

## Class of 1971 50th Reunion Survey

# **Race and Gender**

### Questions 19 through 23

Q19. What is your race? Asian, Black or African-American, Hispanic or Latina, White, Other.

Q20. Do you identify as LGBTQ and if yes, when did you first know your sexual identity?

Q21. Did you achieve any “firsts” as a woman, or as a woman of color?

Q22. While at Mount Holyoke, did you experience specific acts of racism?

Q23. Have you experienced sexual harassment?

### **Q19. What is your race?**

Asian — 4 Asian (4%)

Black or African-American — 3 (3%)

Hispanic or Latina — 0

White — 104 (93%)

Comments — 6

- Caucasian
- My current mission is to identify myself only as an American.
- I prefer not to answer.
- I'm white and I'm Jewish.
- American
- Race is an outmoded concept! My ethnicity is European.

**Q20. Do you identify as LGBTQ and if yes, when did you first know your sexual identity?**

Yes — 2 (2%)

No — 114 (98%)

Comments — 4

- Early 30s
- college
- I had lesbian friends come out to me when I was a teenager.
- I feel there is too much attention to this identity factor.

## **Q21. Did you achieve any “firsts” as a woman, or as a woman of color?**

Yes — 28 (28%)

No — 72 (72%)

Comments — 26

- I was the first Women's Rights Coordinator for Mass. CLUM.
- First woman in the company with a manager's title.
- First person in my family to attend college
- One -- first female faculty member to be awarded the teacher of the year award by the graduating law class -- in 1993.
- Chief Public Defender State of CT
- Explained earlier.
- First assistant director of planning for Baltimore City.
- first woman rector in three churches
- I was the first female education coordinator at the insurance company.
- Don't know
- I was the first woman in my family to go to college, and I was the first to marry a non-Jew.
- First all-woman law firm and with next firm first woman partner-actually two of us that year.
- I was among firsts I am sure, but did not aim for that.
- I was the first woman hired as a fulltime teacher at a prep school that was going coed.
- i wasn't the first but I was among a small group of female senior vice presidents at the time
- I was the first woman to utilize the Agricultural Preservation Program to successfully save three Metro Boston farms from bankruptcy. A total of 210 acres permanently preserved which now grow local food for many high end restaurants and local residents.
- First woman hired at my office.
- Within the companies that I worked for, I was first in a particular position numerous times, including when I was COO for EFJ and CEO for Zetron.
- Yes, as a woman, an honor related to my volunteer work.
- I tried hard to think of one!! Oh well - no regrets.
- I was a White sponsor of a Black sorority at the University of Missouri.
- Infamous as only professional staffer to take 3 maternity leaves in less than 5 years.
- First woman ever to be the Divisional Vice President of the Program General Arrangements Committee of the Million Dollar Round Table
- Youngest and only pregnant AVP at a major US bank, started first for profit Brownfield Development company.
- First woman to receive tenure in the History Department and go up through the ranks including being granted an endowed chair—Furman University is older than MHC
- career advancement in a traditionally male oriented field

## **Q22. While at Mount Holyoke, did you experience specific acts of racism?**

Yes, from fellow students — 3 (3%)

Yes, from professors or staff — 1 (1%)

Yes, from local residents — 0

Not sure — 5 (4%)

No — 86 (76%)

Other — 18 (16%)

Comments — 18

- Not really, However I am assuming that you also include anti-semitism as a form of racism. While I cannot think of a specific example of anti-semitism, it was an interesting observation that as freshmen, Jewish students were put as roommates with other Jewish students, and the college always had almost exactly 10% of each incoming class were Jews. This number is far less today, and this is very disturbing to me.
- (I wanted to answer "not sure" but when I entered my comment, it switched to "other") Junior year my room shared a wall with the dorm lobby. One night when I was trying to get to sleep a group of students were yakking loudly by the bell desk (after bells hours were over). I went downstairs to nicely ask them to please move to the dining room so they could still have fun talking and not keep me awake. Turns out they were black, and I'm white. I couldn't tell the color of the people who were keeping me awake, but I felt like they took my asking them to move as a racial insult.
- I would note, though, that MHC was the first time in my life I knew students of color, and they truly helped me begin to understand the world in a very new way.
- I witnessed inequity, disparity, and pain.
- Black students seemed (perhaps justifiably) angry. I felt bad (and deprived) not being able to gain friends among them.
- I didn't have 1-1 connection with any of my professors or instructors, that may have "taken me under their wing" to advise or guide.
- I try to ignore or look beyond any potential missteps.
- But I'm white!
- N/A
- There were ways in which Jews were viewed differently. On the questionnaires used to help with roommate assignments, I was asked if I wanted a Jewish roommate. I remember thinking that was an odd question; wasn't I just an MHC student like everyone else? I learned after enrolling that there was actually a quota on the number of Jewish students.
- I think people assess you the way they do, but don't necessarily make it plain. In fact they often did not know they assessed me wrong. You cannot predict other's people's assumptions.
- In light of occasional tensions between students of different cultural backgrounds, I think we all would have benefitted from greater knowledge and understanding of others' experiences and worldviews.
- passive racism from a certain sector of the black students who separated themselves and did not mingle
- No racism as the question implies, but antisemitic or cluenesses incidents. From the MHC adminstration regarding Jewish students: Some required meetings were scheduled for Yom Kippur (Jewish High Holiday,) and it was awkward asking professors to take exams scheduled on the High Holidays at a different time. In my first year dorm, I asked in the kitchen for a pork substitute and was offered a ham sandwich! Sophomore year, though, we had such good substitutes, that even non-Jewish students signed up! I had to explain to the man in charge of menus for the college that even though he thought he was doing something nice for a Jewish holiday, that when he had blintzes on the menu for the first time ever, that none of the Jewish could eat them on Passover. He did try after that to avoid

Q22. While at Mount Holyoke, did you experience specific acts of racism? (continued)

pastas during that week. There were always matzohs in all the dorms, so that was nice. Some students who had never met a Jew before said some ignorant things.

- absolutely NOT
- Not subject but observer
- Acts of classism - as a poor student, I was snubbed by many of the rich girls who attended in my day. To earn spending money I had to wait tables in the dorm. Humiliating.
- I was totally unaware of what my classmates, who were POC, had experienced in her lives.

**Q23. Have you experienced sexual harassment? (Check all that apply.)**

Yes, in my undergraduate or graduate school years — 11 (10%)

Yes, in the workplace — 40 (35%)

Yes, in my personal life — 23 (20%)

Not sure — 7 (6%)

No — 33 (29%)

Comments — 38

*Please note that, due to technical problems with the online tool, respondents were unable to check more than one box — the numbers above therefore need to be read in conjunction with the following comments:*

- workplace and in my personal life
- I have been very fortunate. However, while at DFEH (1979-1986) we worked on some pioneering sexual harassment cases. What has been shocking to me is that there is a huge push to educate realtors on the subtleties of racism. The last two legal updates that my Brokerage did (we have two a year for our malpractice insurance) were focused in large part on what not to do and say because of potential racial discrimination. I am honestly disheartened that this is still so prevalent over 40 years after I started at DFEH and was dealing with the issue then.
- there were a lot of things I experienced in my career that would be called out as sexual harassment today.
- It would not let me check multiple places. I experienced it in college, in the workplace and in my personal life.
- I was able deal with it.
- Maybe in grad school years
- Yes to the first 3, though Survey Monkey doesn't want to hear it.
- Some faint looks/ suggestions in graduate school
- It is only letting me check one box, but I experienced it in the workplace and my personal life.
- Minor— occasional remarks
- Could only pick one but more apply
- also in the workplace/site would not let me choose 2
- I waitressed one summer in a restaurant. The owner put his hand on my derriere one afternoon when he passed behind me. I left the job soon thereafter.
- the survey would not permit me to check "in the workplace" as well as in school. In my first job after grad school, a sexist ad hung over my desk and I wasn't allowed to take it down — and one guy at work was so verbally harassing that he made the even younger secretary cry; I had to ask my dad for an effective way to confront him. In a much later job, an off-site seminar participant took me out to dinner to tell me how upset he was that I had been treated poorly (as the only woman) by the seminar leader — and then he himself tried to push his way into my hotel room. I guess he figured he deserved a reward!
- Not harassment, but sexism.
- Yes, undergraduate or graduate; and in the workplace. I could not check both boxes.
- Not really harassment because these were isolated instances.
- Two times in my life I was the victim of unwanted sexual touching by men, once by a co-worker and once by a stranger on public transportation

Q23. Have you experienced sexual harassment? (Check all that apply.) (continued)

- My non-profit job was in the sportfishing industry. I worked with an all-male board and with everyone from charter boat captains to tackle company executives. It was inevitable that I would be hit on, and I was. In fact, it happened all the time.
- But not much.
- I left that job.
- There were relationships that should not have happened but I did not experience it as harassment, and I am sure the people involved thought they were bullying me.
- Yes to both workplace and personal life. Sexist treatment by bosses and male colleagues. Unwanted, sexually intrusive behavior by men in social situations.
- Minor but annoying
- physical assault on date with friend's brother. stopped short of rape
- Yes, in the workplace. One co-worker gave me trouble. I made sure never to be alone with him (after he chased me around his room) and did not have any more problems. Yes, also, at the corporation where sexual jokes were told at lunch and the supervisors joined in with the jokes and laughter that made it a hostile environment for me. After a while, I just ate someplace else.
- I think that I answer this question in retrospect. At the time I would not have called it sexual harassment, but just the way things were when you went into a field dominated by men. I did not have the luxury to take offense, or let it get in my way. As more and more women entered the field the harassment decreased.
- The bar took some training and it may be I am good at ignoring it, but I felt welcome and respected
- In personal life and in workplace.
- See #17 and #18
- I was once hit on at a job interview
- It's not letting me check all of them!
- Survey won't let me check all that apply, add workplace please
- I never let it slide - addressed it.
- Also in personal life: I couldn't manage to check 2 boxes. I think most women have.
- I have always been able to deal with this effectively on an individual basis
- Not accepting multiple answers. Yes also in Grad school and personal life
- Also personal life; won't let me check two.