

Women colleges



Women Colleges Exclusively opened to women, women's colleges are s of higher learning that provide educational opportunities to women only (Harwarth, 1999). These colleges started in the mid- and late 19 century (Harwarth, Maline, & DeBra, 1999). The need for higher education for women was driven by the various factors such as shortage of schools teachers, increase in labor-saving appliances in the home that made women redundant at home and also liberated them from their traditional role, and increased demand for higher education for women following the increased employment opportunities during the Civil War and in post World War II years (Harwarth, Maline, & DeBra, 1999). Originally steeped towards providing education in the liberal arts (Kiss, 2006), these colleges offer educational opportunities that equal that offered to boys in the men's colleges. Women's colleges, especially southern women colleges, were attended mostly by white women; however, black women's colleges sprang up in the post-Civil War years that significantly contributed to the advancement of the educational opportunities of the black women (Guy-Sheftall, 1982). For instance, Bennett College, an originally co-ed institution, was converted into a liberal art college for black women. Unlike it precursors, the seminaries, which were restricted to women from the upper class, the mid- and late- 19 century women's colleges were opened to women from the middle classes (Harwarth, Maline, & DeBra, 1999). Indeed, women from the middle class were able to afford a decorous education probably due to increase in philanthropic gestures from donors. The liberation of women from their traditional role in the post World War II years led to a corresponding increased in the role of women in the academia and in government (Harwarth, Maline, & DeBra, 1999). Furthermore, during the World War II,

many colleges were depleted of their male faculty members, which resulted in the demand for female faculty. Thus more women's colleges sprang up in response to these changes in order to provide more educational opportunities for women to fill these positions. Works Cited Guy-Sheftall, B. (1982). Black Women and Higher Education: Spelman and Bennett Colleges Revisited. *The Journal of Negro Education* , 278-287. Harwarth, I. (1999). A Closer Look at Women's Colleges. Washington DC: National Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education. Harwarth, I., Maline, M., & DeBra, E. (1999). Women's Colleges in the United States: History, Issues, and Challenges: Executive Summary. Washington DC.: U. S. Department of Education National Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning. Kiss, E. (2006, September 12). Reaffirming Our Commitment to Women's Education. Retrieved June 24, 2011, from Agnes Scott: <http://www.agnesscott.edu/news/newsDetails.aspx?Channel=%2FChannels%2FAdmissions%2FAdmissions+Content&WorkflowItemID=46ad7d9b-8645-4f7a-ba6b-0a67bfa466b2>