

34 Follen St., Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Dean Dunn,

9-2-00

Five months after I first heard of the plans to replace the 150 grad students living in Cronkhite, I and several others who attended last Wednesday pleasant reception remain unconvinced by Radcliffe's desire to replace 150 living space with offices for 60 fellows.

As far as I can gather your arguments are that it would benefit the fellows to all work under one roof, as despite separation of fields, serendipitous overlaps may occur. Is this really proper justification, when only a few blocks separate Cronkhite from the Bunting, Murray Research and Public Policy Centers and e-mail can bring anyone together instantly? From all I have read and from my own experience creativity does not originate in think tanks but in small group settings, which such the three Centers now offer. Why will not your excellent plan to have all presentations given at Cronkhite accomplish both the cross-fertilization and the solidarity you seek? This administrative proposal seems to me the simplest, the least costly and by far the best solution.

What you have downplayed is a far more serious concern, the proposed displacement of 150+ grad students. Do not the three Centers offer the fellows enough office space? Bunting even has a parking lot. Why should the office needs of one fellow warrant taking 2.5 students' dormitory rooms apiece for an office,--plus their cafeteria? Mary Powers claims Harvard would replace the lost dormitory space, but where? Bunting is not big enough for 150 students. Harvard's explosive growth over the last forty years has already driven up housing prices so much that large numbers of working families and older people literally have been driven out of the Cambridge. And Somerville is suffering in the same way. The City is spending millions trying to house a few, but building land costs are astronomical and there is very little available building space left for housing. Mayor Galluccio just yesterday asked the universities for a limit of student enrollment. All the cities have reached a student satiation point.

Intellectuals do not own wisdom. Nor has knowledge had much effect upon the most pressing world needs. If Harvard and Radcliffe want their graduates to become leaders of the world, these leaders must be willing to step out of their cloistered citadels of power and mingle with the hoi ploi. The short strolls between the three Centers could be more beneficial to your fellows than the intense segregation you are proposing. They might learn how the rest of us solve our problems. They might visit the Special Needs Housing on Arsenal Square, chat with the elderly and the homeless. They might meet, enjoy and even learn from Cambridge residents who live in the real world. After all Howard Gardner insists that there are seven kinds of knowledge and Myers-Briggs claims sixteen personality types. Learning to put yourself in others' shoes is an essential part of wisdom.

Thus when resources become as tight as they are here, the rationale for any large change should include careful consideration of all factors involved including ripple effects. The deleterious effects upon the City of your proposal are far outweigh any benefits the fellows might accrue. Actually Cronkhite as it now offers already plenty of opportunities to share research findings together-- without total exclusion from real life. The Radcliffe fellows actually already have the best of both worlds.

Sincerely, *Sheila G. Cook*

Sheila G. Cook

A communciation wa received from
Sheila G. Cook, relative to Radcliff's
desire to replace 150 grad living
spaces with offices for 60 Radcliff fellows.

In City Council Roundtable
September 25, 2000