

ISSN 1881-6436

Discussion Paper Series

No. 11-02

Why did Keynes promote Grace I in 1921?
A Cambridge University Officer's Attitude towards Conferring Degrees on
Women

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January 2012

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23 January 2012

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Provisional Version: 2.0

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Section 1 Introduction

Broad studies of Keynes's economic thought have gathered momentum as the 'Counter Revolution' against him has strengthened since the 1970s. Thus, it is now necessary to return to the heart of Keynes's visions as well as theories in order to seriously consider the lessons they offer regarding contemporary economic difficulties. Harrod (1982[1951]), Milo Keynes (1979[1975]), and Patinkin & Leith (1977) have attempted to determine Keynes's thoughts based on the testimonies of his contemporaries. In addition, The Collected Writings of JMK (1971-1989) have enabled a

deeper understanding of Keynes's visions through the analysis of primary documents. The fruits of this research are abundant, including studies by Dostaler (2007) and Hirai (2008) and four biographies¹. Among these studies, however, few have considered Keynes as a practical man as well as a theorist. Dostaler (2007: 2) considers Keynes "a man of action as much as thought" and Nasu (1995: 3) argues that "the so called 'Keynesian Revolution' could not have happened without his wide experience as a man of affairs". Skidelsky (2009: 56) summarizes this aspect of Keynes's personality as follows:

Keynes was also extremely practical. ... His theoretical speculations issued into compact plans of action, which could be slotted into the existing institutions of government, and which could therefore be made to happen without huge convulsions in established practice ...

A number of researchers, then, have recognized that Keynes's economic thought and theories are inextricably linked to his practical behaviour.

Keynes's role as a University Officer has not been the central theme for researchers. Although biographies and other studies have touched on the topic of the role², more detailed research into this topic is lacking. For example, Nasu (1995) refers to Keynes's bursarship at King's College but not to his other efforts at the University of Cambridge as a whole. This topic is, however, very important, particularly with respect to the issue of women's degrees in the early 1920s. It is said that as a young man Keynes rebelled against Victorian virtues and became more conservative later in life³; this transition suggests that the young Keynes valued aesthetic contemplation, love and friendship, whereas the older Keynes came to emphasize secular values, a public sense of responsibility and some types

¹ Skidelsky (1992[1983]), Hession (1984), Moggridge (1992) and Felix (1999).

² For example, see Harrod (1982[1951]: 304) and Moggridge (1992: 353).

³ Skidelsky (1992[1983]: 26) regards 'the presuppositions of Cambridge civilisation' as more serious than 'the presuppositions of No. 6 Harvey Road'. For discussions on the origin of Keynes's thought, see Bateman & Davis (eds.) (1991).

of tradition. The topic of women's degrees in the early 1920s—when Keynes was in his late thirties—provides an excellent window into this transitional period of Keynes's life, during which he was neither young nor old and engaged both in private matters and in the public sphere. In addition, as Keynes's mentor Marshall had previously been involved in women's issues, it should be helpful to identify differences between the two men's thoughts on the matter.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: Section 2 outlines three steps in the problem of women's degrees in 1920-21; Section 3 discusses the three reasons behind Keynes's actions; and Section 4 draws conclusions and lists the lessons learned from this topic.

Section 2 Three Steps in the Problem of Women's Degrees

This section deals with Keynes's involvement in the issue of conferring formal degrees to women at Cambridge in the early 1920s. The course of events is divided into three steps or terms: the first is before December 1920, during which Keynes did not play a central role; the second covers November 1920 to October 1921, when Keynes became actively involved as a Council member of the Senate; and the third is the aftermath of the polling day results in October 1921.

2-1 Step 1: Total Failure

C. R. Fay (1884-1964), a historian and Keynes's close friend and colleague at King's College and the faculty of economics, was a central figure in the economics courses for Tripos and, like Keynes, was eager to reform the college and university system. Fay submitted a letter to the *Cambridge Review [CR]* in June 1918, criticizing the popular arguments that full status should not be conferred to women because wartime was not a proper time for reform and because an extended period of time would be required for such extensive reform. According to Fay, the former argument implied that all inequalities not directly related to the war should be

perpetuated, while the latter stance was representative of a general attitude of apathy that prevented people from taking positive and bold action against inequality. Taking this as his starting point, Fay argued that immediate action was necessary⁴. At a congregation of the Senate on 30 October 1919, Fay expressed his opinion that the admission of women teachers into full and equal membership would increase educational efficiency in history, economics and modern languages⁵, and he was subsequently appointed as a member of a syndicate for the issues faced by women students at the University⁶.

The syndicate, consisting of 13 members, published its final report on 7 May 1920⁷. The report was divided into two contrasting parts, A and B, reflecting the conflicting opinions within the University. Six members signed Report A, and the remainder signed Report B; the Vice-Chancellor (Peter Gilles, Emmanuel College) did not sign the report at all.

Report A proposed the admittance of women with full membership, with two caveats: the University reserved effective power over the number of women students and over the conditions of their residence—that is, only a small number of women could be matriculated at Girton or Newnham. In contrast, Report B contained a detailed and strongly worded counter-argument to Report A. The spiritual and material wealth of Cambridge, the report argued, was in possession of the colleges, even more than of the University, and admitting women to such colleges would destroy their traditions. Report B also expressed doubt that teaching and examination systems developed by and for men were also adequate for women. The report admitted that men’s universities, women’s universities and mixed universities each had their own merits, but that

the educational system of the country should not be of one uniform type The

⁴ “Women’s Degree”, by C. R. Fay, *CR*, 6 June 1918, pp. 436-437.

⁵ “Discussion of a Report”, (held on Thursday 30 October 1919). *Cambridge University Reporter [CUR]*, 11 November 1919, pp. 253-254.

⁶ “Acta”, (dated on 6 December 1919), *CUR*, 9 December 1919, p. 354.

⁷ “Report of the Syndicate on the Relation of Women Students to the University”, (dated on 7 May 1920), *CUR*, 11 May 1920, pp. 935-943.

mixed university ... may be a very good thing. ... And yet to have all universities in the country of this one type would diminish instead of promoting educational efficiency and would impoverish educational ideals⁸.

Report B proposed the creation of a new women University based on Girton and Newnham Colleges. The new University would share libraries and laboratories with Cambridge University, but its examinations and degrees would be separate. Report B thus reflected the viewpoint of ‘men’s college supremacists’ who attached importance to intimate communities that excluded outsiders and eschewed external standards.

Will Spens (1882-1952), who signed Report B, also propounded an alternative, ‘a possible federal scheme’, with the aim of satisfying both male traditions and female requests. In Spens’s scheme, the Senate would consist of two houses, one comprised of men and the other of women. Each house would have autonomy regarding their own matters, and a joint meeting would be held to decide on matters concerning both houses. Degrees would be given in a congregation including both houses. The problem was how to pass Graces⁹; when Graces concerned both male and female students or members, they would be submitted first to the men’s house. After they had passed with or without amendment, they would be submitted to the women’s house. In the event of disagreement between the houses, a two-thirds majority in a joint congregation would decide the matter. McWilliams Tullberg (1998[1975]: 138) describes this scheme as “distinctly disadvantageous to women”, as the ratio of male to female students at that time was 10 to 1. However, despite its flaws, Spens’s scheme is notable for its effort to create a more effective way to compromise between both camps.

A number of economists at Cambridge were eager to discuss the two reports, and in October 1920, a congregation was held at the Senate for that

⁸ *CUR*, 11 May 1920, p. 939.

⁹ A formal motion submitted to the Senate, with the sanction of the Council. See Stubbings (1995[1991]: 57).

purpose¹⁰. The *Cambridge University Report* [*CUR*] recorded the opinions of 17 members on the matter¹¹; among these, two economists supported Report A. Dr. Clapham (1873-1946), who would go on to become first Professor of Economic History at Cambridge, pointed out that “men and women worked in perfect harmony in the mixed University”¹². Fay argued that, after being granted equal partnership, female teachers would benefit more than female students from being formal members of their Special Boards¹³.

The vote began at 9 a.m. on 8 December 1920. Report A was defeated, with 712 votes for Report A and 904 against it (total 1616)¹⁴. However, resident members of the Senate were, as a whole, for equal membership (See Chart 1). The total number of active University Residents, including not only residents at Cambridge but also those teaching at the University or a College and others employed directly by the University, was 491 at that time; of these, 86 abstained from voting, 214 voted for Report A, and 191 voted against Report A. Among professors, 27 were for Report A and 15 were against it¹⁵. About 59% of non-resident members voted against women’s formal membership.

	Placet	Non-placet	Total
Total	712 (44.1%)	904 (55.9%)	1616
Teaching Residents	214 (52.8%)	191 (47.1%)	405
Others	498 (41.1%)	713 (58.8%)	1211

Chart 1. Outcome of vote on Report A (December 1920)

¹⁰ *Cambridge Review* reported that it was “quite an unusual spectacle” and that “chairs and benches were filled with listeners”. “Senate Debate on Women’s Degree”, *CR*, 22 October 1920, p. 22.

¹¹ “Discussion of the Report of the Syndicate on the Relation of Women Students to the University”, (held on 14 and 15 October 1920), *CUR*, 28 October 1920, pp. 190-207.

¹² *CUR*, 28 October 1920, pp. 193-194.

¹³ *CUR*, 28 October 1920, pp. 201-202.

¹⁴ “Acta”, *CUR*, 10 December 1920, p. 395.

¹⁵ “Analysis of the Vote of Dec. 8, 1920”, *CR*, 18 February 1921, p. 248. “Vote of Dec. 8, 1920 -Corrigenda”, *CR*, 25 February 1921, p. 263.

Undergraduates spontaneously organized a poll amongst themselves, as they were not members of the Senate. A total of 3213 (67% of resident undergraduates) voted, 884 for and 2329 against Report A¹⁶. This figure indicates that male students were generally more strongly opposed to the admittance of women than teachers. The Union Society, a famous debating club of which Keynes was the President in 1905, had proposed a motion several times that welcomed the equal admission of women to all privileges of the University; the motion was accepted in May 1920¹⁷, but was then retroactively rejected in November of the same year¹⁸. Thus, while socially aware students were likely to accept gender equality, the majority of students showed overt hostility towards equality as voting day approached. Essentially, then, teachers' respect for women was defeated by the hostility of students and conservative graduates.

Both camps were ultimately defeated when Report B was also rejected on 12 February 1921¹⁹. With this defeat, the problem of women's admittance reached an impasse, with only two viable solutions: a scheme granting full membership to women or the creation of a new Women's University. However, as the matter was extremely complicated, it was impossible to satisfy the majority simply by selecting one of these two extremes. Naturally, another approach—compromise—was necessary.

2-2 Step 2: Compromise

Just one month before the polling day in December 1920, half of the Council members were elected. The maximum number of members was

¹⁶ "University Journal", *Cambridge Chronicle [CC]*, 8 December 1920, p. 3. *CC* described the voter turnout as 69%, but 67% is the correct figure based on the total number of undergraduates (4789). See "The Residents List", *CR*, 22 October 1920, p. 23.

¹⁷ 365 votes in favour versus 266 against (total: 631). "The Union Society", *CR*, 21 May 1920, p. 342.

¹⁸ 337 votes in favour versus 423 against (total: 769). See McWilliams Tullberg (1998[1975]: 149).

¹⁹ 50 votes in favour versus 146 against Report B. "Acta 12 February 1921", *CUR*, 18 February 1921, p. 660.

fixed at 18 according to the Cambridge University Act²⁰, but the Chancellor did not typically attend meetings and the Vice-Chancellor (Giles) at that time was elected from the representatives of Heads of Colleges. Thus, a total of 16 members discussed general matters concerning the University as a whole. Neville Keynes had been a member of the Council since 1893, when he became Secretary, and he had acted as Registrar since 1910. Sir E. Rutherford, J. M. Keynes and Mr Spens, all newly elected, played a crucial role in women's issues on the Council.

The central Government, deciding that considerable "grants could not be made without an enquiry sufficient enough to satisfy Parliament"²¹, established the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities on 14 November 1919. With the main goal of inquiring into four issues²², the Commission, consisting of 23 members²³, made a business trip to Cambridge in August 1920 and took evidence from numerous resident members (Evans 2010: 30). Among others, Keynes also testified to the Commission (Harrod 1982[1951]: 304).

Keynes played a vital role in dealing with women's issues from the moment of his election as Council member. According to the Council minutes for 6 December 1920, the Secretary of the Royal Commission expressed a desire to receive the written views of a few representative members of the University. The Vice-Chancellor requested members to suggest the names of suitable persons²⁴. The suggested names are not recorded in the minutes; however, judging from correspondence in the

²⁰ See Articles 6 and 9 of the Cambridge University Act (1856). The Registrar of the University (ed.) (2009[1914]: 145-146).

²¹ *Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities: Report*, Cmd 1588, London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1922, p. 7.

²² The four issues were: financial resources and their administration within the University, the government of the University, and the relations of the Colleges to the University. See *Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities: Report*, p. 5.

²³ The Chair was Asquith and the Deputy Gerald Balfour. B. Athena Clough, the Vice-Principal (later Principal) of Newnham, joined as one of the two female members.

²⁴ *Council of the Senate Minutes*, Min.I.20B (1920-1921), Manuscript Room, University Library, University of Cambridge, 6 December 1920, p. 83, Section 13.

Keynes Papers of King's College, Cambridge, it was evidently Keynes, among others, who was in charge of answering the Royal Commission's request:

The Royal Commission ... are anxious to supplement the memoranda ... by obtaining representative local opinion ... with regard to the government of the University. / ... the Commissioners have not yet arrived at definite conclusions²⁵.

The last sentence shows that the Commission was prepared, at least partly, to be persuaded by university teachers.

Keynes not only replied to the questionnaire from the Commission, which comprised 10 questions²⁶, but also seemed to make out a draft of the formal University reply²⁷. Keynes then exchanged views with Spens and redrafted²⁸. Keynes's response included the following points: he was in favour of the creation of a Resident Body consisting of University teachers or officers²⁹; he was in support of the existing system used to elect the Vice-Chancellor, the order of rotation of the Heads of the Colleges, because the Heads system embodied the hospitality and dignity required of the Vice-Chancellor³⁰; and he opposed the appointment of outside representatives to supervise internal organizations such as the General Board of Studies and the Financial Board, as external members could rarely attend meetings and were useless in practice³¹. Instead, Keynes suggested that a periodical Royal Commission should supervise the University and

²⁵ From C. H. Stocks (Secretary of the Royal Commission) to J. M. Keynes, 15 December 1920, UA/5/1/94, the Keynes Papers [KP], Modern Archives, King's College, University of Cambridge.

²⁶ "Universities Commission: Questions about University Government, Cambridge", UA/5/1/97-99, KP.

²⁷ [A reply to University Commission], undated [December 1920], typed with MA, by Keynes, UA/5/1/100-105, KP.

²⁸ From Will Spens to J. M. Keynes, 1 January 1921, UA/5/1/95-96, KP.

²⁹ Keynes' reply to Questions 1, 2 and 3, UA/5/1/100, KP.

³⁰ Keynes' reply to Questions 4 and 5, UA/5/1/101, KP.

³¹ Keynes' reply to Question 9, UA/5/1/104, KP.

report *ex-post facto*³².

Keynes, who might have been irritated by conservative members in the Council such as Professor Sorley and Mr Gray³³, appealed to public sentiment in the University as well. In February 1921, he expressed his opinion in the *Cambridge Review*³⁴. This letter³⁵ revealed Keynes's basic thoughts on women's issues:

Quite apart from the right to vote in the Senate, it is, in the opinion of most male teachers in the University, a grievance that a woman, however well qualified, should be debarred on the sole ground of sex, from eligibility for University prizes and studentships and from University lectureships, Readerships and Professorships, *which are the reward and encouragement of sound learning*. It is also a grievance, for the men teachers in the University as well as for the women, that we should be debarred from electing our women colleagues on Boards of Studies, *however useful* we may deem the assistance of particular individuals to be.

Keynes first emphasized two practical grievances: unequal opportunities that discouraged women from studying and closed job appointments that diminished educational efficiency.

Keynes continued, calling the fact that the name of a female Girton lecturer (Mrs Wootton) was advertised not in the main body of the lecture list but in a tiny footnote to a title entered under the name of a male lecturer (Hubert Henderson) "disgraceful" and an "injustice" indicating that female lecturers were not considered to be formal staff members. Keynes

³² Keynes' reply to Question 10, UA/5/1/105, KP.

³³ Professor Sorley and Mr Gray put forth a motion that only Girton and Newnham should be incorporated into a new University; the motion was rejected in January 1921. *Council of the Senate Minutes*, Min.I.20B (1920-1921), 17 January 1921, p. 84, Section 5.

³⁴ This weekly magazine, which published club activities, poems, book reviews and letters to the Editor, was introduced in 1879 and ceased publication in 1998. The purpose of the magazine was to communicate the life and thoughts of students and staff at the University.

³⁵ "Correspondence: Women's Degrees", *CR*, 42, 21 February 1921, pp. 273-274, Emphasis added.

described the Master of St. John's (R. F. Scott), who pretended to hold a moderate position with respect to this issue and attempted to conceal the full extent of the problems, as "obviously untruthful"³⁶. Keynes also pointed out that an "action by the Commission would be improper interference from outside on a domestic matter" and if a House of Residents could not accomplish much-needed reforms on its own, the Royal Commission would go further to intervene on a larger scale³⁷.

In February and March 1921, larger steps were taken towards normality within the Council: "the Vice-Chancellor was requested to take steps to ascertain whether a compromise between the different parties was possible on the question of Women's Degrees"³⁸. After conferring with members of the Council, the Vice-Chancellor decided to invite the signatories of a proposed paper to the Council. Twelve members, including Keynes, Spens, Clapham and Rutherford³⁹, unanimously resolved the following points in the paper: (1) women students shall be matriculated at women's colleges with a distinct disciplinary body; (2) women shall be eligible for all degrees except membership of the Senate; (3) the number of resident women in *statu pupillari* shall be within 500; (4) a Professor elected from the body of Women Graduates shall not be *ex officio* Head of the Department; and (5) women shall be eligible for all Scholarships and Prizes, and for all Professorships, Readerships, Lectureships, etc. and for memberships of Boards and Syndicates. As discussed later, these points closely reflect Keynes's personal opinions on the matter.

It was Keynes who seized the initiative when this paper was discussed at the Council on 7 March 1921. Keynes first moved, Professor Rutherford

³⁶ Keynes later cut these aggressive expressions from the draft. From J. M. Keynes to the Editor of the *Cambridge Review*, 21 February 1921, UA/5/2/2-4, KP.

³⁷ A local newspaper reported that "Mr. J. M. Keynes breathes out fire and threatenings of short and quick shrift from the Royal Commission". "University Journal", *Cambridge Chronicle [CC]*, 2 March 1921, page 5.

³⁸ "Women's Degree Committee: 1 March 1921", *Council of the Senate Minutes*, Min.I.20B (1920-1921), annexed, 7 March 1921, between p. 91 and p. 92.

³⁹ The other members were Peter Giles (Vice-Chancellor), H. G. Comber, E. C. Pearce (the next Vice-Chancellor), Walter Durnford, H. F. Stewart, H. A. Holland, H. Hamshaw Thomas and T. Knox-Show.

seconding⁴⁰, that “the Council appoint a Committee to draft a Report to the Senate containing Graces for carrying out the proposals of this Report”. Professor Sorley immediately moved as an amendment, Mr Gray seconding, that a syndicate should be organized to discuss the memorials already circulating for and against the women’s degree issue. Sorley and Gray desired to follow the normal procedures of forming Graces, as they thought that the Council members, a majority of whom supported compromising, desired to find a solution by themselves. The amendment was rejected with 11 votes to 3 (1 not voting) and the original motion passed with 13 votes (2 not voting). As a result, Keynes, Spens, Innes and Sir W. Dunford were appointed members of the first Committee to draft a report and Sorley and Gray were appointed to the second Committee⁴¹.

A series of memorials were published one after another. On 8 March 1921, two memorials were published: the first, which was signed by 113 members, including C. W. Guillebaud, a nephew of Alfred Marshall, was similar to the report with 12 signatories described above, while the second, with 102 signatories headed by R. F. Scott, claimed that “the University ought to remain a University for men’s education directed by men” and that only titular degrees should be awarded to suitable women⁴². Further, Knox-Show, a member of the Council, announced that he would publish a memorandum in agreement with a compromise plan⁴³; 187 members signed the memorandum. Of these 187⁴⁴, 115 had voted placet on Report A in December 1920, 50 had voted non-placet, and 22 had not voted⁴⁵. Regardless of their previous voting action, then, many members were

⁴⁰ In the Council, a motion was to be followed by a seconding motion. Decisions were made on a relative majority system.

⁴¹ *Council of the Senate Minutes*, Min.I.20B (1920-1921), 7 March 1921, p. 91, Section 7.

⁴² “Memorials to the Council of the Senate on the Relation of Women-Students to the University”, (dated on 7 March), *CUR*, 8 March 1921, pp. 710-712.

⁴³ See also *Council of the Senate Minutes*, Min.I.20B (1920-1921), 2 May 1921, p. 94, Section 10.

⁴⁴ The figure given by McWilliams Tullberg (1998[1975]: 158), 177, is incorrect.

⁴⁵ “Memorial to the Council of the Senate on the Relation of Women Students to the University”, (dated on 28 April), *CUR*, 3 May 1921, pp. 902-903.

deeply concerned with finding a solution to the issue. Women's colleges, responding to this movement, welcomed the proposal to confer titular degrees and vowed that they "would not take steps to appeal to the Commission"⁴⁶.

On 25 April, two reports, prepared by the two Committees appointed on 7 March, were laid before the Council, and after some amendments, it was resolved that the Registry was requested to prepare a combined report including an introduction and concrete statutes, and that the report should be published on 3 May, discussed on 12 May, and voted upon on 16 June⁴⁷.

The two proposals were called Grace I and Grace II⁴⁸. The former, 'the compromise', consisted of three elements⁴⁹: the number of women students was to be limited to five hundred (a Grace could change this limitation); all privileges except membership of the Senate were to be conferred on women students and teachers, but this condition was also subject to existing special rights of particular Colleges; and the discipline of men and women students was to be kept entirely separate. Grace I took a step towards realizing gender equality in the fields of study and research, while giving sufficient consideration to the traditional concerns held by protectors of the (men's only) college system. This idea "undoubtedly contain[ed] the most acceptable suggestions since Report A was voted down"⁵⁰. Grace II, in contrast, simply proposed titular degrees for women.

The process of drafting these two Graces was extremely unusual for three reasons. First, the Council formed its own committee to consider the

⁴⁶ "The Women's Question", by K. Jex-Blake (Mistress of Girton College) and B. A. Clough (Principal of Newnham College), (dated on 4 May 1921), *CR*, 6 May 1921, p. 351.

⁴⁷ *Council of the Senate Minutes*, Min.I.20B (1920-1921), 25 April 1921, p. 93, Section 10.

⁴⁸ "Report of the Council of the Senate on Degrees for Women Students" (dated on 2 May 1921), *CUR*, 3 May 1921, pp. 907-911 and 3 October 1921, pp. 46-50.

⁴⁹ See Leedham-Green (1996: 192), McWilliams Tullberg (1998[1975]: 158) and Sutherland (2006: 176-177). See also "Women's Degree", *CC*, 12 October 1921, page 5.

⁵⁰ "The Women's Question", *CR*, 29 April 1921, p. 327.

two ideas rather than appointing a syndicate to draft a report. This special treatment was necessary for the Council to take the initiative in reversing the result of the big issue settled just a half year previously. Second, the two ideas were not signed separately but were combined into a single report consisting of two parts with the signatures of 14 Council members⁵¹. This format was also necessary to dramatize the united effort by the Council to reach a solution. Third, the method of voting was irregular; votes on the two proposals should have been taken simultaneously, but in the event that Grace I passed, Grace II was to be withdrawn⁵². Although this strategy invited harsh attacks⁵³, the Council overcame the opposition⁵⁴ and wanted to avoid a situation in which support for Grace II surpassed that for Grace I, even if both received a majority vote.

Keynes took a firm stance in support of Grace I in a discussion at a Senate congregation⁵⁵. He began by blaming “the gallant die-hards from Clare” for speaking “lightly of the evil results of external interference”. Keynes opined that most of those who had voted against Report A had been afraid that either (i) men would lose final authority over men’s education, or (ii) University facilities would be overcrowded by increased numbers of women. Keynes expected Grace I, the compromise, to effectively address these concerns. The important thing, Keynes concluded, was that the University itself needed to find a solution to the issue⁵⁶.

The polling day was postponed from 16 June to 20 October⁵⁷ due to

⁵¹ Sorley and Gray refused to sign.

⁵² “Report of the Council of the Senate on Degrees for Women Students” (dated on 2 May 1921), *CUR*, 3 May 1921, p. 907.

⁵³ A letter from W. L. Mallison (Chairman, Master of Clare College) *et al.* to Vice-Chancellor (dated on 13 May 1921), *Council of the Senate Minutes*, Min.I.20B (1920-1921), annexed, 16 March 1921, between p. 96 and p. 97.

⁵⁴ *Council of the Senate Minutes*, Min.I.20B (1920-1921), 16 March 1921, p. 96, Section 6.

⁵⁵ Apart from Keynes, Spens, Fay and Clapham remarked. “Discussion of the Report” (dated on 12 May 1921), by Mr Spens, Mr Fay and Dr Clapham, *CUR*, 24 May 1921, p. 1031, p. 1035 and p. 1036.

⁵⁶ “Discussion of the Report” (dated on 12 May 1921), by J. M. Keynes, *CUR*, 24 May 1921, p. 1038.

⁵⁷ *Council of the Senate Minutes*, Min.I.20B (1920-1921), 4 June 1921, p. 99, Section

possible transportation difficulties caused by a coal miners' strike and related strikes⁵⁸. Because non-resident members needed to come to Cambridge in order to vote, the Council, considering an equal opportunity, decided to postpone the polling day. This postponement, by chance, gave both camps more time to contemplate their positions.

During this period, Keynes exchanged important letters with Spens in September 1921. Spens was very worried about the situation, stating that "if the University did not accept a compromise which the women accepted, there would almost certainly be interference by Parliament". Spens wrote to Keynes that it would be desirable for influential graduates such as Austen Chamberlain to say something about the situation:

Unfortunately I do not know Chamberlain personally, ... I cannot approach him myself. ... but I fancy you will know him pretty well, and if so and if you at all agree with my view of the situation, I think much the best plan might be for you to make or take some chance of discussing the whole situation with him and making some such suggestions as the above⁵⁹.

Keynes, on his holidays in Charleston, replied quickly with the words, "Your letter of the 2nd September is very interesting, though I hope you are unduly pessimistic. I believe we shall win without much doubt, if only we can get our supporters to vote". He continued:

However, last night I happened to be staying with Asquith and discussed the situation with him. He was horrified to learn that there was any doubt as to a successful issue of the October Vote. He told me that the Commission will not be reporting before the end of the year; that is to say, *sometime after the Vote*. If, he said, the Non-Placets were to win, that would certainly make a profound difference

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⁵⁸ See McWilliams Tullberg (1998[1975]: 160). Once in May 1897 special trains ran between Kings-Cross London and Cambridge for non-resident members of the Senate. "To the Editor of *The Times*", *The Times*, 21 May 1897, p. 14.

⁵⁹ From Will Spens to J. M. Keynes, 2 September 1921, UA/5/2/5-7, KP.

to their report. He was also very decidedly of the opinion that the Non-Placets would not obtain the faintest degree of Parliamentary support; but the report of the Commission would necessarily bring the issue into the political arena; and that in that event the opponents of the women could not possibly hope for success.

Of course *this was confidential*. But I do not think there would be any harm in your letting it get round privately to the opposition that the Commission will not be reporting until after the Vote; ... They will therefore be doing a great injury to the University...

... our right tactic will be to circulate a fly early in October bringing right out into the open the threat of external interference. We could point out that in that event the compromise would fall to the ground, and in all the general turmoil which would follow *the interests of the University* would certainly suffer. ... Even if the threat of interference enrages the opposition I do not think that this matters. Our business is not so much to attend to them as to attend to our own supporters⁶⁰.

This letter reveals three basic elements of Keynes's way of thinking. First, Keynes's ultimate target was not constraints related to old colleges or preposterous conventions, but University interests associated with research and advanced education. Second, his concrete measures were practical: the tactics were to stimulate moderate members to take action by suggesting the threat of external interference. Third, he was optimistic about the near future.

Keynes's suggestions in the letter were possible thanks to his deep connections in the inner circles of government. Chamberlain, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, placed his trust in Keynes, stating that "in my absence he will be received on the same footing as I should be if I were present"⁶¹. Keynes, on the other hand, was close to the Whigs rather than the Tories. In autumn of 1915, Keynes became friendly with the Asquiths

⁶⁰ From J. M. Keynes to Will Spens, 8 September 1921, emphasis added, UA/5/2/8-9, KP.

⁶¹ Keynes (1971 vol. 16: 415) and Dostaler (2007: 143).

and the McKennas among other elite circles. He recalled as follows: Asquith's "temperament was naturally conservative. ... he was the perfect Wig for carrying into execution those Radical projects ... which were well judged" (Keynes 1972 vol. 10: 38-39). Asquith had refused to hear demands from suffragists (Strachey 1928: 315). However, in August 1916 he at last gave up his opposition to women's right to vote after crediting women's direct and indirect achievements during the War (ibid.: 354). Keynes might have favoured this pragmatic temperament⁶². His honeymoon with high-ranking statesmen enabled him to access confidential information, which in turn strengthened his confidence to persuade others to join his cause.

The members' poll was held on Thursday, 20 October 1921. It had been difficult to forecast which camps were predominant⁶³, with numerous fly-sheets for and against being circulated about. Just as the bells at St. Mary's, the University church, began to ring at half past 8 a.m., it was discovered that Grace I had failed, with a vote of 694 to 908 (total 1602) and Grace II had passed with a vote of 1011 to 369 (total 1380)⁶⁴. In that moment, Keynes's efforts to pass Grace I seemed to have come to nothing, despite the marginal accomplishment of securing titular degrees for women.

2-3 Step 3: Virtual Victory

The failure of Grace I in 1921 does not indicate that Keynes was defeated in the long run—in fact, the reality is quite the opposite.

⁶² Nevertheless, the honeymoon period ended in 1926, when the General Strike arose. For the first time, Keynes approved of Lloyd George, who was positive about the Strike, and criticized Asquith, who blamed union leaders for illegal actions. Keynes never reconciled with Asquith, who was infuriated by Keynes's article (Dostaler 2007: 114).

⁶³ "No one seems to be very confident how the vote will go. If the non-residents abstain from voting Scheme I. is almost certain to be carried". "Women's Degree", *CC*, 12 October 1921, page 5.

⁶⁴ "Acta" by John Neville Keynes (Registrar), *CUR*, 25 October 1921, p. 171. See the following: "No Women Members at Cambridge: Grace I. Defeated", *The Times*, 21 October 1921; "University Journal: Grace I. and II.", *CC*, 26 October 1921, page 3; McWilliams Tullberg (1998[1975]: 165), Leedham-Green (1996: 192).

The Report of the Royal Commission published in March 1922 was as Keynes predicted based on the information secretly provided by Asquith. Fortunately, the Report did not adopt a hostile attitude towards the University. In fact, it recommended nearly the same contents as Grace I, though more conservative. The Report specified that a grant of £4,000 a year to support women students continue for ten years. According to the Report, the most serious practical grievance of women at Cambridge was that the teachers, regardless of their qualifications, were not eligible for posts or offices in the University, and were excluded from teaching organizations. However, attempts to address this problem were repeatedly rejected by non-resident voters. On the other hand, the Report also maintained that Cambridge should remain predominantly a ‘men’s University’—that is, that the offices of Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Proctor should not be open to women. The Report allowed for a limited number of women undergraduates (500) to matriculate at Girton or Newnham, and specified that some would be required to live with their parents. The Report thus effectively accepted the major elements of Grace I and held non-resident rather than resident members responsible for the failure of Grace I. In addition, the Report took conservative teachers (some College fellows) into account when recommending the preservation of some aspects of men’s power.

The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act was enacted on 31 July 1923. Clause I of the Act provided that the University of Cambridge Commissioners (11 members) should be established. Clause 6 provided that the Commissioners should make statutes for the University in accordance with the Report of the Royal Commission (1922), after giving careful consideration to the admission of poorer students. The Act did not refer directly to female students and teachers; however, the Report served as an adequate guide on these matters.

In advance of this legislation, the economics group in Cambridge had embarked on reform targeting women’s issues. In 1903, when the Economics Tripos was launched, the group organized the Special Board for

Economics and Politics, in a manner similar to other groups. Within the Special Board, several elected members dealt with practical business such as courses of study, examinations and studentships. The chairman and the secretary were elected from among the members of the Board each year. The secretary recorded minutes autographically. The chairman approved the previous minutes by signing next time. A search of the minutes of Board meetings reveals that the first meeting to which a woman admitted was held on 8 December 1920 (by curious coincidence, this is the same day that the polling was held for Report A): “It was decided to invite Miss [sic, Mrs] Wootton⁶⁵ to deliver the causes of [..., *unreadable*] on the Economic Functions of Government in place of Mr Henderson, and actualise the lectures in any way that might be possible”⁶⁶. At the Conference of Lecturers, which started on 25 May 1923, the scheme for an Economics Department Fund and the lecture list for 1923-24 were approved. Previously, there had been a Degree Committee that consisted only of economists to discuss economic matters, unlike the Special Board, which included scholars in law and politics and discussed general matters.

Three years later, the formal faculty system was launched. The first meeting of the Faculty of Economics and Politics was held in the Marshall Library at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, 26 October 1926. A woman teacher, Miss Tappan, attended the first meeting⁶⁷. One month later, the Faculty Board for Economics and Politics, consisting of 8 male members⁶⁸, was formally organized. The minutes reported that “Miss Tappan was coopted [as] an Additional Member of the Board”⁶⁹. Miss Tappan, along with male teachers such as Lavington and Dobb, were nominated as examiners for the

⁶⁵ Barbara Wootton (1897-1988); married in 1917, but her husband died during World War I. She studied economics at Griton.

⁶⁶ *Minutes of the Special Board for Economics and Politics*, Min.v.115 (1911-1923), Manuscript Room, University Library, University of Cambridge, 100th Meeting, 8 December 1920, p. 129, Section 1.

⁶⁷ *Minutes of the Special Board for Economics and Politics*, Min.v.116 (1923-1929), Faculty Meeting, 26 October 1926, p. 82.

⁶⁸ Butler, Guillebaud, Yule, Clapham, Shove, Lavington, Keynes, and Alston.

⁶⁹ *Minutes of the Special Board for Economics and Politics*, Min.v.116 (1923-1929), 1st Faculty Board, 16 November 1926, p. 86, Section 3.

qualifying examination. On 15 November 1927, it was agreed that “women ought to have equal eligibility with men as conditions for the Adam Smith Prize and other University Prizes”⁷⁰. The Prize was a triennial essay prize of £60, founded by Marshall in 1891. The application was open to women in line with Keynes’s 1921 letter to the *Cambridge Review*. In short, the economics group restructured its organization and rules to formally accept women students and teachers.

The new Statutes were published in January 1926, approved by the King in May, and put into practice in October. The pillars of the reform roughly comprised three points: first, the governing body was no longer the Senate, which included non-residents, but the House of Residents only (Evans 2010: 30). Residents directly connected with the University were granted autonomy, except in elections for Chancellor and burgesses for Parliament. Second, the University was re-organized to ensure a high standard of education and advanced research. In particular, middle-units or intermediaries (faculties and laboratories) between colleges and the University were established and were self-governed to some degree. Third, the position of women was drastically improved⁷¹; women could now hold teaching offices, and 11 of the 183 University Lecturers appointed by the new Statutes were women⁷².

The actual results of the reform came to strongly resemble the defeated Grace I, while at the same time including Grace II. Consequently, as Bradbrook (1969: 70) points out, after 1926 the distinction between full membership in the University and membership in title only became very difficult to discern. The economics group had anticipated this trend and established itself at the head of the movement by pushing through numerous reforms, including those aiming to improve the status of women. Although Clapham, Fay, Robertson, and Guillebaud were all key players in

⁷⁰ *Minutes of the Special Board for Economics and Politics*, Min.v.116 (1923-1929), 7th Faculty Board, 15 November 1927, p. 116, Section 7.

⁷¹ See Statute B Chapter IV-1, Statute D Chapter VII-8 and Statute E Chapter I-8. The Registry of the University (ed.) (1928: 15, 41, 58-59).

⁷² *The Historical Register of the University of Cambridge Supplement, 1921-30*, Cambridge: University of Cambridge, p. 7.

these reforms, the core of the reform movement was Keynes himself.

It took more than 20 years for true gender equality to finally be realized. As of September 1946, 2 women were Professors, 20 were University Lecturers, and 2 were Heads of Department (McWilliams Tullberg 1998[1975]: 180). A syndicate to examine women's issues established in January 1947 published its report in June of the same year. The report recommended the full membership of women on the same terms as men. The Grace was put to the vote on 6 December 1947; this time, the Grace passed without hitch. When the Proctor pronounced the word 'Placet', his cap was lifted and replaced again, bringing to an end the long struggle for equality.

Section 3 Why did Keynes promote Grace I?

This paper takes up three reasons for Keynes's support of Grace I in 1921: his personal philosophy, his central reasoning, and a profound element below the surface.

The first reason, which forms a background for much of Keynes's work, is Keynes's personal philosophy, particularly as it related to women. At Cambridge, Keynes was constantly surrounded by progressive pioneering elder women and promising female students. Mary Paley Marshall (1850-1944) and Keynes's mother, Florence Ada Keynes (1861-1958), were pioneers who studied economics at Cambridge. Mary, one of the first five women to enter Newnham College, read moral sciences (including economics) (Marshall 1950: 14) and obtained a first class at the Tripos. She became the first woman lecturer of economics at Cambridge and published the book *The Economics of Industry* (1889)⁷³ with her husband. However, later in life her potential did not manifest in the field of economics *per se* but found an outlet in helping others. She inspired numerous girls, including Florence and Eglantyne Jebb (1876-1928). Mary was also in charge of developing the Marshall Library of Economics, a library where students could borrow books for lectures on economics. Keynes expressed

⁷³ Keynes described it as "an extremely good book" (Keynes 1972 vol. 10: 239).

his high opinion of Mary in her biography while implicitly criticizing her husband and Keynes's mentor, Alfred Marshall, who, according to Keynes, "came increasingly to the conclusion that there was nothing useful to be made of women's intellects" (Keynes 1972 vol. 10: 241). Referring to Alfred's father, who was known to treat his wife poorly, Keynes also wrote, "Hereditary is mighty, and Alfred Marshall did not altogether escape the influence of the parental mould" (ibid.: 162). These comments suggest that Keynes completely rejected his mentor's philosophy about women.

Keynes's mother, Florence Ada Keynes, also matriculated at Newnham and studied for the Higher Local Examination. When she and her husband Neville moved to Harvey Road, the University was still clinging to a number of old traditions, but progressive elements, including the admission of women, were beginning to become apparent as well. Numerous female students and elderly graduates were fascinated with the Charity Organization Society started in London. Florence served as Secretary of the COS Cambridge for many years. She also served as chair of the public service and magistrates committee of the National Council of Women for 11 years, and as President during 1930-31. She became the first woman Town Councillor in Cambridge in 1914 and Mayor during 1932-33. She embodied the new spirit of social reformers.

Keynes was also fortunate to have excellent female students and colleagues. He served as an Elector to the J. E. Cairness Scholarship of Girton College from 1909 to 1915 and taught a sizeable number of capable female students. He demonstrated his familiarity with and confidence in his students in a recommendation letter for one of them, stating that "I am fairly well acquainted with Miss M. Nicholson's work in Economics ... and *I have no hesitation in recommending* Miss Nicholson in the above terms"⁷⁴. In addition, Keynes regarded Dorothy Jebb⁷⁵ (1881-1963), Eglantyne's sister, as "amongst the very ablest of the economic students

⁷⁴ From Keynes [no signature] to unknown, 1 June 1912, emphasis added, UA/14/1/51, KP.

⁷⁵ During WWI, Dorothy and Miss Elkin worked for the Board of Trade under Layton, who had been temporarily hired by the Government.

who have taken the Economics Tripos” (Skidelsky 1992[1983]: 212), and he supported Lynda Grier’s (1880-1967) promotion to lecturer of economics at Newnham. Grier had been inspired by Mary Marshall and took Part II of the Economics Tripos. In 1915, Katherine Stephen, the Principal, consulted Keynes regarding Grier’s promotion. Based on other correspondence⁷⁶, his assessment must have been positive.

Keynes also recommended Miss Hélène Reynard (1875-1947) for a post in economic affairs. From “the work she has done for the *Economic Journal*”, Keynes wrote, “I should judge her well suited for the post of Lecturer in Economic and Business Affairs at King’s College for Women”⁷⁷. In contrast, he assumed an ambivalent attitude towards Marjorie Tappan Holland (1895-1977), the first member of the Faculty of Economics. On the one hand, he “was grateful for her help” and intimate knowledge of the American banking systems⁷⁸ (Patinkin and Leith 1977: 27). On the other hand, however, he “seems to have regarded her credentials as pedestrian and in 1932 voted against her reappointment to a university lectureship” (Aslambeigui & Oakes 2009: 31)⁷⁹. After Keynes praised a paper by Joan Robinson as “excellent – most beautiful and lucid” (Marucuzo & Rosselli eds. 2005: 174-175), in 1931 the Faculty Board permitted Robinson to give eight lectures based on her draft on imperfect competition. Robinson also engaged in discussions with Kahn and Sraffa among others on Keynes’s *Treatise on Money* and provided Keynes with beneficial suggestions. If anything, these episodes demonstrate that Keynes espoused a meritocratic attitude towards his students and colleagues, irrespective of age and sex. Keynes apparently eschewed the prejudiced view that women were good only at examinations and had little originality in advanced

⁷⁶ The “men should be sent to Miss Grier’s lectures at Newnham, which are, I hear, quite good and cover the same ground as Fay’s. I am in communication with Miss Grier about it”. From Keynes to Pigou, 9 January 1915, UA/5/1/32, KP.

⁷⁷ From Keynes to unknown, 25 May 1922, UA/14/1/101, KP.

⁷⁸ This testimony was Austin Robinson.

⁷⁹ Tappan was fellow (1924-1963) and Vice-Mistress (1940-1941) at Girton. *Girton College Resister* says that she kept lectureship in economics at the University from 1923 to 1963. Therefore, Keynes’s vote against her must have been dismissed.

research. In other words, he was, unlike his mentor Marshall⁸⁰, convinced that women had no intellectual obstacles barring them from fully participating in economics research and policy.

The second reason for Keynes's support of Grace I is that, as a person of affairs, he attempted to do away with unreasonable conventions. His criteria were clear: to allocate money and human resources efficiently within the limit of the University fund; to establish a just reward structure based on teachers' efforts in order to attract talented researchers; to clarify the process of personnel affairs; and to grant a certain degree of autonomy to the inner organization of teaching and research while at the same time allowing for control by outside organizations to some extent.

For Keynes, who confessed that Cambridge was "pretty inefficient" (Fay 1979[1975]: 38) in the year of his matriculation (1902), Cambridge in the 1910s became "more and more as a sort of machine, like the India Office"; however, he nevertheless committed himself to "inevitably go on and on improving it" (Skidelsky 1992[1983]: 270). From 1908 onwards, he engaged in drafting reform plans and discussing them with other reformers. In 1911-12 he joined the Reforms Committee to discuss the governance of the University and "the relating of the University to women students"⁸¹, finances, and the organization of teaching and research. His stance was to widen the University Common Fund in proportion to Colleges' teaching contributions to the University and to the movements of the business cycle. That is, Keynes intended to create a new system of taxing colleges progressively and redistributing the money to necessary units⁸². Teachers' stipends should, Keynes wrote in 1920, "be fixed by the Faculty on elastic principles", not "through a centralised authority on inelastic principles"⁸³.

⁸⁰ Groenewegen (1995: 526) describes him as the feminist *manqué*, meaning that Marshall could not escape from "unscientific prejudice" when supporting "the sexual division of labour" (ibid.: 525).

⁸¹ "Reforms Committee, Private for Members Only", MA, signed by R. K. J. P., 11 March 1911, UA/13/1, KP.

⁸² "Proposed Scheme of College Contributions to the Common University Fund", April 1911, by J. M. K., UA/13/32-42, typed, KP.

⁸³ From Keynes to the Master [Giles?], 13 November 1920, UA/5/1/89-91, KP.

Incentive was another important factor. To exclude women from scholarships and teaching offices was against “the reward and encouragement of sound learning”⁸⁴. Keynes’s 1925 correspondence summarized his points:

I am very strongly opposed to any fixed scheme of the stipend ... I should like to keep the division of the Faculty Funds between these members as fluid as possible. I am opposed to the variation of stipends depending merely on seniority. ... If a man has not been promoted to the first grade by the time he is 36 to 40 years of age, it is much better that there should be some slight pecuniary pressure on him to seek a job elsewhere⁸⁵.

In short, Keynes called for the optimum use of financial and human resources within limited funds. It was therefore very logical for him to include capable women in these human resources, especially as he had eschewed the common prejudices regarding women’s abilities.

Keynes also attempted to reconcile economic efficiency with public sentiments such as ‘justice’ or ‘fairness’. He argued in the following: women lecturers were permanently excluded from the lecture list and debarred from emoluments, calling the situation “disgraceful” and asserting that “these injustices” must be rectified⁸⁶. Keynes called for a new General Board of Studies to coordinate the proper apportionment of teachers between different subjects. The Council would nominate the members of the Board, as, according to Keynes, this method was “the fairest and most practical”⁸⁷. This indicates that the Keynes had confidence in the ability of

⁸⁴ From J. M. Keynes to the Editor of the *Cambridge Review*, 21 February 1921, UA/5/2/2-4, KP.

⁸⁵ From Keynes to the Master (Gonville & Caius), “Faculties Finance”, 13 March 1925, UA/5/2/42-54, typed, KP.

⁸⁶ From J. M. Keynes to the Editor of the *Cambridge Review*, 21 February 1921, UA/5/2/2-4, KP.

⁸⁷ “Organization of Teaching and Research in the University and Colleges”, 25 October 1912, by J. M. K., UA/13/121-122, KP. Keynes also questioned “whether we should begin to limit the freedom of those [laissez-faire] forces by reference to what is ‘fair’ and ‘reasonable’ having regard to all the circumstances”. See “Am I a Liberal?”, 1

the Council members, with their broad wisdom, to handle expeditious processing.

Keynes was always a University reformer. In the process of modernization, it was absolutely necessary to admit women to full membership, including not only titular degrees but also full access to studentships, scholarships, prizes, teaching offices, and Board membership. Keynes's intention was to abolish absurd conventions in the University, which followed the development of both economics and gender equality.

The third and final reason that Keynes supported Grace I is deeply embedded in the specifics of his actions and his basic economic philosophy: to solve women's issues required the creation of a middle unit—idealistic autonomous organizations that coordinate tradition and enterprise, freedom and control. The problem involved more than merely gender equality, but extended to autonomy in the University. For Keynes, the elimination of absurd conventions did not necessarily deny established traditions of their merit; in fact, Keynes proposed “a return towards medieval conceptions of separate autonomies”⁸⁸. In the case of the women's degree issue, he first and foremost saw the need to prevent the Royal Commission and non-residents from intervening in the matter. Nonetheless, at the same time he appealed to outsiders and persuaded insiders to accept a compromise, the plan seemingly better than a strong intervention.

Keynes attempted to establish the renewal of ‘separate autonomies’ with new measures and with flexible ideas. First, he pushed for the establishment of new middle or intermediary units (faculty and laboratory) to advance the sciences (including economics). He maintained that teaching and research staff, regardless of whether they were fellows at a College, should be appointed by a Faculty member and fulfill their responsibilities with respect to the curriculum. He insisted that the Faculty be mostly self-governed, but should be supervised (so as to point to public aims) by

August 1925, Keynes (1972 vol. 9: 303).

⁸⁸ “The End of Laissez-faire”, 1926, Keynes (1972 vol. 9: 289).

other autonomous organizations such as the General Board of Studies, the Financial Board, or the Council of the Senate. Second, and more flexibly, Keynes promoted the calculation of costs and benefits in the face of limited financial and human resources while giving due consideration to the fairness and desirability of the situation.

In the mid 1920s, Keynes produced writings placing a high value on University autonomy. “The Universities are another example of the semi-independent institutions divested of private interest which I have in mind”⁸⁹. He continued to discuss:

the ideal size for the unit of control and organization lies somewhere between the individual and the modern State. ... progress lies in the growth and the recognition of semi-autonomous bodies ...

It is easy to give examples ... of separate autonomies ... the universities, the Bank of England, the Port of London Authority, even perhaps the railway companies⁹⁰.

the real problems of the next ten years is ... a deliberate and persevering attempt to discover how to run the best enterprises which are already public concerns efficiently and to the public advantage. ...

the running of these public services ... by boards whose members, chosen solely for their business capacity, were adequately remunerated. ... in that way the advantages of public ownership and responsibility would be combined ...⁹¹.

Keynes gave a few examples of public concerns: the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the Charity Commissioners, building societies, co-operative societies and colleges, school and universities. He always insisted that colleges and universities, the best example of self-government, should be efficiently managed for the sake of public purposes.

⁸⁹ From Keynes to the Editor of *The Times*, 25 March 1925, Keynes (1981 vol. 19: 348).

⁹⁰ “The End of Laissez-faire”, 1926, Keynes (1972 vol. 9: 288-289).

⁹¹ *The Manchester Guardian*, 1 August 1927, Keynes (1981 vol. 19: 696).

Keynes's most profound reason for promoting Grace I, then, was not a direct movement for gender equality *per se*—although that was achieved as a result—but rather his desire to embody an idealistic autonomy within the University.

Section 4 Concluding Remarks

This section provides a brief summary and conclusion and offers three lessons that can be learned from this topic.

4-1 Summary

Keynes's reasons for promoting Grace I, a compromise oriented towards gender equality, can be explained in three ways. First, he had eschewed the prejudiced view that women were good only at routine work and should care for others rather than pursuing their own careers. Pioneering women, including his mentor's wife and his own mother, as well as promising female students, were perhaps partly responsible for his ability to discard old-fashioned attitudes. This philosophical attitude lies at the heart of Keynes's actions with respect to women's issues. Next, Keynes aimed for the optimum use of financial and human resources to encourage the development of modern academic subjects, including economics. For that purpose, he found that it was absolutely necessary both to abolish absurd conventions in colleges and the University and to actively promote women lecturers. Lastly, he attempted to realize in the University his idealistic organization, a semi-autonomous body. Keynes's actions thus embody two mixed visions: a fairness in fighting to protect minority rights⁹² and economic viewpoints to consider pecuniary incentives and budgetary constraints. Thus, for Keynes, the issue of women's degrees was placed on a level equal to that of his overall vision of economic management in a free society. Although his efforts in women's issues were

⁹² Dostaler (2007: 23) appreciates "Keynes's struggle for women's equality, for the right to contraception and abortion, for the recognition of homosexuality".

not directly related to radical feminism *per se*, they represent a significant contribution toward the eventual achievement of gender equality.

4-2 Three Lessons

Three important lessons can be extracted from the battle over Grace I.

The first is that gender is a persistent issue in education. Marshall offered the opinion, echoed in Report B, that “there is a question concerning the intellectual aptitudes of men and women ... The women are better at routine work but less original”⁹³. This was an extreme opinion, but in less extreme cases, some teachers claimed that men and women required separate education systems, including separate accommodation, classrooms and degrees. It is necessary to study this issue using an empirical approach.

Second, the purpose of universities has emerged as a significant problem: Who governs a university and how? Are the main providers of autonomy those inside the university (teachers only, staff including officers, or all members including students)? Or is it necessary for third parties to supervise or intervene in universities? How and to what extent should public subsidies be introduced into universities? Does a universities’ financial basis depend exclusively on tuition and fees, public aid from the national treasury, or voluntary donations? And finally, what social responsibilities do universities have? Faced with all of these pressing questions, it is necessary to identify a new mission for universities—not for religious and political elites, but for ordinary people. These issues remain open questions and will be discussed repeatedly.

Third, Keynes’s economic thought is itself relevant and suggestive. From 1908 onwards, and in the early 1920s in particular, Keynes, also a man of practice, had been engaged in reforming the University, sometimes gradually and at other times drastically, calling upon his excellent practical sense (drafting and planning), persuasive ability (eloquent writing style) and human resources (network of intellectuals). His solutions for the issue of women’s degrees included multiple visions involving not only university

⁹³ *CUR*, 4 October 1920, p. 64.

reform and gender equality movements, but also autonomous control in a free society with the goal of realizing economic efficiency, social justice and individual liberty⁹⁴.

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