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## Spiritual Values Among Fraternity Men Compared to Unaffiliated Men and the Influence of Hegemonic Masculinity

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## **SPIRITUAL VALUES AMONG FRATERNITY MEN COMPARED TO UNAFFILIATED MEN AND THE INFLUENCE OF HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY**

**Jason B. Goldfarb and Charles G. Eberly**

*The article is based on the Center for the Study of the College Fraternity's 2009 Adele Williamson Outstanding Masters Research Award winning thesis entitled, "Student Spiritual Development Associated with Fraternity Affiliation." Using data (n = 1,211) from the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) 2003 pilot survey instrument, College Students' Beliefs and Values, funded by the John Templeton Foundation, this study examined the relationship between fraternity affiliation, hegemonic masculinity, spirituality, religion, and other associated spiritual/religious factors. Significant differences were found regarding measures of spirituality and associated beliefs and values between fraternity-affiliated and non-affiliated participants, as well as respondents' relative levels of hegemonic masculinity. Discussion and implications for practice offer consideration for practitioners and fraternity advisors with enhancing local chapter programming, creating new programs, or finding ways of reinforcing college fraternal organizations' core values, particularly as they address issues of spirituality and personal religious growth, and a healthy conception of manhood.*

Most college men are aware of the positive masculine traits they wish to exhibit (e.g., honor, loyalty, respect) but fall victim to acting-out their peers' perceptions of what it means to be a "man" (Harris, 2008). College fraternities are often cited as organizations that foster hyper-masculine behaviors (e.g., misogyny, excessive alcohol consumption, homophobia). Pressure from fellow members to live-up to a socially constructed definition of masculinity requires fraternity members to constantly be vigilant in proving their masculinity to their peers (Edwards, 2007; Harris; 2006; Kimmel, 2008; Sanday, 2007; Syrett, 2009). While members often feel pressure from their fraternity brothers or from their own perceptions of masculinity to deviate from the organization's espoused principles and values, they realize these behaviors are contradictory to the espoused mission of character development found in many fraternal organizations (Syrett, 2009).

Phi Beta Kappa, the first American college fraternity, was founded at the College of William & Mary on December 5, 1776. Friendship, morality, and learning were the founding principles of this organization. Phi Beta Kappa's motto derived from its Greek letters, "[I]ove of wisdom the guide of life" (Robson, 1966, p. 23). Fraternity rituals, the moral and ethical foundation of the organizations, are often cited to espouse such positive ideals (Brooks, 1967; Callais, 2005; McMinn, 1979). Embedded in these fraternal ideals is the concept of building guiding principles for living a more fulfilled life. Interestingly, spirituality is cited as a key component needed to attain such a life (Love & Talbot, 1999).

Even though fraternity ritual is seen as a positive influence on those who belong, fraternity membership is often observed as a negative influence (Bartholow, Sher, & Krull, 2003; Caudill et al., 2006; Kuh & Arnold, 1993). The dissonance between the two influences often appears to be quite problematic and has been a topic of concern in higher education (Pike, 2000). While the majority of current research on fraternities focuses on the negative effects of fraternity affiliation, it is equally important to assess the moral foundations of these organizations and how members are influenced as a result. Two key questions to be asked are whether fraternities enhance their members' spiritual development and if so, in what manner do they enhance spiritual development?

## **Review of Research**

### ***Spirituality and Fraternity Affiliation***

There has been a growing interest in the spiritual development of college students; however, there has been little empirical research that examined spiritual development among fraternity members (Webb & Mueller, 2009). Webb and Mueller (2009) studied 123 fraternity/sorority members and non-affiliated students at a mid-sized, mid-Atlantic institution and found the only significant difference between affiliated and non-affiliated students was their level of connectedness. While both sets of participants were found to score low on the connectedness scale of the Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments (ASPIRES) (Piedmont, 1999), affiliated students scored significantly lower on the connectedness scale than their non-affiliated peers. Webb and Mueller defined connectedness following Piedmont's (2005) definition, "as 'feelings of belonging and responsibility to a larger human reality that cuts across generations and groups'" (p. 48).

Eberly (1970) analyzed data for college men based on length of fraternity membership from the ground-breaking Lehmann and Dressel (1962) four-year, longitudinal study (1958-1962). He found the measured change in attitudes and values during college suggested a meaningful spiritual foundation was important.

Greeks selected fraternity, family, and Church as three of their most reinforcing influences on original attitudes and beliefs during college. These three factors, among others, might be taken to represent 'traditional American values,' to be honored and preserved from a fraternity point of view. It then might follow that fraternity group selection and self-selection into fraternities should be such that those selected are the most likely, throughout their college experience, to honor those values (p. 102).

More recent research using data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) supported Eberly's reflection (Hayek, Carini, O'Day, & Kuh, 2002). Hayek et al. found that compared to other students, fraternity and sorority members had greater levels of engagement in educationally effective practices, including experiences and exposure to diversity and self-reported gains in various educational and personal growth areas. However, Hayek et al. did not directly address the issue of student spirituality and beliefs.

Fraternity rituals, through symbols or myths, communicate the philosophical or religious meaning of the organization. Brooks (1967) described the fraternity ritual to be, "based solely on intellectual, moral, and spiritual pursuits" (p. 198). Callais (2005) explained the fraternity ritual allowed members to become connected with the fraternal organization, as well as knowledgeable

of the expectations and responsibilities assumed based on their developmental stage. The ritual experience was an important component of students' developmental process because it helped students transition from one stage of their lives to the next. Eberly (1967) compared the perceptions of a sample of fraternity members in two chapters with the perceptions of a set of inter/national officials regarding the influence of fraternity rituals on members. A majority of participants reported that rituals should have a high value in their moral development, but unfortunately they reported their ritual values were not congruent with their behavior. Owen and Owen (1976) similarly described how the spiritual elements of fraternities' rituals reinforced feelings of reverence and brotherhood for many members.

Syrett's (2009) history of White college fraternities, however, offered disconfirming evidence of the spirituality of fraternity men dating from the founding of the organizations. His argument is based on the fact that early American colleges were founded principally to educate young men into the clergy. Men who later became fraternity members, however, grained against the atmosphere of piety supported by the colleges' faculty members, themselves likely to be clergy. Young men joined fraternities because they "offered an escape from the monotony, dreariness, and unpleasantness of the collegiate regimen which began with prayer before dawn and ended with prayer after dark" (Rudolph, 1990, p. 146). Thus, even in the earliest years of the college fraternity, men less likely to pursue a career in the clergy were the men most likely to join such organizations.

As the effects of the industrial revolution changed men's occupational roles and women entered college and the workforce in direct competition with men, men's concept of masculinity changed to a definition that stipulated "being a man" was the opposite of femininity. Thus, demonstrating manhood came to mean demonstrating one's heterosexuality and one's differentiation from the feminine, specifically in terms of treating women as objects to demonstrate one's manhood to other men (Syrett, 2009). In addition, restricting one's own self-expression of tender emotions by labeling expressions of affection as "gay" and avoiding association with men who appeared to be feminine (e.g., homosexuals). Syrett's historical analysis and Kimmel's (2008) sociological analysis of contemporary males from the ages of 18 to 26 reinforce the unhealthy consequences of what has come to be known as hegemonic (hyper) masculinity on college men; whether or not they are members of college fraternities.

### ***College Men and Hegemonic Masculinity***

Edwards (2007) and Harris (2006) addressed issues surrounding hegemonic masculinity among college men. Edwards found that college men felt great pressure and strained to conform to unrealistic societal perceptions of what it meant to be a man. All ten participants from a large university on the east coast in his qualitative study responded, to some level, that they were unable to become the ultimate perception of what a man is, and subsequently felt "they could never fully live up to society's expectations of them as men on their own" (2007, p. 111). When these individuals tried to liberate themselves from the pressure of trying to live up to the quintessential definition of what it means to be a man, they felt overwhelmed rather than liberated.

Harris (2006) discovered that when college males experienced pressure from both external and internal influences (e.g., personal perceptions, peer groups, campus involvement, etc.), they

adopted behaviors such as “misogyny, alcohol consumption, homophobia, having a work hard/play hard mentality, and male bonding” (p. 191). Participants perceived that all of these behaviors and attitudes were common among college males.

Fraternities have been identified as groups that foster atmospheres encouraging hyper-masculine behaviors such as high-risk drinking and hazing (Nuwer, 1999). Due to the exclusive nature of these organizations, fraternity members feel pressure to try to conform to the traditional male gender role, and that pressure consequently explains the reason for their excessive use of alcohol (Capraro, 2000; Edwards, 2007). Fraternities have also been identified as organizations that promote misogynist attitudes. For many fraternity members, in-group misogynistic attitudes directly impact their interactions with women. As DeSantis (2007) explained, “many of the women...interviewed [for the study] disclosed incidents of abuse by acquaintances, most of whom were fraternity friends or boyfriends” (p. 96). While the women DeSantis interviewed realized there were other fraternities that did not recruit hyper-masculine, hypersexual members, they explained that those members were the nice, sweet guys that reminded them of their little brother; not the dating type. The sex role conformity faced by college males is clear.

### **Methods**

The purpose of the present study was to examine spirituality among fraternity members compared to non-affiliated male respondents in a representative sample of college men. A subset of data from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) 2003 pilot survey, College Students' Beliefs and Values (CSBV), was used for the study. The CSBV was designed as a longitudinal follow up of participants from the annual Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Survey of Entering Freshman, re-administered to a matching group during their third year at a diverse sample of colleges.

#### **College Students' Beliefs and Values (CSBV) Survey**

The HERI staff examined many definitions of “spirituality” and was unable to find an existing instrument that fit their needs due to the narrow focus on specific aspects of spirituality or religiosity. They sought to develop a survey instrument that would be inclusive of all students' beliefs, whether or not their spiritual beliefs stemmed from personal religious convictions or from other sources. As a result, the CSBV included both spiritual beliefs and perspectives and spiritual practices and behaviors. Most importantly, the HERI staff wanted to create a survey that did not assume the religious or spiritual beliefs of the student, referenced God minimally, and was inclusive of many beliefs—both conventional and unconventional. The instrument was also user friendly—a survey short in length and that used easily comprehended terminology (HERI, 2004c).

After the HERI staff developed the criteria for the survey instrument and administered the 175 item pilot survey, a factor analysis of the data resulted in identifying 19 principal factors (HERI, 2004d). The 19 factor scales measured six broad areas of spirituality, (1) Religious/Social Conservatism, (2) Religious Skepticism, (3) Self-Esteem, (4) Equanimity, (5) Psychological Distress, and (6) Spiritual Distress. The final pilot survey instrument factor scales included measures of spirituality, aesthetically-based spiritual experience, religious commitment, self-esteem, equanimity, spiritual distress, psychological distress, spiritual/religious growth, growth

in global/national understanding, growth in tolerance, growth in leadership, religious engagement, charitable involvement, religious/social conservatism, religious skepticism, spiritual quest, social activism, artistic orientation, and compassionate self-concept (HERI, 2004a). Cronbach's Alpha reliabilities for the 19 factor scales as reported ranged from .97 to .65 (HERI, 2004a).

### ***Proxy Measure of Hegemonic Masculinity***

Goldfarb and Eberly developed a twentieth scale from CSBV items, designed to approximate a measure of hegemonic masculinity (Table 1), using classical measurement theory (Winston, 2000). The researchers selected items from the CSBV that were consistent with descriptions of hegemonic masculinity found in two recent dissertations (Harris, 2006; Edwards, 2007). The list of selected items was forwarded to Dr. Frank Harris for his expert review, and he agreed that the items had face validity for the purposes of the present study (personal communication, January 10, 2008).

Hegemonic masculinity as defined for the purposes of the present study involved being highly athletic, dominant (e.g., ability and social group), exhibiting high alcohol use, and including misogynistic beliefs. Individual items selected are listed in Appendix A. The resulting 18 item scale was tested for Cronbach's Alpha reliability of .681, then used to examine fraternity and non-affiliated respondents' relative position as a proxy measure of hyper-masculinity in relationship to respondent scores on the CSBV Factor Scales previously identified in the pilot survey analysis. This new scale was used in conjunction with the 19 principle factors developed by HERI staff.

### ***CSBV Data Collection***

In March 2003, a postcard was sent out to a random sample of about 250 third-year students at each of 47 universities across the country to notify 2,000 CIRP student participants that they would receive the CBSV survey in the mail with more information about the survey. In addition to the survey and associated information, surveys were randomly selected to include a monetary incentive (e.g., \$0, \$2, \$5). Two weeks later, the HERI mailed the four page questionnaires with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study. Another attempt was made to get students to participate in the study by sending an email reminder to a sample of the total population. Two weeks after the email reminder a second survey was sent to the research participants. In the end 32% of the responses were usable for the study (HERI, 2004b).

### ***Treatment of the Data for the Present Study***

Both fraternity member ( $n = 237$ ) and non-affiliated male ( $n = 974$ ) subsets of the data were examined to determine if the independent datasets had the same underlying factor structure as the original, combined set of HERI data. Internal Consistency Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) was calculated to test if the reliability of the 19 factor scales for affiliated and non-affiliated males were similar (Appendix B). If the factor scales were stable (e.g., underlying factors from both sub-sets were similar), then finding similar reliabilities would strengthen the use of the survey factors for the present analysis. If the factor structures were somewhat different, this outcome would support the idea that there were underlying differences between the data sets of fraternity members and non-affiliated male participants. The affiliated and non-affiliated factor scales had parallel reliabilities for all 19 scales. Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to

determine significant differences, if any, between fraternity and non-affiliated participants on each of the 19 factor scales. Scheffé post-hoc tests were used to determine specific scale mean differences (Klockars & Hancock, 2000).

## **Results**

Since all relationships between variables identified in the analysis of CSBV data were reported in terms of correlations, no causality of any kind can be inferred from the original HERI results or results of the present study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). The data reported below are descriptive of a nationally representative sample of college men, because the 46 baccalaureate institutions chosen for the pilot study were purposefully selected based on different institutional characteristics (e.g., type, control, geographic location, etc.) to ensure a diverse sample of colleges and universities (HERI, 2004b).

### ***Fraternity Membership and College Students' Beliefs and Values***

Displayed in Table 1 are the results of a one-way MANOVA examining the relationship between fraternity membership and 20 scale factors (e.g., 19 CSBV factors and the hegemonic masculinity scale developed for the purposes of this study). Affiliated participants, compared to non-affiliated participants, reported higher levels of religious skepticism [ $F(1,665) = 7.66, p = .006$ ] and hegemonic masculinity [ $F(1,665) = 34.75, p < .001$ ]. Non-affiliated participants demonstrated higher levels of spirituality [ $F(1,665) = 9.23, p = .002$ ], religious commitment [ $F(1,665) = 13.03, p < .001$ ], spiritual/religious growth [ $F(1,665) = 16.22, p < .001$ ], religious engagement [ $F(1,665) = 14.35, p < .001$ ], and religious/social conservatism [ $F(1,665) = 22.89, p < .001$ ] compared to affiliated participants.

Table 1  
*Means and Standard Deviations of Affiliated and Non-Affiliated Participants and MANOVA Results*

Measures	Affiliated		Non-Affiliated		MANOVA <sup>a</sup> (Between-groups effects)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F(1, 665)	$\eta^2$
Spirituality	36.36	5.97	38.23	6.19	9.23**	0.014
Aesthetically-Based Spiritual Experience	10.08	2.32	10.66	2.45	5.56	0.008
Religious Commitment	39.59	8.28	42.49	7.96	13.03***	0.019
Self-Esteem	26.73	3.75	25.99	4.07	3.35	0.005
Equanimity	14.15	2.17	14.39	2.27	1.13	0.002
Spiritual Distress	8.41	2.12	8.60	2.04	0.87	0.001
Psychological Distress	6.06	1.26	6.20	1.33	1.18	0.002
Spiritual/Religious Growth	9.98	2.46	10.96	2.41	16.22***	0.024
Growth in Global/National Understanding	11.77	1.75	11.92	1.76	0.85	0.001
Growth in Tolerance	11.31	1.73	11.17	1.74	0.66	0.001
Growth in Leadership	8.25	1.14	8.14	1.19	0.97	0.001
Religious Engagement	20.50	7.16	23.32	7.50	14.35***	0.021
Charitable Involvement	10.57	1.91	10.14	1.93	5.05	0.008
Religious/Social Conservatism	15.42	3.89	17.36	4.09	22.89***	0.033
Religious Skepticism	17.96	4.25	16.82	4.14	7.66*	0.011
Spiritual Quest	25.93	4.92	26.44	5.26	0.94	0.001
Social Activism	19.26	4.07	19.76	4.23	1.42	0.002
Artistic Orientation	8.05	2.52	8.27	2.69	0.69	0.001
Compassionate Self-Concept	22.53	3.39	22.64	3.22	0.11	0.000
Hegemonic Masculinity	49.24	6.47	45.28	6.76	34.75***	0.050

\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\* $p < 0.005$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$

<sup>a</sup> Results of MANOVA for the Group main effect:  $F(19,661)$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .996$  ( $F$  value is Wilks' lambda)



***Hegemonic Masculinity and College Students' Beliefs and Values***

Examining the relationship between the participants' level of hegemonic masculinity and the scale factors, a one-way MANOVA was executed using a scale developed to assess respondents' relative conformity to hegemonic masculinity (Table 2). Due to the lack of participants who demonstrated levels of either extreme or scarce hegemonic masculinity (e.g., being more than two standard deviations), the two groups were combined with the groups that were between one and two standard deviations. The four hegemonic masculinity groups were categorized as: Low ( $\leq -1$  SD), Medium-Low (between  $-1$  SD and the mean), Medium-High (between the mean and  $+1$  SD), and High ( $\geq +1$  SD).

Table 2

*Means and Standard Deviations of Participants' Level of Hegemonic Masculinity and MANOVA Results*

Measures	Low		Medium-Low		Medium-High		High		MANOVA <sup>a</sup> Between-groups effects	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	<i>F</i> (3, 663)	$\eta^2$
Spirituality	39.67	5.15 <sup>1,2</sup>	38.50	6.20 <sup>3</sup>	37.21	5.96 <sup>1</sup>	35.67	6.91 <sup>2,3</sup>	9.66***	0.042
Aesthetically-Based Spiritual Experience	11.34	2.33 <sup>1,2</sup>	10.66	2.37 <sup>3</sup>	10.35	2.32 <sup>1</sup>	9.75	2.64 <sup>2,3</sup>	8.77***	0.038
Religious Commitment	45.69	6.02 <sup>1,2</sup>	43.17	7.71 <sup>3,4</sup>	40.49	8.07 <sup>1,3</sup>	37.55	8.58 <sup>2,4</sup>	24.97***	0.102
Self-Esteem	23.21	3.38 <sup>A</sup>	25.58	3.90 <sup>A</sup>	27.07	3.55 <sup>A</sup>	29.02	3.29 <sup>A</sup>	53.98***	0.196
Equanimity	14.42	2.25	14.38	2.34	14.32	2.16	14.22	2.26	0.19	0.001
Spiritual Distress	8.68	1.99	8.71	2.07	8.50	2.13	8.23	1.93	1.53	0.007
Psychological Distress	6.40	1.40	6.21	1.29	6.01	1.27	6.15	1.33	2.25	0.010
Spiritual/Religious Growth	11.58	2.31 <sup>1,2</sup>	11.15	2.34 <sup>3</sup>	10.40	2.45 <sup>1</sup>	9.70	2.37 <sup>2,3</sup>	15.30***	0.065
Growth in Global/National Understanding	11.50	1.55	11.89	1.79	11.93	1.83	12.25	1.68	3.48	0.015
Growth in Tolerance	11.17	1.55	11.23	1.67	11.32	1.91	10.90	1.76	1.35	0.006
Growth in Leadership	7.90	1.15	8.21	1.30	8.27	1.08	8.35	1.06	3.54	0.016

\* $p \leq 0.01$ ; \*\* $p < 0.005$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$

<sup>A</sup>Significant differences amongst all of the groups.

<sup>1, 2, 3, ...</sup> Significant differences between the groups with the same superscript.

<sup>a</sup> Results of MANOVA for the Group main effect:  $F(19, 645)$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .997$  ( $F$  value is Wilks' lambda)

Participants who displayed the lowest level of hegemonic masculinity reported higher levels of spirituality [ $F(3,663) = 9.66, p > .001$ ], aesthetically-based spiritual experience [ $F(3,663) = 8.77, p = .006$ ], religious commitment [ $F(3,663) = 24.97, p < .001$ ], spiritual/religious growth [ $F(3,663) = 15.30, p < .001$ ], religious engagement [ $F(3,663) = 51.56, p < .001$ ], and religious/social conservatism [ $F(3,663) = 60.37, p < .001$ ] than all other participants. Participants who reported the highest level hegemonic masculinity revealed higher levels of self-esteem [ $F(3,663) = 53.98, p < .001$ ] and religious skepticism [ $F(3,663) = 26.23, p < .001$ ].

To further examine the relationship between hegemonic masculinity and the scale factors, a one-way MANOVA was performed to examine both hegemonic masculinity and fraternity affiliation (Table 3). Due to the low numbers of affiliated participants, the hegemonic masculinity factor had to be condensed into two groups to have large enough samples to run the MANOVA test. The groups were split between low (less than the mean) and high (greater than the mean).

**Table 3**  
*Means and Standard Deviations of Fraternity Affiliation/Level of Hegemonic Masculinity and MANOVA Results*

Measures	Affiliated				Non-Affiliated				MANOVA <sup>a</sup>	
	Low		High		Low		High		Between-groups effects	$\eta^2$
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Spirituality	37.71	5.74	35.65	5.99 <sup>2</sup>	39.03	5.90 <sup>1,2</sup>	37.06	6.42 <sup>1</sup>	8.82***	0.038
Aesthetically-Based Spiritual Experience	10.26	2.13	9.99	2.42	10.96	2.40 <sup>1</sup>	10.20	2.46 <sup>1</sup>	6.36***	0.028
Religious Commitment	42.81	7.45	37.90	8.23 <sup>2</sup>	44.14	7.26 <sup>1,2</sup>	40.07	8.33 <sup>1</sup>	20.33***	0.084
Self-Esteem	24.98	3.90 <sup>3,4</sup>	27.65	3.34 <sup>2,4</sup>	24.79	3.90 <sup>1,2</sup>	27.76	3.67 <sup>1,3</sup>	33.30***	0.131
Equanimity	14.29	2.27	14.08	2.12	14.41	2.31	14.36	2.22	0.48	0.002
Spiritual Distress	8.50	2.17	8.36	2.11	8.73	2.02	8.42	2.05	1.30	0.006
Psychological Distress	5.95	1.34	6.11	1.21	6.31	1.32	6.04	1.32	2.47	0.018
Spiritual/Religious Growth	10.98	2.44	9.46	2.32 <sup>2</sup>	11.33	2.32 <sup>1,2</sup>	10.42	2.44 <sup>1</sup>	15.91***	0.067
Growth in Global/National Understanding	11.55	1.47	11.86	1.88	11.79	1.75	12.10	1.74	2.02	0.009
Growth in Tolerance	11.60	1.40	11.16	1.88	11.16	1.65	11.18	1.86	0.79	0.004
Growth in Leadership	8.00	1.08	8.39	1.15	8.05	1.27	8.26	1.04	2.73	0.012

\* $p \leq 0.01$ ; \*\* $p < 0.005$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$

<sup>1,2,3,...</sup> Significant differences between the groups with the same superscript.

<sup>a</sup> Results of MANOVA for the Group main effect:  $F(19,645), p < 0.001, \eta^2 = .995$  ( $F$  value is Wilks' lambda)

Individuals who reported both a low level of hegemonic masculinity and were affiliated demonstrated higher levels of religious engagement [ $F(3,663) = 39.52, p < .001$ ] than all other groups. Participants who reported a low level of hegemonic masculinity but were non-affiliated revealed higher levels of spirituality [ $F(3,663) = 8.82, p < .001$ ], aesthetically-based spiritual experience [ $F(3,663) = 6.36, p < .001$ ], religious commitment [ $F(3,663) = 20.33, p < .001$ ], spiritual/religious growth [ $F(3,663) = 15.91, p < .001$ ], and religious/social conservatism [ $F(3,663) = 48.52, p < .001$ ]. Individuals who reported a high level of hegemonic masculinity and were a member of a fraternity exhibited higher levels of religious skepticism [ $F(3,663) = 21.22, p < .001$ ], while participants who demonstrated a high level of hegemonic masculinity and were not a member of a fraternity displayed a higher level of self-esteem [ $F(3,663) = 33.30, p < .001$ ].

### **Discussion and Considerations**

Findings of the present study indicated that non-affiliated participants demonstrated higher levels of spirituality, religious commitment, spiritual/religious growth, religious engagement, and religious/social conservatism than affiliated participants. Fraternity members compared to non-affiliated men reported only a higher level of religious skepticism, meaning that fraternity men as reflected in the respondents from the CSBV Survey were more questioning of parental religious beliefs and practices and formal religious conventions. It would seem that current fraternity members might not have a strong spiritual or religious connection. Webb and Mueller (2009) found similar results in their study of fraternity/sorority members and non-affiliated participants at a mid-sized, mid-Atlantic region institution. Affiliated students scored significantly lower on the connectedness subscale than their non-affiliated peers. Connectedness in Webb and Mueller's study was defined "as 'feelings of belonging and responsibility to a larger human reality that cuts across generations and groups'" (p. 48).

Dr. Seth R. Brooks (1967), a visionary past president of Beta Theta Pi Fraternity, suggested that the fraternity ritual was a bridge between a young man's early life and his post-college life, during which many young men took a furlough from formal religious practice. Most fraternities have religiously based rituals that stress the important values and beliefs of the organization (Robson, 1976). Fraternity leaders should implement ritual-based educational programming that helps members connect their beliefs and values to the fraternities' guiding principles, creating a spiritual foundation that would allow young affiliated men to explore their own personal beliefs and values. While Ryan's (2009) study examined the experience of female college students who joined Greek letter organizations, such values-based programming could also help college fraternity men establish appropriate expectations and norms for behavior and should begin the moment a man joins a fraternity.

Fraternities have been identified as groups that foster atmospheres that encourage hyper-masculine behaviors (Edwards, 2007). Harris (2006) described hegemonically masculine males as those for whom "misogyny, alcohol consumption, homophobia, having a work hard/play hard mentality, and male bonding" (p. 191) were primary characteristics of their identity. Using a locally developed proxy scale assessing hegemonic masculinity using items from the CSBV Survey, the researchers found quantitative outcomes that supported both Harris' and Edward's

qualitative research. Fraternity members reported higher levels of hegemonic masculinity than non-affiliated participants.

Buchko (2004) found that men were not likely to turn toward religion for advice during times of trouble. One impact of hegemonic masculinity on male resiliency is the inability to cope with trauma and the range of emotions associated with such experiences (Harris, 2006; Edwards, 2007). A reflection of the inability to cope with trauma and its emotional challenges is the high-risk drinking associated with exaggerated masculine behavior (Capraro, 2000) often found in all-male societies.

Both affiliated and non-affiliated men who reported lower levels of masculinity exhibited lower levels of self-esteem compared to their male counterparts who reported higher levels of masculinity. However, men with more moderate levels of masculinity exhibited healthier levels of spirituality along with men who reported they had leadership training. Since college men often adopt their peers' views of masculinity, it is important to provide the necessary programming that is sensitive to the specific needs of college men. Practitioners need to be cognizant of the specific stressors that men face and be willing to work with them through difficult times. Edward's study revealed that "men put on a performance that was like a mask in that it allowed them to portray an image that conformed to society's expectations and cover up the ways they felt they didn't measure up to society's expectations" (p. 179). The "college man' culture" (Kuh & Arnold, 1993, p. 331) that promotes high-risk drinking is parallel to Edwards's (2007) concept of hegemonic masculinity. The results of this study indicated the need for promoting personal self-confidence as a counterpoint to conceptions of hegemonic masculinity for both affiliated and non-affiliated men. One method to do so among fraternity men is to expand leadership education opportunities to all members of a chapter, not just to members of executive committees in regional leadership academies. A second method is to establish clear behavioral expectations at the moment a man joins (Eberly, 2009).

### ***Limitations***

There were several limitations to the present study. First, all analyses were based on self-reported information. Self-report bias could lead to participants over-reporting the number of hours in a typical week members and non-members spend partying, drinking beer, drinking wine or liquor, and/or socializing with a person of a different racial or ethnic group. Also, some students might not be willing to reveal how "spiritual" they actually were. They may have felt uncomfortable responding to the CSBV Survey content, particularly as items related to their personal values. Additionally, respondents may have (no matter how hard instrument developers worked to eliminate ambiguity) confused spirituality with organized religious beliefs and institutions (Bryant, 2007).

In one item on the CSBV Survey participants were asked if they had joined a fraternity or sorority after entering college, but were not able to indicate whether the organization joined was traditionally White (e.g., North-American Interfraternity Conference, National Panhellenic Council), traditionally Black (e.g., National Pan-Hellenic Conference) or associated with other cultural backgrounds (e.g., National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations). Also, the researchers for this study did not request racial classification data from the HERI. However, Bryant (2007), using the same data set as the researchers, reported that only four percent of total

respondents were Black, four percent were Asian, and two percent were Latino/a. Some results may be confounded based on the inability to control for racial identity within fraternity affiliation. If information regarding racial identity were available, actual numbers of participants based on Bryant's percentages may well have been too small to carry out inferential statistical analyses (Glass & Stanley, 1970). Lastly, the small number of affiliated students required collapsing some of the response categories during the analysis to have a large enough sample to carry out inferential statistical analyses. A larger initial sample would have resulted in richer data for analysis.

### ***Conclusion***

The purpose of the study was to examine the correlation between fraternity membership and the development of spirituality within its members, and to determine how the level of spirituality of fraternity members compared to the level of spirituality among the general college male population. There were significant differences on the 19 CSBV factors between fraternity members and non-affiliated male respondents. In addition, there were significant findings among the six planned analyses and the hegemonic masculinity scale developed from CSBV items for the purposes of this study. Analyzing the CSBV factor scales among members of fraternities, compared to non-affiliated participants, demonstrates the need to enhance local chapter programming promoting the development of spiritual and ethical values, creating entirely new character development programs, and finding other meaningful ways of reinforcing college fraternal organizations' core ritual values, particularly as they address issues of spirituality and personal religious growth supported by a healthy conception of manhood.

## Appendix A

*Proxy Measure of Hegemonic Masculinity (Cronbach's Alpha = .681)*

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### *Athleticism*

Question 6: Since entering college have you:

Item 8: Participated in: intercollegiate football or basketball

Item 9: Participated in: other intercollegiate sport

Question 7: During the past year, how much time did you spend during a typical week doing the following activities?

Item 4: Exercising/sports

*Dominance: religion, ability, social group, etc.*

Question 8: For the activities listed below, please indicate how often you engaged in each since entering college.

Item 1: Socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group (reverse coded)

Question 9: Compare with when you first started college, how would you now describe your:

Item 2: Knowledge of people from different races/cultures (reverse coded)

Question 13: Please indicate the importance to you personally of each of the following:

Item 2: Becoming an authority in my field

Item 6: Being very well off financially

Item 11: Becoming successful in a business of my own

Question 31: Rate yourself on each of the following traits as compared with the average person your age. We want the most accurate estimate of how you see yourself.

Item 7: Drive to achieve

Item 16: Leadership ability

Question 31: Rate yourself on each of the following traits as compared with the average person your age. We want the most accurate estimate of how you see yourself.

Item 24: Self-confidence (intellectual)

Item 25: Self-confidence (social)

Question 19: Please indicate the extent to which each of the following describes you.

Item 5: Feeling good about the direction in which my life is heading

### *High Alcohol Use*

Question 7: During the past year, how much time did you spend during a typical week doing the following activities?

Item 5: Partying

Question 8: For the activities listed below, please indicate how often you engaged in each since entering college.

Item 5: Drank Beer

Item 6: Drank wine or liquor

### *Misogyny*

Question 29: Please indicate your agreement with each of the following statements:

Item 10: If two people really like each other, it's all right for them to have sex even if they've known each other for only a very short time

Item 11: The activities of married women are best confined to the home and family

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## Appendix B

*Internal Consistency Reliability of 2003 CSBV Pilot Study<sup>a</sup>, Affiliated, and Non-Affiliated Participants (Cronbach's Alpha)*

Variable	Overall <sup>a</sup>	Affiliated	Non-Affiliated
Spirituality	0.86	0.862	0.855
Aesthetically-Based Spiritual Experience	0.78	0.797	0.799
Religious Commitment	0.97	0.936	0.946
Self-Esteem	0.79	0.692	0.782
Equanimity	0.75	0.690	0.749
Spiritual Distress	0.65	0.722	0.675
Psychological Distress	0.66	0.632	0.645
Spiritual/Religious Growth	0.88	0.821	0.798
Growth in Global/National Understanding	0.82	0.721	0.796
Growth in Tolerance	0.70	0.679	0.67
Growth in Leadership	0.71	0.680	0.654
Religious Engagement	0.87	0.878	0.879
Charitable Involvement	0.68	0.621	0.63
Religious/Social	0.82	0.77	0.802
Religious Skepticism	0.85	0.799	0.803
Spiritual Quest	0.83	0.838	0.83
Social Activism	0.81	0.813	0.81
Artistic Orientation	0.70	0.693	0.716
Compassionate Self-Concept	0.78	0.759	0.769

<sup>a</sup>2003 Pilot Study of College Students' Beliefs and Values Conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA.

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