their students in residences, with Stirling and St. Andrews leading the way with 62% and 72% respectively in halls. This situation compares with little over 10% in halls of residence at Glasgow and Strathclyde.<sup>24</sup>

We have looked at the reasons why local students chose the University. But a very important factor in recruitment hinged on the choices made by the University itself, in other words the admissions policies it pursued. At the start of the period under discussion, the University was quite happy with a predominantly local student base, and it actually pursued policies to preserve this local bias. There was little outside interest in these admissions policies in the 1940s and 1950s, but suddenly in the 1960s, the squeeze on places in that decade caused the Scottish media to take an interest in the geographical origins of students. The first UCCA report of 1961-3 noted that “present pressures have invested the problem of getting into a university with an emotional quality unknown in the past,”<sup>25</sup> and universities began to find themselves in the spotlight as their raised entry standards led to qualified applicants who would have gained

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<sup>23</sup> David M<sup>c</sup>Crone, “Anglicising Scotland: University Admissions” in *Scottish Government Yearbook* 1990, p. 204.

Figures from the Graduate Database show that for MA and BSc ordinary graduates in the sample, 28% of them were aged 17 or under at matriculation in the 1940-61 cohort, and although this dropped quite considerably in the 1962-84 cohort, 17% of matriculants were still aged 17 or younger.

<sup>24</sup> *Statistics of Education* 1979, Vol. 6, Universities (London, 1982).

<sup>25</sup> The Universities Central Council on Admissions, *First Report, 1961-3* (London, 1964).

a place in former years being rejected.

In this climate it became important for the Scottish universities to prove that they were not rejecting Scottish school leavers in favour of applicants from further afield, and in particular, from England. The whole issue of recruitment policies was discussed in depth at a meeting in 1963 between the four Scottish principals and at this meeting, Glasgow, as well as Aberdeen and St. Andrews, recorded that they gave preference to applicants from their own areas, with preference thereafter to the rest of Scotland.<sup>26</sup> Sir Edward Appleton, Principal of Edinburgh University, said that it had been found necessary in Edinburgh to introduce a quota system with a view to maintaining the percentage of Scottish students at not lower than 61% in an attempt to check the increase in English entrants and St. Andrews too, commented on its high English proportion and suggested that it would take more West of Scotland applicants if they were available. As we have seen, Glasgow was the most local of the Scottish universities at this time, and so was able to dodge some of the criticism. Thus the *English Students Worry Scottish Universities* article which appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* in 1965 exonerated Glasgow from the charge of taking too many English entrants, noting that Glasgow had “recently followed a policy aimed at giving better opportunities to Scottish applicants.”<sup>27</sup> Indeed, rather than losing its local bias in favour of English or foreign students, Glasgow seemed to be becoming even more local at this time, another *Herald* article noting a rise of some 7% in the proportion from within 30 miles between 1961 and 1964. The article attributed this to the twin impact of university policy in encouraging the local applicant coupled with an increase in the number and quality of local

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<sup>26</sup> Minutes of Court 1961-62, (Appendix), *Report of the Conference of Representatives of the*

applicants.<sup>28</sup>

As we have seen in Chapter One, it was partly in response to the increased pressure for places in the 1960s (which highlighted the need for some nationwide rationalisation and the need to be able to gather statistics on how many students were actually unable to gain a university place), that the UCCA system was introduced in 1961. The process of applying to university had become increasingly more complicated as faculties within each university began to introduce individual entrance requirements, and the UCCA system helped to simplify this procedure.<sup>29</sup> Through standardising application procedures to universities countrywide, UCCA had important implications for student mobility. Interestingly, Glasgow University, with its continued reliance on local school leavers, felt no need to join the system fully, although it agreed to partial membership for applicants from England. So Glasgow remained outside of this organisation which facilitated the “nationalisation of student entry”<sup>30</sup> and this helped to keep numbers of non-Scots lower than they might otherwise have been. The two Scottish universities which relied most heavily on English applicants entered into full membership - Edinburgh University immediately, and St. Andrews in Autumn 1967, but Aberdeen and Strathclyde also went for partial membership.<sup>31</sup>

Despite remaining outside of the UCCA, there was concern in the

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*University Courts*, 17th November 1961.

<sup>27</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 22nd November 1965.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 6th November 1965.

<sup>29</sup> A sign of the times was the abolition of the Scottish Attestation of Fitness in 1968. It had for many years had effectively been meaningless because individual university faculties were setting their own entrance standards.

<sup>30</sup> A. H. Halsey, *The Decline of Donnish Dominion* (Oxford, 1992), p.76.

<sup>31</sup> Strathclyde University joined UCCA fully in 1967, but then reverted to partial membership in 1969 because it felt that the requirements of the UCCA procedure placed it at a disadvantage in respect of those applicants who were also candidates for Glasgow University. It rejoined in the same year as Glasgow University, 1984.

University that the workings of the system might lead to local applicants going elsewhere since, through the incidence of dates of conditional acceptance by a university in UCCA, Glasgow candidates could be committed to places in English universities when there could be a place for them in Glasgow.<sup>32</sup> The fear of a drain of talent southwards was voiced again in the 1970s. In 1978, the University's Academic Development Committee expressed concern that able West Central Scotland students were migrating south, depriving local higher education institutions of an important fraction of their potential home-based entrants, and this "could have a profound effect on the general quality of the intake unless the predominance of the home-based student was to abate in favour of able entrants from outside the region."<sup>33</sup> These concerns were fuelled by declining local population, whilst financial considerations also contributed towards changed attitudes towards recruitment from different geographical areas in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Taking demographic considerations first, it became clear that the local market was shrinking, with pressure on places easing somewhat in the 1970s. By the end of that decade declining birth rates and government predictions of falling university applications in the future, coupled with the loss of population from Glasgow itself in the 1970s, persuaded the University that it should cast its net more widely. There were moves towards attracting students from more distant parts of Scotland and England with, for example, successful recruitment drives in Orkney and Shetland to encourage school leavers from these islands to come to

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<sup>32</sup> General Council, *Annual Report 1966*, report of the Business Committee.

<sup>33</sup> Minutes of Court 1977-78, (Appendix): Meeting of the Academic Development Committee, 20th April 1978. The Academic Development Committee was first convened in 1970. It met 5 times a year and consisted primarily of the Principal, Clerk of Senate and the Deans of each faculty. Its function was to plan academic policy and, increasingly, to work out ways of saving money.



Glasgow rather than taking the more traditional route to Aberdeen University.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile, to encourage recruitment from South of the border, the Schools Liaison Committee decided to invite teachers and careers advisers from schools in the North of England to the University in 1979.<sup>35</sup> This initiative also seems to have borne fruit, since as we have seen in figures 2.2 and 2.3, there was a small proportionate increase in students from outwith Scotland but within the UK in the 1980s.

There were also moves to attract students from even farther afield as financial considerations began to make applications from abroad increasingly welcome. Whilst in the early post-war decades there were no particular initiatives to encourage foreigners to apply to the University, and the proportion of overseas students was, as we have seen, very low, new initiatives were soon to increase this proportion substantially. Successive government alterations to the fee status of foreign students meant that they became an increasingly attractive financial prospect, with the 1967 decision to increase their fees relative to those paid by home students setting a precedent for successive government-imposed rises in the following decades, the increase announced in 1979 by the new Thatcher government being particularly sharp.<sup>36</sup> Government cutbacks in annual grant allocations to the universities at the same time forced them to regard the income from overseas students as increasingly necessary. It was in this climate that Glasgow University introduced an overseas recruitment initiative in the spring of 1981, with selected members of staff despatched abroad to publicise the University. The results were encouraging, with almost 12% of the total full-time

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<sup>34</sup> Interview with Professor A.L. Brown, 6th June 1996.

<sup>35</sup> Minutes of Court 1978-79, 7th February 1979, p. 174.

<sup>36</sup> From 1979 overseas students were required to pay fees covering the full cost of tuition.

students in 1985 coming from abroad.<sup>37</sup> This brought Glasgow into line with the Scottish average and marked a substantial increase over the 7% of five years earlier.

With the growing emphasis on UK-wide and overseas recruitment, it now made sense to join the UCCA scheme fully. Aberdeen University joined fully in 1982, Strathclyde followed suit in 1984, and Glasgow, under pressure from local schools<sup>38</sup> and realising how unwise it was to remain the only university outside the system, also joined in that year. Joining UCCA certainly helped Glasgow shift to a more cosmopolitan population, with recent figures showing that about 17% of its students are from England, Wales and Northern Ireland and 13% from abroad.<sup>39</sup>

Partly as a result of long established traditions and partly because of deliberate recruiting policies, it is noticeable that overseas students tended to come in clusters from particular areas. In 1985, for example, a third of the students from abroad came from either Malaysia, Hong Kong or Norway. They were also unevenly distributed throughout the University, forming about 27% of the undergraduates in the Engineering Faculty but only 0.8% of Arts Faculty undergraduates.<sup>40</sup> Postgraduates were also more likely to be foreign than undergraduates, a postgraduate being more than twice as likely to be from abroad.

It is important to note that the overseas recruitment drive provided peculiarly difficult problems for a university which historically was not well placed to cater for foreigners (or indeed any non-local students), given its long

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<sup>37</sup> Glasgow University Court, *Annual Report 1985-6*.

<sup>38</sup> Letter from the University Registrar, J.M. Black, 24th June 1996.

<sup>39</sup> University of Glasgow, *Facts and Figures 1996*.

<sup>40</sup> Glasgow University *Newsletter*, No. 73, 6th December 1984.

tradition of non-residential provision. A foreign student was much more likely to be attracted to a university that could provide residential accommodation and so the recruitment drive had an important impact on university accommodation policy. Sustained attempts were made to guarantee every foreign student accommodation, at least for the first year of study. These efforts are described in more detail in the accommodation section of Chapter Three, *Student Life*, but it is worth mentioning here that the issue resulted in university policies being at odds with UGC recommendations. Since the 1970s, the UGC had made it clear that no government money would be forthcoming for the building of residences and following its visit to the University in 1983, it advised Glasgow to concentrate on local recruitment rather than attempting to woo those from further afield because of the problems of financing new residences.<sup>41</sup> Despite this recommendation, the University considered that the residential outlay needed to attract foreign students was one that had to be met.

Efforts to increase overseas recruitment were mirrored at all British universities, (12% of students in Britain as a whole came from abroad in 1980, compared to 6% in 1940<sup>42</sup>), and brought criticism in their wake. The cries of “too many English” which had been voiced in the 1960s now resurfaced as complaints against the number of foreigners in the universities. For instance, in 1982, the University Court received a letter from the MP Donald Dewar pointing out that many of his constituents were worried that Scottish school leavers were being deprived of places by increased overseas recruitment.<sup>43</sup> Again, the root of the problem was a squeeze on university places, since although there were fewer

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<sup>41</sup> Minutes of Court 1983-84, 14th December 1983, p. 103.

<sup>42</sup> University Grants Committee, *Returns from Universities and University Colleges in receipt of Treasury Grant 1940* (London, 1942) and *Statistics of Education 1980* (Cheltenham, 1982).

<sup>43</sup> Minutes of Court 1982-83, 20th October 1982, p. 28.

school leavers due to falling birth rates, rising unemployment had led to a growing awareness of the value of higher education so that proportionately there was a greater number seeking university entrance. Echoing the response of the 1960s to this increased pressure, entrance requirements were raised successively throughout the 1980s, particularly in the Arts Faculty, in order to keep student numbers within the strict limits set by the UGC.<sup>44</sup> University admission officers now had to perform a delicate balancing act in order to reach overseas student targets whilst avoiding any overshoot on the UGC imposed ceiling for total student numbers.

### School background

The post-war trend towards a steadily increasing proportion of students whose home address was either abroad, in more distant parts of Scotland, or in the rest of the UK was inevitably reflected in a wider geographical spread of school backgrounds. However, along with more dispersed school origins, the actual *type* of school attended was also changing, with more students from a wider spread of Education Authority (EA) and comprehensive schools as well as denominational schools, and somewhat less from the fee-paying grant-aided sector. This was a direct result of government education policy at secondary level, the most influential aspects of which were, as indicated in Chapter 1, the 1945 Education Act, the raising of the school leaving age, exam reform and comprehensivisation in the 1960s.

Indeed, the number, social background and even religion of the University's students were intimately bound up with the extent and type of

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<sup>44</sup> Minutes of Senate, 1980s, *passim*.

secondary school provision available. In the first half of the twentieth century, when school provision was far from universal (and there were fewer university places), the chances were far less than they are today of a child reaching the standard necessary for university entry. Before 1945, secondary education in Scotland was based on selection at age twelve to determine who would gain a full secondary education and who would just enter the Advanced Division. In this way, the university population was kept low, since a limited number of school pupils gained the full secondary education which would give them a chance of obtaining university entrance qualifications. Even the 1945 Education Act (which ensured that access to secondary education could no longer be determined by stage or attainment, but was to be determined by age) did not eliminate the bi-partite division of secondary education which continued in junior and senior secondary schooling.<sup>45</sup> As a result, in the early post-war years pressure for university entry was not great and universities had to do little in the way of selection because the schools effectively did this for them.<sup>46</sup>

As a result of the balance between numbers applying for university entry and the number of places available, M<sup>c</sup>Pherson and Neave note that “many Scots doubted till late in the day that Scotland needed a Robbins Report.”<sup>47</sup> In 1954, for example, only 6.5% of the age group in Scotland went onto any form of higher education at all with just over half of this group (3.4%) entering university.<sup>48</sup> The extent of university provision in England and Wales, which stood at 3.1%, was similar. The gender breakdown is interesting though. In Scotland more women than men (6.9% compared to 6.1%) went into higher

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<sup>45</sup> Andrew M<sup>c</sup>Pherson, “Schooling” in *People and Society in Scotland, Vol. 3, 1914-1990* (Edinburgh, 1992), p. 91.

<sup>46</sup> Apart from the pressure created by returning ex-servicemen in the late 1940s.

<sup>47</sup> A. M<sup>c</sup>Pherson and Guy Neave, *The Scottish Sixth* (Berkshire, 1976), p. 61.

education, although of these 4.6%, of the men did so in the university sector compared to only 2.3% of the women. However in England and Wales only 5.3% of women made higher education and only 1.7% of these got to university. This gap in higher education provision widened over the next decade so that by 1962, 10.5% of Scottish women were entering higher education, and 6.9% in England. The proportions of both English and Scottish women entering university had not risen greatly, but Scottish women still fared better, with 3.2% of those undertaking some form of higher education doing so at university compared to 2.4% in England.<sup>49</sup>

These figures, taken from the vast array of statistics gathered by the Robbins Committee show that, although the secondary schooling system kept the numbers who attained the standard necessary for university entry low, somewhat higher participation levels existed among Scottish students, particularly women, compared to England and Wales. In his examination of the Scottish schooling system, M<sup>c</sup>Pherson notes that a higher proportion of Scottish pupils were gaining a full secondary education compared to England and Wales,<sup>50</sup> whilst Shirley Cunningham has pointed to several factors peculiar to the Scottish education system which benefited Scots girls: in particular, the relatively generous provision of free or cheap co-education secondary schools, and the distinctive Scottish examination system.<sup>51</sup> One of the questions asked of graduates in the questionnaire concerned their school background, so it is possible to test whether

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<sup>48</sup> The remainder went into teacher training or further education colleges.

<sup>49</sup> Report of the Committee on *Higher Education. Appendix 1: The Demand For Places in Higher Education*, Cmnd. 2154-I, p. 148-149.

<sup>50</sup> Andrew M<sup>c</sup>Pherson, 1992, op. cit. He notes that "by the early 1960s, it is estimated, 38% of the Scottish age-group was admitted to a selective secondary course (including private schools) as compared with 30% gaining admission to places in grammar schools, direct grant schools or private schools in England and Wales," p. 91.

<sup>51</sup> Shirley Cunningham, "Women's Access to Higher Education in Scotland," in S. Acker et al,

the schooling of Glasgow University graduates did in fact conform to this picture of cheap co-education.

Responses to the questionnaire do indeed support this view, and show that a large proportion of both male and female Glasgow University students came from inexpensive, mixed schools. These were the local selective secondary schools - the academies or high schools such as Hamilton, Ayr and Kilmarnock Academies or Hillhead High. Indeed these four schools alone contributed 12% of graduates in the Graduate Database between 1940 and 1961 (the first half of the time span covered by the survey). They were Education Authority controlled mixed grammar schools, which although not free, usually charged only small fees - several graduates noting that the fees were “nominal.”<sup>52</sup> In all, just over 80% of women and just under 90% of male graduates 1940-61 went to a school of this type.<sup>53</sup>

The remainder of the questionnaire respondents (roughly one fifth of women and one tenth of men) had been educated in what may be termed ‘private’ schools which can be divided into two categories: direct grant schools and independent schools. Direct grant schools received grants direct from the Scottish Education Department; they charged much higher fees than the grammar schools and they tended to be single-sex.<sup>54</sup> The Glasgow direct grant schools

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(eds.), *Women and Education* (London, 1984), p. 181. Cunningham’s arguments are returned to later in this chapter.

<sup>52</sup> By 1968, only 5 Glasgow EA secondary schools were still charging fees. J. Highet, *A School of One’s Choice A Sociological Study of the Fee-paying Schools of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1969).

<sup>53</sup> This proportion includes those graduates who had been to an English grammar school. A similar picture for Birmingham University was found by Roy Lowe and Alison Gaukroger, who note that “a glance at the school backgrounds of students in different Faculties suggests, perhaps predictably, that the vast majority of entrants to a civic university such as Birmingham were ex-grammar school pupils.” Roy Lowe and Alison Gaukroger, *The recruitment of students to English Civic universities in the post-war era* (paper presented at the Ghent Conference of Vice Chancellors, 1992), p. 24.

<sup>54</sup> The girls’ schools in Glasgow which fall into this category are Hutchesons’ Girls’ Grammar, Craigholme School, Laurel Bank School, The Park School, Westbourne School for Girls. The

were very important feeders to the University, and were far more important than the independent schools. Of the small Scottish independent sector, G.S. Osborne notes that “the more important of (these schools) are English in every sense of the term except the geographic. Modelled on the English public schools, they prepare their pupils for the English GCE and for admission to English universities.”<sup>55</sup> This sector was always far less important in Scotland than in England and, as the quote makes clear, they did not in any case tend to send many pupils to the Scottish universities. The smallness of the Scottish independent sector is indicated by UCCA figures on school background which show that in 1968, 12.6% of all accepted UK home candidates had been to an independent school in England or Wales, but only 0.9% had been to an independent school in Scotland.<sup>56</sup> There were in fact twelve independent schools in Glasgow, but only one, the boys school Glasgow Academy, took secondary pupils.<sup>57</sup> Nonetheless, this school did achieve an importance in terms of university success out of all proportion with its size, since 4% of male questionnaire respondents 1940-61 had been educated there.

Osborne draws attention to an important difference between the Scottish and English secondary system. He notes that despite the pre-1960s division of secondary schooling between EA grammar schools and fee-paying direct grant schools, there was in Scotland “less tendency to distinguish certain schools by their social cachet rather than their academic prestige.”<sup>58</sup> Thus Scottish grammar schools were not automatically seen as inferior to the fee-paying sector and, as

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boys' schools are Hutchesons' Boys' Grammar, Kelvinside Academy and St. Aloysius' College.

<sup>55</sup> G.S. Osborne, *op. cit.* p. 211-12.

<sup>56</sup> UCCA, *Statistical Supplement to the Seventh Report 1968-9* (Cheltenham, 1970).

<sup>57</sup> See S. Leslie Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

<sup>58</sup> G.S. Osborne, *op. cit.*, p. 212.



we have seen, the success of the grammar schools in getting their pupils into university could rival that of the fee-paying schools. Of the top five schools most frequently attended by female graduates 1940-61, three were fee-paying, but two were local grammar schools.

It should be noted that no matter what sector of the secondary education system is examined - grammar, direct grant or independent - almost all of the schools concerned were non-denominational. A separate Catholic secondary sector existed, but historically Catholic schools had tended to be poorer in terms of resources, teaching standards and staff-pupil ratios. It was not surprising then, that relatively few Catholic students should find their way through the University gates. Between 1940 and 1961, only 7% of questionnaire respondents recorded that they had been to a denominational school (8% of women and 6% of men), whereas roughly a quarter of the population in Glasgow are estimated to have been Catholic at this time.<sup>59</sup>

Therefore, we have a picture in the early post-war years of a majority of students coming from the inexpensive, mixed, selective, non-denominational Glasgow schools, although about 10% of male and 20% of female students had attended a direct grant (or independent) school. The links between many of these local grammar and direct grant schools and the University were well established. As one graduate from Hamilton Academy put it: "going to university was natural - the whole class did, and to Glasgow, without really thinking of alternatives,"<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> James Darragh, "The Catholic Population of Scotland, 1878-1977," in David M<sup>c</sup>Roberts (ed.), *Modern Scottish Catholicism 1878-1978* (Glasgow, 1979), pp. 211-247.

His estimates for the Catholic population of Glasgow are:-

1931 - 294,200, 23.7% of Glasgow's population

1951 - 321,300, 25.6%

1971 - 317,900, 28%

1977 - 293,400 (% not available).

<sup>60</sup> Female (honours) arts graduate, 1962, from questionnaire, No. 1802.

whilst another from the same school said “my choice of Glasgow was due to the tradition at my school, where most of the teachers were Glasgow graduates and the bursary competition was taken very seriously.”<sup>61</sup> Indeed, an article in the *Glasgow Herald* in the 1970s felt that these strong traditional ties between local schools and the University “lead some to talk of Glasgow’s tradition as ‘incestuous,’ passed from successful father to aspiring son, from head master to star pupil.”<sup>62</sup>

It is worth noting that some questionnaire respondents have commented on the impact socially which these strong ties between the University and local schools could have. Pupils who had all come up from one of the local schools together had less incentive to mix with new students; groups from local schools, particularly the private ones, could be intimidating to “outsiders.” One graduate from the 1960s remembered “when I arrived from fifth year at my local school I was very aware that the former pupils from the Glasgow fee-paying schools were much more confident. They knew how the University operated and the personalities on the staff.”<sup>63</sup> Another from the 1940s commented “I did not find university unfriendly - just indifferent to lone students not from the High School, Glasgow Academy etc. In my final year at Shawlands (School), only two pupils went to university.”<sup>64</sup> Apparently there could also be rivalry between different school groups. Iain Hamilton QC remembered that he did not join the Liberal Club because it was full of ex-Glasgow Academy pupils and he had been to Allan Glen’s, so he ended up in the Scottish Nationalist Association.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Female (honours) science graduate, 1975, from questionnaire, No. 268.

<sup>62</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 3rd October 1978.

<sup>63</sup> Female (honours) biochemistry graduate, 1968, from questionnaire, No. 120.

<sup>64</sup> Male (war honours) arts graduate, 1942, from questionnaire, No. 48.

<sup>65</sup> Iain Hamilton, QC, who came up to University as an ex-serviceman in 1948. Seminar on *Student Politics* at Glasgow University to commemorate the eleventh jubilee of the University

We have already noted that in the post-war period the secondary education system underwent substantial reform, and this was to have an important impact on the school backgrounds of graduates. Of particular importance was exam reform. In 1961 the SCE O grade was introduced to be taken in fourth year before the Highers of fifth year, thus providing an intermediate stage for pupils to work towards.<sup>66</sup> This had the immediate effect of increasing numbers of pupils staying on at school past the minimum leaving age. In addition, Sixth Year Studies were introduced in 1968 to provide an extra year after Highers. It will be recalled that one of the features of the Scottish education system identified by Cunningham as being of benefit to girls was the examination system. She identifies the narrower gap in standard, as well as time, between the O grade and Higher as benefiting girls.<sup>67</sup> The comprehensive reorganisation which accompanied examination reform in the 1960s was also important for girls. The reorganisation created the free, neighbourhood comprehensive which finally eliminated the division of secondary education into junior and senior secondary schooling, with its attendant high wastage rates. According to M<sup>c</sup>Pherson, the comprehensive “did give a particular boost to the attainment of female and working-class pupils.”<sup>68</sup> Coupled with the successive raising of the leaving age (to 15 in 1947 and 16 in 1973), these reforms in schooling and the exam system had enormous implications for overall numbers of applicants

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in 2001 (23rd May 1996).

<sup>66</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Pherson notes of the introduction of the SCE O grade that “secondary schooling was immediately opened up. Rates of staying-on rose. Between 1964 and 1974 the percentages of school leavers gaining certification increased from 27 to 66...,” *op. cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>67</sup> Highers are taken one year after the SCE O grade and are easier than the 2 year English A level. According to Cunningham, “The narrower gap in standard as well as in time may very well provide a more attractive stepping stone to girls for two reasons - the lack of confidence in their own academic ability at this age...and the younger age at which the examinations are taken - 17, or even 16 compared to the more usual 18 in England. The closer girls are to adulthood and to facing the implications of a dual role of work and marriage, the greater the pressure to leave the formal education system...,” Shirley Cunningham, *op. cit.* p. 182.

presenting themselves for university entry. This was the “trend” already noted in Chapter One, exacerbated in its effects by the population “bulge” of the early 1960s.

What effects did these wide-ranging school reforms have on the school background of graduates in recent decades? Given the extent of the reforms, one would expect to see significant changes in school backgrounds from the 1960s, with more students coming from the new comprehensive schools and a corresponding lessening of the proportion from the private fee-paying schools. However, the proportion of graduates in the second cohort (1962-84) who had attended either a direct grant or independent school did not change dramatically. There was a drop of c5% amongst female graduates (from c20% to c15%), whilst the proportion of male graduates who had been educated at a school of this type remained the same at 10%. The well-known local direct grant schools continued to exert an influence out of all proportion to their size and whilst, for example, between 1940-61, 9% of female graduate respondents had been to Hutchesons’ Girls’ Grammar School, between 1962 and 1984, this had only dropped to 7%. The continued success of the Glasgow grant-aided schools is perhaps not surprising. In his study of these schools in the late 1960s, J. Highet found that despite significant fee-increases, post-war competition for places had intensified, and at the time of publication of his book (1969) the school rolls for most of the grant-aided schools were at an all-time high.<sup>69</sup> The fact that these were selective and academically successful schools (sending at least one third, and in some cases over half, of their pupils to university), coupled with the continued

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<sup>68</sup> McPherson, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>69</sup> For example, considering some of the grant-aided schools for girls in Glasgow: Laurel Bank School’s roll rose from 458 in 1947 to 608 in 1964-5, that of The Park School rose from 386 in 1946-7 to 507 in 1968 and that of Craigholme School rose from 454 in 1964-5 to 575 in

popularity of the local university amongst their pupils, meant that such schools continued to do proportionately very well as feeders to Glasgow University.

It is also interesting to note that the interviews Highet conducted with Glasgow headmistresses as part of his research in the 1960s, brought to light the increased aspirations of female pupils, and of their parents. Highet gained the strong impression that, especially at the girls' grant-aided schools, the proportion of academically-inclined pupils had increased since the war. He concluded that "this, and the associated rise in their rolls, reflects a change which is perhaps the outstanding post-war development affecting these schools - a change on the part of parents towards their daughters schooling."<sup>70</sup> However, this change was not confined to the direct grant schools and he observed a similar phenomenon at EA schools such as Hillhead High. His examination of this school revealed that whilst more boys than girls traditionally went to university, in a "recent year" as many girls as boys had applied to university and, for the first time, more girls had gone to university than to teacher training college. This helps explain the take-off in female numbers at the University which we observed in Chapter One in the 1960s and 1970s.

EA schools such as Hillhead High, as well as the new comprehensives, began to strengthen their position as feeders to the University in recent decades. EA schools had always provided the bulk of the University's students and although they did not increase their proportion much further, there was a significant broadening out in the number of these schools represented at the University. Whilst in the 1940-61 cohort 40 EA schools in the Glasgow area had sent one or more pupils to Glasgow University, by 1962-84, 67 EA schools were

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1968. (J. Highet, *op. cit.*, p. 79).

represented. And by the 1980s, a list of the top twenty most frequently attended schools in the Graduate Database included schools which had hardly sent any pupils to the University in the early post-war decades. These included Penilee Secondary, Elmwood Secondary (Bothwell), Duncanrig Secondary (East Kilbride) and Coatbridge High.

Also among the top twenty schools attended by graduates in the 1980s there were several Catholic schools (such as St. Bride's in East Kilbride and Our Lady's High in Cumbernauld), and the improved position of Catholic students in reaching the University represents a significant change in the post-war period. Between 1962 and 1984, 17% (16% female and 18% male) of the questionnaire respondents recorded that they had attended a denominational school - more than double the proportion for the earlier 1940-61 period. Although exact figures for the numbers of Catholics in the West of Scotland are difficult to come by, Darragh's estimates for Glasgow show that the Catholic proportion in the population may have declined quite rapidly in the 1970s, making the proportionate increase in Catholic representation at the University even more striking.<sup>71</sup> This rise was a direct effect of the improvements in Catholic education which had taken place, particularly since the comprehensive reorganisation of the schooling system in the 1960s. Glasgow had actually begun constructing new Catholic comprehensive schools in the 1950s; by 1964 it had built seven new ones and by 1970 there were thirteen.<sup>72</sup> According to A. M<sup>c</sup>Pherson "by the end of the 1970s...and through the 1980s, Catholic schools

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<sup>70</sup> J. Highet, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

<sup>71</sup> James Darragh, *op. cit.*

<sup>72</sup> J.H. Treble, "The Development of Roman Catholic Education in Scotland," in David M<sup>c</sup>Roberts (ed.), *op. cit.*, p 137.

were performing highly effectively.”<sup>73</sup>

What did these school origins mean in terms of the social backgrounds of Glasgow’s students? Clearly there is often a strong link between school background and social background and it is fair to say that the majority of students who had attended a fee-paying school would have been middle-class.<sup>74</sup> However, as has been noted, the fee-paying sector in Glasgow was never especially large and many of the local academies took both middle-class and working-class pupils.<sup>75</sup> Therefore school background alone is insufficient to build up a social profile of Glasgow University’s students and one must also consider social background. The graduate questionnaire asked graduates to provide information about their father’s occupation, and this enables some broad conclusions to be drawn about the social class of Glasgow’s students.

### Social background

The social background of students at universities in Britain as a whole has become a cause of some concern as the expansion of educational opportunity represented by both the 1945 Education Act (1944 in England) and the later expansion of the university sector, encompassed in the 1963 Robbins Report, do not appear to have made universities noticeably more egalitarian. As Peter Scott observed in 1984 in *The Crisis of the University*:

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<sup>73</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Pherson, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>74</sup> Although the direct grant schools did provide scholarships. For example, Hight found in the 1960s that every year about one tenth of the combined population of Hutchesons’ Girls’ Grammar and Hutchesons’ Boys’ Grammar Schools received “assistance in one form or another.” J. Hight, op. cit., p. 74.

<sup>75</sup> The relative smallness of Glasgow’s fee-paying sector can be seen clearly if Glasgow and Edinburgh are compared. Hight notes the “dominance of Edinburgh as *the* fee-paying centre” and in 1964, c24% of its school children had attended fee-paying schools as compared

“the social base of the universities has been broadened, but not as much as many had hoped. Going to university has become a much more common experience for 18-year-olds in Britain; indeed it has become the almost automatic expectation of many middle-class professional families. Yet the proportion of university students from working-class homes has remained stuck at 25%.”<sup>76</sup>

This was the picture for Britain as a whole, and there were significant local differences.<sup>77</sup> At Glasgow, working-class contributions to student numbers were higher than average, partly as a consequence of the tendency to live at home. A study carried out by the University into the backgrounds of all 1963 entrants who were from Scotland found that, using father’s occupation as a measure of social class and grouping the results according to the Registrar General’s scale, the social background of the 341 female entrants and 707 male entrants analysed was as follows:<sup>78</sup>

Social background of 1963 entrants to Glasgow University:-

14%	Group 1	3%	Agriculture
35%	Group 2	1%	No Reply
16%	Group 3, Non-manual		
24%	Group 3, Manual		
6%	Group 4		
2%	Group 5		

If the bottom three groups, or Group 3 (Manual), Group 4 and Group 5, are regarded as making up the working-class, it can be seen that 32%, roughly a

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with 7% in Glasgow and Aberdeen and 4% in Dundee. J. Highet, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>76</sup> Peter Scott, *The Crisis of the University* (London, 1984), p. 209.

<sup>77</sup> For example, one investigation of three Northern universities undertaken in the 1960s suggested that the local picture could be even worse than this national figure. J. Abbot found that Edinburgh, Durham and Newcastle Universities had a working-class proportion of 15%, 21% and 20% respectively, (J. Abbot, “Students’ Social Class in Three Northern Universities,” *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 16, 1965, pp 206-221). Equally, the picture could be better than the national average, the Robbins Report noting a working-class proportion of 40% in Welsh universities in 1955, (Committee on Higher Education, *Higher Education* (London, 1963), Appendix Two (B)).

<sup>78</sup> Stanley Nisbet and Barbara L. Napier, *Promise and Progress A Study of Students at the University of Glasgow in the 1960s* (Glasgow, 1970), p. 27.

The Registrar General’s scale is as follows: (1) Professional, (2) Intermediate or lower professional, (3) Skilled - divided into manual and non-manual, (4) Partly skilled, (5) Unskilled. From *Classification of Occupations* (London, 1960).



third, of the 1963 intake was from a working-class background. The estimate is supported by the findings of another survey conducted by Ian M<sup>c</sup>Donald, who found that 32.5% of a sample of Glasgow University students in 1960 were working-class.<sup>79</sup>

Of course, as M<sup>c</sup>Donald points out in his survey, such figures are only significant if they are “set against some index of expectancy based on the weight of each social class in the community at large.”<sup>80</sup> He uses the census breakdown by class of the population of West-Central Scotland to observe the discrepancy between the proportion of the various classes in the population as a whole compared to their actual representation in the University.<sup>81</sup> As might be imagined, for 1960, he finds that there are six times the expected number of students from class 1, but at the other end of the scale, only about an eighth of the expected number from class 5.

M<sup>c</sup>Donald also compared the 1960 sample with two earlier years to try to gain some measure of change over time in social background. He compared the 1960 figures with those for 1910 and 1934 and discovered that there had in fact been little change in the social origins of students since the beginning of the century. Whilst 31.4% of the 1910 sample were working-class and 31.8% of the 1934 sample, this was not very different from the 32.5% for 1960. The increase in the working-class share was so small that he concluded “the general pattern of class representation has changed little in the fifty year period, certainly not sufficiently to be statistically significant.” Of course, the fact that about a third

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<sup>79</sup> Ian J. M<sup>c</sup>Donald, “Untapped Reservoirs of Talent?,” *Scottish Educational Studies*, June 1967. My figures from the Graduate Database give a somewhat higher working-class proportion for men and women for the 1960s (38%), but this may be due to differences in the way occupations have been categorised.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>81</sup> He uses the breakdown for the West-Central area of Scotland rather than the figures for

of the students were working-class as early as 1910 means that there was less likely to be an impressive improvement in proportionate terms. Indeed, as R.D. Anderson has shown in *Education and Opportunity*, historically Glasgow has admitted a significantly higher proportion of working-class students than other Scottish universities. For example, his figures put the proportion of students who came from manual working-class backgrounds in 1912 at 37% for Glasgow University whilst the figures for Edinburgh, St. Andrews and Aberdeen stood at only 30%, 23% and 30% respectively.<sup>82</sup>

There are no published figures on social background at Glasgow University for the 1970s and 1980s, but figures from the Graduate Database for 1970-79 and 1980-84 are shown below, along with figures for earlier decades. Male and female statistics are shown separately and suggest some gender differences.<sup>83</sup>

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Scotland as a whole, since Glasgow drew the majority of its students from the local area.

<sup>82</sup> R.D. Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 316. His figures are of new Carnegie beneficiaries in 1912.

<sup>83</sup> Most of the surveys mentioned do not give a gender breakdown by social class, although Ian M<sup>c</sup>Donald did note that he found no significant gender differences in his sample. However, for the early 1900s, R.D. Anderson noted that “women who entered universities in the 1900s had rather more middle-class backgrounds than the men.” Anderson, *ibid.*, p. 308.

**Table 2.1****Father's occupation of male Glasgow University graduates, all degrees (%)**

Father's Occupation	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980-84
School teacher	5%	8%	8%	7%	3%
Higher education teacher	3%	1%	1%	3%	4%
Dr & other medical specialists	7%	5%	5%	7%	4%
Clergy	5%	3%	3%	1%	1%
Lawyer	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%
Architect /surveyor	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%
Other professional	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
<b>TOTAL PROFESSIONAL</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>17%</b>
Company director /proprietor	8%	6%	7%	4%	7%
Manager /administrator	23%	24%	15%	21%	17%
Accountant	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Engineer	5%	7%	6%	9%	11%
Designer /draughtsman	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Other business	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL BUSINESS</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Civil Service /Local govt. /social work	2%	1%	2%	3%	5%
Armed forces /police	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION/FORCES</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Clerks /skilled workers /small shopkeepers	26%	28%	36%	34%	26%
Semi & unskilled workers	6%	11%	8%	8%	9%
<b>TOTAL WORKING-CLASS</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<i>N</i> =	171	185	165	197	90

Source: Graduate Database

Table 2.2

**Father's occupation of female Glasgow University graduates, all degrees (%)**

Father's Occupation	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s
School teacher	7%	9%	7%	9%	7%
Higher education teacher	1%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Dr & other medical specialist	2%	5%	5%	7%	4%
Clergy	5%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Lawyer	4%	1%	2%	0%	2%
Architect /surveyor	3%	0%	2%	1%	2%
Other professional	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%
<b>TOTAL PROFESSIONAL</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>22%</b>
Company director /proprietor	9%	7%	7%	10%	8%
Manager/administrator	21%	25%	25%	25%	19%
Accountant	1%	3%	2%	2%	5%
Engineer	9%	5%	5%	6%	11%
Designer /draughtsman	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%
Other business	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
<b>TOTAL BUSINESS</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>45%</b>
Civil Service /Local govt. /social work	1%	3%	4%	2%	2%
Armed forces /police	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION/FORCES</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>
Clerks /skilled workers /small shopkeepers	28%	28%	24%	25%	25%
Semi & unskilled workers	6%	5%	7%	7%	6%
<b>TOTAL WORKING-CLASS</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>31%</b>
N=	163	220	184	204	108

Source: Graduate Database

The continued dominance of graduates with fathers engaged in middle-class (professional and business) occupations is clear for both men and women. It is also clear that women tended to be slightly more middle-class than men.<sup>84</sup> However, within this broad pattern interesting fluctuations can be observed. The tables show that in the 1950s and 1960s, the proportion of men with fathers who were clerks, manual workers or small shopkeepers - occupations which have

<sup>84</sup> This is a similar finding to that of Lowe and Gaukroger who found that a comparison of the social backgrounds of male and female students at Birmingham University confirmed "the often stated claim that female undergraduates were generally drawn from higher social backgrounds than males during the post-war years," Roy Lowe and Alison Gaukroger, op. cit. Also, Michael Sanderson, writing about the University of East Anglia in the 1960s notes that "the social origins of girls at UEA was somewhat higher than that for boys," Michael Sanderson "...And will girls be admitted? Women at the University of East Anglia in the 1960s," paper presented at "The transformation of an elite? Women and Higher Education since 1900" (University of Cambridge, 24th September 1998).

been categorised as broadly working-class here - rose quite dramatically, reaching over 40% of the male University population in the 1960s and 1970s, whilst the position of working-class women remained virtually static at one third over the same period. However, by 1980-84, men appeared to be becoming more middle-class again, with the working-class proportion back down to roughly a third. In fact, the University appears to be no more working-class in the 1980s for men or women than it had been in the 1950s.

It would seem from these figures that the long term impact of universal grants from 1960 onwards has largely been to benefit a broader range of middle-class students, at the expense of working-class students. The noticeable increase in the proportion of male working-class students making it to the University in the 1960s and 1970s can perhaps be partly attributed to the impact of universal maintenance grants, but this gain seems to have disappeared by the 1980s, coinciding with cuts in the real value of the maintenance grant.

In an examination of the class composition of entrants to all Scottish universities between 1962 and 1972, D. Hutchison and A. McPherson concluded that there had been a rise in the proportion of middle-class women at university and a corresponding decrease in working-class men in this decade.<sup>85</sup> They saw increasingly well-qualified middle-class female entrants as, in effect, “pushing out” lower class men. In attempting to explain this trend, they summed up the phenomenon as being the result of:

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<sup>85</sup> Dougal Hutchison and Andrew McPherson, “Competing Inequalities: The Sex and Social Class Structure of the First Year Scottish University Student Population 1962-1972” *Sociology* (10), 1976, pp 111-116. They point out that the decline could not have been caused by any fall in the representation of the working-classes in the population as a whole since: “there was a decline of only half a point in the percentage of working-class pupils. This indicates that any decline that there may have been in the manual component of the age-group as a whole could hardly have been responsible for the declining manual component of the university population,” (p. 111).

“a consistent middle-class superiority in public examination performance among both sexes, combined with a steady increase in the proportion of women entering university and a consequent raising of university admissions requirements, particularly in the over-subscribed non-science areas where women and working-class men were over-represented.”

However, my figures suggest that at Glasgow University working-class men were holding their own comparatively well in proportionate terms in the 1960s and 1970s, but that this trend was not sustained more recently.

An interesting point to note is that there may be a link between geographical and social class recruitment, with Glasgow's shift to taking in students from beyond the local catchment area having some social implications. There is some evidence to suggest that the larger numbers of students from South of the border may have been more middle-class than their Scottish colleagues at the University, with figures from the Graduate Database showing that 24% of the English graduates compared to 31% of Scottish graduates in the sample 1940-84 came from working-class backgrounds. Although the Graduate Database provides no figures on the social origins of graduates who came from overseas, it may also be the case that the larger number of overseas students at the University recently will tend to be predominantly middle-class, particularly in view of their higher fees.

We have observed that gender, and even geography, could have an impact on the social background of Glasgow's students. A further look at the Graduate Database reveals that there were also social differences relating to degree subject studied. Tables 2.3 and 2.4 below illustrate this point and show father's occupation for male and female graduates in the sample for three different degree groupings - MA, BSc and MB ChB & LLB.

Table 2.3

## Father's occupation of male Glasgow University graduates by degree (%)

Father's Occupation	1940-61			1962-84		
	MA	BSc	MB ChB & LLB	MA	BSc	MB ChB & LLB
School teacher	7%	5%	6%	7%	9%	12%
Higher education teacher	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Dr & other medical specialist	1%	4%	25%	2%	4%	17%
Clergy	4%	3%	0%	1%	0%	4%
Lawyer	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	3%
Architect /surveyor	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Other professional	1%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
<b>TOTAL PROFESSIONAL</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>38%</b>
Company director /proprietor	4%	10%	12%	6%	6%	6%
Manager /administrator	19%	28%	21%	17%	21%	14%
Accountant	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	5%
Engineer	8%	7%	5%	8%	10%	7%
Designer /draughtsman	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Other business	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL BUSINESS</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>32%</b>
Civil Service /Local govt. /social work	1%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Armed forces /police	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC ADMIN./FORCES</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Clerks /skilled workers /small shopkeepers	34%	27%	18%	37%	31%	24%
Semi & unskilled workers	11%	8%	4%	11%	7%	2%
<b>TOTAL WORKING-CLASS</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>26%</b>
<i>N</i> =	160	135	78	178	161	58

Source: Graduate Database

**Table 2.4**

**Father's occupation of female Glasgow University graduates by degree (%)**

Father's Occupation	1940-61			1962-84		
	MA	BSc	MB ChB & LLB	MA	BSc	MB ChB & LLB
School teacher	7%	8%	9%	7%	6%	10%
Higher education teacher	1%	2%	3%	2%	3%	4%
Dr & other medical specialist	4%	4%	6%	5%	5%	13%
Clergy	4%	1%	6%	2%	1%	4%
Lawyer	2%	1%	9%	2%	0%	3%
Architect /surveyor	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	4%
Other professional	2%	3%	0%	2%	3%	1%
<b>TOTAL PROFESSIONAL</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Company director /proprietor	6%	9%	10%	7%	10%	8%
Manager /administrator	23%	22%	22%	26%	21%	20%
Accountant	2%	2%	4%	1%	3%	1%
Engineer	6%	8%	3%	6%	10%	4%
Designer /draughtsman	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%	0%
Other business	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%
<b>TOTAL BUSINESS</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>34%</b>
Civil Service /Local govt. /social work	1%	3%	1%	4%	3%	4%
Armed forces /police	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC ADMIN./FORCES</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Clerks /skilled workers /small shopkeepers	31%	30%	18%	23%	25%	19%
Semi & unskilled workers	8%	3%	3%	9%	8%	3%
<b>TOTAL WORKING-CLASS</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>21%</b>
<i>N</i> =	179	173	67	187	187	71

Source: Graduate Database

As the two tables show, female graduates were always less working-class than their male colleagues, irrespective of degree subject. The tables reveal no great changes over the 1940-61 to 1962-84 cohorts, but in both cohorts the vocational degrees of medicine (MB ChB) and law (LLB) tended to be the most socially elitist subjects for men and women. This reflects the extent to which medics and lawyers tend to follow in their father's vocational footsteps.<sup>86</sup>

No figures exist for the UK as a whole to allow comparison with those

<sup>86</sup> See Chapter 5, *Graduate Careers*, for a fuller discussion of the phenomenon of "self recruitment" into the professions.



available for Glasgow.<sup>87</sup> Comparable statistics exist, however for some individual universities. Oxford University had a much smaller working-class intake than Glasgow University, though here too, the women were less working-class than the men. On average 19% of male and 13% of female Oxford graduates 1946-67 were from working-class backgrounds.<sup>88</sup> At Birmingham University, women arts students were less working-class than their male counterparts, with 42% of BA men and 33% of BA women being working-class, for the period 1961-65. For science students over the same period, 39% of BSc men and 31% of BSc women were working-class.<sup>89</sup> These figures, although for a more concentrated time period than the figures presented in tables 2.3 and 2.4, nonetheless show a broad similarity with the figures for Glasgow.

It is apparent from the Glasgow figures that the working-classes were not making very significant inroads into the University. Aggregated statistics provided by UCCA demonstrate that Glasgow's experiences reflected a national trend and show clearly that in the UK as a whole, the working-classes were actually losing ground to middle-class entrants in recent decades. Of students accepted to UK universities in 1984, 20.5% had come from manual backgrounds whilst in 1978, 23% had done so compared to 27% in 1968.<sup>90</sup> One point which should be borne in mind, however, is that the proportion of the population as a whole which was working-class was declining. Guy Routh shows that whilst in 1951, 80% of Britain's workers were in manual or clerical jobs, by 1971 this had

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<sup>87</sup> Although UCCA reports give statistics on the parental background of university applicants, these figures are not broken down by gender or individual university.

<sup>88</sup> D.I. Greenstein, "The Junior Members, 1900-1990: A Profile," in Brian Harrison, (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford Vol. VIII The Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1994), p.56.

<sup>89</sup> Figures from A. Gaukroger and R. Lowe, *A University and its region: student recruitment in Birmingham in the years following the Second World War*, a paper presented at "The University in its Urban Setting" conference, Aberdeen University, July 1993.

<sup>90</sup> Statistical Supplements to the annual UCCA reports.

fallen to 72%.<sup>91</sup> Therefore one should perhaps expect the working-class proportion to decline. However, Anderson notes the poor position of the working-classes in the UK as a whole revealed by the recent UCCA statistics on social background and concludes that, although this was a reflection of the shift towards middle-class occupations in the general population, nonetheless “once the relative size of classes is allowed for the difference of opportunity between middle-class and working-class children is still about five to one.”<sup>92</sup>

It would seem that neither school reform nor universal grants have broken the stranglehold of the middle-classes. However, it should be remembered that although the overall female working-class proportion never rose beyond a third in any post-war decade at Glasgow University, numerically, in a university the size of Glasgow, this still represented quite a large number of students. By 1970, the University population stood at over eight-and-a-half-thousand, giving a total of well over two thousand students from working-class backgrounds.

It would be interesting to supplement the statistics with some personal reflections on social class at the University - to assess how the outnumbered working-classes felt and whether they indeed perceived the University as being a very middle-class institution. In actual fact, few questionnaire respondents mentioned the issue of class, suggesting that perceptions of class differences and divisions were not especially pronounced. Possibly, the fact that the University was so overwhelmingly non-residential blunted class divisions because students spent less time in the University environment. Nonetheless, from every decade

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<sup>91</sup> Guy Routh, *Occupation and Pay in Great Britain 1906-79* (London, 1980), p. 6. Some figures for Scotland are provided by David M<sup>c</sup>Crone, who notes that in Scotland there was a decline in the proportion of manual workers from 52% in 1961 to just over 40% in 1981. David M<sup>c</sup>Crone, “We’re A’ Jock Tamson’s Bairns: Social Class in Twentieth-Century Scotland,” in T.M. Devine and R.J. Finlay, (eds.), *Scotland in the Twentieth Century* (Edinburgh, 1996).

there were a few working-class respondents who did comment on this issue. “I did not meet anyone who was from a similar background to me,”<sup>93</sup> noted a 1950s medic whose father was a semi-skilled factory worker, whilst a 1970s graduate remembered:

“I came from a very low income family and only got to university because of a) opportunities made available through comprehensive philosophy and b) generous student grants. In retrospect, I think that I felt out of my depth culturally and socially. There was little or no help available to prepare working-class students for this very middle-class environment.”<sup>94</sup>

Interestingly, the decade in which the most comments about the class issue were made was the 1980s, when as we have seen, the working-class proportion was declining after the rise of the 1960s and 1970s. The following comments are from that decade: “far too many of the students in my time came from professional/middle-class backgrounds,”<sup>95</sup> “as a working-class, first generation student, Glasgow University was something of a ‘culture shock’ for me,”<sup>96</sup> and “most of the people I mixed with were middle-class Scots, and myself and a few others were aware of being token working-class ‘punters.’”<sup>97</sup>

It was also during the 1980s that, as a result of the successive erosion of the real value of student grants in the 1970s and 1980s, the class composition of the University became an overtly political issue. The SNP candidate for the 1982 Hillhead by-election, George Leslie, adopted student grants as one of his campaign issues and claimed that “with an increase in parental contribution and a serious cutback in grants available to those who have to repeat part of a course,

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<sup>92</sup> R.D. Anderson, *Universities and Elites in Britain Since 1800* (London, 1992), p.62.

<sup>93</sup> Male medicine graduate, 1956, from questionnaire, No. 26.

<sup>94</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1973, from questionnaire, No. 925.

<sup>95</sup> Male (honours) English graduate, 1984, from questionnaire, No. 524.

<sup>96</sup> Male (honours) arts graduate, 1981, from questionnaire, No. 262.

<sup>97</sup> Male (ordinary) social sciences graduate, 1983, from questionnaire, No. 481.

Scottish universities are being turned into elitist institutions.”<sup>98</sup> The University itself was not deaf to such claims. There had been an attempt in the 1970s to encourage applications from working-class students by means of a scheme to reserve a limited number of places for entrants from deprived areas. The scheme was approved by the Arts Faculty in 1976 which set aside 30 places, (15 male and 15 female), for young people with the minimum entry qualifications who would be admitted from a list of schools which had sent no pupils to the University for many years. The Senate rejected the proposal, however, one reason being that it would have meant allowing in entrants with lower qualifications than the qualifications possessed by some who would be excluded. One angry lecturer, dismayed at the Senate’s refusal, was quoted in the *Sunday Mail* as saying “when the matter was debated in Senate one lecturer claimed that the whole idea was a Red plot.”<sup>99</sup>

Thus the idea of favourable treatment for deprived students foundered for the time being, but was resurrected in 1985 when the University was approached by Strathclyde Region and asked to consider setting aside places for students from schools in Easterhouse and Drumchapel - traditionally regarded as deprived areas. The UGC gave an additional quota to allow up to 50 students from these areas, provided they met the General Entrance Requirements for university entry, to be admitted in October 1986.<sup>100</sup> In actual fact only 18 students were admitted in 1986 from these areas, but the principle had been established and it was agreed to extend the scheme to other areas.

There were also initiatives in the late 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the

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<sup>98</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 19th February 1982.

<sup>99</sup> *The Sunday Mail*, 23rd May 1976.

<sup>100</sup> *Glasgow University Newsletter*, No. 96, 14th May 1987, p. 1.

Social Sciences Faculty, to encourage applications from mature students without traditional exam qualifications. It might have been expected that this policy would benefit working-class applicants, but a *Glasgow University Newsletter* article in 1983 found that “there is still one uncomfortable fact about the mature students whom Glasgow admits. Their profile is one of: more men than women, often a professional background, often with a conventional education up to Highers, often with university-educated relatives. The disadvantaged are not there.”<sup>101</sup> The article hoped that the University’s new scheme of preparing mature students for university study, known as the ACE ‘Introduction to Study’ programme, would be more successful, and indeed found that those taking the ACE programme tended to represent the disadvantaged sectors of the population to a much greater extent.

As we have seen, worthy in intent though such schemes may have been, they could not combat a decline in the working-class proportion at the University in the 1980s. A.H. Halsey et al have argued that the kind of positive discrimination policies pursued by the University are the only way to significantly improve the position of the working-classes. Noting the large differential between the chances of a working-class child getting to university compared to a middle-class child, they conclude that “only if universities positively discriminate in favour of the working-class could this class differential decline.”<sup>102</sup> As Senate debates over the issue showed, however, the issue of positive discrimination was fraught with difficulties and was unlikely to be undertaken on a large enough scale to have any more than a token impact.

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., No. 61, 9th June 1983, p. 16.

To sum up student origins at Glasgow University, it can be concluded that there were perhaps more similarities than differences between the 1980s student body and that of the 1940s. Nonetheless, despite this broad picture of continuity, there have been some noticeable shifts in student origins. Although almost 60% of the student body still came from within 30 miles of the University in the mid-1980s, this was an important drop from the 1940 figure of three-quarters. Moreover, this shift to a wider geographical mix accelerated markedly from about 1980 and has continued to do so in the 1990s. We have seen that this trend resulted from the interaction of local university policy, government higher education policy and local demography. Whilst the University's own recruitment policies tended to promote and favour a local student population, this strategy had to be rethought in the light of decreasing local population in the 1970s. At the same time, two aspects of government university policy in particular, namely cuts in funding to the university sector and the raising of overseas student fees, meant that recruitment of foreign students became increasingly attractive. These factors explain the initiative we have noted to promote the University abroad and in schools from more distant parts of the UK, such as the North of England.

We have seen how these initiatives to broaden the University's geographical mix were, naturally, reflected in a wider variety of schools attended by students. However, the continued importance of local recruitment meant that local education authority and grant-aided schools in the Glasgow area continued to remain the most important feeders to the University, with strong links between many of these schools and the University. We have also noted that despite the

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<sup>102</sup> A.H. Halsey, A.F. Heath and J.M. Ridge, *Origins and Destinations* (Oxford, 1980), p. 187.

decreasing *proportion* of the University's students who came from the local area, actual *numbers* from the West of Scotland region kept up well in recent decades, and two factors - one related to school reform and one related to broader changes in society - have been shown to be important here. On the one hand, school reform ensured that more local pupils gained university entrance qualifications, and on the other, changes in attitudes towards girls' schooling and careers ensured that there continued to be a high level of local demand for a place at Glasgow University from young women in particular.

University initiatives to broaden out the catchment area, whilst at the same time continuing to appeal to local students, clearly met with some success. However, other University initiatives to try and influence the social rather than geographic mix of the student body were far too limited to affect the general middle-class ethos of the University. Continued middle-class superiority in exam performance at secondary school level (in spite of educational reforms) meant that Glasgow University came to draw in a broader range of middle-class students, rather than a significantly larger proportion of working-class students. In particular, the success of increasingly ambitious middle-class female pupils in gaining a university place is perhaps the outstanding development affecting the university sector in the post-war period.

## **Student Life**

Historians considering the admission of women to British universities from c1880-1939 have, according to C. Dyhouse, “drawn a distinction between the early period of the pioneers and a later period of acceptance and integration.”<sup>1</sup> This portrays a relatively straightforward view of women in the universities, but it is an interpretation which can be seen as somewhat simplified. For example, Dyhouse cites the conflicts of the 1920s and 1930s as contradicting any narrative of steady progress and also observes that patterns of accommodation and institutional developments (such as the creation of advisers for women), established in the early period, might develop their own momentum well beyond that time and continue up to World War Two.

A look at the post-war history of women at Glasgow University shows that many of the features Dyhouse has identified continued long after the war and that women’s integration into the University was often not as straightforward as might be imagined. Segregation was marked in numerous aspects of University life. Accommodation, the student unions, careers and advisory services: all remained segregated for many years after the war. Studying was also segregated. In the new Reading Room, which opened in 1939, segregation was enforced until 1951, when the *Glasgow University Magazine (GUM)* noted that the restriction had been lifted but that no one seemed to be aware of the new freedom as all were continuing to sit

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<sup>1</sup> C. Dyhouse, *No distinction of Sex? Women in British universities 1870-1939* (London, 1995), p. 189. She cites Mabel Tylecote and Sheila Hamilton as examples.



separately!<sup>2</sup> By 1957 this segregation through choice was still going strong: “the seating arrangement in the Reading Room, apparently voluntarily maintained, leaves me speechless,” commented an American postgraduate student in that year.<sup>3</sup> In lectures too, there are examples of the post-war bulge being dealt with by splitting large classes into two along gender lines, whilst in lectures where men and women were taught together they were sometimes required to sit separately.<sup>4</sup> But here again, segregation could sometimes be voluntarily maintained. One 1950s student recalled that: “we sat separately ... I think what happened was a sort of natural dividing in the sense that the girls tended to sit at the front together and the lads at the back together. But I don’t think that there was actual segregation.”<sup>5</sup>

In 1957, the QM Union, or ‘QMU’ (the Women’s Union), produced an anniversary publication to mark twenty-five years occupation in its union building and this included a piece by Jean Smits, the American postgraduate already quoted above. Writing from the perspective of someone who had been to an American college which had admitted women as early as 1833 she saw women’s integration at Glasgow University as still very partial. Her observations are worth quoting at some length:

“Glasgow University, founded before Columbus discovered my country, has admitted women only during a small fraction of its history. I think it is still, corporately, highly conscious of the fact. And perhaps, when the history of co-education is as long here as it is in America, this consciousness of woman-the-interloper may fade, as it has there. The symptoms of this consciousness today

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<sup>2</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine (GUM)*, Vol. 63, No. 2, November 1951.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Smits, “Looking Ahead,” in *GUQM College Twenty-five* (Glasgow, 1957), p.22.

<sup>4</sup> From questionnaire respondents, *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with 1954 female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1st February 1995.

are many - beginning with matriculation, when women are carefully catalogued in a separate list, with 'W' in front of their numbers. There are 'students' and 'QM students,' 'the Union' and 'the women's union.'”

Such evidence of separateness was perhaps less remarkable to a significant minority of Scottish students, roughly a third of whom had been educated in single sex schools, but even those who had come from a co-educational background clearly did not mind separate or differential treatment.<sup>6</sup> The maintenance of voluntary segregation certainly implies this, as do some comments made by questionnaire respondents regarding the unions, for example the following: “of course, no one worried then that there were two unions! And the girls themselves would *not* have wanted to be forced out of QM.”<sup>7</sup>

Further evidence suggests a desire on the part of the women students to preserve their separate identity. In 1935, a letter had been sent by students of QM College to the Senate asking that, although the College was closing, the name QM College should not be allowed to pass into disuse and that female students should be officially known as “The Students of QMC.” The Senate agreed that women students should be known as “QM Students.”<sup>8</sup> Indeed, a student two decades later, who was QM President in the 1950s, still felt that “we were Queen Margaret students, we were not just women students. There was an element of the College

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<sup>6</sup> About one third of both male and female students in the Graduate Database had attended single sex schools in every decade until the 1980s, when the proportion dropped to about a quarter.

<sup>7</sup> Male (honours) natural philosophy graduate, 1949, from pilot questionnaire.

<sup>8</sup> Letter to Senate signed by female members of the SRC, 25th April 1935, (Barbara Napier's papers).

still there in the 'fifties.'<sup>9</sup> The *Student Handbooks*, produced annually as a guide to Freshers, reinforced the idea of female students as separate and distinct. They included a separate section on "Queen Margaret Students" which emphasised that the official name for a woman student was "QM student" and provided an historical outline of the College's history. The practice of having a separate section for women students in the *Student Handbook* persisted until well into the 1970s.

As will be seen, many examples of segregation were a direct result of the fact that women had once been part of a separate college which maintained its own facilities despite integration with the University. Nonetheless, segregation in student life was not complete. The Women's Students' Representative Council, for example, had amalgamated with the men's SRC before 1900.<sup>10</sup> And gradually those facilities which were segregated did become mixed with, as will be detailed in this chapter, separate provision in terms of accommodation, welfare and the unions, being gradually replaced by mixed facilities. Indeed, the years between 1939 and the 1980s can be seen in terms of the final achievement of what Jean Smits had looked forward to in 1957, the fading of the "consciousness of woman-the-interloper" and the full integration of women into all forms of student life on equal terms with men. So evidence from Glasgow indicates that integration and acceptance were, as Dyhouse suggests, not smooth and straightforward, but achieved gradually and dictated by local circumstances.

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<sup>9</sup> Interview, 1st February 1995, op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> For more on the SRC, see Chapter 4, *Student Politics*.

It is worth pointing out though, that the end of segregation was not always regarded as progress. The QMU President from the 1950s already quoted above, felt that women had benefited from having a “separate but equal” union:

“enormously. I think we miss it terribly now. What we could actually do with, if the feminists would only admit it, is a women’s club in the University, somewhere where the women actually have a space of their own ... Sometimes I think it was easier for us before things were put on an equal basis with the mixing of the unions...”<sup>11</sup>

She felt that having a separate women’s union allowed women to gain administrative and political experience which, had there been one mixed union, they might not have done. Another 1950s female student echoed this feeling with regard to segregated halls of residence:

“segregation can give women a greater opportunity to organise their own affairs. The committee at QM Hall was my first experience of having to make decisions that would affect the welfare of others. Serving on that committee gave me the confidence to serve on other committees in the University at large.”<sup>12</sup>

Of course there are arguments both ways, and it was perhaps inevitable that halls of residence and the QM Union would eventually become mixed. The pressure for change was not just one of more progressive attitudes, however. With the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 the very legality of separate facilities was thrown into doubt and this was one of the arguments used by the “pro-mixing” faction on campus in their campaign to mix the unions, a campaign which finally achieved its

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<sup>11</sup> Interview, 1st February 1995, op. cit.

aim for the QM Union in 1979 and for the Men's Union in 1980.<sup>13</sup> The two unions were the last of the institutional facilities to go mixed - accommodation, careers and welfare services were all mixed well before this point and the sub-sections which follow will trace this progress towards integration.

The issue of segregation/integration is just one important theme which can be identified as having had a significant impact on the nature of the student experience. It is worth mentioning at the outset a few other key themes which also had a pervasive effect on student life. A key feature of the University which has already been noted is the large home-based student population. This had an important impact on student life because a largely non-residential university faced particular problems in engendering the kind of corporate spirit one might find at a collegial or residential university. Glasgow University was often referred to in the student press as a glorified secondary school with a "nine to five" atmosphere and the lack of involvement by many students in extra-curricular activities was often lamented. However, the charges of apathy often levelled at the students by more active 'corporate lifers' were perhaps unfair in many cases since involvement in the corporate life could be difficult for students who were spending a lot of time travelling to and from campus.

In addition to the non-residential nature of the University, another theme can be identified as contributing towards non-involvement in the corporate life. This

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<sup>12</sup> Female (honours) arts graduate, 1956, (letter to Deputy Archivist, 13th August 1992, courtesy of R. Ferguson).

<sup>13</sup> For more on the events leading to the mixing of the QM Union and the Men's Union, see Chapter 4, *Student Politics*.

concerns the issue of student finance. A student's ability to participate in any form of corporate activity - from joining the student union to taking part in the hockey team - was often intimately bound up with whether or not such activities could be afforded. In the early post-war years in particular, when grants tended to be small and were not universally available, many students have noted that lack of money curtailed extra-curricular activities, although near universal grants in the 1960s seem to have largely removed the worst financial worries, at least for a while.<sup>14</sup>

Having highlighted some of the significant themes relating to student life, we will now examine some key institutions and student activities in order to give an idea of what it was like to be a student at Glasgow University and in particular what it was like to be a female student. We will begin by looking at aspects of the student experience which all students shared; so the chapter begins with sections on accommodation patterns, academic life and student welfare. Then we will move onto those activities which could be avoided if a student did not want to (or was unable to) take part. These include the student unions, student societies, sport, Charities Week and the Student Settlement - in other words, the corporate life.

### The Common experience: accommodation, academic life and student welfare

#### Accommodation

Glasgow University is often referred to as the non-residential university *par excellence*. That is not to say that it did not possess halls of residence by 1939, just

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<sup>14</sup> For figures on the proportion of students receiving grants from various sources, see Chapter 1, *Institutional Development*, table 1.1.

that the stock of accommodation it provided could only house a small proportion of its students. By 1939, male students had three halls - Maclay, (1921), MacBrayne, (1923), and Strain, (1936), all of which had been bequeathed rather than built by the University itself. Horselethill House, added in 1948, was the first newly-established and purpose built hall for men, but housed only 21 students. In fact, by 1950, only about 4% of the male student population were accommodated in residences.

Accommodation provision for women had begun in 1894 when Queen Margaret Hall, providing 25 places, had been built for Queen Margaret College students. Glasgow University took over the hall in 1927 and it was gradually expanded to include other nearby properties so that by 1950, 90 female students were accommodated there, or about 6% of the female student population.<sup>15</sup>

The halls of residence were intended for students from parts of Scotland which were too far away for commuting purposes and for English and foreign students, the importance of halls for foreign students in particular being emphasised by Principal Hetherington in a memorandum on post-war developments to the UGC in 1945 in which he noted that:

“we must urge the importance of a larger and vastly better system of residential halls. Glasgow will always be predominantly a non-residential University; but that makes all the more important the provision of suitable residences. We can make no adequate contribution to work for Colonial and foreign students until this has been done.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> There also existed a small amount of female accommodation in Southpark House, a hostel owned by the Student Christian Movement for women from various higher education institutions, such as Jordanhill Teacher Training College, as well as Glasgow University.

<sup>16</sup> Hector Hetherington, *Memorandum to the UGC on post-war developments*, 1945.

Some of the halls had connections with particular geographical areas - MacBrayne and Kelvin Lodge giving preference to students from the Western Isles and Highlands and Horselethill House to overseas students and several questionnaire respondents noted the value of mixing with students from many different backgrounds which halls allowed. For example, one wrote that “the vital social dimension was achieved by living in a hall of residence...the mix of faculties, backgrounds, ethnic & cultural origins was a microcosm of true university life - not always readily available in a university drawing so heavily on the local population for its student population,”<sup>17</sup> whilst another recorded her “lasting gratitude to Glasgow University for the time I spent in residence in QM Hall, in Robertson House and Galloway House for the people I met from all over the world.”<sup>18</sup> However, not all students could afford to take advantage of this culturally rich environment since the cost of halls could be prohibitive. One 1940s student noted that in Southpark House “the majority of the girls came from Ayrshire and Dumfries...there weren’t many Highland ones. The Highland ones I think mostly went to lodgings because they weren’t so well off as the girls from the south.”<sup>19</sup>

At this point in time it was taken for granted that the halls would be segregated and the situation aroused no comment. There was perhaps more reason for segregation from the point of view of the 1950s generation. As one student put it:

“nowadays, the idea of segregating men and women at university seems laughable, but it must be remembered that in the early ‘fifties there was no

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<sup>17</sup> Male (honours) veterinary medicine graduate, 1957, from pilot questionnaire.

<sup>18</sup> Female (ordinary) science graduate, 1961, from questionnaire, No. 1812.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with 1943 female (ordinary) arts graduate, April 1995.



contraceptive pill, no legalised abortion. Young women intent on getting a degree could not afford to become pregnant.”<sup>20</sup>

Men were permitted to visit QM Hall, but only at certain times and under certain conditions. A 1943 female graduate recalled that in Southpark House “we were allowed male visitors in the front hall. You couldn’t take a man to your bedroom.”<sup>21</sup> By the 1950s, you could take a man up to your room, but the names of male visitors had to be entered in a book on their arrival and no male visitor was allowed in a student’s room after 7.00 p.m.

Regulations regarding male visitors were just one aspect of the rules governing hall life in the immediate post-war decades. Evening meals were formal affairs, as the following comment by a female student who stayed in one of the annexes to QM Hall in the 1950s demonstrates:

“all meals were taken in QM Hall. We could have breakfast & lunch at any time within the set period ... Dinner, however, was formal. All students wore the red undergraduate gown with the appropriate faculty flash... Grace was said at the start of the meal, which was served by waitresses.”<sup>22</sup>

These rather formal and restrictive conditions were mirrored in women’s halls across Britain. For example, a St. Hilda’s graduate from the 1950s remembered that “we bowed to Miss Major as we came into Hall in our gowns where everyone ate virtually all meals. We had to be back in College by midnight. Men were allowed

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<sup>20</sup> Letter to Deputy Archivist, 13th August 1992, op. cit.

<sup>21</sup> Interview, 10th April 1995, op. cit.

<sup>22</sup> Letter to Deputy Archivist, 13th August 1992, op. cit..

in between two and seven.”<sup>23</sup> whilst another graduate of the University of Nottingham recalled “our hall rules permitted us to have men in our rooms, unchaperoned, from 2 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. ... In the evenings men could visit rooms provided that two women were present: this was the ‘chaperone’ rule.”<sup>24</sup> It seems that these regulations were taken seriously; as late as 1961 a woman was sent down from Oxford for being caught in a man’s room.<sup>25</sup>

The steady rise in student numbers in the 1950s, coupled with the lack of building space near the University and limited funds for residential schemes, ensured that the proportion of students accommodated by Glasgow University did not improve. For example, by 1964, despite further extensions, Queen Margaret Hall could still only accommodate 114 students, or slightly less than 6% of the total female student population. However, the 1960s were the first decade in which the University undertook to erect large purpose-built residences to cater for the post-war bulge. In 1964 a hall for men, (Wolfson), was opened, funded by the Isaac Wolfson Foundation and in the same year a new QM Hall for women opened, funded by the UGC. QM Hall accommodated 160 women, whilst Wolfson Hall could house 106 men, but also had a small block for 40 women - this was the first time that men and women had been accommodated at the same site.<sup>26</sup> According to an article in the *Glasgow Herald*, Wolfson Hall had not originally been intended for both men and

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<sup>23</sup> Celia Goodhart, “The Decade 1954-63,” in *The Centenary Symposium St. Hilda’s College, Oxford* (Oxford, 1993).

<sup>24</sup> “Dear Mum and Dad: letters home from a women’s hall of residence at the University of Nottingham 1952-55,” *History of Education*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 1993, p. 299.

<sup>25</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 24th November 1961. The man involved was apparently only suspended for a fortnight.

women but the warden of the hall was quoted as saying: "it was felt to be a more satisfactory environment for students than single sex halls. Men's halls tend to be rowdy and the men get drunk. And women get hysterical living *en masse*, chattering and gossiping."<sup>27</sup> A small additional hall for men, Dalrymple, was added in 1966 and in the following year a large extension was added to QM Hall which then also became mixed. The term "mixed" is perhaps misleading, however, since it did not mean a genuine mixing of the sexes within individual residence blocks; rather it meant the juxtaposition of both women's blocks and men's blocks at the same site. The new residences ensured a small rise in the proportion of students accommodated in halls - just under 10% for women by 1970, with a slightly higher figure of 14% for men, as shown in figures 3.1 and 3.2 below.<sup>28</sup>

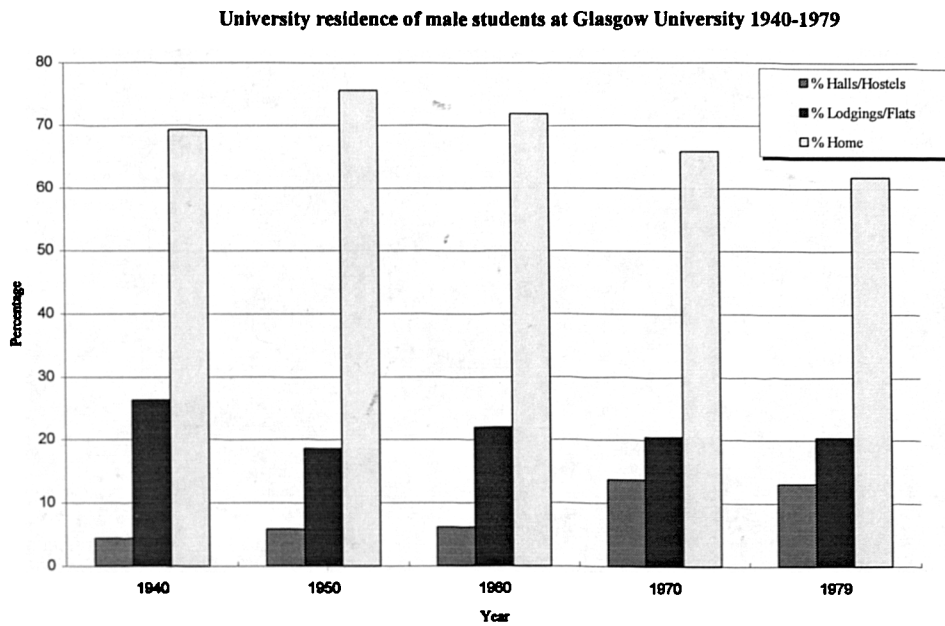
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<sup>26</sup> It was the second mixed hall to open in Scotland, Aberdeen having opened one two years previously, (*Glasgow Herald*, 3rd June 1964).

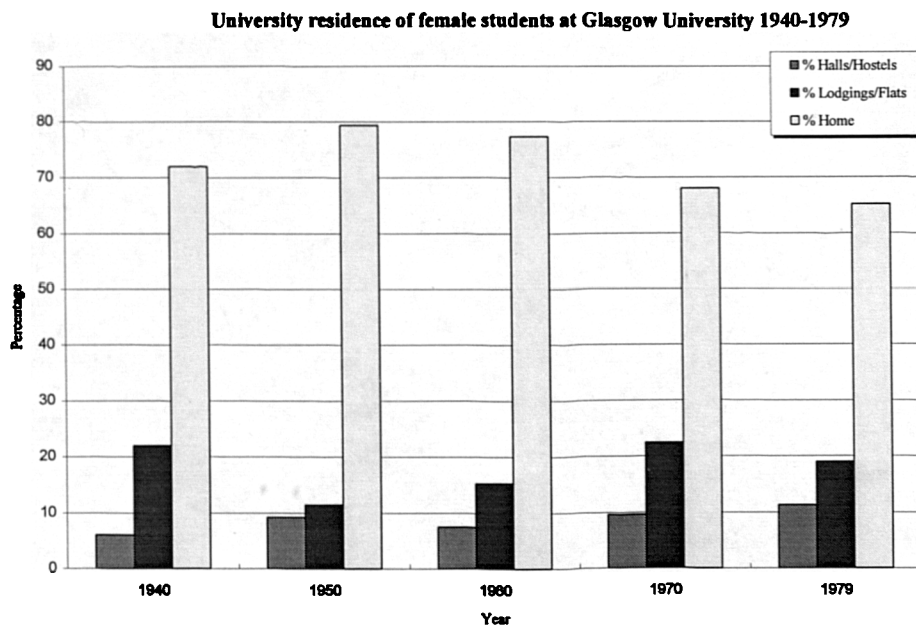
<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 1st March, 1967.

<sup>28</sup> The proportion of men accommodated in halls was always slightly higher than the figure for women, one reason being that more foreign students were male than female.

**Figure 3.1**



**Figure 3.2**



**Source: UGC Annual Returns<sup>29</sup>**

<sup>29</sup> Figures taken from the *Annual Returns to the UGC of Universities and University Colleges in Receipt of Treasury Grant*. Nineteen seventy nine is the last year in which residence statistics are

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show clearly that the proportion of students accommodated in halls continued to lag behind other forms of accommodation - the parental home, or lodgings/flats/bedsits. Despite government pressure to increase stocks of residential accommodation, the fact that the backbone of Glasgow University's students came from the local area, coupled with financial stringencies, were crucial factors in the University's decision not to place too much emphasis on residences. As the Senate noted in 1966, maintaining the University's local character was its "proper role. Students from further afield are welcomed, and are desirable, but any great increase in this percentage of the student intake could raise problems of residential accommodation, or lodging, with which the University is not financially able to deal."<sup>30</sup>

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 also show that until about 1970, the proportion of women living in lodgings or flats was always less than that of their male colleagues with correspondingly more women living at home. This perhaps reflects a reluctance on the part of parents to see their daughters "living out." However, where daughters did live out in the early post-war period, lodgings mirrored the formality and restrictiveness of halls, as the following comment shows:

"(my landlady's) was a happy household with usually 15 guests, teachers and students. A gong summoned us to meals, maids were bidden to address us by our surnames and no male visitor was ever allowed to cross the threshold,

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compiled by the UGC. Glasgow University statistics are available for more recent years, but are not divided by gender. They show, however, that by 1985, just over half the student population still lived at home, 30% lived in lodgings and just under 20% in halls of residence (or other university owned accommodation). The category "Lodgings" incorporates lodgings, flats and bedsits.

<sup>30</sup> Report of the Business Committee to the General Council, 26th October 1966.

unless he happened to be a clergyman or a Doctor. Relationships were more formal then.”<sup>31</sup>

However, the building of new 1960s halls coincided with a relaxation of some of the formality and restrictions of hall life, and those rules which remained began to seem excessive to a more modern generation. A letter to the editor of the *Glasgow University Guardian* in 1962 criticised the constraints of hall life: “the food is generally unpalatable and petty restrictions are enforced.”<sup>32</sup> The letter did not elaborate on the nature of these restrictions, but a look at the booklet of QM Hall regulations from the mid-1970s shows that over a decade later, women were allowed in the men’s blocks and men in the women’s block only between the hours of 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 a.m.<sup>33</sup> Also, women under 19 and in their first year were obliged to inform the warden on duty if they intended to return to the Hall after 11.30 p.m. and were required to state their destination, what time they expected to return and to report to the warden when they got in.<sup>34</sup> This restriction apparently stemmed from “Glasgow’s reputation for violence.”<sup>35</sup> However, evidence that these rules were proving increasingly irksome to the ‘seventies generation of students is evinced by a motion passed by the SRC in 1973 requesting that steps be taken to abolish restrictions regarding visits of members of the opposite sex to residents’ rooms.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1941, from questionnaire, No. 448.

<sup>32</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 7, No. 12, 11th May 1962. (The *Glasgow University Guardian* will hence forward be referred to as *Guardian* in the text).

<sup>33</sup> Queen Margaret Hall, General Information for Residents 1976.

<sup>34</sup> Late-night return regulations at Wolfson Hall, (Acc. 205/13/1).

<sup>35</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 1st March 1967.

<sup>36</sup> Minutes of Court 1972-73, 24th January 1973, p. 223.

The Court's response was merely to suggest that proposals of this nature should be discussed by the Committee on Student Residences (which had been set up in 1963).

Complaints in the student press, such as the one quoted above, about conditions in halls of residence were occasional in the 1960s, but the 1970s witnessed an explosion of articles in *Guardian* which were hostile to the University's accommodation policies. These protests tended to be more about lack of sufficient accommodation places and the price of rooms in halls, rather than about gender restrictions. For example, *Guardian* drew attention to empty University-owned tenements which students thought should be converted into student flats. Another bone of contention was provided by the large houses inhabited by professors in Professors' Square, where rents were apparently lower for entire houses than were the rents paid by students for shared rooms in halls, (the angry tabloid-style headline in *Guardian* over this issue in 1975 ran: "Bloody Hypocrites - Rents Scandal Exposed"<sup>37</sup>). Hostile reports even reached the *Glasgow Herald*. The 1970s was also the decade of the rent strike at universities across the country. Glasgow University was not immune and there was a rent strike at Maclay Hall in 1975 against a 30% increase in hall fees. All this prompted Sir Charles Wilson to take the unusual step of issuing a "Note on Student Accommodation" to the *Guardian* in 1975 explaining the problems, financial and otherwise, that precluded more halls of residence.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 30th January 1975.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 23rd October 1975.

It was during the 1970s that students first began to experience real problems in finding a place to live at the start of the academic year - "the situation is nearly hopeless, flats seem to have vanished off the face of the earth" was how an official at the Lodgings Office in 1975 put it.<sup>39</sup> There were several factors which were aggravating the accommodation situation at this time. Demolition of properties, a smaller supply of landlords as women chose to go out to work rather than to take in lodgers, the effects of legislation such as the 1974 Rent Act (this Act had a "security of tenure" clause which might make it difficult to get rid of an uncongenial tenant and so could put off householders who had previously rented out a bed-sitting room in their own houses), plus changing patterns of behaviour among students themselves: all increased pressures on the existing stock of accommodation. Increasingly local students were choosing not to live with their parents and wanted accommodation as near to the University as possible, a trend which A.L. Brown identified in an article in the *University Newsletter* in 1986. He observed that more students "who could travel from home do not want to do so, particularly after their first or second year. The demand is heaviest for self-catering accommodation in rooms or flats near the University."<sup>40</sup> Therefore, not only did students want to live out, they wanted to do so in shared flats rather than the traditional lodgings. These changes reflected the trend towards a more independent lifestyle for young people, as well as the greater choice which the introduction of universal grants allowed.

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 9th October 1975.

<sup>40</sup> A.L. Brown, "The Changing University - The Home-Based Student," in *Glasgow University Newsletter*, No. 84, 13th February 1986.



Brown's comment draws attention to a limitation of the statistics presented in figures 3.1 and 3.2. These graphs give figures for all matriculated students at the University, and also group flats and lodgings together. If they differentiated between years of study and between lodgings and flats, they would give a more detailed picture of the changes that were at work. Figures from the Graduate Database can help here and show that whilst between 1940 and 1961, only 15% of women and 6% of men were living in a flat in their second year, this had risen to 64% of women and 51% of men for the 1962-84 cohort. This was accompanied by a halving of the proportion of second years in lodgings. The trend towards "living out" in flats after first year was reflected at universities throughout Britain; the historian of Somerville College Oxford, for example, noting wryly that the completion of a major residential development in the 1970s was "succeeded almost immediately by a fashion...probably owing...to a general reaction against all forms of institutionalism - for living out of college."<sup>41</sup>

At Glasgow, however, there continued to be an unsatisfied demand for residential accommodation, fuelled by rising student numbers and an increased intake from overseas and from more distant parts of Britain. In the 1970s and 1980s, accommodation policy tended towards small-scale conversion of existing properties into student flats - rather than the building of large residential blocks. This policy was more a result of expediency than conscious design, since student flats, although they added far fewer places to the stock of residential accommodation, were far cheaper than the cost of a new hall. The main problem was that UGC money was no

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<sup>41</sup> Pauline Adams, *Somerville for Women An Oxford College 1879-1993* (Oxford, 1996), p. 294.

longer forthcoming for such purposes. A windfall arrived in 1973 when an anonymous donor offered funds for a new residence, but the money proved insufficient and the University's inability to raise additional funding led to the scheme's abandonment. Nonetheless, the proportion of the student population accommodated in University residences was increasing. By 1979, the University provided 1,170 places in halls and another 131 in student houses.<sup>42</sup> This provided accommodation for about 12% of the total student population (double the 1950s proportion).

To encourage applications from overseas students, who would provide much needed income from their higher fees and would help to achieve target student expansion figures, every overseas student was guaranteed university accommodation from 1984; 50% of places were also reserved for first years from any location.<sup>43</sup> The pressures of drawing students from a wider catchment area on hall places were already extreme by 1979, when an exasperated Accommodation Office wrote an article to the *Newsletter* expressing the hope that the University's efforts to recruit more students from beyond the Glasgow district would fail because of the lack of suitable accommodation for these potential recruits: "where are these new students going to live? We doubt if those of the Clerk of Senate's dynamic disciples preaching the advantages of studying in the University of Glasgow thought about the problem..."<sup>44</sup> The article recommended the University build a block of 300 student bed-sits immediately; otherwise, it concluded, new students would simply not be

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<sup>42</sup> Figures from minutes of the Student Residence Committee, (Acc. 205/10/2).

<sup>43</sup> Glasgow University *Newsletter*, No. 72, 8th November 1984.

attracted to the University. By the 1980s, the University itself accepted that an additional 500 places were needed, but again, student flats were envisaged rather than halls.<sup>45</sup> In 1982 the adaptation of tenements for student residence in two streets adjacent to the University was begun, financed by money from another anonymous donor, and the controversial Red Road multi-storey flats, at some distance from the University, were renovated for student accommodation (though they were intended for use by students from other higher education institutions in the city, as well as Glasgow University).<sup>46</sup> By 1988, the University was able to provide over 2,000 residential places and was reported to be building new places at the rate of 100 a year. The retiring Principal, Alwyn Williams, was confident that by the mid-1990s the demand would be satisfied.<sup>47</sup>

Despite significant increases in the proportion of students living in halls over the whole period under discussion (about 18% were in halls by 1985<sup>48</sup>), Glasgow still retained a large proportion of students who lived at home - just over 50% still did in 1985. The implications of this for student life were many. As writers in the *Guardian* often pointed out, it made for a poor corporate spirit and resulted in many students sitting on buses when they could have been taking part in extra-curricular

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., No. 21, 20th April 1979.

<sup>45</sup> Paper by Senior Accommodation Officer, 23/02/84, (Acc. 205/10/4).

<sup>46</sup> Principal's Report to the University Court, 1982-83. Money from donors was extremely important, since the UGC emphasised in the 1970s and 1980s that it could offer no financial assistance for building new residences (see for example Minutes of Court 1983-84, (Appendix): meeting of Academic Development Committee, 5th & 23rd January 1984: notes by the UGC following its visit to the University on 25/11/83).

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Alwyn Williams in *Student Handbook*, 1988.

<sup>48</sup> Figures from Glasgow University Court, *Annual Report*. This was a much smaller proportion than for Great Britain as a whole, where c45% of students lived in a hall by 1980, whilst the average for the whole of Scotland was about one third, (figures from *Statistics of Education*).

activities. The benefits of halls were also agreed upon by both the Robbins Report and the UGC quinquennial reports, and anecdotal evidence from students at Glasgow University suggests the positive effect of living in a hall for the corporate life, several commenting that their stay in halls had encouraged them to take part in student activities. “For a time I resided at Maclay Hall which in turn encouraged my participation in student union activities,” recalled one 1942 graduate.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, by far the most common complaint expressed in the “any other comments” section of the graduate questionnaire was that students felt their participation in the corporate life had been curtailed by living at home and travelling in for lectures. The following comment is typical: “as a result of having to travel more than one hour each morning and night (from Airdrie), and most of my social life being at home, I feel I missed out a bit on university life.”<sup>50</sup>

We have noted the modern trend towards living in a shared flat, at least for part of one’s university career. What impact did this have on the corporate life? As with living in halls, living in a flat near to the University freed up time which might hitherto have been spent commuting, but there is little evidence that flat-sharing produced more involvement in extra-curricular activities. Brown, in commenting on the changing culture of the University in which the old image of the student going home for high tea was replaced by the student returning to a flat “carrying home mince and kidney beans to cook chile con carne,” was unsure of the effect this was having on student life in general. “I cannot say that the campus looks busier or that

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<sup>49</sup> Male (ordinary) law graduate, 1942, from questionnaire, No. 243.

<sup>50</sup> Female (ordinary) science graduate, 1959, No. 1463.

the University Library is fuller in the evenings” he commented and certainly, complaints of apathy are as prevalent in the 1970s and 1980s as they were at any time.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps the change towards a more independent way of life also meant that students were less inclined to take part in some of the more traditional corporate activities which might be seen as immature. This point has been made by Mabel Newcomer in her history of American women’s higher education. Writing in the late ‘fifties, she notes that some corporate activities “were a more important ingredient of the average student’s education 50 years ago than now. Today students are socially more mature.”<sup>52</sup> Pauline Adams also mentions the impact of television and feels that at Somerville, the “decrease of college societies was doubtless hastened by the rising popularity of the TV.”<sup>53</sup>

Along with these many changes in student lifestyles, came a less formal way of living. Both shared flats and the modern hall of residence were far less restrictive than the halls and lodgings of the 1940s and 1950s. Regulations in halls governing visits from members of the opposite sex eventually lapsed completely; gone too were the formal hall dinners of the ‘forties and ‘fifties mentioned above, where one wore one’s red gown and was served by waitresses. Meals were self-service, you wore what you wanted and there was no pause to say grace at the beginning of the meal.

Some of these changes spilled over into academic life. Wearing smart clothes underneath the red gown to lectures began to disappear as the norm in the 1950s.

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<sup>51</sup> A.L. Brown, op. cit., *Glasgow University Newsletter*, 1986.

<sup>52</sup> Mabel Newcomer, *A Century of Higher Education for American Women* (New York, 1959), p. 122.

<sup>53</sup> Pauline Adams, op. cit., p. 322.

This is just one of the more superficial changes which took place in the classroom. The next section looks in more depth at how the nature of academic study altered.

#### In the classroom: lectures, tutorials and staff

As has already been observed, university life for many students, for a variety of reasons (and particularly because of living at home and having to travel significant distances every day), consisted of attending lectures and studying, with a very limited involvement in extra-curricular activities. A familiar pattern, in arts at any rate, seems to have been morning lectures, followed by lunch in the one of the unions, an afternoon of study in the Reading Room, then the bus or train home and tea with the family, followed by further study in the evening. Therefore it is important to include a section on life in the lecture or tutorial room because for many, this was virtually their only experience of university life.

One important feature of study, which so many graduates responding to the questionnaire have noted, was the enormous difference between ordinary and honours years. Ordinary lectures tended to be massive and impersonal, whilst only in honours years was there a chance to discuss course material in small tutorial groups and to become known personally to the lecturer or professor. This lack of staff/student contact and the delivery of lectures to huge groups (which formed a frequent source of complaint at SRC meetings and in the student press in the 1940s and 1950s) could lead to isolation and a sense of being left to “sink or swim.” Many students have noted that it was only during honours years that they became more friendly with members of staff and were able to form closer relationships with other

students, several commenting that there was a greater tendency for the smaller honours groups to socialise together. There was much variation between departments of course - one lecturer noting that experimental tutorials once a fortnight were introduced in political economy not long after the war. However, on the science side, another lecturer remember that in the 1940s “there were no tutorials in any real sense.”<sup>54</sup>

Both these lecturers noted the importance of an increase from the 1950s and 1960s in the number of research students who could be used to provide small group teaching and gradually, individual tutorials and larger seminar groups were introduced at all levels. Nonetheless the changes were comparatively slow and student criticism grew more strident in the 1960s, a decade in which so many aspects of university life became targets for a more militant student body. In particular, *Guardian* editorials increasingly focused on criticisms of lecturing methods, the standard of lecturers, the parrot-like regurgitation of the exam system and the existence of outdated curricula, problems in particular departments often making headline news. For example, a 1969 headline read: “Explosion In Spanish Department!”<sup>55</sup> - the Professor of Hispanic Studies was accused of ignoring student grievances about the curriculum.<sup>56</sup> In the following year another headline: “Walkout!,” reported on 50 Dip.Ed. students who had stormed out of a psychology

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<sup>54</sup> Letter from retired political economy lecturer, 8th July 1998 and letter from retired biochemistry lecturer, 9th July 1998.

<sup>55</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 19, No. 7, 14th February 1969.

<sup>56</sup> The issue was taken up by the SRC, with some success, *Guardian* reporting on changes to the Spanish course agreed on some months later, (*Ibid.*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 14th October 1969).

lecture in protest at poor teaching methods.<sup>57</sup> Somewhat paradoxically perhaps, as Gordon Donaldson has noted in his article on Edinburgh University, this militancy coincided with a marked decrease in rowdy behaviour by students in the lecture theatre.<sup>58</sup> Several students from the 1940s and 1950s have noted that lectures at this time could be quite boisterous affairs with “lots of foot-stamping if the lecturer was funny, clever, made a mistake, or was boring.”<sup>59</sup> However, by the 1960s “by a curious paradox, in a generation which has seen students become so much more vocal and aggressive in their criticisms of University policy and their demands for a share in decision-making...they have become incomparably more docile in the classroom.”<sup>60</sup> Donaldson attributes this in part to changes in environment, with the disappearance of enormous lecture theatres with noisy wooden floors, which lent themselves to outbursts and their replacement by modern, sometimes carpeted lecture rooms which were less conducive to student rowdiness. However, this cannot provide the entire explanation. Perhaps the increasing independence of students and a more mature outlook were important factors. In the same way that the trend in accommodation patterns towards living in flats can be regarded as evidence of maturity and independence, perhaps so too can the abandonment of boisterous demonstrations, which came to seem inappropriate. This is hinted at in a comment

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., Vol. 20, No. 6, 5th February 1970.

<sup>58</sup> Gordon Donaldson, “Some Changes in the Classroom in the Twentieth Century,” in Gordon Donaldson, (ed.), *Four Centuries Edinburgh University Life 1583-1983* (Edinburgh, 1983).

<sup>59</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1956, from pilot questionnaire.

<sup>60</sup> Gordon Donaldson, *op. cit.*, p. 158. Some concessions were made to student demand for greater say in decisions affecting their degree courses at Glasgow. In 1978, students were allowed to attend Science Faculty and Arts Faculty meetings, but clearly they did not have ex-officio status because in the following year, the Science Faculty decided against student representation at



made by the current editor of the *Glasgow Herald* who attended Edinburgh University in the late 'fifties and who notes that "we kept up the practice of foot-stamping, hissing and booing but without any understanding of its meaning; increasingly it seemed merely discourteous."<sup>61</sup> Possibly also, a rise in the proportion of female students in many lectures may have had an impact on such behaviour.

Another change was the disappearance of the "chronic" student, a casualty of tighter academic regulations in the post-war era. Nonetheless, failing exams and having to repeat years were still a common experience and the high failure rates - particularly in fixed courses such as engineering - were an increasing source of comment in the student press. A *Guardian* headline from 1967 - "217 suspended - how many more?" - reported on wastage figures presented to the latest General Council meeting. Is anything being done about this? the article wondered.<sup>62</sup> Certainly, anecdotal evidence from questionnaire respondents in all decades suggest worrying failure rates. One recent (1980s) graduate commented "regarding teaching, I did find it was sink or swim in most subjects. Indeed, in the first year chemistry exam for the students of 1977, approximately 300 failed - fortunately I passed!,"<sup>63</sup> whilst another student, this time from the 1960s, noted that very little help or encouragement was given in her subject (also chemistry), and that those without the means to pay for private tuition struggled. In fact this particular student failed her higher ordinary chemistry and taught uncertificated for a year in order to pay with

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Faculty level, although the new Social Sciences Faculty agreed to such representation, (Minutes of SRC Executive Committee Meeting, 14th March 1979).

<sup>61</sup> Arnold Kemp, *The Hollow Drum Scotland Since the War* (Edinburgh, 1993), p. 27.

<sup>62</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 2nd November 1967.

her earnings for private tuition from a PhD student. She then went back to the University and finally passed.<sup>64</sup>

Of course, individual experience varied enormously between different departments and at different times and questionnaire respondents have as much praise for their departments as they have criticism. A number of graduates from the 1940s and 1950s have noted the excellent teaching ability of some of their lecturers; for example, a graduate from 1948 remembers “the student lived in the presence of outstanding scholars and singular personalities,”<sup>65</sup> whilst another from 1954 recalled “we had one or two quite outstanding lecturers.”<sup>66</sup> There are few such glowing tributes to the teaching staff from more recent graduates, but this may be due to the changing culture of university lecturing rather than a decline in quality of the staff. With the recent shift to a greater emphasis on research output, there may have been a decline in the traditional charismatic college teacher and an increasing emphasis by new generations of lecturers on research rather than teaching. Also, as the proportion of lecturers who had PhDs rose, it became increasingly likely that these staff members would have active research interests.

Another notable change, apparent by the 1960s, was the decline in the practice of lecturers entertaining students in their homes. Students from the 1940s and 1950s have noted occasions, rather formal and uncomfortable, when they were invited to professors’ houses; one recalling that the Music Professor “had us out to his house

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<sup>63</sup> Male (ordinary) science graduate, 1981, from pilot questionnaire.

<sup>64</sup> Female (ordinary) science graduate, 1964, from pilot questionnaire.

<sup>65</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1948, from pilot questionnaire.

<sup>66</sup> Interview, 1st February 1995, *op. cit.*

on a sort of Oxford, Cambridge basis and that was almost embarrassing because we were so unused to it.”<sup>67</sup> But these events became more rare. Donaldson attributes this to the increasing availability of staff on campus, making such out-of-hours meetings less necessary. He observes that the allocation of a room to each lecturer and the tendency of lecturers to spend most of the day on campus led to more relaxed relations between staff and students, whilst in days when the lecture room atmosphere was more formal, many lecturers made an effort to entertain students in their own homes. Less sumptuous living conditions also played their part: “in the days when professors could afford one or two domestic servants there was no difficulty in having students in batches of twenty or so for afternoon tea on Sunday.”<sup>68</sup>

Finally, mention should be made of improvements in the facilities for study outside the lecture room. These were greatly improved at the beginning of the period by the opening of the Reading Room in 1939, which provided study space for about 400 students plus reference books. In addition there was the main Library, small libraries provided by the unions for the use of members and Class Libraries. The 1940 *Student Handbook* noted that there were twenty Class Libraries (in Classics, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Philosophy, Political Economy, Russian, Celtic, Italian, German, French, Spanish, Chemistry, Engineering, Naval Architecture, Psychology, Arabic, Education and Law); either housed in the departments themselves, or in the Reading Room. Some decades later

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Gordon Donaldson, “Some Changes in the Classroom,” in Gordon Donaldson, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

(in 1968), a new tower block library building was added, and the Adam Smith Social Sciences Building (which opened in 1967) contained a small library. The libraries suffered from cuts in the 1970s and 1980s, with the result that most class libraries were closed, staffing levels were reduced and opening hours curtailed. The SRC fought against these measures, not without some success, as will be seen in the *Student Politics* chapter.

### Student Welfare

At the beginning of the period under discussion, student welfare services were fairly limited, especially for male students who were provided with virtually no pastoral care. They had an adviser of studies for help in choosing their curriculum and an Appointments Service for careers advice which had been set up as early as 1899. But no facilities existed for advice on personal welfare, although some students would perhaps have contacted the Chaplain in this capacity, and no health service existed in 1939.

Women fared rather better since they were provided with a General Adviser to Women Students - an appointment created in 1935 when QM College closed and women students were brought directly under the main University administration. QM College had had a "mistress" to look after the welfare of its students and the new post was intended to be the modern equivalent. The functions of this General Adviser were many. She was permanent Adviser of Studies to women in arts, was Appointments Secretary for women and also could be contacted about any personal

problems that female students might encounter.<sup>69</sup> Thus most advisory services - whether providing careers, curricular or general welfare advice - were initially segregated, a direct result of the fact that there had once been a separate women's college. The improvements in welfare which were introduced in the 1940s, however, catered for men and women together. A Student Health Service, which the SRC had been pressing for, was set up in 1948 and a Lodgings Officer was also appointed in the 1940s.<sup>70</sup>

Despite these improvements, the inadequacy of existing arrangements became increasingly apparent with the expansion of the student population in the 1950s and beyond. As a result, with regard to women students, the many duties of the General Adviser to Women Students had, with time, to be split up. In 1964, the General Adviser was renamed the Senior Tutor to Women Students and all curricular advising was farmed out to about 16 members of staff. The post of Senior Tutor still had responsibility for welfare advice and the Women's Section of the Appointments Office, but in 1965 the Men's and Women's Appointments Offices were amalgamated and careers advice for women was taken over by this joint office. Therefore, by the mid-60s, both curricular and career advice were no longer segregated services. Welfare advice was to go the same way with the institution of a professional Counselling Advisory Service for both men and women in 1976 (the

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<sup>69</sup> Women students studying science or medicine, however, received curricular advice from an Adviser of Studies in the same way that men did.

<sup>70</sup> Both these services had been provided to a limited extent by the SRC previously - the SRC had produced a list of suitable "digs" and had also arranged X-Ray examinations - but the assumption of these responsibilities by the University was a much needed development, relieving the SRC's burden somewhat and mirroring developments elsewhere, (for example, Aberdeen University had introduced a comprehensive health scheme a few years before Glasgow).

office of Senior Tutor to Women Students had been dispensed with by this point). In addition, "Nite-Line" was set up at this time, staffed by student volunteers and operating nightly during term time. The needs of overseas students were also recognised with the creation of an Adviser to Overseas Students in 1960. Welfare services provided by the SRC proliferated, too. In the mid-1970s it set up an Advice Centre staffed by lecturers and senior students in the Law Faculty to provide legal advice and in 1980 a V.P. Welfare was created on the Executive (by splitting the post of V.P. in charge of Welfare and International interests into two separate posts), and in 1986 a full time Welfare Officer was appointed.<sup>71</sup>

The University authorities had also set up various committees to deal with student welfare and student relations from the 1950s onwards. A Student Amenities Committee to deal with the physical provision of facilities had been set up in 1957, the Student Health and Welfare Committee began in the early 1950s and in 1966 a Student Affairs Committee was instituted. However, *Guardian* was suspicious of the efficacy of the latter committee, which was composed of representatives of the SRC, Men's Union, QMU, Glasgow University Athletic Club (GUAC) and staff. It felt that the committee was in effect acting as a means of diverting controversial matters from the main line of communication between the SRC and the Court.<sup>72</sup>

The ad hoc and occasionally tardy manner with which welfare services were added suggests that the University had perhaps not fully grasped the welfare implications of a much larger student population. Certainly the authorities

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<sup>71</sup> *Student Handbooks*, 1970s and 1980s.

<sup>72</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 19, No. 1., 17th October 1968.

occasionally seemed to be responding to pressure rather than taking the initiative - for example, pressure from the SRC for a Health Service. Also, the provision of a professional student counsellor in 1976 appears somewhat belated; the SRC had noted the need for a Psychiatric Social Worker in 1971.<sup>73</sup> Certainly, limited anecdotal evidence from students suggests that not enough was done in terms of student welfare; “I felt that counselling facilities were only paid lip service to. Whilst I think I largely wasted four years of my life, with proper counselling things could have been much better,”<sup>74</sup> commented a 1973 graduate, although another recognised that this made students stand on their own two feet: “pastoral aspects were lacking, although this did foster independence.”<sup>75</sup>

By the 1960s, certain faculties had implemented some sort of advisory service to improve staff/student relations. In the Medical Faculty, groups of 6 students were assigned to a member of staff for academic and non-academic advice, whilst in the Science Faculty an advisory panel of 20 members of staff existed. A *Glasgow Herald* article in 1965 noted that advice was “encouragingly on the increase,”<sup>76</sup> although a recent report (the Hale report) had noted that in Scotland pre-enrolment advice was sometimes lacking. Contact between schools and universities was improved in the decades to come and better organised open days and closer liaison with schools were a feature of the 1970s and 1980s.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., Vol. 21, No. 6, 28th May 1971, report on SRC’s memorandum to UGC.

<sup>74</sup> Male (ordinary) arts graduate, 1973, from questionnaire, No. 463.

<sup>75</sup> Male (ordinary) science graduate, 1975, from questionnaire, No. 104.

<sup>76</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 9th October 1965.

A final aspect of student welfare which must be mentioned concerns their spiritual well being and the provision which the University made for religious activities. Religious provision in the University was in the hands of official Chaplains, appointed by the University, plus student-run religious societies. Both Protestants and Catholics were provided with a Chapel and Chaplain at the beginning of the period and a Chaplain for overseas students and one for Anglican students were added in the 1950s. The SRC was also involved in religious aspects of life. It possessed a Chapel Committee whose role was to “co-operate with the Chaplain in helping to organise Chapel functions and to provide through the convenor a liaison between the Council and the University Chapel.”<sup>77</sup> The SRC minutes also show that the Chaplain occasionally addressed statutory meetings at this time and he would also visit the halls of residence - a practice that was still going at the end of the 1970s. One of the Chapel services in the calendar was also known as “SRC Sunday” when as many SRC members as possible were supposed to attend - although there was a complaint recorded in the minutes of 1966 that not enough were doing so.<sup>78</sup>

Religion could also form part of the ritual and tradition of hall life, one 1950s student remembering chapel on Sundays when:

“we ‘processed,’ academic staff leading the way and women students at the rear. Although I was a declared agnostic, I enjoyed attending chapel from time to time to participate in this ritual. Women students sat in the lowest pews and

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<sup>77</sup> *Memorandum on the composition and function of SRC standing committees*, 1955, (DC 157/4/1/6).

<sup>78</sup> Minutes of SRC Statutory Committee, 14th January 1966.



the academic staff in the highest. It gave me the opportunity to study the faces of our august professors...”<sup>79</sup>

Respondents to the graduate questionnaire in the 1940s and 1950s, both men and women, quite frequently mention religious activities of one kind or another - such as morning chapel and choir practice; but one senses that, with the passing of time, the religious organisations in the University were fighting a losing battle to a certain extent, with students mirroring the decline in religious observance among the population generally.<sup>80</sup> Respondents from recent decades rarely mention religion and impressions gained from the student press also suggest a decreasing emphasis upon and interest in religion. Throughout the ‘fifties there were regular speakers on religion in the Men’s Union, one attracting an audience of over 300 in 1956<sup>81</sup> and the *University Gazette* in December 1954 reported on students who attended Chapel undertaking an, apparently very successful, “Visitation of Welcome” to Freshers in digs (i.e. going out to students lodgings to welcome those in their first year to the University’s Christian community<sup>82</sup>). By the 1960s there seem to be fewer debates on religious themes (although *Guardian* did run a series of articles on religious questions in 1965). The student religious societies were no longer an important force in Rectorial elections in the way they had been before the war and although figures for involvement in the religious societies are hard to find, the Christian

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<sup>79</sup> Letter to Deputy Archivist, 13th August 1992, op. cit.

<sup>80</sup> By the 1950s, the figures for regular church-going in the population at large were only 11% for women and 7% for men (although figures for Scotland were somewhat higher): Arthur Marwick, *British Society since 1945* (Middlesex, 1990), p.106.

<sup>81</sup> *Gilmorehill Guardian*, No. 2, 19th January 1956.

<sup>82</sup> *Glasgow University Gazette*, No. 20, December 1954. (The *Gazette* was a staff magazine which began in 1947. It was replaced by the *Newsletter* in 1977).

Union only had 120 members in 1967 and the Anglican Society only had 41 members in 1963.<sup>83</sup> In addition, the SRC Chapel Convenor lost voting rights in 1973 and in 1981 the SRC voted overwhelmingly to do away with SRC Sunday.<sup>84</sup>

As well as the general decline in religious observance, there was the old problem of students living at home who were rooted in their own communities and who continued to go to their local church. As the Rev. A. Ritchie told the *Glasgow Herald* in 1981, “attendances at University Chapel Sunday Services never have been very large. This is because Glasgow is a commuter University, with 95% of our church-going students living away from the University. They go to church elsewhere.”<sup>85</sup> A further problem was the relentless growth in the size of the student population which made personal contact between Chaplain and student increasingly difficult. In 1965, *GUM* interviewed the new University Chaplain appointed in that year who stated that he hoped to become known to most students who were living in University-owned residences.<sup>86</sup> If this was a daunting task in 1965, it was to become a virtually impossible one in years to come.

In terms of women’s involvement in religion within the University, it is clear that many played a prominent part and women were sometimes presidents of the student religious societies. For example, looking at two years only: in 1960 there were female presidents of the Free Church of Scotland Association and Student Christian Movement and in 1970 of the Catholic Society and Trinity College

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<sup>83</sup> SRC affiliated clubs, (DC 157/5/9).

<sup>84</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 19th January 1981.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 19th January 1981.

<sup>86</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Martinmas 2, December 1965.

Missionary Society. Societies could occasionally prohibit them from becoming president, however, the Christian Union's constitution doing so as late as the 1980s.

One point which should be mentioned is the possibility of religious tensions, particularly between Protestants and Catholics. It is perhaps easy to overplay such tensions in a city such as Glasgow, and over the whole period there are few allusions in the student press to any tensions between those of different religions. Nonetheless, occasional references to religious intolerance appear. A *GUM* editorial from 1939 complained of the "clannish and militant...aggressive papism" exhibited by Catholics at Rectorial and SRC elections - although it went on to assert that Protestants were as much to blame<sup>87</sup> and in 1967, the minutes of the Men's Union Committee of Management record that the singing of songs intended to incite religious fervour in the Beer Bar was to be forbidden, and the Secretary was instructed to put up notices to this effect.<sup>88</sup> It is also important to remember that Protestant and Catholic students would in many cases have gone to separate schools in Scotland, and so might never have encountered each other until university. As one 1980 graduate observed: "I went to a 'Protestant' school in a very bigoted area. At Glasgow I met Catholics for the first time ever in an unthreatening way,"<sup>89</sup> whilst another noted "I had never mixed with Roman Catholics before, and failed to understand why they were supposed to be avoided at all costs."<sup>90</sup> Indeed, with the increasing success of Catholics in winning places at the University there is some

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. L1, No. 1, 18th October 1939.

<sup>88</sup> Men's Union, Committee of Management minutes, 24th May 1967.

<sup>89</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1980, from questionnaire., No. 63.

<sup>90</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1960, from questionnaire, No. 1328.

anecdotal evidence to suggest that, despite a general fall in religious observance in the population, masses at the University continued to be well supported. One graduate from the late 1970s recalled that “at University I was surprised to attend masses on ‘holidays of obligation’ and see the size of the Catholic student population.”<sup>91</sup>

### The Corporate life: the Unions, student societies and sport

#### The Unions

At the beginning of the period under discussion, the two student unions were single sex and membership was voluntary. The men had moved into a purpose-built building in 1930 and the building which they had vacated was taken over by the Women’s Union, (QMU) in 1932. Both unions were equipped with dining facilities, committee rooms which could be hired, dance and debating halls; the QMU also possessed a limited amount of sleeping accommodation if students wished occasionally to stay overnight. The day to day running of the unions was respectively in the charge of an all-male and all-female Board of Management composed of students and academic staff members, and both unions traditionally tried to remain as independent of the University authorities as possible.

By the time of the Second World War, joining the union was becoming a more common practice than had formerly been the case. For example, whilst one student remembered that in 1919 “no woman from first year medicine had joined, and only

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<sup>91</sup> Male (honours) arts graduate, 1979, from questionnaire., No. 1900. This rise in the Catholic student population has already been noted in the section on “School backgrounds” in Chapter 2,

about one fifth of all women students had become members,"<sup>92</sup> (of the QMU), by the Second World War, well over half of the female population joined each year, in the 1939-40 session 693 women or c59% did so.<sup>93</sup> However, this still left a considerable proportion who chose not to become members, the most common impediment no doubt being the 2 guinea annual subscription which was considered unaffordable. The result was a duality of experience, with wealthier students using the dining room, coffee room and other facilities of the QMU, whilst those who could not afford to join might bring in sandwiches and eat them in the Women's Common Room, where comfort was minimal.

The duality of experience is reflected in the following comment by a 1942 graduate:

"Looking back, I am struck with the lack of amenities in the University, although those of us who belonged to one of the unions did not fare too badly. ... But although the subscription was low - 25 shillings per year for QM Union and £1 for the Men's Union - many students could not afford these sums. They must have found life difficult and uncomfortable with nowhere much to go between classes. I believe there was a room provided by the University where people could eat their sandwiches and have a cup of tea and there were cloakrooms, which I never entered."<sup>94</sup>

There was also a refectory, established in 1946, to provide cheap meals for all those who chose not to join, or could not afford to join, the unions. As well as providing "plain British cooking" between 12 and 3 each day, the refectory provided somewhere for men and women to meet and provided "an opportunity for the

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*Student Origins.*

<sup>92</sup> Jessie Pattie, quoted in Olive Checkland, *Queen Margaret Union 1890-1980* (Glasgow, 1979).

<sup>93</sup> QM Board of Management minutes.

ambitious maiden to discover just how much her beau ideal can do with a knife and fork, before preceding to entrap him in any semi-permanent sort of snare.”<sup>95</sup>

By the 1950s, most women joined the QMU. In the 1956-57 session, for instance, over 90% were members and the *QM Yearbook* of 1958-59 noted that “the non-member is indeed a rarity.” This increased membership was no doubt a result of the wider access to grants, which meant that the annual union subscription no longer seemed too extravagant.<sup>96</sup> The same applied to the Men’s Union, although membership tended to remain much lower - it stood at only 44% in 1951.<sup>97</sup>

A larger membership, however, brought with it problems of overcrowding in both unions. The Men’s Union had to introduce a system of restricted membership and waiting lists to cope with the post-war bulge in 1947, and even after the bulge was past, both unions were stretched beyond capacity by the 1950s.<sup>98</sup> The two Boards of Management considered ways of coping with increased numbers and the QMU decided to press for an entirely new building since there was no room to expand, whilst the Men’s Union planned an extension to be built on the vacant ground next to their union. Both unions got what they wanted eventually: a completely new QM Union building opened in 1968 and an extension to the Men’s

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<sup>94</sup> Reminiscences of a 1942 female arts graduate, courtesy of Rona Ferguson.

<sup>95</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 4, March 1946.

<sup>96</sup> By 1964-65, 85% of Scottish university students were receiving some form of assistance, mainly government grants; 56.8% had done so in 1953-54, (figures from *The Glasgow Herald*, 14th October 1966).

<sup>97</sup> It is difficult to say why male union membership should have been comparatively so low. Possibly the fact that there were many older ex-servicemen in the University who may have been married was important, since they would have perhaps gone home to families in the evening instead of going to the Union. Higher female membership may possibly also be a reflection of the generally somewhat wealthier social backgrounds of female students - see Chapter 2, *Student Origins*.

Union opened in 1965. However, the conditions under which they were obtained caused a tremendous amount of acrimony. Problems stemmed from the fact that the UGC was only prepared to fund new union buildings which were open to all students, hence the cherished principle of voluntary membership, held dear by both unions, would have to be abandoned. Necessity dictated that it was abandoned, since the unions eventually conceded that they could not raise enough money to finance extensions themselves. But the bitterness aroused by the issue, particularly in the Men's Union, ensured that any improvement to the unions was postponed for many years.<sup>99</sup>

In agreeing to the new QM building and the Men's Union extension, Principal Hetherington, was also compromising and accepting something he was not particularly happy with. In the 1950s, he had announced that in his opinion the two unions were already too large and what he would really like to see were several small unions rather than two ever expanding ones, plus a new refectory to deal with catering needs. He wanted to create lots of small, intimate union communities rather than large impersonal unions, which he feared might end up as mere eating houses.<sup>100</sup> In the event, no one else on the Court supported the plan. However, although his small unions did not materialise, a new refectory did open in 1966.

It is interesting to note that when the expansion plans for both unions were being discussed in the 1950s, there was no proposal put forward for erecting a new

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<sup>98</sup> Men's Union, Committee of Management minutes.

<sup>99</sup> For a full account of the problems surrounding extension of the Men's Union, see Gerald Warner, *Conquering by degrees, Glasgow University Union 1885-1985* (Glasgow, 1985).

<sup>100</sup> Men's Union, Committee of Management minutes, 7th June 1954.

building which would provide mixed facilities - segregation was still taken for granted. But by 1975, when pressure of numbers meant that expansion plans were again being discussed, a proposal was mooted for a smaller mixed union to cater for the overspill.<sup>101</sup> This plan did not come to fruition, and the two unions continued in their unmixed state, as already noted, for well over another decade.

During 1979, the year in which the QMU had finally ended segregation while the Men's Union was still holding on to its single sex status, the QMU proposed that once both unions were mixed, there should be a single Board of Management, consisting of men and women, running both buildings. But a few months later, when the Men's Union finally admitted women, there seems to have been no discussion of scrapping the two separate Boards and the status quo was retained in terms of the management structure, the only change being that women could now stand for the Board of the Glasgow University Union or GUU (as the Men's Union became known), and men for the QMU Board.<sup>102</sup>

*Finally, then, the very last segregated unions in Britain went mixed.* But it is important to note that segregation had not been complete before these dates. The 1956 *QM Yearbook* reminded its members that "gentlemen may be introduced from 2.30 p.m. onwards," whilst in the Men's Union, women were allowed in as guests after 6 p.m. on Sundays from 1949.<sup>103</sup> In 1969 the QM bar went mixed and the Men's Union allowed women into the new bar in the extension basement in 1970.

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<sup>101</sup> Meeting of Men's Union management and QMU management to discuss ways of dealing with overcrowding, QMU Board of Management minutes, 12th February, 1975.

<sup>102</sup> See Chapter 4, *Student Politics*.

<sup>103</sup> Gerald Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 144.



The cherished Beer Bar in the Old Union building proved to be more problematic - it finally admitted women in 1980 when the rest of the building went mixed. *Guardian* reported that at the Beer Bar's historic opening to female students, the QM President, Mairi MacLeod, had a pint of beer thrown over her by a "prominent life member."<sup>104</sup>

The mixing of the unions represented an enormous overnight change, but in other more subtle ways the unions altered greatly between 1939 and the 1980s to reflect changes in student taste, entertainment and culture. In 1939 the two unions possessed widely different atmospheres. The Men's Union was a gentleman's club with its smoke room, billiard room, reading room and debating hall. There were weekly *palais* and informal dances, plus the "Globe" cinema on a Sunday and the annual "Daft Friday" just before Christmas - an all night party with bands and films. The atmosphere could often be rowdy and the Committee of Management minutes record many discipline cases for "disturbances" at debates or dances. Offenders *were usually charged with "ungentlemanly conduct."* A further problem was gambling, which the Senate had prohibited. For annual balls and other social events, alcohol could be brought into the building, but there was no permanent bar until 1951, when the Senate agreed to a beer lounge being opened. The style of dress was also very formal at this time, the idea being to look as mature as possible - with University or old school blazers, flannel trousers, pipes and beards. As R.D. Anderson has put it: "student social customs were modelled on those of the adult

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<sup>104</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 16th October 1980.

world, and in dress and general behaviour students were anxious to follow conventional models.”<sup>105</sup>

The atmosphere was very different in the Women’s Union. One graduate noted that the QMU provided a much needed civilising influence compared to the rowdiness of the Men’s Union.<sup>106</sup> As with the Men’s Union, there was no bar initially; tea and biscuits were served instead in the evenings. The women also dressed formally, one student from 1956 commenting that “women students attended classes dressed as if going to work in an office, with pencil skirts, nylon stockings and high heels, often worn with a university blazer!...jeans were totally unknown. We wore slacks in the privacy of Hall, but never to classes.”<sup>107</sup> A very few brave women apparently did wear trousers around campus, but they were considered extremely radical, one 1950s graduate remembering that many students imagined a connection between the wearing of trousers and political inclination!<sup>108</sup> The installation of a permanent bar took much longer in the QMU than in the Men’s Union; it was not until after the Union moved to its new premises in 1968 that a bar was constructed (and even then the new building was not equipped with a bar initially and one had to be added in 1969). Indeed, in the 1940s and 1950s, drinking amongst women seems to have been somewhat frowned upon. Women students did not tend to go in groups to pubs on their own; they would usually only go in the company of a man, and an article in *Guardian* in 1956 complained of the

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<sup>105</sup> R.D. Anderson, *The Student Community at Aberdeen 1860-1939* (Aberdeen, 1988), p. 117.

<sup>106</sup> Male (ordinary) arts graduate, 1960, from questionnaire, No. 480.

<sup>107</sup> Letter to the Deputy Archivist, 13th August 1992, op. cit.

<sup>108</sup> Female (honours) English graduate, 1951, (courtesy of Rona Ferguson).

“disgusting” sight of drunk women.<sup>109</sup> This was not just a male view, as late as 1961, the Women’s Page in *Guardian* contained the following warning for women: “if you do not normally drink alcohol, please do not experiment with it on Daft Friday. Most escorts would prefer not to have their partner drunk.”<sup>110</sup> Certainly, in general, young women at university seem to have drunk less at this point than in later decades. One 1950s female student remembered having perhaps a sherry or two at a union dance, but nothing more.<sup>111</sup>

Union dances, which were held in the QMU and Men’s Union every weekend, were important social events to which members of the opposite sex were, of course, permitted. However, a female student from the ‘fifties noted that “many men at the University seemed positively to dislike the idea of dating a university student, preferring the company of nurses and girls from the ‘dough school,’”<sup>112</sup> and the minutes of the Men’s Union Committee of Management seem to bear this out. In 1949 it was decided that the secretary should write to the School of Domestic Science, the Art School and Jordanhill informing them that “lady” members of these colleges would be charged only member’s rates at informal union dances and nurses were added to the list in 1950.<sup>113</sup> The female student who noted this apparent avoidance of their female colleagues by the men attributed their behaviour to a distaste for an educated wife, who would not do as she was told!

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<sup>109</sup> *Gilmorehill Guardian*, No. 10, 7th December 1956.

<sup>110</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 7, No. 5, 8th December 1961.

<sup>111</sup> Interview, 1st February 1995, op. cit.

<sup>112</sup> Letter to the Deputy Archivist, 1956 female Arts graduate, op. cit.

<sup>113</sup> Men’s Union, Committee of Management minutes, 19th May 1949 and 24th May 1950.

Whether one's partner came from the University or not, life seems to have been quite couple-oriented at this time: "the expectation was that you would form a liaison with somebody...and both parties would expect to be moving towards marriage," said one 1954 graduate.<sup>114</sup> Another, also from the 1950s, remembered the QM annual Hall ball where: "for the benefit of Freshers who had not yet acquired a boyfriend, men from Maclay Hall would be invited to make up the numbers."<sup>115</sup> She also added that "boyfriends were important in our lives, of course, particularly at a time when going to the Union dance on a Saturday evening with a boyfriend was proof that a woman student was not just a blue-stocking." The minutes of the Men's Union Committee of Management also reinforce the idea of a couple-oriented lifestyle at this time, with frequent attempts to try and ensure equal numbers of men and women at union dances.<sup>116</sup>

The emphasis on evening dances being solely for couples faded over time (except for Daft Friday) as gradually both Unions came to reflect changes in youth culture and the nature of student entertainment. The minutes of the two Boards of Management reflect clearly the gradual changes in student social life. For instance, in the Men's Union of the 1950s, high teas were still being served, special Board members ties were ordered, a Brylcreem Dispensing machine was installed and students still carried briefcases.<sup>117</sup> But the weekly palais was giving way to dances referred to as "Informals," or hops, a Television room had been added and by the

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<sup>114</sup> Interview, 1st February 1995, op. cit.

<sup>115</sup> Letter to the Deputy Archivist, 13th August 1992, op cit.

<sup>116</sup> Men's Union, Committee of Management minutes, 1950s and 1960s, *passim*.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 1950s.

mid-1960s, a juke box had been installed, the jazz group had been replaced by a “beat group,” discos were introduced, football machines were installed and a “snackery” appeared next to the Beer Bar.

The QMU also began to run weekend discos instead of palais at which, as in the Men’s Union, alcohol was served as a matter of course. There was a corresponding increase in reports of trouble at these events, noted in the Board minutes of the 1970s. By the mid-70s drugs were also being recognised as a problem. The QMU Board minutes of December 1975 record that the problem of dope smoking was discussed and it was decided that any culprits would be expelled from the building.<sup>118</sup> There was a sign of the times, too, in the Men’s Union when in 1970 the piano was removed from the Beer Bar. Student dress was also changing greatly. Jeans and long hair had replaced the smart University blazers and skirts; the wearing of gowns, still fairly common in the 1950s, was rapidly dying out. The *Student Handbook* of 1960 noted that the scarlet gown was only seen regularly on about 12 backs. There was no longer a desire to emulate one’s elders. Students were part of a more general rise of a new youth culture with its emphasis on pop music and a more alternative lifestyle to the “adult” population - they were part of what Anderson calls the “global changes in youth culture and generational attitudes” which have taken place since the 1960s.<sup>119</sup>

Nevertheless, despite features of more modern student life in the unions, vestiges of the past persisted. Gowns were still worn at Board meetings in the QMU

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<sup>118</sup> Minutes of QMU Board of Management meeting, 3rd December 1975.

<sup>119</sup> R.D. Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

in the 1970s and only in 1971 was it decided that Board members could wear “suitable trousers” when on duty<sup>120</sup> (although a few years later in 1975, a sale of jeans was arranged in the QMU). Also in 1971, the social convenor was arranging a Boots No. 7 make-up talk and sewing classes, which seem more appropriate to the 1950s than the 1970s. Moreover, changes in student culture were not always welcomed with open arms. In 1947, one of the recommendations of the Men’s Union A.G.M. was that “‘jitterbugging’ be classed as ungentlemanly behaviour not to be tolerated in the Union,”<sup>121</sup> whilst a letter of complaint to *Guardian* in 1949 objected to the “infamous intrusion of ‘bop’” in the Men’s Union.<sup>122</sup> There was even uncertainty about installing a television in the Men’s Union in the 1950s - the President asking that his dissent be minuted.<sup>123</sup> In the QMU too, changes were sometimes greeted with misgivings. A vote taken in 1967 showed that a majority of the Board were not in favour of a permanent bar.<sup>124</sup> It was certainly the case, however, that the Men’s Union, much more than the QMU, tried its utmost to preserve its traditional character and to retain its gentleman’s club atmosphere. Arguably it has been quite successful - despite the entry of women in 1980.

One important change that affected both unions was the alteration in the make-up of their governing bodies, both Boards of Management becoming less dominated by professors or professors’ wives and graduates. For instance, with regard to the QMU, the few surviving constitutions show that in 1934, 10 out of 22 Board

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<sup>120</sup> Minutes of QMU Board of Management meeting, 29th September 1971.

<sup>121</sup> Gerald Warner, op. cit., p. 140.

<sup>122</sup> *Gilmorehill Guardian*, Vol. 1, No. 5, 6th December 1949.

<sup>123</sup> Gerald Warner, op. cit., p. 153.

members were non-students, but by 1970, only 8 out of an enlarged Board of 30 were, thanks to successive reforms of the constitution. Before these reforms, the influence of these older non-student members could make for considerable friction. A particularly fraught incident occurred in 1951 when a letter by a male student in *GUM* criticised the running of QMU, and in particular the power of Miss Dawson, the Resident Secretary, and the General Council members to override Board decisions with the result that “the Board of Management is not mistress in its own house.”<sup>125</sup> Miss Dawson almost resigned over the incident, and in fact left a year later. It was decided not to replace her, the Board considering that a Resident Secretary was no longer needed. This event marks the growing progress of the QMU towards more independence and less involvement by what *Guardian* described in 1967 as “professors’ wives and similar octogenarians.”<sup>126</sup> This increase in the power of students on the Board as opposed to graduates or academics was a reflection of the international student movement in the 1960s to press for greater student say on official university bodies.<sup>127</sup>

By the 1970s, despite their relatively new buildings, both Unions were again feeling cramped, but this was also the decade in which government cuts first really began to bite and there was little prospect of extending either building. In 1982 the pressure on the unions was eased somewhat with the addition of a new £500,000 complex next to the refectory, with a bank, travel centre, insurance office, shops,

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<sup>124</sup> Minutes of QMU Board of Management meeting, 31st January 1967.

<sup>125</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. 62, No. 10, November 1951.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 17, No. 10, 16th May 1967.

dining room and bar. The money for this venture was provided by the Clydesdale Bank in return for the 25 year lease for the sole bank in the building and *Guardian* produced a special edition to mark its opening.<sup>128</sup>

This may have eased pressure on facilities in the QMU, but in other ways, the 1980s were not a good decade for the Women's Union. Recurring debts, (*Guardian* reported on an estimated 10,000 loss in 1981<sup>129</sup>), led to a final desperate financial package to save the Union in 1982, whilst earlier on in the same year a fire led to the closing of the Union for a whole term. Membership of the QMU, after a temporary rise following its decision to go mixed in 1979, was also falling. In 1975 it had just over 3,000 members compared to the Men's Union's 5,000, and by 1981 membership had dropped to 1,500 compared to the GUU's 6,000.<sup>130</sup> This ceased to be a financial problem in 1981, however, when the stint money system was replaced by a block grant to each union from the Court.<sup>131</sup> Nonetheless, both Unions remained highly competitive and it was a disappointing turn of events for the QMU.

By the mid-80s, the QMU's fortunes seemed to have revived somewhat. It advertised itself in the *Student Handbook* as the "top Scottish student union" with an impressive line-up of well-known bands on offer.<sup>132</sup> It was also running a "Dafter Friday" to compete with the GUU Daft Friday. The GUU meanwhile was still

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<sup>127</sup> At Glasgow, students also managed to get representatives onto Court and Senate as well as many of the various Court and Senate committees.

<sup>128</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, (special edition), Whitsun term 1982.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 19th February 1981.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 27th February 1975 and 22nd October 1981.

<sup>131</sup> Stint money was a capitation fee levied on each student; it was a small amount of a student's fees allocated to student services - the SRC, GUAC and the Unions etc. - by the Court. But only if a student signed the Union book as a member at the start of the year would the Union get a part of his or her stint money.



emphasising its traditions, its luxurious Reading Room recalling a more “gentile [sic] era,” its “magnificent Debating Chamber” and referring to itself as a “club which draws its strength from the past but always looks to the future.”<sup>133</sup> Therefore, despite several years of admitting women, there still seemed to be an element of the ‘Gentleman’s Club’ about the GUU. The differing atmospheres of the two unions spilled over into student politics, and the QMU was seen as a more ‘radical’ force in student politics compared to the conservative GUU. This issue will be examined in more depth in the next chapter, but for now we will return to the corporate life, and will consider student clubs and societies, many of which held their meetings in the student unions.

### Student societies

Like all universities, Glasgow possessed a whole range of student clubs and societies - religious, political, sporting, subject-oriented and so on, and their number expanded as student numbers increased and catered for ever more eclectic tastes. Many came and went very quickly, but the stalwarts - the main political societies, the Dramatic Society, the Medico-Chirurgical Society and the International Society, for example - survived as a thread of continuity between successive generations of students. The membership of these larger societies might approach the 500 mark, but very few societies could boast a burgeoning membership. As *Guardian* put it in 1967:

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<sup>132</sup> *Student Handbook*, 1985.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

“Political Clubs apart, the support of societies is dismal.”<sup>134</sup> It gave some figures of non-political and non-subject-related club membership and whilst the International Club and Cecilian Society were doing quite well with 540 and 328 members respectively, all of the other clubs cited had less than 100, apart from the Christian Union which, as already noted, stood at 120. Of course, even these figures are probably an over-estimate of true participation, since some students no doubt joined societies at the beginning of the year but remained passive rather than active members.

A noticeable development in the type of student societies was the increase in the number of departmental clubs, (there were 11 in 1950 and 25 by 1960<sup>135</sup>), and as new subjects opened up, new departmental clubs were added. A *GUM* survey of 1951 showed that, of a small sample of 100 students questioned, 35 were members of their departmental club and membership could be quite large if the club represented a popular subject; for instance, the Engineering Society had 370 members and the Geographical Society 258 in 1965.<sup>136</sup> Membership of one’s departmental society could apparently also be obligatory. A student in the Music Department in the 1950s recalls that she *had* to be in the Choral Society: “it was part of the course.”<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 17, No. 7, 7th February 1967. For more information on the size and activities of the political clubs, see Chapter 4, *Student Politics*.

<sup>135</sup> *Student Handbooks*.

<sup>136</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, “Survey on Leisure,” Vol. 62, No. 5, February 1951, and Clubs and Societies affiliated to the SRC, 1960s.

<sup>137</sup> Interview, 1st February 1995, *op. cit.*

Clubs were able to meet in either of the Unions, provided that they were affiliated, whilst the Student International Club, because of its size, had its own premises at 11 University Gardens, where there was a library, study and games room. In 1955, the SRC bought a flat in Eldon Street to be used for student societies and the student press and there also existed George Service House which was set aside for student activities.<sup>138</sup> By 1981, the basement housed *Surgo* (the medics magazine), the Charities Appeal, the Ski Club and Student Community Action; the first floor was used by the Crèche Action Group; the second floor the Malaysian Society, Labour Club, Women's Group and Christian Union and the third floor housed the Cecilian Society.<sup>139</sup> However, there was a constant complaint by the SRC that the amount of money allocated to them by the Court for disbursement among the various societies was far too small. In its memorandum to the UGC in 1956 the SRC noted that there were nearly 100 societies, some 40 to 50 of which shared the annual societies grant of about £200. The average amount for each society was only £5 and "societies with ambitious projects cannot hope to carry them out."<sup>140</sup> It cited the case of the Cecilian Society, whose highly praised production of *The Mikado* was unable to go to an International Cultural Festival at Lille owing to the failure of an appeal for funds to the Court. An appeal was made for a special, (and generously funded), 'Cultural Fund' to enable societies to flourish, but this did not materialise.

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<sup>138</sup> SRC Council minutes, 1st December 1955.

<sup>139</sup> SRC Executive Committee minutes, 23rd June 1981.

<sup>140</sup> *Memorandum submitted on behalf of the Glasgow University Student Body for the attention of the UGC, 1956.*

On the whole clubs and societies tended to be run by male students, even in more recent decades, although the *Student Handbooks* show that several societies in each year had female presidents. For example, in 1955, there were 5 female presidents out of 50 clubs and in 1970 there were 8 out of a total of 54.<sup>141</sup> Women were far more likely to be secretaries than presidents (in 1970 14 clubs had female secretaries), whilst the political clubs were peculiar in that they had guaranteed female input via “QM Convenors” and QM Committees, made necessary by the separation of the men’s and women’s unions.<sup>142</sup> The SRC also had guaranteed female representation initially via the “QM President of the SRC,” although this post was dispensed with in 1956.<sup>143</sup>

At the beginning of the period under discussion, there was still some segregation in student clubs. The QM Medical Club was a female-only society and female Catholics met separately as the Catholic Women’s Society (this merged with the Men’s Catholic Society in 1944). Some sporting clubs were also male-only, such as the Judo club, which opened its doors to women in 1956. Debating too, had been a segregated activity which initially went mixed as a war-time expedient and then decided to retain some mixed debates after the war. Interestingly, segregation returned in the 1970s when the Women’s Liberation Group was set up with an exclusively female membership - but this was a different form of segregation.

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<sup>141</sup> These figures are probably not entirely representative of the whole range of student clubs since not every club necessarily had an entry in the *Student Handbook*.

<sup>142</sup> In the 1970s, the title of “QM Convenor” tended to fall out of favour and the *Student Handbooks* just give a contact name for both unions. Once the two unions had mixed there was no longer any need for both a male and female contact.

<sup>143</sup> See Chapter 4, *Student Politics*.

Instead of women forming their own separate society because they were excluded from the equivalent male society, this was segregation by choice. It was not an act of emulation, rather the society was female-only because its organisers felt that women needed to have a forum to discuss gender inequalities unintimidated by the presence of men.<sup>144</sup>

Whether societies were run by men or women, a common criticism voiced by the student press was that they were dominated by the same small portion of active students. As *Guardian* put it in 1949 “it is still unfortunately true that the corporate life of the University is being carried on the shoulders of a willing but weary few,”<sup>145</sup> and the same faces tended to be involved in debates, prominent in societies, and running for positions on the SRC or Union Boards. Complaints of the apathy of the student body with regard to extra-curricular activities are a continuous feature from the 1940s to the 1980s and it is important to try and assess why this apathy should have been so prevalent.

We have already noted the overwhelming problem, which was of course the fact that so many students lived at home. This meant that evening events were poorly attended because everybody was travelling home; the Dialectic Society noting in 1961 that whilst its lunch time debates attracted a large audience, evening

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<sup>144</sup> For more on debating, political clubs and the Women’s Liberation movement, See Chapter 4, *Student Politics*. In some ways, the establishment of the Women’s Liberation Group was a similar move to the very early women’s societies which had been set up by the pioneering generation of women at universities in the late nineteenth century. C. Dyhouse notes several such societies, such as the Birmingham Mason College “Ladies Social Circle” established in the 1890s which aimed “not to shut out men,” but rather “to welcome women,” (C. Dyhouse, op. cit. p. 227).

<sup>145</sup> *Gilmorehill Guardian*, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 11th 1949.

debates were not even supported by the debaters.<sup>146</sup> A non-residential university also meant that many students continued to focus their social life around their home community rather than the University. As a writer to *GUM* put it in 1970 “students social activities, such as they are, centre on home and church. And no one is going to deny the value of visiting one’s sister-in-law or helping out with the Boys’ Brigade. But all this is ancillary to what University life should be.”<sup>147</sup> And as another student from the 1970s noted “students mostly came from Glasgow, and often stayed within groups of school friends. This meant that clubs were not important for socialising to most people ... Clubs were never socially important, as they may have been in other universities. The one exception may have been the political clubs.”<sup>148</sup>

There were other factors at work during different times which also served to limit student involvement in extra-curricular activities. The war years, in particular, and the immediate post-war era stand out as especially difficult times for a flourishing corporate life and warrant some discussion.

During the war itself all forms of social life were made much more difficult. For a start, many degree courses were shortened so that students could be freed as soon as possible for war service. One student recalled that the normally four year engineering course was completed in two-and-a-half years by limiting vacations to two weeks, with the result that many students graduated before they were twenty

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<sup>146</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 10th November 1961.

<sup>147</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. 81, No. 3., December 1970. A similar problem was experienced with regard to participation in university sports - see next section.

<sup>148</sup> Male (ordinary) arts graduate, 1973, No. 40.

years old.<sup>149</sup> These “fast-track” courses obviously curtailed extra-curricular activities, as did the pressure to pass exams if one wanted to avoid war service of some kind. “The threat of being drafted to the women’s forces or the land army was a good incentive to pass exams!”<sup>150</sup> recalled one female student whilst a male colleague remembered how “Professor Wishart, the Dean of the Medical Faculty, would call in students who failed more than twice and say ‘Mr. X, I hear the sound of marching feet,’ i.e. one could not slack at University to avoid the war.”<sup>151</sup> Various civil tasks also limited the amount of time available for normal extra-curricular activities. Men and women found their evenings taken up with fire-watching, sometimes as often as once a week and men also had to participate in a pre-service training unit for the Army, Air Force or Navy to prepare for call-up. According to one graduate, this took up about eight hours a week.<sup>152</sup> Vacations were also often spent working on farms. However, since many of these war-related activities were campus-based, they should perhaps be regarded as constituting a university social life of sorts, albeit an unusual social life. Certainly one graduate recalled that he “gained a camaraderie in the OTC.”<sup>153</sup>

Normal social activities, such as dances and debates, were made difficult in wartime by poor bus and train services which limited evening activities, plus black-outs which meant that dances finished earlier. “You have to remember...that it was

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<sup>149</sup> As far as women were concerned, they could gain exemption from being called up if they signed a document agreeing to go into teacher training after graduation. They could then take an ordinary arts degree course shortened to two years, (letter from B. Webb, 20/08/95).

<sup>150</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1945, from pilot questionnaire.

<sup>151</sup> Male (ordinary) medicine graduate, 1944, from pilot questionnaire.

<sup>152</sup> Male (ordinary) arts graduate, 1948, No. 970.

wartime, which had a limiting effect, we didn't have the kind of university life that you would have had in normal peace time," commented one student.<sup>154</sup> There were disputes over whether such corporate activities as Charities Week and *GUM* should even continue. In the event there was one Charities Week, in 1940, and *GUM* appeared in every year apart from 1941-42.

The University was also, of course, depleted of men students away serving their country - although it was not so empty of men as had been the case during 1914-18. During the Second World War, despite the fact that men in the Arts Faculty were very sparse, the numbers of men in reserved studies such as medicine were swelled by evacuees from the University of London and cadets of various nations doing short courses; indeed the Men's Union membership had got back up to 1,400 (63% of its pre-war membership) by 1944.<sup>155</sup>

Once the war was over and the University was flooded with ex-servicemen (and, to a lesser extent, ex-service women), there were high hopes that these older students would rejuvenate the corporate life. *GUM* commented that: "their ideas, moulded by contact with the outside world...will be of inestimable value to the University...To them, therefore, we make an appeal, to offer their experience and wisdom."<sup>156</sup> Many of them did offer their experience, and the younger straight-from-school students could feel somewhat overwhelmed. One female student, 1951-56, was suitably impressed by the older set and remembered: "Union debates of

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<sup>153</sup> Male (ordinary) science graduate, 1946, No. 1852.

<sup>154</sup> Interview with 1943 female (honours) arts graduate, 2nd August 1995.

<sup>155</sup> C.A. Oakley, "Unions Past," in *College Courant*, 1970.

<sup>156</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. LVII, No. 1, October 1946.



course, in the days when J. Dickson Mabon was president of the Labour club - quite awesome character for an ex-school student - so many of the leading lights were so much older, ex-army.”<sup>157</sup> And another commented that “we school girls were somewhat overwhelmed by the presence in our class of many older worldly wise men.”<sup>158</sup> However, although the presence of these older students could be stimulating, there was also a danger that their difference in age and experience could be divisive. A 1946 *GUM* editorial commented: “there is a feeling in some quarters that the existence of a strong, ex-service society is a danger, insofar as it seems to exert a force tending to divide the Student Body into two more or less opposed factions.”<sup>159</sup>

Of course, not all ex-service students were leading lights of the corporate life. Many suffered acutely from financial problems and this, as noted at the beginning of the chapter, was another frequent cause of a lack of participation in extra-curricular activities generally. A 1948 report published by the Ex-Service Students’ Committee of the SRC showed that three-quarters of Glasgow’s 2221 ex-service students were unable to live on their Further Education and Training grants.<sup>160</sup> Certainly many questionnaire respondents from the 1940s and 1950s have noted that

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<sup>157</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1956, from pilot questionnaire. It is interesting to note that J. Dickson Mabon contributed a piece on his university experiences for the *Student Handbook* in 1982 and noted that when he first matriculated, “as a teenage schoolboy...so demanding was this new challenge that the Union, the debates, the Corporate Life, although attractive, were quite out of reach.” He was then conscripted and returned three years later as an ex-serviceman “I was now 22 and felt at least a decade older than the straight-from-school ‘real’ Freshers. Now began a roller coaster life of classes and corporate activities.” He, like many others, felt that he had benefited greatly from coming back as a more mature student.

<sup>158</sup> Female (ordinary) medicine graduate, 1956, No. 94.

<sup>159</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. LVII, No. 2, November 1946.

the smallness of grants and the consequent dependence on parents limited social participation. “Apart from £9 grant from Carnegie, my mother paid all fees, travelling expenses and exam fees etc. I worked during University holidays and also every Saturday during term time. Thus it was more or less impossible to join any clubs,”<sup>161</sup> wrote one. Many respondents remember, even now, the exact cost of student activities and the amount of grant they received; the fact that these figures are still imprinted on their memories suggests their great importance in times of austerity.<sup>162</sup> Take for example the following comment from a 1940 graduate:

“lack of funds prevented much participation in University activities: £49 (£40 and £9 Carnegie) did not go far when fees, matriculation and exam fees amounted to 22 1/2 guineas, and my parents struggled to support me, and a younger brother from a joint income of under £5 per week. I normally walked to and from University (5 miles each way) unless the weather was very bad.”<sup>163</sup>

A look back at table 1.1 in Chapter One shows that, despite the fact that many male and female questionnaire respondents received some kind of grant assistance (either a government grant, Carnegie award or school award), nonetheless, three-quarters of the men and nine out of ten women in the 1940s recorded that they had also relied on parental help. This reinforces the point that grants tended to be small

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., Vol. LIX, No. 1, October 1948. Further Education and Training grants were provided by the Government to help ex-service men, and to a lesser extent ex-service women, to attend university.

<sup>161</sup> Female (ordinary) science graduate, 1945, from questionnaire, No. 995.

<sup>162</sup> This point has also been made by C. Dyhouse for the pre-1939 period. She sent out a questionnaire to graduates of 6 English universities and noted that “most of my respondents gave clear answers to questions about finance and many of them gave large amounts of detail. The quality of their replies reflects the importance of the issue at the time...” Quoted from p. 212 of “Signing the Pledge? Women’s investment in university education and teacher training before 1939” *History of Education*, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp 207-223.

at this time and that the majority of students had their freedom somewhat curtailed by dependency upon parents.

With universal grants from the 1960s, the financial situation became easier, so perhaps we should expect a corresponding rise in the involvement of students in extra-curricular activities. However, as we have already seen, student societies did not suddenly experience a surge in membership in the 1960s. Many students continued to live at home - over 60% in 1980 - and the problems of commuting or having a non-university-based social life persisted. So it would seem that the effects of living at home upon involvement in corporate activities were perhaps of greater overall significance than financial considerations. In any case, the introduction of universal grants did not mean the elimination of money worries forever. The real value of grants began to decline significantly in the 1970s and 1980s - between 1979 and 1986 they fell in value by 20% - and the spectre of unemployment during these decades was also encouraging many students towards the library.

Further reasons why so few were involved in the corporate life were put forward in an article in *GUM* in 1956. This estimated that three-quarters of the student population were involved in no corporate activities, but instead of blaming the problem on the non-residential nature of the University or financial considerations, the article concluded that higher academic standards were forcing students to concentrate more on their studies, with the threat of National Service and academic suspension combining to make it imperative to pass exams. The article pointed out that LEAs could suspend a student's grant if satisfactory progress was

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163 Male (honours) classics graduate, 1940, from questionnaire, No. 224.

not made.<sup>164</sup> Nor did the situation appear to become easier with time. An editorial in the *Guardian* in the 1960s commented that the main onslaught on corporate living was coming from tighter academic regulations. It noted that in the last year or two, there had been noticeable changes in the giving of class tickets in many departments, and it attributed this to government pressure - the Government being worried by high failure rates.<sup>165</sup> In addition, the post-war increase in the proportion of students taking the more demanding honours degree, rather than the ordinary degree added to academic pressures.<sup>166</sup>

Academic changes also had an effect on the age of the “corporate lifers.” With the disappearance of the BL degree in 1960, students no longer needed to do an MA degree before studying law, and so there was no longer such a large pool of older graduates to take their places in high office.<sup>167</sup> Increasingly those involved in the corporate life tended to be younger. For example, in 1950, the Presidents of the QMU, Men’s Union and Glasgow University Athletic Club (GUAC) had MAs already, but this was far less common by the late 1960s and on into the 1970s and 1980s. *Guardian* felt that younger meant worse: “there can be little doubt...that the general standard of office-bearers in every branch of student activity today cannot compare with those who ran the corporate life in the past,” and with the

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<sup>164</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. 67, No 6, March 1956. LEA’s usually insisted on a student passing 2 degree exams at the end of a student’s first year in order to be entitled to a grant to continue.

<sup>165</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 7, No. 7, 26th January 1962.

<sup>166</sup> See Chapter 1, *Institutional Development*, for figures on the increasing proportion of students staying on for the honours degree.

<sup>167</sup> An ordinance of 1960 merged the two law degrees of BL and LLB, removed the prerequisite of arts study and provided for full-time study for honours degrees, (David M. Walker, *A History of the School of Law* (Glasgow, 1990), p. 76.

disappearance of the old law qualification, the “time is past when students who had experience in the junior ranks of the corporate life were, when embarking on their second degree, fully qualified to take up high student office.”<sup>168</sup> However, younger office-bearers were no doubt helped by the institution of sabbatical years for the highest posts, which enabled them to take a year out of their studies and devote their energies exclusively to running the QMU, SRC and GUAC.<sup>169</sup>

### Sport

Sports facilities at the University were not especially good in 1939. Although there were University-owned athletic grounds at two sites in the city, Westerlands and Garscadden, the gymnasium on campus, built in 1872, was small: “yes, there is a gym, despite rumours to the contrary,” the *Student Handbook* informed Freshers in 1940. The authorities had recognised the need for improvement however, and plans were underway in 1939 for a new sports building. Due to the intervention of war, these plans were halted and ultimately postponed for over twenty years as a result of changed building priorities in the immediate post-war era. It was not until 1961 that a new gymnasium was opened. Known as the Stevenson Building,<sup>170</sup> it was equipped with swimming pool, gyms and squash courts and the *Handbook* noted proudly that “the Stevenson Building is generally accepted to be one of the finest PE

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<sup>168</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 8, No. 7, 25th January 1963.

<sup>169</sup> The SRC President became a sabbatical post in 1971, the QMU President in 1975 and GUAC President in 1978. The Men’s Union decided against a sabbatical year for its president.

<sup>170</sup> To commemorate the late Sir Daniel Macaulay Stevenson, a former Chancellor of the University, who bore much of the cost.

buildings in the country.”<sup>171</sup> The University’s other facilities were also continually being improved: for instance, a cinder track was added at Westerlands in 1961, a pavilion at Garscadden in the late ‘fifties, squash courts at both sites, plus a bar at Westerlands in 1972.<sup>172</sup>

In the same way that the two unions were run by a Board of Management, sports facilities were run by an elected Council of the GUAC, comprising students and staff. GUAC had been set up as early as 1881 and was therefore the first of the four official organisations which represented the body of students. Sports clubs had to affiliate to GUAC and pay a fee if they wished to use the University facilities and the club also awarded “Blues” for out standing athletic achievement.

Membership of GUAC and the right to use the sports building was conferred on all students automatically, but membership of a specific sporting club required a small membership fee. In 1940 there were 18 sports sections affiliated to GUAC,<sup>173</sup> and this rose to 38 sections in 1970 and 42 by 1984. This increase in the number of sports clubs helped cope with the post-war expansion in student numbers, since the new sections helped to “siphon off a large proportion of the extra playing population.”<sup>174</sup> The new clubs also represented a widening of sporting tastes - with clubs such as Aikido, Sub Aqua and Volley ball by the 1980s. However, some clubs

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<sup>171</sup> *Student Handbook*, 1970.

<sup>172</sup> R.O. Mackenna, *Glasgow University Athletic Club* (Glasgow, 1981).

<sup>173</sup> These sections were: Athletics, Hares and Hounds, Association Football, Fives Club, Rugby, Men’s Swimming, Women’s Golf, Golf, Badminton, Women’s Swimming, Boxing, Shinty, Tennis, Women’s Hockey, Hockey, Fencing, Cricket; *Student Handbook* 1940.

<sup>174</sup> R.O. Mackenna, *op. cit.*, p.95.

fell by the wayside also indicating changing sporting tastes; the Fives section, for example, disappeared in the late 1950s.

Despite the increase in the number of clubs, there are indications that the apathy which affected other corporate life activities also pervaded sport. The *University Gazette* estimated that over 90% of undergraduates took no part in any sport in 1948 whilst *Guardian* estimated in 1958 that only 10% of students joined GUAC societies.<sup>175</sup> A clear indication of the limited uptake in sport is available in minutes on the affiliation of the Netball Club to GUAC in 1953. The club had 24 members and its affiliation was approved “the only snag being that the existence of such a section might prove deleterious to the Women’s Basketball section.”<sup>176</sup>

One of the reasons why participation in sports was small was that many students, both male and female, continued to play for their old school teams instead of University teams. There were frequent appeals in the student press for students to stop playing for their former pupils team, for example in 1940, an article in *GUM* on the falling membership of the Women’s Hockey Club appealed to women who were playing for their Old Girl’s Club to “wield a stick for Alma Mater.”<sup>177</sup> This was particularly a problem where direct grant Glasgow schools were concerned. In his survey of the Glasgow fee-paying schools, J. Highet notes the importance of former pupil organisations for schools such as Glasgow Academy, which had branches of

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<sup>175</sup> *Glasgow University Gazette*, No. 7, December 1948, and *Gilmorehill Guardian*, No. 4, 7th November 1958.

<sup>176</sup> GUAC Council minutes, 19th May 1953.

<sup>177</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. L1, No. 8, 21st February 1940.

the “Glasgow Academicals” all over the UK.<sup>178</sup> GUAC was keenly aware of the problem and the Council minutes record discussions of the issue. One suggestion made in 1946 was that school visits should be made to inform prospective entrants of the sports facilities at Gilmorehill to try and persuade them to get involved in University sport.<sup>179</sup>

More recently, however participation in sporting activities increased greatly with a growing emphasis on group exercise sessions, in particular, proving popular. Figures from 1965 show that 63% of the undergraduate body had joined the Stevenson Building,<sup>180</sup> whilst numbers using the facilities then rose by 300% during the period 1975-85.<sup>181</sup> The Stevenson Building, regarded as state of the art when it opened in 1961, was no longer adequate to cater for the demand and by 1979, the Director of PE felt that “Glasgow lagged behind all other universities in the Kingdom, save London, in the provision which it was able to make for both indoor and outdoor sports.”<sup>182</sup> The opening of the Kelvin Hall International Sports Arena in 1987 eased the pressure on facilities somewhat, but it was not until 1994 that the University committed itself to a £4.5 million refurbishment of the Stevenson Building, which re-opened at the end of 1995.

A good deal of the increased use of the University’s sports facilities came from female students and C.A. Oakley, a 1920s graduate, saw sport as an important

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<sup>178</sup> John Highet, *A School of One's Choice* (Glasgow, 1969), p. 150.

<sup>179</sup> GUAC Council minutes, 18th January, 1946.

<sup>180</sup> Glasgow University Court, *Annual Report 1965-6*.

<sup>181</sup> Sharon M’Neish, seminar on *University Sport* at Glasgow University to commemorate the eleventh Jubilee of the University in 2001 (1997).

<sup>182</sup> R.O. Mackenna, *op. cit.*, p. 103.



example of how women have progressively taken a greater share in the corporate life. In 1957 he commented that “some of my girl friends of thirty years ago could do a soft shoe shuffle with the best, but none of them ever thought of throwing a discus about. The idea of women competing at the annual sports meeting at Westerlands was just unthinkable.”<sup>183</sup> Traditionally women tended to compete only in well-established girls sports such as hockey and netball, but gradually they came to take part in just about every sporting activity. This provides an important change in perceptions of what were acceptable activities for women.

Increased participation by women was not always welcomed by their male colleagues. In 1948, the GUAC Council received letters from two women requesting permission to join the Fencing Club, but this request was refused.<sup>184</sup> In addition, the Judo Club would not allow women in until 1957.<sup>185</sup> No doubt at least part of the reason why women’s admission could be vetoed was the fact that the Council was male-dominated - in 1951 only 3 out of 17 were women, for instance - so these decisions are perhaps not surprising.<sup>186</sup> The influence of this overwhelmingly male Board seems occasionally to have stifled initiatives for the formation of women’s sections, as well as prohibiting women’s entry to existing male sections. The minutes record an unsuccessful attempt by two women to form a Woman’s Cricket Club in 1946, an initiative which the board declared “probably not

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<sup>183</sup> *GUQM College Twenty Five*, op. cit., p.10.

<sup>184</sup> GUAC Council minutes, 22nd November 1948.

<sup>185</sup> *GUQM College Twenty Five*, op. cit., p.23. Once women were admitted, they tended to form a separate “women’s section” of the club, rather than being allowed to join the men’s section.

<sup>186</sup> However, the constitution did ensure that some female representation on the Council was guaranteed: the Vice President had to be of opposite sex to the President and the QM Convenor had to be female; (GUAC constitution, 1958).

feasible,”<sup>187</sup> and in the following year it was considered too expensive to form a Women’s Boating section.<sup>188</sup> The Board tended to retain a majority of men right up to and including the 1980s, although the numbers of women on the Council did increase and the 1974-75 session saw the first female president. Since then women have done well in achieving the top GUAC position and in the next twenty five years, seven of the presidents were female.<sup>189</sup> Recent years have also seen the abandonment of separate male and female sections in some areas - there are now mixed Athletics and Tennis sections, but some sections have remained single-sex - such as hockey, basketball and golf.

#### The philanthropic student: Charities Week and the University Settlement

In Glasgow as at other universities an annual “rag” event, or Charities Week as it was known, took place. Glasgow’s Charities Week was in fact the first Students’ Charities organisation in Britain and by 1939 involved a whole range of events including a procession of decorated floats, house-to-house collections, a pantomime-type show known as “College Pudding” and the selling of the rag magazine, “Ygorra.”

Considering “rags” in the earlier part of the century, Dyhouse observes that women’s participation in such events was often frowned upon. She notes that in the 1930s, King’s College in London urged women to try and steer clear of rags and

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<sup>187</sup> GUAC Council Minutes, 12th February 1946. A Women’s Cricket team was formed in 1951, however.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 18th April 1947.

<sup>189</sup> Dr. D.P. Gilmore, seminar on *University Sport*, op. cit., (1997).

women in Aberystwyth were granted official permission to participate in the student rag for the first time in 1931.<sup>190</sup> At Glasgow University, the *Student Handbooks* give no clear indication as to whether women's involvement was at any time regarded with displeasure. Certainly women participated in the "College Puddings" from an early date and seem to have taken part in all events by the 1940s. "I went out collecting on Charities Day on a couple of occasions. Dressed as a gypsy (a cheap and easy outfit)...with a friend...wearing a very prim Edwardian schoolgirl's costume...."<sup>191</sup> recalled one 1942 graduate.

As well as being a chance to dress up and play the fool, Charities Week was also an important public relations event between town and gown. It was an occasion where the public could see students actually helping local charities and putting something back into the community. It may have become even more important in this respect, since with the guaranteeing of student grants in the 1960s and the yearly increase in the amounts and proportions of government funding for universities, the public were liable to become increasingly critical of the apparently privileged status of students. Thus events such as charities could help to reinforce, in the minds of a sceptical public, the helpful face of the student. A survey in *GUM* in 1950 amongst the general public found that 92% of those asked felt that Charities Week performed a useful function in the city, suggesting that the event was a positive element in boosting town/gown relations.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> C. Dyhouse, 1995, op. cit., p. 213.

<sup>191</sup> Female arts graduate 1942, (courtesy of R. Ferguson).

<sup>192</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. 62, No. 2, November 1950.

Principal Hetherington, however, was unsure of the merits of the event. He did not think Charities Week was important to the University, and was uncertain whether the event performed a useful function in the city of Glasgow.<sup>193</sup> Certainly there were problems surrounding the annual event. An article in the *Glasgow Herald* in 1969 entitled: "Is Charities Week Worthwhile?" cited declining student enthusiasm and rising expenses and arrests as threats to its continuation.<sup>194</sup> Student apathy was indeed a continual problem. Although figures of yearly participation are not available, in the 1957 campaign *Guardian* noted that only about 11% of Glasgow University's students had taken part,<sup>195</sup> and in 1981, out of all the 40,000 students in the Glasgow area, only 1,500 participated.<sup>196</sup> Violence too was an increasing problem. In 1970, an eve-of-Charities rag battle between Glasgow and Strathclyde resulted in 25 arrests and three years later a *Guardian* report spoke of how the campaign had degenerated into violence when hundreds of technical students had attacked the Men's Union before smashing into the QMU, wrecking the bar and looting drink.<sup>197</sup> A further riot in 1987 resulted in the Senate banning the event for seven years; it did not begin again until 1995.<sup>198</sup> There were problems too, over *Ygorra*, which in 1977 was branded sexist and racist by the National Union of

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid. He felt that one day of collecting, rather than a week would be sufficient and thought that a lot of the other activities - "Ygorra" and "College Pudding" included - should be done away with.

<sup>194</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 11th February 1969.

<sup>195</sup> *Gilmorehill Guardian*, Vol. 3., No. 2, 24th October 1958.

<sup>196</sup> Press cuttings: Charities Day, (Acc. 242/2/58).

<sup>197</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 20, No. 9, March 5th 1970 and Vol. 24, No. 7, 15th February 1973.

<sup>198</sup> *Blue Stockings, Black Gowns, White Coats*: exhibition to mark centenary of women's admission to the University (Glasgow University, 1995).

Students. Despite this and in spite of the fact that some Glasgow colleges refused to sell it, Glasgow University continued to do so.<sup>199</sup>

These problems aside, the amount of money raised during Charities Week was often impressive. The 1963 record of over £27,000<sup>200</sup> was surpassed in 1975 when £36,000 was raised. Amounts collected could fluctuate greatly from year to year. In 1983, for example, only £18,000 was raised whilst the previous year's total had been £30,000.<sup>201</sup> Initially, the money collected tended to be distributed among local hospitals, but with the establishment of the National Health Service in 1948, a wider selection of charities benefited. However, one group which always received a portion of the money collected was the University's Settlement Association.

Most universities had some kind of "Settlement" scheme in operation which involved social work in deprived parts of the local community. As Dyhouse has noted "some of the earliest societies formed among women in the universities were devoted to charitable and philanthropic activity," and she cites Glasgow's Queen Margaret Settlement Association, founded in 1897, as being one of the earliest examples, along with similar developments at Bristol and Manchester Universities.<sup>202</sup>

Male students at Glasgow University had established their own settlement, but this had ceased to operate by 1935, the year in which men were allowed by a constitutional change to join the QM Settlement, which was then renamed the

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<sup>199</sup> Press cuttings: Charities Day, op. cit.

<sup>200</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 8, No. 8, 8th February 1963.

<sup>201</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 13th February 1975 and 11th March 1982.

<sup>202</sup> C. Dyhouse, 1995, op. cit., p. 221.

Glasgow University Settlement. This provides an early example of male and female integration at a time when, as we have seen, debates, accommodation, careers advice and so many other aspects of university life were segregated.

The Settlement was particularly important for women, since there were close links between its activities and the University qualifications in social work which many women took. Indeed, the Settlement was instrumental in establishing the School of Social Study and Training in the University.<sup>203</sup> Students studying for Diplomas in Social Study or Diplomas in Public Administration could undertake placements at the Settlement for a few months, becoming involved in the various groups run by the Settlement - for example, the Invalid Children's Aid Association, Play Centres or the Women's Club. Some students even lived in the residence at the Settlement for a whole year. There were also links with the Charities Committee, since, as noted above, each year a donation of part of the amount collected during Charities Week was made to the Settlement. There were close links, too, with QMU, which organised Settlement social events in the Union, particularly the annual Christmas party for a hundred or so Settlement children.

The Settlement was still going strong in the 1980s, although its work had shifted from Anderston to Drumchapel, a move which had taken place in the 1960s, when the redevelopment of the Anderston area began. The training provided through the settlement was also broadened beyond Glasgow University students; a 1980s memorandum commenting that the social work agency in Drumchapel run by

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<sup>203</sup> Synopsis of the Glasgow University Settlement in archive index, (DC 22).

the Settlement provided placements for students from Jordanhill and Queen's College social work courses as well.<sup>204</sup>

The student experience at Glasgow University in 1939 was clearly very different from that of the 1980s. The most obvious change has been in the physical development of the University, which resulted in an enormous increase in amenities - in particular, bigger unions and libraries, better catering and shop facilities, new halls of residence and far more comprehensive welfare facilities. Along with this vast expansion in the University's infrastructure there have been important changes in the patterns of behaviour of successive generations of students. In particular, greater integration between the sexes has developed over time, as separate seating arrangements in lectures and libraries have broken down and formerly segregated facilities - unions, welfare services and residences - have all become mixed. These changes have helped to make relations between the sexes more informal and more relaxed.

Concomitant changes in attitudes expressed towards women are also apparent, for example, in the student press, and it is worth summing up with a few paragraphs on gender relations as expressed in the *Glasgow University Guardian* and *Glasgow University Magazine (GUM)*.<sup>205</sup> In the early post-war years both of these publications were very male-dominated and as late as 1960, *GUM* was advertised in

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<sup>204</sup> Glasgow University Settlement, 1980s, (DC 22/2/3/8).

<sup>205</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine* began in 1888. The *Gilmorehill Guardian* got off to a false start with a few issues in 1949 and then began in earnest in 1956. It changed its name to the *Glasgow University Guardian* in 1961.

the *Student Handbook* as being “written by gentlemen, for gentlemen.” Perhaps unsurprisingly, therefore, early editions scarcely mentioned women at all and where they did, comments about women were at best patronising and at worst sexist. Women were described in a way that would have been wholly unacceptable to a later generation: for instance, in 1956 *Guardian* referred to the QMU Convenor of Entertainments as “tall, shapely, wide-eyed Joanne M<sup>c</sup>Neill,” whilst the Secretary of the ‘55 Club was “a slim, sultry brunette.”<sup>206</sup> While making frequent references to the appearance of female students, male writers joked that it was the women who were concerned with appearances and nothing else. Women were portrayed as shallow and concerned with nothing but fashion. A typical male comment from 1943 read “we should like to take this opportunity of complimenting the about-to-retire QM Board and the lady members of the SRC for their very fine work in showing the Q-Emmas of 1942-43 that it is still possible for a woman to take an intelligent interest in subjects other than clothing coupons.”<sup>207</sup> Alternatively, women were represented as husband-hunters and gold-diggers, one article noting that men at the Union Palais were turning to nurses in preference to university women who were looking for rich, athletic “somebodys”<sup>208</sup> whilst another advised men to beware the Matrimonial Undergraduate who would attempt to attach herself to a medic, with an eye on his future earning potential.<sup>209</sup>

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206 *Gilmorehill Guardian*, 1956 editions, *passim*.

207 *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. L111, April 1943, No. 5.

208 *Ibid.*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 24th November 1961.

209 *Ibid.*, Vol. LVII, No. 7, May 1947.



On the whole, such comments were humorous in tone, although occasionally more ugly sentiments were voiced. Intolerance towards the position of women in the university was expressed in a *GUM* editorial of 1946 which railed against “the silly little girls who are with us because they will some day make an easy living out of it,”<sup>210</sup> whilst a letter of 1951 was more explicit in its hostility to the increasing numbers of women.

“The great majority of women - particularly in arts - contribute nothing to the life of the University; their time is taken up flitting from one branch to another in search of game...they are occupying valuable places which might well be filled by conscientious and well-intentioned male students to who admittance is at present denied.”<sup>211</sup>

Much of this resentment no doubt stemmed from the heightened competition for university places that took place during the late 1940s and early 1950s between ex-servicemen and school-leavers. The attack did not go unnoticed, however, and provoked a rare retaliation in the next issue by a female student who asserted that women contributed a great deal to university life - with more female than male students attending political debates, voting in Rectorial elections and taking part in poetry and drama clubs.

In many respects, the early post-war student press conveyed the impression of the University as being a Gentleman’s Club in which “Old Lags” indulged the presence of fluffy female arts students. However, by the 1960s, condescending and sexist remarks had disappeared, and although sexism did rear its head in other ways

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid., Vol. 56, No. 6, June 1946.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., Vol. 62, No. 5, February 1951.

via photographs of scantily clad female students, these, too, had disappeared by the 1970s. Thus the student press came to reflect the easier social relations between men and women that had emerged at Glasgow University as segregated spheres of activity diminished. The press also benefited from an expanding female student population and a growing roster of female student journalists.<sup>212</sup>

These improved relations between the sexes were also exemplified in changes in the way students lived, dressed and entertained themselves. The modern Glasgow University student (male or female) increasingly chose the independence of living in a flat (either university or privately-owned), over living at home or in lodgings. More relaxed dress codes led to the abandonment of the blazer, the pencil skirt and the scarlet gown in favour of jeans. In entertainment, the formal palais, which one attended accompanied by one's partner, or the sing-song around the piano, were replaced by Saturday night pop bands and discos.

These changes are not of course unique to Glasgow University. Experience of them, however, was shaped by the fact that Glasgow University retained such a large home-based student population. We have noted the "nine to five" atmosphere, the lack of involvement in corporate activities and the tendency for students to retain a non-university social life. These had a pervasive affect on the nature of the student experience which was often compounded, particularly in the early post-war decades, by lack of money and dependency on parents as a result of small grants.

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<sup>212</sup> Although the proportions of men and women involved in *Guardian's* production could vary considerably from year to year (for instance, in 1965 no women were on the staff, but two years later 8 out of a staff of 15 were women), nonetheless, it remains generally true that more women

Near universal grants in the 1960s gave students more freedom to manage their finances and encouraged the trend towards living in bedsits or shared flats; but more recently, there are signs that the earlier financial constraints may be returning. The serious-minded student of the 1940s and 1950s, studying on a small grant, living with parents and coming to the University for lectures only, may have given way to a more affluent and carefree student in the 1960s, but by the 1970s and 1980s, students were increasingly under pressure again financially. With the decline in the real value of grants, coupled with poorer job prospects, students might again be encouraged to live at home, eschew the corporate life of the University even more and travel to Glasgow for lectures only. The following comment, by a 1980s graduate, echoes the kind of restrictions experienced by the immediate post-war generation: "I regret a little not doing more on a social level - hard to do this when lack of grant kept me living with parents nearly twenty miles away from campus."<sup>213</sup> More recently, the loans system of the 1990s must be exacerbating this situation and it will be interesting to see how far the old pattern of students living at home and attending their local university returns and if so, how it will affect patterns of student social life, including interaction between the sexes.

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became involved, although they were rarely editors. There were female editors of *Guardian* in 1949, 1956, 1970, 1979 and 1984.

<sup>213</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1980, from questionnaire, No. 63.

## Student Politics

In 1978, the *Glasgow Herald* ran a special feature on Scottish universities and in its synopsis of Glasgow University commented that “the conservatism of Glasgow’s students is stubborn.”<sup>1</sup> This perceived conservatism can be identified in Glasgow’s persistent refusal to join the National Union of Students (NUS) and the tardiness of its male and female unions to admit members of the opposite sex. Certainly Glasgow could by no stretch of the imagination be seen as radical or at the forefront of student opinion and whilst some other campuses were erupting into scenes of violence during the classic period of student unrest in the late 1960s - the LSE and Essex for example - Glasgow remained quiet. Student leaders constantly bemoaned the lack of political activity and fervour at the University and, as we have already seen in the previous chapter, often blamed the non-residential nature of the University for this apathy. John Carswell has noted the potentially radicalising effect which moving away to University could have. It was a process which “took students in large numbers away from familiar social surroundings to become academic atoms. They were unbonded proletarians, free, young, uncommitted.”<sup>2</sup> This was something that the majority of Glasgow students never experienced and must be seen as a factor in their largely conservative and parochial behaviour. Of course, we have already noted significant changes in the makeup of the University’s student population - from three quarters living within 30 miles in 1940 to just under 60% in 1985 (c70% living at home in 1940 and just over 60% in 1980). Whether

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<sup>1</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 3rd October 1978.

<sup>2</sup> John Carswell, *Government and the Universities in Britain* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 121.

this shift made a noticeable difference to levels of political involvement and activity will be considered later, but at the outset, it is worth tempering this overall picture of a conservative and apathetic student body.

The impression of a vast 'degree factory' where the students took little interest in any kind of corporate life or political activism does not take account of several factors. It ignores Glasgow's proud tradition of political debating, its often highly political and bitterly contested Rectorial elections, its ability to maintain six or more political clubs (while some universities could manage only three) and the activities of its Students' Representative Council (SRC), which were to become highly politicised by the late 1970s and 1980s. As *The Observer* commented in 1966, Glasgow possessed a "strong 9-to-5 element," but also a "strong, often angry, university-minded group."<sup>3</sup>

The political life of a university comprises many elements. Political clubs and debates are vital, as are student demonstrations and protests over various issues. The student responses to broader social and political movements such as CND and the women's movement are also important. In addition, the peculiarly Scottish feature of the Rectorial election provides an effective barometer of student political thinking at three-yearly intervals. The activities of student governing bodies must also be taken into consideration. Glasgow had a unique array of four such bodies: the Athletic Club (GUAC), the Men's Union, the Women's Union (QMU), and the SRC. With the exception perhaps of GUAC, these bodies can all be regarded as political in some sense - arguably more so in the 1970s and 1980s than previously.

However, discussion of the QM Union and the Men's Union has been confined in large measure to Chapter Three, *Student Life*, because both unions were primarily social organisations providing entertainment, food and drink, and committee rooms for societies to use. The SRC, however, although it had as one of its aims the promotion of "social and academic unity among students,"<sup>4</sup> also had the important job of acting as a source of communication between the University authorities and the student body. This immediately gave it an additional political dimension which the two unions did not have.

Since its part in the political life of the University was such a central one, the role of the SRC will be examined first. The chapter will then move on to consider the political clubs - arguably the most important University societies in terms of the levels of general interest and membership they could command. In particular, consideration will be given to two of the most important activities of these clubs: debating and putting up candidates for the Rectorial election. The focus will then broaden to consider student responses to wider social-political movements (such as protests over Suez in the 1950s, Vietnam in the 1960s and university cuts in the 1970s and 1980s). In particular, given the overall focus of this study on female students, the impact of second wave feminism will be considered and contrasted with the immediate post-war decades in which feminism seemed moribund. In this context, the growing awareness by modern generations of female students of the perceived sexism of their male colleagues will also be examined, and particular

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<sup>3</sup> *The Observer* (supplement), 8th May 1966.

<sup>4</sup> *Glasgow University Calendar*, 1939.

campus battles over the provision of strippers and pornographic films as evening entertainment in the Men's Union will be set within the context of the segregated union facilities, which were maintained until very recently. It has already been noted that the stubbornness exhibited by the student body in maintaining separate unions was also reflected in a refusal to join the NUS, and the chapter finishes with an analysis of why the University was so apparently conservative regarding these issues.

The SRC was set up in 1885, at a time when all Scottish universities were forming similar institutions to encourage the development of corporate life. So it was already in place when women students were first admitted to the University in 1892. The women set up their own separate QM SRC in 1894, but it amalgamated with the Men's SRC in 1898. It was important that women should be represented on the SRC and so a Women's Convenor was created, this office existing right up until the Second World War. The war was significant for women, since as might be expected, they played a greater part in the running of the SRC; in the 1939-40 academic session, as well as the usual QM Convenor, one of the four additional members of the SRC Executive Committee was female, as was the Book Exchange Convenor, the entire Book Exchange Committee and several of those on the Amusements Committee, whilst in the Honorary Secretary's annual report to the SRC in 1941-42, it was recorded that women had played a prominent part in the

SRC and noted that “on the whole, the women members of Council have toiled more willingly.”<sup>5</sup>

At this point, in 1941, women formed 33% of the University population, compared with 23% in 1938. They did not have representation commensurate with this proportion, but were making inroads. Indeed, in 1941, women had their guaranteed representation extended, the single position of QM Convenor being abandoned in favour of two posts, the QM President and QM Vice President of the SRC.<sup>6</sup> This positive discrimination did not survive past the mid-fifties however, and in 1956 the QM President and QM Vice President were dispensed with and women now had to compete equally with men for the highest office of President. This was not a universally popular move. Jean Smits, an American student at the University, observed that “there were outraged howls from some who were sorry that SRC would no longer have a QM President, and thus the University would no longer have a ‘first lady.’”<sup>7</sup> (However, a measure of positive discrimination continued in that the constitution stated that if there were no other women elected to the SRC’s Executive Committee, then the Vice President for Educational and International Affairs must be female). Jean Smits felt that although women could now compete equally for the post of SRC President “it will be a long time before a woman actually holds the post.”<sup>8</sup> In actual fact she was wrong, for only two years later in the 1959-60 academic session, Meta Ramsay became the first female President. This did not set

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<sup>5</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. LI, No. 3, 15th November 1939 & Vol. 41, No. 12, 4th June 1941.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. LII, No. 4, 27th November 1940.

<sup>7</sup> Jean Smits, “Looking Ahead,” in *GUQM College Twenty Five* (Glasgow, 1957), p. 23.



a precedent for many more women students to do so, however - the next female president was not until 1972-73 and there was not another until 1981-82. Women did not do especially well as regards other executive positions either, even with one guaranteed position. There were exceptional years though, such as 1965-66, when the Junior Vice President, Finance Convenor, Honorary Assistant Secretary and Administrative Assistant posts were all filled by women.<sup>9</sup> Then in 1970, all vestiges of positive discrimination were abolished. Despite this, women always managed to get at least one representative on the Executive in every year and by the 1980s were regularly getting two, three or even four Executive positions (out of a total of seven). It is also interesting to note that during the few years when women *were* president of the SRC, they were able to make an impact and get issues of particular relevance to women considered. Thus in the 1972-73 session, Council passed a motion supporting the campaign of the Women's Liberation Group for a crèche for the children of staff and students as well as passing a motion calling for the Student Health Service to investigate the facilities available to female students for abortion and contraception.<sup>10</sup>

The Executive Committee was the elite and topmost committee of the SRC. The full Council, consisting of representatives from all faculties and years, had seats specially reserved for women in the earlier decades under examination, ensuring that they were adequately represented (for example, three Arts Faculty seats allocated to first year women and three to first year men and so on). As numbers of women in

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<sup>8</sup> Jean Smits, *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Student Handbook*, 1965.

the University expanded, the number of female Council seats was also expanded, enabling female representation on Council to approximate female representation in the University. Thus in 1961, 23% of the Council were women at a time when they formed 25% of the University population.<sup>11</sup> However, in 1967, the constitution was re-written to make all seats gender-free,<sup>12</sup> and as a result numbers of women could now fluctuate quite considerably from year to year - in 1974 they formed 39% and in 1977 24% of Council.<sup>13</sup> In fact, the new situation often meant that women were under-represented and as a result there was an attempt to reintroduce positive discrimination in the 1980s. The 1981-82 president, Patricia Bell, interviewed by the *Glasgow Herald* on her election victory, commented that “my one regret is that there are so few women coming forward to stand for Council. I am campaigning for half the seats to be reserved for women.”<sup>14</sup> This provoked a letter to the *Glasgow Herald* from a male student who pointed out that, because in the recent SRC election only three candidates out of the 50 standing had been women, if Bell’s view were to prevail, there would be an even higher number of unfilled vacancies than at present which would therefore greatly decrease the representative nature of the Council.<sup>15</sup> In any case, Bell did not manage to get half the Council seats reserved for women. Nor did the recommendation by the Constitution and Procedure Committee of 1981 that

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<sup>10</sup> Minutes of Court 1972-73, 17th December 1973.

<sup>11</sup> SRC Statutory minutes, 16th November 1961, (DC 157/4/12).

<sup>12</sup> Apart from the General Poll seats, which consisted of ten seats, three of which were allocated to women. In 1968, the General Poll seats were reduced to seven, two of which were reserved for women and the General Poll became gender free by the 1970s.

<sup>13</sup> SRC Statutory minutes, 7th February 1974 & 10th November 1977, (DC 157/4/23).

<sup>14</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 11th November 1981, (ACC 242/2/61).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

a Women's Affairs Convenor be established on the Executive (who should be female and elected from the whole body of female students), come to fruition.<sup>16</sup> But it is interesting that, although these proposed changes to the constitution failed, the old notion of positive discrimination had re-emerged in an attempt to resolve the problem of women's under-representation.

The problem is perhaps a surprising one, given the steady increase in the overall numbers and proportion of women at the University. In 1950, there were 1,422 women (20% of the student population), by 1970 there were 2,952 (34%), rising to 6,007 (45%), by 1987. It is not an easy matter to answer why women should have fought shy of the SRC. Were women just generally more apathetic, more likely to concentrate on study and shun extra-curricular activities? Some indicators suggest that this may have been the case: the very low polls in QM Union elections (often only 10%), for example and the lack of involvement, for much of the period, in the student press. Other indicators, such as the consistently higher female poll in Rectorial elections, perhaps belie this judgement. A clue perhaps lies in a comment made by a male student writing to the *University Guardian* in 1982 on the subject of positive discrimination for women on the SRC. He felt that "for too long the attitude to women actively taking part in student politics has been prohibitive to female students."<sup>17</sup> Perhaps it was this discouraging attitude which affected some women. Part of the reason must also lie in the motives students have for getting involved in such student governing bodies. Some undoubtedly wished to further the

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<sup>16</sup> SRC Executive minutes, 17th March 1981, (DC 157/4/25).

aims of their particular political party and this motivation may have been less present in women students who, as will be shown later, tended to be less involved in political clubs within the University. Some students also probably saw the SRC as a good training ground for a later political career, possibly a career option that fewer women than men perceived as realistic. Perhaps women were also more put off than men by the SRC's poor image and did not want to be involved in a body of such low standing?

Indeed, the SRC's poor image amongst the student body was a constant cause of concern for those serving on it; its low status seems to have been a consistent problem throughout the period under discussion. The student press was particularly vitriolic - a typical complaint being voiced by the *Guardian* leader of November 1966. Reporting on the recent elections, it criticised an SRC which "instead of being a means to the end of student representation, has become to itself, an end in itself. Buying a new duplicating machine has become more important to the SRC than the problems of staff-student relations."<sup>18</sup> But of the many complaints directed at the SRC, there are two major criticisms which resurface again and again: firstly that the Council was unrepresentative of the student body and secondly, that it was inefficient and/or misguided in its activities.

The first criticism, that of unrepresentativeness, stemmed largely from the method of election of the Executive Committee. The Executive was elected at the first Statutory Council meeting by the Council. In other words, it was not elected

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<sup>17</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 25th February 1982. (The *Glasgow University Guardian* will hence forward be referred to as *Guardian* in the text).

directly and this led to criticisms that it was ‘cliquey.’ A further result of this system was that the presidency was often uncontested. The situation did improve over time, however, and in a record poll of 20% in 1970, the SRC was voted in on a platform to introduce direct elections as well as general meetings with the student population to decide policy.<sup>19</sup> Although a motion proposing binding general meetings (provided a quorum of 500 attended), was rejected by Council, direct election of the President was achieved in 1971 and direct election of the rest of the Executive in 1972. The issue of binding general meetings was to re-emerge again in the late 1970s, but the University Court consistently refused to allow them fearing that extremists would be able to get their viewpoints adopted as SRC policy.<sup>20</sup>

The fact that binding general meetings were continually vetoed by the Court had important results because it meant that the SRC could ignore any decisions taken at such meetings (which were known as Emergency General Meetings (EGMs)) and which could be called by either the SRC or a group of students). This does not seem to have been a problem in the 1940s, 1950s and even the 1960s. Indeed, few EGMs were called during these decades. The 1970s and 1980s, however witnessed a mushrooming of EGMs, which were often called to debate issues of no direct relevance to campus life. This led to criticisms by some students that the SRC was acting outwith its proper scope of activity, or pursuing policies that were ‘ultra vires.’ For example, in November 1975, the SRC chose to spend £300 on sending a coach load of unemployed Glaswegians on a ‘right to work’ demonstration in London.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, No. 3, 15th November 1966.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Vol. 21, No. 3, 10th December 1970.

“This is a failure by Council to live up to the responsibility vested in them by the 10,000 students whom they represent,” said *Guardian*.<sup>21</sup> More serious was the controversy surrounding the SRC’s decision in the early eighties to ‘twin’ with Bir Zeit University on the Israeli occupied west bank of Jordan (as a means of drawing attention to the loss of academic freedom experienced by students there under military rule). Trouble arose at an EGM in May 1981 at which 813 students voted by a large majority to end the twinning arrangement, but the SRC decided not to be bound by this decision.<sup>22</sup> The situation was worsened when the SRC held another EGM in 1981 on the demand for political status by the IRA hunger strikers. When a motion was passed in favour of the IRA’s demands, the SRC decided to uphold this decision and convey the result to the ‘relevant people’ in Ireland.<sup>23</sup> The SRC was accused by the students of accepting EGM decisions only when it suited them. The President, James Black, resigned over the controversy. The following year, the SRC passed a motion opposing the imposition of martial law in Poland and donated £100 to the NUS Solidarity fund in aid of NZS (Poland’s independent student union).<sup>24</sup> Motions of this nature would have been unheard of in the earlier decades of the period under discussion and show clearly that the SRC’s own perception of its legitimate scope of activity had altered greatly. As a result, the question of whether a body representing the students should confine itself to local matters of direct relevance to the well-being of the student population or whether it should broaden its

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<sup>20</sup> Minutes of Court 1976-77, 16th February 1977, p.192.

<sup>21</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 20th November, 1975.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 15th November 1966.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* 28th May 1981.

outlook was to remain a constant source of dispute, and indeed remains a divisive issue today.

So we can see that a significant shift took place in the post-war decades with regard to the concerns and activities of the SRC. In the 1940s and 1950s, annual reports show the SRC to have been primarily concerned with running its various student services - book sales and travel for example - and organising Charities Week and Rectorial events and managing the student press.<sup>25</sup> SRC meetings appear to have been quite cosy affairs - tea and biscuits and everyone wearing their gowns - and amicable relations were usually maintained with the University authorities. By the late 1950s and 1960s the scope of activity was increasing. The Council was larger, and new SRC Departments had been added - for instance the Employment Department which provided information about vacation jobs and a Grants section to provide advice about student grants. Discussions were no longer about how to promote the wearing of gowns or how best to redecorate Pearce Lodge (the SRC's building). Topics debated in the 1960s and 1970s included issues such as University re-development, how UGC money should be best spent and student representation on the committees of Court and Senate. By the late 1970s and 1980s, as we have seen, forays into wider social and political issues were made - often generating unpopularity for the Council. However, in these decades the SRC also did much to organise demonstrations against inadequate grant increases and education cuts and

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<sup>24</sup> SRC Statutory minutes, 14th January 1982, (Acc 174/1/88).

<sup>25</sup> This consisted of the *Student Handbook*, *Glasgow University Guardian* and *Glasgow University Magazine*. Although these were all SRC publications, the SRC had no editorial control over the *Guardian* or the *Magazine*.

occasionally won praise from the student press as a result. The range of activities it became involved in had widened greatly with the expansion and increasing complexity of the University and in recognition of this, the Senate agreed to the position of president being a sabbatical one in 1971. (That of the senior vice-president followed in 1977). In addition, the SRC appointed more permanent staff, including a full time welfare officer in 1986. The move from Pearce Lodge to the more spacious John McIntyre Building at the end of the 1960s also helped.

It can be seen that by the end of the period under examination, the SRC was highly political, and this was demonstrated not only by the kind of motions that it passed and the issues it discussed, but also by the increasing politicisation of its candidates. It had always been the case that many of the candidates standing for election were also involved in one of the political clubs. For example, in the 1950s, Meta Ramsay was involved in the Liberal Club as well as being SRC president 1959-60 and a famous example from the early 1960s is Donald Dewar, who was secretary of the SRC as well as being involved in the Labour Club, being its Chairman in 1961. Nonetheless, *Guardian* did not analyse SRC elections in political terms at this time and one gets the impression that the personalities were more important than their political colouring. By the late 'sixties and 'seventies, however, a gradual change can be observed. Indeed, the *Guardian* analysis of the 1967 SRC elections perhaps marks the beginning of this change towards more overtly political candidates. An article on the elections voiced the suspicion that the nominations put forward for election suggested a party conspiracy. "Is the SRC being used to further



the purposes and propaganda of a political grouping?" the article wondered, implying that the notion of attempting to get a particular party slate on the SRC was a new one.<sup>26</sup>

Certainly, by the 1970s elections were increasingly becoming contested along party lines and as a result a significant body of opinion wanting to keep politics out of the SRC emerged. A constitutional amendment put forward by the leader of the Socialist Society in 1970 to try and make the SRC an overtly political body was defeated and in 1972, a record poll of 25% voted in an election fought over two issues, one of which was a non-political SRC.<sup>27</sup> Again in 1979, the large number of moderate students returned onto Council had as part of their agenda taking politics out of SRC affairs.<sup>28</sup> These attempts to keep politics and the SRC separate seem to have been largely in vain and *Guardian* coverage of the annual elections increasingly focused on the political shifts represented by each election result, especially by the 1980s. For example, the leading article on the 1982 elections reported on a "landslide to the left."<sup>29</sup> However, it was perhaps impossible for the SRC to remain non-political by this point, since higher education cuts which led to staffing losses and the falling real value of grants made it virtually impossible for it to stay aloof. The entry in the *Student Handbook* of 1982 summed up the position: "many argue that the SRC should be apolitical, yet the very nature of the role of

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<sup>26</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 2nd November 1967.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 20, No. 5, 22nd January 1970. The other issue was that of NUS affiliation, which will be returned to later.

<sup>28</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 2nd November 1979, (Acc 242/2/61).

<sup>29</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 6th May 1982.

furthering the interests of students - claiming better grants etc., indicates that politics cannot be avoided.”

As we have seen, the SRC increasingly became a battle ground for the University's political clubs to fight for control of the important seats. These political clubs will now be examined and their impact on the University assessed. As already mentioned, Glasgow maintained a whole spectrum of political clubs right through the post-war period, although due to the transient nature of the student population, some clubs appeared, disappeared and reappeared at intervals. On the whole, however, six political clubs were maintained throughout the period: Conservatives, Liberals, Distributists, Labour (founded 1946), Scottish Nationalist and finally various far left clubs which appeared and disappeared, such as the Communist Club (formed 1945) and later on the Independent Socialist Club, Socialist Society and Socialist Workers Party. Occasional other groups were added to the list, usually in response to the wider political situation, for example the Pacifist Society during the war and the Scottish-USSR Society in 1950 to promote friendship between Scotland and the Soviet Union (a direct response to the anti-USSR propaganda of the time). However, the greatest spurt of political society formation took place in the 1968-69 academic session when four new clubs were formed: two left wing (the Radical Students Alliance (RSA, which turned into the Socialist Society), and the Marxist Society) plus two right wing (the National Front and New Right).<sup>30</sup>

The appearance of these four new clubs can be traced to the contemporary political situation. The RSA was Glasgow's off-shoot from the national RSA -

which was a group of Communist, Labour and Liberal students set up in 1966 as an electoral alternative to the leadership of the NUS which was regarded as right wing.<sup>31</sup> Glasgow's RSA claimed to be interested in greater student involvement on campus in matters affecting them and stated that it was working with the Scottish RSA and the RSSF or Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, the formation of the Marxist Society was rooted in disillusionment with the British Communist Party. The formation of the two right wing groups can also be traced to contemporary events - the National Front explicitly stated their support for Ian Smith in Rhodesia and Enoch Powell on coloured immigration. In his book on the events of 1968, Ronald Fraser makes the important point that discontent with the Labour Government of 1964-70, "rather than further left wing aims, appeared suddenly more likely to provide the cause for a right wing backlash."<sup>33</sup> The formation of the two right wing groups at Glasgow University mirrors this national phenomenon of increasing disgruntlement with the political left leading to a shift to the right and the re-emergence of racist ideas.

None of these new political groups lasted very long, however, only SocSoc surviving past the early 'seventies. A picture of continuity over the decades is provided by the continuation of the mainstream political clubs, whilst more extreme political groups made temporary appearances. But it is a difficult problem to assess the level of support enjoyed by these societies. No serial statistics exist for their

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 1968, 1969.

<sup>31</sup> Chris Harman, *The Fire Last Time: 1968 and After* (London, 1988).

<sup>32</sup> Chris Harman, *ibid.*, the RSSF was formed in 1968 on the initiative of the LSE Socialist Society.

<sup>33</sup> Ronald Fraser, *1968: A Student Generation in Revolt* (London, 1988).

yearly membership and although club minutes occasionally give membership figures, these are patchy.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, the student press occasionally featured articles on the size of the respective political clubs which provide some clue as to the extent of involvement. The earliest survey located was a small poll carried out in the Christmas edition of the *Glasgow University Magazine (GUM)* in 1950.<sup>35</sup> Eighty one men and nineteen women were surveyed and 34% claimed to belong to a political club, the Conservative Club being the most popular, with 38% of those belonging to a club saying they were members. Indeed, the 1950s seem to have been a decade in which Conservatism consistently provided the most popular political creed, the Tory club annual dinner being noted in *Guardian* as “the social event of the year.”<sup>36</sup> The popularity (and sociability) of student Conservative clubs at this time seems to have been mirrored elsewhere: a student at one of the English civic universities remembered that “the political societies were not the most popular (societies), apart from the Conservative party and that was a social sort of thing, you joined the Conservative Society if you were very sociable.”<sup>37</sup> The dominance of the Conservatives in student politics at this time reflected the political picture in Scotland generally, the 1950s representing the peak of Conservative popularity, 50.1% of the Scottish electorate voting Conservative in 1955.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Minute books exist for the Conservative Club 1942-51, Labour Club 1967-74 and Distributist Club 1954-67.

<sup>35</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, No. 3, December 1950.

<sup>36</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, No. 17, 22nd February 1957.

<sup>37</sup> Female 1950s graduate, *Bloody Students*, Radio 4 broadcast 13th June 1996.

<sup>38</sup> James Mitchell, “Scotland in the Union, 1945-95: The Changing Nature of the Union State” in T.M. Devine, and R.J. Finlay, *Scotland in the Twentieth Century* (Edinburgh, 1996), p. 95.

Towards the end of the decade, in October 1958, *Guardian* provided figures of political membership for the new academic session. The Conservatives were still the largest with a record membership of 463, Labour were next with 110, the Liberals had 40 and the Distributists and Socialist Unity both had 30. These figures show that involvement was low, the Conservative figure only representing about 7% of the student population and Labour about 2%. An article in the *Glasgow Herald* in 1965 showed the Conservatives to be still ahead,<sup>39</sup> although it seems that the popularity of the clubs could fluctuate considerably from year to year with the Liberals claiming to be the largest club with 400 members the previous year.<sup>40</sup> At the end of the decade in 1969, a memorandum by the Labour Club claimed that the political clubs jointly represented approximately 1,000 undergraduates, or approximately 12%.<sup>41</sup> Figures for the 1970s are sparse, but in the 1976 edition of the *Handbook*, Labour were listed as the largest of the political clubs and by the 1980s Labour had permanently overtaken the Conservatives: with 320 members in 1982 (approximately 3% of the total student population), it was “by far the largest” political club on campus.<sup>42</sup> This was no doubt a response to the unpopularity of the Conservative Government’s education policies. Indeed, *Guardian* claimed in 1986 that “Labour is the only effective, active political grouping on campus.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 8th November 1965. (News cuttings, 47987).

<sup>40</sup> *Student Handbook*, 1964.

<sup>41</sup> Memorandum by the Labour Club to the Parliamentary Select committee on Staff/Student relations, 17th April, 1969, (DC 329/1/1).

<sup>42</sup> SRC Statutory minutes, 18th February 1982, (Acc 155/2/50).

<sup>43</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 30th October, 1986.

Disillusionment with Labour's prevalence on the SRC, however, was expressed in the mid-eighties by the formation of the Grass Cutters Society. In 1985 this group successfully gained 12 seats on the SRC and its spokesperson commented "we are an umbrella group for those disaffected by Labour dominance on Council."<sup>44</sup> Mirroring national events, an SDP group was formed in 1985 and they too, began to erode support for Labour. The *Guardian* headline of May 1986 read "Alliance Triumph" and reported that the Liberal-SDP Alliance and one independent candidate had displaced Labour from all but one of its Executive seats.<sup>45</sup> Scottish Nationalism was also a significant force. A rise in nationalist support in the 1970s can be inferred from the fact that a separate nationalist club, in addition to the long-standing Scottish Nationalist Association (GUSNA, which had been formed in 1927), was set up in 1971, this new group being known as the Glasgow University Nationalists (GUN).<sup>46</sup> Although this group seemed to disappear fairly rapidly (although absence from the annual *Handbook* did not necessarily mean extinction - sometimes clubs just did not manage to get an entry included for whatever reason), it was back for sure by the early 1980s, claiming in the 1982 *Handbook* that "last year we became the fastest growing political club on campus," with over 100 members. Some further mention of the Socialist Society should perhaps also be made because, although numerically small, it had an impact beyond its numbers, due to the commitment and activism of its members. The impact of Glasgow's SocSoc was less than at some other campuses - the LSE being an extreme example - but even so, it was able to

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 7th March, 1985.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 1st May, 1986.

organise for left-wing figures such as Tariq Ali to speak on campus, put up a Rectorial candidate in 1968 (Dany Cohn-Bendit), and organise a sit-in in 1969, which will be returned to later.

The above discussion has shown that none of the political clubs commanded a great deal of numerical support on campus. Within this minority, it is clear that men were more dominant than women, although there was certainly a core of committed political women. A female student writing in *GUM* in 1946 commented that: “QM is as interested in politics as the Union, in the sense that both have about the same number of really energetic members of the political clubs,” but she went on to argue that the women’s attendance at political debates was not as good as the men because “the average man is aware that he should be interested in politics and the average woman is not.”<sup>47</sup> She concluded by calling on women to take an interest in politics because at the moment the QM committees of most of the political clubs were “moribund.” Each political club maintained a QM section with a QM convenor, but a cynical female contributor to *GUM* in 1940 commented that male students were “adept at...the gesture of electing women to minor committee positions, or at forming them into compact non-interfering QM sections.”<sup>48</sup> Having QM sections, however, at least ensured some female input into the political clubs, although women occasionally managed to get to the top of the clubs in their own right, rather than just heading the QM section. In 1943 a woman became outright president of GUSNA, whilst in the following decade, the 1956 Labour Club president was female and in

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<sup>46</sup> *Student Handbook*, 1971.

<sup>47</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. LVI, No. 5, May 1946.

1957 the presidents of both GUSNA and the Communist Club were women. Moreover, women were often vice presidents or secretaries of the political clubs and by the 1970s were becoming president more regularly; for example, of the Labour Club in 1970, of the Independent Socialist Club in 1972 and of the Distributist and Liberal Clubs in 1974.<sup>49</sup>

So although women never dominated the political clubs, they were certainly increasingly involved and they were active in two of the major activities of the political clubs - firstly, putting up candidates for Rectorial elections and secondly, debating. These two activities were vital to the political clubs; getting a Rectorial candidate elected granted immediate prestige to the winning campaign team and similarly, winning the debates trophy for the year greatly enhanced a political club's status.

We will consider the election of the Rector first.<sup>50</sup> This was a three-yearly event, peculiar to the four ancient Scottish universities, in which groups of students selected a Rectorial candidate and campaigned for his or her election: the whole student body was eligible to vote for one of the candidates on polling day. The Rector was intended to be a students' representative who would sit on the University

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> After the mid-1970s, it becomes increasingly difficult to determine whether political club presidents are male or female because the club entries in the *Student Handbooks* cease to list the presidents, vice presidents and secretaries and instead just give a contact name for those interested in joining.

<sup>50</sup> The office of the Rector was a historic one. Originally the Rector had been responsible for the whole internal government of the University with both staff and students voting in Rectorial elections. By the twentieth century, however, the Rector had come to be seen as very much the students' representative to the University authorities and only students could vote. The Rector was president of the University Court and also appointed an assessor to the Court, usually in consultation with the SRC, who would be able to attend meetings in his absence.



Court (he/she even had the right to chair Court meetings) and would campaign for the interests of the students. An analysis of the type of candidates chosen is important since it gives an idea of the changing pre-occupations of the students and, as will be seen, the type of candidate put forward in the early post-war decades was very different from that of the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1940s and 1950s, candidates chosen tended to be political figures and Rectorial elections were eagerly followed by the Scottish press because the result was seen “as a kind of political barometer, or rather as an oracle prophesying the mood of the next generation of Parliamentary electors.”<sup>51</sup> As a result of the interest generated by Rectorial elections, students took the task of choosing a candidate seriously.

Rectorial candidates were put forward by particular campus groups or societies. By the 1940s and 1950s, the two most powerful forces in Rectorial elections were the halls of residence and the political clubs according to a *Guardian* article of 1956, which also noted that the religious societies on campus, once an important force in Rectorial elections (such as the Pacifist-Protestant backing for Dick Sheppard in 1937), were no longer significant.<sup>52</sup> Of the political clubs, it was usually only the Conservative club, being the largest and the richest at this time, that was able to put up a candidate on its own whilst the other clubs often formed coalitions for the purposes of managing and funding a campaign. These coalitions often proved very successful. In 1945, Sir John Boyd Orr was voted in backed by a coalition of the Scottish Nationalists, Labour and the Liberals and although the

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<sup>51</sup> J.M. MacCormick, *The Flag in the Wind* (London, 1955), p. 163.

<sup>52</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 5th October 1956.

Conservatives triumphed in 1947 again with the election of Sir Walter Elliot (Conservative MP for Kelvingrove and former Secretary of State for Scotland), the choice in 1950, the Scottish Nationalist John MacCormick, and his successor, Tom Honeyman (in 1953), were both backed by powerful non-Conservative political coalitions. The wider political importance of Rectorial elections at this time can be seen particularly in the election of John MacCormick. Scottish Nationalism was beginning to represent a significant force in Scottish politics: the Scottish National Party (SNP) had been formed in 1934, the SNP had won the Motherwell by-election in 1945 and a petition for home rule, the ‘Scottish Covenant,’ had been launched in 1949. MacCormick himself felt that his election in 1950 provided “a strong fillip to the Covenant campaign”<sup>53</sup> whilst Iain Hamilton notes that the election was one factor in a general feeling that “Scotland was on the march again.”<sup>54</sup> Iain Hamilton, who matriculated at Glasgow University in 1948, was one of the chief campaigners for MacCormick’s election as Rector, but he is perhaps better remembered for his part as the driving force behind the famous removal of the Stone of Destiny from Westminster Abbey, and its return to Scotland, in 1950.

Scottish Nationalism did less well in the 1950s, a decade in which the Conservative party was able to reassert itself on campus, with the election of R.A. Butler as Rector (Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Commons) in 1956 and the Second Viscount Hailsham (chairman of the Conservative Party) in 1959. Hailsham can be regarded as perhaps the University’s last truly political Rector,

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<sup>53</sup> J.M. MacCormick, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

more in keeping with some of the distinguished politicians who had been chosen before him than with the media personalities who often took up the position afterward. The preference for a respected political figure whom the students wished to honour and who would in turn confer honour upon the University was gradually losing ground to the notion of the 'working Rector' who would be able to devote more time to the position and who would therefore preferably need to be locally based. Indeed of the Rectors chosen in the post-war era, many of them were, or at least had claimed they would be, 'working Rectors' and many were also Scottish.<sup>54</sup> Increasingly, the notion that the Rector should be non-political was also gaining ground, and whilst of the 1940s and 1950s choices only Honeyman was a truly independent Rector, very few of the Rectors of the 1960s and beyond were at all political.

As well as being contested along political lines, an important feature of Rectorial elections in the 1950s was their function as an outlet for student 'high spirits.' MacCormick's installation as Rector in the St. Andrew's Hall in the city was especially notable for the 'riotous scenes' involving shouting, flour-throwing and various stunts, including the placing of a live goose on the stage, which the press made much of. The *Glasgow Herald* felt that this was perhaps part of a growing trend: "it may...be the case that yesterday's outbursts merely marked another stage in

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<sup>54</sup> Iain Hamilton, QC, seminar on *Student Politics* at Glasgow University to commemorate the eleventh jubilee of the University in 2001 (23rd May 1996).

<sup>55</sup> The idea that the Rector should be 'working' had gained in significance as a result of the St. Andrews Bill of 1953 which had attempted to remove the Rector from his statutory chairmanship of the University Court and to confer that office on the Principal. Student and graduate protests had successfully quashed this proposal, (*The Glasgow Herald*, 26th October 1953, (Box 29861)).

student demonstrativeness which over the past two decades has become increasingly vigorous during Rectorial addresses.”<sup>56</sup> The Senate was suitably outraged, but could not agree on an appropriate collective penalty for the student body.<sup>57</sup>

In contrast, the election of Honeyman in 1953 was felt to have been the “dullest for many years,”<sup>58</sup> with a low poll of just over a third of the students voting. The *Scotsman* felt that this showed a “couldn’t care less” attitude among the students,<sup>59</sup> but in fact polls were rarely much over 30% - a result rather of the election taking place on a Saturday than anything else. Voting traditionally took place in either October or November and a battle within the University grounds would be waged between the different campaign groups attempting to prevent their rival’s supporters from voting. Men voted in the Hunter Hall East whilst women were able to avoid the fight altogether and vote separately in No. 1 University Gardens. This is not to imply that women took little part in the Rectorial elections. The photographs of the time may show clearly that they avoided the traditional fight, but women were involved in the campaign committees formed to publicise the chosen candidates. For example, although no minutes of the campaign committees survive, the *Daily Record & Mail* interviewed a female student, Greta Duncan, who was involved in campaigning for the Pacifist MP Emrys Hughes in 1953, whilst the secretary of the Honeyman Committee in that year was Moira Craig.<sup>60</sup> In addition, the proportion of women voting in Rectorial elections was consistently higher than

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<sup>56</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 29th January 1951.

<sup>57</sup> Minutes of Senate 1950-51, Principal and Deans Committee, 18th January 1951, p.72.

<sup>58</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 23rd October 1953. (Box 29861).

<sup>59</sup> *The Scotsman*, 28th October 1953. (Box 29861).

the proportion of men. In the 1950 MacCormick election, for instance, 53% of the women voted, compared with 30% of the men, and in the Honeyman contest the figures were 46% and 31% respectively.<sup>61</sup> The higher female vote persisted into the 1960s, but unfortunately 1962 is the last election for which the Senate printed the results by gender, so it is impossible to see if the trend continues into more recent times.

In order to try and increase the overall poll in Rectorial elections, the SRC approached the University authorities in 1955 with a view to changing the day of the Rectorial election from a Saturday to a weekday. The University refused to allow a Rectorial fight to take place on a working day, so the SRC agreed that in return for a week day election, no organised fight would take place within the University. The method of voting was also changed, a secret ballot being introduced.<sup>62</sup> The new arrangements certainly increased the vote, Butler, the first Rector to be elected under the new conditions, being elected with a 57% poll. Butler's term of office, however, is chiefly remembered for his extremely rowdy installation (even worse than MacCormick's in 1951), which received enormous press coverage. The *Scottish Daily Express* reported that "Glasgow's hooligans pelted Lord Rector R.A. Butler...with flour bags, fruit and soot. At one stage even a hose pipe was aimed at the platform party."<sup>63</sup> Rowdyism continued outside after the installation where a policeman was pushed through a window. Unsurprisingly, Glasgow students were

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<sup>60</sup> *The Daily Record and Mail*, 21st October 1953 (Box 29861).

<sup>61</sup> Minutes of Senate 1950-51 and 1953-54.

<sup>62</sup> Minutes of Court 1955-56, 11th July 1956, p.328.

<sup>63</sup> *The Scottish Daily Express*, 22nd February 1958 (News cuttings 32454).

banned from using the St. Andrews Hall again and Principal Hetherington called it “a most grievous and disastrous business.”<sup>64</sup> Once more, the outraged University Senate was unsure of what punitive action to take. Thirty one students were already being prosecuted in the criminal courts, but discussions centred around some form of collective punishment. C.J. Fordyce, Clerk of Senate, wanted to shut the Men’s Union at 6.00 p.m. every day for the rest of term. This was decided against, partly because the University was not even sure if its term of agreement with the Union would allow it to do so.<sup>65</sup> The next installation, that of Hailsham was a quiet one. It took place in one of the University’s halls amid tight security with an invited audience. On the day of the installation the *Glasgow Herald* noted “security arrangements approaching those on Manhattan Island during the visit of Mr. Khrushchev to the USA are being taken at Glasgow University today.”<sup>66</sup>

Trouble returned in 1962, however, when in a departure from the idea of the working Rector, Glasgow students chose to honour Albert Lutuli, one of the South African ANC leaders and a Nobel Peace Prize winner. On the day of his election, a prolonged fight took place in front of the University on University Avenue (since the fight was banned from taking place within University grounds). Traffic was held up for hours and there were 32 arrests, including one woman. The students did not appear to show any remorse; the *Guardian* editorial stuck up for the tradition of the

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<sup>64</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 1st May, 1958 (News cuttings 47982).

<sup>65</sup> Minutes of Court 1957-58, 20th March 1958, p. 267. This caused much concern in the Senate over the University’s apparent lack of disciplinary control regarding the Union and led to an investigation of the existing terms of agreement. The incident was also one of much concern for the students who were worried that the event might affect their efforts to raise money for an extension to the Union.

Rectorial fight, whilst the SRC announced its intention to organise a collection for the defence of the students charged in the incident.<sup>67</sup>

Lutuli was never allowed to leave South Africa, but his election was an important symbol of anti-apartheid feeling at the University. Sixty-one percent of the student body voted - the highest ever poll. As the *Glasgow Herald* put it, “the appeal to idealism has proved more powerful than the myth of the ‘working Rector.’”<sup>68</sup> Some practical good actually came out of his election via the “Lutuli Scholarship Fund” which the students started up to raise money for a black South African to come and study at Glasgow University. By April 1966, nearly £5,000 had been raised and a series of Lutuli scholars arrived to study at the University throughout the ‘sixties and ‘seventies.

The other two Rectors of the 1960s, Lord Reith, former BBC Director General, elected in 1965 and Lord Macleod, the 73 year old ex-Minister, elected in 1968, were both seen by the *Glasgow Herald* as responsible and serious Rectors.<sup>69</sup> Both were elected and installed with little trouble - indeed, *The Times Educational Supplement* felt the installation of Lord Reith “had the air of a church parade.”<sup>70</sup> Both were also regarded as non-political choices, being proposed by coalitions of several different University clubs together. But both also aroused disappointment. Reith was criticised for his inactive role in the Tom Marr disciplinary case in the

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<sup>66</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 22nd October, 1960, (News cuttings 47984).

<sup>67</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 27th October 1962. In the event, only 5 out of the 32 students were found guilty of breach of the peace and were fined £3 each, (*Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 23rd November 1962).

<sup>68</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 23rd October, 1962.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, editorial, 22nd October, 1968.

mid-sixties,<sup>71</sup> whilst MacLeod was attacked at his installation by the senior vice president of the SRC, Stuart Johnston, for not attending Court meetings or living up to his campaign promise to appoint a student as his assessor.<sup>72</sup> Neither did he seem interested in helping to achieve greater student representation on the governing bodies of the University, the issue which had formed the main thrust of his campaign.

Indeed, the 1968 Rectorial election is interesting in that four of the five candidates stood on a reform platform, a clear indication that Glasgow was not immune from the international movement for greater student say in the running of universities. One of the candidates was Daniel Cohn Bendit, the German socialist and student activist in France, whose election campaign promised to replace Court and Senate by a new body of staff and students (he came third with c20% of the vote). Interestingly, a similar type of candidate was put forward for the Rectorial election at Aberdeen University at the same time - the radical Robin Blackburn, one of the assistant lecturers expelled during the troubles at the LSE. But he too, was beaten by a more conventional candidate, suggesting that Aberdeen, like Glasgow, was a conservative University.<sup>73</sup>

It was possibly the perceived inactivity of the 1960s Rectors which contributed towards the result of a *Guardian* poll conducted in 1969, in which 72% of those

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<sup>70</sup> *The Times Educational Supplement*, 4th November 1966.

<sup>71</sup> The 'Marr case' will be returned to later (see footnote no. 148).

<sup>72</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 6th November, 1969.

<sup>73</sup> Colin M'Laren, "The Student Experience, 1945-1978," in John D. Hargreaves with Angela Forbes, *Aberdeen University 1945-1981: Regional Roles and National Needs* (Aberdeen, 1989), p. 75.



students questioned thought the Rector was irrelevant.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, in 1969, the major political clubs recommended that the position of Rector be an honorary one and his function on Court taken over by three elected students.<sup>75</sup> In an article in the *Glasgow Herald* in 1970, the Principal of UMIST in Manchester argued that the office of Rector at Scottish universities was an important factor in stemming any student unrest, since it gave the students some element of democracy through their entitlement to elect a representative of their own choosing.<sup>76</sup> But the fact that a significant portion of Glasgow students wanted to replace the active role of the Rector with student representatives suggests that they may have been dissatisfied with the sort of representation the Rector gave them and so any notion of the Rector as a bulwark against unrest is misguided. In the event, the students did achieve increased representation on Court, although the office of the Rector remained the same and did not become honorary. The SRC President was co-opted onto Court in 1975 (although it was not until 1981 that students were allowed to attend Senate meetings, and then only as observers).<sup>77</sup> Towards the end of the 1970s, the office of Rector's assessor was abolished and replaced by an SRC assessor nominated by Council who could attend Court meetings along with the SRC President. With these changes, the University authorities decided that the Rector could no longer be a student, and so John Bell, the 1977 Rector who was also a divinity student at the University, was the first and last student Rector.

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<sup>74</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 6th November, 1969.

<sup>75</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 2nd May 1969, (News cuttings 47993).

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 2nd April 1970, (News cuttings 47994).

<sup>77</sup> *Student Handbook*, 1982.

The other two Rectors of the 1970s were James Reid in 1971 and Arthur Montford in 1974. Reid's success, although with a low poll of only 39% - the lowest since the date of the Rectorial was changed to a working day - was seen as a vote of sympathy for the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders who were staging a 'work-in' in an attempt to avoid being made redundant. Reid, former secretary of the Communist Party and the Communist Councillor at Clydebank, was the leader of the UCS shop stewards. One of the students who nominated him, SRC President Martin Caldwell told the *Glasgow Herald*: "in the past the post of Rector has largely been associated with dignitaries and has been a somewhat honorary post. We feel the broader community needs to be represented."<sup>78</sup> Again the need for greater student representation on University governing bodies was stressed in his campaign; this was no doubt an important a factor in Reid's election in addition to sympathy for the UCS workers. Although it could be argued that he was standing as a political Rector, the *Glasgow Herald* was probably right to say that it was his personality rather than his politics which had been important.<sup>79</sup>

The 1974 election of Arthur Montford, Scottish TV sports commentator, is of particular interest where female students are concerned, since one of the candidates standing was proposing to address questions of specific interest to women students. This was Janey Buchan, Glasgow councillor and nominee of the Labour Club. She claimed, in particular, that she would look into the Medical Faculty's attitude towards women applicants. The *Scotsman* quoted her as saying Scotland was "a real

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 25th October 1971, (Acc 27/10).

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 18th October 1974.

male chauvinist pig of a country” and that the principal target of her Rectorial campaign would be the “whole range of discriminations practised against women.”<sup>80</sup>

This was the first time that a female candidate had stood on a platform specifically addressing women’s issues and it would be interesting to see to what extent she harnessed the female vote.<sup>81</sup> As already noted, the Senate minutes no longer give a breakdown of the result according to gender at this point and all that can be established is that the overall vote was 40% and that Janey Buchan came fifth out of six candidates, getting 367 out of 3913 votes or 9%. The election took place at a time when an awareness of the new Women’s Liberation movement was certainly present in the University - a Women’s Liberation Group being set up on campus in 1973. However, Buchan’s failure to do better should not be seen purely in terms of a failure for Women’s Liberation since a whole range of factors came into play during Rectorial elections - the efficiency of the campaign, a tendency to vote for a well-known face etc. It is possible that the very fact that Buchan *was* a woman counted against her. The *Glasgow Herald* commented before the election in 1974 that although Janey Buchan was 4-1 on favourite at the local bookmakers “women candidates have not done well in the Rectorials of recent years.”<sup>82</sup> In 1968, for example, the two female candidates had come bottom of the pile and *Guardian*

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<sup>80</sup> Glasgow University Medical Faculty was operating a quota system to restrict the numbers of women in the Faculty - see Chapter 1, *Institutional Development*. (*The Scotsman*, 17th May 1974).

<sup>81</sup> She was not, however, the first female candidate to stand. In 1950 Rosamund John had stood, Lady Tweedsmuir had stood in 1953 and in 1968 there were two female candidates, Baroness Elliot of Harwood and Winifred Ewing.

<sup>82</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 28th October, 1974.

reflected that their gender had probably been a drawback.<sup>83</sup> And in 1950, the actress Rosamund John, sponsored by a group who believed “that the election of a woman as Rector would place Glasgow in the vanguard of progressive universities and accord recognition to the increasingly important part that women are playing in university life”<sup>84</sup> again came bottom of the pile with only 14 votes.<sup>85</sup>

A woman stood again in 1980, Margo MacDonald, former SNP MP for Govan and now director of Shelter; her campaign was also in some measure targeted at women. She campaigned on four issues: education cuts, accommodation problems (in the city generally, as well as for students), nuclear disarmament and finally the role of women in the University. Out of seven candidates, MacDonald came fourth. As well as a blow to women, this result was also seen as a blow to Scottish Nationalism. In reality, the fact that she was representing a political party, whether it be Scottish Nationalist or any of the others, was probably a drawback since by this time, political candidates were quite clearly not doing well. Janey Buchan had also been a political candidate (Labour), and the year in which she lost so too did the Conservative candidate Isabel Barnett. The move away from political Rectors was not peculiar to Glasgow. Colin McLaren observes a similar phenomenon at Aberdeen University where the 1970s saw two media-men and an actor chosen as Rector.<sup>86</sup> He sees this as a sign that enthusiasm in student politics had evaporated. Certainly Rectorials at this time seem to have created less of a stir at Glasgow, with

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<sup>83</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 5th November 1968.

<sup>84</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 23rd October, 1950, (News cuttings 47978).

<sup>85</sup> Minutes of Senate 1950-51, 21st October 1950.

the student press less interested and none of the lengthy campaign broadsheets which appeared in earlier decades.

The 1980s began with another non-political 'media personality' being voted in. This was Reginald Bosanquet, who became a source of disgust and embarrassment to the students. At the Rectorial Ball he was reported as being 'drunk and incapable'<sup>87</sup> and by 1983 the SRC not only passed a motion deploring the involvement of Bosanquet in a new video magazine 'Private Spy,' which included sexist material, but were also considering contacting the Privy Council to investigate the possibility of having him removed from the Rectorship. This amendment was defeated, partly because the Council were unsure if it could be done.<sup>88</sup> The *Guardian* editorial appealed to students to choose their Rector more wisely in 1984.

In the event, they chose Michael Kelly, Glasgow's Lord Provost. The first ever Provost to be elected as Rector, he symbolised the connections between the University and the city of Glasgow. However, *Guardian* was rather scathing of his performance as Rector, complaining in 1986 that "Michael Kelly promised to work for students on campus but since his election he has done nothing. His election was a piece of self-gratifying political publicity,"<sup>89</sup> and in 1987 the ideal of the working Rector was completely eschewed in favour of a symbolic gesture against apartheid with the election of Winnie Mandela. Like Lutuli before her in 1962, she was forbidden to leave South Africa. Unlike Lutuli, the poll was small, less than 25% of

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<sup>86</sup> C. McLaren, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>87</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 13th November 1980.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 10th March 1983.

the student population, but Winnie got 57% of the votes cast. So right at the end of the period under discussion, Glasgow University got its first female Rector.

It can be seen that the nature of the Rectorial election changed greatly over the period under consideration, the earlier political and often absentee Rectors of the 1940s and 1950s being replaced later on by non-political, 'working' Rectors, often well-known personalities. It does seem that this transition corresponded to a lessening of interest in the election. Polls went up initially following the change to a week day vote in 1955, but after the impressive turn-out of over 60% to vote for Lutuli in 1962, the vote tended to get smaller and smaller each year, with one or two exceptions. Possibly the fact that students managed to get some representation of their own with regard to Court meetings meant that the vital function of the Rector as the students only real representative was no longer as important. Student behaviour at Rectorial installations and on election day also became far less rowdy. This may be another indication of a growing indifference, but R.D. Anderson feels that, since the 1960s, the "introduction of a more relaxed life style, with less need for the release of tension, may account for the decay in the traditional demonstrative rowdyism."<sup>90</sup>

We will now consider the other important activity of the political clubs, that of debating. This was an activity upon which much emphasis was placed. It was traditionally regarded as one of Glasgow's strong points and the annual *Student Handbook* urged freshers to take part. An article in *New Society* in 1966 quoted one

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 16th October, 1986.

<sup>90</sup> R.D. Anderson, *The Student Community at Aberdeen 1860-1939* (Aberdeen, 1988), p. 118.

Glasgow student as saying that “Blues here don’t have the prestige that they do at Oxford or Cambridge. If anyone has prestige, it is the debaters”<sup>91</sup> whilst Donald Dewar MP, who was a Glasgow student in the early 1960s, makes the point that debates at Glasgow were different from debates at other universities. He notes that at Oxford, Cambridge and Durham, for example, debates tended to be sustained by invited speakers and the student speakers were in effect ‘filling in’ before the guest speaker, whereas at Glasgow, debates were sustained purely by the students.<sup>92</sup> This is perhaps one reason why the University did so well in debating competitions. The Men’s Union did particularly well at a competitive level; by 1982 it had won the ‘Observer Mace’ competition 9 times and in 1975 it won the ‘Scotsman’ trophy for the 15th time out of 22 competitions. But female debating teams also had their successes. In 1957, the QM team won the trophy and best speaker’s prize in the ‘Scotsman’ debate and in the following year, the QM entered two teams for the ‘Observer’ competition and one of their speakers went forward to the next round as the best individual speaker outside of the winning team.<sup>93</sup>

Debates at the University were organised on parliamentary lines and the political clubs took it in turn to form a government and introduce a Bill on some political issue. The overall organisation of the year’s debates was in the hands of the Debates Committee, composed of members of each political club, usually the Presidents. There also existed the Dialectic Society, the University’s oldest club, which specialised in the method of debating and also non-political debates. Both the

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<sup>91</sup> *New Society*, 10th February 1966.

<sup>92</sup> Donald Dewar MP, seminar on *Student Politics*, (23rd May 1996), op. cit.

Men's and QM Union awarded a trophy at the end of each academic session to the political club which had performed to the highest standard and these were keenly competed for.

Before the war debates had been organised separately by the Men's and QM Unions, but in 1939-40 the falling membership of the Dialectic Society due to male students being called up, meant it was forced to team up with the QM debating society in order to survive. Mixed debates were then held throughout the war until the 1945-46 session when the Men's Union withdrew, it was rumoured, because of the alleged low standard of speaking by the women at mixed debates. A female writer in *GUM* defended the QM standard of speaking and pointed out that the "hostile, intolerant and discouraging"<sup>94</sup> reports of their speeches in *GUM* were hardly an encouragement to female speakers. There was even some regret that debates had now returned to being unmixed. A debater from the Men's Union, reflecting on the previous evening's all-male debate in November 1945, observed "I never missed a woman as much as last night" and the following month, many men deserted their own debate and departed up the hill to the QM to see how the Women's first unmixed debate since before the war was going. The debate down the hill in the Men's Union was forced to carry on with less than thirty men present. The write up of these two debates in *GUM* observed that the Men's Union debate had been dull whilst the success of the QM Union debate had "started a few people thinking."<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 2, No. 15, 8th February 1957.

<sup>94</sup> *Glasgow University Magazine*, Vol. LVI, No. 5, May 1946.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. LVI, No. 1, November 1945 & No. 2, December 1945.



This resulted in a trial of mixed debates being held again in the 1945-46 session and although a reporter for *GUM* said disparagingly “we do not approve of joint debates. The number of women speakers in this University who are worth listening to could be counted on the fingers of one hand,” the debates convenor for the year recommended that debates remain mixed in future. *GUM* approved, “not because women add much to debates” but because their presence meant that “the hall is full and the atmosphere is pleasanter.”<sup>96</sup> This rather patronising attitude towards female debaters persisted throughout the 1950s, in spite of the QM debating successes mentioned earlier, an article in the 1957 *Handbook* being typical of the time. The section on debates in the Men’s Union dismissed all women debaters as ‘lightweights,’ but hastened to add that: “this is not agitation for reform. If the present system did not operate, the eyes of weary debaters would never be soothed by the figure of a pretty co-ed on the opposite bench.”

Such attitudes were less evident by the 1960s, a decade in which female debating continued to enjoy some success. The Dialectic Society had a female president in both 1961-62 and 1967-68 and the *Handbook* of 1967 mentioned that QM teams competed very successfully each year with other universities in the ‘Observer’ and ‘Scotsman’ debates, being overall runner-up in the ‘Scotsman’ the previous year. This was also the first year the QM sent two representatives to the Eighth National Inter-varsities Debating competition and both reached the semi-final. Debating seems to have been as popular as ever in the 1960s - Neil MacCormick (son of the 1950 Rector John MacCormick) a Glasgow student from

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. LV1, No. 4, March 1946.

1959-63, estimating that one in six students turned out at some point for the marathon Friday debates which began at 1.15 p.m. and could continue until 1.00 a.m.,<sup>97</sup> whilst another student remembered that “the University debates were standing room only in 1968, and were invariably rowdy, abusive and witty. They were tremendous entertainment.”<sup>98</sup>

Nevertheless, the fortunes of debating seem to have fluctuated quite considerably from year to year and in 1971, the QM debates convenor asked the QMU Board whether debating in QM should even be continued.<sup>99</sup> It was decided it should, with some changes in the form of debates and with evening debates to be encouraged. By this point, however, it is noticeable that debates were no longer reported in the student press as a matter of course. Important debates did receive coverage, such as the annual Inter-varsities competition, but the detailed reporting of each union debate and of who spoke and what they said, prevalent in the *GUM* of the 1950s, was no longer a feature of the *GUM* or of the *Guardian* by the 1970s. This suggests that the importance of debating was lessening, though figures of those involved are not available. Possibly it was inevitable that the appeal of debating would decrease as the sheer range of other activities and societies on offer widened - the 1945 *Handbook*, for example listed 33 recreational clubs (excluding sport), whilst the *Handbook* of 1970 listed 50. Or maybe debating was just one of the many corporate activities which were bound to suffer as a result of the growing threat of graduate unemployment. Also, the central importance of debating to the political

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<sup>97</sup> Professor Neil MacCormick, seminar on *Student Politics*, (23rd May 1996), op. cit.

<sup>98</sup> Male (ordinary) arts graduate, 1973, from questionnaire.

clubs seems to have declined somewhat. Thus in 1975 the Labour Club temporarily withdrew from participation in union debates in order to concentrate on being purely a political institution,<sup>100</sup> whilst some of the newer and more radical political clubs steered clear of debating altogether - such as the Marxist Society, which explicitly stated in its *Handbook* entry that it was a non-debating society.<sup>101</sup>

In spite of its declining popularity, debating was still going strong in the 1980s. The 1984 *Handbook* reported that in the previous year the Dialectic Society had won the World Debating Championship in New Jersey and that regular lunch-time debates held in both unions had often attracted up to 250 people. In addition, in 1986 the female president of the Dialectic Society came fourth in the World Debating Championship in New York. So the tradition of debating was maintained right up until the present, even though its central importance to the political clubs may have lessened somewhat.

As a final word on the role of the political clubs, it should be noted that, as well as debating and organising Rectorial campaigns, the clubs pursued a variety of additional activities. They arranged for well-known MPs to come and speak at the University, organised discussion groups and also got involved in external activities, canvassing in both local and general elections, as the Labour Club minutes of the late 1960s and 1970s show. For instance in the 1971 municipal elections the Club helped to canvass in the nearby Woodside Ward for Albert Long and in the 1974

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<sup>99</sup> QM Union Board minutes, 10th November 1971, (DC 240/2/15).

<sup>100</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 20th November 1975.

<sup>101</sup> *Student Handbook*, 1968.

General Election canvassed in West Renfrewshire.<sup>102</sup> Many members of the Club are also recorded as being active in local Labour parties and in the Young Socialists and the Club also sent observers to the Scottish Labour Party Conference. Involvement in University politics could also be a stepping stone to a career in national politics. Two famous examples, from the Labour Club again, are John Smith, chairman of the Labour Club in 1959 who was adopted as prospective parliamentary candidate for East Fife in 1961 while still at University (he came second), and Donald Dewar, chairman of the Labour Club in 1961, who achieved a sensational victory at Aberdeen South in 1966. Another Labour example is Dick Mabon, MP for Greenock after being president of the University Labour Club in 1949. For the SNP, examples include Andrew Welsh, Iain MacCormick, Winnie Ewing and Margaret Bain - four 1970s MPs who were all ex-members of GUSNA. Further examples from the 1980s are given in R. Parry's *Scottish Political Facts*. He provides information on the educational backgrounds of Scotland's 72 MPs following the 1987 general election. Forty nine of these MPs had been to University and of these, 10 (9 men and 1 woman) had attended Glasgow University.<sup>103</sup> These are all well known cases; less startling but nonetheless important were former Club members who went on to serve on the Glasgow Corporation - such as Stewart Miller, former

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<sup>102</sup> Labour Club minutes, secretary's report 1971-72, (DC 329/1/1).

<sup>103</sup> Richard Parry, *Scottish Political Facts* (Edinburgh, 1988). The 10 MPs were Norman Buchan (Labour), Menzies Campbell (Liberal), Donald Dewar (Labour), Sam Galbraith (Labour), Charles Kennedy (SDP), David Lambie (Labour), John Smith (Labour), Andrew Welsh (SNP), Anthony Worthington (Labour) and Margaret Ewing, formerly Bain, (SNP).

vice chairman of the Labour Club who gained a municipal seat during the 1969-70 academic session.<sup>104</sup>

We have examined the activities of the mainstream political clubs on campus. In addition to these, there also existed other social-political clubs which reflected the wider national and international political climate. One example is the University's anti-apartheid group, which was important in the campaign for Winnie Mandela's Rectorial election. There also existed, at various points, an Anti-Nazi League, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), and groups of particular interest to women such as the Women's Liberation, anti-abortion and pro-life groups. Apart from the Women's Liberation group, these tended to be 'single issue' campaign groups which provided an important source of campus protest and discussion. In the type and timing of the groups formed, the University acted as a microcosm of society, as might be expected, reflecting national political trends. The role of some of the more important of these protest movements on campus will be examined next.

The transient nature of student populations meant that such clubs appeared and disappeared as successive generations of students passed through the system and also as the national importance of the particular movement increased or decreased. CND, for example, was mentioned in the 1960 *Handbooks* list of clubs as having been formed the previous year and this coincided with the contemporary media attention the Campaign was receiving as a result of the espousal of unilateralism by an important section of the Labour Party.<sup>105</sup> The University's CND branch was

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<sup>104</sup> Labour Club minutes, secretary's report 1969-70, (DC 329/1/1).

<sup>105</sup> Paul Byrne, *The Campaign For Nuclear Disarmament* (London, 1988), p. 48.

affiliated to the Combined Universities Nuclear Disarmament Council and took part in activities sponsored by the Council. The Club faded away in line with the national movement, but was back in the *Handbook* of 1975. The next mention of the club is in 1980 when the *Handbook* commented that last year the club had been “rescued from oblivion.” The club now claimed to have the “largest membership of any political club on campus,” and this corresponded to the resurgence of the national movement. Nineteen-eighty saw much CND activity with an EGM attended by 180 students voting for immediate unilateral disarmament and with two of the Rectorial candidates featuring nuclear disarmament in their campaigns (the Labour MP Robin Cook and Margo MacDonald), plus a ‘Week of Action’ reported in *Guardian* in January and a delegation of 200 Glasgow University students at a London march.<sup>106</sup> Two years later, the Club was still going strong and took part in what *Guardian* reported as the “largest demo against nuclear weapons ever seen in Scotland” against the siting of the Trident missile base on the Clyde.

Women have traditionally always been important in the CND and the peace movement generally (the Greenham Common women are amongst the best known examples), although it is impossible to tell how many of the members of Glasgow University’s CND group were women. But there was one group on campus which was firmly women-only. This was the Women’s Liberation group, formed in 1973 in the wake of the first national Women’s Liberation meeting in Oxford in 1970. The *Handbooks* 1975 entry on the group stated that it had been set up “at a time when campus discrimination against women was beginning to be realised” and just

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<sup>106</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 11th March 1980 & 5th November 1981.

as the national movement was seeking through so-called ‘consciousness raising groups’ to realise the extent of women’s inequality, so too the Glasgow University society was aiming to ‘raise the consciousness’ of its members to become aware of campus inequalities. The *Handbook* reported that its major campaign on campus since its formation had been for a crèche for the children of students and staff and it also claimed to be fighting against discrimination in faculty admission, as well as investigating and trying to improve the facilities available for women in the Student Health Service and Careers Service. These were its localised aims, but it shared with the national movement a desire to achieve the four basic demands of equal pay and opportunity; equal education; free, safe abortion and contraception; and free day-care for children.

The *Handbook* gave no figures of membership, so it is difficult to assess its impact. It seems unlikely, given the low membership of clubs generally, that it commanded a particularly large following. Nonetheless, irrespective of whether they were a member of the Women’s Liberation group or not, female students of the 1970s quite clearly had a greater awareness of inequality than their predecessors. Norms of behaviour which had previously been taken for granted were increasingly questioned and it is worth looking at how an awareness of feminism grew amongst successive generations of post-war female students. In the early post-war decades, female students seemed to regard feminism as no longer necessary, a view shared by most women in the country, since, in theory at least, women had achieved much equality with men. To quote from the QMU’s Twenty-fifth anniversary publication in 1957 “the rampant feminist has gone, too, having won her point, and we can

breathe a sigh of relief at both her victory and her passing.”<sup>107</sup> In the 1940s and 1950s there was a cult of femininity emphasised by the tight-waisted, long-skirted ‘New Look’ which university women were as keen to wear as any other women, and the 1950s was an inactive decade for women’s struggles.<sup>108</sup> The *QM Yearbook* of 1956 emphasised that in the Union “feminism is moribund; femininity still flourishes,” whilst a quote from a female student at Oxford University perhaps sums up the decade: “Oxford was going through a rather quiet period...looking back, I realise that we were indeed in between some of the great struggles. We did not have to be suffragettes and many rights had been won; and the later surge of Women’s Lib. was still only a twinkle in Germaine Greer’s eye.”<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, gender roles which would have seemed unacceptable to later generations of female students were accepted as the norm at this time, as the following comments illustrate. A 1956 female graduate who served on the Glasgow University Athletic Committee remembered that “women were in a minority on the committee and were, inevitably, expected to serve coffee to the male members. I did not have the courage to protest at this sexism!”<sup>110</sup> Similarly, a graduate involved in the student Conservative Society at St. Hilda’s College, Oxford recalled that “the convention...was that a female should be the Minutes Secretary. I inherited this job from another St. Hilda’s girl ... Feminism was not very strong ... Our generation failed to have enough sense of outrage, though it did exist; we failed to rebel enough. The aspirations of young

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<sup>107</sup> Jean Livingston in *GUQM College Twenty Five*, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>108</sup> See, for example, April Carter, *The Politics of Women’s Rights* (London, 1988), p. 14.

<sup>109</sup> Penny Griffin (ed.), *One Hundred Years of Women’s Education in Oxford* (London, 1986), p.177



women were still very limited.”<sup>111</sup> Interviews with female Glasgow graduates from this era add to the impression of feminism being a non-issue at this time. The question “did you feel at all disadvantaged, being a woman?” almost invariably met with the response “I never thought about it,” one graduate adding that “I’ve changed - in my late ‘forties I suddenly realised that women really *were* disadvantaged.”<sup>112</sup>

The 1960s began quietly too for feminism, although the student struggles and protests of the later 1960s have been seen as important creating more of an awareness of inequality in women. Campaigns over issues such as Vietnam tended to be very male dominated: “male chauvinism was common to all the student movements”<sup>113</sup> and participation in these protests by women could lead to indignation at their subservient role. One female student from Liverpool University remembered that her involvement in 1960s demonstrations involved “doing the womanly things like the duplicating, but I was never a speech maker or a leader in any sense, but again I think very few of the women were,”<sup>114</sup> and authors such as Martin Pugh have stressed the importance of these protest movements in the rise of feminism in the 1970s - he argues that “the new (feminist) movement found its recruiting grounds in the campaigns against nuclear weapons, the anti-Vietnam war

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<sup>110</sup> Female (honours) arts graduate, 1956, (letter to Deputy Archivist, 13th August 1992, courtesy of R. Ferguson).

<sup>111</sup> Celia Goodhart, “The Decade 1954-63” in Jane Mellanby (ed.), *The St. Hilda’s College Centenary Symposium: A Celebration of the Education of Women* (Oxford, 1993).p. 38.

<sup>112</sup> Interview with 1954 female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1st February 1995.

<sup>113</sup> Ronald Fraser, op. cit., p 304.

<sup>114</sup> Female 1960s graduate, *Bloody Students*, Radio 4 broadcast 20th June 1996.

agitations...participation in these heightened women's awareness of their own predicament."<sup>115</sup>

Thus the protest movements of the 1960s laid the path for the feminism of the 1970s. However, where Glasgow University is concerned, this influence should not be exaggerated since the extent of involvement in 1960s student protests was limited. Nonetheless, by the 1970s there are certainly many examples of increasing 'feminist' awareness among female students. An issue of particular importance, and one which was peculiar to Glasgow by the mid-seventies, was the existence of segregated unions. It was during the late 1960s and 1970s that segregation began to seem out of step with modern lifestyles, and the separate male and female unions were no longer greeted with the same unquestioning acceptance. In October 1969, *Guardian* questioned some female freshers on what they thought of their QM Union, and the most outstanding complaint was reported to be "why is there a need for a separate female union?"<sup>116</sup> And although a general meeting of the QMU at which between 2-300 were present in 1973 voted by two thirds to remain a female only institution, by 1977 the vote was closer and in 1979 the QMU finally ended segregation after much publicity and a campaign by the campus pressure group the Society for Equal and Improved Facilities (SEIF).<sup>117</sup>

The QMU was the last all-female union in Britain and arguably, the persistence of segregated social facilities gave Glasgow University a more 'sexist'

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<sup>115</sup> Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959* (London, 1992). See also J. Gelb, "Feminism in Britain: Politics without Power?" in D. Dahlerup, ed., *The New Women's Movement* (London, 1986).

<sup>116</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 23rd October 1969.

environment than many other universities, simply because segregation did not allow men and women to mix and integrate on equal terms. As a QM Board member commented in 1966 “the idea of men down the road, with their beer bar mystique, and women up the road in their tea-partyish atmosphere, splits the University up in every possible way. The attitude of men to women is of a completely social kind: when the two meet only on the dance floor, it is impossible for them to meet on equal terms.”<sup>118</sup> The other three ancient Scottish universities had abandoned segregation by the early 1970s: Aberdeen’s union went mixed as early as 1939, St. Andrews in 1964 and Edinburgh in 1972. Once the QMU had voted to admit men in 1979, the days of the all-male union were numbered, and it finally opened its doors to women in 1980.

To be fair, the tardiness of Glasgow’s unions to mix was perhaps not entirely a result of sexist or backward attitudes. Some students were clearly worried at overcrowding and this argument against mixing was sometimes put forward. Nonetheless it is remarkable that the unions remained unmixed for so long, especially once the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 had thrown their legality into question, and the persistence of segregation adds weight to the idea that the mass of students were conservative, or maybe just apathetic - lacking the will to fight for a change in the system. Indeed, the QM Board member quoted above, felt that the segregated unions contributed towards the apathy of the students, since the lack of centralisation meant there was no common centre where they could meet. Possibly,

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 1970s, *passim*.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, No. 4, 29th November 1966.

too, the fact that one third students had come from single sex schools meant that a significant proportion of students accepted segregated unions more easily. One also gets the sense that some students wished to preserve separate unions simply because Glasgow was unique, and this uniqueness should therefore be maintained. This attitude certainly seems to have been prominent among some of the male anti-mixers. Indeed, the men, or at least a significant proportion of them, appear to have been more conservative over the issue than the women, reluctantly abandoning their 'gentleman's club' when their hand was forced by the QMU's decision to mix.

It is also interesting to note that once the two unions had mixed, the GUU<sup>119</sup> continued to be seen as a more conservative place than the QM; a perception which remains in place today. This difference between the two unions can be illustrated by an event in 1981, which was the year the QM gained its first male president, a well-known homosexual on campus. It is highly unlikely that he could have been elected as GUU president, and the *Express* reported of the "disquiet in GUU at the election of a self-confessed homosexual president of QMU."<sup>120</sup> An analysis by *Guardian* of the November 1981 SRC elections also highlights the point in more explicitly political terms: "the liberally-minded QMU provided the basis for much of the Labour support, while the GUU remains forever the bastion of more conservative politics, this time opting for the centrist Lib/SDP Alliance."<sup>121</sup> Also in 1981, *Guardian* noted that after the initial temporary imbalance in union membership caused by the mixing issue, more and more students were joining the GUU, which

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<sup>119</sup> The Men's Union became known as the GUU after mixing.

<sup>120</sup> *The Express*, 20th May 1981.

now had 6,000 members, and it saw this as evidence that “more students are settling to the complacency and political non-involvement of the GUU.”<sup>122</sup> However, this is a complicated issue, there were no doubt other factors involved in students joining the GUU - for instance, appearances: QM looked “shabby, modern and dreary.”<sup>123</sup> Nonetheless, the persistent conservatism of the GUU cannot be denied and it continued to lag behind much current opinion in the 1980s. As late as 1984 the University Court finally felt it had to intervene to stop the showing of pornographic films in the GUU,<sup>124</sup> and the Union also consistently assumed an anti-gay stance, refusing to allow the University’s GaySoc to affiliate to the Union. The GUU president was reported in the *Guardian* as saying: “we don’t want a squad of poofs in our Union. There’s room enough for that sort at the QM.”<sup>125</sup>

Gay activists picketed the GUU in protest at the Board of Management’s persistent refusal to allow GaySoc to affiliate. But there were also pickets organised, primarily by female students, over the issue of strip shows which, despite being banned more than once by the Union Board in the 1970s, still re-appeared at intervals in the Men’s Union throughout the decade. This issue provides a further example of both the perceived sexism which separate unions could foster (strip shows would have been unlikely in a mixed union) and also a refusal by women students to tolerate what they perceived as offensive behaviour. Indeed, the 1970s can be seen as a decade in which sexist and/or intolerant attitudes towards women

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<sup>121</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 19th November 1981.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* 22nd October 1981.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* 2nd October 1986.

<sup>124</sup> Minutes of Court 1983-84, 21st March 1984.

actually worsened. In an interview in 1978 in the *Guardian*, Sue Slipman, President of the NUS, suggested that the women's movement was stagnating and hinted at a sexist backlash by men. She cited sexist student rag mags, the re-appearance of strip shows at student unions and the wearing by some male students of "I am sexist and proud of it" badges as evidence of this.<sup>126</sup> Certainly the Men's Union at Glasgow seems to bear this assessment out, the strip shows being supplemented later by the showing of pornographic films, nicknamed the 'Freds.'<sup>127</sup> In addition, the titles of two debates held in Scottish universities in the 1970s are perhaps worth noting. In Aberdeen an inter-university debate was held in 1976 to discuss the motion that "this house believes that women should be barefoot, pregnant and in the kitchen,"<sup>128</sup> and in 1977 another inter-University debate held in the Men's Union at Glasgow considered the motion "that wife beating is a right and not a crime."<sup>129</sup> It is interesting to note, however, that women protesting over sexist forms of male entertainment did not always see themselves as Women's Libbers. A female student interviewed for *The Daily Express* during a 1976 protest of between 50 and 100 students against strip shows in the Men's Union commented "we are not a Women's Liberation group, but we object strongly to this kind of thing."<sup>130</sup> This quote implies that some women, whilst campaigning under the banner of 'feminist' issues were at the same time anxious to distance themselves from the bra-burning image associated

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<sup>125</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 11th February 1982.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 11th March, 1978.

<sup>127</sup> So-called because the pornographic films were shown interspersed with Tom and Jerry cartoons, created by Fred Quimby.

<sup>128</sup> QM Union Board minutes, 6th October 1976, (DC 240/2/18).

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 26th January 1977.

with the international women's movement. It also shows that those protesting at sexism in the Men's Union were not necessarily involved in or in favour of the campus Women's Liberation group.

Although these protests provide clear evidence of a desire by female students to stamp out activities which were regarded as demeaning to women, it is difficult to draw a direct comparison with the early post-war decades and argue that these protests showed 1970s women to be more 'feminist.' The introduction of strippers and the 'Fred's' did not take place until the 1970s, so no equivalent situation was present in the 1940s, 1950s or 1960s. However, evidence of a greater feminist awareness is clearly indicated if one takes a look at the minute books of the QM Board which by the 1970s show a new desire to stamp out inequality and to address women's issues. For instance, in 1975, the QMU President declined to judge the Charities Queen competition, a move wholly approved by the SRC who congratulated the Board on its decision. Instead, the QMU held a drag queen competition the following year! Also in 1976, the QMU was unsure whether to allow the Christian Union to book the QMU Common Room because its constitution stated that the president had to be a man and in the same year, the Board gave their support to a female student who had apparently assaulted a Board member of the Men's Union when she was asked to leave the all-male Beer Bar. The Board also arranged family planning talks, arranged for the National Abortion Campaign to hold a meeting in 1975 and recommended to the SRC that a crèche be set up.<sup>131</sup> It is

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<sup>130</sup> *The Daily Express*, 15th May 1976, (Acc. 27/24).

<sup>131</sup> QM Union Board minutes 1970s, *passim*.

important to note, though, that the QM Board were possibly not typical of the female student population as a whole, perhaps tending to be more 'radical' than the mass of women students, certainly by the 1970s. The campaign by the QMU Board over the Alton Bill, right at the end of the period under discussion in 1987, provides a good example. The QMU held two EGM's within two weeks to debate the Bill, but failed to get the two-thirds majority necessary to mandate the QMU in opposition to it, although the Board itself had already voted their own opposition to the Bill and had banned all pro-life literature from the union building.<sup>132</sup>

Towards the end of the 1970s, the national women's movement was seen to be losing momentum somewhat. Setbacks included more amendments to the 1967 Abortion Act and the disarray at the United Nations Conference on women (which broke down over political issues).<sup>133</sup> Nonetheless, at Glasgow University, there seems, if anything to have been more activity on women's issues in the 1980s. The Women's Liberation group was resurrected as the Women's Group in 1980 and pursued an active campaign against the 'Fred's' and the sexist material appearing in the GUU Broadsheet. The group managed to get several representatives on the SRC in 1984 and a Women's Committee of the SRC was set up in the 'eighties. This Committee campaigned over issues such as better lighting on campus and the provision of bus services to and from the unions to halls of residence late at night.

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<sup>132</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 17th December 1987. In addition, of the large membership which the campus Pro-Life Group, (formed 1976), claimed to have in the 1982 edition of the *Student Handbook*, there were stated to be more women members than men, further evidence that a significant number of women adopted a more "conservative" approach over abortion than the QM Board. (Much of the Pro-Life support undoubtedly came from Catholic women).

<sup>133</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 11th November 1980.



The Committee also attempted to introduce a full time Women's Officer on campus, but this failed by one vote. The women's slate on the SRC were even able to get tabloids banned from SRC shops because they were "offensive to women," but the *Guardian* editorial felt that this was taking things too far arguing that "students can decide for themselves," and the tabloids were soon returned to the shelves.<sup>134</sup>

The 1980s, with the advent of mixed unions, also had important consequences for women in terms of student government, since they could now stand for GUU Board positions and men could likewise stand for election to the QMU Board. This situation brought to the surface tensions and arguments over what the gender policies of the respective Boards should be. A letter appearing in *Guardian* in 1982 complained of the QMU's policy of positive discrimination which, although men could compete for Board positions, reserved six board seats for women. In spite of this guarantee of adequate female representation, some women were still worried at the apparent take-over of the QMU Board by men. The first male QMU president took office in the 1981-82 session and the next two presidents were also male. A concerned Women's Group held a female only meeting in 1982 on the issue of "did we mix this union just to hand over power to men?"<sup>135</sup> Neither did women do as well as the men at QMU, in terms of getting representatives onto the GUU Board. Few female students stood for election and although a woman ran for the presidency in 1985, she was unsuccessful. A sprinkling of Board positions were obtained

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<sup>134</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 1980s, *passim*.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 13th January 1982.

though, for example, in 1982 the only two women standing were voted onto the Board with large majorities.

To sum up the impact of second wave feminism and women's issues on campus in the 1970s and 1980s, it can be said that whilst there was certainly greater awareness of many forms of inequality - everything from exclusion from the Men's Union to the sexist constitutions of some university clubs - it also seems to have been the case that those actively campaigning for equal opportunities and better facilities for women were always in a minority. The Women's Group in 1984 had only about 100 members according the *Handbook* and although evidence from the QMU minutes and the demonstrations reported in the *Guardian* show feminist awareness, it is important not to over-emphasise activities which, although recorded in the sources, probably touched the mass of students very little. It is often as significant to note what the sources *do not* say as much as what they do. Thus the *Guardian* of the 1970s and 1980s features very few articles on women's inequality and few letters of complaint at the 'sexist' activities in the GUU. In addition, female students did not appear to use their vote very well when voting for their representative on the Court, the Rector. Despite higher female polls at Rectorial elections, women did not vote for women candidates and, more particularly, did not vote for those female candidates who campaigned on a platform of specifically looking at the position of female students. The impression gained is that feminist activity at Glasgow University was, on the one hand the preserve of an active minority, and on the other, slightly behind the national and international women's movement. Thus the Glasgow University Women's Liberation group was formed

three years later than the national one<sup>136</sup> and photographs of pretty students were still appearing in the *Guardian* - such as the “freshest fresher of the year”<sup>137</sup> in the year, 1968, in which American women were protesting at the Miss America contest.<sup>138</sup>

We have seen how female students, and indeed sympathetic male colleagues, demonstrated against objectionable GUU entertainments. Some analysis must also be made of wider campus demonstrations and the sort of political issues that caused concern and anger amongst students in the post-war period. Glasgow was never at the forefront of radical activity, but there were issues which aroused student interest. Of particular note during the 1950s were the two issues of Hungary and Suez. The Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 united students in condemnation and produced the “finest spontaneous display of student opinion seen by this generation of Glasgow students” with “outstanding” attendances at debates over the issue. Collections were organised for the Red cross in Hungary and soon the impressive sum of £4,724 had been raised. This was also the year in which Glasgow students could be seen literally fighting in the streets over the Suez crisis outside the Men’s Union, the President of the Labour Club holding a meeting over the issue in the midst of the battle on a traffic island. There was also an attempt by several students to throw the Communist Club president into the river Kelvin.<sup>139</sup>

Such scenes of violence make the 1960s look rather tame by comparison, and although the last years of this decade saw much student unrest elsewhere, Glasgow

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<sup>136</sup> And also two years later than the Women’s Liberation group at Aberdeen University, which might perhaps be expected to lag behind Glasgow; see M<sup>c</sup>Laren, op cit.

<sup>137</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 17th October, 1968.

<sup>138</sup> David Caute, *Sixty-Eight: the Year of the Barricades* (London, 1988), p. 237.

remained quiet. Whilst in January 1969 events at the LSE culminated in its closure sparking off large sit-ins at Essex and Cambridge, in Glasgow the Socialist Society organised a small symbolic occupation of the Adam Smith Building over-night which did not even make headline news in the *Guardian*.<sup>140</sup> The *Evening Times* reported that “it was the sit-in that fell flat” with a group of 150 students initially dwindling to only 2 by the following morning.<sup>141</sup> Nonetheless, some students did take part in demonstrations against the Vietnam war, an issue which mobilised massive anti-American support throughout the whole of Europe at this time. For instance in 1968 Glasgow University students travelled to London for a Vietnam Solidarity Campaign demonstration.<sup>142</sup> But even at this time of massive country-wide protest over Vietnam the conservatism of many of Glasgow’s students manifested itself. For 1968 was also the year in which Tariq Ali, prominent leader of the national anti-Vietnam campaign, was shouted down when he came to speak in the Men’s Union,<sup>143</sup> and the *Guardian* responded somewhat censoriously to more vigorous protest movements at other universities. The paper called the actions of Cambridge students in 1968, who had attempted to overturn a car carrying the Labour Defence secretary, Denis Healey, a “display of violence and gross discourtesy...by the rowdies of Cambridge University.”<sup>144</sup> However, attitudes expressed by the *Guardian* must be treated with caution, since the paper was always

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<sup>139</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 2, No. 6, 9th November 1956.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 19, No. 6, 30th January 1969.

<sup>141</sup> *The Evening Times*, 31st January 1969, (News cuttings 47993).

<sup>142</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 5th November 1968.

<sup>143</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 18th October, 1968, (News cuttings 47992).

<sup>144</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 18, No. 10, March 1968.

run by a very few students and reflected the views of this minority. The change from right wing to left wing editors from year to year could change the image the paper projected quite considerably, and the editorial comment on Cambridge students quoted above came from a year in which the editor was Ross M<sup>c</sup>Kay, who was the leading light of the campus National Front group and unlikely to have much sympathy with left-wing inspired student protests. Somewhat paradoxically, therefore, in the year of international socialist-led student unrest, *Guardian* projected a particularly right wing and conservative image.

Nevertheless, left-wing organised protests over contemporary issues of concern continued throughout the decade. There was quite a large turn-out of about 350 students for a demonstration against the Government's decision to increase overseas students' fees in February 1967.<sup>145</sup> Jack Straw sees this attack on overseas students as especially important: "if there was a single incident which radicalised students against the government, it was the overseas student fees issue."<sup>146</sup> There was also a sit-in, large by Glasgow standards, over the issue of secret files in 1970.<sup>147</sup> All these demonstrations were responses to external events and similar demonstrations were taking place at universities all over Britain. Some activity by Glasgow students is unremarkable. What is more remarkable, is the almost total

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<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 17, No. 8, 28th February 1967.

<sup>146</sup> Quoted in Ronald Fraser, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>147</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 20, No. 9, 5th March 1970. The secret files issue occurred over revelations at Warwick University that the University authorities were keeping secret files on the political activities of students.

lack of protest over the ‘banned students’ affair of 1965.<sup>148</sup> Interestingly, a student interviewed concerning the event by *New Society* commented that “you’d have had a real riot if people in the Union had been suspended.”<sup>149</sup> This implies that at least part of the reason why so few students seemed to care was because of the low standing in which the SRC was held, as observed earlier.

Student protest in the 1970s and 1980s often tended to be associated with the campaign for higher grants and the repeated cuts in the level of funding for higher education. The SRC was vigorous in organising protests and these were often well-attended by Glasgow students. In 1974 *Guardian* reported on the “large Glasgow University contingent under the SRC banner and headed by Jimmy Reid” which took part in the “biggest ever” grants demo in Glasgow, whilst in 1981 a successful ‘work-in’ in the Adam Smith Library forced the Court to re-open it in the evenings. Also in 1981, an estimated 5,000 students and staff marched from the QM Union to Strathclyde University in protest at the Government’s proposed education cuts and similar demonstrations continued throughout the 1980s.<sup>150</sup> In actual fact the 1980s seem, in terms of student protest and demonstrations, to have been the most active decade at Glasgow University.

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<sup>148</sup> This was a disciplinary case which proved highly embarrassing for the University involving the suspension of six students serving on the SRC after an investigation into the harassment of a female clerk who worked for the SRC and who had been receiving abusive letters and phone calls. One student admitted his part in the affair, the remaining five appealed to the University Court. The Court eventually pronounced that nine of the charges had been found “not to have been established” and the students were allowed back to university. The most famous of the students involved was Tom Marr, the SRC secretary, and the affair became known as the “Marr case.”

<sup>149</sup> *New Society*, 10th February 1966.

<sup>150</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, 14th February, 1974, 3rd December, 1981 and 5th November, 1981.

Many of the grant demonstrations were organised by the NUS, and although Glasgow University took part in these, it always remained outside of the Union and was the only British university never to affiliate. Referendums on the issue in 1974 and 1985 produced a consistently high anti-NUS vote, 66% and 68% respectively, voting against affiliation, and the most frequent reason cited for this stance was the high affiliation fee.<sup>151</sup> However, some students were also put off by the left wing NUS leadership in the 1970s. A *Glasgow Herald* article on the affiliation issue in Scotland in 1976 also suggested that devolutionary sentiments may “in greater or less degree” have contributed towards anti-NUS feelings, but continued that “organised nationalism has played little part at most universities.”<sup>152</sup> In addition, the longer Glasgow University remained disaffiliated, with no especially adverse consequences, the less reason there seemed to join and non-membership came to be something of a tradition to be preserved.<sup>153</sup> “Non-membership of NUS is one of those revered Glasgow traditions, like the previous all-male and independent stance of the GUU, which Glasgow students strive to retain largely because it is a tradition,” observed the *Handbook* in 1982. Thus the student population at Glasgow can be seen as both isolationist and parochial, a situation which one of its students, in a letter to the *Glasgow Herald*, saw as being the result of the largely local student

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<sup>151</sup> Initially, the Scottish universities had developed their own union - the Scottish Union of Students (SUS), set up in 1947, of which Glasgow University was a member until increasing dissatisfaction with the way the union was run had led it to disaffiliate in 1962. The SUS had collapsed in financial disorder in the early 1970s and so its role in Scotland was taken over by the NUS which had a Scottish office in Edinburgh and a full-time Scottish president.

<sup>152</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 22nd September 1976, (Acc 242/2/62).

<sup>153</sup> The NUS did impose some penalties for non-affiliation. Glasgow University was refused permission to send observers to the annual conference and its debating teams were banned from

population: “there is surely a connection between Glasgow University being the only British university outside the NUS and the abnormally high number of students there living at home,” he argued, concluding that Glasgow was a “parochial sausage-machine.”<sup>154</sup> Significantly, this provoked letters of complaint from other students who stated that it was the left-wing dominated clique of the NUS which was the cause of their anti-NUS stance.<sup>155</sup>

The non-affiliation of Glasgow University to the NUS sets the University apart from all other Scottish and British universities, as does the University’s maintenance of separate unions until very recently. It could be argued that these factors show the University to be a conservative institution, and other indicators - such as the lack of political protest on campus in the 1960s and the small proportion of students involved in political societies - seem to back this up. In addition, occasional surveys of student opinion carried out by the *Guardian* tend to reinforce impressions of conservatism. In particular, two polls, both conducted in 1968, give an idea of student thinking on two important social issues. The first concerned attitudes towards marriage and cohabitation and found that whilst the idea of marriage was very popular, the idea of co-habitation was less so, 59% of men in the survey and 92% of women saying that they would not co-habit (so women seemed more conservative on this issue).<sup>156</sup> The second survey concerned attitudes towards the

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taking part in the ‘Observer Mace’ debating competition, which the NUS organised, for several years.

<sup>154</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 27th April 1974.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 1st May 1974.

<sup>156</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 18, No. 8, February 1968.



pill and took place in the wake of the Muggeridge affair.<sup>157</sup> It found that 66% of students questioned thought that the pill should not be made available through the Student Health Service.<sup>158</sup> These two surveys together suggest that, certainly at Glasgow anyway, students tended to have traditional and conservative attitudes. They also show that they did not conform to the images of permissiveness they were often labelled with by the media, but in this their opinions were in line with the attitudes of young people generally. As Jane Lewis has pointed out: “during the 1960s, attitude surveys showed young people to be much more conservative in their ideas about sex and marriage than press reports about ‘promiscuity and the pill’ indicated.”<sup>159</sup>

As already suggested, probably the most important factor in the apparent conservatism of Glasgow’s students was the non-residential nature of the University. For many students, going to university was more akin to an extension of school than anything else. They continued to live at home and attended the university on a 9-to-5 basis, their apathy towards extra-curricular activities no doubt reinforcing conservative attitudes. Although the University did become somewhat less locally based in recent decades, the shift was perhaps not large enough to have a great impact on political behaviour and attitudes and may have been counter-balanced by the threat of unemployment and the consequent need to get a good degree.

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<sup>157</sup> Muggeridge, Rector of Edinburgh University, had expressed his disagreement with the Edinburgh SRC’s decision to make available supplies of the pill to students through the Student Health Service. This led to a bitter attack on him by the Edinburgh student newspaper, as well as discussion of the pill by Glasgow’s SRC.

<sup>158</sup> *Glasgow University Guardian*, Vol. 18, No. 7, 8th February 1968.

<sup>159</sup> Jane Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945* (Oxford, 1992).

Nonetheless, the stubbornness of the student population in defying national trends over issues such as NUS affiliation suggests a degree of ‘radicalism’ of a sort amongst the student body, in the sense of behaving in a distinctively different way from other institutions. And however uninvolved in politics and political issues the majority of students may have been, we should not forget the “strong, often angry, university-minded group” quoted at the beginning of the chapter from the *Observer’s* 1966 supplement on universities. These were the students that took part in the proud debating tradition, who were involved in the political clubs, who campaigned for Rectors and participated in all the other political movements on campus. They were always a minority, but a very active one. In general, they were probably more radical than the student population as a whole - thus the SRC on several occasions attempted to affiliate the University to the NUS and, as mentioned above, the QMU Board was more radical than the mass of its the members over the abortion issue raised by the Alton Bill in 1987.

The period covered spans enormous changes in the whole tenor and aspect of student life and the nature of student politics reflected many of these changes. We have seen, for example, how, on the one hand, the SRC became more political in its activities and how on the other, Rectorial elections became significantly *less* political. There were changes too, in the fortunes of the political clubs. In the 1950s the Conservatives were the most popular party, but gradually from the 1960s their dominance was replaced by that of Labour. The far left also came to be important; numerically they never commanded a great deal of support, but they were usually to be found at the forefront of any protest movements, in organising, for example, the

1969 occupation of the Adam Smith Building. The prominent role of SocSocs in spearheading protest was repeated at other universities and seems to indicate a trend across the board for politically active students to become more left-wing than previous generations of students in the 1940s and 1950s had been. The nature of protest changed, too. The classic period of the student 'sit-in,' in the later 1960s and early 1970s over student rights and representation, from which Glasgow did not suffer greatly but was not totally immune, was replaced in the later 1970s and 1980s by protests over bread and butter issues - the falling real value of grants in particular.

As a whole, the political clubs do not seem to have increased their importance in the University, the numbers involved in them remaining small and not even keeping pace with the expansion in student numbers. It was no doubt the case that these clubs suffered, along with many other University activities, from the worsening economic situation in the 1970s and 1980s which caused students to worry more about job prospects and passing exams rather than sparkling careers as 'corporate lifers.' An article in the *Glasgow Herald* in 1984 reflected on the phenomenon of student apathy in the context of the lack-lustre Rectorial campaign of that year and observed that the numbers voting in SRC elections had also taken a nose-dive in recent years. In explaining why, the article commented that this phenomenon was not a result of students suddenly becoming uninterested in politics: "how could they at a time when the effects of Government cutbacks are in evidence all around them? Quite simply - and paradoxically - these cutbacks and the general

economic climate they engender have panicked many students into abandoning all extracurricular activity in pursuit of a 'good degree.'"<sup>160</sup>

As far as women in the University are concerned, evidence from the SRC suggests that they did not occupy as prominent a position in student government as their increasing numbers and proportion within the University might suggest. In particular, they tended to be under-represented in the SRC once female-only seats were abandoned in the late 1960s, and they seldom reached the top post of President. However, from 1970 onwards, women always managed to get at least one representative onto the SRC executive although it was not until the 1980s that they managed to organise sufficiently for a women's slate to be returned onto the SRC. It is hard to judge if women became more important in the political clubs, no gender breakdown of membership being available. But they became president and secretary of the clubs more often by the 1970s, suggesting a higher profile. In general, it seems that there existed in all decades a hard-core of committed women active in politics, just as there was a hard-core of men who were similarly involved. The same names crop up again and again in the *Guardian* of men and women who were involved in the SRC, the political clubs and debates. Nonetheless, by the 1970s, it is clear that the larger numbers of women on campus, combined with a heightened awareness of inequality, had an important effect on behaviour. It was the QM Union which took the initiative over the mixing issue and it was the mainly female protests which drew attention to the strip shows and the 'Fred's' in the Men's Union.

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<sup>160</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 21st February 1984.

In many ways the atmosphere on campus was far more political in the later decades than it had been in the 1940s and 1950s. Norms of behaviour which had once been accepted unquestioningly were increasingly challenged and the campus came to reflect new influences of feminism and political correctness. The 'Charities Queen' was by the 1980s a 'Charities Personality,' whilst, also in the 1980s, the traditional University Song Book was branded racist and withdrawn from sale.<sup>161</sup> Traditional political activities, such as the Rectorial election and debating, had declined in importance, but the influence of politics was felt more strongly in everyday life, a situation illustrated, above all, by the enormous change in the type and range of activities undertaken by the SRC.

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<sup>161</sup> *The Scotsman*, 6th May 1983.

## Graduate Careers

According to Shirley Cunningham, Scottish girls have fallen heir to two contrasting traditions: the academic, democratic tradition of Scottish education, but also the conservative role of women. “Reputedly, the Scottish attitude to its womenfolk is conservative if not bordering on the Victorian” Cunningham has observed in her 1970s thesis on the entry of girls to higher education.<sup>1</sup> She quotes the author Naomi Mitchison, who felt that “any woman who has worked in any kind of field in Scotland after working in England (or indeed in many other countries, including India and most parts of Africa) will be aware of this curious, deep anti-feminism.”<sup>2</sup> This anecdotal assessment is backed up by more tangible evidence provided by Arthur M’Ivor in his chapter on women for the collection *Scotland in the Twentieth Century*. He cites the existence of a more marked occupational segregation in Scotland than in England and wider gender wage differentials as being among the “fragmentary evidence (which) suggests that Scottish society was more patriarchal than English society at the beginning of the twentieth century and that despite some convergence it remains so at the end of the twentieth century.”<sup>3</sup>

What effect, if any, did this apparently patriarchal society have on the careers of female graduates? Graduates formed, after all, a small elite within Scottish society, and it might be expected that their high level of educational attainment would enable them to overcome any conservative or “anti-feminist”

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<sup>1</sup> Shirley M. Cunningham, *The Entry of Girls to Higher Education - A Scottish Perspective*, unpublished PhD thesis (University of Aberdeen, 1978), p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195. We have already noted in a previous chapter the comment made by Glasgow councillor Janey Buchan, who described Scotland in 1974 as “a real male chauvinist pig of a country,” *The Scotsman*, 17th May 1974. (See Chapter 4, *Student Politics*).

attitudes regarding the employment of women. But did they, in fact, find it harder to get good jobs than their counterparts in England? And did those women who chose to leave Scotland gain better jobs than those who remained at home?

Evidence from Glasgow University Appointments Committee and from the Graduate Database certainly suggests that female graduates were not above being discriminated against and falling victim to employer suspicion or resistance, certainly in the immediate post-war decades. This chapter will highlight some of the difficulties women faced in getting good Scottish jobs. It will suggest that the consistently higher proportion of Glasgow female graduates absorbed by the teaching profession compared to the average for the UK was partly a consequence of the reluctance of Scottish business to take on women.

Of equal, if not greater significance, however, in influencing the kind of careers female graduates entered was the changing structure of the West of Scotland economy. Opportunities in industry, particularly heavy industry, became less plentiful as the transition to a “post industrial” society was accompanied by a contraction of the region’s traditional manufacturing base. Scotland also possessed a consistently smaller service sector than that which existed in England and this also served to limit the scope of graduate career choice.<sup>4</sup>

This chapter will explore both the regional and societal influences which affected graduate career patterns, using quantitative evidence based largely on the

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<sup>3</sup> Arthur McIvor, “Gender Apartheid?: Women in Scottish Society,” in T.M. Devine and R.J. Finlay, *Scotland in the Twentieth Century* (Edinburgh, 1996), p. 205.

<sup>4</sup> See for example, Peter L. Payne, “The Economy,” in T.M. Devine and R.J. Finlay, *ibid.*, p. 23. Payne defines the service sector as being: distribution, hotels and catering; transport and communications; tourism, financial and business services; public administration and defence, and education and health.

Graduate Database to examine these trends. Glasgow University, like most universities, produced annual statistics on the first destination of its graduates, but these statistics are flawed and the benefit of the Graduate Database is that it provides career information by gender for the entire period 1940-84.<sup>5</sup> The database also provides complete career histories, so changes and developments in career can be charted.<sup>6</sup> These developments in career path will be examined in more detail later. Initially, however, the first job undertaken by Glasgow's graduates will be examined and the impact of gender and degree subject upon early career assessed.

It should be noted at the outset that figures have not been shown for the vocational degrees - notably divinity, law, dentistry, medicine and veterinary medicine. This is because graduates studying for any of these degrees overwhelmingly entered the profession they were training for. For example in the 1940-61 cohort, 9 out of 10 female law graduates entered the legal profession and 7 out of 10 of the men (those male law graduates who did not take up a legal career mostly entered the financial sector as trainee chartered accountants). Of those graduates who studied medicine, only one of the graduates in the sample who entered employment did not enter the health sector upon graduation.

It should also be noted that there is an important distinction to be made between those graduates who went straight into employment and those who embarked upon some form of postgraduate degree or training first. These two

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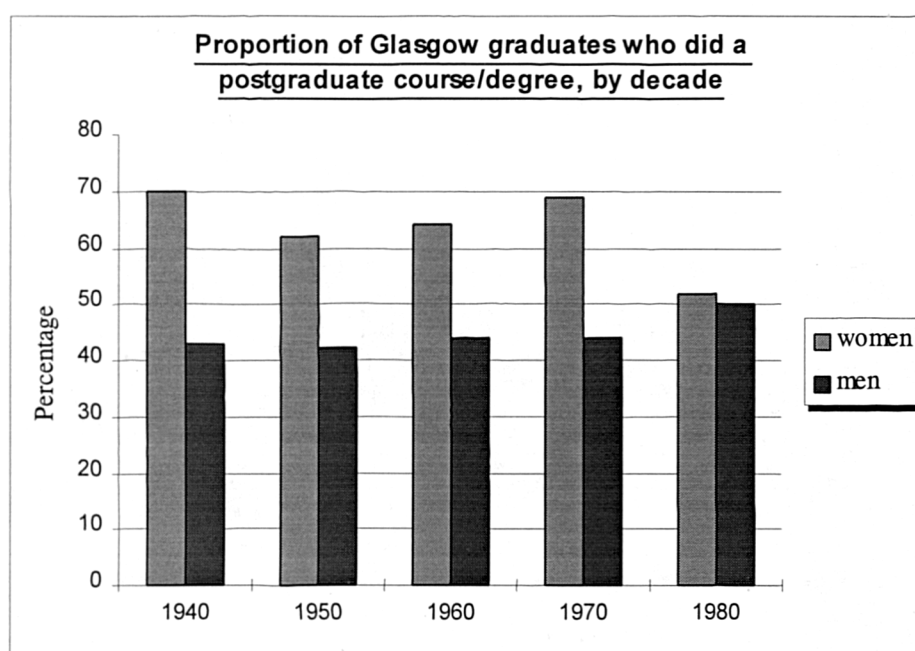
<sup>5</sup> The annual reports of the University Appointments Committee have been destroyed for most of the 1960s. From 1972 onwards, the reports treat men and women together and no gender breakdown is possible.

<sup>6</sup> Snapshot career information was recorded by the survey at ten yearly intervals. Graduates were asked for their first job on leaving university and then for subsequent jobs 10, 20, 30



groups have been treated separately in the tables which follow since those graduates who undertook postgraduate work before taking up employment formed such an important proportion of the total graduates in each year. The importance of further study after graduation is shown clearly in figure 5.1 below, which shows the proportion of Glasgow graduates who completed a postgraduate course in selected years from 1940 to 1980.

**Figure 5.1<sup>7</sup>**



**Source:** Glasgow University Appointments Committee reports & Graduate Database

It can be seen from figure 5.1 that although there are some fluctuations from decade to decade, a consistent 60% or more of female graduates went on to

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and 40 years later. (Career histories for graduates from the 1970s and 1980s are inevitably less complete). For further details of the survey, see appendix.

<sup>7</sup> The figures for 1940-1970 are taken from the annual reports of Glasgow University's Appointments Committee. For 1980, the figures are taken from the Graduate Database (since the Appointments Committee reports no longer separated men and women in their statistics).

further education or training in every decade, except for the 1980s - when the proportion had dropped to just over half. And while postgraduate work was generally less important for men, it nonetheless absorbed over 40% of male graduates in every decade. Comparison with other universities shows that elsewhere the general trend seems to have been towards a higher rate of postgraduate study in the immediate post-war years, followed by a decline in more recent decades. D.I. Greenstein notes that at Oxford, over one third of graduates were doing postgraduate work (not including research degrees), as early as the 1930s<sup>8</sup> whilst Judith Hubback found in the 1950s that one third of her sample of married female graduates possessed a teacher training qualification, and a further 12% had followed a secretarial course. She observed that:

“parents are becoming increasingly aware that a degree by itself will not be an immediate passport to a good job. They have to envisage paying for a further period of training which will give their daughter a professional qualification, without which she will, in most cases, be unable to reap the full financial benefit of a degree.”<sup>9</sup>

More recently, University Grants Committee *First Destination* figures (which begin in 1961) show that by the 1970s, the trend for postgraduate study in the UK as a whole was going downwards, and continued downwards in the 1980s.<sup>10</sup> They show that whilst in 1961 over half of female UK graduates and almost 40% of male UK graduates followed a postgraduate course, by 1980 under a third of female and under a quarter of male graduates were doing so. In contrast, at

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In cases where graduates did an arts degree followed by a law degree, the law degree has not been classed as a postgraduate degree.

<sup>8</sup> D.I. Greenstein, “The Junior Members, 1900-1990: A Profile,” in Brian Harrison, (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford Vol. VIII The Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1994), p.71.

<sup>9</sup> Judith Hubback, *Wives who went to College* (London, 1957), p. 21.

Glasgow University postgraduate study seems to have become more important in the 1980s for men - with a rise to 50%, and although there had been a substantial drop from the 1970 figure for women, nonetheless, just over half of female graduates were still opting for postgraduate courses.

We will examine some reasons why Glasgow retained a persistently higher rate of entry to postgraduate courses later in the chapter. For now we will begin with some tables which show the first career destinations of Glasgow's graduates, sub-divided into those who did a postgraduate degree and those who did not, to give an overview of the kinds of employment sectors they initially went into. As well as treating undergraduates and postgraduates separately, the tables divide Glasgow's graduates by gender, degree subject (arts and science) and are split into two broad cohorts, 1940-61 and 1962-84. In addition, the figures are disaggregated further to show ordinary and honours graduates separately, since it was expected that whether or not a graduate had completed the three year ordinary or four years honours degree might well have an impact on career choice.

The tables group graduate employment into broad sectors - such as education and industry - and the discussion which follows deals with each employment sector in turn, beginning with the most important sector (which was education). Employment hierarchies (or the type of employment a graduate performed within a particular sector) are then considered. A more in-depth examination of female graduate employment trends (using data relating to marriage and children) is then undertaken. Finally, relationships between some

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<sup>10</sup> UGC, *First Employment of University Graduates 1961-62* (London, 1963) and *First*

of the variables considered - such as social background and career choice - are examined to see what links there are between them and what patterns can be identified.

**Table 5.1<sup>11</sup>**  
**First job of Glasgow ordinary MA graduates (%)**

	Postgraduates				Non-postgraduates			
	1940-61		1962-84		1940-61		1962-84	
	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>
Schools	79%	76%	64%	50%	68%	47%	20%	23%
Higher Education	0%	0%	1%	5%	0%	5%	0%	5%
<i>(Total Education)</i>	<i>(79%)</i>	<i>(76%)</i>	<i>(65%)</i>	<i>(55%)</i>	<i>(68%)</i>	<i>(52%)</i>	<i>(20%)</i>	<i>(28%)</i>
Public Administration	8%	2%	10%	13%	14%	5%	20%	14%
Industry	9%	5%	10%	16%	7%	11%	13%	18%
Commerce	1%	5%	9%	5%	7%	11%	33%	18%
Finance	0%	12%	1%	11%	0%	21%	0%	18%
Health	1%	0%	3%	0%	4%	0%	13%	0%
Forces/Police	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>2%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>5%</u>
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N=	126	41	107	48	46	39	40	44

<sup>11</sup> The sectoral categories were divided as follows:-

**Schools:** nursery, primary and secondary teaching, plus other types of employment in schools (secretary, librarian etc.).

**Higher Education:** university and college lecturers and researchers, research institute workers, plus other types of employment in higher education (administrator, student welfare officer etc.).

**Public Administration:** civil servants; local government; post office; British Telecom; public bodies (e.g. Citizens' Advice Bureaux);

**Industry:** miscellaneous industries (e.g. food, printing, building, mining, shipbuilding, computer industry);

**Commerce:** advertising; arts, entertainment & sport; management consultancy; market research; colonial/commonwealth trade; retail trade; transportation;

**Finance:** insurance; banking; chartered accountants; stockbrokers etc.;

**Health:** dentists; nurses; midwives; doctors; surgeons; other hospital workers;

**Forces/Police:** armed forces; fire service; police & prison services;

**Other:** other occupations not covered elsewhere (e.g. church-related & religious occupations; farming & farming-related; charitable organisations; voluntary work; unemployed).

For male graduates from the earlier cohort whose first occupation was military service, their job 10 years after graduation has been taken. Graduates whose destination was unknown have not been included, neither have those female graduates who gave their first occupation as "housewife," always a very small number.

The decision to split the figures into two broad cohorts rather than taking a decade by decade approach was made in order to ensure that numbers in each group - for example, the female MA ordinary postgraduate group - would be large enough for reliable analysis.

The percentages have been rounded up or down and therefore in some cases the percentage total is 99% or 101%; however, for clarity, all percentage totals have been shown as 100%.

**Table 5.2**  
**First job of Glasgow honours MA graduates (%)**

	Postgraduates				Non-postgraduates			
	1940-61		1962-84		1940-61		1962-84	
	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>
Schools	65%	67%	44%	51%	30%	29%	23%	24%
Higher Education	0%	15%	16%	12%	10%	8%	10%	9%
<i>(Total Education)</i>	<i>(65%)</i>	<i>(82%)</i>	<i>(60%)</i>	<i>(63%)</i>	<i>(40%)</i>	<i>(37%)</i>	<i>(33%)</i>	<i>(33%)</i>
Public Administration	13%	3%	20%	11%	30%	13%	25%	12%
Industry	17%	7%	6%	10%	20%	25%	0%	15%
Commerce	0%	3%	3%	7%	0%	17%	11%	12%
Finance	0%	5%	5%	6%	10%	4%	11%	24%
Health	4%	0%	5%	2%	0%	0%	20%	0%
Forces/Police	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	3%
Other	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>2%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N=	46	61	64	82	40	48	46	43

**Table 5.3**  
**First job of Glasgow ordinary BSc graduates (%)**

	Postgraduates				Non-postgraduates			
	1940-61		1962-84		1940-61		1962-84	
	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>
Schools	67%	35%	62%	43%	19%	4%	16%	7%
Higher Education	4%	9%	3%	0%	4%	8%	4%	11%
<i>(Total Education)</i>	<i>(71%)</i>	<i>(44%)</i>	<i>(65%)</i>	<i>(43%)</i>	<i>(23%)</i>	<i>(12%)</i>	<i>(20%)</i>	<i>(18%)</i>
Public Administration	3%	13%	8%	9%	7%	13%	4%	11%
Industry	13%	22%	10%	30%	33%	67%	40%	59%
Commerce	1%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Finance	0%	0%	1%	0%	4%	0%	4%	0%
Health	12%	9%	11%	9%	33%	4%	24%	4%
Forces/Police	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Agriculture	0%	13%	0%	4%	0%	4%	0%	4%
Other	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>4%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>8%</u>	<u>0%</u>
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N=	75	46	79	46	37	48	45	54

**Table 5.4**  
**First job of Glasgow honours BSc graduates (%)**

	Postgraduates				Non-postgraduates			
	1940-61		1962-84		1940-61		1962-84	
	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>female</u>	<u>male</u>
Schools	30%	13%	31%	18%	3%	0%	4%	6%
Higher Education	41%	28%	39%	24%	19%	6%	7%	4%
<i>(Total Education)</i>	<i>(71%)</i>	<i>(41%)</i>	<i>(70%)</i>	<i>(42%)</i>	<i>(22%)</i>	<i>(6%)</i>	<i>(11%)</i>	<i>(10%)</i>
Public Administration	4%	9%	1%	10%	6%	13%	11%	13%
Industry	11%	44%	9%	35%	39%	75%	33%	55%
Commerce	0%	2%	1%	4%	0%	4%	11%	4%
Finance	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	4%	6%
Health	13%	2%	15%	7%	32%	0%	30%	9%
Forces/Police	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%
Agriculture	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N=	54	54	67	84	41	46	54	47

**Source:** Graduate Database

An initial glance at these figures shows that the education sector was by far the most important employer overall, but its importance was always greater amongst those graduates who obtained a postgraduate qualification - a reflection, particularly in the case of arts graduates, of the very high proportion who did teacher training. In fact, amongst the postgraduate group, with the exception of male honours scientists (where industry rivalled the education sector as the most important source of employment), no other sector came close to rivaling a job in education. This was the case for both the early (1940-61) and later (1962-84) cohort, although in general the popularity of a job in education was declining somewhat. The figures also show that in general the education sector tended to be more important for female than male postgraduates.

The figures for those going into the education sector have been sub-divided into schools and higher education and show that, as might be expected, entry into higher education was more frequent for honours than ordinary graduates and for

postgraduates than non-postgraduates. The greater opportunities for research in the sciences meant that higher education also provided a more plentiful source of employment for the science than arts graduate. Interestingly though, table 5.4 indicates that a somewhat higher proportion of female than male science postgraduates took jobs in higher education in both cohorts, with men more likely to choose a job in industry.

After education, industry tended to be the second most popular sector for postgraduates and it also formed the most important sector for science non-postgraduates irrespective of gender and for both honours and ordinary graduates. However, more men than women were absorbed by this sector, as might be expected, over half of male scientists always ending up in this sector. For female scientists, the health sector proved to be of particular significance, especially for non-postgraduates, with a quarter or more of both honours and ordinary graduates in both cohorts amongst this group taking a health-related job (many women becoming hospital pharmacists, hospital biologists or laboratory technicians). In contrast, comparatively few of their male science colleagues entered this sector. In addition, for those female scientists who left university with a postgraduate qualification, the health profession was also a significant employer for both the ordinary and honours graduate, never taking less than one in ten.

Final points to note are the importance of commerce and finance - in particular for arts graduates who had not obtained a postgraduate qualification - as well as the importance of public administration, again particularly for arts graduates and particularly for women.



It is important to explain why the employment patterns outlined above occurred and also to assess whether or not employment patterns at Glasgow were distinctive or simply following UK trends for graduates generally. We will begin by considering the education sector because of its enormous importance as a graduate employer throughout the period, and will initially focus on school teaching (returning to higher education later).

From 1906, all graduates intending to teach in Scotland were obliged to take a one year course at a teacher training college and the nature of that course and the kind of teaching post open afterwards depended upon whether or not the graduate had obtained an ordinary or honours degree. Graduates who obtained the ordinary degree could only train for primary teaching, or for teaching in the lower classes of secondary schools whilst honours graduates qualified to teach their particular subject throughout secondary school.<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, despite the prerequisite of a postgraduate teaching qualification, tables 5.1 - 5.4 suggest that a graduate could still get into teaching without the teacher training certificate, a sizeable proportion of non-postgraduates managing to do so. This was noted by one 1950s graduate who remembered that “in those days you could get teaching posts reasonably easily without having been to college;”<sup>13</sup> possibly this was a result of teacher shortages - which we will return to later.

What is abundantly clear, whether they trained for primary or secondary teaching, is that schools did extremely well out of Glasgow graduates. Other studies of university women suggest that the enormous importance of teaching, particularly in the immediate post-war decades, was reflected elsewhere. In her

survey of 1950s married graduate women Hubback found that of those employed, 47% were school teachers<sup>14</sup> and Janet Howarth's investigation of Oxford graduate women shows 46.5% entering the education sector 1953-59.<sup>15</sup> Statistics produced by Glasgow University's Appointments Committee concur with these figures and show, for example, in 1947, roughly 48% of total female graduates entering teacher training college. Ten years later, slightly over a half of total female graduates were still training to teach.<sup>16</sup>

As noted earlier, from 1961 it becomes possible to compare Glasgow University with national figures, and it would appear that the particularly important place of teaching for the Glasgow graduate persisted for longer than was the case for the rest of the UK. Comparison with Glasgow reveals that whilst in 1961 32% of all UK female graduates who were doing some kind of further education or training were training to teach and 13% of their male UK colleagues were also doing so, at Glasgow University twice the proportion of women and three times the proportion of men signed up for teacher training in that year.<sup>17</sup> A decade later, although the margins had narrowed somewhat, Glasgow graduates (both male and female) were still over 10% more likely to

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<sup>12</sup> A.F. Skinner, "Professional Education," in *The Yearbook of Education*, 1953, Section 2: The British Isles, Chapter 4: Scotland.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1st February 1995.

<sup>14</sup> Judith Hubback, *op. cit.*, p. 45. Her sample was taken from 11 universities and consisted of married female graduates who had taken their degrees in or after 1930. Her figures are not directly comparable however, since they are dealing only with married women and are not based on first occupation after graduation, but on occupation at the time of the survey which for some of the graduates would have been well over 10 years after graduation.

<sup>15</sup> Janet Howarth, "Women," in Brian Harrison, (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 370. Her figures are for the entire education sector, rather than just school teaching.

<sup>16</sup> Glasgow University Appointments Committee, *Annual Reports*, 1947-57, excluding medical graduates.

<sup>17</sup> The figures are 64% of all female graduates and 44% of all male graduates. UGC *First Employment of University Graduates 1961* (London, 1963) and Glasgow University Appointments Committee, *Report for the year ended 31st December 1961*, (figures exclude medicine, dentistry and veterinary science, as do the UGC figures).

train as teachers than the UK average.<sup>18</sup> More recent Appointments Committee figures for Glasgow are not available by gender, due to changes in the way the Committee kept its records, but the Graduate Database allows some comparison to be made and shows a further narrowing of the margin, but still a greater tendency towards teaching at Glasgow.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, if Glasgow is considered in a purely Scottish, rather than a UK context, this point remains generally true. Unfortunately, the UGC does not actually provide separate figures for Scotland, but it did, beginning in 1970, include a summary table for individual universities, providing aggregated male and female first destination figures. These show, firstly, that a higher proportion of Glasgow graduates were staying on to do some form of postgraduate study than was the case for the rest of Scotland<sup>20</sup> and secondly, that teacher training did seem to have a particularly important place in Glasgow compared to the rest of Scotland. The UGC summary tables for each university show that in 1970, of those male and female graduates doing postgraduate study, Glasgow University

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<sup>18</sup> In 1970, of those UK graduates doing some kind of further education and training, 58% of women and 31% of men were training to teach; UGC *First Employment of University Graduates 1970* (London, 1972). The figures for Glasgow University were 70% and 43% respectively; Glasgow University Appointments Committee, *Report for the year ended 31st December 1970*.

<sup>19</sup> The UK figures for 1980 show 41% of female graduates who did some form of further education and training as doing teacher training, (23% of male UK graduates), compared to 49% of Glasgow University women (26% of Glasgow University men). (Figures for Glasgow University calculated from Graduate Database for the years 1979-81 rather than just 1980, since the figures in one single year are rather too small for reliable analysis).

<sup>20</sup> For example, in 1970, a higher percentage of Glasgow University graduates were staying on to do postgraduate study, (55%), than the Scottish average, (47%), and if the eight Scottish universities are considered individually, Glasgow had the second highest proportion of graduates whose first destination was in postgraduate work, (Aberdeen had the highest proportion). A decade later, all the Scottish universities had a smaller proportion of their graduates staying on for further education or training. The average for Scotland was now 28%, but the Glasgow figure of 32% was still slightly above this average. If the eight universities are considered individually again, Glasgow still had the second highest proportion undertaking postgraduate study - after St. Andrews. (Glasgow University Appointments Committee, *Annual Reports* and UGC, *First Destination of University Graduates*).

had the highest proportion in teacher training (60%), after Aberdeen University (63%). By the 1980s, the UGC had abandoned its separate category for teacher training, so comparisons can no longer be made. However, in the last year before this category was abandoned, 1978, Glasgow now had the highest proportion, out of all the Scottish universities, of its postgraduates in teacher training college (59%).<sup>21</sup>

Therefore, we have a picture of school teaching being more important to Glasgow graduates than was the case on average in the UK, and of the Scottish universities, Glasgow was always at the top or near the top as regards the proportion of graduates it sent to teacher training college.

A look at the geographical destination of these Glasgow graduate teachers shows, in addition, that they chose to work predominantly in local schools in and around the Glasgow area. Tables 5.5 and 5.6 below give the most important first employment sectors for all graduates in the sample and it can be seen that those who became school teachers almost overwhelmingly did so within 30 miles of Glasgow, for both the 1940-61 and 1962-84 cohorts. A few took jobs in more distant parts of Scotland; hardly any made it to England, Wales or Ireland (although the Scottish teacher training certificate was equally valid for teaching in England). The picture was similar for both male and female graduates.

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<sup>21</sup> The next highest was now Strathclyde with 52% and then Aberdeen with 50%.

Table 5.5<sup>22</sup>**Geographical location of first job, Glasgow graduates 1940-61 (%)**

	Schools		Higher Education		Industry		Health		Public Service		Law	
	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>
Local	90%	87%	69%	69%	52%	54%	89%	89%	39%	33%	100%	88%
Rest of Scotland	9%	11%	16%	3%	8%	7%	4%	7%	18%	22%	0%	10%
England	1%	2%	16%	28%	40%	39%	7%	4%	43%	44%	0%	3%
N=	201	91	32	42	62	100	90	89	38	38	31	38

Table 5.6<sup>23</sup>**Geographical location of first job, Glasgow graduates 1962-84 (%)**

	Schools		Higher Education		Industry		Health		Public Service		Law	
	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>
Local	84%	87%	59%	53%	59%	48%	85%	87%	67%	59%	91%	86%
Rest of Scotland	12%	7%	11%	21%	5%	10%	4%	4%	17%	17%	6%	12%
England	4%	6%	30%	26%	36%	42%	11%	9%	17%	24%	3%	2%
N=	170	97	37	43	86	150	93	54	42	46	43	45

**Source:** Graduate Database

<sup>22</sup> Sectoral categories as before, see table 5.1 (footnote), except that here the *industry* category includes industry, commerce and finance together. The figures are for all graduate questionnaire respondents irrespective of degree (so for example, it includes law and medical degrees as well as arts and science). The figures are for home graduates only; figures for the proportion of graduates working abroad are not shown because they would be artificially low as a result of the questionnaire being sent to graduates resident in Britain only. *Local* = within 30 miles of Glasgow, *England* = England, Wales & Ireland.

<sup>23</sup> Some of the increase in graduates taking up their first employment in England by the time of the second cohort (1962-84) was the result of an increased English contingent within the Glasgow University student body who went back home after graduation - English students accounted for 9.6% of the respondents in the Graduate Database (men and women) between 1940-61 and 18.3% 1962-84.

It should also be noted that the proportion of students in the Graduate Database who took a job in England was somewhat smaller than the Appointments Committee reports show the actual proportion to have been. This is probably because the survey relied on the accuracy of graduate addresses held by the University and therefore there is likely to be a bias towards students who have stayed in Scotland.

Having established a pattern of very high entry to school teaching by female Glasgow graduates, predominantly in the local West of Scotland area, it is worth spending some time analysing why this occupation should have exerted such a pull. There are well-known reasons why teaching was attractive to women generally. In many respects it was the easiest occupation for them to enter since, of all the professional occupations, it provided conditions which could be most successfully combined with domestic responsibilities - congenial working hours and holidays, easy re-entry to the profession after absence for child rearing, plus more numerous opportunities than many other occupations could provide for part-time work. Teaching also requires only a relatively short vocational training, and so need not postpone marriage too long. These are all “pull” factors, but there were certainly “push” factors at work too. During the war years, for example, female students who expressed their intention to go into the teaching profession were exempt from National Service, and there is some evidence to indicate, at Glasgow University at least, that there were women who expressed interest in the career simply as a means of avoiding National Service.<sup>24</sup>

There were other external pressures at work in the form of successive government initiatives to increase recruitment to teaching, such as the campaign in the mid-1960s to encourage married women to return to the profession. Due to the expansion in secondary education in the post-war era, the teaching profession suffered from continual shortages - James Scotland notes that Glasgow had five hundred oversize classes in 1961 - and certainly some women

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<sup>24</sup> For example, the proportion of female entrants expressing a desire to teach dropped by 20% after the war, (*The Glasgow Herald*, 16th January 1946).

were influenced by the constant pleas for more teachers.<sup>25</sup> C.E. Arregger quotes one graduate who returned to the profession as saying “my conscience pricked me every Friday lunch time when I heard the BBC appeal for married teachers to return.”<sup>26</sup> With the age of marriage going down, there was a tendency for women teachers to be lost to the profession earlier, so it was important to encourage them to return after marriage. In addition, because of the continued teacher shortage, various aspects of the profession were made more amenable. For instance, between 1958 and 1961, the course for honours graduates was reduced from three to two terms. Also, candidates with lower qualifications were admitted to superior posts and some primary teachers were allowed to take the more backward classes in secondary schools.<sup>27</sup> A factor which may account for the continued attraction of teaching in the 1960s (amongst men as well as women) was the considerable rise in the salary scales from July 1961. Equal pay for men and women came into operation at the same time.

However, these factors would have influenced women across the whole of the UK and do not explain the higher levels of entry to teacher training by Glasgow female graduates (which has been observed from 1961 when UGC comparisons become possible). An initial point to note here is that Glasgow had a higher proportion of working-class students than was the case on average for British universities, and working-class students traditionally gravitate towards a teaching degree to a greater extent than students from wealthier backgrounds.<sup>28</sup> In addition, part of the explanation perhaps lies in the economic situation in the

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<sup>25</sup> James Scotland, Chapter 14: “The Teachers,” in *The History of Scottish Education, Volume 2* (London, 1969).

<sup>26</sup> C.E. Arregger, *Graduate Women at Work* (Gateshead, 1966), p. 35.

<sup>27</sup> James Scotland, *op. cit.*

West of Scotland, where the decline in the region's traditional manufacturing base, particularly from about 1960, served to limit the scope for a career in industry. The decline of the heavy industries in and around Glasgow was perhaps not as significant for women as for men, since it might be argued that industries such as shipbuilding and steel were not likely to attract or employ large numbers of female graduates. However, C. Harvie has noted the rapid decline after the 1930s of other manufacturing industries - such as clothing, food and drink, paper and chemicals - sectors where female graduates might have found research, administrative and managerial jobs.<sup>29</sup> He notes that the expansion of the service sector acted as a compensating factor, but Payne points out that the growth in the service sector was slower than in England, "inhibited by the persistently low level of per capita incomes" in Scotland.<sup>30</sup> Therefore there was a smaller Scottish service sector to provide alternative career options for graduates who could not find a job in industry. This situation may well have encouraged female graduates to opt for the relative safety of a teaching career.

There is also evidence to suggest that, not only were there fewer opportunities in Scottish industry compared to England, but that those Scottish businesses who were recruiting graduates were less keen to take on women than was the case South of the border - certainly in the immediate post-war decades. It is true that women everywhere faced difficulties in permeating traditionally "masculine" occupations, and much literature testifies to the fact that employer attitudes towards women were not particularly enlightened, especially in the

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<sup>28</sup> This point will be returned to later on in the chapter. See also, Chapter 2, *Student Origins*.

<sup>29</sup> Christopher Harvie, *No Gods and Precious Few Heroes Scotland 1914-1980* (London, 1981), p. 38.

<sup>30</sup> Peter L. Payne, "The Economy," in T.M. Devine and R.J. Finlay, op. cit., p. 23.



immediate post-war decades.<sup>31</sup> As late as 1960 only 82 of the 234 employers (35%) who visited Glasgow University in that year were interested in interviewing women - and 58 of these 82 were only interested in scientists.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, the number of companies interested in recruiting Glasgow women actually fell during the early 1960s.<sup>33</sup> In addition, there is some evidence from the annual reports of Glasgow University Appointments Committee to suggest that Scottish firms seemed particularly unwilling to encourage female applicants in comparison with English firms. The report of 1956 noted that:

“of all full time vacancies notified in 1956 only 14.8% were in Scotland...The long hoped-for development, in Scottish industry as a whole, of opportunities for women graduates comparable to those which have been available to them in England for years past is very slow to materialise.”<sup>34</sup>

This lack of industrial openings in Scotland, coupled with the strong desire of most female graduates to remain in Scotland - in 1960, for example, just over 70% of female graduates were planning to stay in Scotland - acted to limit alternative careers to teaching.<sup>35</sup> The Appointments Committee did make efforts

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<sup>31</sup> See for example, Margherita Rendel, “Do Women Have Trouble Getting Jobs?,” *New Society*, 27th August 1964, pp. 17-18. She reported on the results of a survey she had carried out into employer attitudes towards hiring women. She replied to advertisements for prestigious jobs in various newspapers and found that only about one third were open to women, another third of the adverts referring explicitly to men (these included managers, engineers, accountants, salesmen, programmers etc.). The traditional reason for objecting to women was that they would marry, have babies and leave the job almost immediately, but the article showed that pure prejudice was also clearly rife since many of the job adverts in the survey: “were very senior jobs that no one would be qualified for much before 40.” She therefore concluded that: “the chances of a woman of that age requiring maternity leave or of abandoning a good job on marriage are not greater presumably than of a man moving to another firm.”

<sup>32</sup> Glasgow University Appointments Committee, *Report for the year ended 31st December 1960, Women's Section*.

<sup>33</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 9th June 1965. Whilst 101 firms were interested in women in 1962, only 54 were in 1964.

<sup>34</sup> Glasgow Appointments Committee, *Report for the year ended 31st December 1956, Women's Section*.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, *Report for the year ended 31st December 1960, Women's Section*.

to interest Scottish firms in female graduates, and one senses a certain frustration in the Committee's 1960 report which noted that:

“it is in one way disappointing to see how little the registrants avail themselves of the opportunity of having interviews with firms' representatives at the University ... Considerable effort has gone into building up contacts with these firms and when one meets with an encouraging response and a willingness to employ women graduates in reasonable numbers (despite the drawback of the short period of service that can generally be anticipated), it is rather disheartening to find that only a few registrants express interest. The main reason for this, of course, is that the majority of Glasgow women graduates wish to remain in Scotland and the majority of the firms who visit us are offering posts only in England.”<sup>36</sup>

It also seems to have been the case that those Scottish firms who *were* willing to employ female graduates were offering less prestigious posts than could be found in England. A summary report of the destinations of female arts graduates between 1953 and 1959 noted that of the 17 women who entered Scottish industry or commerce between those years, all but 4 of the posts were of a “routine type” whereas of the 46 who took up employment with non-Scottish firms, 14 entered as management trainees, 6 entered market research and a few were taken on as mathematicians or physicists.<sup>37</sup> There is also some evidence for this from the Graduate Database. Between 1940 and 1965, for example, none of the women in the sample who were working in industry in England were employed as clerks or secretaries (they were scientists, administrators, information officers etc.), but 14% of those working in Scottish industrial firms were performing clerical duties. Therefore the problem in Scotland seems to have been not simply that Scottish firms were unwilling to take on female

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

graduates, but also that they were unwilling to take them on at a sufficiently high level - they would accept a female secretary, but balked at the thought of a female management trainee.

Whilst, as noted above, the Appointments Committee did make some efforts to interest Scottish industry in female graduates, in practice these efforts did not amount to very much - the 1960 women's report, for example, noted that during the year thirty new contacts with firms were established (but only eight of these were in Scotland).<sup>38</sup> In fact, for the final year registrants who were interviewed by the Appointments Committee, one senses that there was little attempt made to redirect them away from a career in teaching. A comment made by the General Adviser to Women Students, Barbara Napier, about these final year interviews suggests that for many students there was little in-depth exploration of possible careers other than teaching: "some interviews are purely a formality and may take only five minutes."<sup>39</sup> Indeed, most women had more than likely already made the decision that they were going to train as teachers by the time of their final year careers interview - a decision no doubt often influenced by a lack of alternative career opportunities or *perceived* lack of other opportunities, and also parental pressure. The impact of parental influence was noted by a 1946 article in the *Glasgow Herald* (on the careers of female Glasgow graduates) which observed that "it is suspected that parental influence is largely responsible for the 'safety-first' pressure towards the choice of teaching, and (the

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<sup>37</sup> Summary report of Appointments Committee 1953-59 by Barbara Napier, General Adviser to Women Students, (DC 450/4).

<sup>38</sup> Glasgow University Appointments Committee, *Report for the year ended 31st December 1960*.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, *Report for the year ended 31st December 1956, Women's Section*.

student's) opposition to anything - for instance, housing estate management - with which they themselves are not familiar."<sup>40</sup>

The role of the Appointments Service seems to have been more in providing information than in directly influencing graduates' career choices. A 1960s report on all university Appointments Boards found that in a sample of British graduates, only 2% cited their Appointments Service as the main influence on their final choice of employment.<sup>41</sup> It is also noticeable that none of the comments made by questionnaire respondents criticised Glasgow's Appointments Committee for poor career advice. However, several respondents pointed to a failing further down the line in terms of poor advice on courses which later limited their career options. In particular, several female students clearly felt that they had not been encouraged to stay on for the final honours year because of the expectation that they would just enter (primary) teaching. The following comments, all made by female respondents who became teachers (no equivalent comments were made by male respondents) show how a lack of advice could lead to under-achievement. The first comment is typical of many:

"I was expected by the school to take an honours degree in French and German and I realise now that I could have done that. I think the University let me down in not giving me any guidance in this matter ... no one contacted me or advised me when I decided to take an ordinary MA, although I had obtained certificates of distinction in French and German in my first two years at university."<sup>42</sup>

A couple of comments also implied a clear gender bias in course/career advice.

A student from the late 1960s noted:

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<sup>40</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 16th January 1946.

<sup>41</sup> *University Appointments Boards*, Lord Heyworth (London, 1964), p.72.

<sup>42</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1948, from questionnaire, No. 200.

“advice....not good. Long after my studies I found I could have taken other subjects. Did not know I could do higher ordinaries in my third year when I only *had* to take one class - but took two ‘ordinaries.’ This cut down my options for teaching in secondary schools - so I moved into primary schooling. Also I hope advice now is not so gender-biased,”<sup>43</sup>

whilst one from as recently as the 1970s remembered that “in my time (Glasgow University was) a highly sexist institution. I left an honours course to take up teaching - no one pointed out this would affect career prospects. I remedied this via a degree at an American University.”<sup>44</sup> So it was *course* advice rather than *career* advice which was lacking, and in particular, it was the advice that women should not bother staying on for the honours year which resulted in many female graduates having to accept a primary or lower secondary teaching career. It should be noted, however, that financial considerations could also enter into the equation, as the following comment from a 1950s female graduate who became a primary teacher highlights. “Things were different in my day. Careers were not readily open to women and when our parents paid the bill girls were unwilling to ask for even the extra year to do honours. I qualified easily for honours courses but could not afford to go on.”<sup>45</sup>

Given that the ordinary degree cut down options in teaching, it is perhaps surprising that so many female graduates continued to take an ordinary degree, especially after the introduction in the 1960s of universal maintenance grants which no longer discounted an honours degree on financial grounds. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 show, for example, that although there was a decline in the proportion of female ordinary MA graduates who gained employment in school teaching from

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<sup>43</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1970, from questionnaire, No. 1032.

1940-61 to 1962-84, nonetheless, almost two thirds of MA (ordinary) postgraduates and one fifth of non-postgraduates still entered teaching in the later cohort. Relatively narrow career aspirations on the part of women probably contributed to the continued popularity of the ordinary degree, as well as poor advice resulting in ignorance of the consequences for one's career, as some of the anecdotal evidence quoted above suggests.

Given the continued popularity of the ordinary degree, particularly amongst women, it is hardly surprising that, as has been well documented elsewhere, within the education sector women tended to be concentrated in primary teaching and those women who taught in secondary schools were disproportionately clustered in the lower teaching grades with few making it to posts as head teachers. For example, as recently as 1987, almost 84% of secondary school head teachers were men.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, the position of women teachers seems to have worsened over the century, with 57% of headships of primary and secondary schools being held by women in 1927, but only 39% in 1984.<sup>47</sup> My figures support this picture of a worsening situation for women teachers. Of those female questionnaire respondents who had graduated in the 1940s and who were still employed in school teaching 30 years later, a quarter had by this point become headmistresses. However, of those women who graduated in the 1960s, 30 years on only 6% of those still involved in school teaching had attained a

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<sup>44</sup> Female (ordinary) science graduate, 1974, from questionnaire, No. 1657.

<sup>45</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1951, from questionnaire, No. 1952.

<sup>46</sup> S. Acker, (ed.), *Teachers, Gender and Careers* (London, 1989), p. 10.

<sup>47</sup> Alison Oram, "A master should not serve under a mistress, women and men teachers 1900-1970," in S. Acker, *ibid.*, p. 21.

headship, (compared to 26% of the men).<sup>48</sup> Alison Oram argues that one reason for this worsening picture was the increase in co-education, especially in secondary schools, which has reduced the number of headships that are traditionally reserved for women in girls' schools, whilst the impact of the introduction of equal pay was vital according to Mackie and Patullo, "when a profession which has traditionally relied on the low-paid work of women begins to be better paid it then attracts men. The National Union of Teachers (NUT) considers that the switch over from women holding a majority of primary school headships...can be linked to the introduction in 1961, of equal pay for teachers."<sup>49</sup> The problem of part-time teaching, which many women moved into whilst bringing up a family, also restricted promotion prospects for women. NUT figures from 1976 showed that of 55 local education authorities, only 12 were prepared to consider part-timers for posts above the bottom scale.<sup>50</sup>

Just as the high rates of post-war entry to the profession required explanation, so the overall declining rate of entry<sup>51</sup> observed in the second cohorts of tables 5.1 - 5.4 needs explaining. An important influence in this decline was the contraction of teacher training places which was imposed in the late 1970s. Also, as A. McPherson has pointed out, the 1970s was the decade in which the problem of teacher supply was finally contained (due to lower birth rates and increased rates of return to teaching amongst married women) so there

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<sup>48</sup> No differentiation between primary and secondary headships was possible in the Graduate Database because most graduate respondents did not specify which type of school they were head of.

<sup>49</sup> Lindsay Mackie & Polly Patullo, *Women At Work* (London, 1977), p. 79.

<sup>50</sup> Sarah Curtis, "Origins and Outcomes," in Penny Griffin, (ed.), *St. Hugh's: One Hundred Years of Women's Higher Education in Oxford* (London, 1986), p. 280. Unfortunately, due to time-constraints at the data entry stage, the Graduate Database does not contain information as to whether a graduate's job was part-time or full-time.

was less pressure for graduates to enter the profession.<sup>52</sup> The widening choice provided by alternative graduate careers also had an impact. Graduates who in previous generations would probably have become teachers were now becoming accountants, computer programmers and management trainees.

One might expect also, that the expanding higher education sector would begin to attract graduates who might have become teachers in earlier decades. However, what is surprising, given the growth in the higher education sector from the 1960s, is that the proportion of Glasgow graduates entering higher education seems to have remained fairly stable over the 1940-61 to 1962-84 cohorts, and in some cases even declined quite noticeably (for example, a decline from 19% to 7% in female (non-postgraduate) science graduates entering this sector 1940-61 - 1962-84). The frequent need for geographical mobility in the academic profession is perhaps one factor in dissuading Glasgow graduates from a career in higher education; we have already noted the desire of many Scots to stay in Scotland and tables 5.5 - 5.6 show that many graduates had to leave Scotland to take up a higher education appointment (almost a third of women who got a job in this sector moving to England 1962-84 and a quarter of their male colleagues). Possibly the widening of career options in more recent decades also served to push down the proportion entering higher education and, from the later 1970s onwards, opportunities in higher education were tending to become less plentiful. A final point to make with regard to this sector is that women appear to be doing rather well in comparison with men. Amongst science

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<sup>51</sup> Except for male ordinary and honours scientists, who showed some increase from 1940-61 to 1962-84 in the proportion entering the education sector.

<sup>52</sup> Andrew McPherson, Chapter 3: "Schooling," in *People and Society in Scotland, Vol. 3, 1914-1990* (Edinburgh, 1992), p. 98.



graduates with honours, a consistently higher proportion of women than men made it into higher education, whilst for arts graduates with honours, slightly more women were in higher education in both cohorts. The explanation for this probably lies in the subjects represented in tables 5.1 - 5.4 - i.e. arts and pure science subjects - are ones which had a good female representation.

Leaving the education sector now, we will move on to consider graduate careers in business. If the three sectors of industry, commerce and finance are considered together, then they provided the next most important graduate employer (after education) for all postgraduates, irrespective of gender and irrespective of degree subject. As for those graduates who went straight into employment, these three sectors together were enormously important - particularly for science graduates, with 37% of female non-postgraduate (ordinary) scientists and 67% of male non-postgraduate (ordinary) scientists entering one of these sectors 1940-61, and 44% and 63% respectively 1962-84. For honours scientists, the figures were even slightly higher.

Within these three sectors, there was an overall tendency for finance and commerce to grow at the expense of industry, a trend which was apparent in the UK in general, as well as being apparent in Glasgow. Finance and commerce increased its share of graduate recruits in the UK from 17% in 1972 to 23% in 1979 and 29% in 1983<sup>53</sup> and figures for Glasgow University from the Graduate Database are very similar - 16% of total 1970s graduates entered commerce/finance compared to 28% in 1980-84. These developments reflected changes in the economy generally, with the rise of the service sector at the

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<sup>53</sup> OECD, *From Higher Education to Employment, Vol. IV* (Paris, 1992), p. 72.

expense of traditional manufacturing industry. Tables 5.1-5.4 also indicate that finance and commerce became increasingly important sources of employment for arts rather than science graduates and especially for graduates who went straight into employment. By the later cohort, a third of female non-postgraduate (ordinary) arts graduates were finding a job in commerce (compared to almost a fifth of their male colleagues), whilst male arts graduates were more likely to end up in finance - a quarter of honours and almost a fifth of ordinary arts men taking their first job in this sector 1962-84.

Comparison with UK figures reveals two other major points. Firstly, that Glasgow female graduates fell largely into line with UK figures generally and secondly, that Glasgow's men were behind the UK average, as table 5.7 below indicates.

**Table 5.7<sup>54</sup>**

**Non-postgraduates whose first job was in industry, commerce or finance (%)**

	Women		Men	
	<u>Glasgow University</u>	<u>UK</u>	<u>Glasgow University</u>	<u>UK</u>
1961	27%	25%	58%	67%
1970	30%	34%	55%	67%
1980	48%	47%	61%	68%

**Source:** University Grants Committee & Graduate Database

<sup>54</sup> UK figures taken from *First Employment of University Graduates, 1961-80*. Figures for 1961 and 1970 exclude medicine, veterinary and dentistry graduates, however, from 1973 the UGC began including medical, veterinary and dentistry graduates, so the 1980 figures include these. Figures for Glasgow University are taken from annual reports of the Appointments Committee for 1961 and 1970, but the 1980 figure is taken from the graduate questionnaire and is based on the 1980-84 average for those entering industry, commerce and finance, (since numbers from 1980 alone are too small for accuracy). Both sets of figures exclude those who went on to further postgraduate research or training and those whose destination was unknown.

It may seem strange that the figures for Glasgow's women are similar to the UK average, given that we have already noted the reluctance of Scottish industry to take on female graduates. However, a significant proportion of those graduates involved in industry went to England to take up their careers, over 40% in the Graduate Database doing so 1940-61 and over 35% 1962-84, as tables 5.5 and 5.6 indicate.

The second major point to note is that, although the gap narrowed between female graduates and their male peers in recent decades as the proportion of women entering business careers increased, nonetheless, the gender difference remains striking, with over 10% more men in Glasgow and over 20% more men in the UK entering industry, finance or commerce in 1980. Although female BSc graduates were more likely to enter industry than female MA graduates, the gender bias was still evident irrespective of discipline. For example, if the figures for ordinary graduates given in tables 5.1 and 5.3 are considered, it can be seen that between 1940 and 1961, whilst only 14% of non-postgraduate female arts graduates and over a third of non-postgraduate female science graduates took a job in commerce, finance or industry, 43% and two thirds of their male arts and science colleagues did so respectively.

This gender difference needs some explanation and can partly be accounted for by the employer discrimination we have already noted. Such attitudes were bound to reinforce the tendency for women to avoid occupations where they might encounter prejudice. Nonetheless, table 5.7 testifies to the steady growth in the proportion of women entering industry, and is evidence of the gradually changing attitudes of employers towards taking on women. Barbara Webb, who

worked in the women's section of Glasgow University's Appointments Committee from 1949 right through to the 1980s, is well placed to comment on the changes here and notes that there were only a few industries which were prepared to recruit women in the 1940s and 1950s and jobs such as management training almost always went to the men. But she remembers things gradually beginning to change - for instance in the early 1960s she recalls Rolls Royce appointing three women graduates to their management training scheme which had previously been open to men only.

It should also be noted that the rise in the proportion of women in the university sector - (the proportion of women at in British universities rose from 22.6% in 1949-50 to 36.7% in 1979-80<sup>55</sup>) - automatically resulted in a greater number of women able to take advantage of careers in industry and created pressure for their acceptance. In addition, more women were taking science degrees, which tended to be more popular amongst industrial employers than arts degrees. And as it became more common for women to go into industry, this encouraged others to apply. Part of the problem all along with getting women into industry had not only been that there was the possibility of discrimination, but that women were just not applying in any great numbers for the posts available. As Sarah Curtis notes in her study of St. Hugh's graduates, "the most common reason given by industry and the professions for the dearth of women in them is that women do not apply."<sup>56</sup> An article by Burnhill and M<sup>c</sup>Pherson testifies to the fact that women were becoming more ambitious in recent decades.

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<sup>55</sup> UGC, *Annual returns of Universities and University Colleges in Receipt of Treasury Grant* (London). The proportion of women at Glasgow University was slightly different, being only 19.6% in 1949-50 but 41.7% by 1979-80.

<sup>56</sup> Sarah Curtis, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

They compared a sample of female degree students between the selected years of 1971 and 1981<sup>and</sup> found<sup>4</sup> an increase from 57% to 78% in the percentage of the women wanting to “move up” in the world and an increase from 37% to 57% in the proportion wanting “the opportunity to hold a senior position by the age of thirty.”<sup>57</sup> These figures suggest increased aspirations on the part of women and Burnhill and M’Pherson also recognised that the impact of second-wave feminism must have been important, observing that, “by 1981, post-1968 feminism had gained in confidence and effect, giving wide currency to propositions about equal opportunities for women.”<sup>58</sup> A graduate of St. Hilda’s College, Oxford also noted the importance of seeing an increasing number of women in positions of authority: “strong female role models in public life and industry were beginning to become the norm...I believed that self motivation and hard work were all that were needed to succeed.”<sup>59</sup>

Finally, a crucial factor in the increase of both male and female graduates employed in industry was the ever-increasing demand of employers. The post-war era witnessed an enormous growth in the number of employers using university appointments services to recruit able graduates. The 1964 UGC report on Appointments Boards noted that:

“our evidence suggests that the use of appointments services by employers is a growing habit. About one in five of our sample were going to them before the Second World War. Forty three percent took to using them

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<sup>57</sup> Peter Burnhill and Andrew M’Pherson, “Careers and Gender: The Expectations of Able Scottish School-leavers in 1971 and 1981,” in Sandra Acker and David Warren Piper, (eds.), *Is Higher Education Fair To Women?* (Surrey, 1984).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>59</sup> Wendy Jarett, “The Decade 1984-93,” in Jane Mellanby (ed.), *The St. Hilda’s College Centenary Symposium: A Celebration of the Education of Women* (Oxford, 1993), p. 44.

during the 10 years immediately afterwards, and 29% between 1955 and 1962.”<sup>60</sup>

Coupled with this, there seems to have been a greater use being made of appointments services by students in the post-war period. Partly, of course, the rise in student numbers inevitably resulted in greater use being made of university careers services, but it was also a response to an increasingly diverse job market. In times past, when graduate employment had been more concentrated in the learned professions, the route of entry tended to be well known and students could be directed by teachers and parents. With a widening of the types of employment graduates were entering, they needed more direction from their university appointments services which in turn became larger and more professional. Greenstein notes this trend at Oxford,<sup>61</sup> whilst at Glasgow University, the Appointments Committee report of 1960 indicated the need to increase staff, observing that the increased number of registrants posed “one of the major problems for the future.” By 1970 registrations were continuing to rise more steeply than the overall increase in student numbers.<sup>62</sup>

Although the increased use made by industrial employers of university appointments services encouraged graduates everywhere to consider business careers, we have noted some disparity between UK and Glasgow rates of entry to industry. In particular, table 5.7 shows that from the 1960s, whilst roughly the same proportion of female Glasgow graduates were entering industry as was the case in the UK as a whole, the figures for their male colleagues were somewhat

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<sup>60</sup> Lord Heyworth, *op. cit.*, p.22.

<sup>61</sup> D.I. Greenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

<sup>62</sup> Glasgow University Appointments Committee, *Report for the year ended 31st December 1960 & 1970*.

below the UK average. This situation has been noted for Scotland as a whole by Michael Sanderson for the pre-1960 period, who comments on the “particularly poor showing” made by Scottish graduates in getting into major British industrial enterprises in the immediate post-war years. He notes that Scottish students formed 18% of total students in Britain, but between 1945 and 1955, they had secured only 3% of the graduate entry places into the National Coal Board, 6% in ICI and 9% in Lever Brothers. In explaining the situation, Sanderson comments that “it was suggested that this was due to the skimmed nature of Scottish student life and its lack of residences, industrial employers having a decided preference for residential universities.”<sup>63</sup> This may have been significant, but other factors may also have been at work. There is some evidence that industrial employers were less favourably inclined towards the ordinary degree, taken by more Scottish than English students. This is hinted at in a comment made in the Appointments Committee report of 1961. The small number of women staying on for honours in pure science was noted (only 22 did so in that year) and it was observed that, “such totals don’t match the demand for good calibre scientists.”<sup>64</sup> However, another important factor must have been, as we have already noted, the fact that there were fewer business opportunities in Scotland. Coupled with this, many Scottish graduates did not wish to leave Scotland and most of the companies Sanderson mentions would have been offering jobs in England. Tables 5.5 - 5.6 have already shown that roughly 40% of men who gained their first job in business did so in England and there may well have been many more who would have taken an industrial job if one had been available locally.

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<sup>63</sup> Michael Sanderson, *The Universities and British Industry 1850-1970* (London, 1972), p. 358.

An exodus of 40% of male graduates represents a significant loss of potential talent from the region, and these were years in which the so-called “brain drain” came to receive attention in the media. Certainly the outflow of population from the West of Scotland region at this time was on a scale to cause concern, and some three-quarters of the natural increase in the region left the area between 1951 and 1960 because of the failure of the local economy to generate enough suitable jobs.<sup>65</sup> To gain an idea of what was happening to its graduates, the University Appointments Committee began in the 1950s to record how many of the annual crop of graduates were staying in Scotland. These figures show that in 1958, for example, 69% of female and 58% of male graduates were staying in Scotland to work/study. Therefore the problem of an exodus of graduates from the country was not an especially alarming one. Certainly for female graduates, Barbara Napier was able to comment that “the ‘drift south’ does not bother me unduly: no large number is involved.”<sup>66</sup> However, there was much variation between degree discipline, with arts graduates more likely to stay in Scotland and with male science and engineering graduates the most likely to take up industrial appointments elsewhere. In 1960, 61% of all male scientists and 66% of all male engineers who went straight into employment were leaving Scotland for work - mainly in England. The Appointments Committee report of that year noted that this exodus may well have been undertaken reluctantly, commenting that “it is certainly quite wrong to assume that two out of every

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<sup>64</sup> Glasgow University Appointments Committee, *Report for the year ended 31st December 1961, Women's Section*.

<sup>65</sup> Anthony Slaven, *The Development of the West of Scotland: 1750-1960* (London, 1975), p. 223.

<sup>66</sup> Barbara Napier, General Adviser to Women Students, correspondence, DC 450/4, letter dated 21st March 1952.



three Scottish scientists and engineers really want to leave Scotland. Generally speaking, they leave for better training, more clearly defined prospects and competitive salaries.”

Therefore those graduates who were most likely to want industrial careers and who had the subject specialisms most desired by industry were finding that the regional economy, with its serious industrial weaknesses, could not provide suitable opportunities. The problem of a significant proportion of male pure and applied scientists leaving the country was also experienced by other Scottish universities: a study of Aberdeen graduates and the impact of the ‘brain drain’ showed that between 1860 and 1955, about half of the science and 65% of the engineering graduates left Scotland.<sup>67</sup> The study also noted the greater propensity for male graduates to leave Scotland for work compared to their female colleagues but found no evidence for an increase in the extent of the ‘brain drain’ between 1860 and the 1950s. These figures are clear evidence of a similar lack of industrial opportunities in the North of Scotland, although the economic situation did pick up somewhat in Aberdeen with a rising proportion of the University’s graduates employed in local industry in recent decades - a reflection of the development of the oil industry.<sup>68</sup> More recently, too, there seems to have been a reversal in the brain drain at Glasgow University, with the 1970 Appointments Committee report showing that only 37% of male engineering graduates were leaving Scotland in that year. In fact, a few years later the annual reports stopped showing figures for the numbers of graduates leaving Scotland.

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<sup>67</sup> D.I. Mackay, *Geographical Mobility and the Brain Drain: A case Study of Aberdeen University Graduates, 1860-1960* (London, 1969), p. 124.

The Committee felt that the contraction in opportunities in the US and Canada were important factors in halting the 'brain drain,' whilst new electronics industries in the West of Scotland region - Motorola and Hewlett Packard in the 1960s and later on Japanese companies such as JVC (in East Kilbride), Oki (Cumbernauld) and Terasaki (Clydebank) expanded local opportunities somewhat and must have accounted for much of the increase in graduate employment in industry in the Glasgow area.<sup>69</sup>

After education and industry, the next most important employer for Glasgow graduates tended to be public administration,<sup>70</sup> a sector which was particularly important for arts graduates. Of MA (ordinary) female graduates in the sample who went straight into employment, 14% them 1940-61 and 20% 1962-84 entered public administration, compared to 30% and 25% respectively for their female honours colleagues (tables 5.1 and 5.2). As for men, public administration was taking over 1 in 10 of arts graduates by 1962-84. This sector was also important for arts graduates who had stayed on for a postgraduate qualification, although slightly less so. In the immediate post-war period, Glasgow graduates wanting to pursue a career in this sector were faced with a similar problem to those who wished to pursue an industrial career, in that many public administration jobs tended to be in England. The need to go South of the border for many public administration openings is clearly shown in tables 5.5 - 5.6 which show that over 40% of female and male graduates in the sample who

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<sup>68</sup> Alexander G. Kemp and Sandra J. Galbraith, "Contributions to the Regional Economy: expenditure and employment," in John D. Hargreaves with Angela Forbes (eds.), *Aberdeen University 1945-1981 Regional Roles and National Needs* (Aberdeen, 1989), pp 19-46.

<sup>69</sup> See P.L. Payne, op. cit., for details of companies moving into the area, p. 24.

gained their first employment in this sector did so in England 1940-61, although the proportions had dropped in the later cohort to 18% for women and 24% for men. The growth in Scotland's public administration sector in recent decades probably accounts for this, combined with a shift in the type of employment pursued within this sector. In recent decades, the growth of local government has outstripped the Civil Service, with three quarters of both male and female Glasgow graduates within the public administration sector employed in local government 1962-84 compared with slightly over a half of women and a fifth of men 1940-61.<sup>71</sup> Many of these jobs in local government were as planning, development and housing officers, or social workers, welfare officers and careers officers, and there were more Scottish opportunities in these areas compared to a career in the Civil Service, which often meant moving to London. Comparison with UGC figures is complicated by the fact that the UGC categories lump local government and medicine together; however, it does seem that Glasgow had a somewhat smaller proportion of total graduates entering public administration, probably because of the higher proportion who were training to teach. Taking 1970 as an example year and considering female graduates, the UGC statistics show that in the UK as a whole 15% of total female graduates were entering local government authorities and hospital services, whilst the Glasgow University Appointments Committee found only about 5% of its female graduates entering government service and hospitals in the same year.

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<sup>70</sup> The public administration category incorporates local government, the Civil Service, the post office and British Telecom. (Although BT has since been privatised, it was still public for the time span covered by the questionnaire).

<sup>71</sup> Figures from Graduate Database.

One point should be added with regard to the Civil Service, and this was the impact the Second World War had upon female entry to the Service. The Ministry of Labour took over all university appointments work for the duration of the war and this enabled some female graduates to gain Civil Service appointments they would have been unlikely to gain in normal conditions. The Appointments Committee report of 1942 noted that the success of women graduates in the Administrative and Executive grades in the Home Service and in the Foreign Office was “most satisfactory” and between 1940 and 1945, 10% of women in the Graduate Database gained their first employment in the Civil Service compared to less than 1% in the decade after the end of the war (1945-55).<sup>72</sup> However, the 1942 report also noted that these opportunities posed a dilemma for women since, “the main difficulty is in choosing between immediate further preparation for a permanent appointment in some other career and the acceptance now of a temporary Civil Service post which, in all probability will come to an end with the end of war.”<sup>73</sup> The problem of the temporary nature of these appointments is clearly apparent since ten years after graduation, less than half of the women in the Graduate Database who had gained a wartime Civil Service appointment were still employed in the Civil Service, (those who had left having moved into teaching, industry or no employment).

After education, industry and public service, the health sector formed the next most popular first destination for female arts and science graduates. Of course just about all those graduates who became doctors had done the medical MB ChB degree, but as tables 5.2 - 5.4 demonstrate, a career in other aspects of

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

the medical profession provided an important outlet, in particular, for the female science graduate. One third of both ordinary and honours BSc women 1940-61 who went straight into employment were absorbed by this sector and over one in ten of postgraduate female scientists. These women became hospital clerks and administrators, specialists (such as psychologists) as well as nurses and researchers. Greenstein, commenting on the similarly important position of medicine for Oxford female science graduates after the Second World War, observes that this was not a result of the opportunities for women in medicine but rather a reflection of limited opportunities elsewhere, as well as of the small proportion of women studying science. He notes that as the proportion of women scientists rose, so too their proportion in medical careers declined.<sup>74</sup> This trend is apparent too in the Glasgow Graduate Database, with a drop from a third to a quarter in female non-postgraduate (ordinary) scientists in the medical sector 1962-84, although the decline for honours scientists was less noticeable. In terms of the geographical location of those who worked in the health service, it seems that the local area was able to provide sufficient employment opportunities to accommodate these graduates, the overwhelming majority working within 30 miles of Glasgow (nearly nine out of ten doing so irrespective of gender/cohort). Indeed tables 5.5 - 5.6 show that the health sector exported the lowest proportion of graduates to England after school teaching and law. Law is a peculiar case, however, in that the nature of the legal qualification which a Scottish graduate obtained, plus the differing Scottish and English legal systems, inhibited any drift south.

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<sup>73</sup> Glasgow University Appointments Committee, *Civil Service Report*, 27th April 1943.

We have now examined where graduates chose to work as well as the most important sectors they chose to enter. But within these sectors, it is important to establish what kind of work they were performing, since broad economic categories can conceal great inequalities. Finding out what proportion of men and women entered "industry" may hide the fact that all the women are technicians and all the men senior managers. So we need to look at job type, or hierarchy, to gain a greater insight into graduate employment. For instance, taking industry, examination of hierarchies within that sector reveals that the variety of industrial occupation female graduates were obtaining expanded noticeably in the post-war period. Analysis of the Graduate Database shows that between 1940 and 1960, of the women (all degree disciplines) who gained a job in industry, only 3% gained a managerial job as their first employment, 44% worked as researchers of some kind, 15% were clerks or secretaries. Amongst the male graduates over the same time span, 7% were managers, 23% were researchers, 3% were clerks, and 30% became engineers - an occupation which barely registered as a female career at this time. However, by the 1970s and 1980s the situation for women was much improved. Of female graduates in industry 1970-84, 17% became managers or trainee managers immediately after graduation - in retail, theatre, banking and hotels. Of the remaining female graduates the job profile was also very different amongst this more recent cohort. Whilst, as we have seen, most of the 1940-60 graduates were researchers, chemists, personal assistants or secretaries, of those who graduated 1970-84, many became computer programmers (12%), accountants (10%), or worked in

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<sup>74</sup> D. I. Greenstein, *op. cit.*, p.76.

marketing (9%) or the media and publishing (including a TV presenter, radio producer and assistant newspaper editor); there was only one secretary. It is indicative of the decline of the secretarial career for female graduates that the UGC abandoned the category of “secretarial training” in its employment statistics from 1966. The significant proportion of Glasgow female graduates which accountancy began to take in recent decades mirrored national developments in this area. April Carter cites accountancy as an example of an occupation where the previously nominal representation of women was greatly expanded particularly towards the end of the 1970s and into the 1980s, and notes that the UK proportion of women among university graduates entering this profession rose from 8.2% in 1970 to 27.5% in 1980.<sup>75</sup>

The growth in “new” occupations such as accountancy and computer programming is shown in tables 5.8 and 5.9 below, which give a complete breakdown of the types of work performed by all MA and BSc questionnaire respondents. As with tables 5.1 - 5.4 the figures are divided into two roughly equal cohorts, 1940-61 and 1962-84 and are split by gender and level of degree - i.e. whether ordinary or honours.

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<sup>75</sup> April Carter, *The Politics of Women's Rights* (London, 1988), p. 83.

**Table 5.8<sup>76</sup>**

**Type of work pursued by MA graduates (%)**

	1940-61				1962-84			
	Women		Men		Women		Men	
	MA (ord)	MA (hons)	MA (ord)	MA (hons)	MA (ord)	MA (hons)	MA (ord)	MA (hons)
School teacher	77%	55%	67%	60%	57%	36%	39%	43%
Higher education teacher	0%	3%	0%	8%	0%	7%	2%	8%
Research	3%	6%	2%	5%	1%	4%	2%	5%
Social work	2%	0%	0%	0%	4%	3%	3%	1%
Library/museum	3%	10%	0%	0%	3%	8%	2%	1%
Medical specialist (not Dr)	1%	0%	0%	0%	3%	8%	0%	1%
Other professional	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Managerial/admin.	6%	10%	7%	16%	17%	15%	21%	27%
Accountant	0%	0%	9%	3%	1%	5%	3%	4%
Engineer	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Computer programmer	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	0%
Artistic/media	1%	0%	2%	3%	1%	0%	7%	0%
Secretarial/clerical	7%	16%	11%	3%	10%	12%	11%	6%
Manual	1%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	6%	3%
Voluntary	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N =	150	70	68	83	120	95	81	109

<sup>76</sup> The hierarchical categories were subdivided as follows:

**School teacher:** primary, secondary, TEFL etc.;

**Higher education teacher:** FE and other college teachers, university and polytechnic lecturers;

**Research:** scientist, research officer; **Social work:** social services worker;

**Library/museum:** librarian, archivist, museum curator;

**Medical specialist (not Dr):** any health-related profession other than doctor, for example: osteopath, psychologist, dentist, midwife, nurse;

**Other professional:** any other professional types of work not covered elsewhere, for example: architect, surveyor, pilot;

**Managerial/admin.:** manager, administrator, assistant manager, sales manager, departmental head, controller, university registrar etc.; **Accountant:** accountants and chartered accountants;

**Engineer:** all types of engineers, e.g. chemical, electrical, mechanical, civil.

**Computer programmer:** computer programmer, systems analyst, information technology specialist;

**Artistic/media:** actor, artist, author, musician, conductor, editor, producer, journalist, reporter;

**Secretarial/clerical:** clerk, secretary, receptionist, proof-reader etc.;

**Manual:** all skilled and unskilled manual occupations, for example, machine operator, fitter, gardener, sales assistant, waiter/tress, barman/maid.

The categories included have been chosen for their particular importance to graduates. For example, school teaching and higher education teaching have been differentiated because the proportion of graduates entering these two categories warrants separate consideration. For male graduates from the earlier cohort whose first occupation was military service, their type of work 10 years after graduation has been taken. Graduates whose type of work was unknown have not been included, neither have those female graduates whose type of work was as a housewife. The BSc graduates comprise those who took pure science subjects only.



**Table 5.9**

**Type of work pursued by BSc graduates (%)**

	1940-61				1962-84			
	Women		Men		Women		Men	
	BSc (ord)	BSc (hons)	BSc (ord)	BSc (hons)	BSc (ord)	BSc (hons)	BSc (ord)	BSc (hons)
School teacher	52%	22%	28%	10%	50%	22%	36%	18%
Higher education teacher	2%	15%	4%	8%	0%	8%	4%	2%
Research	19%	43%	28%	67%	7%	30%	0%	43%
Social work	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Library/museum	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Medical specialist (not Dr)	8%	13%	8%	0%	10%	13%	0%	12%
Other professional	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%	4%	2%
Managerial/admin.	4%	2%	24%	2%	9%	5%	8%	4%
Accountant	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	4%	2%
Engineer	1%	0%	0%	6%	0%	4%	14%	7%
Computer programmer	2%	0%	4%	0%	12%	2%	17%	7%
Artistic/media	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Secretarial/clerical	13%	4%	0%	0%	9%	8%	10%	2%
Manual	0%	0%	2%	6%	1%	0%	3%	1%
Voluntary	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>N</i> =	102	82	65	88	105	99	96	84

**Source:** Graduate Database

In some cases, the figures indicate what one might expect. For example, they show research to have been a much bigger employer for science graduates, both men and women; and within the education sector, they show that university teaching was much more prevalent among honours than ordinary graduates. Library and museum work are of little importance to men and computing proves to have been a popular option for ordinary male and female scientists. At the managerial and administrative level, men appear to do better than women on the whole (especially in arts) although, perhaps surprisingly, ordinary science graduates of whatever gender seemed to have more managerial success than their honours colleagues. Possibly this is because without a more specialist science background, ordinary science graduates went into administration whilst their

more specialist honours colleagues went into research and development. Also surprisingly, amongst arts women, honours graduates seemed more likely to do secretarial/clerical work than ordinary graduates. One explanation for this might be that honours graduates stayed on for the additional year in the hope of getting a better job, but were then disappointed and had to take a clerical post after all.

There was a slight overall rise from 1940-61 to 1962-84 in the proportion of both male and female arts graduates who ended up in a clerical or manual occupation, this is probably due to a worsening of the graduate employment market. We have already noted the peculiar problems faced by the West of Scotland economy in the post-war decades, but more generally, the British economy was experiencing problems by the 1970s which spilled over into the graduate employment sector. There was a sharp cutback by many industrial employers in the early 1970s and this was followed by cuts in public spending and especially teacher training towards the end of that decade. In 1972 concern about graduate unemployment prompted the London School of Economics to organise a series of seminars to examine the changing patterns of graduate employment and in the volume which accompanied these seminars, Harriet Greenaway noted that:

“the supply of graduates and the demand for them in traditional ‘graduate jobs’ began to diverge during the 1960s and continued to do so to such an extent that in 1971 the newspapers discovered that there was a ‘crisis.’ ‘Graduate unemployment’ demanded attention when 5.4% of 1970 graduates still sought employment six months after graduating. This compared with 2.3% in 1966.”<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Harriet Greenaway, “The Impact of Educational Policies” in Harriet Greenaway and Gareth Williams (eds.), *Patterns of Change in Graduate Employment* (London, 1973), p. 1.

In recognition of this new problem, the UGC introduced the category 'temporary work' in 1972 to cater for graduate under-employment. If those men and women in the Graduate Database who left Glasgow University between the years of 1970 and 1984 are considered, we find that 7% of female graduates and 4% of male graduates took their first job at a 'temporary' non-graduate level - with several sales assistants and bar workers plus a bus conductor, lorry driver and a waitress.<sup>78</sup>

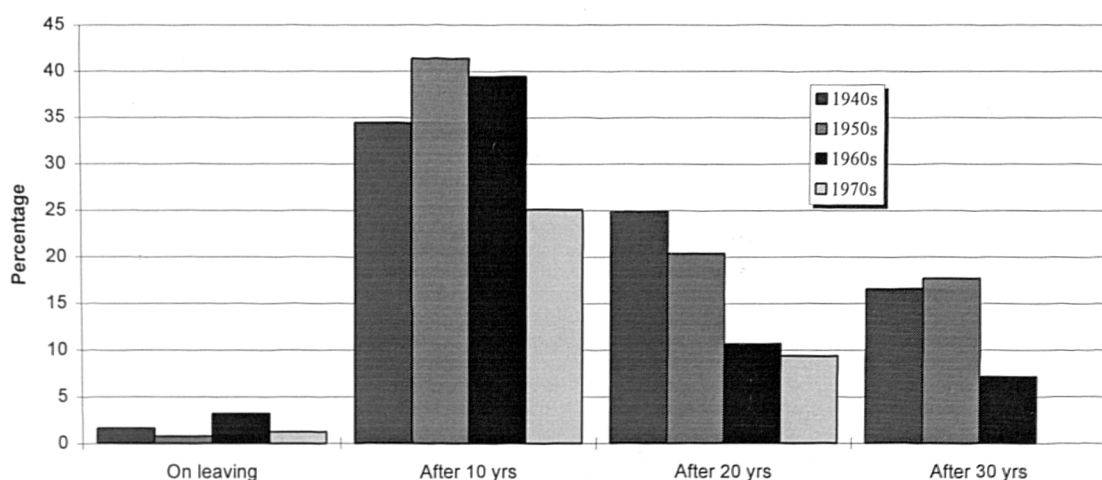
Despite an increase in those who could not get 'graduate level' jobs, a look at the trends in women's employment over the two cohorts shows that female graduates (whether ordinary or honours graduates), were more likely to gain a job at managerial level between 1962-84 than they were 1940-61. Partly this has been the result of factors already discussed - changed employer attitudes, greater ambition amongst female graduates and so on. An important factor also, has been the changing patterns of female employment. Figure 5.2 below shows that there has been a clear trend in the post-war era for women to remain in the workforce for longer, with a lessening of the traditional break for a spell as full-time wife and mother amongst recent graduates. Only a quarter of 1970s female questionnaire respondents were not working ten years after graduation compared with almost 35% in the 1940s and over 40% in the 1950s.

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<sup>78</sup> A similar observation has been made for Aberdeen University in Alexander G. Kemp and Sandra J. Galbraith, *op. cit.*, who note that in the 1970s and 1980s there was a growth in the number of Aberdeen graduates "working in activities not normally associated with graduates. Taxi drivers and shop assistants are examples," p. 32.

Figure 5.2<sup>79</sup>

Percentage of Glasgow University female graduates from the 1940s-1970s who were not in paid work after leaving university and at 10 yearly intervals



Source: Graduate Database

This trend cannot be accounted for by a decline in the popularity of marriage, since if anything, marriage was becoming more popular. Almost three quarters of 1940s female graduates married, whilst of those who graduated in the 1960s, almost nine in every ten did so. This upward trend has been noted in studies of other universities, Janet Howarth finding that whilst 71% of women up at Oxford in the 1930s married, 84% of the 1950s cohort did so.<sup>80</sup> It was also a trend observable in the population at large, Jane Lewis noting that marriage proved increasingly popular in the 1960s.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup> The percentages relate to women who described themselves as unemployed, housewives or voluntary workers. No percentage is given for the 1970s cohort 30 years after graduation, since none of them have yet reached this stage in their life. This graph can be compared with a similar one for women at university in Oxford in Janet Howarth, *op. cit.*, p. 372.

<sup>80</sup> Janet Howarth, *ibid.*, p.369.

<sup>81</sup> Jane Lewis, *Women in Britain Since 1945* (Oxford, 1992), p. 43. Lewis notes that the marriage rate peaked in Britain in the early 1970s and then began to fall off. Again Glasgow's graduate women followed trends for women more generally, with the proportion of female graduates who married 1970-84 falling to just under three quarters, (figures from Graduate Database).

Steve Kendrick has noted that the entry of more married women into the labour force has been, “the most important single shift in the labour market”<sup>82</sup> since the Second World War and it was largely changed social attitudes which made possible this increase in married women in the workforce. As Arregger put it in 1966,

“one social pressure has weakened within living memory. Older women will remember the time when working at all after marriage would have been regarded as an undesirable eccentricity unless it was *financially* necessary, when husbands, quite apart from anybody else, would have objected strongly because of the implication that they could not adequately support their wives.”<sup>83</sup>

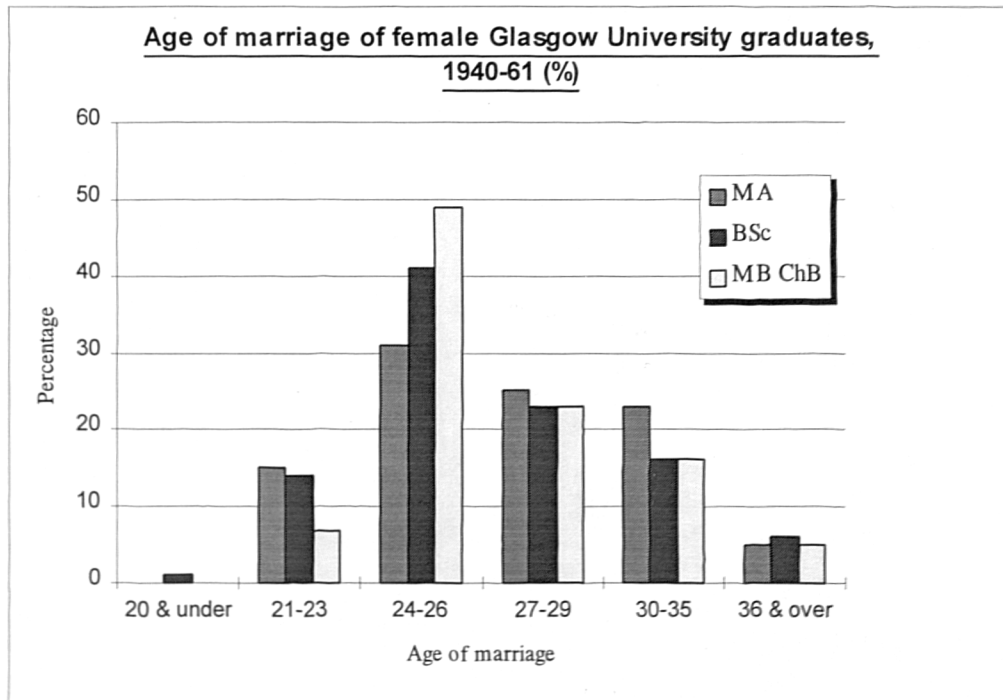
Not only was marriage becoming more popular, it was being entered into at a younger age, as is shown by figures 5.3 and 5.4 below which show the age of marriage for women at Glasgow University, 1940-61 and 1962-84, in three subject areas - arts, science and medicine.

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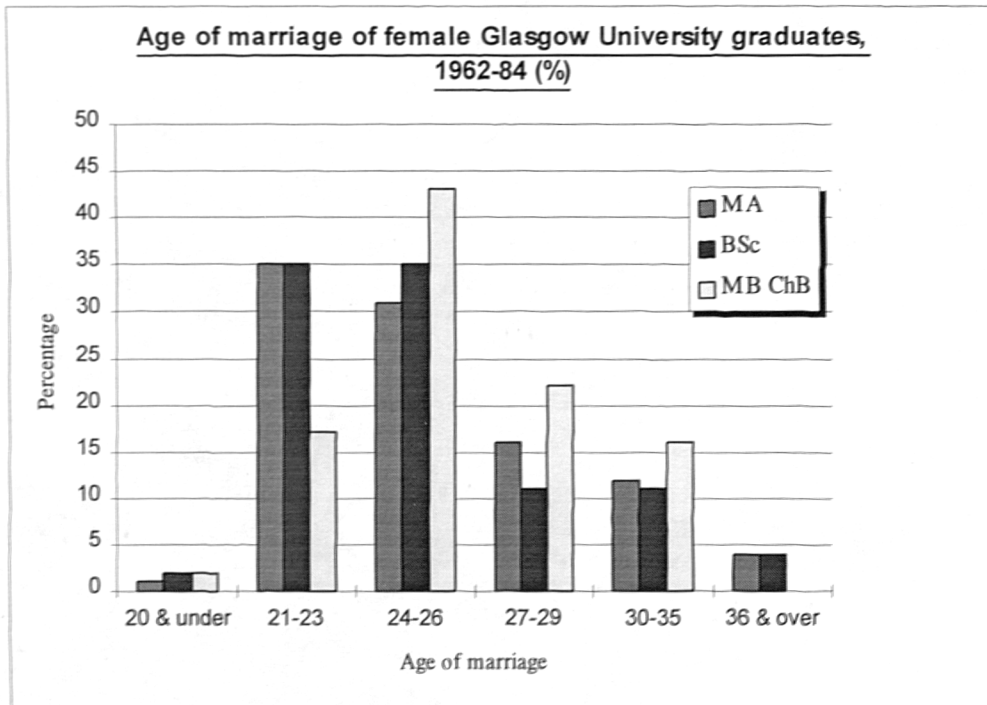
<sup>82</sup> Steve Kendrick, “Occupational Change In Modern Scotland,” *Scottish Government Yearbook* (Edinburgh, 1986), p. 244.

<sup>83</sup> C.E. Arregger, *op. cit.*, p.78.

**Figure 5.3**



**Figure 5.4**



**Source: Graduate Database**

Whilst the most popular age bracket to marry in during the earlier cohort was 24-26 years old, this had fallen to 21-23 years old by the time of the second cohort for arts and science female graduates. However, the pattern for medics was slightly different and they tended to marry consistently slightly later, no doubt a reflection of the fact that a medical degree takes longer to complete. In this movement towards earlier marriage, graduate women were following trends among women in general - with the average age of marriage for women in Britain falling from 24.6 in 1951 to 22.6 in 1971.<sup>84</sup> Given the rise in the popularity of marriage amongst graduates, as well as a decline in the age at which marriage took place, it is just as well that legislation in the immediate post-war years lifted marriage bars in many occupations. The marriage bar in the Civil Service was lifted in 1946 and of particular importance to women was the lifting of the marriage bar in teaching in 1945.

However, although changes in attitudes and changes in the law meant that marriage was rapidly ceasing to become an impediment to women pursuing a paid occupation, the problem of combining motherhood with a job continued. Of those women in the Graduate Database who got married, over three quarters of them had one or more children in both 1940-61 and 1962-84 cohorts, with little difference between arts and science graduates. But coupled with this we have seen that the proportion of women who described themselves as housewives 10 years after graduation was declining from the 1950s (figure 5.2) and this suggests that the increasing number of graduates who were choosing to marry, and

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<sup>84</sup> Jane Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 44. She notes that more recently the trend in age of marriage has been moving upwards again.

choosing to marry younger, were able (or were prepared to manage) to combine motherhood and paid employment more successfully.

Given that age of marriage was tending to decline, it might be expected that the age at which a graduate had her first child might also decline and a comparison over the two cohorts reveals that the age at which a female graduate had her first child was indeed decreasing. Table 5.10 below shows this pattern for arts and science graduates.

**Table 5.10**

**Age at which first child was born, MA and BSc graduates (%)**

Age Group	MA graduates 1940-61	MA graduates 1962-84	BSc graduates 1940-61	BSc graduates 1962-84
20 and under	0%	1%	1%	1%
21 - 23	4%	2%	2%	2%
24 - 26	18%	18%	25%	32%
27 - 29	31%	41%	33%	36%
30 - 35	39%	34%	29%	26%
36 and over	8%	4%	11%	3%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>N=</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>133</i>	<i>137</i>

**Source:** Graduate Database

For MA graduates, the main change was a decline in those women waiting until they were over 30 before having a child, a change which was compensated for by an increase in those having their first child in the 27-29 age group. The pattern was similar for scientists in terms of a decline in first-time mothers over the age of 30, but here this decline was mostly compensated for by an increase in first-time mothers in the 24-26 age group (coupled with a small increase in the 27-29 age group). So we can see that earlier marriage was leading to a tendency for a graduate to start her family earlier, but this was accompanied by a greater tendency to remain economically active. Legislative changes in recent years



have been a help here in enabling a woman to juggle career and family more successfully. Whilst one graduate from the 1950s commented of her generation that, “there was no maternity leave then, you gave up your job and did part-time work afterwards,”<sup>85</sup> this situation was greatly improved in 1975 with the introduction of the Employment Protection Act. The Act required employers to grant 6 weeks maternity leave and to hold open the job for 29 weeks after the baby was born so that a woman was guaranteed a right to reinstatement. This was a very important piece of legislation in helping women to combine work and family.<sup>86</sup>

Of course, many of those women who combined a job with a family did so by working part-time and there is also evidence to suggest that women tended to retreat after some years from occupations which were less easy to combine with a family, and to move into areas - notably school teaching - which were more flexible and which provided more opportunities for part-time work.<sup>87</sup> Tables 5.11 and 5.12 below show that twenty years after graduation, the education sector had gained at the expense of, in particular, industry, commerce and finance.

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<sup>85</sup> Female (ordinary) arts graduate, 1956, from questionnaire, No. 258.

<sup>86</sup> April Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>87</sup> Unfortunately information on whether a graduate's job was part-time or full-time was not entered into the Graduate Database since time constraints meant that some information had to be left out at the data input stage. However, this information was asked for on the questionnaire, and so can be entered and analysed at a later date.

Table 5.11<sup>88</sup>

Occupation of female MA graduates on first graduating and then at 10-yearly intervals (%)

MA graduates 1940-61					MA graduates 1962-85		
	<u>1st job</u>	<u>10 yrs on</u>	<u>20 yrs on</u>	<u>30 yrs on</u>	<u>1st job</u>	<u>10 yrs on</u>	<u>20 yrs on</u>
Education	73%	52%	60%	68%	57%	42%	66%
Public service	11%	3%	7%	7%	14%	13%	9%
Ind/comm/fin	12%	6%	3%	5%	20%	11%	9%
Health	2%	2%	4%	3%	6%	6%	3%
Other job	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%
Home maker	1%	37%	25%	17%	1%	27%	12%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>N=</i>	<i>188</i>	<i>185</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>167</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>194</i>	<i>116</i>

Table 5.12

Occupation of female BSc graduates on first graduating and then at 10-yearly intervals (%)

BSc graduates 1940-61					BSc graduates 1962-85		
	<u>1st job</u>	<u>10 yrs on</u>	<u>20 yrs on</u>	<u>30 yrs on</u>	<u>1st job</u>	<u>10 yrs on</u>	<u>20 yrs on</u>
Education	54%	35%	55%	51%	55%	34%	56%
Public service	5%	4%	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
Ind/comm/fin	19%	5%	4%	7%	22%	12%	13%
Health	18%	14%	16%	19%	16%	11%	10%
Other job	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	3%
Home maker	3%	42%	21%	18%	1%	36%	13%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>N=</i>	<i>192</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>185</i>	<i>169</i>	<i>192</i>	<i>190</i>	<i>116</i>

Source: Graduate Database

This pattern of “retreat from industry” has been found in other university studies. For example, the national survey of 1960 graduates carried out by Kelsall et al found patterns of segregation even more entrenched some years after graduation.<sup>89</sup> The survey found that whilst in 1960, 61% of female graduates were employed in the education sector, only six years later the proportion had risen to 68%, suggesting that “a significant proportion of those women who initiated careers in fields other than teaching encountered difficulties which led

<sup>88</sup> Occupation 30 years after graduation has only been shown for the 1940-61 cohort because many of the 1962-84 cohort had not yet reached this stage in their career.

them to return to the traditionally 'feminine' and female-dominated sphere of education."<sup>90</sup> This exodus from industry was also observed by Janet Howarth in her study of post-war Oxford graduates; she found that most graduates "moved out of (industry) as they acquired family responsibilities or ran into barriers to promotion."<sup>91</sup>

So although a look at the first job pursued by female graduates shows that they were moving into a wider variety of occupations in recent decades, a look at their career development over the next ten or twenty years shows a narrowing back into the education sector again. Another cautionary note should be sounded with regard to women's progress into a broader spread of occupations. Within particular employment sectors, women continued to be concentrated in certain occupations, and one finds that, "the finer the distinctions the more segregation one will 'catch.'"<sup>92</sup> We have already seen that within the education sector women were disproportionately clustered in primary teaching with far fewer headmistresses than headmasters, and similar patterns of segregation can be observed elsewhere. For instance, Chisholm and Woodward found that in 1973, those women employed in public administration were disproportionately represented in certain sectors - particularly local government, hospital services and museums and libraries compared with their male colleagues, and within these sectors women tended to be in the lower occupational grades. They found, for example, that of those women working in the Civil Service, graduate women

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<sup>89</sup> R.K. Kelsall, A. Poole and A. Kuhn, *Six Years After* (Sheffield, 1970).

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164.

<sup>91</sup> Janet Howarth, *op. cit.*, p. 370.

<sup>92</sup> Gross, quoted in Lynne Chisholm and Diana Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

proportionately exceeded men only in the lower-status executive grades.<sup>93</sup> Possibly the situation has improved in more recent decades, but Carter's figures for membership of some professional bodies in 1988 suggest the persistence of segregation. Women formed only 14% of the Law Society, 19% of the Institute of Bankers and 0.8% of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers in this year.<sup>94</sup> Indeed, Kendrick has argued that, in proportional terms, women have improved their position in the professions very little over the century. He cites the relative exclusion of women from the professions as "the most important aspect of occupational gender segregation." His figures show that in 1981, only 1.1% of total female employment in Scotland was in the professions, whereas the figure for men was 5.8%.<sup>95</sup>

So far we have studied the social and geographical origins plus career destinations of Glasgow's post-war graduates in isolation. But it is interesting to observe that there existed strong relationships between these variables. For instance, it has already been noted that degree subject studied had an important bearing on later geographical mobility, with engineering and science graduates far more likely to move to England or overseas to take up employment. Equally, a strong relationship existed between social background and type of degree subject studied and planned future career. Several authors have focused on these links between social class and career aspirations,<sup>96</sup> and have found that students

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 165. Job descriptions in the Graduate Database are not subtle enough to provide similar Civil Service material for Glasgow.

<sup>94</sup> April Carter, *op. cit.*, p.83.

<sup>95</sup> Steve Kendrick, *op. cit.*

<sup>96</sup> See for example, A. Kelly, "Family Background, Subject Specialisation and Occupational Recruitment of Scottish University Students: Some Patterns and Trends," *Higher Education*, Vol. 5, 1976, pp. 177-188; Andrew McPherson and Graham Atherton, "Graduate Teachers in Scotland - A Sociological Analysis of Recruitment to Teaching Amongst recent Graduates of the Four Ancient Scottish Universities," *Scottish Educational Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1, May

from working-class backgrounds were more likely to take vocational degrees - particularly engineering and education degrees - whilst those from higher social origins were more likely to be found in Law and Medical faculties. For example, J. Abbott found that in Newcastle University's Medical school, working-class students made up only 16% of the total in 1964,<sup>97</sup> whilst with regard to graduate recruitment to teaching, M<sup>c</sup>Pherson and Atherton found (in a sample of 1968 Scottish graduates) that whilst only 25.6% of male arts students and 50.3% of female arts students from non-manual backgrounds entered a College of Education, the figures for those from manual backgrounds were significantly higher - 42.5% and 64.8% respectively.<sup>98</sup> In her article on graduate career patterns, A. Kelly cites some reasons why these patterns existed. They include a likelihood that children from middle-class backgrounds would have more knowledge of professions other than teaching, as well as the fact that those from a middle-class background were less likely to be troubled by the pressing need to earn money as soon as possible. Meanwhile, a teaching or engineering degree offers quicker financial rewards to working-class students whose parents may not be able to afford the extra financial outlay required for a longer law or medical training (a medical degree took 6 years to complete at Glasgow, reduced to 5 years in 1972).

An examination of the Graduate Database indicates that the general patterns outlined above were in evidence in Glasgow. For both men and women, the tendency for those from working-class backgrounds to enter teaching at a

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1970, pp. 35-55; J. Abbott, "Students' Social Class in Three Northern Universities," *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 16, 1965, pp. 206-220.

<sup>97</sup> J. Abbott, *ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> M<sup>c</sup>Pherson and Atherton, *op. cit.*, 1970.

higher rate than was the case for their middle-class colleagues is apparent, with a corresponding lower working-class representation in professional occupations such as law and medicine. Table 5.13 below shows the first occupations of male and female graduates in two broad middle-class and working-class groups.

**Table 5.13<sup>99</sup>**

**First occupation of working-class and middle-class graduates, all degree subjects (%)**

	1940-61				1962-84			
	W/C women	M/C women	W/C men	M/C men	W/C women	M/C women	W/C men	M/C men
School teacher	59%	37%	39%	16%	45%	30%	31%	16%
Higher education teacher	3%	3%	2%	6%	2%	2%	6%	4%
Research	10%	15%	16%	17%	7%	12%	11%	13%
Lawyer	3%	7%	5%	7%	5%	7%	6%	11%
Library/museum	1%	3%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%
Dr and other medical specialist	13%	20%	13%	26%	15%	19%	7%	13%
Other professional	1%	1%	5%	5%	1%	1%	2%	3%
Managerial/admin.	2%	5%	8%	8%	9%	10%	11%	14%
Accountant	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%	3%
Engineer	0%	1%	10%	9%	1%	1%	11%	13%
Computer programmer	1%	0%	0%	1%	4%	3%	3%	2%
Artistic/media	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Secretarial/clerical/manual	5%	8%	3%	4%	9%	9%	7%	6%
Voluntary	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>N =</i>	<i>135</i>	<i>261</i>	<i>127</i>	<i>209</i>	<i>136</i>	<i>264</i>	<i>178</i>	<i>236</i>

**Source:** Graduate Database

The figures do show some change over time, with the tendency for working-class women, in particular, to enter school teaching lessening quite considerably over the 1940-61 and 1962-84 cohorts.<sup>100</sup> Of course, the proportion

<sup>99</sup> Working-class occupations are defined here as routine non-manual occupations, all manual occupations and small shopkeepers. Middle-class occupations are the professions, and managerial and administrative posts.

<sup>100</sup> The decline in the tendency for male working-class graduates to enter school teaching was, however, somewhat less over the two cohorts - a fall of 8%, and there was no change in the

of graduates who were choosing a career in teaching was declining anyway in recent decades, so some fall off in teacher training amongst working-class students is no surprise. What is of more interest is that the decline in entry to teaching amongst working-class women was twice that experienced amongst middle-class women (a decline of 14% for working-class and 7% for middle-class women over the two cohorts). This suggests that the importance of class in determining the career choices of female graduates at Glasgow was perhaps lessening, with women from a working-class background more able to buck the trend and steer away from the traditional working-class route to a respectable career as a teacher. Was this trend observable for all classes of female graduates though? Or was it just the high achievers from working-class origins who managed to steer away from teaching? A comment made by M<sup>c</sup>Pherson and Atherton in 1970 certainly implies that class of degree may have been important. They note that, "being female, manual and in arts - the cumulative pressure to teach which acts on such students is so strong that it can only be ignored by students who attain what is, for such a class of students, an unusually high educational attainment."<sup>101</sup> No firm conclusions can be drawn with regard to Glasgow female graduates on this point, since the number of first class degrees obtained by those women who came from a working-class background in the sample is not large enough for reliable analysis. However, if working-class men and women are considered together, the number of firsts is larger, and there is some indication that teaching amongst this group of high achievers was rapidly

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proportion (16%) of middle-class men becoming teachers. Possibly, the relatively small proportion of middle-class men who entered teaching as early as 1940-61 meant there was unlikely to be much change in by the 1962-84 cohort.

<sup>101</sup> Andrew M<sup>c</sup>Pherson and Graham Atherton, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

losing popularity. In the 1940-61 cohort, 20% of the working-class men and women with first class degrees opted for school teaching but by 1962-84 none of them did; instead, almost 20% entered university or college teaching.

No study of social background and career choice is complete without a look at the phenomenon of “self-recruitment” - the tendency for offspring to follow their father’s footsteps into a particular profession. Kelly points out that this tendency is less strong for women than for men, chiefly because women students are concentrated in Arts Faculties and comparatively few study engineering, dentistry, architecture etc., so trends are difficult to detect.<sup>102</sup> Nonetheless, she did find evidence of self-recruitment for women to law and medicine. Examination of the sample of Glasgow graduates reveals that those male graduates who entered medicine 1940-61, 22% had fathers in medicine. For the later 1962-84 cohort, the proportion was 29% whilst the figures for female graduates were 4% and 11% respectively.<sup>103</sup> Therefore for both men and women, a slight increase in self-recruitment is discernible. However, for law, the extent of self-recruitment seems to have declined, with 11% of male graduates who became solicitors or barristers 1940-61 coming from a legal family, and 7% 1962-84 (the numbers of women in each cohort who had a father in law are rather too small for reliable analysis). The consistently high level, and even increase, in self-recruitment to medicine may be a reflection of what Kelly refers to as a

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<sup>102</sup> A. Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>103</sup> Medicine here is defined as all those who became doctors as well as other medical specialisms, such as osteopathy.



rumoured preference in university medical faculties for sons and daughters who come from a medical background.<sup>104</sup>

What overall conclusions can we draw about the nature of graduate careers since 1939 for Glasgow graduates, and especially female graduates? In summing up the trends which have been observed, it would seem that two factors had a particularly important impact on career choices. The first was the desire of most graduates, drawn from the local West of Scotland region and deeply rooted in their local area, to want to remain in the Glasgow area to work. As one 1981 graduate put it, “you lived, studied and expected to work in Glasgow.”<sup>105</sup> This meant that graduates were very dependent upon the nature of the local economy, and this is the second factor which had great importance. As we have seen, many areas of the Glasgow economy were struggling in the post-war period and therefore opportunities in business were less plentiful than they were South of the border. In addition, some Scottish employers were suspicious of taking on women in the immediate post-war decades, and although women in Britain as a whole experienced difficulties in gaining positions of authority and responsibility in industry at this time, there is evidence to suggest that prejudice was generally more entrenched in Scotland. As a result of the desire to remain in the Glasgow area and the sparser business opportunities locally, Glasgow’s women tended to enter teacher training at a higher rate than was the case for Britain as a whole.

We have also seen a distinct geographical pattern of employment emerging, dependent upon the type of career a graduate undertook. The local area did

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<sup>104</sup> A. Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 184. If such a preference exists with regard to recruitment to Medical

particularly well out of graduates who were entering professions such as law, medicine and of course, teaching, whilst those who wanted a career in public service or industry were much more likely to move to England - though there was some halting in this process in more recent decades. These points apply equally well to male graduates, but with some important qualifications: men did not experience the same difficulties in convincing employers to take them on that were faced by women, they were more likely to leave Scotland for work (especially science and engineering graduates), and they were less likely than their female colleagues to enter teacher training.

However, the tendency for female graduates overwhelmingly to enter teaching has lessened in recent decades and we have seen that there has been much progress in career opportunities for women since the war. Whilst the 1950s female graduate might still encounter the question, “do you want to teach or do secretarial work?”<sup>106</sup> on visiting the University Appointments Service, more recent graduates (and particularly those from the later 1960s onwards), have taken advantage of a far wider range of careers, helped by changes in the economy which have created ‘new’ graduate jobs - such as chartered accountancy and computer programming.

Nonetheless, comparison between Glasgow University and the rest of the UK does suggest that women in Glasgow were slower to break out of the traditional female graduate destination of teaching than was the case generally. Although the proportion of Glasgow female graduates embarking upon a teacher training course was falling in recent decades just as it was in the rest of the UK, it

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Faculties, it is unclear how this preference operates.

seems to have been falling at a slower rate; the most likely explanation for this being the tardiness of Scottish industry in coming round to the idea of taking on women graduates, forcing them to opt for teaching if they wanted to remain in Scotland, which so many did. Also, it seems that the persistence of the ordinary degree, always more popular among female than male graduates, was crucial in prolonging the pattern of a higher than average entry to teaching. However, the recent decline in the ordinary degree, coupled with changes in employer attitudes and an increase in the number of female graduates have all helped to bring Glasgow more into line with the rest of the UK.

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<sup>105</sup> Female (honours) law graduate, 1981, from questionnaire, No. 1487.

<sup>106</sup> St. Hugh's graduate, quoted in Sarah Curtis, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

## Conclusion

The post-war era ushered in what has proved to be the most dramatic phase of university development in Britain, with a combination of student demand and government policy producing unparalleled expansion in the university sector. A good deal of this pressure for admission came from female students whose rising aspirations led them to aim for a university degree, rather than the more traditional route to teacher training college. This thesis has examined the response of one particular institution to these expansionist pressures, and has emphasised the position and role of women, with comparative references to the experiences of male students. In this context, the distinctiveness of Glasgow University in shaping the experiences of female students has been highlighted. Whilst recognising that female students were affected by, and responded to, national trends apparent at all British universities, it has been shown that the distinctiveness of Glasgow University, and of the West of Scotland region, gave a particular local colour to their experiences.

Chapter One charted the dimensions of the expansion in student numbers at the University, and the pattern observed in Glasgow - of wartime dislocation from 1939-45, followed by a post-war glut of students 1945-51, steady growth throughout the 1950s, and then more rapid growth from the 1960s - was one which was reflected elsewhere. But the early post-war rise in student numbers was largely sustained by men, and the take-off in female numbers did not occur until the 1960s. Factors such as a bias towards male students in the distribution of post-war Further Education and Training grants as well as the post-war emphasis on science and technology (set in motion by the Percy and Barlow Reports and underpinned by the Robbins Report)

were shown to be detrimental to a rise in female numbers in the 1940s and 1950s, at Glasgow as elsewhere. However the early post-war emphasis on science was finally relaxed in the late 1960s and both the numbers of women and their proportion in the university sector rose steadily from about 1960. It was shown that in comparison with the average for British universities, the proportion of women at Glasgow University (and in Scotland as a whole) tended to be somewhat higher from the late 1960s, a situation which can be attributed to a schooling system which possessed features that were beneficial to girls.

The impressive growth in female numbers at the University was sustained throughout the 1970s and 1980s; by 1987, the proportion of female students was approaching half of the student body and there had been an almost six-fold increase in numbers of women since 1939 (compared to a three-fold increase in total student numbers). But this impressive growth rate was not achieved without some misgivings on the part of the University authorities: and there was some tension between local and national university policy. Whilst concerns about overcrowding and the lack of available space in the built up West End of Glasgow tempered the Senate's enthusiasm for student expansion, different faculties responded in different ways, since the degree of pressure from applicants was experienced unevenly in different departments. It has been seen that pressure in the 1960s and 1970s at the University came more from women than from men and therefore more in arts and social sciences than in science and technology. The response of the Arts Faculty to this pressure was to put up its entrance standards, but also to welcome expansion. So whilst the number of arts places increased, simultaneously women found that

they needed better exam results to get in. Meanwhile the University's Science and Engineering Faculties were unsure of expansion since the pool of well-qualified applicants did not seem to be increasing, but they succumbed nonetheless to government pressure to expand.

In recent decades, although female students continued to favour arts and social sciences over other subjects, an increasing proportion began to opt for science, medicine, law and to a lesser extent, technology. But only in medicine did their increasing presence cause serious concern. Fears about the long medical training being wasted on a woman who might leave the profession for motherhood after a few years led to the operation of a quota system for female applicants, not lifted until the late 1970s. Other universities also imposed similar restrictions on female admissions to their Medical Faculties.

Just as government encouragement for expansion in higher education did not always sit easily with Glasgow University, so too the UGC's desire to promote residential universities recruiting from a national pool of applicants was at odds with a University which relied so heavily on a local student body, most of whom lived at home. Chapter Two examined in more depth what kind of students Glasgow University recruited and explored how the school, social and geographical backgrounds of its students shifted after 1939 as a result of the interrelation of local and national university policy, as well as local demographic factors.

In 1939, three quarters of the student body came from within 30 miles of the University, had attended either a local Education Authority or grant-aided school (the latter contributing a disproportionately large share of recruits to Glasgow

University as a result of their selectivity and academic bias) and a majority of this student body - roughly two thirds - were middle-class. There were some gender differences, with female students more likely to be middle-class and to come from the local area and also some social differences, with Glasgow having a higher working-class proportion than the British average. This can be attributed to a combination of: the cheapness of living at home and attending the local university, a somewhat more egalitarian secondary schooling system than that of England and a higher proportion of manual workers in Scotland. There was a pattern of considerable continuity in student backgrounds throughout the post-war period, with the majority of students still coming from local, middle-class homes in the 1980s, but within this broad picture of continuity, important changes had taken place. In particular, the geographic mix of the student body had widened significantly, with the pace of change accelerating in the 1980s. Nonetheless, women continued to remain more local than men, a reflection in particular of the kinds of degrees popular with foreign students (notably science, engineering and postgraduate studies, areas in which male students were always more prevalent). The proportion of overseas students and students from further afield in the UK was increased largely through the specific recruitment drives which the University began to undertake in recent decades. Falling local population and the lure of high overseas student fees in difficult financial times from the late 1970s prompted the University to widen its catchment area; the decision to join UCCA in 1984 confirmed the shift in University policy.

A shift from three-quarters (1939) to just under three-fifths (1985) in the proportion of students coming from within 30 miles of the University represented a significant change. Yet it still meant that a majority of students continued to be local right through the post-war period: this pattern had a pervasive effect on the nature of student life. Chapter Three examined many facets of the student experience, from institutional aspects (such as patterns of accommodation, the male and female student unions and academic life) to social aspects (such as student clubs, sport and religion), and it was found that the predominantly home-based student population often presented particular problems for the 'corporate life.' In particular, the tendency for such students to retain a non-university social life - playing hockey for their Former Pupils team or attending their community church, for example - meant that the level of involvement in university activities was perhaps less than at predominantly residential universities. This tendency was equally apparent amongst male and female students. So lack of involvement in the corporate life was shown to be not always a result of apathy. Students often had well-developed home social lives and might maintain stronger contacts with their old school and neighbourhood friends than their fellow university students. However, the chapter also showed that, of those students who *were* involved in the corporate life, an increasingly central role was taken by women. Female students became president of student societies more frequently, there were more women involved in the student press and women also took a larger part in sporting activities.

The chapter also detailed the gradual shift in campus institutions from segregation to integration. The majority of institutional facilities at Glasgow -



accommodation, welfare and careers services, the student unions and even library facilities - were initially segregated by gender. One reason for this was that there had been a separate women's college (Queen Margaret College) since 1883, which had not formally amalgamated with the University until 1935, and so separate female facilities were imported into the University. Women were referred to as QM students and the female-only preserve of the QM Union maintained a very different character from the 'Gentleman's Club' atmosphere 'down the road' in the Men's Union. Evidence from interviews and questionnaires showed that some graduates felt that segregated unions were a good thing, giving women a space of their own as well as giving them management experience through serving on the all-female QM Union Board and its various committees. However, segregation began to lose popularity, certainly by the 1970s, and campaigns to mix the unions resulted in the eventual abandonment of segregation. The unions were the last campus facilities to mix, and were also the last unions in Britain to mix.

In Chapter Four, which looked at the politics and political institutions of student life in detail, it was argued that the tardiness of the male and female unions to mix was symptomatic of a wider conservatism on campus. Again, the pervasive effect of a large home-based student population was noted (the majority continuing to live in the parental home despite a move towards living in flats and the provision of more places in university residences). It was argued that students returning to their parents' home at the end of each day were more likely to be conservative than students living in residences away from home. However, along with this conservatism, the student body often exhibited a stubborn nonconformism. In this

way, there was a sense in which the maintenance of separate unions was seen by the student body as a tradition to be preserved in the teeth of trends occurring elsewhere. Glasgow's persistent refusal to join the NUS (Glasgow was the only British university never to affiliate) can partly be explained in similar terms.

Despite this general atmosphere of conservatism at the University, a closer look at several aspects of student politics - including political clubs, the weekly political debates held in the unions, the three-yearly Rectorial election and the role and actions of the SRC - revealed a lively, if sometimes numerically small, political scene. Whilst membership of the political clubs was frequently small and SRC seats sometimes uncontested, Rectorial elections often generated great interest and high voting figures (especially in the immediate post-war decades), whilst the weekly debates in the unions were often packed. It was also shown that women came to play a greater role in political activities as their numbers in the University rose. Their representation on the SRC and in political clubs increased and they were prominent in campus battles over stereotypically male activities in the Men's Union and in the campaign to mix the unions. They also always voted in greater numbers in Rectorial elections. However, despite their increasing presence in the University, women did not occupy the top positions in the political clubs and in the SRC as often as their male colleagues and this came to be a source of concern in later years. For example, it was noted that in the early 1980s an attempt was made by a female SRC president to introduce positive discrimination and thereby boost female representation on the SRC council. Similar concerns about female under-representation were voiced in the QM Union once the mixing of the QM (and the

ending of the all-female Board of Management), led to rising numbers of men being elected to the Board.

Finally, Chapter Five considered what happened to Glasgow's graduates once they had left the University. The main point of difference observed between Glasgow and other universities was that female Glasgow graduates tended to opt for teacher training at a higher rate than the average for British universities. The decline of manufacturing industry in the Glasgow area, coupled with a relatively small service sector, limited industrial and public service opportunities, whilst an unenthusiastic response from some Scottish employers to the idea of taking on female graduates (particularly in the immediate post-war decades) further reduced choice. This, along with the desire of the majority of female graduates to remain in Scotland, encouraged entry to teacher training in greater numbers than elsewhere, as did the continued popularity of the ordinary degree.

In recent decades, in common with national graduate employment trends, the popularity of teaching declined amongst female Glasgow graduates (although the trend occurred more slowly there than was the case for UK graduates generally). The containment of the teacher shortage in the Glasgow area by the 1970s, coupled with a cut in the number of teacher training places at the end of that decade, discouraged such a large-scale entry to teaching. Similarly, changed employer attitudes, with more firms willing to take on women, new industrial opportunities in the region as a result of the influx of American and Japanese electronics firms, a rise of new graduate occupations such as chartered accountancy and computer

programming, and increased aspirations of female graduates themselves, all contributed to a broader range of graduate careers being pursued.

Overall, the thesis has shown that since 1939, Glasgow University has expanded its intake to include a wider section of local middle-class women, has increasingly integrated them into academic and social life, and has fed them into a broader range of graduate jobs, mostly in the local area. Whilst these trends were often apparent at universities across Britain, it has been shown how particular Scottish and local factors have influenced women's experiences at Glasgow. The integration of quantitative material on recruitment and careers with qualitative material on student life and the student experience has provided an unusually detailed and rounded picture of the University not only as a 'degree factory' but as a social and socialising institution with its own distinctive culture and traditions.

The study also allows some speculative comments to be made with regard to a number of the debates surrounding education history and women's history since the war. We noted in the introduction the focus of much literature in this field on the question of how far educational reforms have affected equal opportunities; particularly in terms of closing the gap in attainment between the rich and poor. Analysis of the social backgrounds of Glasgow's students has shown that local circumstances ensured a larger representation of the working-classes at the University than was the case for Britain as a whole. However, here as elsewhere, it is apparent that the educational reforms at secondary school level could not eliminate

the continued tendency for a higher proportion of working-class (compared to middle-class) pupils to leave school at the minimum leaving age.

The thesis also allows us to say something about social mobility. It has been noted in many studies of this subject that there are well-known routes of upward mobility through the educational system for working-class children. In particular, and of especial importance for women, has been the trend for working-class women to do an arts degree as a prelude to a respectable teaching career. Analysis of the social backgrounds and careers of Glasgow's female graduates provides tentative evidence to suggest that this traditional route was breaking down somewhat in recent decades, with working-class women increasingly likely to enter industry or other professions. Women of whatever class were choosing teaching less frequently, but the decline was more noticeable amongst working-class women.

The wider variety of careers pursued by Glasgow's female graduates in the post-war years provides a clear indication of their changing role and status. Their ambitions were higher and their entry into new fields of employment both reflected and encouraged changed attitudes towards their position in society. Their changing role was also reflected in a growing tendency to work after marriage and a shortening of the traditional break in employment for child-rearing. These were trends which were apparent for women generally. The post-war decades also saw an increase in the popularity of marriage as well as a fall in the age at which marriage was entered into amongst Glasgow graduates. Here again, these trends mirrored those for women more generally. The image of the 'Blue Stocking' who had no

concern for anything but study whilst at University and who eschewed marriage after graduation was well and truly dead.

More subtle, essentially social, changes in the position of women have been occurring since the war, and these were manifested in the lifestyles and debates of students at Glasgow University. For example, the post-war years at Glasgow saw a reaction against all types of gender segregation including a reaction against the desirability of separate women's organisations, run for women and by women. Seats specially reserved for women on the Students' Representative Council, including a women's president of the SRC, were abandoned and were replaced by open competition for all seats, and we have seen how the QM Union eventually abandoned both segregation and all-female government. Here we can see clearly the impact of the women's movement which stressed equal treatment for men and women. However, more recently, ideas of positive discrimination were raised on campus as organisations such as the QMU Board and the Students' Representative Council found that equal opportunities could lead to female under-representation. Thus debates at the University have reflected wider debates in society over how best to improve upon the continued under-representation of women in many top positions in society.

Finally, the thesis allows a few observations to be made with regard to some of the ways in which this study adds to the literature on women in universities. In some respects, evidence from Glasgow University supports well-documented points relating to women's position within universities. We noted in the introduction that

much of the existing literature tended to emphasise women's concentration in arts subjects, their sparse representation in the higher ranks of university staffs, and their smaller overall numbers within universities until very recently. Here Glasgow University followed patterns generally and the thesis confirms these overall points.

What is more surprising, perhaps, is what the study highlights about gender segregation. Gender segregation within the University was eliminated in virtually every area of student life in the post-war period, but although it *was* abandoned, patterns of segregation - both institutional and informal - persisted for a surprisingly long time. The findings of this study give pause for thought, particularly with regard to women's integration into university life. Just as C. Dyhouse found that one should be cautious in regarding women's integration into universities before 1939 as anything other than partial, her caution can equally be applied to the post-war period. Segregation is a complex issue: segregation might be enforced from above - as, for example, with separate male and female halls of residence - or could be voluntarily maintained by the student body, as with the traditionally all-male and all-female student unions. Either way, the thesis allows us to conclude that the full integration of women into the University was achieved gradually.

The thesis also adds new perspectives to the current literature on female graduate careers. The thesis provides some evidence of greater Scottish resistance to the idea of employing women in responsible posts in industry compared to England (especially in the immediate post-war decades). So whilst other studies have testified to the problems graduate women faced in the employment market, here we have evidence of particular problems for Glasgow female graduates in trying to find

good local jobs in industry. Coupled with this, it has been shown that the advice women received whilst at university could have a limiting effect on later career options. It was not so much that the advice meted out by the careers service was poor, rather it was the advice given by some academic staff about course options which could later restrict career choice. In particular, it seems that many women were advised just to do an ordinary degree, rather than staying on for honours. In teaching this cut down options for taking advanced classes in secondary schools, and there is also evidence that industrial employers may have favoured an honours degree for some posts. So whilst other studies of female graduates have emphasised the failings of university careers services to offer imaginative advice, at Glasgow University there appears to have been, for some women, an equally important failing in curricular advice. Further study of other Scottish, and English, universities would enable us to assess whether the story was similar elsewhere - although, with the ordinary degree persisting longer at Scottish universities, especially at Glasgow, it may be that Glasgow provides a special case.

There is a clear need for further in-depth case studies to test out some of these points with regard to other institutions. This thesis has shown in some detail how the interaction of government policy, local university strategy and regional factors (demographic, economic, educational and cultural) can shape the experiences of female graduates. Further case studies will enable us to compare how different, or similar, the role and experiences of women might be at other institutions where a very different set of local circumstances may exist. By adding detailed case studies to the more general histories of women's higher education, we can gain a more



subtle appreciation of the forces of change at work and can reach a greater understanding of the local articulation of national education policy.

## Methodological Appendix

Much of the quantitative evidence presented in this thesis has been based on a questionnaire (shown at the end of this appendix), sent to Glasgow University graduates.<sup>1</sup>

The questionnaire was sent to male and female graduates who had graduated 1940-1984 inclusive,<sup>2</sup> and was sent to those who fell into one of three broad degree groupings:

- 1) arts (MA) and science (BSc) undergraduates;<sup>3</sup>
- 2) undergraduates studying one of two vocational degrees, either medicine (MB ChB) or law (BL and LLB);
- 3) postgraduates (any postgraduate degree).

These three degree groupings provided a representative mix of the kinds of degrees taken by graduates. The bulk of the University's students fall into category (1) and study either an MA or a BSc degree, but the inclusion of graduates taking a professional or higher degree takes account of other types of student.

A stratified sample of these degree groups was taken in which the strata were defined by year of graduation (1940, 1941, 1942 etc.), gender and degree taken (MA, BSc etc.).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The names and addresses of these graduates were obtained from the alumni database which is maintained by the University's Development Campaign Office. The Development Campaign Office kindly agreed to fund the questionnaire provided that they could include some questions of their own; as a result, the final part of the questionnaire included questions not relevant to this thesis. Part E of the questionnaire consists of the Development Campaign Office's questions.

<sup>2</sup> The decision to use 1984 as a cut-off point, rather than to include the whole of the 1980s was made to ensure that all graduates had had at least 10 years in the job market in which to develop their careers.

<sup>3</sup> Selection of graduates by whether they had obtained the MA or BSc qualification resulted in a whole variety of different degree subjects being sampled. For example, those MA graduates sampled included History, Politics, English and French graduates, to name just a few.

<sup>4</sup> A 22% sample was taken from graduates 1940-1965, but for ~~1966~~ 1984 the sample size was halved (to achieve roughly equal sample sizes in the face of rising student numbers from c1965). This meant that two different sampling fractions have been used within the 1960-69 time span but calculations have shown that this had very little effect on the results).

The survey was only sent to graduates with addresses in Britain.<sup>5</sup> As a result, the number of graduates in the database whose geographical origin was abroad was far less than is actually the case for the University's graduates; this factor has been borne in mind in the discussions of geographical origin throughout the thesis, and the University's own statistics have been used to reflect the true geographical make up of the University.

In all, slightly under 5,000 questionnaires were sent out - the total number of graduates surveyed was 4,897. Of these, 1,951 questionnaires were returned, or a 40% response rate. The survey was sent out to equal numbers of male and female graduates and the response rate was 52% female and 48% male.

The data from these questionnaires was then entered into a relational database.<sup>6</sup> Much of the data could be entered straight from the questionnaire, with no coding necessary, but some data did require coding to make it more 'manageable.' Coding schemes were devised to analyse, in particular, two of the key variables:

- 1) Occupation (the same coding scheme was used for both father's and graduate's occupation)
- 2) Geographical background.

Details of these coding schemes are given below:

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<sup>5</sup> This was because the cost involved in overseas postage was deemed to be too high in view of what would most likely be a poor response rate from graduates living abroad. (Prior to sending out the full questionnaire, a small pilot project was undertaken. Three hundred questionnaires were sent to both home and overseas graduates, but the response from overseas graduates was low (19%).)

<sup>6</sup> The database program used was Microsoft Access.

## 1) Occupation Codes

The coding scheme for occupation was a two-fold one based on sector and hierarchy within that sector. Examples of sectors are education and health; examples of hierarchies are primary school teacher and nurse. The coding scheme used was largely based on that used by the History of Oxford project, in the chapter by D.I. Greenstein.<sup>7</sup> This scheme was chosen for its flexibility and because it would allow comparability between the Oxford and Glasgow data. Details of this coding scheme are given below:

### A) Sectoral codes

#### **Military/Police establishment**

A	Armed forces (e.g. army, airforce, navy)
AC	Civilian auxiliary to the armed forces (naval dockyards etc.)
AP	Fire service, police and prison services

#### **Commerce**

ADV	Advertising firms/publicity
CONS	Management Consultancy
LEIS	Arts, entertainment and sport
M	Press, radio, television
MKT	Market research
O	Other commerce not taken into account of in sub-divisions in this section
OC	Colonial/commonwealth trade.
OR	Retail commerce
ORA	Retail of art or precious works, gems etc.
TRANS	Transportation (but not shipbuilding which has a separate code)

#### **Industry**

B	Book publishing
BP	Printing
BU	Building
COMP	Computer industry
I	Other industry not accounted for in other sub-divisions
IF	Food industry
MIN	Mining industry
MET	Iron and steel (metal related) industries
SHI	Shipbuilding industry
TU	Trade union
UTIL	Utility companies - gas, oil, electricity etc.
OI	Unspecified business
HO	Hotel, restaurant and catering industry

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<sup>7</sup> D.I. Greenstein, "The Junior members, 1900-1990," in Brian Harrison, (ed.) *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. VIII* (Oxford, 1994).

**Public Administration**

CCS	Colonial civil service
CS	Home civil service
GPO	General post office (including British Telecom - which was govt. owned for most of the period)
LG	Local government
LGSW	Local government social services
NG	National government (e.g. MP)
PB	Public body, e.g. Citizens' Advice Bureau, National Trust

**Church related and Religious**

CH	E.g. cleric, deaconess, nun etc.
----	----------------------------------

**Miscellaneous**

CRT	Charitable organisations
NC	Not codeable
NK	Not Known (dead/retired)
NL	Unemployed
HM	Homemaker
VOL	Voluntary worker

**Educational - (see Hierarchical section for second-level codes largely specific to educational sector)**

E	Educational
ES	Research institute

**Farming and farming-related, estate management, land ownership**

GF	Farming and landowning
GFP	Planter involved with tea, coffee, rubber etc.
GP	Non-farm property

**Health Care- (see Hierarchical section for second-level codes largely specific to health sector)**

HC	Health care
----	-------------

**Finance**

K	Finance
---	---------

**Legal profession**

LAW	Legal profession
-----	------------------

**B) Hierarchical Codes*****1. Hierarchies***

A	Artistic - e.g. actor, author, conductor, musician
AU	Auctioneer
B	Sales manager (to be considered on a par with D below), e.g. broker, merchant, buyer, agent
C	Chaplain, deaconess, cleric, nun
CONTR	Contractor
D	Administrative/managerial; assistant manager, head of dept., controller, registrar, official.
DES	Designer, draughtsman
ENGR	Engineer

INSP	Inspector
J	e.g. copywriter, film director, editor, producer, journalist, BBC reporter
L	Lawyer
LIBR	Librarian, archivist, curator
M	Medical officer, hospital consultant, doctor, physician
N	Unskilled manual, e.g. machine operator, dock worker, postman, waiter
PI	Pilot
PRO	Programmer
R	Surveyor, architect
RES	Scientist, research officer, microbiologist
SM	Small shop keepers
SW	Social worker
T	Accountant
VET	Veterinary surgeon
VOL	Voluntary worker
W	Skilled manual, e.g. print worker, master electrician, lathe operator, chef
WN	Routine non-manual, e.g. administrative assistant, cashier, clerk, clerical assistant
WS	Semi-skilled manual
NC	Not codeable

## ***2. Hierarchical codes indicating specialism***

### For specific use with education sector

AO	Adult education
EX	Examiner
NST	Teacher (primary or secondary not specified)
NSZ	Headmaster/mistress (primary or secondary not specified)
O	Other kind of teacher not specified elsewhere (e.g. language schools)
P	Coach, private tutor
SP	Primary school teacher
SS	Secondary school teacher
PZ	Primary school headmaster/mistress
SZ	Secondary school headmaster/mistress
TT	Teacher training college
U	University/college teacher other than professor
UP	University/college professor
UZ	University/college head, chancellor, president, principal etc.

### For specific use with health care sector

F	Other health-related profession not otherwise specified, e.g. osteopath, psychologist, dentist
M	Physician, doctor
MC	Consultant physician
MN	Nurse, midwife

## **2) Geographical codes**

1	Within 30 miles of the University
2	England and Wales
3	Ireland
4	Outside UK
5	Not known/unclassifiable
6	Beyond 30 miles, but within Scotland

Finally, a copy of the questionnaire and the covering letter which accompanied it are shown below:



UNIVERSITY  
*of*  
GLASGOW

Department of Social & Economic History  
University of Glasgow  
4 University Gardens  
Glasgow G12 8QQ

July 1995

Dear Graduate

I am a research student doing a PhD on Glasgow University in the period 1939-1984. Part of my research concerns the social background, university experiences and careers of its students during this time. In order to analyse these aspects of Glasgow's students, I would ask you to please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the stamped, addressed envelope provided

You will be making a valuable contribution to the University's history by spending a few minutes on this questionnaire, and a very helpful contribution on my part. I hope that you can find the time to do this as it will help my research enormously

The final section of the questionnaire asks about graduates' feelings towards the University and your response would be most appreciated. I should stress that all questionnaires returned will be treated in the strictest confidence and no reference to individuals will be made by name.

If you have any queries about the questionnaire, please write to me at the above address.

Yours sincerely

*Judy Wakeling*

Research Student in the Department of Economic & Social History



CONFIDENTIAL SURVEY OF THE ORIGINS & DESTINATIONS OF STUDENTS 1939 - 1984

(You need not answer any questions you do not wish to)

A. INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

A1. Your Family Name: ..... Other Names: .....

A2. Your Maiden Name: ..... (if applicable) A3. Date of Birth.....

A4. Are you  male  female? A5. Place of birth ..... A6. Nationality .....

A7. What were the last two schools you attended between ages 11 and 13? Please tick appropriate box:

Dates	Name of School	Location	Boarding <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	single-sex <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	School type <input type="checkbox"/> fee paying <input type="checkbox"/> state aided <input type="checkbox"/> denominational <input type="checkbox"/> other, please specify
	1				
	2		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> fee paying <input type="checkbox"/> state aided <input type="checkbox"/> denominational <input type="checkbox"/> other, please specify

A8. If you took an Ordinary degree, what Faculty were you in?.....

A9. If you took an Honours degree, what subject/class of degree did you get? (e.g. MA English 2.2) .....

A10. In which year did you graduate (for your first degree)? .....

A11. If you took a further degree or qualification at Glasgow, please give details, (e.g. PhD History; Diploma in Accountancy) .....

A12. Please indicate your major source(s) of funding while at Glasgow

family, friends, self  government grant  school award  Carnegie

other - please specify .....

A13. Have you attended any institution of higher education other than Glasgow University?  yes  no

If you answered "yes" please answer the following questions. If "no", please proceed to Question A13.

Dates	Name of Institution	Location	Subjects Studied	Degrees/Quals (e.g. PhD)
	1			
	2			

A14. Please list, with dates, other qualifications or memberships you have obtained (e.g. ARIBA 1966, CChem 1978)

A15. Extra-Curricular Activities. Please tick if you were involved in any of the following student governing bodies:

SRC  QM Union  GU Union  GUAC

A16. If you ticked any boxes, what position(s) did you hold? (e.g. President, GUAC) .....

Please list any student societies that you were a member of, e.g. Hockey Club, Labour Club

A17. Please specify the type of accommodation you stayed in, together with years:

	hall of residence	parental home	flat	lodgings	other, pls specify
example	1st yr.		2nd, 3rd, 4th yr.		
your accommodation					

A18. Occupation: Please complete the following table, giving information on the first job that you held after leaving university and the jobs held at each 10-year interval, where applicable. In the "status" column please enter:  
 E = employee; S = self-employed (without employee); M = employer; V = voluntary or unpaid work;  
 NA = not applicable (Please exclude vacation jobs)

	job title & position held	Part/full time	status	where applicable, name of firm/ employer & nature of activities	job locations (town, country)
examples	Home maker	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Solicitor, Partner	FT	M	Smith & Jones, Solicitors	Glasgow, UK
first job after GU					
job 10 years after GU					
job 20 years after GU					
job 30 years after GU					
job 40 years after GU					

**B. INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR SPOUSE (OR SOMEONE WHO ACTED AS A SPOUSE) AND FAMILY**

(This information helps determine the social profile of graduates)

B1. Have you ever been married?  no  yes B2. If yes, in which year \_\_\_\_\_

If no, please proceed to Question B5.

B2. If yes, please give details of your first spouse's education career below. (If you have second or subsequent spouse(s) please use extra sheets to provide the same information about them.)

B3. Did your spouse continue his/her education after the age of 18  yes  no. If yes, please complete this table:-

Dates	Name of institution	Location	Subjects Studied	Degrees/Quals (e.g. BA)
1				
2				

B4. Please complete the following table giving details of your spouse's jobs immediately before marrying you and at 10- and 30- year intervals thereafter, where applicable. In the "status" column please enter:

E = employee; S = self-employed (without employee); M = employer; V = voluntary or unpaid work;  
 NA = not applicable (Please exclude vacation jobs)

	job title & position held	Part/full time	status	where applicable, name of firm/ employer & nature of activities	job locations (town, country)
examples	Home maker Teacher	NA F	NA E	NA Anytown High School, Secondary School	NA London, UK
at marriage					
10 years after marriage					
20 years after marriage					
30 years after marriage					
40 years after marriage					

B5. Do you have children?  yes  no If yes, in which years were they born?.....

**C. INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PARENTS**

(This information helps determine to what extent Glasgow University recruited first generation university students)

**C1** Please complete the following table about the education of your parents (or persons who acted as your parents)

Father			Mother		
Did he continue in full or part-time education after the age of 18? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know			Did she continue in full or part-time education after the age of 18? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know		
If yes			If yes		
Name/Loc'n of Institution	Subject	Degrees	Name/Loc'n of Institution	Subject	Degrees
If obtained other qualifications (e.g. HND, SRN)?			If obtained other qualifications (e.g. HND, SRN)?		

**C2** Where did your parents/guardians live when you came to Glasgow University?

Town ... County ... Country ...

**C3** What were your parents' occupations when you came to Glasgow University? In the "status" column please enter

E = employee, S = self-employed (without employee) M = employer, V = voluntary or unpaid work If other parent had died or retired before you came to Glasgow University, please also indicate their last job

	job title & position held	Part/full time	status	where applicable, name of firm/ employer & nature of activities	job locations (town, country)
examples	Home maker Manager, Marketing Division	/ F	/ E	/ Coca UK soft drinks manufacturer	/ Southampton UK
father's job					
mother's job					

**D ANY OTHER COMMENTS**

**D1** Thank you for answering these questions. In using the survey to build up a picture of the University's immediate and long-term impact, my interest is not just confined to quantitative information, please feel free to write about any aspect of your life at Glasgow University or about the University's subsequent impact on your career (e.g. how you got to the University, its teaching methods, university life, town/gown relations, discipline, sport, clubs, relations between sexes and between students of different nationalities, the impact of war or national service, politics, religion, friendships etc.). I would welcome your comments below or on extra sheets.

Please continue on additional sheets if necessary

**B. INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS TOWARDS THE UNIVERSITY**

Higher Education organisations are facing a challenging period in their development. The public perception of Glasgow University is more important than ever, especially opinions held by graduates such as yourself. Could you please be kind enough to provide some basic information about how you feel today about the University, how it stays in touch with you and what future developments you would like to see?

- E1. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you describe the frequency with which the University communicates with you?  
 too infrequent 1  2  3  4  5  too frequent
- E2. How often would you like to hear from the University?  
 3 monthly  6 monthly  annually  every 3 years  never
- E3. On a scale of 1-5, where would you place your feelings a) for the University and b) your Faculty or Department?
- |                     |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |               |  |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--|
| <u>University</u>   |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |               |  |
| affectionate        | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> | hostile       |  |
| resentful           | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> | grateful      |  |
| interested          | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> | disinterested |  |
| <u>Faculty/Dept</u> |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |               |  |
| affectionate        | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> | hostile       |  |
| resentful           | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> | grateful      |  |
| interested          | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> | disinterested |  |
- E4. In your opinion, do you feel that Glasgow University graduates hold less (or more) affinity and affection for their University than graduates from other Universities do about their institutions?  
 less affection  about the same  more affection  don't know
- E5. How do you feel your time at Glasgow University prepared you for your subsequent post-university life?  
 completely unprepared  somewhat prepared  neutral  fairly prepared  very prepared

Please give a brief reason .....

- E6. Central funding for Universities is being cut back. How would you rate the following other methods of filling this gap in funding?
- |                                      | completely inappropriate   | rather inappropriate       | neutral                    | fairly appropriate         | very appropriate           |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Industrial grants for research       | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Industrial contracts                 | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| fee-raising training and consultancy | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| fund-raising and appeals             | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| national lottery applications        | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Increased student fees               | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |

- E7. It could be argued that Universities now compete for students and resources in a way which was not seen in the past. How would you rate the following reactions and responses to this situation?
- |  | completely inappropriate   | rather inappropriate       | neutral                    | fairly appropriate         | very appropriate           |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| the very idea of universities competing                            | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| use of marketing and promotional techniques                        | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| direct mailing of potential student recruits                       | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| management of press and media to improve university image          | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| lobbying of central government to get better slice of funding cake | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |

- E8. What do you think are the two most important things the University should do (or not do) in the runup to the next century, and why?
1. ....
2. ....

**Thank you very much for your co-operation. Please place the completed questionnaire in the return envelope and mail it. If you would like a summary report of the survey findings, please tick this box .**

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