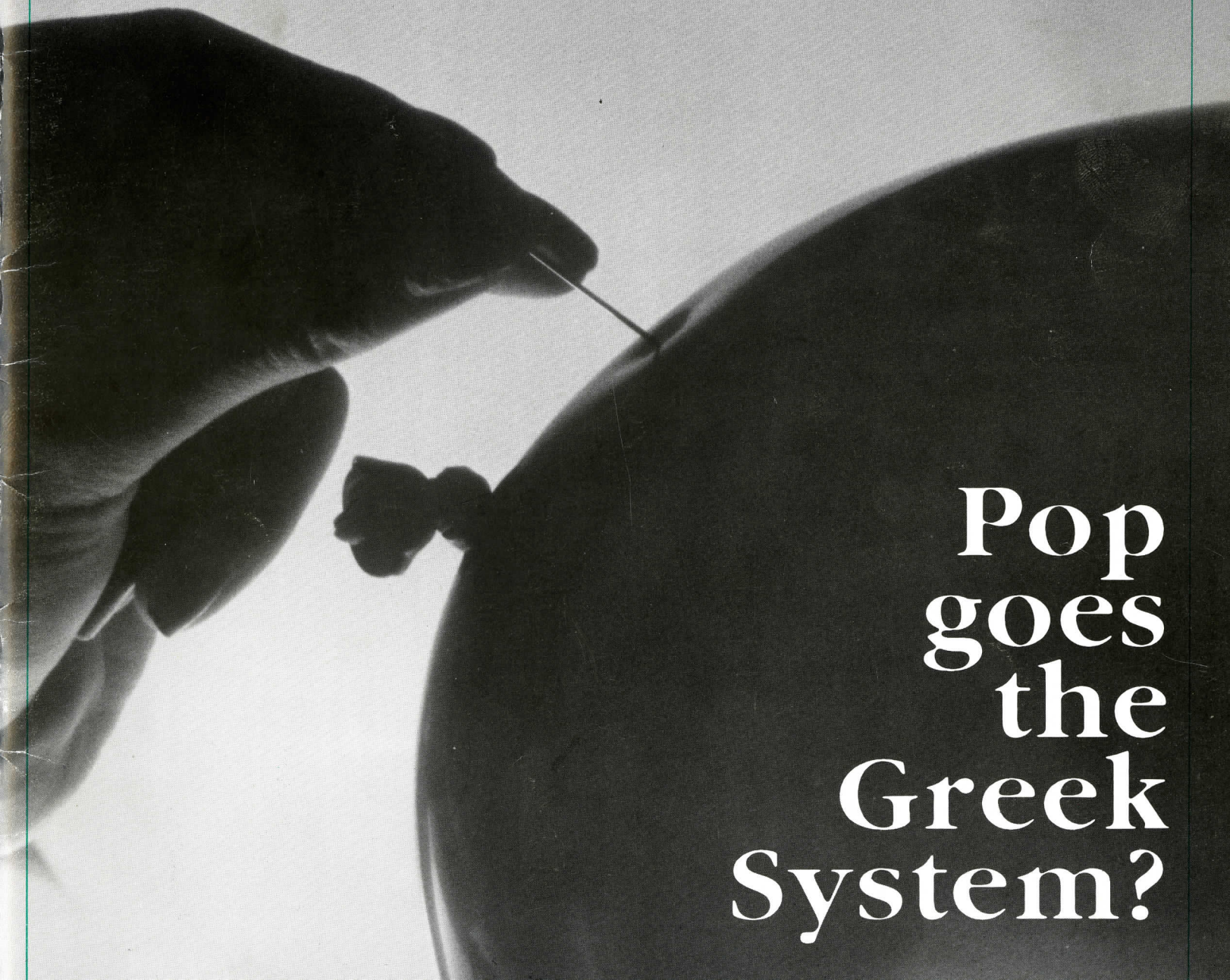


MOYO

mind of your own

October 1991

Volume I, Issue i



Pop
goes
the
Greek
System?

There are only
two ways
a balloon will pop.

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Our Aquatic Staff

Greek to Me



Our Founder

Did you read those *Choose Your Own Adventure* books when you were a kid? You, the hero, were asked to make a critical choice at the bottom of every page, a choice which could ensure either your success or your failure in the story's romanticized plot: "If you decide to rescue the princess, turn to page two; if you choose to descend into the dragon's lair, blindfolded and without weapons, turn to page 112." This reading was great preparation for college.

If you're a freshman, undoubtedly you are confused right now. Half of your new friends are ready to take you down to "The Row" the moment the no-contact period ends (or maybe even before that), and your other friends warn you to stay away. Your parents may have had a satisfying Greek experience years ago, and (as with everything else) they push what was best for them onto you. Most of your teachers probably don't speak highly of the Greek system, or perhaps they avoid the subject altogether. And surely you have heard an unfounded rumor that President Myers is dismantling the Greek system. I heard the same words and was tugged in the same directions.

When I first got to Denison I thought Phi Beta Kappa was a sorority for really smart women: I knew nothing about the Greek system. I knew my father had been president of his fraternity, and I had seen

Animal House. Needless to say, I had conflicting messages.

I quickly learned that the commitment to academics, intellectualism, maturity and leadership about which my father beamed in his stories of his fraternity wasn't the focus of the frats anymore. The chandeliers, mahogany banisters and national songs still exist (albeit neglected, abused and forgotten), but the importance of these traditions has diminished—pushed aside in many houses for beer, violence, beer, sheep, drugs, beer, and vomit.

Fraternities aren't the same as they were 50 years ago. Frats used to sponsor mandatory study sessions for their pledges; now covert road trips cause missed classes, and pledges average a 2.36 GPA. They used to work hard to beautify the houses and the grounds; now Greek alumni visitors are disheartened by the beer-soaked houses and the grass which is littered with cans and broken glass.

The Greek system perpetuates an old-world xenophobia, remaining largely WASP despite Denison's valiant recruiting efforts. The admissions office works hard to attract diverse students from around the country and around the world. Many have different skin colors; many are from foreign countries; many vary in their social and economic backgrounds; many have different sexual preferences; many have different religions or no religion at all; many have unique and extraordinary talents; and many have drastically different stances on important issues.

These students are the new "Cream of the Crop." Yet the Greeks remain largely white, upper-class and homogeneous in their applicants and members. Greek students, many of whom dream of being leaders in government, finance or law, deny themselves exposure to influences that could give them the edge—personally and economically. It worries me that those who may lead our

country years from now are living in houses with other students who have by comparison virtually identical backgrounds, views and experiences; they will leave Denison without having had significant exposure to the kinds of individuals that are quickly becoming the majority—those whom affiliated students will attempt to lead. (Ronald Reagan, George Bush and Dan Quayle all spent their college days living in fraternity houses; could this explain why our country can't solve any of its social problems?)

The Greek system has given men complete control of almost all of the social space on campus, leaving women virtually dependent on fraternity members for weekend social entertainment. It has provided a setting for date rapes, gang rapes and hazing; it has made sexist, violent and illegal behavior a social norm; and most shamefully, it discriminates against students who cannot afford Greek association dues or who don't meet very ambiguous house admissions standards.

What is the biggest crime of the Greek system? Last year 492 male and female students registered for Rush. They ran to the open arms of the fraternities and sororities, participated in their games and met potential friends. They were poked, probed and investigated. And once this process was finished, 53 people (many of whom were new freshman simply looking for friends and acceptance) were turned down by every house—53 young students were told "You are not good enough for us." It is bad enough that many of these organiza-

tions determine one's social fate based on qualities like how much money a rushee's parents make, how much he or she weighs, whether the rushee is attractive or not. But to officially reject a new student from a group of friends is undeniably barbaric and cruel (and to say "Well, that's life—that's the way the real world is" is to also condone the real-world realities of poverty and bigotry). To those who partici-

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When I first got to Denison I thought Phi Beta Kappa was a sorority for really smart women: I knew nothing about the Greek system.

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pate in this scrutinizing process (and the members of the fraternity or sorority who are guilty by association), I stand in awe of you for being able to inflict such great pain on such a large number of individuals.

I want to make it clear before I continue that I don't condemn freshman who think they might want to affiliate. To a new freshman on a campus where social opportunities are limited, the Greek system must seem like a dream come true—like a Quaker Oats product: instant friends!—just add beer and stir (but how good is that instant stuff anyway?). And in a town the size of Granville, if you lack creativity, your only escape (getting drunk three nights a week) may only be possible if you affiliate.

Ethics aside, personally I don't understand why a healthy, heterosexual male would want to live in a fraternity house

and forgo eating meals and living side-by-side with women in the residence halls. The late-night conversations and the friendships I've developed with women through dorm life continue to be invaluable. Living in the

can be a success in life. And you can have all of these things without adding your financial and moral support to a generally poorly-managed system which embraces so many immature, unhealthy, illegal and unintellectual values.

My advice to new freshman: have a mind of your own—be independent. Don't be a joiner, be a leader. Don't be chosen, choose. Ask yourself why you're going to college.

I've given you my opinions, now it is up to you. If you are prepared to choose your own adventure *yourself* and to give your affiliation decision some serious thought, go on to another

article now and read on; but if you're getting ready to jump blindly into an affiliation decision—whatever that decision may be—without cognition, go on to the next paragraph.

The fiery breath of the two-headed dragon roasts you to death. The End. ■

—JDB

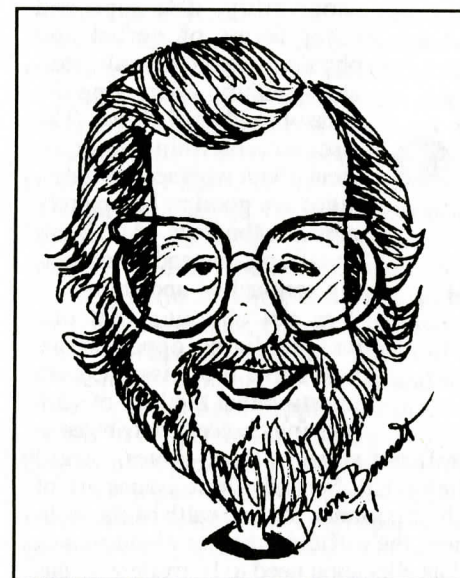
To a new freshman . . . the Greek system must seem like a dream come true—like a Quaker Oats product: instant friends!—just add beer and stir (but how good is that instant stuff anyway?).

residence halls has one primary advantage: while Joe Frat is down in his room on The Row with the guys, I'm sharing a pizza with his potential girlfriend in our dorm TV lounge.

You can have a social life without affiliating. You can have great friends. You can have valuable leadership experiences. You

Hood Advocates Off-Campus Living

by Dr. Richard Hood,
English Department



the dominant social institution on this campus, still I think it may be true that Greek organizations serve at times as convenient symbols that allow various other members of the community to avoid dealing with more significant social issues.

We can't discuss the fraternity/sorority issue without discussing the issue of residence in general. Greek organizations have assumed and maintained their present roles on this campus primarily because students' residential options—and so the context within which most of their social contacts and choices are made—are so tightly constrained. A male student has the choice of living in the dorms, living in a fraternity or living at the homestead; a female student has only two of those three options. Students living in the fraternities or at the homestead do so at the direct expense of those students who, either because they have not chosen or been chosen by a fraternity, nor have they decided that homestead living fits their lifestyle, live in the dorms.

So we live in a system by which a minority of students enjoys relative residential autonomy, at the expense of the majority of students whose residential choices have been predetermined by the university. For the males on campus, this situation presents a compelling reason to consider fraternity life.

Common sense tells us that people with greater residential autonomy enjoy a greater degree of social autonomy as well. As a result, the fraternities necessarily become the social focal point for their members, as well as for those students whose residential conditions are not a direct product of their own choice, but rather a constriction placed upon them by the university. And it's important to remember that, though they may benefit from it, the fraternities did not create this restrictive social condition. It exists because students have no other residential options. And so, officials at the university complain about student behavior clearly resultant of official decisions that virtually guarantee that behavior. Fraternities are the most powerful social institutions on this campus because they are the only places where any sort of autonomous residential community exists. (Meanwhile, the village of Granville seems desperate to avoid locating anything that might serve as an appealing social venue for its students anywhere near its lovely square.) To complain that fraternity members have created a social system in which the principle behavior involves getting stupendously drunk with a close-knit group of similar sots is a bit

like criticizing a prison inmate's choice of wardrobe. If all you've got are stripes, those will have to do . . . even if they don't do very well.

The principle problem on campus, therefore, is a lack of residential alternatives. A variety of residential communities produces a variety of social contexts. People in different neighborhoods spend their time in different ways. Denison University is frightfully poor in neighborhood variety.

If students lived off campus in any significant numbers, dominance of the Greek system would fade. Students would necessarily live in Newark or in the coun-

To complain that fraternity members have created a social system in which the principle behavior involves getting stupendously drunk . . . is a bit like criticizing a prison inmate's choice of wardrobe.

As a relative newcomer to Denison, I'm a bit abashed about speaking up on the issue of social symptoms on campus. What the hell do I know about how this place operates? Still, sometimes a fresh view can be helpful. And from this rather new perspective, let me say that I think maybe the fraternity/sorority issue may cloud another, more basic problem.

Before we begin to line up on this or that side of the fraternity/sorority issue, it behooves us to take a look at what the issue itself is—specifically how that issue has developed particular (rather odd, I might say) nuances in its embodiment at Denison. An investigation of what really are the connections between Greek organizations and social life here at Denison might lead us to a better understanding of our own needs as a community, and to a better agenda for the future. So let's make an attempt to move the exhaustively reiterated debate about the value of a "Greek system" into the background for a moment. Though it is true that Greek organizations are rather consistently present whenever administrators and faculty discuss "what's wrong with Denison," it seems equally true that nobody is happy with the social environment at Denison, and though the Greek system is, indeed,

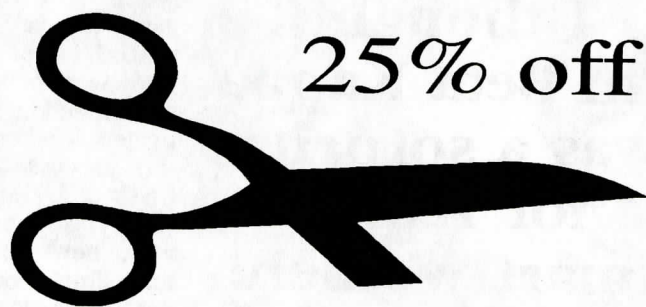
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try, since Granville certainly wouldn't have them. The resultant diversity of residential and social contact would be extremely beneficial to the campus community as a whole (there are a few professionals on this campus who need to spend a little more time outside of Granville, too). The level of residential choice and the degree of autonomy enjoyed by students would be increased dramatically. With residential autonomy—particularly off campus—social responsibility and community obligation necessarily increase: students no longer have to deal with an angry RA or security officer; they are forced to cope with unsympathetic landlords, policemen, neighbors of various backgrounds, etc., etc. They have to pay their rent, maintain the premises, get to campus, etc. They gather socially in places populated by non-students, too. Whether or not they possess or use alcohol and/or drugs is no longer a question of "social policy." It is a matter involving the student's own sense of self-worth, and also involving the law, as it should be.

What are these new off-campus stu-

dents like? Because they are Denison students, they maintain close on-campus ties. Often, though, rather than attend a huge drinking party on campus, they have small groups of friends over for dinner. Occasionally, they invite a faculty member or a class to

The lack of off-campus living opportunities . . . is the single most important student life issue we need to confront on this campus.

their place. They do their own "social programming." They create their own living and community structures. They act like the intelligent adults they are.

The lack of off-campus living opportunities (and of alternative residential choices on campus) is the single most important student

life issue we need to confront on this campus, because it is linked so significantly to so many of the problems everyone discusses when speaking of "what's wrong with Denison." We are being disingenuous if we complain about Greek dominance of social life on campus, substance abuse on campus, lack of community diversity, lack of personal responsibility, date rape and other forms of verbal and physical sexual assault, etc., etc.—without addressing the issue of residential choice. The circular, interminable argument about whether the fraternities are good or bad merely obscures the issue. And keeps us talking, instead of reflecting seriously—and acting.

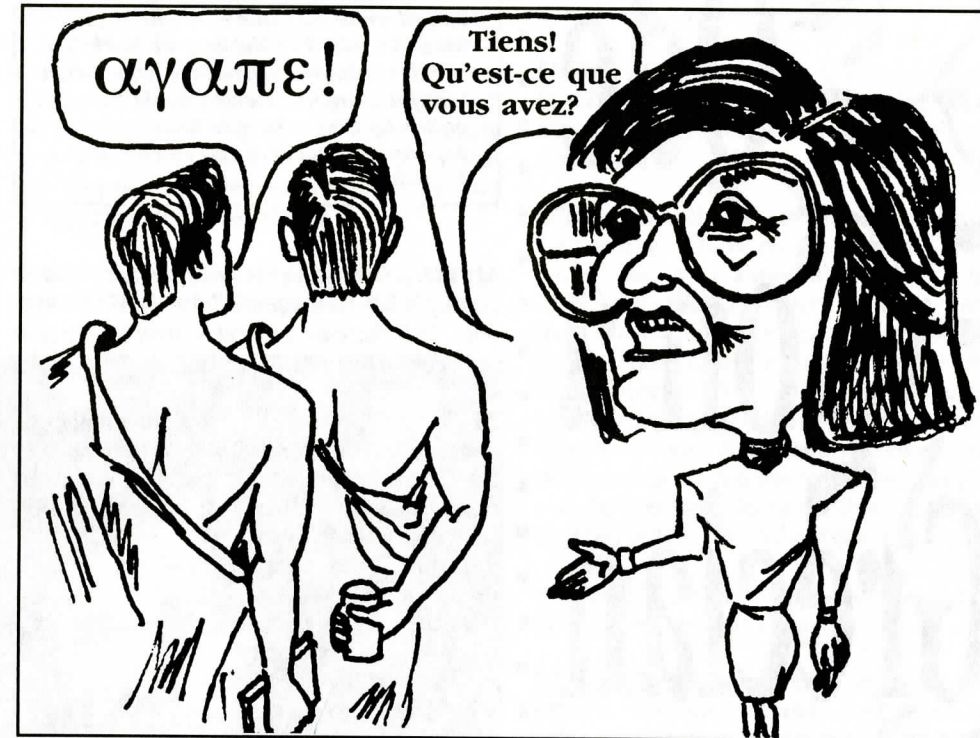
I'm not claiming that off-campus living opportunities will solve these issues; I am insisting that the lack of such housing choices contributes in significant ways to these issues. And I believe that, because these issues are of such importance to the health of the institution, the difficult choices about money and its allocation need to be made with this degree of significance in mind.

The reason students are not allowed to

live off campus is simple, but its solution complex. The university needs the money students pay for dormitory rooms and board. It does no good for students to shriek about spending \$20,000 a year to attend this place, as if that alone should mean students get whatever they want. In the first place, most of these students are lying; most aren't spending a penny to come here. Rather, they're using their parents' money, money the students have done precious little to earn. Second, it costs a good bit more than \$20,000 a year to produce a single student's university experience. The financial decisions are difficult ones. Talking about the wrong issues won't solve them. Neither will personal attacks on the administrators, faculty, other students or institutions on campus. I don't believe in traditional Greek systems on campus. But I do believe in my students, Greek or otherwise. I believe that Denison has the kind of people in its community who can and will make these changes happen. Things are starting to happen in the housing area, but they won't happen any faster without active student participation. If we think and act together on this issue, perhaps we can get something accomplished. Let's go to work.

Afterwards, we'll talk about the fraternities. ■

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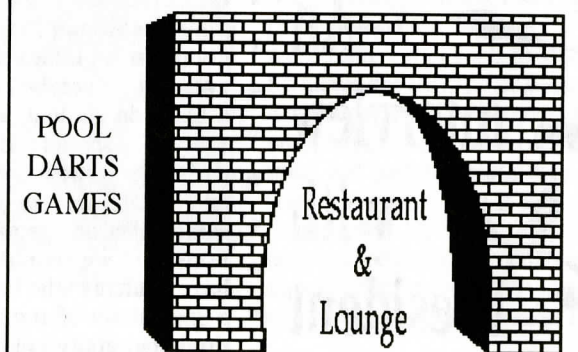
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 assistant to the director
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for this project.

The **Brick Wall**

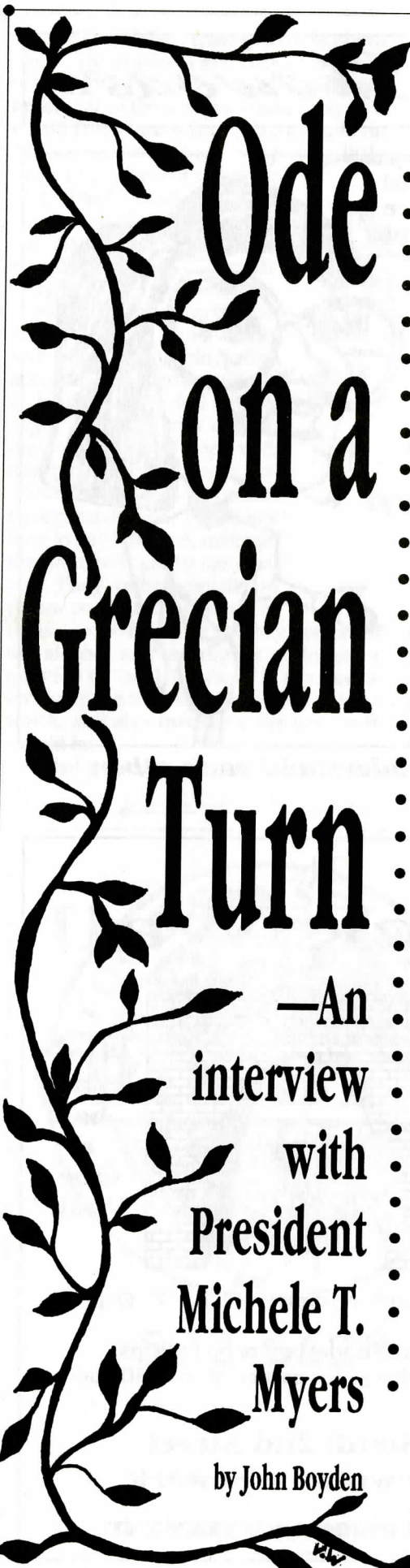


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Ode on a Grecian Turn

—An
interview
with
President
Michele T.
Myers

by John Boyden

She is to Doane fashion what Nancy Reagan was to the White House. Like Marcel Marceau was committed to silence, she is dedicated to turning Denison into a top national school. She looked small standing at the head of Swasey controlling the angry crowd, but she thinks big—I believe she wants what best for all of us. I wish I could've gotten up the courage to ask her to explain the appeal of Jerry Lewis to the French.

MoYO: Many students have accused you of having a "hidden agenda" for the Greek system. Will there be a Greek system at Denison ten years from now?

MTM: I hope so. I have no hidden agenda about the Greek system. I have an agenda about the Greek system which has been very well discussed with the trustees, with the faculty, with many students and with the Greek system itself. I meet fairly regularly with the president of IFC. He knows my views, and he knows what I hope to accomplish, and so there is nothing hidden about what I'm trying to do. One of the things that I would like to see happen with the Greek system is more of a parity between the way men live in the Greek houses and the way other people live in the residence halls. I think we should have a common standard for everyone. Everybody is a Denison student, and everybody should sort of live in the same manner and be subject to the same rules and regulations, and we shouldn't have students who have a special set of regulations that apply only to them. I have made that known in my White Paper, I have made that known in speeches: there is nothing hidden about it.

I am afraid that if the Greek system doesn't change to some extent it is going to destroy itself over time. It has already done so at a lot of other universities because the excesses that go on in a totally unsupervised arena become impossible to tolerate anymore, and a lot of

houses get kicked out. I don't want that to happen at Denison. I think the Greek system traditionally and historically has been a strength for Denison. It provides some very good things for young men and women: traditions, rituals, friendships, people who get very close to one another because they live in a small setting, and they have gone through certain kinds of things together. I think that the bonds that this forges is helpful and good, but it has its negative side, too.

It has historically been fairly exclusive—not everybody can join. In the past, people chose people on the basis of criteria that were not always known and certainly now wouldn't be legal. And there is absolutely no supervision in the fraternity houses, at least in the last twenty years. Young men—who have a lot of energy and want to do what they want to do—end up doing it, and they don't always act responsibly. There have been a lot of alcohol problems and a

lot of violence in the fraternity system, and there are some attitudes towards women which are not healthy. That is what has to change. But the fact of their existence, and the fact that they do provide an environment which could be good because of the traditions and the friendships, I think that's certainly worth salvaging.

MoYO: The sorority houses have live-in house mothers. What is the likelihood of adult supervision in fraternity houses next year?

MTM: I think it's very likely. It is very likely for a number of reasons: we on the administrative side have talked about that for a long time and would like to see that hap-

pen. The trustees are very much generally in favor of that. The alumni leadership of the Greek system is in favor of that. There is a proposal currently by the Alumni-Interfraternity Council to put adults in the houses starting in the fall of '92; that came out of the alumni, this is not a proposal that I originated. I was delighted to see it

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Q:
"What is the likelihood of adult supervision in the fraternity houses next year?"

●
A:
"Very likely."

because it matches what I would like to see done.

MoYO: Mary Bunnell, the new director of Greek life/assistant dean of student life, was involved in a severe reorganization (diehard Greeks might even argue "dismantling") of the Greek system at Bucknell. Is that why she was hired?

MTM: No. First of all she did not preside of the dismantling of any Greek system at Bucknell; if anything, Bucknell has strengthened its Greek system. They are one of the few universities that has decided after a long study (which was prompted by the excesses of their system) to determine if they were going to keep the system or not, and the overwhelmingly recommendation was to keep it, but only if it changed significantly. And the changes that they have made involved putting adult supervision in the houses, making Rush in the sophomore year and a variety of other things. Mary Bunnell was an assistant dean for the last two years at Bucknell. The study that precipitated Bucknell's change long preceded her coming to Bucknell. She was one of the players in the decision that was made there, but I would certainly disagree with the characterization that it was a dismantling of the system. In fact, from all accounts (and I know the president there quite well), the Greek system is thriving and is doing better.

MoYO: Will we be seeing a second semester Rush in Denison's near future?

MTM: We're going to talk about that. I can't tell you whether it will happen or not because I don't make things happen just by waiving my hand. But it certainly will be on the agenda for discussion with the committee that is currently looking at social and residential life, and it is currently on the table with the Alumni-Interfraternity Council.

MoYO: Why specifically was Beta suspended?

MTM: Because they violated an agreement that was made last year that was the result of their violating the pledge program

regulations. Last summer we suspended recognition because they had violated the pledge regulations. Then we decided to reinstate them last year if they would make some changes in their system, and they agreed they would. We had an agreement, and they were supposed to do certain things and not do some other things. Then they violated the agreement, and we had some evidence about that. So we simply did what we said we were going to do if they didn't keep their word, which was that they wouldn't get another chance, and we would close the house down.

MoYO: Could you clear up some of the rumors about what it was the Betas did?



Denison's 18th President

MTM: They violated the pledge regulations again: they held sessions when they were not supposed to, they did some more physical things during the pledge program that are against the law—a lot of physical exercises for many hours, they had people eat things that were supposed to induce them to vomit—and things like that are against the law, against our regulations and against their regulations. The Beta Nationals has regulations about how to conduct pledge, and they violated those regulations. They had a trip off campus where

there was alcohol in the van, and that is terribly dangerous. And the trip caused them to miss classes the next day. That is also very much against the alumni rules. There was no question of drugs and no question of violence to women.

MoYO: I understand that a letter went out to all of Denison's Beta alumni this summer. What has been their reaction to Beta's removal?

MTM: Honestly, it has been extraordinarily positive. I have received maybe forty letters; they were almost all positive. The only letters I got that were negative were from one alum and two parents of current Betas. Those were the only negative letters I got. Everything else was overwhelmingly positive. And the positive letters were very long letters, many from alumni of all classes—some younger, some older—and the common statement that was made in those letters was "it's about time."

MoYO: Does Beta have a good chance of being reinstated next year?

MTM: Yes. But they have to stay out of trouble this year. There is a whole set of rules, if you will, which tells them what they can and cannot do this year as an unrecognized chapter, and they have that list of things. And the dean of students is in the process of crafting the criteria that will permit them to be reinstated. At this point this is a little vague because Beta, this summer, in an attempt persuade us to keep them open, gave us a proposal of what they would agree to do if we would leave them open. There are a lot of elements of that proposal which are very good, which I would like very much to see implemented. So as we are looking at social and residential life in the Greek system in general, I would like some of these elements to be used not just for Beta, but for all of the Greek system. And if that were the case, that would be what Beta had to do to become reinstated. That includes adult supervision, incidentally, and also having external security personnel at parties.

MoYO: Why didn't you reinstate D.U. this year. Hasn't their punishment been long enough?

MTM: Actually the students who are currently wanting to form this chapter are really very nice students, and I was very impressed with them, and I thought their goals and what they wanted to do with the new D.U. chapter was very good and on the right track. The reason I didn't go for it is,

first of all, the Committee on Greek Life was not unanimous about the recommendation, and there was a very strong minority report that was very much against reinstating them now, and I have to take that into account. The other reason is that we are trying to make some changes in the Greek system, and it seems to me that we need to get clearer about what those changes are going to be before we open up the door for another fraternity. Now that's a judgment call. Some argue that, well, why not bring in a new fraternity that can help bring the changes about?

What made me less confident that that could happen was in the early stages of the negotiations with D.U. they had said that what they wanted to do was second semester rush. The moment they applied to IFC they came back to us and said that they would rush at the same time everybody else was rushing. So here was a case where they had said "we don't

need to be like the rest of the Greeks: we will set the example," and the moment they walk in, they immediately start fitting in with the norms. I was not 100 percent confident that all of their good intentions would be strong enough to carry the whole Greek system in the right direction. I think they have good intentions—in fact I think they represent the kind of house I think we should have on this campus, and if we make them wait a little bit until the others come part way, then when they come in they will really stay strong. But I'm not at all opposed to recognizing them at some other time. They had a very open membership and a very diverse group of men which I liked. I think they had very good intentions, I'm just afraid that their good intentions will get lost. Maybe if we wait a year it will be better.

MoYO: Do you think Slayter Programming and SAC will ever be able to compete with fraternities for providing social events.

MTM: I think so. We need to work on that awfully hard because it's not where we want it to be yet. Among the things people complained about on Friday [September 13 in the open forum in Swasey Chapel]

that complaint resonates with me very much because I think that is a legitimate complaint. This is a very small campus, it's a very small town, there is not a whole lot to do. I think the institution has some responsibility in providing something, but I think the students have a responsibility to take hold of their own entertainment—this is not a summer camp, and we're not here to just provide entertainment. But I think that should not mean that we don't care about what happens. I think SAC has done a remarkable job in the two years that I've been here in providing a lot of things for students to do. Maybe it's not enough. Maybe we need to find appropriate spaces for clearing events beyond the Bandersnach, and clearly we need to work on the third floor of Slayter. We also need to make a pub on this campus—a lot of campuses have pubs.

MoYO: Does it bother that men have control over such a large percentage of social space

“I don't like being seen as the enemy. And I don't quite know what to do to change that. I am not out to dismantle the Greek system; I want to strengthen it—I want to make it stronger and better.”

on campus, and that women have to be dependent on them?

MTM: Yes. In fact when you listen to the women they complain a good deal about the fact that the social spaces are controlled by the men and that they can only co-host or co-sponsor something in somebody else's house and therefore have less of an ability to control the norms and the behavior. They would like to have spaces of their own where they could set the tone rather than feel that they have to follow the tone that is set by the men.

Now they say that on the one hand, but on the other a lot of women will tell you they like what goes on down on Fraternity Row and they want to go to these parties, so clearly they must not find them so offensive.

MoYO: On the whole what has been the reaction of Denison alumni to the rumored and

proposed changes to the fraternity system?

MTM: The alumni are very pro-fraternity. This institution had 90 percent of its students in fraternities twenty years ago—the majority of Denison alumni were Greek. They want to maintain the Greek system, and I want to maintain it. I didn't come here to take away the Greek system; if I hadn't liked it I wouldn't have come. The thing that the alumni want, that the board of trustees want, that the faculty want and that I want is to clean up the act of the Greek system, and those changes are very, very much favored and supported by the alumni. And that has to do with alcohol, and that has to do with the maintenance of the houses. The alumni come and the visit the houses, and they write me letters, and they call me on the phone, and they are appalled by the conditions of the houses. That, in fact, is doing better than it was five years

ago, but it is not good enough yet. The actives may not like change—they want to preserve the status quo—but I don't think they'll be able to do that.

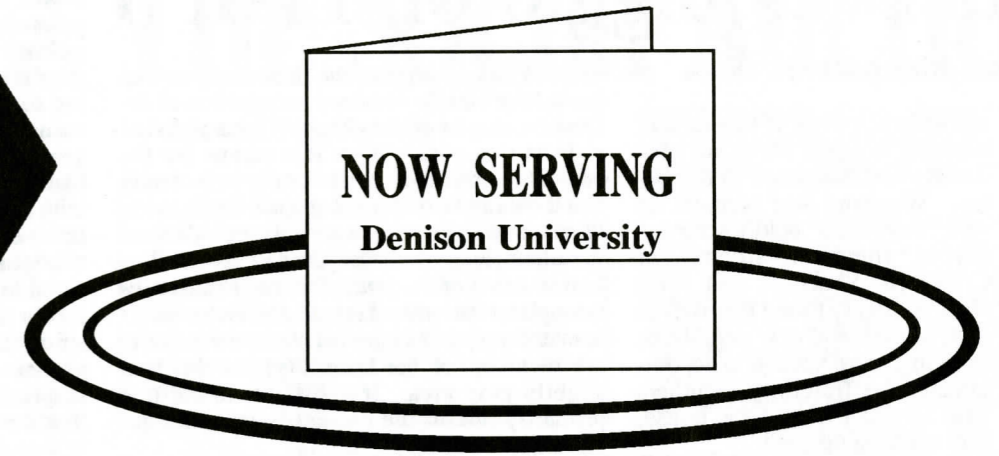
MoYO: If a new freshman came to you unsure if he or she should join a Greek organization, what would your advice be?

MTM: To take his or her time, to talk a lot to a lot of different people—both Greek

and independent—and to try and see if it looks to be something they might want to do, but not to feel they had to go through with it if all of a sudden it didn't seem to meet what they wanted. Or even to possibly wait even until the sophomore year—they do take actives in the sophomore year. But simply to talk to a lot of people on both sides of the issue and make up their own mind. I wouldn't encourage one way or the other.

MoYO: Any last comments?

MTM: I don't like being seen as the enemy. And I don't quite know what to do to change that. I am not out to dismantle the Greek system; I want to strengthen it—I want to make it stronger and better. So that means some changes. ■



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Beta Pres Biggio on Plan B

by Dawn Rinehart '94

Rumors began to fly within days of returning to school about just what exactly had happened to the Betas. Windows had banners up with "Save Beta" boldly scrawled across them. Residents of Crawford, Shorney, and West Halls suddenly found themselves with unexpected new neighbors, as rooms were needed to accommodate the fraternity members who couldn't live at the house, and people on the quad repeated the stories they'd overheard about the "real reason" the Betas were kicked off campus. No one seemed to know the truth behind the whole matter, or, if anyone did, he or she was remaining conspicuously silent. We approached Gus Biggio, the acknowledged president of the Betas, to give us the truth behind the rumors. An interview was granted.

The whole story really began last summer when the Betas were placed on probation and agreed to follow carefully outlined rules through the '90-'91 school year. "We were put on probation for violations of Rush procedure, supposed hazing, as well as for providing alcohol to minors . . . basically just general "bad" things. Essentially we were given a second chance last year, and then we took it from there."

In May of this year, the members of the fraternity were told that recognition of the chapter at Denison was under review in light of recently received information concerning alleged violations of the probation agree-

ment. Early in August, the final decision was made to officially withdraw recognition of the Denison chapter of Beta Theta Pi for a period of at least one year. What this means for the current members of the fraternity is basically that there can be no formal chapter organization of any sort, there will be no freshmen allowed to rush or pledge Beta this year and that the Beta house can not be used for Beta activities throughout the year. Technically, Betas aren't to ever congregate in groups where the majority are members of the fraternity, but this is a slightly gray area. It's difficult to enforce primarily due to the current living arrange-

"It's all right, just get your heads out of your asses and get this fraternity back on track."

ments and the social ties between Betas. The Betas are mostly grouped together with the roommates they would have had in the house, with the seniors predominantly in West Hall, juniors in Crawford and sophomores in Shorney. This makes restrictions on congregating rather hard to enforce. Also, between classes most Betas with a free moment gather around the "Beta Bench" outside Slayter, not so much to defy the University's decision, but to catch up with their friends.

Overall, they seem to be taking the whole thing pretty well: "Sure, we're definitely disappointed, but this is making us work for what we

want to have back next year. The sophomores who pledged just last year are disappointed, too, but it makes them all the more willing to really work for the two years they'll have left. And the seniors are working so they know they'll have their house to come back to at Homecoming after they graduate," Gus says. "I'm pretty confident that we'll be back. We still have to come up with some guides to follow, but I think after this year we'll be able to really show the school that there are no reasons why we shouldn't be allowed back."

On top of their seemingly indomitable spirit, they have the support of the national organization and the alumni. "We're on suspended status with the nationals because that's normal procedure to recognize the school's decision. But they are really supporting us. We are one of the oldest chapters of Beta Theta Pi and the oldest fraternity here at Denison: they don't want to lose us. I've gotten letters from them already with new ideas for Rush, different ways to organize the chapter and other helpful ideas. We have a great alumni association, too, and I've received letters from both younger and older alumni. They are a little disap-

pointed in the turn things have taken, but they are supporting us, basically saying 'It's all right, just get your heads out of your asses and get this fraternity back on track.' Maybe there's a better way to put that, but that's the real sentiment right there."

There have been some changes to typical Beta weekend life now that they have been removed from their house. But this, too, they seem to take in stride. "The other houses are very supportive, and a lot of the time we can hang out there. Dorm life is . . . interesting, I guess. It's kind of nostalgic, what with all the freshmen around, going

about things in their freshmen way, as opposed to us and our "mature" way. Also, we've had a chance to do things we never would have done otherwise, like finding new places in Newark or Columbus to hang out."

Gus said that the specific allegations against the Betas dealt with a couple of things, primarily hazing and underage drinking. He doesn't seem to put much faith in the theory that the timing of the decision was a deliberate ploy to make the changes in the summer when no one was around to protest. "Supposedly, the information wasn't available to them previously and that was the sole reason why it all took place over the summer. I heard a rumor that they received the information around Christmas and then sat on it for a semester; I don't know if there's any truth to that, but I would be pretty upset if this were true. Rumors abound; it's hard to know what to believe."

In closing Gus said, "Greek institutions have a powerful role at Denison, and as college organizations, they have two sides, both the social and the intellectual. The intellectual side has just about all but been forgotten and I think maybe this is going to give us a chance to reconsider the direction the system is heading. Maybe we'll have the chance even to turn it around. All of the fraternities seem to be hanging from the hair of their chinny-chin-chins, and hopefully they'll learn from this as we have." ■

The Social Auction

by Kirstin Rogers '94

The following is based on my personal experiences as a participant in the sorority rush of 1990, following which I pledged and subsequently depledged a house. While it represents only one specific perception of a common experience, it is nonetheless valid, and it raises significant questions.

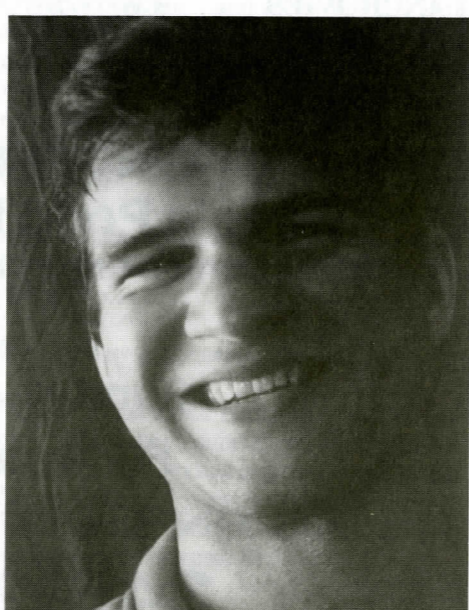
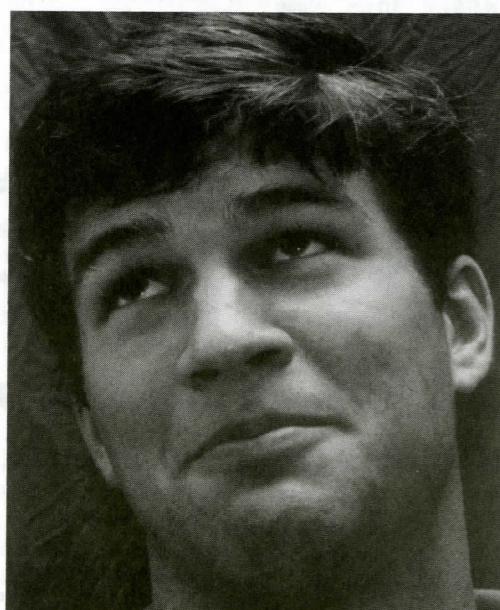
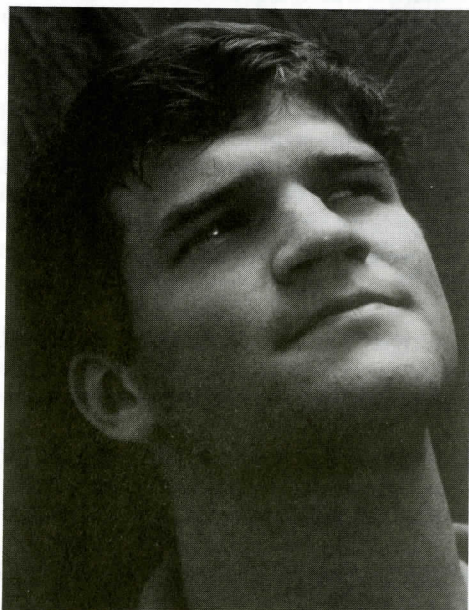
Thoroughbred racehorses, primed for sale, parade before their prospective purchasers, nervous of stage lighting and circus commotion. As they roll their eyes and snort at the chaos, so do rushing freshmen women pick at their clothes and itch from unpleasantness. For almost all will agree who have had any part in Rush that it rests among the least pleasurable social experiences of life. A young woman experiencing the anxieties of Rush is in the same situation as an untried racehorse: each promenades back and forth before calculating eyes that strain to capture the smallest defect. Each contender fidgets as judges' thumbs flip

registry pages in a furious attempt to predict future success and compatibility based on background, appearance and momentary behaviors.

Led blindly into the social auction of Rush, as a freshmen woman you will seek with desperation to catch the eyes of the houses you believe to be the most prestigious bidders. Preparing for days, you will question and consult, drag out dresses from your closets and play out interviews. But like the ignorant horses, you know nothing of your potential bidders, save whatever rumors and stereotypes you have managed to collect through the "no contact period" prior to Rush. Though designed to protect the individual interests of the competing houses, this policy serves only to keep you uninformed, uneasy and wondering—all so each house will appear equally anonymous in the eyes of visiting freshmen.

Just as you are nearing a point in your lives when you are trying to decide for yourself who you are and what image you want to project, you will also be trying to decide, through the obstructions of ignorance

(Continued on page 21: "Social Auction")



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Does Affiliating Make You Stupid?

by Stacie Molnar '94

Affiliating probably doesn't make you stupid, but on average Greek males have lower grade point averages than non-Greek males. So does affiliation cause the lower grades? Does that mean we should throw the Greek system off campus? According to Provost and Professor of Psychology Charles Morris, closing down the fraternities might not solve the problem.

Recently, Dr. Morris conducted a study which compared the academic history and college performance of Greek and non-Greek men. He examined the average high school class rank, the average SAT score and the average GPA for each group and found that fraternity affiliates tended to have lower aptitude scores and class ranks than their unaffiliated counterparts. With this information, Morris performed a statistical test which determined

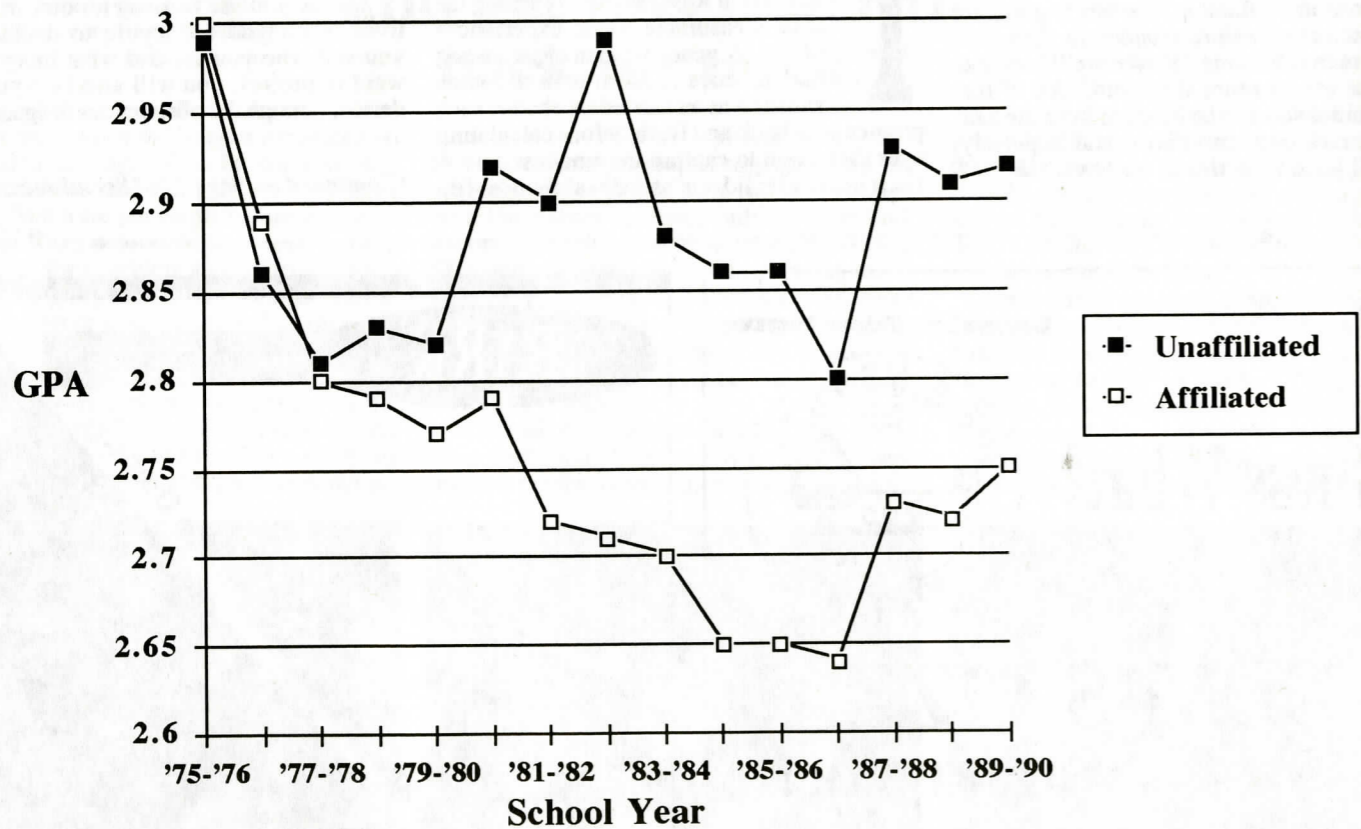
that 17.9 percent of the variance in GPA between the two groups could be attributed to aptitude differences, while only 1.8 percent of the variance could be attributed to actual affiliation.

This study suggests what many have already suspected: students who choose to become part of the Greek system have different aptitudes and personal habits than those who remain independent, and these differences probably account for GPA differences. Consequently, one may suggest that even if the Greek system were removed from campus, a difference in the average academic performance of the students who make up these two groups would still exist.

Although this study does not address the social or ethical implications of fraternity involvement, it does clarify some misconceptions regarding its effect in the classroom. ■

15 Years of GPAs: Uaffiliated vs. Affiliated Males

In 1976 the average GPAs of Greek and non-Greek men were virtually the same; in fifteen years the gap has significantly widened.



THE BULLSHEET

Angry? Concerned? Confused? *The Bullsheet* wants your reactions to the issues raised in *MoYO*. Please deposit your signed letters in *The Bullsheet's* Slayter mailbox.

Let's get the dialogue started.

Borsari on Brotherhood

by David Borsari '93

I think of fraternities as groups of college men who share their friendship, knowledge and aspirations. These common experiences, centered around the pursuit of an education, build ties that last a lifetime. There are several important concepts in the realm of any fraternity upon which fraternal success is dependent.

The concept of brotherhood is a unique aspect of fraternity life. For me, brotherhood transcends conventional friendship as it is marked by deep-seated loyalty and camaraderie. The structure of a fraternity brotherhood has helped to develop some of the nation's greatest leaders at both the corporate and government levels.

Since 1825 all but two U.S. presidents and vice presidents have been fraternity men. Of the prominent men and women listed in the *Who's Who in America*, 70 percent are Greek, and approximately 75 percent of all congressmen and senators are fraternity men. Today, fraternities remain unchallenged in their dedication in leadership on campus and beyond.

I think it's important to understand that brotherhood is by no means synonymous with conformity, and no fraternity is made up of members who are exactly alike. The diversity in a house is what makes the fraternity experience so valuable. By interacting with people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures, fraternity members prepare themselves for the diverse world after graduation. In addition, brotherhood aids the transition to college life. Entering college can be a traumatic experience for new students and joining a fraternity is often the easiest way to make new friends and adapt to the Denison environment.

Leadership is a term which coincides with the Greek system. Fraternity members at Denison are consistently among the leaders in campus activities. They hold positions in student government, academic clubs and honoraries, various Denison community service organizations, as well as maintain our own governing body, the Interfraternity Council. Also, each fraternity elects its own officers and chairperson

to deal with internal affairs. Fraternity involvement provides many opportunities to develop and practice leadership skills that will probably prove invaluable all though life.

The Denison University Greek system regards academics as one of the most important aspects of Greek life. Programs used by some fraternities to aid scholarship include time management workshops, study groups, minimum GPA requirements and scholarship awards. Upperclassmen often serve as a valuable and unique resource of campus and academic information for younger students.



David Borsari of Lambda Chi Alpha

The fraternities at Denison participate in and run many philanthropic and service events. Working on such projects gives fraternity members the chance to benefit worthy causes while fostering personal growth and strengthening ties with their brothers.

Combining a dedication to academics with a healthy athletic and social program, the Greeks form a very energetic and involved sector of Denison students. Joining a fraternity is an important step in a man's life and should be considered carefully. Fraternity life challenges its members to continue the long tradition of superior academics and leadership while allowing them to express their individuality. ■

A PLEDGE IN A SEA OF SCREAMING GIRLS

by Amy Mason '94

Standing in a sea of screaming girls all wearing white and carrying balloons, my heart was in my throat—and it wasn't because I was elated. Pledge day was supposed to be one of those exhilarating days that would alter and enhance my college experience. I imagined that somehow it would allow me to have more fun, giving me a group of girls I could identify with. Instead I felt out of place, suffocated, and completely ill at ease. I knew at that moment I had made the wrong decision. Thinking back on pledge day and the whole sorority experience, I have come to some conclusions about why Greek life was not for me.

For the first two months of my freshman year I carved out a life for myself with new people, places, and activities which I found fulfilling. Suddenly in November a wave of excitement and anticipation washed through the campus: Rush was upon us.

This wave was extremely contagious. Once I was involved in the Rush process, it was extremely difficult to distance myself to make an objective decision. Rush also boosted my ego, which I think kept me going. The actives made it seem like they really wanted me in their sorority which made me feel good about myself. Luckily, I was not rejected by all of them—if being accepted made me feel good about myself, then I can imagine how terrible I would have felt if I had not been.

Once I got past the ego issue I knew that I did not want to commit myself to something I felt uncomfortable being involved in. I had already found a network of friends, and I did not need a sorority to give myself an identity. The importance and pressure placed on drinking and going to "The Row" made me feel even more uncomfortable. I also did not like the label and the stigma that came with being associated with a sorority. With all of this in mind, I decided to de-pledge.

I am not opposed to the Greek system as a whole because I think it is a good thing for some people, but personally, I prefer being independent. I don't think I have had less fun or that my social life has been hindered in any way. I have never regretted my decision; I know that it was the best one I could have made. I have experienced a social life at Denison on both sides, and I couldn't be happier with the side I've chosen. ■

Kruse Urges 'Thinking Hard'

by Kristina Kruse '93

Incoming first-year students, please do me a favor and put the scenario of the idealized Greek experience into your mind. Most likely it includes one or more of these aspects: coming into contact with people you like, people you can share experiences with, people you can have a great time with; fun parties; and connections that will serve you both in your college years to come and possibly for the rest of your life. Indeed,

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The entire concept of Rush is completely degrading to the human spirit. In it, women and men are judged by only the externals: the clothes they wear, how good they are at making conversation, their body size, etc.
●



Kristina Kruse: Independent

all of these things are very real aspects of Denison's Greek life. However, there are other aspects of this lifestyle that are just as much a reality, and I would like to explain how and why the decision to affiliate with a Denison Greek organization can be a negative one.

First of all, I would like to say that I find the fraternal concept fascinating. What a wonderful thing it would be to be a part of an organization made up of brothers or sisters who make a pledge to be there for each other for the rest of their lives. Of course, any human endeavor is bound to have its share of flaws, but this is only to be expected. But after spending two years at Denison, I have observed the flaws of the Greek system to be much more prevalent than its successful attributes.

The entire concept of Rush is completely degrading to the human spirit. In it, women and men are judged by only the externals: the clothes they wear, how good they are at making conversation, their body size, etc. Of course, this is the best that they can do in such a short amount of time; Rush lasts only for a couple of weeks. But, unfortunately, it makes outcasts out of those people who cannot measure up to those standards necessary to join the house of their

choice.

If you are somehow able to make it through Rush with you dignity intact, your trials will not be over. When you pledge the house of your choice, you will be told that you must achieve a certain grade point average in order to keep the sisters or brothers to whom you have pledged your loyalty. And, like it or not, you will still be judged constantly by both those within your chapter and those outside of it. Your sisters or brothers will be keeping a constant eye on you, urging you to consume large amounts of alcohol, and if you cannot make the decision to refrain from consistently drinking yourself into oblivion, then that is precisely what you will do, to the detriment of your grades, your health, and your personal safety. Women especially are in danger, because I personally know of many instances of date rape in which the woman involved was intoxicated; I know of none at all in which the woman was dead-cold sober.

Outside of your affiliation you will be judged, like it or not, by others on the reputation of the house you belong to. When someone hears that you are an "X" or an "A," they may assume that you love to party, that you do drugs, that you are stupid, that you are smart, that

you are not cool . . . I think you get the picture. If you are independent enough not to let these stereotypes bother you, then more power to you. There are always exceptions to any rule, and I have known people who were in a house—who were proud to be in their house—who did exactly what they pleased, regardless of their house's stereotypes. But these are, most definitely, exceptions. And this bothers me.

It is possible to be part of the Greek system and to have a very positive experience in it; many people do. However, I urge you, incoming students, to think hard about your reasons for wanting to be in a house, and whether or not trying to get into one will force you to change the fabulous person that you are. I think that most people will agree that trying to conform to arbitrary standards is not a good way of making friends, nor does it make anyone a truly happy person. It is a tough decision, and once you make it, you will have come a long way in knowing who you are. ■

Never Uncertain

by Kimberly O'Hare '94

Sorority life at Denison has been nothing less than a positive experience for me. As a member of a Greek organization, I have formed friendships that will probably last a lifetime. In addition to these friendships, I have learned leadership skills that will carry well beyond my years at Denison. The closeness and loyalty that I feel with my sisters adds depth and meaning to my life in and out of the classroom. Through the altruisms and community service associated with the Greek system, I have found the social settings to be unlimited and the atmosphere to be always changing. There are always new faces, and my commitment to sisterhood and long-lasting friendships is the foundation of my involvement with Greek life.

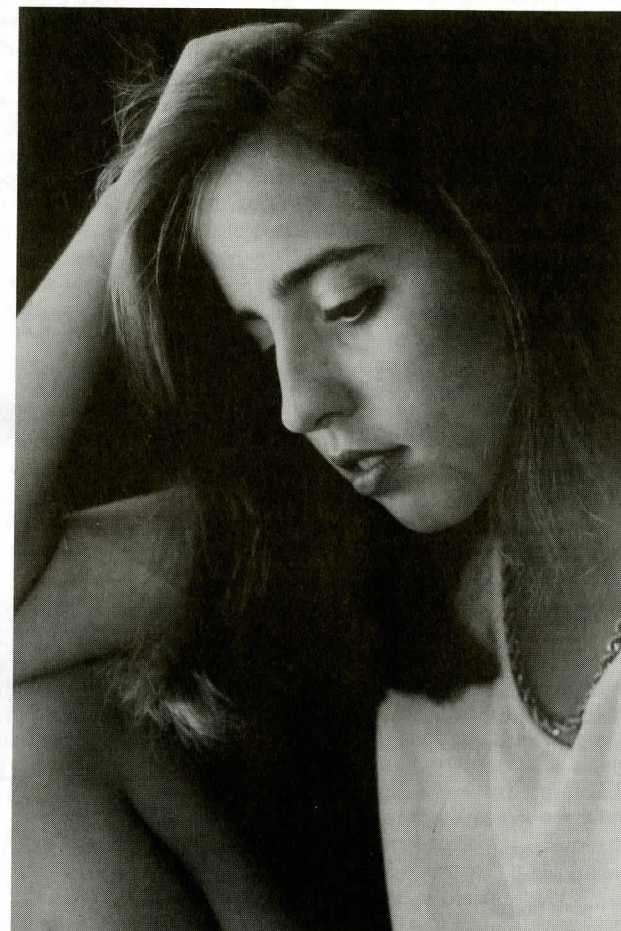
As soon as I pledged my sorority, I found myself belonging to a new family—I never had to feel lost or uncertain. My sisters gave me somewhere to turn to *all* of the time . . . especially during the traumatic adjustments I faced throughout my freshmen year.

As a member of a sorority your sisters provide a wealth of support just like a best friend would. The sense of obligation and responsibility to the Greek organization brings about camaraderie from *all*. It isn't just you and those in your house, it is you and everyone. The opportunity to meet new people is limitless, and the bonds you have with your house are as strong as the bonds you might have with your family at home.

Some have said Rush and Greek life are negative experiences. No one likes to face rejection from their peers, but in my opinion, freshman year Rushees have a second chance. Just because you are not part of Greek life does not mean you are ousted from Greek involvement. There is always the possibility of rushing sophomore year.

Sorority members are not limited to sorority friends. Personally, I hold many dear friendships with girls not in sororities. I find no difference in the degree of friendships I share with my sisters than I do with those girls who are non-Greek. It is only the idea of tradition that makes my experience unique. It is this tradition that makes up the Greek community. There have been arguments saying that the houses are stereotyped one

way or another. I see sororities as being made up of girls who hold the same values, interests and goals. At the same time we are *all* individuals striving for friendship and trust. Whether we are Greek or non-Greek, we are Denison students striving for the best. ■



Kimberly O'Hare: Affiliated

●
As soon as I pledged my sorority, I found myself belonging to a new family—I never had to feel lost or uncertain.
●

D.U.'s New Face from Bucknell:

Mary
Dorsey-
Bunnell

by Tressie Howard '94

There are many proposed social changes rumored on Denison's campus. Mary Dorsey-Bunnell, the new assistant dean of student life, may be able to allay some common fears, or she may provide new ones.

Bunnell says she has no hidden agenda that she is waiting to spring on Denison's students: "I have no intention of eliminating anything, but some things need to be done a little differently."

She would like to discuss some of the "things" with various members and leaders of the Greek system. Bunnell says she is mostly concerned with improving the academic averages of the fraternities. In addition, she would like the Greeks to become more involved with sponsoring all-campus activities and philanthropic events.

Bunnell is no stranger to campus improvement. She served as director of activities at Bucknell University for two and a half years. During this time, students witnessed monumental changes made in Bucknell's Greek system. When Bunnell took her position at Bucknell, the university was undergoing its second Greek review. Shortly after, the majority of the faculty voted to abolish the Greek system. They sent their recommendations to the president who in turn established a committee to conduct a study of the Greek system in various colleges and universities across the country. They studied what would be considered good and bad Greek systems, as well as Greek systems that had been abolished. Out of this effort came "the Directives for Social and Residential Life."

The directives resulted in the establishment of sophomore rush with the idea "that you have a foundation from which to make an informed decision." Also, only juniors and seniors were then permitted to live in fraternity houses. In addition, student peer counselors (which are comparable to Denison's resident directors), were assigned to live in the houses of all the fraternities, including even those houses not owned by the university.

Ms. Bunnell is actively working on several plans for improving the social life on Denison's campus based on her experiences at Bucknell. Among these ideas is the renovation of the third floor of Slayter. This subject has been talked about for several years, and the answer to the questions of when and to what extent are still up in the air. ■

AΦA: A Fraternity of a Different Color

by Derrick Pryor '93,
President of AΦA

The Denison University chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha has been much maligned and misrepresented over the course of its six year existence. We are an historically African-American "Greek letter" organization, the first of its kind to be established for the purpose of uplifting the African-American community. Founded at Cornell University in December of 1906, we have grown from humble beginnings to become one of the strongest and most prolific forces not only in the African-American community, but in the larger society as well.

Here on Denison's campus we are a relatively new organization, established in 1985. Our Rho Upsilon chapter of Alpha has come to the forefront in

fraternal standings through Alpha's "quality instead of quantity" mentality. Also, many people have wondered why we choose to "Rush" during the second semester, why we have only five active members in our "house" and what that "stepping" stuff is all about.

"Militant" and "separatist" are adjectives commonly used to describe Alphas at Denison.

The problem lies in an ignorance of our history or a lack of knowledge of the general facts, or both.

Alpha is an organization rich not only with African-American history, but with that of our African forebears as well. We view rush as a

rigorous process of selection, resulting in a group of men who are doubtlessly "Alpha Material." We refuse to buy into the approach of sending out three times as many bids as we have room for new members, hoping to attract enough men. In our minds, such a method leads to the men choosing the organization, not the the organization choosing the men. It is an honor to be a member of Alpha, and we feel that honor would be greatly compromised if we were to turn from the strict traditions of quality that gave Alpha its reputation today. This is why we rush during second semester: even though

traditionally we have accepted freshmen, the rules set forth in our national charter require proof of at least one semester's grades to more accurately judge the character and the ability of prospective Alpha pledges.

The question of the number of our members present on the Denison campus is an important issue not only to those observing our activities here, but also to our sponsoring national body. Before we received our individual

charter from Alpha's national office, we had to prove that we could exist as a fraternity at Denison and yet maintain our traditionally

selective attitude, without limiting our numbers so severely as to prevent full recognition of our chapter from the national governing body. In our pursuit of quality, we have never had any more than six members in our chapter at any given time since our conception six years ago; we do not expect the number to exceed ten active members.

Our national body accepts and commends these figures; they present proof of numbers sufficient both to support the local chapter and to maintain our standards at the national level. To some, our inability to foresee the number of our future actives as greater than ten may seem pessimistic. In our minds, however, it is a necessary reality: Denison does not recruit heavily from African-American communities. Without a large base from which to make our selections, an historically African-American fraternity which prides itself on its selectivity, Alpha simply cannot find enough men of the quality we expect to maintain its traditionally extremely high standards. Therefore, in keeping with the ideas of the founders of Alpha, we refuse to forfeit the quality of our pledges for sheer numbers. We select only those men with the substance of character, the scholarship, the leadership, and the dedication to the cause of uplifting our community who have made Alpha Phi Alpha the unique and prestigious organization that it is today.

Alpha Phi Alpha's character as an African-American fraternity raises the question of whether or not it would admit non-African-Americans into its fold.

Some speculate that if the organization does not allow for non-African-American members, then the organization must be guilty of "reverse racism." Nationally, Alpha does have white brothers, as well as brothers of every other ethnic or racial description. The fraternity is predominantly African-American, as well it should be, since its founders' primary concern was for the betterment of the African-American community. We do not discriminate on the basis of color. Instead, we base our requirements for membership in scholarship, in leadership, in character, and in dedication to the improvement of the African-American community. If there is any man who can prove to the brotherhood that he possesses these four essential qualities, he can and will be accepted, gladly and with open arms.

Another common question concerning Alpha asks where our house is. For the past two years, we had for our use the Monomoy Annex—it was small, but it was our house nonetheless. Last semester, we ran into some difficulties regarding some specifications of our contract—specifications that concerned full occupancy of the building.

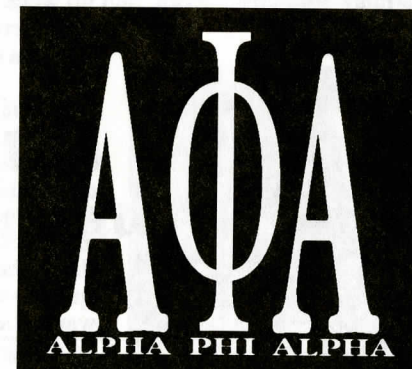
As the contract stated, we men of Alpha understood that six permanent male residents constituted full occupancy, and we were fully prepared to meet this requirement. However, the administration believed that the full occupancy of our contract constituted six permanent male fraternity members as residents. Although this specific stipulation was not written into the contract, the administration argued that it was "implied in good faith" that we would have six men living in the house at all times, and that these six men would be fraternity members only. This specification of the contract was the major point of disagreement concerning our continued use of the house. Because of our principle concerning the quality of our pledges, we were unable to invite any new members last semester, thus leaving open a position in the Monomoy Annex. As for the future, we hope to regain the Annex for our use next year, should everything go as planned.

Which comes to the final most popular question about Alpha, "What is that stepping stuff?" Stepping is an activity in which African-American fraternities and sororities engage solely for the purpose of displaying their pride in their individual organizations. Stepping, again, is another aspect of Alpha which finds its

roots in African culture, in a ceremony called the "Ring Shout." It is uniquely African, and we use it to show our pride in our organization, to emphasize our heritage, and to entertain while teaching about and promoting our community. It is energetic, it involves rhythm, and it requires a lot of concentration and discipline.

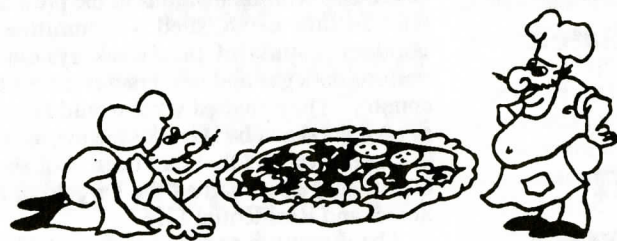
It becomes obvious that we are indeed differ-

ent from the other fraternities on Denison's campus. The examples above, obviously, are only a few of the differences that make Alpha Phi Alpha so unique. We admit our differences, and we relish them! The problem with these fundamental differences is that people cannot see them simply for what they are—differences. Instead, people perceive these differences as challenges to the norm. This inability to accept the uniqueness of others leads to labels and stereotypes that affect not only ourselves, but other organizations like ours. Labels such as "militant" and "separatist" are adjectives commonly used to describe Alphas at Denison. The problem lies in an ignorance of our history or a lack of knowledge of the general facts, or both. We are what we are because we have a knowledge of our own history and culture, we have a strong sense of identity and we have a strong sense of self. We are not in this fraternity as a means of social acceptance, we are here to do something positive for our community—the community that fostered us. We are here to give back to those who have helped us to attain our own positions in life. And that, Denison University, is the bottom line. ■



We base our requirements for membership in scholarship, in leadership, in character, and in dedication to the improvement of the African-American community. If there is any man who can prove . . . that he possesses these four essential qualities, he can and will be accepted, gladly and with open arms.

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the year of 1950: Looking Back on Fraternity Life

by Bradley F. Norpell '50
of Phi Gamma Delta

At the conclusion of World War II, veterans began streaming home, many seeking a college education under the generous provisions of the GI Bill of Rights. A typical Denison fraternity pledge class in 1946 was composed of as many veterans as non-veterans. Over 90 percent of the students belonged to a fraternity during this period.

The students enrolling in Denison in the late 1940s were raised during the Great Depression. This experience, frequently coupled with military service, produced a pool of potential fraternity pledges with sharply different backgrounds than today's candidates. Among other characteristics, they were less affluent and more inclined toward acceptance of the standards espoused by their parents. The age of television and permissiveness was yet to arrive.

One of the conditions of entering Denison in 1946 was a signed pledge to abstain from the use of alcohol while on campus or in Granville. The declared penalty for violating the alcohol ban was expulsion, though there were few (if any) incidents requiring such severe punishment. The reality was that there was very little drinking in the Denison community. This is not to suggest that there were no infractions, but the students knew the University was serious about the rule and conducted themselves accordingly. Newark, the "City of Sin," was only five miles away and was prepared to accommodate those who wanted to quaff a few. Tony's, Fox Brothers, and the Dugout were favorite watering holes, but on campus and in the town, the Baptist ethic prohibiting the use of alcohol largely prevailed. Let it be said in passing that if one

had possessed all the wealth of Croesus, one could not have bought a single gram of hallucinatory drug in Granville township during this period. A sorority, hosting a Christmas party in their chapter house, was placed on social probation for serving a plum pudding, the recipe for which called for flaming brandy. Twenty years passed before the first authorized consumption of beer on campus occurred during a memorable D-Day celebration. Tuition was only \$500 a year, but many of the male students could



Getting Away from it All: Cat Run in the Licking Hills offered a refuge from the constraints of the campus.

not have afforded Denison without assistance from the GI Bill, which paid the entire tuition in addition to the room and board fee of \$590.

The University sponsored few campus-wide activities, that function falling almost entirely within the domain of the Greek system. Parties were held in the fraternity houses, usually with a seasonal theme: spring, Christmas, fall—a local combo customarily provided the music

while the houses were decorated in accordance with the prevailing theme. The sororities followed a similar schedule, so there weren't extended periods without social activity of one kind or another. Alcohol consumption was not part of the activity, and a good time was had by all. The faculty (many of whom were fraternity members themselves) were generally supportive of the fraternities. Nine of the members of my chapter in 1948 had fathers on the Denison faculty, who, with their wives, regularly joined us for dinner.

The fraternity houses were closely supervised by their respective alumni associations. The active brothers did not object, having come from more modest homes than those provided by the fraternities. They felt they owned the house, and it made sense to take care of it. I moved into my fraternity house in 1947. The original furniture, bought in 1930, was still in excellent condition. Coat and tie were mandatory at dinner; fraternity songs were sung and grace was said. One of the principal pledge duties was babysitting for the married brothers with families who lived in temporary barracks scattered around campus. Freshmen beanies were worn, and no week passed without a traditional serenade honoring the pinning of a coed by one of the brothers.

Fraternities flourished during the fifties as never before. A new chapter was added to the existing eight, and many added new living space to accommodate the demands of an increasing membership. Then came Vietnam. Widespread student protest against the war spilled over into campus life, challenging the traditional role of the fraternities. Rituals, rules, and regulations were no longer automatically accepted by rebellious students. Emphasis on the group was supplanted by emphasis on the individual. The University sponsored more social activities as fewer students joined the Greek societies. Off-campus living became increasingly popular, with the result being that many of the houses struggled financially. This development, in turn, caused a decline in the quality of living conditions compared to dormitory life. These were times of change, mandating adjustments. Sororities suffered declining memberships in the sixties, with three of the seven deactivating. In an increasingly affluent student body, more cars appeared, expanding the range of social life beyond the campus.

The fraternity succeeds when its members work together. This "oneness" was more easily obtained at the Denison of the fifties, with less than one percent of the students belonging to minority groups.

Today's Denison boasts an ethnically and culturally diverse student body. The faculty has a significant presence of members who obtained their college training during the rebellious sixties, and whose support for the fraternity system is apparently something less than enthusiastic. Most of the fraternities were founded at Denison over 100 ago when the world was a different place, for better or for worse.

Many of the criticisms leveled at the current fraternity scene at Denison are doubtless deserved, but it is a pity that some of the positive aspects are not given more

● Newark, the "City of Sin," was only five miles away and was prepared to accommodate those who wanted to quaff a few.

● recognition. The Greeks prepare a budget, organize their social lives, feed themselves, maintain their living quarters, impose punishment for infractions of the rules, and generally run their houses like a business. Teamwork, decision making, and planning, all learned in the fraternity environment, are highly prized skills in the modern competitive world. A fraternity is a group having common purposes. In recent years, there has been increasing stress on independent, pluralistic thinking in our society. Virtually all our institutions—religious and educational—have undergone extraordinary change since World War II. Our institutions inevitably reflect our values, and our colleges are no exception, nor are our fraternities. The "me" generation is not about to subscribe to the shared values that made the fraternities at Denison work so well in the past. ■

Freshman Lambert Co-Authors Book

by Kirstin Rogers '94

Freshman Erin Lambert had a busy summer. She and her father, Lee, co-authored a book about the country of Kuwait and its often misunderstood culture. Lee, an entrepreneur and an American consultant to Kuwaiti businessmen, began as a sportswriter for the *Oakland Tribune*. He and his daughter first went to Kuwait in March of 1984. Since then, the Lamberts have made eight additional visits to Kuwait, some as long as six weeks, which culminated in a final visit in May of 1990, just before the declaration of war.

Their book, *Have You Heard the One About...*, is still in the manuscript stage, though Erin says there is a publisher who is working with her father. "Now that I'm so far away, it's hard for me to stay on top of things," she said, "But we hope to have it printed by sometime in November." Erin and her father each specialized in certain chapters of the book, which centers on American myths about Kuwaiti culture. "We each wrote an introduction, but it's hard to draw a definitive line between which sections are mine and which are his; the effort was mutual and we helped each other out."

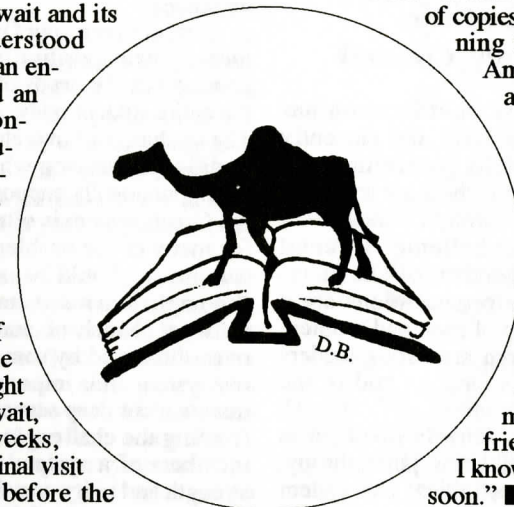
Erin was most influential in developing six of the book's fifteen chapters, one of which contains the results of a survey of school children from her hometown of Worthington, Ohio. Conducting the survey herself, Erin made sure that it was presented in the form of a free-response questionnaire rather than a simpler multiple-choice format. The survey, of which two versions were written, was given to two groups: one consisting of fourth through seventh graders, and the other consisting of eighth graders through seniors in high school. It included questions on the religion, the geography, the language, the government and the food of Kuwait. While most of the younger students had no idea of the truth, saying that Kuwaitis eat lizards and camels, speak Mexican or German and have as many as one hundred wives, the older students had little idea of the location of Kuwait, its forms of government, or its national religion, Islam.

"The main focus of our effort is towards education and understanding. Quite deliberately, this is not a book about the war, but about Kuwaiti culture," said Erin. "Using anecdotes of our own experiences as ignorant Western

tourists, we hope to clear up some of the confusion and the ill-feeling of the American people towards Kuwait." The Kuwaiti government thinks highly of the Lamberts' idea—it will buy a certain number of copies for its own use, planning to distribute them to American universities as a good-will promotion.

Erin says that the book should be available in regular bookstores as well, once it has been published.

The Lamberts plan to return to Kuwait as soon as possible, perhaps even this spring. "I missed seeing our friends," said Erin, "but I know we'll get back there soon." ■



● "Using anecdotes of our own experiences... we hope to clear up some of the confusion and the ill-feeling of the American people towards Kuwait." ●

Defending the System

by **Ida**

the President of Panhel

by **Ida Bergstrom, President of the Panhellenic Council**

The Greek system at Denison has existed since 1867 and currently represents eight fraternities and seven sororities which are governed by the Interfraternity Council (IFC) and the Panhellenic Council (Panhel) respectively. The members of these organizations are a diverse group of men and women, many of whom are strong leaders on Denison's campus and in the Granville community. Greek members are actively involved in student government, athletics, philanthropy, as well as many other activities. Our system prides itself on the goals of scholarship, unity and community service.

The fraternities and sororities are continually trying to find new, innovative ways to improve academics and offer educational programming for the entire campus. This past year different houses sponsored speakers who talked about current topics such as date rape and the Persian Gulf War. These programs provide students with the opportunity to learn from a well-informed speaker and offer a comfortable setting where discussions are often generated that give students the chance to learn from one another, increasing their awareness about the current events and important issues.

This past year has also included increasing numbers of events which helped unite IFC, Panhel and other campus organizations. Panhel and the Student Activities Community co-sponsored an all-campus study break during exam week. The sororities also hosted an all-sorority international dinner for which each house prepared a dish native to a different country. The new Activities Coordinating Team (ACT) should help in organizing successful events co-sponsored by many groups to unite the student body, Greeks and non-Greeks.

The individual chapter members also contribute a great deal of time and effort to philanthropic causes. Traditional events, such as the Bowl-a-Thon, Anchor Splash and Tug of War continue to benefit community as well as national causes. IFC has also instituted a new sandwich service as part of the Salvation Army food kitchen which seems to be very successful. These service projects not only help the underprivileged, they also

involve students in enjoyable and learning experiences.

In recent years, our Greek system has implemented many positive changes in order to accommodate the needs of its members, alumni, the entire student body, and the administration. These changes have strengthened the Greek tradition at Denison which always has been a strong, nationally supported system. Although the Greek system is often used as a scapegoat for many of the problems which exist on our campus, it should be proud of the numerous accomplishments it has worked so hard to achieve. Much of our positive influence is over-shadowed by some of the weaknesses in our system. It is important for our members to maintain our deep sense of tradition while confronting the challenges that we will face. As members of a system which prides itself on strength and unity, we alone can work together to ensure a successful future on the Denison campus. ■

● **Although the Greek system is often used as a scapegoat for many of the problems which exist on our campus, it should be proud of [its] numerous accomplishments.** ●

MENDING D.U.'s BROKEN REPUTATION

by **Vernell Bristow '94**

Ask any admissions candidate waiting for an interview in Beth Eden: they've heard Denison is a party school. Whether it is true or not, that reputation is one the University and its students can do without. At the very least, Denison students will find it difficult to get jobs if their interviewers believe they did nothing but drink for four years. "We want to promote a more lively intellectual climate and to de-emphasize the party image," said Lorraine Wales, director of the college union, cultural events, and campus activities.

One of the possible causes for Denison acquiring this reputation is what used to be the basis of its social entertainment.

For many years the responsibility of providing campus-wide social events was taken on by the Greek system. "They had a major responsibility for the social life of the campus as there were no other groups providing that kind of entertainment," said Dr. John Jackson, coordinator of Black Studies.

As late as the mid- to late 1970s the University was not adequately providing campus-wide social events. Jackson said that the University's sponsoring of campus-wide events was not on a "pro-active basis." He also said that there was a committee established that provided some campus-wide events that were non-alcoholic, but the sponsoring wasn't actively pursued.

The kind of social events that the fraternities sponsored were not as closely monitored as they are today. There were some people on campus who did not agree with some of the fraternities' activities. "At that time there were panty raids, and there were all sorts of incidents associated with Greeks that some women and also Black students especially found offensive. I think it was in the late seventies when the Betas and the Fijis had what they called the "Beta Wars" in which they dressed up in blackface and grass skirts. Both women and Blacks on campus found it offensive," said Jackson.

Over the years it does seem that the situation concerning the fraternities is better. Chief of Security for 12 years, Frank Abele, recalls, "There has been a big improvement in fraternity life as far as our visits on fraternity row, whether it be for inspection or to answer a complaint, or whatever. The situation has been much improved over the years. Each year it seems to get just a little better. There seems to be more respect for people, more respect of my officers."

Jackson also says there has been a change

in the way fraternity members act. "Individual members of houses certainly, at least publicly, express more awareness as regards to those behaviors people find offensive," said Jackson.

Currently, the University is actively engaged in sponsoring events for the whole campus. Slayer Programming and the Student Activities Committee have been formed to provide such activities. "One of the most significant efforts we are making this year is the formation of the Activities Coordinating Team (ACT). Designed to facilitate cooperative programming and joint-funding, the goal is to increase participation in all-campus events, not only large events, but smaller ones, too. We're hoping to appeal to the broader range of interests and tastes that exist among our students," said Wales.

Jackson believes that the addition of the committees makes the variety of campus activities more interesting: "I think it's a lot better. It gives you a chance to get in more diverse programming, something which a greater variety of people could find entertaining and can derive enjoyment from.

The formation of ACT is not designed to alienate Greeks from planning all-campus events. Wales said, "Greeks and non-Greeks will sit side by side planning a calendar of 'main-stream' activities. And among the social options from which to choose may be a Slayer program, a SAC event or a party hosted by a fraternity or sorority. It will help place the emphasis where it belongs—on institutionally-sponsored activities open to everyone." ■

"Social Auction," from page 11

and misinformation, what image each house represents. Informatively blind, you will be forced to depend on tidbits such as, "Kappas all have money, and they know what your parents are worth," or, "Pi Phi really party hard, you'll learn to drink with them," or, "Well . . . the Alpha Chi's are really smart. . . ." In a feat of unity, nearly 80 percent of you will group together to visit the houses whose rumors you have already learned—hopeful and with a feeling of solidarity born of equally dubious fates.

And with false face and false conceptions, you will tour each house, be inundated by six great rooms, six kitchens, six dressing rooms, six guest rooms, six parlors and six house mothers' apartments. You will gather six name tags, shake hands with six equally cordial house presidents and meet six equally inviting active members, each of whom, hopefully, will lead you to yet more actives, allowing for an infinite variation on finite pleasantries. Finally, you will view six Rush skits—six different portrayals of the six most common stereotypes (nerd, fashion-plate, rebel, social princess, friendly airhead, and female jock) that comprise diversity. You will leave, aspiring to bid-backs from every house and unable, in the feast of invariably similar presentations, to prioritize or to dif-

ferentiate.

However, just as buyers know the ideal horse for their operation, so do the actives of each house know the ideal pledges for their organization. So forget equality of presentation; like buyers at an auction, the actives have seen all the available information, mentally noting which of you to be sure to meet and which to ignore. True, they cannot possibly remember something significant about every one of you, but thanks to Rush registration, each house has a copy of your picture. In shaking your hand, in seeing your face, in hearing you talk about yourself, they're going to remember. They will not recall any specifics, but whatever general impression your picture and your information form left in their minds—an impression already colored by positive or negative overtones. Add to this a mere 40 second conversation to gauge your personality, and a head-to-toe once-over to judge your appearance, and the impression has been set.

Having had all of about two hours to acquaint yourself with each of the six houses, you will doubtlessly have your heart set on at least two of them. Eagerly you will await the moment when your Rush counselor tells you which houses you have offered you a bid to come back. From this very point, some of you will be sent to an emotional slaughter, your sense of self-esteem devastated when you receive not a single bid. Granted, this is a rare occurrence, but an occurrence which is neither impossible nor improbable. Comparing notes with peers, the devastated will seek chocolate with wild abandon as the fortunate browse in their closets with elation, all in preparation for the second round of meetings: The most important round, during which you will have only one hour each at the two houses of your choice—one hour in which to meet, talk, decide and be decided upon.

Finally, if you are yet in the running, you will once again have an appointment with your Rush counselor concerning your invitation to the final parties. At this point, most of you will be invited to one house—or not. More depression and depreciation of self worth, more soul searching and anxiety, some tears and much chocolate later, you will pat each other on the back and say good-night. Hopeful of your future with your newly found sisters, supposedly custom tailored to your personality, you will sleep peacefully, all but assured of a place in that house.

Or maybe not so peacefully. What if the house that invited you back is not the one you wanted to join? What if you doubt that the people in that house are really the people you want to be associated with from this point onwards? What if you are secure in your invitation, but you spend the night consoling your roommate or the girl down the hall, the girl everyone seems to like: pretty though not beautiful, intelligent though not a genius—the girl who was not invited to any final parties at all? You let her cry on your shoulder while you try to justify your own invitation, unsure of your continued allegiance to a system that has its foundations in what is, in essence, a meat market. ■

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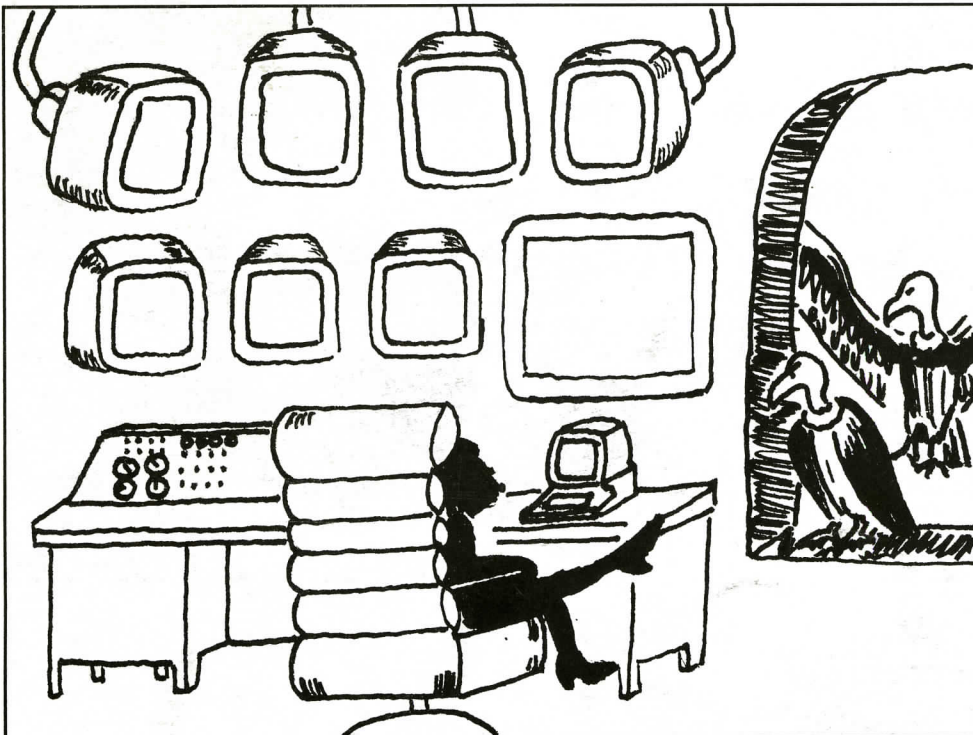
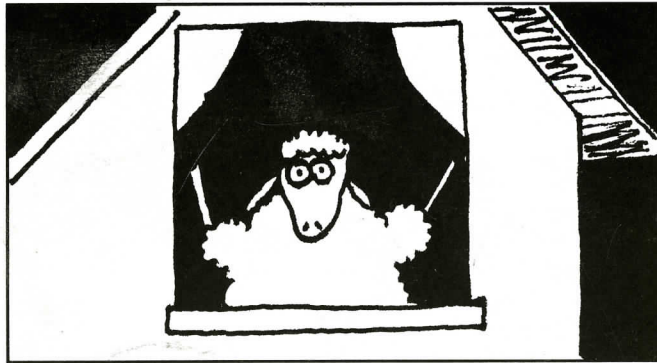
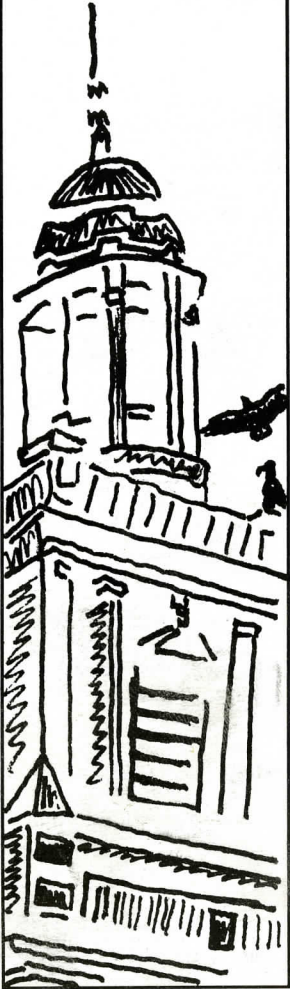
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