

Zeta Alpha Chi: the Rituals of Theta Kappa Nu

Goals

1. Increase the knowledge of ritualism history.
2. Increase the understanding of Lambda Chi Alpha's heritage; in particular, the ritualistic traditions of Theta Kappa Nu that were brought to the greater Fraternity at the 1939 union.
3. Gain an understanding of the source of the Λ XA Associate Member Ceremony.

General Arrangements

1. While this workshop is appropriate at any time, it is particularly useful during the initial weeks following a membership recruitment period.
2. The workshop, as well as the ideas found in the Theta Kappa Nu ceremonies, are open to everyone without restriction.
3. Should the workshop be conducted with only initiated members present, it is possible to expand the discussion to include comparisons with the initiation ritual of Λ XA. Be aware that doing so may well cause the session to run considerably longer than an hour.
4. When possible, use a rectangular room with chairs for the number expected to attend in the central part of the room. Ideally there should be room for the eight officers around the walls. When the number attending permits, it would recreate the Θ KN Chapter Room to have the chairs for the audience lining the east, south, and west walls (one or two rows deep), but be sure to leave space for those taking the role of the officers.
5. Discuss with the High Phi what arrangement individuals may make with him to borrow the two open documents with materials related to this workshop, *Ritual—What and Why* and the *Open Ceremonies of Λ XA*.

Materials

1. Ideally, seven copies of this script—or at least copies of the appropriate page(s) for each individual who will read one of the roles.
2. For those chapters who trace their history, at least in part, to Θ KN, any ritual equipment or other memorabilia owned by the chapter might be displayed to advantage as part of the workshop.

Time Required

Preparation: 30 minutes general planning and recruitment of those to take the 8 roles
the Narrator reads extensively; ideally he should be familiar both with the traditions of Θ KN and with ritualism generally
Archon and Oracle have lengthy passages to read
Captain of the Guard, the Guard, Treasurer, and Chaplain read short passages
the Candidate has only one line
[2 of the Θ KN officers are not included in the script: Scribe and Sentinel]
30 minutes specific preparation of the narrator
10 minutes setup of the room, more when Θ KN memorabilia is to be used

Execution: 1 hour

Directions

1. With a large group, it is preferable to follow the script closely, with questions and discussion at the end. With smaller groups it is possible to pause between sections for discussion, questions, and observations.
2. Begin by reminding the group of the goals for the session ... while the *Goals* listed above may be used, it is preferable to customize their presentation to your current chapter situation.
3. For most purposes, only some of the narrator comments should be used; the choices should be made ahead of time in light of the goals for the workshop, not spontaneously.
4. At the conclusion, inform the group how individuals may arrange to borrow the chapter's copy of materials related to Θ KN rituals, namely *Ritual—What and Why* and the *Open Ceremonies of Λ XA*.

introduction

Narrator

The year 1939 saw the union of Lambda Chi Alpha and Theta Kappa Nu. At the time of union, Lambda Chi Alpha had no new member ceremony worthy of the name. It was therefore considered appropriate to retain the initiation tradition of Theta Kappa Nu by condensing its ritual to form the Associate Member Ceremony of the greater fraternity.

The ritual of Theta Kappa Nu was virtually identical to that of one of its eleven founding chapters: Phi Kappa Nu at Howard College, a school known to us today as Samford University. The local ritual was written by Theta-Alpha #1, George Neely.

What did Theta Kappa Nu bring to the greater fraternity? 55 chapters, 34 on campuses new to ΛXA . "Duke" Flad among some 7,000 members. The elegant symbol of a lion rampant holding pasewise a white rose slipped proper. The challenge of VIR QUISQUE VIR. A focus on academics not then present in ΛXA ... even when virtually bankrupt in 1938 the Grand Council awarded its annual graduate scholarship and authorized a lamp trophy for the highest chapter grade-point-average.

Late August of 1939 found the Ninth Grand Chapter of Theta Kappa Nu meeting at Birmingham-Southern College and Lambda Chi Alpha in its 18th General Assembly at San Francisco's Mark Hopkins Hotel. The document of union was endorsed by the Grand High Zeta, the Grand Council, and all four founders of Theta Kappa Nu. The General Assembly voted first ... every undergraduate delegate in favor of the merger. After learning of that vote, and following considerable discussion of the details, a roll call vote found the same unanimity in Birmingham.

After telegraphing the favorable vote to the General Assembly still meeting in San Francisco, the Grand Chapter conducted two final items of business: a charter for the Mississippi State colony and one final use of the Theta Kappa Nu initiation ritual. Since 1939 the larger fraternity has always honored the final wishes of the Ninth Grand Chapter ... we do not permit the exemplification of the ΘKN ritual. This workshop, with its use of excerpts, maintains that tradition while educating our members in the ideals of Theta Kappa Nu.

Grand Archon Lybarger's closing comments included: "We have accomplished something parallel to that which was accomplished in a similar period of time at Springfield, Missouri, in 1924, when Theta Kappa Nu came into existence. So, you are founders ... you have help establish this fraternity, established it upon a higher plane, a broader base, a more secure foundation.

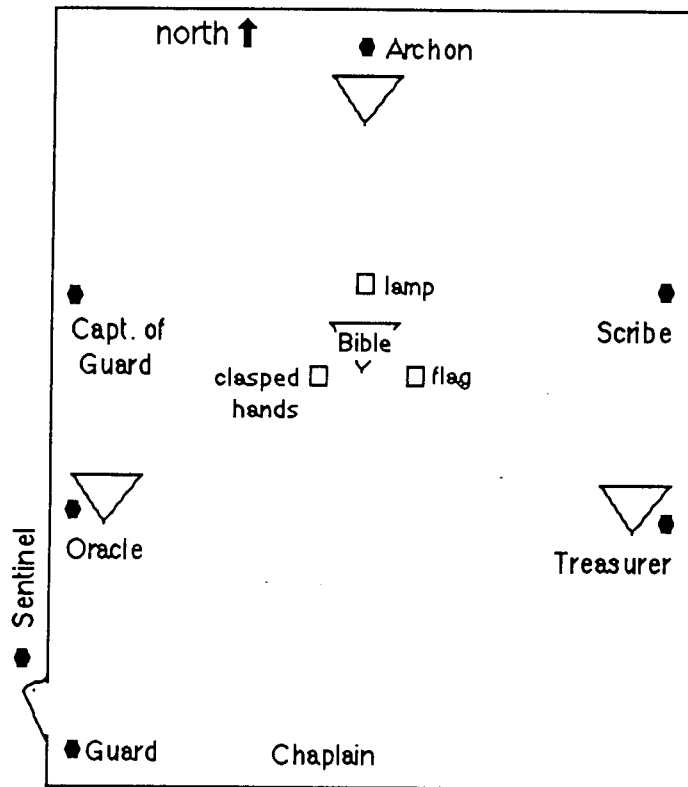
... We have risen from the plain and we have stood upon the mountain and have been able to look into the future and as we have done so, we have seen a great fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha—our fraternity ... You and I will be old. We will have passed out of the picture, but this fraternity will abide and we will be benefiting college generations ... as yet unborn."

Narrator

The privilege of condensing the pledge degree and three degrees of initiation to form the Associate Member Ceremony fell to the ritual guru of Theta Kappa Nu, its long-time Grand Oracle, "Dad" Krenmyre.

While some of the mechanics may be unexpected, you should recognize the concepts underlying Theta Kappa Nu's rituals. The workshop text comes from the 1928 edition.

the room



Narrator

The Chapter Room of Theta Kappa Nu was rectangular, with North taken as the shorter side farther from the door.

In the center of the room was a Central Pedestal or Altar—a triangle with 18-inch sides, base and top black, the square column silver; on each side of the supporting column was the Greek letter **eta (H)**—for **Athos** or **virtue**; on this central altar was the open **Holy Bible**.

Surrounding the central pedestal, in a triangular arrangement, were three small pedestals whose tops were four inches square. The one toward the Archon had the Greek letter **delta** (Δ) on its column—for **Dioaskalia** or **learning**—and supported a **Grecian lamp**.

The one toward the Treasurer had the letter **pi** (Π)—for **Potriotikos** or **belonging to fellow countrymen**, with a small American (or Canadian) **flag**.

The one toward the Oracle had the letter **alpha** (Λ)—for **Adelphotas** or **fraternity**, with a small cast of **clasped hands**.

the officers

As each officer is mentioned, the individual who will take that role should move to the appropriate position. [Note that it is not necessary to have a Scribe or a Sentinel, although you may wish to have someone stand at the Scribe's station, to clearly show the secondary triangle.]

The stations of the three principal officers formed the equilateral **Principal Triangle**. In front of each chair was a pedestal the top of which was a triangle fourteen inches on each side. The Archon was in the north—with a large coat of arms on the wall behind, the Oracle in the west—with a large banner (theta at top center, kappa to left, nu to right, coat of arms in center) on the wall behind, and the Treasurer in the east—with a large banner (theta to left, kappa below the centered coat of arms, nu to right; eleven stars in an arc across the top).

The stations of three minor officers also formed an equilateral triangle but oriented with its apex in the south, which was the station of the Chaplain. The Scribe was in the east and the Captain of the Guard in the west. The Scribe had a small table, but the other stations consisted only of a chair.

The station of the Guard was at the door, with the Sentinel just outside the door. Members sat in chairs arranged around the walls.

Narrator

The “four-corners-of-the-earth” room arrangement is found with many rituals, ancient and modern. The Sentinel is really not an officer of initiation, just the formal recognition of the need for a member to guard against the interruption of the ceremonies.

The seven ceremonial officers—including three principals, seated in the four compass directions, is in keeping with the traditions of numerology. This $3 + 4 = 7$ is emphasized by one officer in each direction wearing a white cape.

Narrator The principal officers wore black gowns—think typical choir robe or the traditional bachelor's gown—with four stripes of one-half inch silk braid down the front center ... the two inner ones gold, the outside ones white. On the left breast of the gown was a Tudor rose in white felt. These officers wore a white cape lined with crimson ... and a black cap about four inches high, without brim or visor, the cap having gold, crimson, and white one-quarter inch silk braid on the bottom edge and a white felt Syriac numeral on the front. This Syriac numeral, which represented 11, looks like an equilateral triangle with a piece of one side missing.

The Chaplain's robe had a crimson cross on the left breast instead of the Tudor rose and his white cape had a crimson cross on both breasts. His cap had the Syriac numeral in crimson. The other minor officers had a white Syriac numeral on the left breast of the robe and did not wear a cape; their caps had only gold and white braid.

The Captain of the Guard held a seven-foot-long spear with black shaft and a gold head; the Guard held a similar spear but with a silver head.

Each member wore a plain black robe with white Syriac numeral on the left breast; the member's cap was entirely black, i.e., no braid. While robes were prescribed, we are informed that, in practice, the members wore suits to the initiation ceremonies. Few chapters of any size could afford robes for the entire membership.

Narrator Why use regalia? It creates an atmosphere of dignity and sets the tone for the ceremonies. Virtually all fraternal organizations prescribe some form of special costume for the officers. Theta Kappa Nu was somewhat unusual in that the man being initiated wore a suit rather than some form of special clothing.

opening the chapter

Narrator Like many fraternal organizations, Theta Kappa Nu conducted its initiation as an item of business within the regular meeting format. Unlike most organizations the pledge and initiation ritual were largely performed for each candidate individually—only the second section of the third degree was done for a group of neophytes.

The standard Opening Ceremony was the first order of business. This ceremony began with conversation among the Archon, the Captain of the Guard, the Guard, and the Sentinel about securing the chapter and renewing the Covenant, but with the instruction to the Sentinel—who was stationed outside the chapter room—to “offer hospitality and assistance to any worthy

friend passing." The opening concluded with a prayer for divine guidance by the Chaplain.

Narrator Information concerning contemporary college fraternity initiations can be found in a 1979 doctoral dissertation; 22 out of a possible 67 ritual scripts were obtained and analyzed.

Preliminary or anteroom activities involving several officers and the candidate(s) were found in 17 of the 22 scripts; half included an opening prayer.

Narrator To gain admission to the Chapter Room while a Chapter is in session, give the raps ... four knocks, pause, one knock. When the Guard admits you, go to the center of the base of the Principal Triangle, face the Archon, and give the sign of the Everlasting Triangle at waist height, about eight inches from the body, parallel to the floor. Form the triangle with the thumbs and first fingers, leaving a small gap between the fingers. When the Archon recognizes you with the same symbol, you may be seated. To address the Archon during the meeting, arise and give the symbol of the Everlasting Triangle; the Archon will respond with the same symbol.

The meeting then proceeded with (2) a Roll Call and (3) reading and adopting minutes of the previous meeting. When needed, the pledging and/or initiation ceremonies were the fourth item of business.

1. pledging ceremony

Captain moves to the station of the Guard.

Narrator The **initiatory or pledge degree**. It was conferred upon a person as soon as possible after he was pledged by the Chapter. Black curtains are hung over the door through which the candidate enters; black covers are placed on the four central and three officer pedestals. The candidate is blind-folded and has an eight-foot chain passed over his shoulders and tied around his wrists. The room is in semi-darkness and a slow, quiet selection of music such as "The Fifth Nocturne" is played during the conferring of the obligation.

Narrator Why use music? It is a mechanism for appealing to the emotions, for dealing with the whole person. The three traditional components of all initiation rituals are (1) secrecy, (2) emotion, (3) edification of ideals. Behavioral psychologists speak of the components as behaviors, cognitions, and affect. By whatever name or approach a first-rate ritual will inspire the individual in all aspects of his being.

anteroom preparation

Narrator The Archon somehow receives word of "strangers nearby" and instructs the Captain of the Guard to investigate. Both the Sentinel and the Guard are outside the chamber with the man to be pledged. After some intervening instructions, the Captain of the Guard goes to the door carrying his spear, raps on the door, is answered, and opens the door slightly.

entrance ceremony

Captain Who disturbs the deliberations of our Chapter?

Guard A stranger, Mr. John Smith, who wishes to become a brother.

Captain Whence came you?

Guard From the world outside where all is discord, hatred, and contention, and where one strives alone to make a man of himself.

Captain Why came you to our door?

Guard Because I had observed that you were a band of brothers who by your fraternal assistance helped every man to be a man.

Captain Are you prompted by any other motive than that of mutual assistance and brotherhood?

Candidate I am not.

Captain conducts Candidate to station of the Oracle. "Conducts" means that the Captain's right arm is inside the neophyte's left arm and grasping the neophyte's hand, palms touching.

Narrator The Archon asks for any objections from the members to the admission of the candidate, the Captain of the Guard comments on the initiation process and conducts the candidate to the base of the Principal Triangle. Conducting means that the Captain has his right arm inside the neophyte's left arm and grasping the neophyte's hand, palms touching. After additional questions the Captain conducts the candidate around the triangle to the Oracle's station.

Narrator As you would expect, the sociologist found that each of the 22 fraternity initiations had some form of ceremony such as we have just heard to admit the neophyte to the initiation chamber.

Captain Brother Oracle, it is the desire of our Worthy Archon that you instruct Mr. John Smith relative to the purposes of Theta Kappa Nu Fraternity.

the first obligation

Oracle My friend, Theta Kappa Nu Fraternity is composed of a group of friends and brothers who have banded themselves together for mutual assistance and fraternal association. We believe that the first duty of every man is to make of himself a man, and that he can only do this through the help of God. We take as our guide the Holy Bible, and as our exemplar Jesus of Nazareth. The objects of our Fraternity are the establishment of a brotherhood for the cultivation of the highest ideals of patriotism, the acquirement of sound learning, the observance of the moral law and the laws of God.

Worthy Archon, *[turns toward Archon and makes the sign of the Everlasting Triangle]* the neophyte has been instructed relative to the purposes of our Fraternity.

Captain conducts Candidate to the base of the altar

oath of a neophyte

Narrator The Captain and candidate move to the altar and the Archon administers the oath. Just prior to the oath the candidate is told

Captain You will be asked to do nothing that will conflict with your code of morals or that you will be ashamed of in after life. With this assurance on my part, are you willing to proceed?

Narrator All 22 of the fraternity scripts had an oath of fidelity to the group. The Captain's speech you just heard is an example of what the sociologist called a "good faith assurance," a formal statement of the commitment of the fraternity to treat the prospective member with dignity and respect.

Then

Archon Brother Captain of the Guard, our friend being bound to us by irrevocable ties you will release him from his chains and restore him to light.

Narrator After the blindfold and chains are removed,

Archon My friend, you have taken the obligation of a neophyte, and henceforth until you are initiated as a member of Theta Kappa Nu Fraternity you will be known by this appellation. The word means *beginner*.

Narrator A number of groups use symbols to indicate the seriousness of the obligation being subscribed to by the candidate. In Freemasonry, for example, the candidate is blindfolded—indicating ignorance in the mysteries not yet revealed, has the tip of a sword placed against his left breast—suggesting that undue eagerness to join the group without consideration of the obligations being assumed is deadly, and has a rope noose placed about his neck—emblematic of the personal death that occurs when one runs away from responsibilities. Other groups may use black garments to indicate the naive status.

Captain conducts Candidate to station of the Archon

the second obligation

Narrator The candidate then gave the Treasurer a monetary gift that went to the general fraternity's graduate scholarship program; Lambda Chi Alpha continued this practice from the Union until 1959.

Narrator The Captain conducted the candidate to the apex of the triangle—Archon's station—and heard

Archon My friend, you have set out upon a journey in which I trust you will be successful. Let me assure you that we stand ready at all times to assist you in your undertaking. Do not put too much dependence in your own strength. Instead, seek the advice and support of your friends; or better, go to the Source of all strength. The Clasped Hands are the symbol of fraternity. May they ever remind you of your obligations and responsibilities. You entered blinded and bound in chains through doors draped with black curtains. Our altars are covered with black. The chains are emblematic of the chains of circumstances that prevent one from succeeding when striving to do so for selfish purposes. The darkness and black coverings signify that you are as yet in darkness and have much to learn.

Captain conducts Candidate to station of the Guard

badge of a neophyte

Narrator The Archon then presented the badge of the neophyte, also called the pledge button, and enumerated the requirements for initiation.

The sociologist reports that 16 of the initiation scripts involved the formal presentation of the badge. Theta Kappa Nu's ritual is unusual in that the badge of the neophyte is formally presented at the conclusion of the pledging ceremony, but the brother's badge is not presented during the final part of the initiation ceremony.

2. first degree: learning

Narrator The **first degree or degree of learning**. Black curtains remain over the door through which the candidate enters; gold covers are placed on top of the black covers on the pedestals.

 The Archon opens the degree.

Archon Brothers, the North Star is visible in the heavens, calling us together to remind us that the purpose of Theta Kappa Nu to build for better manhood is as fixed as the position of that heavenly body. Let us therefore resume our labors.

Captain conducts Candidate to station of the Oracle

Narrator After entrance knocks and dialogue between the Guard and the Captain of the Guard, the blind-folded candidate is admitted and takes another oath. His blindfold is then removed. The Captain conducts the neophyte to the station of the Oracle.

Captain Brother Oracle, it is the desire of the Archon that you instruct our friend Mr. John Smith.

Oracle My friend, you will note that the Greek letter "Delta" which is the initial of the Greek word [Dioaskalia] adorns the pedestal marking the station of our Worthy Archon. This reminds us that learning is the foundation of all true character. Scholarship in Theta Kappa Nu is held in the highest esteem, for through it more than through anything else we expect to gain distinction on this campus. You are not only expected to make passing grades each year but also to distinguish yourself in some branch of learning.

Captain conducts Candidate to midway between the Oracle and Treasurer

Narrator The Captain and Neophyte move to the Treasurer's station for more details on the academic obligation and then to the base of the principal triangle.

Archon My friend, there is indeed much yet for you to learn. The lamp has long been a symbol of learning.

Narrator The Captain of the Guard points to the lamp with the seven-foot gold-headed spear he carries.

Archon By it we are reminded that we should ever strive to attain high standards of scholarship. The Greeks taught that the learned man used his wisdom for the good of his fellows. You are to remember that that is the only object we, as members of Theta Kappa Nu, have in attaining knowledge. Go, my friend, out into the world and prove that you are indeed a man among men by the

way you use the advantages that are yours. Remember that this institution of learning has been placed here by society for your use, and that you owe much to society in return for the possibilities which lie before you.

Observe that a cover of gold has been placed over the black cover which adorns the pedestals. As gold is a basic metal that has been used from time immemorial for decoration, so it is with learning. Thus, my friend, *[Archon comes from station and takes neophyte by right hand]* may you form the foundation of good character upon the truths you have learned, and may you adorn your life with the pure things of knowledge. *[releases hand]* Take with you this piece of gold cloth. *[hands to neophyte]* It is from the decorations of one of the Grecian temples dedicated to the God of Knowledge. The Greeks taught that if at any time you use your knowledge for other than righteous purposes this piece of cloth will turn black. May you return with it as pure as it now is. Go, my friend, and may you be successful.

Captain moves to his station; Candidate moves to back of the room

Narrator The Captain then conducts the neophyte to the door.

3. second degree: patriotism

Narrator The **second degree or degree of patriotism**. Black curtains remain over the door through which the candidate enters; red covers are placed on top of the gold and black covers on the pedestals. An American flag is placed near the station of the Archon. Again there are entrance and exit formalities, an oath, and instructive admonitions concerning patriotism. The letter pi that adorns the Treasurer's pedestal stands for [Potriotikos].

4. third degree: morality

Narrator The **third degree or degree of morality or virtue**. Black curtains remain over the door through which the candidate enters; red covers remain on top of the gold and black covers on the pedestals. The Archon begins the degree

Archon Brethren, the hour of meditation has come. The sun is sinking and it will soon be dark. We have labored all through the day, striving to impart knowledge to those who sought it that we might strengthen our fraternal ties, add to the activities of our school, and support our government. There has been among us a neophyte, Mr. John Smith, who has cheerfully taken our instruction and wishes to become a brother among us before it is night. Shall he be admitted, if he has kept untarnished the piece of gold cloth which he as a neophyte bears?

Narrator The members respond with "He shall." The blind-folded candidate enters and takes the final oath. He is then taught the handclasp by which the brothers of Theta Kappa Nu greet each other and the meaning of the various triangles is restated. The handshake: grasp brother's hand with thumb resting on knuckle of middle or large finger, press slightly four times.

the final mystery

Narrator The second section of the third degree is conducted with the neophytes seated in the south. An altar of sacrifice is placed midway between the Archon's station and the central altar. Three different "hopes for the future" prove to be for naught.

Captain My brothers, is there not hope? Surely we have a great fraternity knitted together by bonds that are everlasting. If our nation can survive but for a time we can knit the influential men of our provinces into a fraternal band with us, and then we shall be acclaimed the rightful conquerors of the races.

Archon Perhaps it may be so. Brother Captain of the Guard, prepare the sacrifice to the God of Fellowship.

Narrator The Captain pours wood alcohol on a pan of salt and lights it, but the fire flickers and goes out.

Oracle My brothers, there is yet hope. Have we not given learning to the world? The nations of the earth have sat at the feet of our scholars. As soon as they become as cultured as we are, they will understand our conquest and all will be well.

Archon Our brother Oracle speaks sagely. From our scholars we have learned that darkness fleeth before wisdom. Brother Oracle, prepare a sacrifice to the God of Knowledge. He surely will be pleased and will reward us.

Narrator The fire again flickers and dies.

Treasurer There is still hope, for have we not builded a great brotherhood? If our nation can but live until we can teach all people the spirit of patriotism we shall conquer. Patriotism is the great welding force of the ages. Ours is yet to be a great future; let us go forth to teach men loyalty to our leader.

Archon The wisdom of our Treasurer has ever been helpful, we will listen to his advice. Brother Treasurer, prepare the sacrifice to the God of Patriotism.

Narrator The third fire dies. Then the Chaplain returns

Chaplain My brothers, I have indeed found the secret. In a cave among the ruins of an eastern city, I found an old hermit at the point of death. I ministered to him, giving up my search for happiness that I might be of service to him. In his last moments he directed me to a secret cavern and there I found these old scrolls.

Narrator But without the secret the scrolls cannot be read. The secret: Nikomen Kata Theou. The fourth fire, alcohol added to a mixture of granulated sugar, potassium chlorate, and strontium nitrate, continues to burn brightly. At this point the curtains over the door are quietly changed to white and a white cover is placed over each pedestal ... appearing white with red, gold, and black border. A red cross is raised from behind the altar of sacrifice. The great fraternal secret of Theta Kappa Nu is

the central ideal

Oracle "From now henceforth and forever I demand not sacrifice but service." For centuries ... we have faced the North and as we have looked toward our Archon, we have looked toward the North Star. Our purposes have been as changeless as that heavenly body, and now the wisdom of our fathers begins to dawn. We have held sacred our name "Theta Kappa Nu," but little did we understand its meaning until now: Nikomen Kata Theou, Through God We Conquer. We are asked to sacrifice only by service to our fellowmen.

Narrator The sociologist reports that 21 of the 22 fraternity initiations included exposition of confidential insignia, signs, and mottoes. The obvious exception would be the non-secret society of Delta Upsilon, who have no symbols or practices restricted to members.

the League and Covenant

Narrator The Scribe reads the League and Covenant, a statement of the ideals and principles of Theta Kappa Nu. Each newly initiated brother approaches the Scribe's desk, signs the League and Covenant, and resumes his seat.

Narrator Among the 22 initiation ritual scripts, 6 call for an enrollment ceremony as part of the proceedings. The *League and Covenant* of Theta Kappa Nu is a document that was signed by the representatives of the 11 local fraternities at the Springfield founding ceremony in 1924; it was then used at every initiation of new members ... a set of principles connecting all men initiated into the fraternity.

Narrator Various officers then explain the meaning of the badge and coat of arms, the Scribe presents each new brother with a certificate of membership and a membership card, and the Archon closes the initiation ritual.

other items of business

Narrator Following initiation, as needed, were
(5) literary exercises
(6-7-8) reports of officers and committees; reading correspondence
(9) election or installation of officers, when needed
(10) proposals for membership
(11) general business
(12) roll call

closing the chapter

Narrator After ascertaining that there was no further business, the Archon proceeded with (13) The Closing Ceremony, first instructing the Captain of the Guard, the Guard, and the Sentinel to secure the chapter for the ceremony.

Archon Brother Treasurer, what is our duty as we go forth into the world?

Treasurer To live as men, to treat all men as friends, and to offer our assistance to those who are worthy.

Narrator With two blows of the gavel, everyone arises [*gestures for all present to rise*], the response to the Archon's question, which you should each give, is "It is."

Archon Brothers, is it your determination so to live and act?

All It is.

Archon Brother Oracle, what is your last admonition?

Oracle Brothers, as we go forth may it be in the spirit of brotherhood. Theta Kappa Nu has a mission to perform second to none. It is ours to teach by example and precept, that "a friend sticketh closer than a brother." As we go about on our campus we should remember that we are to be friends, not only to our group, but to all who are worthy. There is always some student who needs a friendly handclasp or a cheerful greeting; some student who will be a success if encouraged, but who, without that encouragement, will fail. It is ours to offer to this student the friendship which he needs.

Narrator After a prayer by the Chaplain, the Archon declares the chapter closed.

quest by the light of the north star

Narrator The underlying theme of a journey or quest is indicated in the Theta Kappa Nu ritual by the changing of the covers on the seven pedestals, the three in front of the principal officers and the four in the center of the initiation chamber. Of the 22 college fraternity initiations, 6 had similar symbolism.

There were a number of references throughout the ritual to using the constancy of the North Star to guide the initiate on his journey ... the intended symbolism was the adherence to an unchanging set of fraternal ideals.

Additional information concerning rituals, both in ancient and in other contemporary groups, may be found in *Ritual—What and Why*, pp. 1-19.

Other details on emblems and ritual in Theta Kappa Nu may be found in *Ritual—What and Why*, pp. 28-36 and 49-50. Items of particular interest include the text of the League and Covenant (pp. 28-29) and a description of its emblems (pp. 35-36).

Information on the general history of Theta Kappa Nu may be found in *Lambda Chi Alpha: A Historical Perspective* by Charles Peyser with Ernest Vargo (1992), particularly pp. 44-57 and 238-243.

Confidential information describing modifications to the initiation ritual of the combined fraternity may be found on pp. 21-22 of the *High Phi Manual*.

This workshop is a 1999 revision of a workshop facilitated by Chuck Peyser at the 1994 Conclave at Simpson College and at the 1994 Leadership Seminar in Indianapolis.