

# **Fraternities and the Single-Sex Experience: An Overview**

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### About the Authors

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Zack is a two-time graduate from the University of Louisville with a Bachelor's degree in English and a Masters in Education with a focus in College Student Personnel. Upon graduation from his Master's program, Zack worked as the Fraternity and Sorority Life Coordinator at Wesleyan University. Currently employed at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse as the Fraternity and Sorority Life Coordinator, Zack is passionate about finding new and developmental ways of improving the fraternal experience for all members. Zack is a proud member of Sigma Phi Epsilon.

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Kinsley is a two-time graduate of Georgia Southern University with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Master of Education in Counselor Education with an emphasis in Student Affairs. Kinsley's professional work focuses on enhancing the fraternity/sorority experience for all members at Georgia Southern University. She is a proud member of Alpha Omicron Pi.

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Prior to joining Plaid, Dawn spent more than twenty years in higher education administration in roles ranging from academic advising to serving as a university vice president. In addition to her roles in higher education, Dawn was active in professional associations including serving as state director in Virginia for NASPA, serving as a selected faculty member and later director for NASPA's New Professionals Institute and ACPA's Mid-Level Management Institute. She has also published and presented extensively including such areas as crisis management, women and leadership, sexual misconduct, strategic planning and student mental health issues.

Dawn received her bachelor's degree in English with an emphasis in secondary education from Virginia Tech. She received her master's degree in counseling, also at Virginia Tech and her Ph.D. in higher education administration and organizational management from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with a research focus on strategic planning and its affect on recruitment and retention in colleges and universities. Dawn is a member of Tri Delta women's fraternity.

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### Introduction

*“We learned the rules to frat life quickly, or at least we thought we did. Never let your drink out of your sight. Don’t go upstairs – where the bedrooms were housed – without a girlfriend who could check in on you later. If one of us was denied entry to a party because we weren’t deemed “hot” enough – houses often ranked women on a scale of one to 10, with only “sixes” and up granted entry to a party – we stuck together. Maybe we went to the foam party next door” (Bennett, 2014).*

*Or, consider this, “According to the most recent National Panhellenic Council 2013-2014 annual report, sorority women from across the nation raised over \$5.7 million for philanthropies and reported nearly 1 million hours of community service in the last academic year alone.*

*“Even more impressive is that, in the same time frame, fraternity men in The North American Interfraternity Conference raised \$20.7 million for philanthropies and completed 3.8 million hours of community service.*

*“These figures, though enormous, don’t even take into account alternative Greek service organizations or multi-cultural Greek councils like the United Greek Council or National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc.*

*“And in no way do these numbers even come close to quantifying the unmeasurable amount of personal benefits that going Greek provides: higher academic standards, self-development, community building and irreplaceable friendships.*

*“Yet, here’s the catch: If we were to try to write a story every time that a Greek organization did something wonderful — whether it promoted positive values or raised thousands for a charity — we’d need to hire an entire staff of writers to keep up with that volume of content” (Buffer, 2014).*

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Both stories outlined above are from popular media sources. Yet, both are in direct contrast to one another. Are fraternity and sorority students, and in particular fraternity men, *the problem* on today's college campuses? Or, are fraternity men all that is right and good about college men as the future leaders of America? Or, like most things in life, is the story more complicated?

The purpose of fraternity has remained consistent: “*Founded in 1909, the North-American Interfraternity Conference, Inc. is the trade association representing 69 International and National Men's Fraternities. The NIC serves to advocate the needs of its member fraternities through enrichment of the fraternity experience; advancement and growth of the fraternity community; and enhancement of the educational mission of the host institutions*” (NIC, 2017). Today, the NIC estimates 380,000 are current undergraduate members with 4.2 million as current living alumni members (NIC, 2017). Fraternities can be found at large, public universities and small, private universities. The commonality are the bonds of friendships made and the stated values of the organizations which they join. While the NIC-type of organization tends to serve as the model prototype of today's fraternity, there are also NIC-type organizations which function independently of the NIC, for example, Kappa Sigma, Phi Delta Theta, Lambda Chi Alpha which are among some of the larger undergraduate men's social fraternities. The National PanHellenic Conference (NPHC) is made of up men's and women's organizations that have historically been affiliated with African-American and black undergraduate students and alumni/alumnae. In more recent years, one has witnessed an emergence of fraternities and sororities with a focus on Latino/Latina, Native American and students of Asian/Pacific Islander backgrounds. Some of these organizations also hold membership in the NIC. And, one should also note local organizations which function outside of national organizations and function with primarily local and/or alumni advising. All of these organizations make up the landscape of social fraternity today. This paper explores what makes fraternity distinctly different from other social organizations, an overview of the value of single-sex and/or single-gender organizations, the contrasting images of fraternity presented in the media and, finally, we attempt to find some truth in a world more interested in glorification of a good story than dealing with facts.

### **Sex Versus Gender Identity and the Title IX Exemption**

When one begins the examination of the fraternity community, it is important to recognize that there is a difference between the idea of “sex” and “gender identity” on college campuses and within the fraternity and sorority community. Several national fraternities and sororities have redefined their acceptance rules taking into account the idea of “gender identity” versus “sex.” The American Psychological Association (2015) defines gender identity as “a person’s deeply-felt, inherent sense of being a boy, man, or male; a girl, a woman, or female; or an alternative gender... that may or may not correspond to a person’s sex assigned at birth or to a person’s secondary sex characteristics.” Sex, on the other hand, is “assigned at birth (or before during ultrasound) based on the appearance of external genitalia” (APA, 2015).

It is important to draw this distinction as this paper focuses on the justification and defense of single-sex and/or gender organizations. That is to say, this paper explores organizations that are considered male-only. This paper does not take a position on the value of single-sex versus single-gender organizations. Therefore, the terms are used interchangeably throughout the paper.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (of the United States) states, in part, that: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” While the intent to create an “even-playing field” under Title IX is evident, several exemptions from Title IX were granted including, among them, an exemption for social fraternities and sororities in Section 1681(6)(A) which reads: “(6) Social fraternities or sororities This section shall not apply to membership practices – (A) of a social fraternity or social sorority which is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of Title 26, the active membership of which consists primarily of students in attendance at an institution of higher education.”

The fraternity/sorority exemption under Title IX was underscored in *Haffer v. Temple University* (1981) when women athletes sued Temple University for failure to meet the requirements of Title IX in its intercollegiate athletic program. The district court denied summary judgment and offered a detailed description of the legislative history of Title IX, including that fraternities and sororities were explicitly exempted from Title IX, and distinct

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from college and university athletics. While the reason for this exemption is not stated in the Education Amendments, value of the single-sex experience is implied as social fraternities and sororities are listed among other organizations including, but not limited to, boys' and girls' conferences, voluntary youth service organizations and educational institutions of religious organizations with contrary religious tenets.

### Fraternity in the Media

Greek organizations in the crossfire of the media's war on fraternity are finding it difficult to showcase the positive aspects of membership. Starting in 1978 with the release of the movie *Animal House*, fraternity's Hollywood image portrayed a typecast of drunken debauchery, sexual misconduct, hazing, lack of focus on education and too much focus on the party. Movies following suit, including *Revenge of the Nerds*, *Old School*, *American Pie: Beta House*, and most recently *Neighbors*, have all added to the preconceived notion that fraternities are a gateway to binge drinking, sexual assault, hazing and similar student misconduct. The constant push and pull between the media and fraternity has created a blurred brand that fraternities fight to reconstruct day in and day out. John Conklin writes in his book *Campus Life in the Movies: A Critical Survey from the Silent Era to the Present* (2008), "College movies have been consistently unflattering in their depiction of fraternities and sororities, especially over the past three decades. Whether cinematic representations of Greek Life have shaped popular beliefs about these organizations and influenced the attitudes and actions of prospective and current members and college administrators is uncertain, but those who have never belonged to such a group have little to rely on for information about them besides what they see in movies" (pp. 141-142).

The release of *Animal House* in 1978 filled in the blanks about "fraternity" for many prospective and even current members as well as those who chose to forgo the fraternity experience. It provided a picture of what fraternity must be like -- full blown anarchy. More recently, in *Neighbors*, a 2014 film centered on fictional fraternity Delta Psi moving into a new house located in a residential area, members of the organization are pitted against their neighbors, a young couple with a baby who recently moved to the area. From illicit drug use and obscenely outrageous parties to hazing the couple next door, the movie magnifies all the typical stereotypes that are placed on fraternities.

While one would hope that most movie-goers have the ability to see past Hollywood's depiction of fraternity in the movies, when stories alike are in print, is that capability still there? After the prominent entertainment magazine, *Rolling Stone*, published an article, later found by Columbia University School of Journalism to be blatantly false, depicting the alleged story of Jackie, a University of Virginia junior who said she was raped by seven men at a Phi Kappa Psi



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house party, the organization was pegged for normalizing a culture of sexual assault. In reaction to the story, the university suspended not only Phi Kappa Psi, but all fraternities and sororities on campus until the end of that semester. Despite the article's retraction months later, the lasting effects of this story can still be felt today.

In March 2015, MSNBC ran an article titled "Why Fraternities Need to be Abolished." Highlighting scandals at Penn State, North Carolina State, University of Michigan, and more, the author, Andre Lohse, compares fraternity's charitable donations and philanthropic work to the donations that Hell's Angels makes to underprivileged children. Lohse claims, "Fraternities are out of excuses" and "University presidents owe it to the next generation of students to abolish fraternities...." (MSNBC, 2015).

Jump-to-conclusion articles that highlight the worst of the worst in movies or television shows that magnify a counterculture of fraternity and sorority life, like the ones mentioned above, draw attention, create a frenzy and drive sales, but at what cost? This raises the question: Does art imitate life or life imitate art? Conklin (2008) continued to write, "Few movies portray fraternities and sororities as organizations that serious, tolerant, and well-behaved students would want to join" (p. 139). Certainly evidence exists of students in real life trying to imitate what is seen in the media.

### Fraternities in Academia

In the summer of 2012, a committee report was released from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. In this report, the committee reported a decision to enforce a two-decade old coeducation mandate that would be applied to all social organizations on campus, including fraternities and sororities (“Report of the Charter Committee,” 2012, p. 22). Following a 2014 cover story in *The Atlantic*, *The Dark Power of Fraternities*, Wesleyan University’s President and Board of Trustees made a decision to pursue coeducation for all residential fraternities on campus<sup>1</sup> (Barthel, 2015) (Roth, 2014). In the spring of 2016, Harvard University released an announcement stating that, starting with the class of 2021, members of fraternities, sororities, and finals clubs would be ineligible for team captaincies, leadership positions within recognized student organizations, and forfeit their eligibility for endorsements for high caliber academic fellowships such as the Fulbright, Rhodes and Marshall scholarships (Faris, 2016). These are the latest in a line of attempts meant to regulate the membership of fraternities and sororities amongst some of the top universities in the nation. Most of these attempts, and all examples given above, are done in the name of sexual assault, gender equity and diversity. Moreover, it must be noted that Harvard’s original reason for adopting the policy was out of concern about sexual assault on campus being caused or increased by single-sex organizations. After that was debunked and Harvard’s policy criticized in general, Harvard re-engineered its rationale to be based on gender equity concerns. It should also be noted that Wesleyan relied upon an argument that co-edification would somehow reduce the occurrence of sexual assaults occurring within or related to single-sex men’s organizations. Are these decisions achieving those ends?

Trinity College has since reversed its decision mandating coeducation within the fraternity and sorority system on its campus. After the departure of her predecessor, President Joanne Berger-Sweeney reversed the decision in a statement to the University in 2015. She wrote, “I have concluded that the coed mandate is unlikely to achieve its intended goal of gender equity. Furthermore, I do not believe that requiring coed membership is the best way to address gender discrimination or to promote inclusiveness. In fact, community-wide dialogue concerning this issue has been divisive and counterproductive” (Jacobs, 2015). Sarah Brown

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<sup>1</sup> In the spirit of transparency, it should be noted that one of the authors is a former employee of Wesleyan University during the time period described in this paper.

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from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* notes that by the 2014-2015 school year, not a single female-identifying student had joined a fraternity. The same held true for male-identified students joining sororities (Brown, 2015). The Trinity example is indicative of a trend emerging from some areas of higher education. When seeking to be more inclusive and promote gender equity, colleges and universities are targeting single-gender organizations as scapegoats for a more systemic problem of gender disparity. As Berger-Sweeney notes, these choices are creating rifts within communities, often sparking heated debates that create deeper divides than previously existed.

Wesleyan University is currently embroiled in a lawsuit between one of its fraternity chapters and the University administration over the coeducation housing mandate. The lawsuit notes that the mandate, which, unlike Trinity, specifically targets the residential spaces of fraternities on the campus and not organization membership, is “discriminatory and unfair” (Santora, 2015) citing other housing options on the campus that group students based on shared interests and commonalities. The legal question of the mandate aside, this example further exemplifies Berger-Sweeney’s assertion. Dialogue on campus, both formally in town halls and in publications like *The Wesleyan Argus* and *Wesleying.com* as well as informal conversations on campus have become divided. These points raise many questions, among them: If single-sex organizations are not a core issue related to gender equity and campus safety, what are the core issues? Is Wesleyan examining those issues? If not, why not? Rather than constructive dialogue, it has become more dominated by the divisions sparked by the lawsuit and the misinformation that exists among the students. While it is still early in the Harvard decision, evidence has shown that similar trends are likely to emerge in response to Faust and Khurana’s decision although Harvard has experienced student unrest, faculty protest and alumni discord all related to its most recent actions. Fraternities and sororities are not unique in the behaviors that these measures seek to undo, however.

### Similar Student Conduct

Acts of hazing, sexual misconduct and assault and racist and homophobic slurs are often attributed to fraternity, in part, due to highly publicized stories. When looking at student conduct in organizations that have nothing to do with fraternity life, the worst case scenarios are often similar, but the stories lack the same magnification. This begs the question: What do conduct cases occurring on college campuses look like when “fraternity” is not involved?

In 2011, at Florida A&M University, Robert Champion, a member of the Marching 100, a co-ed organization, faced an unfortunate death due to the acts of hazing during a tradition called “Crossing Bus C.” During this rite of passage, members of the band would run through the aisle of a 56-passenger bus while being punched, kicked, hit with sticks and cones, and more. After a lengthy investigation, it was determined that Champion’s death was caused by internal bleeding due to blunt force trauma endured from the acts of Crossing Bus C.

In July 2014, The Ohio State University completed an investigation report against the Director of the OSU Marching Band, another co-ed organization, and found that the Marching Band’s culture was overtly sexualized and facilitated and condoned acts of sexual harassment, where, in some cases, employees of the University were present. From activities called “Midnight Ramp,” where new band members were asked to perform on the field in nothing but their underwear, to assigning nicknames that were lewd in nature, the OSU Marching Band had many traditions that implicated university rules and regulations, as well as federal laws.

In the 1800s, Princeton’s lack of dining facilities and a ban on fraternities encouraged students to dine in boarding houses and some twenty years later, the first formal Eating Club was established. Despite what has now transformed into eleven eating clubs that students describe as “home away from home” and “an atmosphere that is warm and welcoming” the history and culture of selectivity and raucous activity remains. In 2007, the *Observer* published an article detailing the importance of status and demographics for selection into Princeton’s Eating Clubs. A long history of discriminatory acts has plagued the clubs, and their selection process known as “bicker” has come under fire for its less than welcoming recruitment events, but that is not the only issue facing these groups. An eatery by day and a bar by night, parties that promote a sexualized culture and highly anticipated rituals for new inductees take over the clubs’ prestigious grounds after a hearty meal in the dining room. It bears noting that Princeton’s Eating

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Clubs were male only until a lawsuit in 1990 which forced the organizations to become co-ed (Frank v. Ivy Club, 120 N.J. 73 (1990), 576 A.2d 241)

In December 2014, two officers of the Tiger Inn eating club were charged with student conduct violations for the electronic distribution of a photo that allegedly displayed sexual acts at the Tiger Inn house (Princeton Alumni Weekly, 2016). While the Eating Club's official website proudly boasts that times have changed and these clubs have evolved, the culture of the clubs continues to run deep.

As mentioned, Harvard has also experienced issues with its Final Clubs (mutually exclusive social clubs). Most recently, on March 29, 2017, *The Harvard Crimson*, Harvard's student newspaper, released an article suggesting that a "committee tasked with implementing the College's penalties against single-gender social groups" now supports the all-female final clubs fight to remain single-sex organizations, and will allow the groups to stay as is for the next three to five years because of their "positive contributions...to the campus community."

Similar student conduct can be seen when looking at the round of suspensions of Ivy League sports teams for discriminatory and sexually charged behaviors. In the fall of 2016, Harvard suspended the men's soccer team for the remainder of their season after officials confirmed allegations that players were rating the school's female athletes in "sexually explicit terms" (New York Times, 2016). In 2012, a nine-page document was created by a male player that included photos, evaluations and a numeric rating of women players. This tradition carried into 2016 and the team is finally feeling the repercussions of their actions.

Columbia University's wrestling team was suspended in the middle of their season in the fall of 2016 after screenshots of messages in GroupMe displayed homophobic and racist statements, some directly regarding students on Columbia's campus. And most recently, Princeton University suspended its men's swimming and diving team after the university released a statement that e-mails were found that contained "vulgar and offensive as well as misogynistic and racist" comments (New York Times, 2016).

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However, behaviors assumed to only be displayed in social organizations, bands and athletics at higher education institutions are now infiltrating even younger students. Nearly eighteen years ago, researchers at Alfred University in New York conducted a survey on 1,541 high school students' experiences with hazing and found the following:

- 48 percent of students who belong to groups reported being subjected to hazing.
- 43 percent reported being subjected to humiliating activities.
- 30 percent reported performing potentially illegal acts as part of their initiation.
- 24 percent of students involved in church groups were subject to hazing.

To look at a more recent example of the extensive hazing that occurs in high school, let's use the 2016 Lake Zurich High football team. Antonio Romanucci, the attorney for two victims of the Lake Zurich High team described the acts in a press conference, "They were brutally mocked, teased, humiliated, embarrassed and emotionally harmed, all in the name of team bonding (2017)." The lawsuit alleges that teammates were forced to strip naked, were urinated on, and were forced to perform sexual acts on one another. The lawsuit also states that other teams at the high school also have their own traditions that include being duct-taped naked while teammates punch and kick the victim (Chicago Tribune, 2017).

Alfred University's research and the Lake Zurich High football team shows that the need to be a part of a group and form connections among peers is an important component of the development of teenagers, and that need transcends the high school years, creating an environment at colleges and universities of young adults yearning to belong.

Despite some people's belief that what we have on hand is a "fraternity problem," it is evident that these behaviors exist in environments when fraternity is not involved. From athletics, to marching bands, and even in high schools across the country, one sees outrageous acts of hazing and physical and emotional abuse in these spaces. The difference between those groups and fraternities lies within the foundation on which fraternities are built, a set of values, a ritual withstanding time, and an understanding of student and male development. Fraternities are uniquely equipped to combat negative behaviors and foster an environment of development for men and social change for all, but if people continue to argue that fraternities are the hub of man's worst behavior, will they eventually only live up to that standard?

### **“Hypermasculinity” in Fraternities**

Part of the dialogue about promoting healthier attitudes and behavior of students who participate in single-gender organizations, particularly fraternities, has become known as its own research as hypermasculinity. Many fraternity and sorority life professionals can espouse the virtues of fraternities and sororities, enumerating the number of hours of community service, philanthropy donations, better overall scholastic performance, better first- to second-year retention, higher graduation rates, and other facts that demonstrate the value and worth of fraternities and sororities to the college student experience. What else are these organizations offering to their students? A few recent studies have demonstrated the beginning of a field of research into hypermasculinity within fraternities that has led to some interesting conclusions.

The study of manifestations of masculinity within the fraternity world is not new, but recent research suggests some interesting and sometimes conflicting data about how masculinity presents itself within modern fraternities. Four relatively recent studies highlight the emerging understanding of hypermasculine behavior within fraternities. Bleecker and Murnen (2005) examine what they term as “Rape Supportive Attitudes” amongst fraternity men versus unaffiliated men at a small, liberal arts college campus. Corpew and Mitchell (2014) analyze whether there is a three-way connection between fraternity men, hypermasculine attitudes, and sexually aggressive behavior towards women. In a further study, Corpew, Matthews, and Mitchell (2014) analyze how masculinity presents itself within a subset of college men. Lastly, McCreary and Schutts (2015) analyze definitions of fraternal brotherhood within college fraternities, and thus provide the beginning of a framework for shifting away from what the researchers describe as stereotypical destructive aspects of masculinity often couched as “boys will be boys” behavior and toward undergraduate men living their fraternal values. Each of these studies provide data from which one can see the emerging study of hypermasculinity in college-aged men, the intersections within fraternity membership, and the implications for student affairs practitioners both at the campus and inter/national headquarters level.

Bleecker and Murnen (2005) studied “a small sample of 30 fraternity men and 30 non-fraternity men” from a “small, mid-western, liberal arts college” (p. 488). It should be noted that the sample size of their study is, in many ways, much too narrow and tailored to make any true generalization about attitudes and beliefs about fraternity men at large; thirty students from a

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small, mid-western liberal arts college are not representative of fraternity men nationwide. Despite these limitations, Bleecker and Murnen attempt to generalize their findings to a much larger scale. Through the course of their study, the researchers presented the participants with a survey that measured “rape supportive attitudes” while the researchers also documented individual decorations that were hanging in the participants’ personal living spaces. From the results, Bleecker and Murnen make generalized assertions about attitudes relating to women within fraternity males. The relationships that emerge out of their study are correlational and the researchers make a point of noting “the correlational data do not allow us to make any causal statements about the relationships [between sexually degrading images in fraternity men’s rooms and the fact that this display was linked with the men’s belief about rape]” (p. 491). Despite this assertion of a lack of causal relationship, Bleecker and Murnen go on to generalize that “there is likely a complex relationship between [the display of degrading images and the endorsement of beliefs that legitimize rape] that develops over time” (p. 491). Other studies have shown that this is not the case, however.

Corpew and Mitchell (2014) attempt to further understand hypermasculine behavior and sexually aggressive attitudes toward women. In their study, the researchers hypothesize a three-way interaction between disinhibition on sexually aggressive attitudes, fraternity membership, and hypermasculine attitudes. The Corpew and Mitchell study included 217 college males from three southern universities, including one predominately white institution and two historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Students were surveyed to determine quantitative scores for both sexually aggressive attitudes and for hypermasculine attitudes (p. 553). Their initial hypothesis was not supported by the data. Additionally, they attempted to “analyze a similar three-way interaction on hostile attitudes towards women...the hypothesis stated that men who are in fraternities, high in disinhibition, and high in hypermasculine attitudes, possess greater hostility toward women” (p. 558). Again, the data did not support this hypothesis. Corpew and Mitchell did a regression model and found two distinct two-way interactions that are worth noting, however.

The first of these two-way interactions indicates that as adoption of hypermasculine attitudes increases, hostility toward women increases for males not in fraternities. The authors provide several ideas as to why this may be the case, but they focus the majority of their



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argument on an emerging theory suggested by researchers Gallagher and Parrott. In Corpew and Mitchell, Gallagher and Parrott note that, “*males’ tendency to experience negative psychological and physiological effects based on their attempts to meet socially sanctioned standards of being a man, which may lead to adoption of hostile attitudes towards women*” (p. 558). Put more simply, cultural norms surrounding manhood and anti-feminine attitudes contribute to an increased hostility toward women. Corpew and Mitchell note that during college, a time of exploration and identity development,

*“there may be obstacles that challenge one’s masculine development such as school and/or job stress, relationship stress, and perceived competition from male and female peers. The latter may pose a significant hurdle to those men who have been socialized to believe that their identity as a man depends on their ability to win at any endeavor. With the significant progress of women toward equality of status and opportunity in all areas of society this aspect of self-esteem grounded in achievement-focused notion of masculinity is increasingly challenged”* (p. 558).

An interesting note about this two-way interaction in Corpew and Mitchell is that “the relationship between hypermasculinity and hostility toward women remained static for males in fraternities” (p. 559). This directly contradicts the Bleecker and Murnen study. The second interaction they found was that as male disinhibition increases their hostile attitudes toward women decreased. The researchers indicate a need for further study as their initial hypothesis, asserting a greater likelihood for fraternity men to demonstrate hostile attitudes toward women, was not supported by their findings.

Corpew, Matthews, and Mitchell (2014) examined 328 male identified students from two predominately white institutions and one HBCU in southern cities (p. 108). The study sought to expand on Gallagher and Parrott’s analysis of hypermasculine behaviors and utilized the Auburn Differential Masculinity Index. Throughout their study, they were able to determine that hypermasculine behavior can be broken down as to having four main components: dominance and aggression, sexual identity, anti-feminine attitudes, and devaluation of emotion. They also determined that men tend to fall within four distinct categories of hypermasculine behavior: extreme hypermasculine, traditional masculine, traditional hypermasculine, and non-hypermasculine. Non-hypermasculine males presented the lowest levels on all four components.

Men who fell within this profile can “adopt attitudes that are less violent, less anti-feminine, and more emotive” (p. 118). Traditional masculine profiles endorsed moderate levels of dominance and aggression, and low levels in all the remaining dimensions. Hypermasculine profiles tended to have moderate dominance and aggression and sexual identity dimensions with high levels of anti-feminine and devaluation of emotion dimensions. Traditional hypermasculine profiles endorse high levels of dominance and aggression and sexual identity, while presenting moderate levels of devaluation of emotion and low levels of anti-feminine dimensions. Traditional hypermasculine, according to their findings, is where many fraternity men tend to fall within the spectrum. “[These] two profiles reveal a stark need for collegiate personnel to identify and provide necessary services, programming, and organizational support to aid males in the navigation of their masculine identity” (p. 117). Given that their findings demonstrated an oversampling of fraternity men within the traditional hypermasculine profile, it stands to reason that further support and resources should be devoted within the field to better understand how masculinity is presenting itself within fraternities and ways that practitioners can better work to assist men in their personal development. When one examines the findings of this study in combination with that of McCreary and Schutts, one can begin to see a possible expansion of research on the focus on fraternal core values in education and programming.

McCreary and Schutts (2015) examine definitions of fraternal brotherhood within college fraternities. It is important to compare these definitions of brotherhood with the varied hypermasculine identities that Corpew, Matthews, and Mitchell presented. The authors present the findings from multiple studies they conducted to determine their definitions of fraternal brotherhood. These studies included a grounded-theory study and two quantitative studies conducted via electronic survey. The first of the quantitative studies was comprised of 301 completed surveys comprising students from a variety of class years and institution types, but geographically was predominately in the northeastern and southeastern United States. The second quantitative study was meant to be a replication of the first study, but broke the participants into two, roughly even-sized pools of about 325 participants from varying demographic backgrounds. The studies all found and quantitatively supported that brotherhood can be defined within four main categories: solidarity, shared social experiences, belonging, and accountability. Brotherhood defined under solidarity and shared social experiences generate

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negative outcomes in membership. Brotherhood defined as solidarity had high correlation with hazing tolerance. Brotherhood defined under shared social experiences had strong links to alcohol usage and moral disengagement. Brotherhood defined as belonging is a strong indicator for retention and persistence; brotherhood as accountability also had strong links with positive moral decision-making.

This study, when combined with Corpew, Matthew, and Mitchell, lays a foundation of understanding between hypermasculinity and fraternity behavior. Some argue that traditional hypermasculinity may be found in organizations that are defining brotherhood under either shared social experiences or as a form of solidarity. This may be an area for further research. Understanding the various forms brotherhood may take within fraternities is vital for practitioners to better program and engage with students in those organizations in order to help them to define their masculine identities.

### **Current Education and Identity Development**

Given the understandings of hypermasculine identities within fraternities, it is important to understand what is currently offered as a form of education for fraternity men in the development of their masculine identities during their fraternity experience. While each organization and chapter has its own unique membership education process, it is important to note that there are several commonalities, growing trends, and potential areas of improvement for fraternities.

Each fraternity's education process attempts to instill in its members a shared, common set of values. While the success of each educational experience will vary depending on a number of variables, the ultimate goal of all membership education is to instill the national values into the members of the organization. In this way, membership education attempts to create a definition of brotherhood that is based on accountability to those values.

There have been several growing trends within recent years in fraternity membership education. First, national organizations are beginning to move away from pledge-model processes that front load the fraternal education experience into the first six to eight weeks of a member's experience. Rather, an emerging practice is to utilize a system of education that works toward continual growth, training, and development of its constituent members. Second, this continual process focuses on areas beyond just the national fraternity. Membership education has begun to focus on acclimation to colleges, life after college, leadership growth and potential, and risk-reduction methods such as bystander intervention, alcohol education, and sexual assault prevention education. It can be argued that fraternity members receive more information related to risk reduction philosophies than their non-affiliated colleagues as they receive all the information offered by their colleges and universities plus the information and education offered by their fraternal organizations.

While there have been many great strides in fraternity education models in recent years, there are definite areas of improvement. As Corpew, Matthews, and Mitchell pointed out, there may be need for student personnel practitioners to focus on providing guidance and support for the development of college-aged men. Fraternities with a shared mission of supporting young men through their college experience are uniquely equipped to provide this experience for their members in a single-sex environment. Fraternities are uniquely equipped for a number of

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reasons. For example, fraternities, while often considered as a collective, have their own distinct identities and values. There is no singularly prescribed definition of what it means to provide personal development for young men. Young men have an opportunity to select organizations that match their personal values and fraternal organizations have the same opportunity to select men whom they believe best fit with their organizations. One could argue, can this same education not occur in a co-education environment? It can. But a co-education environment is distinctly different; fraternities provide a unique opportunity to have male-to-male discussions which, by definition, change when the environment includes both men and women. With the resources available at the national and local levels on many campuses, a focus on identity development may be the future of the fraternal education experience. Combatting many of the stereotypes and concerns often associated with fraternal membership may begin with some education on breaking the stereotypical hypermasculine mold.

While the term “hypermasculine” and the ideals supported by this notion may not be consistent with each national or international fraternity, each fraternity does have its own core set of values that is inconsistent with the stereotypes presented in popular media and over-simplified by some in academia. As it currently stands, no other area of college campuses is as uniquely equipped to begin shifting this behavior as fraternity life. While there are developmental opportunities for women (women’s centers as a primary example) there are nearly no dedicated male development areas of college campuses beyond the fraternity experience. If colleges want to begin moving toward a more accepting and understanding college male, it will be vital that they continue to support and fund the fraternal experience in combination with other areas of male identity development on college campuses.

### Conclusion

If relying on the media, one may assume that hazing and mayhem on college campuses center around the fraternal experience. When reviewing actual data, one can find problematic student conduct in organizations other than fraternity and on college and university campuses on which fraternity is not present. This does not excuse fraternity members if participating in such acts. It does, however, provide a more accurate picture of life on today's college campus. Because fraternities exist around a common value set which calls for gentlemanly conduct national fraternities are uniquely positioned to not only address problematic conduct but to also provide for men an environment in which they can grapple with what it means to be a man today and to do so using a common set of values as found in fraternity ritual. National fraternal organizations must resist the urge to apologize for all fraternal misconduct as if fraternity men are guilty because they belong to Greek organizations; it should be no surprise to anyone that fraternity men act like college students. Instead, fraternal organizations should trumpet loudly good works of fraternities and de-mystify the fraternal experience with accurate information about what is offered to young men and how fraternal organizations can partner with higher education to address some of the greatest ills on today's campuses. Fraternity is not for everyone but, for many, it can be a life-changing experience for the better as they develop as young men.

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