Baby, It’s Cold Outside: Curfews for Women at the University of Massachusetts

Having grown up in an age of the United States that was sheltered from the most blatant forms of sexism and racism, I found it disconcerting that the university I attend as an undergraduate had enforced curfews for women as late as 1972, not 20 years before I was born. Upon thinking about that fact for a few moments, I realized it was not surprising considering the other discriminations and abuses I knew had occurred and indeed in light of the restrictions still imposed upon women currently as well as the difficulty they face entering traditionally male-dominated realms such as the military, politics, and any mathematically-oriented professions. However, while the evidence of sexism is clear if one looks critically at our society and our history, the reasons these prejudices exist, and the ideas which they instill, are not immediately apparent. In this essay, I have taken it upon myself to explore both the facts behind curfews and other regulations for women at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and the ideologies that lead to their implementation and sustainment, which I have found are: an *en loco parentis* mentality, a desire to control youth’s sexuality particularly through the control of women, and a belief in women’s inherent weakness and inability to be responsibly independent.

To provide context for the examination of these ideologies, it is necessary to describe the central rules enforced at the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass). The oldest official student handbook, where most rules were printed, in the University’s archives is from the academic year 1890-1891, while the college itself was founded in 1863. The information on curfews was not included in the University Handbook until 1944, but, starting in 1929, the Women’s Student Government Association (WSGA, founded in 1929), distributed a women’s Handbook for Massachusetts Agricultural College (MAC, the previous name of the University of
From this data, it is clear that there are gaps in the documentation of rules for women, who entered the University as early as 1875, as well as in documentation of general rules for all students prior to 1890. However, it is safe to assume that women had curfews prior to the printing of official handbooks, given the University’s history of curfews and heavy regulation of women.

In the 1929 WSGA handbook, the rule for curfews is stated, “The house will close at 10:15 P. M. unless college functions are scheduled for a later hour.” The “house” referred to Abigail Adams House, or “The Abbey,” which was built in 1919 as a women’s dormitory on the site of what is now the Lederle Graduate Research Center. Prior to its construction, women students were given dorms in fraternity houses that MAC rented for that purpose as well as in Draper Hall, which is still standing. Further rules in the WSGA handbook included a requirement of signing out on sheets specified for that purpose when leaving the dormitory for a week-end, to go home, or when going out any evening after 7:30 p.m.; and regulations on when male callers could be received in the lobby (not before noon—these were called “calling hours”). As enforcement, demerits were given for lateness and failure to sign in or out or other infractions. These demerits could result in review by a disciplinary board and potentially more serious consequences. Lastly,

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1 Student Body, Woman’s Student Government [WSGA handbooks]; Student Affairs [University Handbooks], University Special Collections and Archives, University of Massachusetts.
2 Frank Prentice Rand, Yesterdays at Massachusetts State College (Amherst, MA: The Associate Alumni Massachusetts State College, 1933).
4 Student Affairs — Dean of Women Helen Curtis, Records, 1902-1993 (bulk, 1940-1973), [Patricia Wright, Helen Curtis: the mother of all deans,” Massachusetts, 1992], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
each [woman] student was “asked to take and pass with a satisfactory grade an examination in September on the contents of this handbook.”

In 1936, the rules changed slightly: “All houses close regularly at 10:30 P.M. for upperclassmen, except Friday and Saturday nights and nights before holidays. On Friday nights the closing hour shall be 11:30 P.M. and on Saturday nights and nights before holidays, 12:00 P.M. In the event of college functions, except late formal dances, all houses will close thirty minutes after the scheduled closing of that function.” This marks an extension of curfews and an acknowledgement of social activity on the weekends, which had not been a major concern for the administration prior to the late 30s because the number of women at the University had been so low.

The 1944 University Handbook, as mentioned above, initiated the inclusion of curfew rules, although the WSGA ceased printing their separate women’s handbook as early as 1937, again indicating another gap in rule documentation. It is likely, however, that the women’s handbook was still printed under a different organization(s), perhaps by the University itself, because the below image (figure 1) of a separate “Women’s Residence Regulations” handbook from 1965 was pictured in an edition of the University newspaper, The Massachusetts Collegian.
Figure 1, “The Root of All Evil,” *The Massachusetts Daily Collegian* (Mar. 1, 1966), 4.

The fundamental rules did not change when they were added to the University Handbook, but a statement indicating that off-campus women were expected to follow the same or nearly the same curfew hours and male calling hours was included. This indication is further substantiated by a statement by Edna L. Skinner, Adviser of Women, in 1934: “There are only a limited number of householders willing to rent rooms to women students. The reason is obvious for college girls require privileges such as the use of the family living room in which to receive their men friends. With students so scattered it is difficult to secure full cooperation from so many house mothers.” The fact that women students were expected to receive callers in an open, visible-to-the-rest-of-the-household room is probably partly due to social custom in the 30s, but it could also be the imposition of University regulations on off-campus women students, which is indicated by the use of the words “house mothers,” who were older women in-residence in the dorms who kept track of the students coming and going in their designated dorm.

1950 saw a drastic change in the rules, mainly for freshmen women. Freshmen were required to be in their dorm by 10:00p.m. on Sundays, 7:00p.m. Monday-Thursday, 11:00p.m. on Fridays, and 12:30p.m. on Saturdays, with 3 Saturday “one o’clocks” each semester. Additionally, after “Dean’s Saturday,” (as in the Dean of Women and Dean of Students) which was Dec. 2 that year, freshmen who had a passing average were allowed a 10 pm curfew. The upperclassmen had increasing freedom in 15 and 30 minute increments. Sophomores had

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8 Student Affairs — Dean of Women Helen Curtis, Records, 1902-1993 (bulk, 1940-1973), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
curfews as follows: on Sundays 11:00p.m., Monday-Thursday 10:15p.m., Fridays 11:30p.m., and Saturdays 1:00a.m. Juniors had the same hours as Sophomores except for an additional 15 minutes on Mondays through Thursdays. Seniors had the same restrictions as Sophomores and Juniors except that their Monday through Thursday curfew was extended to 11:00p.m. For each infraction, there was a minimum penalty of a warning and explanation and a maximum penalty of a demerit. Three demerits or five or more minutes of lateness (which accumulated over the semester) required women to go before the judiciary board, which would assign a punishment. Usually punishments were a reduction of privileges for a certain time, but they could go so far as expulsion from school.9

The 1950 handbook also finally included designated men’s dormitory regulations, most of which had to do with the logistics of the housing process and rules about group living and health and safety. Until that point, the women’s dormitory regulations were labeled as the only dormitory regulations and included a section on men’s dorms that only said that women were not allowed in men’s dorm rooms, only in lobbies, and only when a chaperone is present. As far as the records of rules in the University handbooks are accurate, men were never subject to curfews or sign out sheets at the University, while it was not until 1966 that curfews were abolished for women at UMass. Now that we have established what the fundamental rules were, we will explore the ideology in the administration and national culture that allowed these rules to exist. To do this, we will look at the implications of these and related policies in the University.

The primary ideology influencing these policies was the idea that the administration should take an en loco parentis, Latin for “in place of the parent,” approach. En loco parentis

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9 Student Affairs—[University Handbook 1950], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
policies assume several things about the responsibilities and capabilities of both the student and the administration, the first being that the parent/authority is wiser than the student/child and that the parent-authority knows what is best for both parties. Approaches in this vein also assume that “Deans of women were responsible [emphasis added] for ‘the physical, social, moral, religious, and aesthetic, as well as the intellectual,’ development of their charges…In practice, for women at least, it meant dress codes, dormitory closing hours, and protective oversight. ‘She was like your motha’…”10 Because of this ideology within the administration, staff and faculty were charged with the responsibility not only to the student, but also to the parents, to “raise” them properly, socially as well as academically.

Of course, policies using this approach, like parenting itself, inadvertently impose the parent-authority’s morals onto the student-children. The twenties, when women started entering the University in growing numbers and curfew policies started being written down, was the age of the flapper—a college-educated woman who pushed the boundaries of social construction of sexual morality and impropriety though use of fashion. It makes sense that, in order to control these women and other 1920s feminists, the en loco parentis policies described above, which were designed to keep women and men out of each other’s beds, were codified, unified, and implemented in handbooks. Similarly, “by the century’s midpoint, as scientific and medical advance made fear of disease and even pregnancy less powerful disincentives to nonmarital sex, and as more Americans from different backgrounds were incorporated into the nation’s civil society, it became more necessary to articulate and justify the rules governing sexual

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10 Patricia Wright, “Helen Curtis: the mother of all deans,” Massachusetts, 1992 [Student Affairs — Dean of Women Helen Curtis, Records, 1902-1993 (bulk, 1940-1973), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.]
behavior." The need on the part of the older generation to assert their morality and ensure the survival of “traditional values” through parent-like restrictions on university students explains both the organization of rules in the 1920s and the harsh lowering of curfews to 7:00 p.m. for Freshmen in 1950. Thus en loco parentis mentality in the administration assumed a responsibility for the moral, social, and academic development of students and therefore imposed “traditional” morality on its student-children by keeping men and women away from each other at night and subjecting them to chaperonage whenever they were together.

But this approach was psychological as much as it was administrative (and manipulative), and it involved forming a certain personal relationship between students and faculty that mimicked parenthood. The most obvious demonstration of this relationship is the previously mentioned house mothers (figure 2).

![Figure 2, Little Man on Campus cartoon section, *The Massachusetts Daily Collegian* (Nov. 12, 1965), 6.]

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House mothers were both a policing force and a socializing force. House mothers took on the role of a parent by being the permission-granter for special occasions of allowing men in the dorms and for allowing extended curfews for special cases. They also performed housekeeping checks to make sure rooms were tidy, like a real mother would, and they even performed bedchecks in 1965 to make sure all women were indoors, claiming that “they were necessary for the University to meet its obligations to all the parents.” If a woman student was to be late due to an unavoidable emergency, she was to “TELEPHONE HER HEAD OF RESIDENCE [HOUSE MOTHER] BY PUTTING IN A PERSON-TO-PERSON CALL through the University,” the same way a responsible youth would call home if they had an emergency. To form strong relationships between housemothers and their wards, there were special events put on for students and house mothers to bond over, including TV sessions, “fireside chats”, faculty lectures, and dinners and dances—some of which were for just girls and others that included guests. Housemothers were to serve as hostesses at social functions held by their student-children, just like a mother-wife. Women in sororities, who also had house mothers, were encouraged to “[further] [their housemother’s] loyalty to the group by cherishing her and making her feel at home” and to have “interest in her as a person,” as one would treat a mother. Consequently, students and housemothers formed close relationships that mirrored parental

12 Student Affairs—[University Handbooks], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
15 Student Affairs—[ 1962 University Handbook], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
16 Student Affairs — Dean of Women Helen Curtis, Records, 1902-1993 (bulk, 1940-1973), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
17 Student Affairs—[ 1964 University Handbook], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
18 Student Affairs, Dean of Women, Student Social Activities Committee (S.S.A.) 1956-1960, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
relationships both because they enforced home-like rules and provided home-like companionship.

The University also demonstrated its parental role through a heavy reliance on chaperones. In an adaption of courtship rituals in which young men and women were not to be alone together without supervision, chaperones were required at every social function. In the 1929 WSGA handbook, there are a plethora of rules about merely walking around town:

A chaperone shall be included in all groups of women, or of men and women, out of town except by special arrangement at all times after 7.30 P.M. b. Women of the Faculty and wives of Faculty men are considered as chaperones…. Upper class girls may leave the campus after 7:30 P. M. in groups of two or more. Underclassmen must be accompanied by an upperclass girl or chaperone…Three sophomores or four freshmen can go to movies at night unchaperoned… Even with written permission girls should not leave the dormitory after 10:15 P. M... Unless special permission is obtained from the Advisor of Women, girls may not attend dances given in halls or other public places in Amherst or adjoining towns.19

By 1944, chaperoning rules not specifically applicable to social events, such as those mentioned above, had disappeared from the handbooks. In addition to the requirement of chaperones at events, the 1944 handbook includes a not-so-subtle suggestion that parties were not to be used as make-out sessions: “….It is expected that all rooms used by guests during a social function shall be open and lighted.”20 From this, it is clear that chaperones at social functions were an

19 Student Body, Woman’s Student Government [1929 handbook], University Special Collections and Archives, University of Massachusetts.
20 Student Affairs—[1944 University Handbook], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
embodiment of the moral, parental eye in the interactions of men and women at UMass. Between house mothers and chaperones and curfews, students had very little time and space to be alone together (figure 3), which is exactly what the administration wanted to accomplish through its parental, traditional-moral policies.

![Figure 3, Little Man on Campus cartoon section, The Massachusetts Daily Collegian (Oct. 15, 1965), 6.](image)

From the role that housemothers played in the lives of women students and ways in which students and housemothers were encouraged to interact; from the imposing moral figure of the chaperone; and from the nature of the curfew and sign out sheet policies, which are parental in their attempt to monitor the coming and going of students and their attempt to confine the potential sexualized interactions of students in the courtship-reminiscent “calling hours,” we can see that UMass shaped its policies out of an en loco parentis approach, and this is one of the factors that lead to the practice of women’s curfews.

Related to en loco parentis motivations and hinted at in prior sections is a second impetus for curfews. As always, people with traditional morals want to control the marriage, dating, and
sex of others, especially the youth because they will shape the values and practices of future generations. The easiest way to control something is to control a fundamental part of it, like a captain controlling the movement of a ship by controlling its rudder. In the case of sexuality, women have historically been the easiest thing to control, mainly because they started out being physically controlled by men for various reasons and from that pattern of control progressed into being psychologically controlled, and thus there are established patterns and moral justifications for controlling women’s thought and action. Women also have had legitimate reasons of their own for wanting sex and marriage to be controlled—rape, financial instability, and unwanted children are a few burdens uncontrolled sex and marriage have placed on women. Thus women themselves have been motivated to cooperate with traditional morality in order to preserve themselves and their well-being. A system of control can be seen through the University’s policies, and this system is reflective of the administration’s desire to control sex and dating.

A few reasons the older generation had for being afraid of the sexuality of its youth were mentioned above—the flapper’s challenge of societal norms in the 20s and the increasing medical technologies of the mid-century that would potentially erase a fear people (mostly women) had of unwanted pregnancies and allow them to be more sexually open. Changes in dating patterns also made people who married in the 30s and early 40s worried about the increased intimacy they saw in couples after 1945; while a custom of dating multiple people at a fairly shallow level had been the norm before WWII, after war broke out, youth started marrying younger and developing closer relationships sooner. This habit dropped its association with marriage after WWII, and more people were being more intimate without seeing that as
necessarily leading to marriage.\textsuperscript{21} Another reason people were afraid of youth sexuality arose in the 50s and continued into the 60s: panty raids (figure 4). Panty raids were a phenomenon wherein male students rioted and together stormed women’s dorms in order to steal bras and underwear. They demonstrated to administrators a need to control student’s sexuality because of their impropriety and their “very public [challenge] to authority,”\textsuperscript{22} and marginally their potential danger to assaulted females.

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\caption{[panty raid depicted in the middle left column], \textit{Little Man on Campus} cartoon section, \textit{The Massachusetts Daily Collegian} (Sept. 19, 1966), 4.}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{22} Beth Bailey, \textit{Sex in the Heartland}, (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999), 47.
In the 60s, the introduction of the pill presented another reason for moral people to be concerned about youth sexuality. Many people viewed giving the pill to unmarried women (and for some people this extended to married women) as “an open approval of immorality,” and some even wondered about the future of marriage using the logic: “‘Why should we foster promiscuity? If the pills are distributed, who will marry?’”\(^\text{23}\) Clearly, the moral majority had reasons to fear the usurpation of its traditional values, and worked to prevent this usurpation by indoctrinating and regulating youth through University organizations.

One important method of controlling women’s sexuality that was employed by the University and its organizations was convincing women to control themselves. They did this through placing value on a woman’s honor and reputation and then equating a good reputation and honor with sexual “morality”. Starting with the first women’s student handbook in 1929, a quote by William Shakespeare was printed on the page before the regulations and rules began: “If I lose mine honor I lose myself,” and this quote is included in every handbook until 1945.\(^\text{24}\) Not only did this quote clearly indicate to women students that the University was expecting them to not have extramarital sex, it clearly demonstrates that the purpose of University curfews and sign out sheets was to prevent this loss of “honor.”

Another statement along the same lines was introduced in 1944 and was kept in, on the first page of rules, until 1966: “Every student shall conduct herself at all times in such a way as to uphold her own good name and that of the college.” The handbook later continues, after all rules have been listed, “It is the belief and hope of WSGA Council that this system will place upon each individual woman at Massachusetts State College more responsibility and concern for


\(^{24}\) Student Body, Woman’s Student Government [WSGA handbooks], University Special Collections and Archives, University of Massachusetts.
her own personal conduct.” 25 Again, reputation is heavily emphasized, and it was impressed upon women students that the University expected them to behave in a very specific, morally correct way. These words also gave women a sort of pseudo responsibility to police themselves—they made the situation seem as though women were taking on the responsibility to take care of themselves, but really, the administration was telling them what to do and not allowing them the responsibility of deciding that for themselves.

Other examples of the University placing an emphasis on image and reputation include the admonition published by the Isogon, the Senior Women’s Honorary Society, in 1945 “…you know what a ‘good kid’ is, above all, be one, and be friendly and considerate.” 26 Isogon (and the University handbooks) also included fashion advice that mostly revolved around the weather but also had some moral implications—dresses and skirts were always encouraged, and often slacks were discouraged, especially in cases of more than very casual interactions. The same edition of the Isogon says, “…You can’t go prancing through the living room in a housecoat, or your undies, or with your hair all screwed up…It’s up to you incoming freshmen to help us keep up the standards that are expected of college women like us. So remember in the dining hall curlers are not to be in evidence—or slacks or shorts or scuffies or pajamas. There’s such a thing as making yourself too much at home, you know!” Not only is this a direct case of women policing women, but it again emphasizes reputation, not just of individual women this time but of all women. The point is that one immoral girl makes all girls look bad. Obviously this is due to double standards—women were not small in number at the University in 1945; many men had been drafted, and to compensate for this dip in the male population, UMass allowed a higher

25 Student Affairs—[1944 University Handbook], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
26 [Isogon] Student Affairs — Dean of Women Helen Curtis, Records, 1902-1993 (bulk, 1940-1973), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
percentage of females into the University. Women were not rare to encounter and thus easily lumped together. Correspondingly, more women were talking on leadership roles that men had been forced to abandon, and women were becoming more visible and more like people to the men they were working with. This is acknowledged in the Isogon itself. And yet women were all still labeled in the same “flutterhead”\textsuperscript{27} category if one woman chose to present herself in a nontraditional manner, perhaps by smoking in public, which was officially “not [approved] of [for] women students;”\textsuperscript{28} they were supposed to smoke inside.

While the University was able to convince women to control their sexuality (at least on the surface—it was mostly the reputation that was emphasized), it had to take on some of the burden of regulating dates by regulating calling hours. However, the rules did place the responsibility for proper dating on women themselves, again making it seem as though women had the responsibility of making these decisions but really only making them police, not lawmakers. The rules for calling hours fluctuated slightly over the years, but in general they looked similar to the following: “Students may not entertain men callers before 6 p.m. of any week day with the exception of out-of-town callers who may be received after 10:00 a.m. on Sunday and noon other days. Town callers may be received after 12 noon on Saturday and Sunday.” I have no insight on the seemingly arbitrary difference between out-of-town callers and town callers except that men from out of town might want to get their trip’s worth of girl time. However, I can point out that the fact that men were not subjected to curfews, sign out sheets, or exams on regulations, and the fact that the men’s dormitory regulations (that women were not allowed in men’s dorm rooms) were included within women’s regulations, and the fact that the

\textsuperscript{27} [Isogon] Student Affairs — Dean of Women Helen Curtis, Records, 1902-1993 (bulk, 1940-1973), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

\textsuperscript{28} Student Affairs—[1944 University Handbook], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
rules about men callers were directed at women, indicated that the responsibility (and blame for infraction) lay solely on the shoulders of women. By presenting the rules in this way, the University was saying that women were responsible for their own conduct as well as the conduct of the men with whom they interacted.

Isogon also had advice for women on the subject of dating, another instance of women policing women. Not only did their handbook contain a hypocritical advice article by a senior male student, including such gems as “Don’t talk too much about yourself…Don’t drink more than two if you drink…Don’t be too worldly wise and sophisticated…Don’t be possessive…Don’t talk about your date [to other people]…Don’t be choosey…Don’t make snap judgments,” but it also contained more advice about reputations! The book warned that bad reputations can be made quickly on “practically nothing,” and thus women should be very careful about necking too liberally. The precise wording is, “Hang on to your kisses till you find somebody you really want to give them to, and then you’ll be glad you did, because it’ll be all the nicer then…So be good, girls, and you’ll find what you’re looking for…”

The imposition of responsibility for following the rules for dating and maintaining a good reputation (as well as doing all the right things to get/please a guy…), as illustrated by the rules on callers and the advice from Isogon, was directly placed on women. That, combined with the pressure on women to control their sexuality in “moral” ways, reflects the attitudes of the time and the attitudes of the administration, which wanted to control the sexual activity of the students. This goal, a branch of en loco parentis thought, aimed at maintaining and enforcing in the student-child population the standards of the traditional morals of the previous generation.

29 [Isogon] Student Affairs — Dean of Women Helen Curtis, Records, 1902-1993 (bulk, 1940-1973), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
Curfews, sign out sheets, and calling hours were an extension of the goal of controlling sexuality because they limited the times and ways in which men and women could interact.

The last component of the ideology that lead to curfews for women at universities (that we will discuss) is the belief that women are not capable of independence. This belief is also a branch of *en loco parentis* thought because it sees the student-child as incapable of making informed, adult decisions. The UMass administration indicated on several occasions that it thinks of the student body as nine year olds, the most humorous occasion being in the 1929 University handbook, which gives some general instructions on life like: wear clothing appropriate to the weather, sleep regularly, keep good posture, drink water, eat regularly, “eliminate regularly and thoroughly” (which I can only assume is a reminder to use the bathroom—oh, what forgetful children students are!), brush your teeth, work, play, and rest, get help if you are sick. All of these are amusing for the mere fact that to remind an adult without any impairment to do these things is silly, but the silliness is compounded when in the same paragraph is written, “you are your own boss…You are considered to be a man, and able to spend your time wisely.” Clearly, the *en loco parentis* mentality sometimes extended to the thought that students are just children.

But more than that, the administration systematically treated women as if they needed strict regulation in order to perform well academically. The strongest examples of that are the quiet/study hour rules, rules on freshman dates, and lights out rules. One handbook condescendingly points out, “Noise carries above, below, to adjoining rooms, and thru open windows—The Rec Room is a much better place to discuss your date and the evening than the

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30 Student Affairs—[1929 University Handbook], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
bathroom and or the corridor.”31 To ensure women got the proper amount of study time and were not disturbed by their neighbors’ chatter, the University had study hours; one year they went from 7:00-9:15, and “during these hours girls are to remain in their own rooms for study. There is to be no wandering in the halls, or gathering in the rooms. (c) After 9:15 girls may leave their rooms, provided regular quiet hours are observed.”32 The earliest rule book for women had quiet hour rules that specifically stated that there was to be no running in the corridors and no loud talking or laughing. This makes one wonder why the men did not have these rules. Presumably they can become disturbed by loud noise, and presumably there are college males who get loud. Either males police themselves without being told, or they care less, or they have other places they can go to escape the noise and study, or all three. Perhaps the University was more or less intentionally conditioning women to be quiet, to obey rules, to be sensitive and easily disturbed and unable to resolve a conflict without rules to enforce on others. Or perhaps the University just assumed that women could not work without these rules.

The administration also assumed that, if left to their own devices, women would concentrate on boys and not school. Thus, policies were enforced on Freshmen (undoubtedly the most susceptible to the wiles of dating and the most in need of guidance) that restricted them to two dates per week until Christmas (including callers). Additionally, if a woman had below a 70 average, her dates were further restricted to weekends only.33 Because obviously if a woman is failing, it is because she is spending too much study time on boys. Lastly, women were also at some points restricted to having the lights out in their rooms by 11:00 Sunday through

31 Student Affairs—[1964 University Handbook], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
32 Student Affairs—[1945 University Handbook], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
33 Student Body, Woman’s Student Government [1937 handbook], University Special Collections and Archives, University of Massachusetts.
Thursday. This was primarily for Freshmen (again, the most susceptible to staying up all night talking about boys and forgetting to sleep), but it applied to anyone living in the same dorm as Freshmen women.

All these policies show how little confidence the UMass administration had in the independence and responsibility of women. Isogon even claimed that men were very distracting and that it was easier to focus on academics without them around during WWII. Additionally, a female staff member commented, “It is almost impossible to determine why rules are broken. None of the regulations are excessively stringent. Miss Young suggests the reason may be because ‘the girls aren’t farsighted enough and tend to think only of the immediate situation and not of the consequences.” The women themselves bought into the lie that women are incapable of independence and prone to male distraction, more so than men, apparently, because men were not subject to any comparable rules. The firmly embedded belief that women need guidance, regulation, control is the final piece of the puzzle of why curfews existed at universities.

Although curfews were abolished for the most part at UMass in 1966, and then completely in 1972, women still have not recovered from the internalized policing and internalized low opinions of women. *En loco parentis* mentalities are still a part of our culture, and too many people think they know what is best for everyone else. Knowing is half the battle, and it has taken us as a nation at least 200 years to (fully?) realize the injustices we have imposed upon our own people. Recognizing that *en loco parentis* mentalities, a desire to control sexuality

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34 Student Affairs—[1945 University Handbook], Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
35 [Isogon] Student Affairs — Dean of Women Helen Curtis, Records, 1902-1993 (bulk, 1940-1973), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
36 *Spectrum 65-66: A Guidebook to the University of Massachusetts,* (University of Massachusetts, 1965), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
by controlling women, and a belief in the irresponsibility of women played a part in the
systematic oppression of half our population and a significantly lower proportion of our college
students is an important step in making sure we do not make the same mistake again.
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