

O Pioneers!: Innovation in Hinman and its Pioneering Spirit

*All the past we leave behind,
We debouch upon a newer mightier world, varied world,
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the march,
Pioneers! O pioneers!*

*-Walt Whitman
"Pioneers! O Pioneers!"
from Leaves of Grass*

Prologue

Hinman College is known for its innovation in the realms of student life. Since the very beginning it has been open to radical and revolutionary areas of change that more conventional colleges would shy away from. It is seen in its design. The suite-style living arrangement, each with three bedrooms, a common living area, and a bathroom, is a far cry from the traditional corridor style of living, with no common area and a shared bathroom at the end of the hall. Suite-style living was not the norm in American institutes of higher education in 1967. Hinman was built with collegiate structure in mind and readily latched on to this novel concept.

Suite-style living and collegiate structure would not be the only areas where Hinman would lead the way. Hinman would also lead the way at SUNY Binghamton in creating the first self-regulating dorm, establishing apartment-style living, creating a cooking dorm that was not bound to the university dining system, allowing pets in all of its residence halls, and constructing a geodesic dome and a monument. Although not all of these policies and edifices would survive, they would have a profound effect not only upon the people who were there during the time these structures were in place, but also upon future generations of Hinmanites as well. While maybe not everything that Hinman created still stands today, the spirit of innovation continues with the present generation of pioneering Hinmanites.