

Chapter I

The Dilemma Facing Fraternal Organizations at the Millennium

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INTRODUCTION

In the chapters that follow you will find a history of, and a look at the current structure of fraternal organizations and their umbrella groups; a discussion of a number of specific issues that face these organizations; a description of some of the crises and some of the triumphs of fraternal organizations on North American campuses; and proposals designed to solve some of the most vexing problems that endanger the future of these organizations.

This book is intended to provide a balanced look at the fraternal system of today; and better ways to assure that these organizations succeed and persevere as they begin their fourth century of life. Further, its contributing authors suggest that at the heart of the requisite improvements are a concerted and broadly inclusive examination of fraternal life and the development of a plan that can be accepted by all of the constituencies involved in fraternal life. Contributing authors offer a wide variety of views and perspectives on fraternal organizations; and it is hoped that these varied perspectives will be of benefit to you as you examine these issues on your campus or within your organization.

In an effort to set the stage for the chapters that follow, I shall attempt to take a broad look at fraternalism as it exists today. I begin with a brief history of fraternalism; join those contributors who suggest that a return to the values and directions upon which fraternal organizations were originally based is an excellent long-term solution for the ills of today; and reinforce the view that a comprehensive effort by all of the stakeholders in fraternal life can result in a prosperous future for these organizations.

For the purposes of this book, we have chosen to use "fraternal organizations" where appropriate to describe all men's and women's social fraternal organizations. We have sought to avoid the term "Greek" since some fraternal organizations do not use Greek letters to identify themselves. We have also generally used the term fraternal organizations to include women's fraternities and sororities as well as "new" organizations that include those founded to be inclusive of ethnic and cultural groups.

There are occasions, however, when the terms fraternity, sorority, and other terms seem more appropriate to the context of the chapter. These "new" organizations referred to above include fraternal organizations which are intended to serve the needs of students from different ethnic (e.g. Latino, Asian, Native American), and cultural (e.g. gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender) backgrounds. We use the term "multicultural" organizations when describing these organizations in the collective sense.

Those readers who are not familiar with fraternal issues may encounter other language and terms with which they are not familiar. For instance, we use the term "inter/national" to refer to the parent organizations of fraternal organizations. This term is used since some organizations are "national" organizations, in that institutions in the United States host all of the member chapters. Other organizations are "international" since the organization has chapters at institutions outside of the United States, most often in Canada. Another term that is used in several contexts in this book is the term "chapter."

You will see references to the chapters of the book and you will also see references to the "chapter" or "chapters" of fraternal organizations. This is true since the collections of students at any given institution who form a fraternal organization are often identified as a "chapter" of the "inter/national" organization (e.g. the Mu Tau Chapter of Tau Kappa Epsilon Fraternity). We have provided a glossary of terms at the end of the book to assist those who may not be familiar with terminology used by contributing authors.

Because this book is intended for an audience with a wide variety of experience levels in working with fraternal organizations, some of the material may seem a bit too basic. It is, however, intended for use by graduate students, fraternal organization professionals and volunteers, student affairs professionals, and anyone with an interest in fraternal organizations. It is written by persons from a variety of experience levels in working with fraternal organizations, but those with less experience, have particular skills and expertise to add. The large majority of the authors are friends of fraternal organizations, when these organizations are at their best and critics of fraternal organizations when they fail to fulfill their promise.

HISTORY

You will read in several of the following chapters that American fraternities began with the founding of Phi Beta Kappa at The College of William and Mary in 1776. While this is true in the strictest sense, it is not accurate to say that the beginning of "social" fraternal organizations began at this time. While many fraternal organizations developed from similar roots, and originally had similar purposes, Phi Beta Kappa, of course, grew in a different direction. Between the founding of Phi Beta Kappa and the beginnings of the social fraternity movement in the 1820s, the development of literary societies served as the main social outlet provided within the college environment (Rudolph, 1962).

According to Rudolph, during the 1820s and 1830s, undergraduate students (all of whom were male) were seeking to "redefine the American college" with their purpose being to "change the focus from the next world to this. Their instrument was the Greek-letter fraternity movement" (Rudolph, 1962, p. 144).

Rudolph went on to note:

Few American colleges were left untouched by this movement that so ably characterized the enterprise and initiative of the nineteenth-century college undergraduate. Before they quite knew what had happened, most college presidents had found that their undergraduates had ushered into the American college community a social system that they had neither invited nor encouraged. (Rudolph, 1962, p. 145)

From the very beginning, there was overt skepticism as to the value or desirability of social fraternal organizations. Rudolph cites an 1845 letter from the president of Amherst to the president of Williams, in which the president of Amherst asks, "Would it be desirable to have these societies cease in our colleges?" (p. 145) and goes on to posit that, "During the decade, the same question was being asked at the University of North Carolina, Lafayette, Bowdoin, University of Michigan, Princeton, Brown, Dartmouth, Bown and Dickinson. The question was often asked, but the fraternities grew apace" (p. 145).

As the fraternity movement grew during the nineteenth century and into the beginnings of the twentieth century, the appeal of these organizations to the students of the time was undeniable. According to Veysey (1965):

The fraternity catered to the newly wealthy, giving them a reassuring sense of exclusiveness. It fostered the "joiner" in an age and in an area where large numbers of adults were attracted to lodges. It formed a defensive rampart behind which the seeker of good fun might ignore the official values of the institution . . . It became a breeding ground for conformist expectations such as would make for success in later life. (Veysey, 1965, p. 292-293)

Rudolph suggested that fraternities "were intended to fill an emotional and social rather than a curricular vacuum" (p. 146) and that:

The fraternities offered an escape from the monotony, dreariness, and unpleasantness of the collegiate regimen which began with prayers before dawn and ended with prayers after dark; escape from the long winters and ingrown college world, from the dormitory with its lack of privacy. Fraternities institutionalized various escapes—drinking, smoking, card playing, singing and seducing—but they did not introduce these diversions, which long antedated their founding. (p. 146-147)

Suffice it to say, critics abounded; male students continued to join; the influence of fraternities continued to grow; and as the presence of women students became more prevalent on American campuses, the development of women's fraternal organizations grew. More detail about the growth and development of these organizations can be found in Chapters II and III of this book.

It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that fraternal organizations began to develop and grow rapidly. Many of the challenges and issues currently facing these organizations have developed as higher education in the United States has grown, changed and become more diverse. Colleges and universities, once the home only of the financial and intellectual elite, have opened to the more universal concept of higher education of today. There are those who question whether fraternal organizations have made this transition effectively. Others might advocate for the perspective that it is just this growth and diversity of membership that has moved these fraternal organizations away from their original goals.

Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, fraternal organizations at American institutions have diversified to the point where it is recognized that they have taken on new hues. No longer just black and white, they are now yellow and brown, and organizations within which persons of a variety of ethnicities, sexual preferences and racial backgrounds may take part. More detailed information about the historically Black fraternal organizations and the emerging type of "new" fraternal organizations is available in Chapters IV and V. Despite this growth and development, despite the many positive roles taken on by members of fraternal organizations, and despite the efforts of many groups and individuals the critics still abound.

While the basic purpose for fraternal organizations, at least those developed as "historically white" organizations, was social in nature from their beginning, these organizations have had other central foci. Fraternal organizations for men and women, especially those providing support for the African American student and alumni communities, have long had a series of purposes which were included in their founding documents, in their statements of principle and purpose, and

in their rituals. In a document developed as the basis for the oversight program at the University of Maryland (Foundation for the Future, 1995), the University listed many of these foci and cited documents from a variety of organizations showing that most organizations ascribed to many of these purposes or foci.

Among those included in that document are the following:

1. To complement the academic mission of the college or university. (p. 4)

As noted above, the founding of the fraternal movement is often cited as the beginning of Phi Beta Kappa. That organization and most other fraternal organizations that have developed since, have had the academic excellence of their members and support for the central purpose of the academy as part of their goals.

2. To develop leadership among members. (p. 4)

Fraternal organizations have often been at the forefront of the development of campus politics; and the networking that takes place through membership is often a way in which members may use the organizations to hone their leadership skills and acquire leadership positions. Each organization has also developed leadership training programs to enhance the leadership skills of chapter officers and to prepare alumni to succeed in society.

3. To serve the community. (p. 5)

Fraternal organizations for both men and women, but particularly women's fraternal organizations, have highly developed relationships with philanthropic organizations. Whether it is participation in educational or service programs, fund raising for charitable organizations, support of campus activities, or participation in campus governance, fraternal organizations have historically been involved and have always had an inter/national focus upon service activities.

4. To develop character. (p. 6)

Among the most central parts of most rituals are the development of honor, virtue, responsibility and other positive personal characteristics. According to the Maryland document, "Fraternity rituals are filled with words such as honor, trust, respect, humility, courage and tolerance" (p.6). This development of the affective domains of a member's life is congruent with the goals of most student affairs divisions.

5. To develop the whole person. (p. 6)

Social skills, achievement, establishment of fraternal bonds, improving relationships with other members and others, all form a central focus of the fraternal message. These characteristics along with character development are those attributes many fraternal organizations are said to foster. Allusions to developing the total man or woman

fill not only fraternal rituals, but also many of the programs and activities.

6. To build community (p. 7)

The spirit of collaboration, the participation in a common bonding experience, serving as part of a selective self-governing community, commitment to the chapter, to the inter/national organization and to the institution are all ideals put forward by fraternal groups. One of the often-touted advantages to host institutions of fraternal organizations is the loyalty and support given by fraternal alumni to them.

7. To develop lifelong friendships (p. 7)

How often have we heard it said that the friends that are acquired through fraternal organizations are those with whom we feel closest for the rest of our lives? These organizations assist students early in their collegiate careers to feel accepted and to find a place to call their own, particularly at larger institutions. The development of a core set of friendships to carry students throughout the undergraduate experience and into the rest of their lives is central to the mechanisms used to recruit. Slogans such as "The fraternity for life" are often seen in organization magazines, rush materials and rituals.

The seven purposes of fraternal organizations are among those that are common to students seeking to enter fraternal organizations across the United States and Canada, and at least as described in the documents of these organizations those purposes have not changed dramatically over time. As a pledge to my own fraternity Tau Kappa Epsilon in 1969, I read that a fraternity was, "an adventure in group living," "a training school for leadership," "a crucible for democracy," "idealism in action," and "a magnificent obsession" (The Teke Guide, 1966, p. 6-7). This book offered seventeen values of membership to those who joined the ranks of the initiated, many of which I gained during my undergraduate years and beyond; and indicated that character, education and democracy were foundational purposes for which members were to strive.

Dr. Margaret Mohrmann (1990), in a speech to the national convention of Kappa Kappa Gamma, supported the concept that fraternal organizations, particularly women's fraternal organizations, are more alike than different. She said:

I remind myself of something I believe very strongly; that we have a lot more in common than not, that there is much more that unites us as fraternity women than there is that separates us into our individual sisterhoods. Whatever the political and organizational reasons that resulted in the founding of the National Panhellenic Conference, the basic and essential principle of Panhellenic is the truth that we are more alike than we are different. (p. 1)

She went on to argue that women's fraternal organizations need to be places where women can find congruence between what they seek to be as women and how they act as fraternity members. "That there is agreement between what you do and who you believe yourself to be" (p. 2), and "... that being a fraternity woman ... means that your ability to be congruent, to be finally who you say you are, is evoked, educated, encouraged and celebrated" (p. 2). She argued further that the founders of women's fraternities did so, "to support each other in their attempts to live the best lives they could imagine: lives of honor and honesty, of service and care for others—lives that would enact their lofty and explicit ideas of what goodness is." (p. 3)

Dr. Mohrmann suggested additionally that fraternity women must, "respect the importance of intellectual pursuits, because we believe there is something intrinsically good and ennobling about the ability to think well, because being a member of a fraternity means being eagerly learning for its own sake" (p. 4) despite the fact that, "women's fraternities have a firmly-established reputation for being anti-intellectual." (p. 5)

Have fraternal organizations strayed from these traditional and founding values and traditions? Most critics would support this premise, and even some advocates would admit that they have. So, what is going on now? What problems and issues do we have to deal with if fraternal organizations are going to continue to exist for the next hundred years? The next portion of this chapter will take a look at those questions, and the authors that follow will attempt to provide some answers.

WHO ARE THEY NOW AND HOW ARE WE SEEING THEM?

For the purposes of this book, there are four types of fraternal social organizations on the twenty-first century North American college campus. They include, traditional all male, largely Caucasian fraternal organizations. While some of these organizations have included men of African American and other races as members, they have been, and still remain, primarily white organizations. There are also women's organizations called either sororities or women's fraternities, which like their male counterparts, are primarily, white organizations. The third group consists of the male and female organizations that have grown out of the African American culture of our nation and that consist primarily of African American students and their alumni sisters and brothers. These organizations are generally smaller than their Caucasian counterparts, particularly on historically white campuses, and they tend to place a greater emphasis on the life of alumni members.

The fourth group of organizations is those that are the newest of fraternal organizations on American campuses. These are groups

that seek to provide a social and cultural place for students from other racial and ethnic minorities and that seek to provide social outlets similar to those provided by the traditional organizations, based on sexual orientation and other personal and lifestyle characteristics. Each of these types of organizations has an umbrella group that works with the individual organizations in various ways to provide support, oversight, coordination and other types of service and advocacy.

This book is divided into several sections based upon focus and issues. Section two, the section of this book that follows this Chapter immediately, describes the unique and current status of each of these four organizational types.

Three of the organizational types have umbrella entities that work with them in various capacities to provide leadership and support. Only the "multicultural" groups as a whole do not have a single oversight organization, due to their diversity of purpose and membership.

The Chapters in section two of the book will describe the history, development and issues facing each organizational type. The chapters in section three will describe the umbrella entities, and the issues that they now face. Each chapter will also provide suggested means by which these organizations can work with fraternal organizations and their host institutions to enhance the role of fraternal organizations and to make these organizations increasingly valuable to members and host institutions. In the third section of the book, one of the contributing authors will also look at the role of the professional organization whose members' work to bridge the gap between the fraternal organizations and their host institution.

It would be a great error to take all of these organizations, and even the four groups of organizations, and lump them together. Each organization, and each type of organization, has its own characteristics, history, membership, advantages, and problems. For example, the membership in historically white, all male groups has recently been shrinking; while that of historically white all female groups has maintained a steady state and even grown on some campuses. The growth of Black, Latin and Asian fraternal organizations has been dramatic in recent years. (Kimbrough, 2002)

While this is true, there are some common problems and issues that you will see described repeatedly in the chapters to follow. There are also common advantages related to membership in these organizations, advantages to both the members and the institutions at which they are based. There are also some programs that, with institutional variation, can be effective in assuring that fraternal organizations of all types serve their members and the goals of the host institutions.

It is also my view, and I believe that of most of the authors whose chapters appear in this book, that unless we come up with ways to

work together, and ways to move these fraternal organizations of all types in positive directions, they will ultimately lose their effectiveness and become irrelevant on North American college and university campuses. We must find means to create common goals and purposes without destroying the unique approaches to fraternity, which exist within individual organizations and without violating the educational goals of individual host institutions.

In the fourth and fifth sections of this book, you will find described some of the broad issues that are facing fraternal organizations. These sections also include analysis of ways in which campuses are seeking to deal with these issues, and some of the positive directions that can be achieved when interdisciplinary approaches are taken to create a positive future-oriented worldview regarding fraternal organizations.

In the final Chapter of the book you will find described a picture of the direction, that I believe, will be of long-term advantage to both fraternal organizations and their host institutions. As noted earlier, the book also provides a glossary of terms that may be valuable to the reader. Several appendices that will provide background and reference material from various chapters to follow are also provided at the end of the book.

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING ABOUT FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS AND WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SHOW?

The Benefits

At the 2001 conference of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), Hayek, Carini, O'Day and Kuh (2001) described results from the most recent National Study of Student Engagement. These data, among other things, permit two conclusions, each supportive of membership in fraternal organizations: (1) "Students who belong to Greek-letter organizations do not differ or do slightly better than other students in terms of their levels of engagement in educationally effective practices" (p. 17); and (2) "the overall favorable Greek engagement effect generally applies to all segments of Greek membership—men and women, first-year and senior students, and members who live in the fraternity or sorority houses." (p. 17)

During their presentation at the conference, the authors (Hayek, Carini, O'Day and Kuh, 2001) noted research showing positive effects of fraternal organization membership. Included among these were Astin (1977, 1984) whose research indicated that "Greek" students were more likely to persist in their education; Pike and Askew (1990) whose research showed that members of fraternal organizations had more interaction with their peers and worked more effectively in groups; and Astin (1993) whose research showed self-reported gains in lea-

dership ability. Other research described in this presentation included work by Pascarella and Associates that showed "A modest positive effect on cognitive development for men of color" during the freshman year (1996, p. 6), research by Pike, who described "general gains in cognitive development" (2000, p. 6), and a study by Pascarella, Flowers and Whitt (2001) which showed positive cognitive gain among sorority members.

A study completed in 1997 by the University of Missouri—Columbia (The Impact of Greek Affiliation, 1997) indicates that both male and female members of fraternal organizations were "much more active" than their nonmember counterparts in campus clubs and activities. This is of significance at a time when such participation has reportedly decreased radically on many campuses. (Levine & Cureton, 1998)

The study also showed that this higher level of participation in college carries over into the lives of students after they graduate. Fraternal organization alumni are more involved in "community activity" after graduation and are, thus, more likely to contribute "social capital" to their communities. Similar to participation on campuses, participation in civic and other community organizations has suffered in recent years. In his book, *Bowling Alone* (2000), Putnam indicated that this problem has led to social fragmentation and increasing problems in our society. Thus, increased levels of participation lend themselves to increased contributions of social capital to communities.

Other findings from the University of Missouri Study Columbia (The Impact of Greek Affiliation, 1997) included data, showing that fraternal alumni gave their time, and their money in higher proportion than nonmembers to charitable and not-for-profit organizations. They also gave more contributions to their alma maters than did non-fraternal members. Family members of fraternal organization alumni were also more likely than their nonmember colleagues to attend their alma mater.

The above noted study also showed that while fraternal member alumni were no more satisfied with their overall undergraduate experience than their non-fraternal colleagues, they were significantly more satisfied with their social experience while in college. It also showed an impact on current income, with fraternal organization members earning more than nonmembers.

Tripp (1997) did an analysis of the research regarding the impact of fraternal organization membership on "student development." In defining student development, Tripp included academic development, social development, as well as moral and ethical development. After reviewing the literature available at the time of his study, Tripp concluded that the mix of methodology, sample size, lack of longitudinal

data and other factors made conclusions difficult in each of these three areas of student development; academic, social, moral and ethical. He noted that much of the research is rather dated and indicated that it produces, at best, mixed results

A study by Kimbrough (1996) indicated that the leadership development opportunities for members of African American fraternal organizations on historically white campuses were enhanced by their participation in these organizations. His study did, however, discover some ambivalence among African American nonmembers regarding the value of these organizations.

Detrimental Effects

While the findings above are encouraging, and while other research has shown positive impacts by fraternal organization membership on students, much of the current research indicates negative or neutral impacts on students as a relationship of membership in fraternal organizations. Ozegovic, Bikos and Szymanski (2001) noted that several studies have shown that "on U.S. college campuses, fraternity and sorority members do the heaviest, most frequent and problematic drinking." (p. 448)

They stated that:

These difficulties persist in spite of policy directives issued by national fraternity executives, the dissemination of risk management information, and educational programs concerning personal and group responsibility sponsored by university officials and chapter advisors. National fraternal organizations have created policies outlawing the use of alcohol by underage members. In addition, sanctions are placed on chapters that have violated policies. None of the national fraternity organizations for women sanction any kind of alcohol use for minors at any sorority event. Moreover, alcohol is banned from any sorority chapter property, including the house and parking lot. Nevertheless, many chapter members knowingly break the rules and incorporate alcohol into functions or events because it is an expected component. (p. 448)

These authors completed a study of the drinking behaviors of women college students and found that "membership in a sorority is related to the decision to drink (i.e., nonabstainers) and both the frequency and quantity of alcohol use among college women." (p. 453)

The study by Pascarella and Associates (1996), described briefly above as showing positive cognitive growth during the freshman year among men of color who were members of fraternal organizations, reveals less positive results when compared with students who joined historically white fraternal organizations. This national longitudinal study, shows, "significantly lower end-of-first-year scores on standardized measures of reading comprehension, mathematics, critical thinking, and composite achievement than their non-Greek counterparts."

(p. 253) Similar, though less dramatic results come from the survey regarding women. The researchers found that, "women who joined sororities had lower end-of-first-year scores on all four cognitive measures than non-Greek women, but only the differences in reading comprehension and composite achievement were statistically significant." (p. 253) The authors indicated that this research is consistent with previous research on the topic, and suggested that, "the normative peer culture and socially-oriented time commitments of Greek life are often inconsistent with the educational and intellectual mission of the institution." (p. 254)

Bowker (1994) carried out a more limited longitudinal study. Here, the researcher studied the results of pledging on the academic performance of male and female students over nine years at one small liberal arts institution. He found significant decreases in academic performance by both male and female students during the time they were pledging, with the greater losses being accounted for by males.

In addition to the performance results, Bowker found that pledges were more likely to drop classes and to have lighter academic loads than their non-pledging fellow students. He did find that there was some differentiation on the negative impact of pledging, based upon the individual fraternal organization to which the students pledged. Some women's fraternal organization members improve their academic performance while pledging, but not so with those pledging men's fraternal organizations. Based upon these data, the reader may assume that shorter, less intense pledge periods would have lower impact on students than longer more intense ones. This would seem to suggest that organizations consider shortening and lowering the requirements of their pledge periods.

The many research reports and articles, which show the negative impact on students who participate in fraternal organizations, are too numerous to review in depth here. Suffice it to say that they paint a relatively bleak picture of the impact of fraternal organization membership on many aspects of the lives and development of students.

In addition to the research literature, there is a great deal of anecdotal information described in the educational literature, educational media, popular media and even the literature produced by the inter/national fraternal organizations that suggest negative effects and demonstrates the often insensitive and thoughtless actions of members of fraternal organizations. These reports indicate that fraternal organizations provide a culture, which either allows these problematic behaviors to take place, or actively encourages them. Described below are some of those reports.

Reports Regarding Fraternal Organization Members

The "Short Subjects" section of the March 15, 2002 issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* begins, "Even BLUTO BLUTARSKI, the boorish fraternity pledgemaster of Animal House fame, could have learned a lesson or two from the Kappa Alpha Order at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville." (p. A6) The story indicates that the chapter had been suspended by their national organization as a result of having a stripper and alcohol at a party, in violation of University and organizational rules. As outrageous, was that the fraternity president allegedly told a campus newspaper reporter that the chapter was on probation due to a "weekly tradition of hiring strippers," "frequent cock fights," and "the chapter's practice of 'liquoring up' local homeless men and inciting them to fight one another." (p. A6)

The *ASJA Law and Policy Report*" (2001), the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (2001), and other national media have commented upon "blackface" incidents during the fall of 2001 at the University of Mississippi, the University of Louisville and Auburn University. In his *Law and Policy Report* article, Gary Pavela discussed the tension between a host institution's inclination to discipline fraternity members and their organizations for these incidents, and the likelihood that doing so would impinge upon speech protected by the First Amendment. Whether protected speech or not, such behaviors are antithetical to the founding principles of fraternal organizations and should be condemned by individuals, institutions and inter/national organizations.

The *Chronicle* article also dealt with the First Amendment issues, but concentrated more on the issues of racism and conflicting standards of acceptable behavior on college campuses. In both articles the authors indicated that a long series of legal battles will likely ensue. Headlines concerning these battles, whether or not the fraternities and individuals in question prevail on legal grounds will likely haunt fraternal organizations for years to come.

An article in *The Washington Post* (Glod, 2001) described the hospitalization of an Old Dominion University student who was allegedly beaten severely during a hazing activity within the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity. The report indicated that the national fraternity had removed the charter of the chapter and that the university was taking disciplinary action against individual members of the chapter. This hazing incident followed "the alcohol-related death of a pledge from another fraternity in January." (Glod, 2001)

Bowdoin College is one of several small private colleges in the northeastern United States which, during the last twenty years, has chosen to eliminate fraternal organizations, change the structure of fraternal organizations on their campuses (e.g. make them all coeducational), and/or to change its relationship with them. An article in

the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (1997) described this decision and the student fallout that ensued. The decision by Bowdoin to eliminate fraternal organizations followed the closure of two on-campus fraternity houses the previous year, as a result of an alcohol-related death. College officials cited the alcohol culture, lack of ethnic diversity, lack of promotion of intellectual life, houses which were in disrepair and the exclusivity of fraternities as reasons for the closing, and indicated that the best students seeking admission to Bowdoin were seeking a campus without fraternities.

In 1996, George Kuh, Ernest Pascarella, and Henry Wechsler, three of the foremost researchers in student and academic development and in higher education student alcohol abuse, wrote an op ed piece for the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (1996). In it they identified a list of problems that research has indicated exist within many male fraternal organizations. The authors identified alcohol abuse, anti-intellectualism, lack of appropriate academic progress in comparison with nonmembers and lack of personal development as problem areas. Within the area of student development, they note that men's fraternal organizations are more homogeneous than the general student population, and thus, have a less well-developed appreciation for difference and openness for diversity than nonmember students. The authors argued that the claims by fraternal organizations that leadership development is one of their advantages may be overstated since research indicates that few members actually serve in leadership positions.

They also suggested that while it may be the case that a large number of business, education and civic leaders are fraternal organization alumni, this phenomenon may change as the undergraduate members of these fraternal organizations grow further away from the values which are of importance in the business, education and civic cultures. They note that the perceived problems within fraternal organizations may result in membership becoming a detriment to similar leadership positions in the future.

They suggested that reform of fraternities is a difficult and time-consuming task, and that many attempts by inter/national organizations and individual campuses have been unsuccessful. The authors noted that, "Colleges and universities need to assess how fraternities affect their educational missions, and to evaluate the political consequences of trying to change the deeply entrenched fraternity system." (p. A68) While noting that fraternal system change can only occur on a campus by campus basis, the authors advocate partnerships with the inter/national fraternal organizations where possible, and suggest that change can only occur after in depth study of the organizations, their cultures and potential problem areas. At a minimum they recommend deferring membership to the sophomore year, and suggest

that this will lead to a more mature membership and will enhance the long-term value of fraternal organizations and their property. Comment on this essay and its value to a system of reform will be made in the last chapter of this book.

Articles in the magazines of a number of inter/national fraternal organizations have addressed the issues facing their organizations in many of the areas noted above. Three examples include Breitholz (1992), who suggested ways to address sexism within his fraternity, Phi Tau; Coon (1994), who, in the magazine of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, described problems related to hazing; and Floren (1996), who described efforts by Alpha Gamma Delta to address hazing.

The articles described above present but a few that have appeared during the last ten years in a wide variety of publications. If nothing else, their authors clearly indicate that there is a perception inside inter/national organizations, host institutions, and the higher education establishment outside of the individual host institutions, as well as the media that fraternal organizations must be "fixed" if they are to survive. Many of the problem areas that are in need of study and correction are described in the next portion of this chapter.

PROBLEM AREAS

In the chapters to follow you will find described a wide variety of programs, issues, problems and opportunities, which face fraternal organizations as they move into the new millennium. They will address how campus officials, inter/national fraternal organization officials, umbrella entities, and the courts deal with these issues and concerns. The authors will also propose and discuss some innovative programs and mechanisms by which fraternal organizations and the persons and groups that work with them may improve fraternal life.

While not a comprehensive list, five of the major problems that face fraternal organizations are described in the paragraphs that follow. Each of these problem areas will be dealt with in more detail in later chapters.

Alcohol Abuse

The alcohol culture of fraternal organizations is a long-standing problem. Research has shown that members of men's fraternal organizations and, to a lesser but still troubling extent, members of women's fraternal organizations consume more alcohol than do their fellow students (Kuh, Pascarella & Wechsler, 1996; Ozegovic, Bikos & Szymanski, 2001). Many women's organizations have banned alcohol from organization houses and from organization events. Men's organizations are moving toward a substance free housing program as well.

Despite these efforts, the problems of alcohol abuse persist. While women's organizations have banned alcohol at their events, they have

not prohibited their members from attending events at the houses of men's organizations at which alcohol is provided, nor have they been able to prevent their members from consuming alcohol in other venues. There is no consensus among men's fraternal organizations that alcohol use should be prohibited, and these organizations are accused of regularly violating institutional and organizational rules regarding alcohol use by minors.

Alcohol abuse leads to other problems. Not the least of which are sexual assault, poor academic performance, traffic accidents, fights and other violence. Alcohol abuse and its consequences are certainly not problems exclusive to members of fraternal organizations; however, as cited above, these problems seem of greater concern within fraternal organizations. Unfortunately, individual fraternal organizations and their host institutions have met with limited success in their efforts to find and implement solutions.

Hazing

Hazing may well be the problem that causes the ultimate demise of fraternal organizations, particularly men's organizations. Hazing is a problem for both men's and women's fraternal organizations. Physical hazing is more characteristic of men's fraternal organizations, while psychological hazing seems to be more prevalent among the women's organizations.

As noted above, physical hazing is a serious problem among all men's fraternal organizations. This seems particularly true, however, within historically black men's organizations (Kimbrough, 2002). The deaths and serious injuries in reported cases, especially given the comparatively small numbers of men involved in these fraternal organizations, is compelling. According to Kimbrough (2002), Latino fraternal organizations are beginning to be concerned about this as well. As with alcohol abuse, hazing is not a problem exclusive to fraternal organizations. Athletic teams, bands, ROTC students, and others are also often guilty of hazing.

Individual fraternal organizations have tried everything from banning hazing to banning pledging. Some have had success with the implementation of education programs for students at all stages, from pre-initiation to graduation; and a majority of the states have now implemented anti-hazing laws. Juries have provided large financial awards to victims of hazing, and host institutions are now more likely to be found responsible for hazing incidents than has been the case in the past. According to Bickel and Lake (1999), the courts are more likely than ever to find that host institutions that had, or should have had, knowledge about potential hazing activity but failed to make reasonable efforts to prevent the hazing, are liable for damages to victims. As a result, fraternal organizations and host institutions have an in-

creasing incentive to work together to solve this pernicious and degrading practice.

Anti-intellectualism

If there is anything that is central to the college and university environment, it is the creation, dissemination and acquisition of knowledge. Intellectual curiosity, the desire to be part of a learning community and the life of the mind are the trinity of the academic endeavor. Any organization or activity that fails to recognize or that interferes with the academic function of the institution will not long be perceived as being beneficial to the institution or its members. Research has shown some indication that the members and activities of fraternal organizations are increasingly running afoul of the academic function of host institutions more than ever before. As described earlier, intellectual growth was a founding principle of most of the fraternal organizations in the United States.

Anecdotal information about students who come to class hung over or still drunk, or who miss class completely on a regular basis abound. Students wearing Greek letters on their shirts who sleep through class or who otherwise make it clear to faculty that their academic pursuits are not serious to them, injure fraternal organizations immeasurably. In an earlier day, no fraternal organization would rest if the cumulative grade point average of its members fell below the all men's or all women's average. While some fraternal organization chapters on some campuses pride themselves on academic achievement, and have implemented quality educational support programs involving faculty, sadly, these cases are too few, and too far between. Those fraternal organizations that do not take academic pursuits seriously, and the institutions that host them and allow such academic mediocrity, must deal with these issues if quality fraternal and academic programs are to coexist.

Lack of Student Development

While academic and other forms of intellectual development are the primary reasons for the existence of colleges and universities, certainly the growth and development of students' outside of the classroom is equally important. While this is true for all students, no matter what their age, it is particularly true for traditional aged students (eighteen to twenty-two years old) who are the primary market for fraternal organizations. Student affairs programs are often focused on student development; and now assessment, and learning imperatives have enhanced the needs for such programs to work to move students along Chickering's (1969; Chickering & Reiser, 1993) seven vectors of development or to move them through other types of psychosocial or intellectual development while in college. Such development is seen as

key to the effectiveness of college as a mechanism for growth both inside and beyond the classroom.

As described above in the research portion of this chapter, there appears to be some evidence that members of fraternal organizations develop more slowly in several areas. Because institutions are being placed in the position that their programs must be assessed regularly, they must show that the time, effort and personnel required to provide services to fraternal organizations, are of benefit to students and are assisting them to develop. If evidence shows that fraternal organization members are not benefiting, and perhaps even regressing in their development, then it is hard for institutions to justify using scarce resources to have fraternal affairs offices staffed by one or more professionals, and to have campus property set aside for use by fraternal organizations for housing and other purposes.

While it is difficult for public institutions to do away with entire fraternal systems, private institutions may be able to justify this move on such grounds. It is incumbent upon fraternal organizations, umbrella entities, and host institutions to work together to make sure that fraternal organization members do not progress at a slower rate than their nonmember colleagues.

Sexism, Racism and Lack of Appreciation for Diversity

Recent "blackface" parties, described earlier in this chapter, clearly indicate that there are some fraternal organizations where the problems of racism still exist. Men's fraternal organizations seem particularly guilty of this problem. While this is true of men's predominately white fraternal organizations, there has also been criticism of women's fraternal systems where African American women are not free, in practice if not by policy, to join.

Gay students, racial minorities and women, according to anecdotal information at least, seem often to be the targets of male fraternal organizations. Despite their being banned, reports of little sister groups occasionally come to the fore. Reports of women who are sexually assaulted during or after fraternity parties, strippers being brought to parties, and other sexist activities are occurring too often and are being reported by the media.

The majority of college students are now women and white men are now a minority (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Campuses are becoming more diverse, as is society as a whole (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Levine & Cureton, 1998). Recent data reflected above, indicate that fraternal organization members are not exposed to diversity as often as nonmembers. If this is true, and the trend continues, will fraternal organization alumni be ill prepared to live and work in a multicultural society? Here again, both the organizations and the host institutions have a stake in making sure that this lack of preparation does not happen.

CONCLUSION

Fraternal organizations have a long and storied history in American institutions of higher education. The development of men's fraternal organizations in the first half of the nineteenth century, and women's fraternal organizations in the second half of the nineteenth century, added a necessary set of organizations for students. These organizations were founded upon positive principles, and added positively to the missions of their host institutions. They replaced literary clubs and provided a positive social setting not provided by institutions.

In the twentieth century these organizations moved, according to many authorities, away from their original purposes and principles and became social organizations that created cultures that were antithetical to the cultures of their host institutions. In the latter part of the twentieth century, fraternal organizations and their host institutions sought to deal with many of the problems that had developed within these organizations, and achieved only mixed success. Research, while showing some positive impacts on students, more often showed that fraternal organizations, particularly men's fraternal organizations, had a negative impact on members.

Membership numbers in fraternal organizations have varied over time. The number of students seeking to join historically white men's fraternal organizations, while showing some spikes, has generally decreased. The number of students seeking to join historically white women's fraternal organizations has generally been stable, and has grown on some campuses. Membership in organizations for Latinos, as well as many other social and ethnic groups, has grown, as has the membership of fraternal organizations for African American students.

Some small private institutions have begun to do away with their fraternal organizations, some campuses have sought to impose strict operational guidelines for their fraternal organizations, and many institutions have begun to question the value of fraternal organizations. Other institutions have faced a quandary about whether to distance themselves from the fraternal organizations they host, or to exert more direct and close control.

Hazing and alcohol lawsuits and related judgments have struck fraternal organizations hard, resulting in rising insurance costs, and the implementation of costly risk management plans. Fraternal organization housing; always a significant investment for many inter/national fraternal organizations, local alumni, and housing corporations; has become even more problematic than in the past. Alcohol use on organization property, banned by most women's organizations, has begun to be a higher priority for men's organizations as well.

Since the 1960s, host institutions enjoyed relative protection against adverse judgments in lawsuits by students and other plaintiffs injured

in hazing, alcohol and other activities committed by fraternal organization members who were their students. Beginning in the 1990s, this protection began to erode, and according to one source (Bickel & Lake, 1999), institutional liability for such acts has, and will continue to, increase. This, and a general feeling of concern about student development and other problems, has resulted, as noted above, in many host institutions imposing relationship statements, increased oversight, and other forms of control. These actions have raised concerns among local student chapters of fraternal organizations, inter/national fraternal organizations, umbrella oversight entities, and others who support fraternal organizations. There is a belief among these groups that the actions of host institutions jeopardize their independence and their individual differences as organizations. Historically white women's fraternal organizations raise concerns that such implementation of control over all fraternal organizations wrongly lumps them together with men's fraternal organizations that are responsible for much of the problematic behavior.

In addition to the perceived attacks on their independence by campus officials, fraternal organizations face additional challenges. Fraternal organizations have long held that they have a freedom to associate on public institution campuses, which is protected by the First Amendment. A number of courts have found in favor of these organizations (Burke, 2003). A recent case in federal court (*Pi Lambda Phi v. University of Pittsburgh*, 2000), however, has chipped away some of this protection. This topic will be addressed in a later chapter in this book.

Advocates for fraternal organizations argue that they are still strong and viable. They say that they provide an important contribution to the lives of their student members, create lifelong friendships, add value to the lives of their alumni, and make many positive contributions to their host institutions. Critics, on the other hand, argue that they create a culture that promotes negative behavior; that they are counterproductive to the developmental aspects of the higher education experience; and that they have outlived their usefulness.

On one hand, some inter/national fraternal organizations and their advocates trumpet the independence of their organizations; their First Amendment right to exist at institutions of higher education; and the unique nature of each fraternal organization. On the other hand, some advocates berate institutions and professional associations (e.g. the American Council on Education, the Association for Student Judicial Affairs) who are seeking to deal with the problems related to fraternal organizations and their host campuses. These advocates argue that misbehaving students are students at the host institution first, and that while they are members of the fraternal organization, it is the institutions and not the fraternal organizations that should be respons-

ible for disciplining the students. It is difficult for institutional officials to accept this argument, and these campus and associational officials perceive that the fraternal organizations, in many cases, fail to provide adequate training for local chapter leaders, alumni volunteers, traveling field consultants, and other persons who seek to assist these organizations; and are sometimes distant when problems occur.

Institutions and professional associations often, like their fraternal organization protagonists, argue from untenable positions. Host campuses and others seek to require deferred rush and joining without recognizing the short- and long-term problems this causes for the fraternal organizations, and the economic losses that can ensue as a result. Host institutions fail to provide the economic support to carry these organizations, for example, during the period of change from first semester freshman year, to first semester sophomore year rush and joining. Institutions also fail to recognize the impact of having student members pay dues for only three rather than four years. Institutions criticize fraternal organizations for their lack of support to the institution and its mission, while failing to provide adequate staffing support to provide large numbers of traditional aged students with guidance and proper tools to accomplish institutional goals. Professional associations issue "white papers" that identify problems but fail to provide suggested solutions and ways in which their institutional members can make these changes in a cost-effective manner without disrupting long-standing traditions.

What is the dilemma facing fraternal organizations as they enter the new millennium? *It is their continued existence!* Only if fraternal organizations, institutions, oversight and advocacy groups, professional associations, legal counsel and others join together; abandon their set positions, and seek what is best for the students for whom they are all responsible will these organizations last into the second hundred years of the new millennium. If these organizations are allowed to fail as a result of the short sightedness of leaders on both sides of the issue, students, organizations and institutions will all be the worse for their loss.

As indicated earlier in this chapter, the chapters to follow in this book include the history and current status of fraternal organizations, their umbrella entities, campus officials and volunteers who work with them, and a more detailed look at the problems that are faced by all of these groups and individuals. The authors of the succeeding chapters have also included descriptions of some of the positive movements that are taking place on campuses and within fraternal organizations, and provide suggestions for other ways to improve fraternal life on campuses around the country. In the final chapter of the book, you will find a proposal to assist all of the constituencies involved with

fraternal organizations to work together to improve them and to make these organizations those of which the host institutions can rightly be proud.

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