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Holleman, Jantina W Oral History Interview: Local Women

Carol Bechtel

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INTRODUCTION

The Hope College Oral History Project was designed to record and transcribe for permanent collection the "living heritage" of Holland, Michigan. Since the project's birth in 1977, Hope student researchers have interviewed people with various perspectives on Holland's history. Past projects have included:

- Former Hope Faculty Members & Personnel - 1977 - by Nancy Swinyard
- Past Executives of the Reformed Church - 1978 - by Conrad Strauch & 1979 - by Derk M. Strauch
- Important Women of Holland, Michigan - 1980 - by Carol Bechtel

The persons interviewed represent a vital, but non-renewable resource, whose reflections will provide primary material for future historical research.

Upon the completion of each interview session, the taped conversation was transcribed and edited by both the interviewer and the interviewee. Some alterations concerning accuracy of detail may have been suggested by the interviewer during the editing process, but at all times the viewpoint of the interviewee has been maintained. If the researcher should discover discrepancies between the interviews and published materials, it must be remembered that some divergence may be expected due to the highly personalized perspective of the interview. No claim is made that the information contained within these transcripts is absolutely accurate. No two people share identical viewpoints, and the interval of time between the interviewee's experiences and the events mentioned can sometimes intensify this divergence. Tapes of all the interviews are stored in the Hope College Archives in Van Zoeren Library.

Without the support of Dr. Jacob E. Nyenhuis, Dean of the Humanities and the Fine Arts, and Mr. William K. Anderson, Vice President of Business and Finance, this project would not have become a reality. Dr. Elton Bruins has given generously of his time and expertise as the advisor to the student interviewers. Finally, the success of this project must be attributed to the efforts of the interviewees - each gracious, receptive, and cooperative.
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(Original Copy Only – Hope College Archives)
Interview with
Miss Jantina Holleman
in her office at
Hope College, Holland, Michigan
on
June 25, 1980
with
Carol Bechtel
BECHTEL: Miss Holleman, you came to Hope in 1946. Perhaps you could begin by giving us some of your impressions of the roles of women back then.

HOLLEMAN: Well, I think women were a very important part of the campus at that time, largely because the faculty was smaller, and therefore the number of women seemed to be more impressive. We were trying very hard to be accepted by the American Association of University Women, and we had to prove that we had the same percentage, or approximately, of women on the faculty that there were women in the student body. At that time a third of the student body were female and so we had to try to raise the number of women in the faculty to also being a third. Dr. Lubbers, who was at that time the President, was very interested in this, and he worked to see that there would be that percentage of women on the faculty. I think that in many ways the number - well I know that the number of women is actually percentage-wise much less than it was at that time, and I think the role of women has proportionally diminished, in some ways anyway. When I came in 1946, out of a faculty of 45, 15 were women. Now, there are, perhaps, 145 faculty, and only about 20 full-time faculty women. But the number of women students is now about half of the student body. The percentage of women faculty is very small.

BECHTEL: What was your role, specifically, in seeking that accreditation by A.A.U.W.? Did you take part in that?

HOLLEMAN: No, I didn't have much to do...I was a young faculty person at that time, and I was very happy to join A.A.U.W. Most of the faculty women belonged to it at that time, and parenthetically I might notice that I'm the only one at the moment who does belong any longer, which I feel is rather unfortunate. I think it is an organization that really works for women in academia, and at that time the chapter was very active. But I really wasn't involved in that...I have to give the credit to other people like Laura Boyd, and, well, Nella Myer, and Marguerite Prins who were far more
active than I. Later, I received a grant from the A.A.U.W. to study abroad, and that made me feel especially willing to support them.

BECHTEL: Did you feel that the administration of Dr. Lubbers was particularly favorable toward women?

HOLLEMAN: Yes, I do. I think he made a conscious effort to encourage women. You see I'd gone to college at Central College where Dr. Lubbers, in Pella, Iowa, was the President, and I say it already there that he encouraged me to go on to graduate school, to apply for a graduate fellowship...he really wanted women to make the most of their potential. His own wife is a very capable, lovely woman, and he wasn't threatened by her, he was proud of her. And I think she gave him ideas and he consciously, I think, did try to work for this.

BECHTEL: Umm...

HOLLEMAN: I'm not saying that the other Presidents...(laughter)...I don't want to minimize...I think they've done this too. But I really felt that he, perhaps more than the others, had this in mind.

BECHTEL: I gathered from what you said that you perceive the role of the President's wife as a very important one.

HOLLEMAN: Yes, I did. I felt that Margaret Lubbers took a very positive interest in things on the campus, although she never interfered in what went on in the main office. Nevertheless, her role as a hostess and a spokesman for the women was significant. She was very active in Reformed Church circles...I believe she served on one of the boards that met in New York. She was a very good model for the women on campus. Mrs. Vander Werf was also very, very capable. There was, however, the feeling that perhaps she interfered a little bit in the main office. Whether
that's true or not I don't want to judge, but there was at least that impression. But she too was very capable - a charming, lovely woman. Now I see Margaret Van Wylen as in herself a professional woman, and I think in itself that's a very good image to have. Where she doesn't take as much of a lead in things on the campus, she doesn't need to. She has her own life to lead, and I think that's in itself a very good model to see.

BECHTEL: Who were some of the most influential women on campus in those early years?

HOLLEMAN: Well, strangely enough, the house mothers were very important. When I came here in 1946 I stayed with a lady who had been house mother and had just retired. Her name was Harriet Godfrey. She lived just across the street from the campus, and she had just retired from being one of the head house mothers. Mrs. Godfrey was a widow; her husband at one time had been the head of the Chemistry department. He died rather young and so she'd been at the college a long, long time. Although I never saw her as a house mother, I just simply roomed in her house, I got to know her very well, and heard from many people of the immense influence she had on the lives of the girls in the dorm. There was great emphasis on manners and on what one might call genteel dining habits and living. The house mothers were very important. Then, for example, Bertha Kronemeyer was the head of Van Vleck, no, excuse me, Voorhees Hall. She was a very capable woman. Della Steininger later was at Phelps Hall and then Mary Tellman was for many years also at Phelps Hall... the house mothers had a very important role to play, and I think their emphasis on guidance, and on devotions in the dorm, on good Christian principles was important. They were available night and day, one might say, for help. I think they played a very great role. Then, thinking of other people who were influential at that time, the Dean of Women was a very important figure. At the
time I came in 1946, Dr. Elizabeth Lichty was the Dean of Women. She had her Ph.D. in French - she was truly a scholar and a very capable woman. And I think that the Dean of Women was a kind of catalyst for the women's organizations on the campus. There was a Women's Activities League which coordinated all the girls' activities. The Honors Society, later called Alcor, was very important.

BECHTEL: That later developed into Mortar Board, didn't it?

HOLLEMAN: Yes, and now you see there are men in Mortar Board and I think the girls have lost their control of it. And there are proportionately fewer women in Mortar Board than there were in the years back. Well, some of this is the Women's Lib. movement...you know, it's just inevitable. So, I think the Dean of Women was a very important figure. Her emphasis on nice decorations in the housing, on social life in the dorms, on guidance and psychiatric help was very influential. Then of course one might mention the faculty, or did you want to get to that later?

BECHTEL: No, that's good...

HOLLEMAN: Well, then of course I think the women of the faculty, just because the faculty was small, had, perhaps, a more important role. At that time it was mandated that there had to be a woman on every committee. Now that may be a rather false way of getting women's representation, but it's better than nothing. And in our present committee system it's a kind of "catch as catch can," a sort of popularity contest really, which I think is just as unfair to the men as to the women. And there's no rhyme or reason to the way that people are elected to committees. There's no thought really, or very little it seems...thought of what previous service a person has had, or whether they've been on a committee before, or what their capabilities are. And the idea that you had to have a woman on every committee certainly gave the women a voice. Some of them were heads of committees...I at one time was the head of a committee - Student Life. The Dean of
Women was on the Executive Council; I think that she might have reported to the Board of Trustees. Faculty women were sometimes heads of department, which doesn't occur any longer - there's no woman head of a department. Oh - just this year Dr. Ruth Todd has been made head of the Foreign Language Department. But there was, for example, Metta Ross, the head of the History Department; Laura Boyd, the head of the German Department; Marguerite Prins, the head of the French Department; Mildred Singleton, head of the Library; there was Helen Harton, the head of the Drama Department; Marcia Wood, the head of the Art Department...ever so many women were in, really, leadership roles. They introduced famous speakers, interviewed prospective teachers, and so on.

BECHTEL: I understand that you were acquainted with Francis Phelps Otte. Could you tell us something about your recollections of her?

HOLLEMAN: Yes...it's Mrs. Otte, by the way...

BECHTEL: Otte...

HOLLEMAN: Mrs. Otte, yes. Now her father, you see, had been one of the Presidents of Hope College. Was it the second President?

BECHTEL: Yes, I believe so.

HOLLEMAN: I think so. And Phelps Hall, of course, is named for him. Well, Mrs. Otte had married a medical missionary who was in China at one time. And then she...after her husband died, came back here to live. She was a very old lady when I first came, and she got to be...oh, I thought it must have been at least a hundred, but I'm not sure. (laughter) But she became very feeble and frail, a little wisp of a woman. She didn't weigh more than about 85 pounds, I think, finally. But she always came to Convocations all dressed up with a kind of rusty black dress.
and a rusty black hat, and was ushered in with some ceremony to one of the front seats of the Fall Convocation. And then, of course, she would be at receptions, and everybody was told they should greet Mrs. Otte. But she was very keen - you could see that at one time she had been a very capable, intelligent woman. And she was so proud to be an alumna of Hope College, and I think that in itself told you something about the quality of education in the early days - that she truly had had a liberal education, and she was always interested in foreign speakers, especially from China. She was a very interesting old lady, one of the first women graduates - Class of 1882.

BECHTEL: Do you remember specifically how you met her?

HOLLEMAN: Well, no I don't. It must have been at one of these convocations, receptions, because she was often in attendance at college functions...and quite a grand, rather imperious little old lady.

BECHTEL: 1946 was immediately following World War II. Do you feel that the role of women was helped or hurt in any way by the reverberations of that...the influx of all the men from the service?

HOLLEMAN: Well, certainly there had been fewer men on the faculty as a result...because of the war. And in '46 when I came, of course the veterans were all coming back. There was just a tremendous influx of veterans onto the campus. And that was represented too in the hiring of the faculty. Dr. James Prins, Dr. Henry tenHoor, Chuck Steketee of the Math Department, Dr. Jay Folkert, and I came in the same year, and you see, they had nearly all been veterans. And so there was quite a sudden spurt of hiring on the faculty, where I think during the war years they had scarcely hired anybody, and women were somewhat holding the fort. And certainly in the student body there was just an overwhelming, it must have been...
overwhelming change of enrollment. Where there had been practically no men, I believe 65 in 1945 or so - something like 200 girls and 65 men were the total student body. Well, then in 1946 the enrollment simply...almost tripled, and it was very much dominated by men. And they were very, very glad to be home, and very eager to get an education. There was a marvelous spirit, a tremendous sense of vitality and ambition, and, well, endorsement of what the college stood for - they loved Hope College, they were very loyal to it, they were so glad to be here.

BECHTEL: Did you note any especially significant change in the attitudes among or toward women at that time? Was there a change after women "held the fort," as you say?

HOLLEMAN: Well, I think that inevitably this was going to be...for one thing there were fewer women in graduate school, because of so many men being there, that women faculty were hard to get. Once we had achieved this membership in the A.A.U.W. we kept the proportion of about a third of the faculty being women for a few years. Then this began slowly to decline. And there are many reasons for this - partly the fact that we had lost the impetus to get accredited, partly the fact that women were hard to find...not being so many women going to grad. school. I think something of the administration's goal may have been a factor, they perhaps lost a bit of concern for this. The women themselves, I think, ceased viewing themselves as leaders; they were willing to just be faculty members. I guess perhaps the war had something to do with that, too.

BECHTEL: They faded into the background...?

HOLLEMAN: Yes..."Let the men take over..." There are many reasons for this I think.

BECHTEL: You wrote a brief historical survey for an ad hoc committee on the status of women. When was that?
HOLLEMAN: Well, it must have been in 1976 or '77. I'm not sure.

BECHTEL: On that report you recorded that in 1960 the percentage of women on the faculty was about 23%, and by '66 I notice that it dropped to 13%, and that was the lowest in twenty years. In that period of the 60's, was there anything specific that you would attribute that drop to?

HOLLEMAN: I think for one thing men were going into roles that formerly had been taken over by women. At one time the head librarianship was always filled by a woman. Well, then it got to be acceptable for a man to be a librarian, and so as a woman librarian retired she was replaced by a man. And I think this is true in other roles as well. For example, the head of the Alumni Magazine, Marion Stryker, who was Alumni Director for many years, and I'm not sure this was in 1960, but somewhere around this time, Marion Stryker was retired, and you see, her job has been replaced by Tom Renner. Or the Archivist, Janet Mulder, retired and her job was filled by a man. So some of this reflects the fact that men are now free to go into such areas, and it's a good thing for them, but I don't see women by contrast taking jobs that only men might have had, for example in Mathematics or Religion. In a way it has hurt the cause of the women that the men are now free to go into jobs which formerly were only held by women.

BECHTEL: As long as we're on this topic, the percentage of women on the faculty in '79 was recorded as 16%, just a couple of notches higher. Do you have any opinions on why, or would it be the same reason that you gave for the decline in the 60's?

HOLLEMAN: I think the same reasons still exist. I think, for one thing, there are many women in part time jobs. Look at Maxine DeBruyn in Dance, or there was Ann Bradt so many years in English, Nancy Miller in Education. There is the
impression that women are teaching, which of course they are, but there's the im-
pression, you see, that there are more women around in full fledged roles than
really exist. You don't perhaps notice how few full time professional women there
are on the faculty because there are many part time...perhaps more part time
people tend to be women than otherwise. And these people often have nearly as
much of a job... I think in the Music Department, for example, Mrs. Palma has
almost a full time load, and of course she's only getting a pittance of a salary.
And so, it's one way to save by hiring part time people, who mostly are women,
and you get the impression, you see, that they're on the full time faculty when
they really are not.

BECHTEL: What are some of the effects of this, do you think, on the attitudes of
the faculty, and the college, and eventually for the students?

HOLLEMAN: I think that women...that girls on the student body are not seeing
enough full fledged faculty women as role models. I think, too, that the pro-
fessional women of the faculty tend to become rather discouraged because it just
seems to be so impossible to become, perhaps, promoted, or recognized, that I
think there's a certain amount of discouragement. And I don't want to sound all
negative...I think that Hope College is a wonderful place to be, and people enjoy
their teaching. But I do feel that many of the women have been behind the scenes
for far too long. I see the women in the Physical Education Department, for ex-
ample, being really the work-horses of the Physical Education Department - and
not, you know, getting recognition. Naturally, they don't have dramatic com-
petitive sports, and they don't get the public recognition that the men do...
And they're simply going on tirelessly, it would seem, year in and year out, hav-
ing relatively little to say in policy-making roles.
I think the fact that women are not involved in policy-making - and it's partly our committee structure, which I do think urgently needs revision - is a very demoralizing thing to a professional person. I think in some aspects promotion is denied. I feel that perhaps in my own case this may have been true - where I've twice asked for promotion to full professor and been denied, and at least I think part of the reasons have been male chauvinism. Just simply not knowing what you do, not really paying attention... I think it's more an indication of administrative failure than anything on my part. The fact that they don't know what I do as a teacher shows that the administration hasn't been paying attention, or that, say, one's chairman or dean are male chauvinists is discouraging. And I only use myself as an example in this way. I think that it's harder for a woman to be promoted, and that there's something of a - finally - a very tiring attitude. There's been a great deal of divorce among our young faculty members... among some of the men as well as the women. I think that perhaps the rather impersonal atmosphere at the college is to some extent responsible for the frustration that people feel in their personal lives...

BECHTEL: What do you mean by, "an impersonal atmosphere"?

HOLLEMAN: Well, I...but then perhaps it's inevitable as the college became larger. You can't always keep that kind of cozy family spirit. But I think a great deal could be done by department chairmen and deans...to make people feel more secure. I think that the kind of evaluations that we're having - these statistical studies - (one has to pass out forms to the students - perhaps you've seen them too) - I think these are absolutely dehumanizing, the kind of so-called "evaluation" that one has to have. I don't think that teaching can be evaluated that way. And I think that a good administrator just simply coming in and being interested in what one
is doing - he would find out a lot more than anybody's ever going to find out from these statistical, mass-produced testing devices. You don't dare to admit any problem to administration because then you get the feeling that you're considered incompetent. There's more of a sense of an adversary role rather than of a supportive one between the administration and the faculty, in some cases anyway. I don't say that this is always the case, but it can be. And I think that many younger faculty members, especially, must be very lonely, and feeling that they have really no relationship to much of anything at the college. Where of course at one time everybody was involved in everything, and that was a little bit too intense also - it wasn't perhaps a healthy thing either. But one felt that the Administration knew and appreciated what one did.

BECHTEL: In those early years were the faculty heavily involved in student social activities?

HOLLEMAN: Well, yes, certainly more so than they are now. There were more all-campus events. They had something called a Penny Carnival, for example. And the Dean of Women would perhaps dress up like a clown, and the Dean of Men might be dunked in some kind of a bath or other - all to raise money for some good cause. There would be, for example, the International Relations Club; they had wonderful shows and dinners, and the faculty would enjoy to attend. Now it's just simply gotten too big and you can't attend every thing. The faculty Christmas Dinner was a lovely event. Members of the faculty would put on, perhaps, musical performances, or little dramas and have fun together. The Faculty Picnic was always a fine thing in the spring. Yes, there were more social events among the faculty, and things that included students as well. We were often chaperones at fraternity and sorority events, and we got to know the students in that way.

BECHTEL: You mentioned instances where women would carry a great deal of the load
behind the scenes, and probably still do. Can you site any instances in which you personally have been behind the scenes and not given credit? This is your chance! (laughter)

HOLLEMAN: Well, yes, I gress so. For example I was the Chairman of the building committee when the addition was put on the Music Building. This was really a matter of default too. We had done some preliminary planning in order to get the application for a grant, and I had not seen the plans, these rather rough plans, when Dr. Cavanaugh, the Chairman, was going to be in Europe with the Choir, Dr. Kooiker was also, I think, in Europe, Dr. Rider was away...so then out of sheer default I was asked to be the Chairman in their absence. And while they were gone the grant went through, and we had to act very fast to finalize the plans with the architect. So I stayed up late, very late at night - several nights - going over the rough plans, and I saw all sorts of things. For example, they hadn't put any restrooms in the new addition, they hadn't thought what to do with the organs, which were over in the Chapel at that time. So I made many changes. I got to...

I suggested that there should be a faculty lounge in the new addition, that there should be windows in the rooms where the organists practice because they're much more fixed than the pianists are. After all, you can't be moving an organ. Well, anyway, there were ever so many things that I suggested to the architect and that were incorporated in the final plans. As the work proceeded I came here many a day and worked with the architect to see what was happening. And one time I came along and I noticed that the chairs had been installed in the auditorium, and all of them were installed wrong. They were installed so that your feet hung over the edge of the tread. I of course called this to the attention of the building supervisor, and all the chairs had to be taken out, and in fact the whole floor had to be reinstalled. Well, of course, I should have come along earlier, but if I hadn't I suppose they'd still be there! Anyway, I did do many, many things
in working with the builder and the architect. When the building was dedicated this was never mentioned, and indeed it never has been mentioned in any place that I've ever seen, that Miss Holleman was the Chairman. But when the architect made the final inspection he came to me to sign the papers. And when Mr. Boersma, who was the building supervisor, went around, also, looking to see the last, final things - we even found some places where there should be switches, light switches, still installed - Mr. Boersma had me sign the legal papers for the inspection, which made my ego feel pretty good. (laughter)

Then another instance - I was on what was called the "Build Hope" campaign. This was a few years back; we were raising a lot of money for the college. And they had asked representatives of consistories in many churches, for a radius of about fifty miles around here... And I suppose there were about 200 people came to the initial dinner. Well, there were two women: Dr. Nancy Miller and myself. And I thought, that certainly is tokenism, but as long as it's tokenism, I was glad I was there. Then as the year proceeded, they would be having reports from these consistory members and faculty as to the churches that were being visited to solicit money for the college. Well, as time went on, it was evident that they were not going to ask me to ever do anything. Once they asked me to give the prayer for the dinner, and another time I was asked to cut the pie for the dessert that we had, but they never asked me to speak at a church, which was what everybody else was doing. Well, Paul Baker, who was the layman leader of the town group, (he used to own the Family Fair Grocery Store) - Paul Baker became rather sensitive to this, and he said, "Well, what is Jan going to do?" And he, then, asked me to speak at the Maplewood Church for their congregational meeting, which I thought was so sweet of him, and there was a huge crowd, and I went with great fear and trembling, and I thanked them for their really tremendous contribution to the college. So that I felt that Paul Baker was sensitive to, well, "What is
this woman doing here?" Nancy Miller had dropped out because she became pregnant, and so I was the absolutely lone woman on this campaign. Then, one late afternoon, it was a blustery, snowy day, the development director, who was Norman Timmer, called me, and in great, well, despair asked if I would go to speak to a church in Grand Rapids, because someone else was supposed to have gone and had been unable to go, so would I please go to a church in Grand Rapids that evening? Well, of course, I didn't have any of the materials. I had to rush over there and find the brochures and the charts and everything that they used. So, I tore off on this cold night to speak to that church - that consistory, rather, in Grand Rapids. And this happened at one other time, when somebody else couldn't go, then they asked me to fill in. Well, you see, that doesn't exactly make you feel like a full-fledged professional, does it?

BECHTEL: Certainly not! (laughter)

HOLLEMAN: So, perhaps - I don't know, I don't want to sound bitter, but there has been - I have been on many a committee - to receive the Dutch Princess, or the Queen, in the case of Queen Juliana when she was here. We had a reception in Durfee Hall, and I played the piano then. I was on the committee for Prince Bernhard, especially to set up the Chapel with flowers and the whole entertainment. Well, you know, Prince Bernhard always wears a white carnation in his buttonhole, and I'd read that someplace, so I ordered a carnation for him. He was so pleased! (laughter) It was his symbol in the Resistance - the Dutch Resistance fighters, to wear a white carnation. And then that morning there had been vandalism in the Chapel overnight - we had the flowers all ready the evening before - beautiful flowers in the Chapel. And I came, or rather, John Hollenbach called me at 6:30 in the morning saying, "Jan, the Chapel has been broken into, and it's been vandalized..." And all the microphones that were set up for recording had been either
stolen or broken, and the flowers were all smashed, and I had to madly dash around that morning and from whatever florists I could find get huge bouquets again to put in the Chapel. So I went to that luncheon for Prince Bernhard really exhausted. (laughter) But, I think it's rather typical of some of the things that the women have had to do in social ways, but perhaps because of my interest in the Dutch, you see, I've often been put on these committees to receive the Dutch ambassador, or Princess Margriet. And then, since I knew the ropes, I'd have to plan the tea and the reception line, and whatever program there was. I was the chairman of the luncheon when Dr. Van Wylen was installed, and that was a tremendous amount of work too. For several years I was Chairman of a Church Relations committee which scheduled faculty to speak in Reformed Churches, and gave Church Herald subscriptions to new faculty.

BECHTEL: Can you tell us some more specifics about Queen Juliana's visit?

HOLLEMAN: Yes... Well, she of course had been here during the war - I did not see that. But then she returned, it must have been around 1952... Did we give her an honorary degree or had she already received one? I'm not certain. In any case it was quite a thing for the city to have the Queen of the Netherlands here, and she was received in many places - in the City Hall, and other cities in Michigan - with great pomp and ceremony. And the College acted as the host here - for her visit here. I remember I saved the dress I wore...that, and I had a very beautiful hat, I remember. (laughter)

BECHTEL: Do you remember what you played?

HOLLEMAN: Yes, I do. I played, among other things, the "First Arabesque" of Debussy. And one of the - oh, I don't know - secret service men, or somebody, in her entourage thanked me for it...he recognized the piece, too.
BECHTEL: While we're on music... what about your role in the development of the Music Department here?

HOLLEMAN: Well, of course, I've been a piano teacher, and was for several years head of the Piano faculty. I've been more concerned than anyone in the role of Vocal Music education, because I have often supervised the students in the schools, and I've tried to build this up. Especially, I've developed a curriculum library for student teachers to use, and I've struggled to get the Orff instruments for class use, in my Methods courses. I've been very concerned to improve our curriculum. Again, I've served on many committees. I have often played in performances - I've played concertos with the orchestra, I've done solo recitals, played in chamber music... whatever is going on. You know, my role has been a very many-sided one. I began the teaching of Class Piano, I organized the College Chorus, helped in many ways with Christmas Vespers, etc.

BECHTEL: What was the Music Department like when you first got here?

HOLLEMAN: Well, we had an old house, which has since been torn down. It stood next to the Pillar Church on 9th Street - a great old mansion called the Walsh House. Walsh had been an executive of the Bush and Lane Piano Company. They had been millionaires at one time and then lost all their money, I gather, in the Depression. It was a Victorian mansion. And that was the first time that the Music Department had a house of its own, and they were very proud of it. My studio had a big fireplace and a chandelier and some cozy, big chairs, a big, very impressive looking carpet. It was really a lovely studio. And then downstairs Dr. Cavanaugh, for example, had what had been a great large sort of salon kind of living room, with again a chandelier. Almost every room had a fireplace, which of course we never used because there was gas heating. But still it was a very unusual house
with lovely woodwork and beautiful mirrors and that kind of thing - really quite an elegant place for a Music Department. Then when that house was going to be torn down, well, we made plans to build the new building, which I believe was finished in 1956.

BECHTEL: Why was that decision made? Was it an overload of students...?

HOLLEMAN: Oh, well, not entirely. I think that actually the college - it was partly an overload of students, yes. The department was growing very much, and it was evident that the old house was not adequate. It needed a lot of maintenance, and it was really, you know, going...just badly in need of repair. And we needed a building that was on the campus. It was the fact that the Music Department had done very well and needed a bigger place, I think, that precipitated the plans for the new building. I think that we did very good work, though, in that old building. And there was a wonderful spirit, you know, a sense of coziness...

BECHTEL: Elegance?

HOLLEMAN: Yes, It was nice.

BECHTEL: Well, then, Nykerk was built in 1956?

HOLLEMAN: Yes, the main, central part. Of course, we've since added on to it, and that gave us much better facilities, especially for practice rooms. I wouldn't say that our studios are all that much better (laughter), because I enjoyed my studio in Walsh, but I do have a lovely studio here now, too. And the practice facilities are certainly much better, and the fact that we have the classrooms right here is good. I worked very hard to get better listening equipment in the Music Department. When we were over in Walsh Hall, I used to play records in the evening for students to come and listen, because there just weren't any listening rooms. And then, we had to teach in the basement of the Chapel, and I got a couple
of old telephone booths which we fitted up as listening rooms - little listening booths. And I struggled very much to get money in the budget for listening equipment. I was very anxious when they put the addition on this building that our library should have good listening facilities. For many years I ordered all the phonograph records for the Department.

BECHTEL: Do any other struggles in the life of the Department stand out in your mind? Struggles that you were particularly active in? (Pause) You were active in the development of the Music Appreciation course...

HOLLEMAN: Oh, yes - the course that we call, "Introduction to Music." I was very anxious that such a course should be in the curriculum, which at that time it was not. I remember sending, well, syllabi to the proper committees emphasizing what would be taught in such a course, and how it would be done. And then we proposed to do this on a team teaching plan with Mr. Davis and Miss Morrison and myself. We would have one very large class which would meet in Snow Auditorium and be taught by three people. Well, there were about 125 students in that class. It took a tremendous lot of logistics, because to plan the listening (and our facilities then were not as good as they are now) - and of course to get the record list and to have it all available, to make tapes was difficult. I was particularly intimidated by the making of tapes, which was not as easy then as it is now...Mr. Davis and I worked very much on making those tapes... Well, as the year proceeded, it became evident that the team teaching idea was not the best one. It was very hard to coordinate this between three people. So it ended up that Mr. Davis and I continued to do this for some years in a team teaching way. Then we got some new people on the faculty: Mr. Ryker - Harrison Ryker and Norman Jennings, and they were involved in it for some time. But I was the chairman of this area for a long time, to coordinate who...whoever would be teaching that course. I believe
it has a good reputation on the campus as a solid, respectable cultural heritage course.

BECHTEL: You've been very active in church and community affairs as well as affairs on the campus during your 34 years in Holland. Could you highlight some of your roles and activities in these areas?

HOLLEMAN: Yes. I've been choir director in a couple of...well, three different churches. I started out by singing in the choir at Hope Reformed Church. Then I was asked to direct the choir at the First Methodist Church, and I directed the choir there for seven years until I went off to study for a year in the Netherlands. When I returned, I decided I would like to attend Third Reformed Church, because it had very lovely music. Then I directed at First Reformed Church. Subsequently, I joined Third Reformed, and then was asked to direct the evening music there. They had a small motet choir which sang in the evenings, and I was also responsible for getting soloists. So, I worked at that for several years, as head of the evening music at Third Reformed. I was appointed to some committees - the Christian Education Council and the Christian Action Council. And then I was elected to be the first woman elder at Third Reformed, and I felt that was really a tremendous honor and a great challenge, and I enjoyed that very much.

BECHTEL: Were there any other women elders in Holland that you know of?

HOLLEMAN: I think Hope Church had...they were ahead of us in that respect. But I was one of the very first, that's sure. I think Christ Memorial had one, and I believe that, well, perhaps that was about it...

BECHTEL: It must have been quite an innovation.

HOLLEMAN: Yes, it was. And now that I'm off the consistory I'm serving on the
Executive Council of the Particular Synod of Michigan, which meets quarterly; there are representatives of the classes of the Synod of Michigan, one elder and one minister from each classis, and this is very interesting, also.

BECHTEL: You told me a story the other day about your first time at that Executive Council. I wonder if you could repeat that.

HOLLEMAN: (laughter) Yes, it was rather amusing. I showed up at the Reformed Church Center in Grandville, Michigan for this first time that I should be on the Executive Council. And there were lots of men standing around in the hallway there, all greeting each other with great friendliness, but nobody paid any attention to me, even though some of them did know me. I suppose they thought I was coming to see, maybe, perhaps, Beth Marcus, Women's Work Director, or, well, I don't know. But, in any case, then we went into the meeting and sat around a large table, and someone who was in charge welcomed the men. He said, "Well, it's nice to see all you men today - welcome to 'the brethren,'" and words to that effect. Then Neil Van Heest, who was the minister at Central Park Reformed, and I believe was also the Vice-President, introduced the new members of the Council. And he particularly made a point of introducing me, and said, "Now we can't any longer say 'Welcome to the brethren,' because Miss Holleman is really on this Council, and she has a right to be here - she's an elder from Third Reformed." And then he paid me a very nice tribute. He said that when he'd been a student at Hope College I had been his counselor, something which I had long since forgotten, and that I had actually encouraged him to go into the ministry. And I certainly didn't remember that either. Neil was very sweet, and I did appreciate his very warm and pleasant way - and little bit of humor - in making the men realize that I was on the Council.

BECHTEL: Did you sense any tension in that first meeting?
HOLLEMAN: Yes, I think some of them still haven't accepted a woman... Last time I went to the meeting, the man from Canada said that he really didn't approve at all of women ministers. The whole question of women's ordination was touched on, and he didn't approve of women's ordination. And then I said, "Well, do you mind women on the consistory?" Yes, he felt the same way about that. He didn't really feel that they had any part to play, and that it was a kind of perversion of everything nature intended. Although he was personally pleasant to me, he was very firm in his stand, and I could respect that, but... I felt, too, that when they make appointments to committees they often ignore the fact that there could be good women candidates for some of these roles. For example, on the Student Life Committee, or on the publications...the Church Herald Board. And I did see that there got to be a woman to replace somebody who was retiring from the Church Herald Board. Although I certainly don't want to be on that Council to speak for Women's Lib., and I've tried not to have that viewpoint, but once in a while you feel you have to say something. And I must say, then, that Judge Pikkaart from Kalamazoo was very supportive to me - old Judge Pikkaart. After I had said that there ought to be women on these committees, then a similar case came up, and he said, "Now, isn't this just what Miss Holleman has been talking about?" And he stood for me; I really appreciated that.

Then, in other tasks in the church, I don't know that I mentioned this to you, but I have often served on educational teams. They had what they called a "Leadership Conference" here in the summer for church leaders, and I was asked to do a course in Music for Children. And I have done courses...short, mini-courses at the Seminary on Music for Children, or Music History.

(Pause for tape change)

...Well, yes - I was discussing the other ways in which perhaps I've been involved in music in the church, or choir conferences. At the moment I'm having fun with a
children's church school group, using the Orff Method with them. I have several times had to speak on "Music of the Reformed Church." I'm going to do a little mini-course at a Christian Reformed Church next winter - that rather pleases my elo to think that the Christian Reformed are coming to us for something! (laughter)

BECHTEL: That is quite a step...

HOLLEMAN: Yes. And I spoke to a class at Alma College lately on the music of the Reformed Church. My interest in the Netherlands has helped to tie in with the Reformed Church also. I've been often having to do things in connection with the Dutch culture. I gave a small course last year for the Dutch Language class in "Music of the Netherlands." And it all, perhaps, ties in some way with one's work in the church. It's kind of a spin-off, I think, of one's interest in the historical aspects of the Reformed Church.

BECHTEL: Well, that's all for the questions that I have for you. Do you have any other things you'd like to add?

HOLLEMAN: One thing we didn't touch on, and I should have brought up earlier was the role of the support staff of women on the campus. There have been so many capable women in clerical and maintenance type of jobs who, I feel, have not had, perhaps as much recognition as they might. For many years the manager of the Kletz was Mrs. Dorothy Burt. She worked downstairs in that old Kletz, very hot and cramped. And Dorothy would be on her feet just all day, day after day...

BECHTEL: This was in the basement of Van Raalte?

HOLLEMAN: In the basement of Van Raalte. And she did all the ordering, and of course, we didn't have a catering food service then - it was really her responsibility to run the Kletz. And she was so capable. She spoke to me with considerable
hurt that when they planned the new Kletz they never once consulted her...to see what her suggestions would be for the new Kletz - and she would have had many to give, I know. Because what they have in the new Kletz is just a replica of the old. They didn't have the wit to see that they might improve upon it. Many of the inadequacies of the old Kletz were just transferred right over to the new one. And Dorothy Burt could have seen that.

I think that Marion Stryker as Director of Alumni Relations and of writing the periodical, the Alumni Journal did a heroic job; Marion tried often in the pages of the Alumni Journal to give credit to women alumni. I've already mentioned Janet Mulder, the archivist. I think that some of the secretaries - Charlotte Mulder, the secretary to Dr. Van Wylen, and Marion Orzechoski, the Provost's secretary - they're so capable, and so, just dependable. They're just typical, I think, of many, many wonderful women we've had working in the business and support aspects of the college. When I came here there was really only one completely full-fledged secretary, and that was Mildred Schuppert. Although the registrar had secretaries and the English Department, also, Mildred Schuppert was really a full-time professional secretary to Dr. Lubbers. Then Dr. Lubbers encouraged her to go on to school, and she later became Head Librarian at the Seminary. But the proliferation of that type of job has been astounding too. Where once...of course you did all you own typing - you never would think to have anything duplicated - it wasn't possible to do it. If you gave a test you typed it yourself. If you had letters to write you did it yourself, if you even owned a typewriter. But the people on the support staff - the cleaning women...there's, for example, Mrs. Visscher who recently retired - they were so very good, and often working with minimal budgets and certainly not the best of conditions. We haven't talked about students either!
BECHTEL: We should do that.

HOLLEMAN: That's what the whole thing is about. Again, one can hardly name names. There are just so many, but... I think that the Women's Activities League and the Alcor, the Women's honor society, had great influence on the campus. The women students were encouraged in leadership roles in the religious life of the campus - the Y.W.C.A. was prominent (with the Y.M.C.A.) in leading in the required Chapel services, and in social service projects. Faculty women, and women church leaders (missionaries, for example,) also led Chapel. Somehow, in recent years, when it comes to religious leadership at the college, it seems that women are seen, but not heard. I think that the girls were perhaps more organized than they now are; there was more overall direction. Although I know you have meetings of R.A.'s and house directors, but it doesn't seem to be as important as it once was in the sense of coordinating these things. The fact that we do not have a Dean of Women, I think results in a lack of focus for the activities of the girls. And while we do have a lot of rather high-priced psychiatric help, I feel that some of this could be avoided if we had a capable Dean of Women. But I realize these days have perhaps gone forever. With the student protest of the 60's, the idea of campus rules and regulations has practically disappeared, and all control of the residence houses seems to be resented. I think that this is improving to some extent at the moment, and I hope it will even further be shaped up, because I think it's very important that the residence halls give an impression of what it means to live a... an orderly kind of life. Do you have any more questions?

BECHTEL: You mentioned May Day. Could you describe that please?

HOLLEMAN: Yes. The first of May is still a partial holiday, but it used to be a full day's holiday. And that was really a very significant event, especially for women's sports. Then, I believe it was the Freshman girls who would be trained to have a "daisy chain" - they all dressed up in formals. They practiced some kind of
dance to wind the May Pole and have a daisy chain. It was a very pretty thing - graceful and elegant. And of course the boys were all dressed up. We had it in the Pine Grove. And at that time they would announce the new appointees to the honor's society, and also the girl's who were on the Queen's Court. Various other honors, too, were given out. And then, of course, there was the crowning of the May Day Queen, and a lovely dinner afterwards, which everybody was expected to attend. Now this has really gotten to be a very minimal thing, and the May Day Queen is crowned wearing jeans, or looking very casual. In any case it's just another, well, kind of athletic event. But I always felt that May Day was a very nice recognition of the women's leadership on the campus. I think that, again, you can't bring back the past, but one could think in terms of other things that might give something of that same emphasis to the role of the girls on the campus.

BECHTEL: Why do you think the emphasis on May Day has declined?

HOLLEMAN: Well, it got to be looked upon as just too, too fussy. Nobody wanted to dress up, you know. People were wearing jeans to weddings, they were wearing jeans to wonderful concerts - there was just no other uniform by bluejeans.

BECHTEL: This was during the 60's?

HOLLEMAN: Yes. And so, of course, anything where you'd wear a formal was just too outdated for words; any sort of emphasis on manners was just too stuffy to be countenanced also. So it was all a part of that rebellion of the 60's, and the more casual attitude we have toward dress and manners - some of which may be all right, but then I think we have also lost a great deal. At one time there was planned seating in the dormitories for meals. You were given an assigned seat at a table; there was a host and hostess. The host dished out the meat and the hostess poured coffee and made introductions, and was supposed to keep some kind of a conversation going. Everybody was introduced, and you sat at that same table for, whatever it
was, three weeks or so. And then you were assigned to another table where you were forced to meet some new people. You didn’t just sit with your friends. You had to get to know some new people, and the art of conversation was thought to be important. And this has long since disappeared, and I think that it's rather unfortunate.

BECHTEL: Do you think that some of those traditions could reasonably be brought back?

HOLLEMAN: I think with imagination one could do something toward that. I think that the new addition on Phelps Hall has been an improvement in dining, and that there could be more occasions then where one might have a banquet, and to get student clubs active again. Too much centers around the fraternities and sororities for social life. There's not enough imagination given to the role of other student clubs, or other ways of having students dress up and develop some social poise! But I think it is improving, yes. There is a belated awareness that human relationships are important, that one's education is more than preparing to earn a living.

BECHTEL: Thank you very much, Miss Holleman.

HOLLEMAN: You're welcome.
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## FACULTY COMPARISON—MEN AND WOMEN

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Note: The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee studying women's representation, Mrs. Strand, asked me to do a little historical survey.
The following is not in any sense a statistical study, but a (mostly) personal recollection of the role and status of women at Hope College during the past thirty years. I freely admit that my source of information, the Milestone, is inexact, but the general conclusions are, I think, valid.

In 1946, when I arrived, there were about forty-four full-time faculty members—thirty-one men; thirteen women. Women were, thus, approximately 29% of the total. Several were full Professors, one was head of an important faculty committee, one was on the Executive Board, several were committee members (although it should be pointed out that all faculty served on at least one committee).

Now, in 1975-76, there are about one hundred forty-five faculty members—one hundred twenty-seven men and eighteen women (not counting part-time staff or persons on leave this term). It would seem, then, that the percentage of women is less than half of what it was in 1946, or only about 13%.

Observation (using the Milestone) shows that the number of men rose slightly from 1946-1960, and that the number of women remained fairly constant. In 1950, for example, the total was 62—47 men, 15 women; in 1960, total—72; 59 men, 17 women. Then, about in 1965, there was a large overall increase in faculty, but the number of women actually declined; in 1967 the total was 92; 80 men, 12 women; in 1970 the total was 126; 111 men, 15 women.

Why, may one ask, were the earlier proportions higher? Several explanations may be suggested—after-effects of World War II; college purpose to become accredited by A.A.U.W. and other accrediting agencies; administrative hiring practices; changing roles for men and women; numbers of women in graduate school; attitudes among the women themselves relative to the necessity of professional growth.
In 1946, to reach the standards set for acceptance by the A.A.U.W. (American Association of University Women), the college needed to aim for somewhat near the same proportion of women on the faculty as there were among the students, i.e., one third. If I remember correctly, it also had to show that women were appointed to decision-making areas—Executive Committee, Status Committee (called by a different name then); that they were Department heads; that their pay was equal, that the Physical Education facilities, staff in that area, be qualified; etc.

In addition to the A.A.U.W. requirements, the President, Dr. Irwin J. Lubbers, was personally convinced of the justice of treating women as professional equals. He sincerely tried to develop the potential of the faculty women, trying to instill a sense of confidence and pride in them, encouraging them in professional growth, giving them responsibility and prestige. Women represented the college at significant professional conferences, church gatherings, they chaired faculty panel discussions, sometimes introduced famous speakers, presented honorary degree candidates, led chapel, were much in evidence at social and academic events.

The Dean of Women was a very important figure, professionally well qualified (Miss Lichty had a Ph. D. degree), and remained so until about ten years ago, when campus authority became such an area of debate. Until then, she was on the Executive Committee, was in charge of many areas of campus housing, led the Women's Governance Boards, supervised dorm staff, made disciplinary decisions. She acted as an official campus hostess whenever there were important speakers; she had a separate house for counseling and entertaining. In the summer she was busy seeing to the renovation and cleaning of the dormitories, buying furniture, planning color schemes, etc.; there was a woman's touch in lounge decoration and rooms which seems lacking in some campus housing now.
In 1975, only one woman heads a Department—Dr. Joan Mueller, of Inter-disciplinary Studies. Many names come to mind from the past; Miss Boyd of the German Department, Mrs. Prins and Miss Meyer of the French Department, Dr. Hawkinson of History, Miss Harton and Miss Wood of the Art Department, Miss DeFroe and Miss Van Haitsma, as Heads of the Drama Department.

In several areas, the scarcity of women reflects new roles for both men and women and may be seen as a healthy sign of equality. For example, men now feel free to become librarians, but there does not seem to be much entrance of women into the more masculine areas of Physics or Mathematics. Some areas where women were prominent in years past, i.e., Alumni Director, Archivist, were, upon the retirement of Marian Stryker and Janet Mulder, replaced by men. One does not note much evidence of the promotion of women from the clerical staff in to positions of more responsibility, as, for example, that any of them might be considered for vacancies in Development, Book Store Manager, Business Office, Library Assistants, even though some the secretarial staff are highly knowledgeable in these areas. Apparently once a clerical worker, always so.

Relative scarcity of women in graduate schools (documented by the A.A.U.W.), unintentional neglect by the Administration, apathy by the women themselves, may by cited. Perhaps women are less willing to pay the price of personal sacrifice of marriage and family satisfactions which an earlier generation took for granted; they are less patient, perhaps, with the loneliness and isolation, relative lack of professional recognition and rewards which women in Academia have sometimes suffered. At Hope College, several men were helped financially to pursue work on doctorates, but I do not know that any women were.
The relative absence of the women from the Committee structure may be due to the fact that the present committee structure does not, as the former one did, require at least token representation (better than nothing) on some committees, plus the fact that, I feel, the present system is unfair both to men and women, being more of a disorganized popularity contest than any attempt to use qualified personnel. It is, apparently, also not viewed as a training ground for possible future Administrative staff.

More than half of the student body is female; I am distressed that the girls see far more women in waitress, clerical, domestic, part-time teaching roles and social positions than they do in full-fledged professional situations. A recent Public Relations film, used for fund-raising purposes, did not show a single full-time faculty woman, and women students were pictured as cheer leaders, campus queens, etc. In addition, I wonder about our very educational process, where both men and women and women students might be enriched by having an image of partnership and equality among the sexes which could help society as a whole.

Respectfully submitted,

(Miss) Jantina Holleman,

Associate Professor

November 4, 1975