This article examines gender stratification in sociology by analyzing how the subject was presented to undergraduates at Harvard and Radcliffe from the late nineteenth century to the mid-1940s. Data for relevant courses in economics and social ethics, as well as sociology, demonstrate that women were disadvantaged throughout the period. The analysis also shows, however, that women gradually attained relative equality, and argues that gender integration was always a covert goal of Harvard's policy of "coordinate education." The article explains the process of equalization in terms of cooperative relationships in informal work groups. Ironically, however, integration disempowered Harvard faculty and Radcliffe administrators while augmenting the power of Harvard's centralizing administration.

The problem of gendered inequality in science education and scientific careers is familiar to sociologists and historians of science (Hughes 1973; Rossiter 1982, 1995; Deegan 1991). Much more research is needed, however, not only to document how educational programs maintained such stratification (Deegan 1995), but also to illumine processes that promoted parity (Lopata 1995). The present article seeks to contribute to an understanding of these issues by analyzing the relationship between Harvard University and Radcliffe College, with emphasis on how sociology was presented to undergraduates from the late nineteenth century to the immediate post-World War II era. The case offers both a chronicle of domination and a tale of limited emancipation.

The primary data for the analysis are provided by archival materials at both institutions, including the correspondence of administrators and faculty, legal agreements, official reports, dissertations and honors theses, catalogues and de-
partmental bulletins, commencement programs, class reunion reports, copies of examinations, and financial records.

Because of their inherently local character, these sources constrain interpretation. The evidence deals with the culture, psychology, and power of two organizations, with relations among students, faculty, academic departments, administrators, and governing bodies (mainly the Harvard Corporation), rather than with societal factors. Macrolevel influences can sometimes be discerned, but only indirectly. Nevertheless, the materials enrich our understanding of sociology's past and provide insight into the larger process of gender integration in higher education.

Terms of Relationship

The story of women and sociology cannot be told apart from the tale of Radcliffe's evolving relationship with Harvard. A crucial early step was taken in 1882 with the incorporation of The Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women, whose purpose was to "promote the education of women with the assistance of the instructors in Harvard University" (Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women:1). Several of the seventeen signers of the articles of association were women already prominent in educational reform (but considered moderate in their views), including Elizabeth Cary Agassiz (Radcliffe's first president), Ellen Gurney, and Alice Longfellow. Others were allies on the Harvard faculty.

Establishing the Society formalized a relationship that had begun three years earlier, when the "Harvard Annex" first offered instruction to groups of women. Under this arrangement, Harvard faculty repeated lectures and administered examinations comparable to those taken by the men. According to Sally Schwager's analysis (1982:156) of "Harvard women," the program in Cambridge diverged from all models for the higher education of women. . . . This new proposal was not one of coeducation . . . it was not the prospectus of a new women's college; it seemed, in fact, to vary little from the private arrangements . . . which women in Cambridge and Boston had enjoyed. . . . only the requirement of rigorous examinations differentiated the Annex.

Thus, the "Radcliffe strategy" had two key features: access to Harvard's faculty, and standards of performance equal to those of male undergraduates. This approach ("coordinate education") may be understood as a campaign to infiltrate an elite male institution. Women had attempted to enter Harvard even before the Civil War, but had been denied access by successive administrations. President Charles W. Eliot (1869-1909) also opposed coeducation, but professed an open mind regarding women's capacity for university studies. Eliot's struggle with his conscience motivated him to craft the peculiar Cambridge compromise. The great barriers to parity were acknowledged in an 1885 article in the Harvard Crimson, which noted that