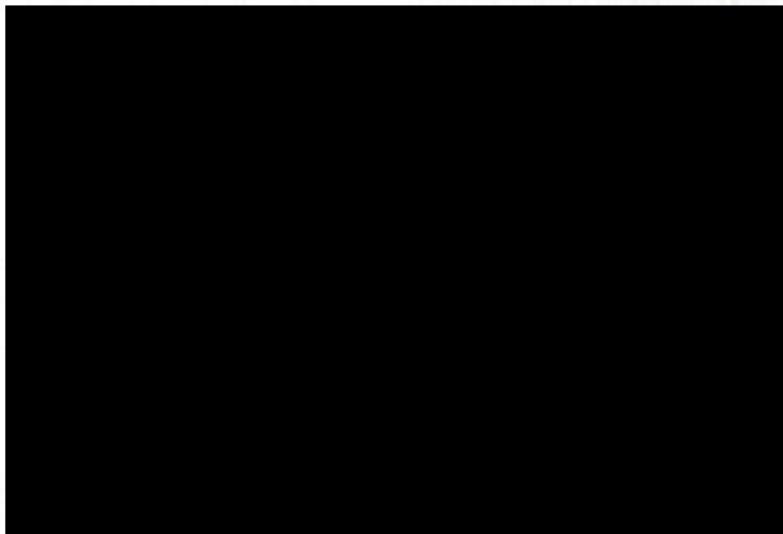


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MEMORIAL  
THE GHOST  
of  
PHI KAPPA TAU



told to [REDACTED]

April 1972

After a discouraging attempt to do a research project on a house I happened to stumble upon this legend. Because of my lack of success and ensuing lack of enthusiasm I decided that it was worth a try to look into this story.

One night my sorority, Alpha Omicron Pi, was having an exchange with the men's fraternity, Sigma Chi. The television program, Night Gallery came on and many of us sat down to watch it. The show followed its usual creepy agenda and at its completion set the mood for our ensuing discussion of ghosts. This was my first exposure to the legend of the ghost of the Phi Kappa Tau house. [REDACTED] a member of the Sigma Chi house told me the first version. He had heard the legend from two of his fraternity brothers. One of his informants had moved out of the house, but one was fortunately still there.

[REDACTED] Knew the legend in more detail because he had heard it from his sister who had dated a member of the Phi Kappa Tau house. She was also a little sister there and had heard the story from other members of the house.

I went to talk to her and found her an even better informant. She referred me to some of the old members of the house. This was rather hard to follow up since the Phi Kappa Tau house has folded and most of its members have graduated. I was able to get in touch with one of the old members, [REDACTED], a law student in Indianapolis.

Legend A

Told by [REDACTED]

"Well the way I heard it was that before the war, there was this doctor who performed abortions for some of the not too fortunate co-eds of the time. I guess one time, something happened during one of the operations abd one of the girls died. I guess he just hid the body somewhere and they never found it. They finally caught him later on and put him in jail, and he said that he had accidentally killed that one girl. He told them where they could find the one body but they never did.

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So anyway, the Phi Tau's say that some really weird stuff always happens over there and that's why so many guys moved out and forced the house to fold. They were a bunch of freaks though, so I don't know. Go ask [REDACTED], he knows more about it than I do-- his sister dated a Phi Tau."

Legend B

Told by [REDACTED]

"S--t, I don't even know where to start. I used to talk to my sister's boyfriend who lived there for a couple of years. His name was [REDACTED]

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The ghost was the guy whobuilt the house. He freaked out one night and shot himself in the luggage room. So anyway then this doctor moves in and starts messing around doing abortions for all the sororities. The guys said that he used to throw everything into an opening in the wall down in the cellar.

10/11/84, P.M. I don't know anything about a guy who did that

1 Let's see there was something about a guy who had just come back from the summer and thought that there were brothers in the house because he kept hearing footsteps and water running.

2740 He tried to find the footsteps. He found them, well not really, he came to where they should have been, but there wasn't anyone there- then something touched him on the shoulder and he went into convulsions. He freaked out after that.

2741 Some of the other s---t was stuff about water running and babies crying along with footsteps at night and something cold passing by you. Most of it happened late at night or real early in the morning to the frogs who had call."

(frogs are equivalent to freshman)

#### Legend C

Told by [REDACTED]

2742 Well let's, one of the cases was a guy in the restroom real late about three in the morning and when he walked in he saw this guy washing his face or shaving or something. And he went in and the guy left and he realized he never saw the guy before. The guy had started down the steps so he went to see him but nobody was there.

2743 Another case was about one of the new pledges who had just come back from vacation and heard footsteps on the stairs behind him. He figured it was one of the brothers jacking him so he decided to turn around and see who it was. He did but no one was there. He went into shock or convulsions or

something. They took him over to the Health Center but I don't know what happened after that.

*2744*  
And then like they heard babies cry at night And another thing that happened back when I was a freshman. [REDACTED] was

*2745*  
the president of the house then. He was sleeping up in the cold dorm one afternoon and was by himself except for on dude who was snoring. [REDACTED] told him to shut up and the dude shut up but then he started again so he decided to go see who it was and by the time he got to the bed it had stopped and no one was even there.

*2746*  
And another case was when the guys were getting ready to go home for break or something ( that's when most of this stuff would happen) a guy was sitting in his room and all of a sudden the lamp started swinging real hard so it almost hit the ceiling. All the windows were shut so it wasn't the wind.

That's about all I can remember."

#### Legend D

Told by [REDACTED]

*2747*  
"Well basically, it started back when I was a sophomore. Well, you know, there were stories before that, but my sophomore year, the Doc really went weird. It was a doctor who lived there during the war that haunted the place. Him and the dude who built the place anyway. Their activities just about drove half the guys out of the house anyway. I guess I've been thinking as much as anybody else and Hancock.

Well I can't see, specifically? The first thing, I think that

through as much as anybody-- me and [REDACTED]

Well let's see, specifically ? The first thing , I think that happened to me, I guess, was one night when I was sleeping in the room, and this was the third night I had been up studying for finals and it was really getting to be a hassle. But, anyhow, I was getting ready to go to sleep and I started hearing noises over my stereo system. You Know, I didn't think too much of it. Well I lay there for awhile and finally went over there after it kept going for awhile. There wasn't anything there-- I was looking for a rat or something. Then I went back to bed. I didn't have any records on or anything then. The next morning when I woke up, I found five records were on and the power was turned on my stereo. The door was locked so no one could have gotten in. And there's no way to sneak in the windows. You know, there's got to be a reasonable explanation to it all. The same thing happened to Hammack the guy who lived next to me, but I kinda' thought he was f--king me over too.

So I guess that's when it really started hitting then. Everybody almost had something happen to them during that year. Like at initiation too. And at the initiation of the fall class my sophomore year things really got wild. But I guess I can't talk about that stuff because they're thinking of starting the house back up again and if this initiaion stuff got out they'd have to change all of their ritual and stuff and I know they really wouldn't want to do that. A lot of the stuff happened since then. I mean every year that I was in the house

all sorts of stuff happened like ghosts walking through the halls at night and oh, faucets turning on in the middle of the night stuff like that. It was really a wild place. I don't know, I really don't want to go into all that because it's so long and involved. And besides, those guys in Bloomington will all tell you the same thing.

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## ANALYSIS

This legend is obviously both an origin and an encounter legend. The origin is completely omitted in one of the stories and it differs in the rest of them. Variant A seems to feel that the ghost is one of the girls who died during an abortion. Variant C does not say who the ghost is at all and Variant B and D meet in the opinion of its being the builder. Variant D throws in the new thought that there are two ghosts really the other one beside the builder being the doctor. Variant B was the only one who gave any explanation for the ghost (the builder shot himself). Variant A did not feel that it was necessary to say why the murdered girl was haunting the house and Variants C and D did not seem to feel that this was important.

Variants C and D were closer to the events in real life and were concerned with the actual occurrences. Variant A was not really well informed and did not seem to be really interested in the legend and while he did not discount the story in any way, he did not give any great stress to the story to make one feel that it was true beyond the shadow of a doubt. Variant B is potentially the best "storyteller" or conveyer of the legend. In his version he gives a fairly detailed story of the origin of the ghost, or at least enough to make it easier to believe. His origin gives the listener evidence which could easily have happened, thus making it easier to believe.

All but Variant A had stories which were memorates in a sense. Variant D had actually had things happen to him and he had lived in the house while things were occurring. Variants B and C had had close contact with one or more members of the Phi Kappa Tau house. This lends credibility to the legend and helps to allow it to continue as a true story.

Variant B,C, and D were all close to the events and were thus better informed. While Variant D did not go into much detail due to his being pressed for time he was not unwilling to talk about it and most certainly expressed belief in the ghost. Variants B and C both believed in the ghost and led one to believe along with them with the use of things like 'some friends of mine had this happen to them' or 'this guy I knew'. Because Variants B,C, and D had close connections with the house they were able to relate more details of the house such as the luggage room, the stairs and the swinging lamps.

One can easily see that the basic part of the legend is that there is a ghost whose habitat seems to be the Phi Kappa Tau house on the Bloomington campus. The origin of the ghost varies from the builder to a doctor to one co-ed who died during an abortion.

The details vary concerning what the ghost actually does. The fact that babies are heard crying appears in two of the versions and is supposedly due to the ghosts of the aborted babies. Someone's being touched by the ghost or coming near it and then having a convulsion also appears in two of the

stories. Footsteps also appeared in both of the stories. These similarities were probably due to a number of factors. Number one, Variants B and C are brother and sister and have discussed the legend between themselves. Their deviations from one another may be explained by the fact that Variant C had a wider range of contacts within the Phi Tau house and that Variant B knew only of the legend through Variant C and her former boyfriend who had been a Phi Kappa Tau.

This legend will probably die out very soon because of the folding of the Phi Kappa Tau house. There are no new events or new first hand informers <sup>ant</sup>s of the legend, and because the house has split up, there is no one to pass the story down to.

Already one can see the change in the legend by looking at Variant A's story. It has gone from a detailed, first or second hand account of the events to a very vague comment which happens to be thrown into the conversation.