

We all missed the opulence and convenience of living at Harvard.”

Benedict Gross did not. He moved to the Quad from Adams House in search “of a little peace and quiet.” He enjoyed the longer walks to classes, the fact that there were fewer people, and the smaller scale of the dorms. “There was a nice culture—if you didn’t go out on Saturday night, they served milk and cookies,” he adds. Initial fears about “students having nonstop sex day and night didn’t happen,” he reports. “Coed living did demystify the opposite gender for us, though. We got to meet and talk with women in the dining hall and that had been unheard of.”

“It put relationships in a whole different category,” agrees Lance Lindblom ’72. “Before, even though you might work on some projects with women, most of the time they were targets. People could work together *and* live together and be friends. It was kind of revolutionary at the time.”

Lindblom in fact met his wife of 40 years, Marjorie Press Lindblom, while

working together on the Harvard-Radcliffe Policy Committee. But they did not start dating until much later and never shared proximate living space as undergraduates. If they had, Marjorie, who did her exchange at Lowell House, is not sure he would have liked her in the morning in the dining hall. “Some of the men didn’t want women there at all,” she recalls, “but most were happy to have us and wanted to talk and be friendly, including at breakfast.” She, however, is “not that friendly at breakfast,” and sat in a far corner with her back turned, reading her newspaper while she ate. “Invariably some nice young man with a smile would come over and set his tray down and try to be nice to me,” she says now, with a laugh. “I feel badly that I often greeted them with grunts and groans.”

Negative experiences did occur. *The Women’s Guide to Harvard* includes an excerpt from remarks made by Katharine Park ’72 during a 2000 conference on “History and Memory: Gender at Harvard and

Radcliffe.” Park, now Zemurray Radcliffe professor of the history of science, moved from North House to Winthrop House, where, she reported, “the hostility was particularly palpable in my entry, where our mates used to urinate against our door.” Coeducational living the following year, back at North House, went a lot better, she reported, perhaps because it consisted of a cohort of men who had voluntarily elected to live with women, “who actually liked women—who enjoyed our company, appreciated our intelligence, and found us interesting and funny (which we were).”

Snively also exchanged at Winthrop House and found she “could not get past the exterior of the jocks.” But her exchange at Quincy House the following year was a stellar experience—largely because of a coed group of about a dozen people, various members of which had dinner

together every night. “We talked about politics or biology or dating. It was a mixed group with some very brilliant people,” she says. “I became comfortable with them and finally felt articulate. Being around men in that way somehow made me feel more confident and like I could take on more challenges....Being with that group was the first time I really felt I had a coed circle of friends.”

For better or worse, co-residency soon became the norm. Jerome Kagan still supports it, although he now wonders about the impact of that more constant intimacy, of the “loss of mystery” between the genders. “Romantic relationships are gratifying when each gets from the other what they do not have. It used to be that women got power from men and men got innocence and grace from women,” he says, but “we’ve destroyed the mystery of sexuality” as the social pendulum has swung too far in favor of transparency.

Sternhell, who says her feminist views, formed while in college, were utterly transformative, sees it differently. “There isn’t any evidence that people who lived in coed housing are less likely to have long-term heterosexual romantic relationships, either in college or afterwards,” she says. “That’s just a familiar argument against equality: ‘It kills romance—vive la différence!’ In fact, I think coed housing made genuine intima-



Do you remember the coed living experiment of 1970 and 1971? Share your memories at [harvardmag.com/extras](http://harvardmag.com/extras).

## Aloian Award Winners

**Each year**, the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) selects two students as the David and Mimi Aloian Memorial Scholars. Recipients have demonstrated solid leadership in contributing to quality of life in the Houses, traits embodied by the Aloians, who led Quincy House from 1981 to 1986. David Aloian ’49 was also executive director of the HAA. This year’s scholars, Anne “Annie” Douglas ’12, of Adams House, and Marcel Moran ’11, of Eliot House, will be honored by the HAA on October 13.

Douglas, a psychology concentrator from Philadelphia, is the Adams student mental-health liaison and played a major role in helping people cope with the death

of a fellow student.

Moran, a human evolutionary biology concentrator from Cambridge, was trip director for the HAA/PBHA Alternative Spring Break trips from 2007 to 2011, leading groups of 25 students who helped rebuild and repair African-American churches destroyed by arson and hate crimes. In Boston, he has tutored in the Mission Hill After School Program.

