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Moving Beyond Alcohol: A Review of Other Issues Associated With Fraternity Membership With Implications for Practice and Research

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This review of research synthesizes more than a decade of published studies on problems associated with fraternity membership beyond alcohol misuse. Topics include sex-related issues, drug use, hazing, and other issues such as gambling, academic dishonesty, campus civility, and fake identification use. Recommendations suggest the need for a role shift for campus fraternity/sorority professionals and advocate for a renewal of peer education programming specific to fraternities. Findings also call attention to research issues hindering our understanding of fraternity membership and offer suggestions for refining future studies.

Substantial reviews of research covering the past three decades (e.g., Barry, 2007; Borsari & Carey, 1999) have established a significant association between fraternity involvement and alcohol abuse. A pivotal moment calling interest to this phenomenon was an editorial appearing on April 19, 1996, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* titled "The Questionable Value of Fraternities" (Kuh, Pascarella, & Wechsler). The primary focus of the article was alcohol-related correlates and detrimental effects of membership. Hundreds of studies that related alcohol misuse to fraternity membership followed during the next 17 years (Biddix, Matney, Norman, & Martin, 2014). Although binge drinking subsequently received the most media and researcher attention, Kuh et al. (1996) also noted that alcohol was only one problematic correlate of fraternity association.

The purpose of this review was to collect, synthesize, and evaluate research on additional issues associated with fraternity membership. The benefit of a collected review of studies is twofold. First, understanding more about other detrimental effects associated with membership can lead to more direct practice implications, particularly for campus professionals, alumni volunteers, and national headquarters staff members. Second, examining the methods used for research may suggest more-effective ways to study both positive and negative membership correlates.

For the purposes of this review, *fraternity* refers to single-sex, social groups that are part of a major national organization, but this distinction is seldom made in the research. It is likely, but not confirmable, that most research focuses on Interfraternity Council (IFC) member groups and, when differentiated, National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) organizations. A pervasive limitation in the research is that fraternity membership often is treated as a single classification (i.e., fraternity/sorority), preventing disaggregation even by gender. An additional issue is that fraternity/sorority members also can belong to other organizations, including athletic teams, restricting the ability to detect effects directly related to membership.

As an explanatory note, the term *Greek* is not used here unless in direct quotation, as Greek is considered a nationality rather than an organizational distinction (see Biddix, 2010). Throughout this review, students who

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are members of fraternal organizations will be referred to as *fraternity members* or *sorority members*, and student affairs staff colloquially referred to as "Greek advisors" will be called *fraternity/sorority campus professionals*.

SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH

This review was bounded to sources published from 2004 to 2014. The research approach was to locate instances where the term *fraternity* or *Greek* was in the title, was used as a keyword, or appeared as a descriptor. Studies in which membership was included as a control variable, independent variable, or demographic variable were also considered for inclusion. The approach of this study, modeled after the methodology of Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), was to review fraternity-*focused* research, as well as to identify, report, and analyze fraternity-*included* research.

The search process began with a review of higher education/student affairs journals to develop a base of articles. This initial review resulted in a list of prominently researched topics that was continually refined as studies were assimilated. Individual folders were created for each topic, and articles were sorted accordingly. Next, major research databases were keyword searched and potential sources were added to the folders or requested if they were not immediately available in full text. After this step, folders that were closely related (e.g., *sexual aggression* and *rape myths*) were combined, while minor topics were moved into an "other" folder (e.g., *gambling* or *civility*). Finally, other reference materials such as books, national reports, and dissertations and theses were incorporated based on common citations in the published studies. This process resulted in 73 potential studies that were evaluated for inclusion based on alignment with the topic/s, ability to meaningfully disaggregate results, and rigorous methodology. A few additional studies that did not meet these criteria but were prominently cited by others or contributed an important point were added when the review was written. The list of primary sources from which studies were derived is as follows:

1. Higher education and student affairs journals

   Higher Education, Journal of College Student Development, Journal of Higher Education, Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, Research in Higher Education, Review of Higher Education

2. Research databases

   Academic Search Premier, Education Full Text (H.W. Wilson), ERIC, Communication & Mass Media Complete Web of Knowledge (including SCI, SSCI, A&HCI), PsycINFO, Sociological Index

3. Other reference materials

   Books, reports from national surveys modeling fraternity involvement, dissertations and theses

Limitations include the possibility that research was mistakenly omitted during the search or that findings were misinterpreted. In most cases, articles not available in full text were located in additional databases, so it is likely the search covered a wider scope. Also, when authors cited critical or interesting research, those studies were also tracked to sources and incorporated. Citation consistency across studies lent reliability, especially for topics appearing in multiple publications. The topics in this review include sex-related issues, drug use, hazing, and other issues such as gambling, academic dishonesty, campus civility, and fake identification (ID) use. The review closes with a summary of methodological limitations consistent across the research.

Sex-Related Issues

First published in 1990, Sanday's *Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood and Privilege on Campus* (2007) is a case study drawing on interviews with fraternity members and victims that suggested the presence of a rape-prone culture within college fraternities. Sanday identified pornography, sexual ideology, masculinity, and degrading initiation and hazing rituals as contributors to sexual aggression and rape myths. In the past decade, researchers have drawn on these correlates to investigate factors contributing to sexual assault and rape-supportive beliefs among fraternity members.

Fraternity Membership, Sexual Aggression, and Rape Myths. In a meta-analysis of 29 studies, Murnen and Kohlman (2007) examined data relating fraternity membership to attitudes and behaviors associated with sexual aggression. Consistently, membership was found to be positively and moderately related to hypermasculinity and rape-supportive attitudes and, to a lesser extent, to self-reported sexually aggressive behaviors. More recently, Corprew and Mitchell (2014) examined the relationship between college men's hypermasculine and sexually aggressive attitudes in a three-institution sample that included fraternity members (n = 81) and nonfraternity members (n = 136). Predictive analysis showed no significant interaction among hypermasculinity, membership status, and disinhibition when regressed on self-reported hostile attitudes toward women. Two-way interactions between hypermasculinity and membership resulted in a slight increase in hostile attitudes; however, not being a member was similarly associated. This led the researchers to suggest that membership alone did not appear to intensify hostile attitudes toward women, as they had hypothesized.

Many of the group comparisons in the literature on sexual aggression on campus have been between fraternity members and athletes. Calzada, Brown, and Doyle (2011) sought predictors of sexually aggressive behaviors among college men (N = 429) and found that more than half (52%) of the fraternity members self-reported having engaged in sexually aggressive actions in the past year, compared with 36% of nonmembers. Men who were involved in sports (n = 359) were more likely to report committing acts of aggression than were the men who were not involved in sports (n = 70), although at lower rates of comparison (35% of those involved in informal sports, 52% of those involved in club sports, 39% of those involved in varsity sports) compared with 27% of those not involved in sports. It is not clear whether the researchers considered men who were involved in both fraternities and the college athletics program. Gidycz, Warkentin, and Orchowski (2007) explored the relationship among alcohol use, athletic participation, fraternity membership, early sexual experiences, and perpetration of verbal, physical, and sexual aggression among college men (N = 325) during a 3-month period. The researchers found that only previous perpetration of acts predicted future actions. The researchers recommended that future research include assessment of peer norms for aggressive behavior, attitudes toward women, and group identification. Murnen and Kohlman (2007) found that the conditions under which hypermasculinity measures and self-report of sexually aggressive behavior are evaluated can cause significant variability in results, obscuring an understanding of how membership, as an aggregate variable, singularly affects sexual aggression.

Fraternity as Risky Environment. Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, and Weschler (2004) publicized the staggering statistics that sorority members were 74% more likely to experience rape than were other college women and

those who lived in the sorority house were three times as likely to experience rape as those who lived elsewhere. Following Sanday's (2007) hypothesis, the researchers suggested the prevalence of sexual assault incidents among sorority members might be the result of greater interaction with fraternity members. A number of researchers have suggested that alcohol is the primary risk contributor (e.g., Benson, Gohm, & Gross, 2007; McCauley et al., 2009), and, by extension, the availability of alcohol at fraternity functions exacerbates a risky environment. Minow and Einolf (2009), although confirming the greater risk for sexual assault and completed sexual assault among sorority members, called into question the link to fraternity members. Specifically, when the researchers controlled for alcohol consumption and attendance at fraternity parties where alcohol was served, they found these factors only partially reduced the correlation between sorority membership and sexual assault. The researchers posited that although contact with fraternity members outside formal events and misreading of danger cues may explain the higher prevalence of sexual assault risk among sorority members, further research is needed to identify and evaluate these and other potential links.

Armstrong, Hamilton, and Sweeney (2006) used interviews and observations of a residence hall floor occupied by 55 women students over 9 months to examine individual, organizational, and interactional contributors perceived to be associated with party rape on campus. Participants regarded fraternity parties as particularly risky places due to the practice of controlling the distribution of alcohol, coupled with party themes degrading to women. Similarly, Menning (2009) studied attendee perceptions of personal safety at campus parties. Likert measures of perceived dangers, party environment, location reputation, and demographics showed fraternity parties were perceived as both significantly more dangerous overall and specifically more dangerous than other parties. This led the researchers to suggest students may have reason to feel less safe at fraternity parties, despite no significant difference in perception of alcohol consumption between fraternity and nonfraternity parties.

Contributing to this perception is a peer culture and environment linked with degradation (Sanday, 2007) and higher rape myth acceptance among fraternity members than among sorority members (Bannon, Briosi, & Foubert, 2013). Bleecker and Murnen (2005) found that men who displayed degrading images of women had higher rape myth acceptance. Fraternity members displayed more images than did nonmembers, the images were more degrading, and the degree of degradation was associated more strongly with rape myths. Similarly, Foubert, Briosi, and Bannon (2011) studied pornography-viewing habits of members at a single institution, finding that men who viewed in the past 12 months (83%) scored higher on self-reported likelihood of committing sexual assault and rape than did men who did not view pornography. Negative perceptions increased with the level of violence depicted in the films.

Other Drug Use

"Other drugs" refers to substances other than alcohol, including tobacco, prescription pain relievers and stimulants, and recreational drugs. In general, research on other drug use points to higher rates among fraternity members; however, Lanier and Farley (2011) suggested caution when interpreting use rates for groups, especially for nonmedical prescription drugs. Despite confirming a higher self-reported rate of use among members, the researchers discovered that controlling for demographic characteristics such as race,

grade point average, and class significantly reduced membership effects. When excessive alcohol and other drug use were added, membership diminished to nonsignificance in predictive models. As will be noted in the studies reviewed, a major problem with other drug research is that membership is seldom disaggregated by gender.

Smoking. In a random-sample (N = 4,223 college students), 10-institution study in North Carolina by Wolfson, McCoy, and Sutfin (2009) found that a majority of college students (83%) had been exposed to second-hand smoking in the past 7 days. The most frequent associations were being female, being a fraternity/sorority member, and binge drinking in the past 30 days. No interaction effects were reported. McCabe, Teter, Boyd, Knight, and Wechsler (2005) found that fraternity/sorority members smoked more than nonmembers did, by using a nationally representative probability sample of students followed from their senior year of high school across two waves of college. After discovering no change in use over time, the researchers suggested that students established and maintained use patterns early, similar to results for longitudinal alcohol use (Park, Sher, & Krull, 2008). Scott-Sheldon, Carey, and Carey (2008), using a convenience sample of undergraduates (N = 1,595) enrolled in introductory psychology classes, found that fraternity/sorority members were more likely to be frequent cigarette smokers than were infrequent smokers or nonsmokers; however, members did not smoke significantly more per day. Finally, Collins and Liu (2014), using large-scale national survey data from the spring 2006 National College Health Assessment (NCHA), reported that fraternity members smoked more than did nonmembers, although membership accounted for minimal change (+0.3%) in predictive equations.

Morrell, Cohen, Bacchi, and West (2005), in a 13-institution study in Texas, found that college students (N = 21,410) were more likely to be current smokers or lifetime smokeless tobacco users if they belonged to a fraternity or sorority. Powe, Ross, and Cooper (2007) confirmed this association by using a sample of randomly selected students selected from 8 historically Black colleges (N = 438; 74% female). The researchers found that not being a member substantially decreased the odds of becoming a lifetime smoker, which was second only to having friends who smoked. The outlier was the finding of Hahn et al. (2010) that belonging to a fraternity or sorority did not increase the odds of being a current smoker. The study was conducted among a random sample of students (N = 2,559) at two Southeastern institutions. Despite comparable demographics for gender, race, age, and class, being a current alcohol drinker produced the only predictive change in tobacco use.

In a qualitative study of smoking behaviors and rationales, Nichter, Nichter, Carkoglu, and Lloyd-Richardson (2010) found that fraternity/sorority members who were upperclassmen differentiated between "being a smoker" and "smoking at parties." This distinction may explain some of the variance associated with smoking rates in the research, particularly since most questions asked about behavior in the past 7 days, which may include party environments as the only place students smoked. Focus group respondents estimated 10% of members were actual smokers versus 60–70% of members who only smoked at parties.

Illicit Use of Prescription Drugs. McCabe, Teter, et al. (2005) found more fraternity/sorority members (8.6%) illicitly used nonprescription stimulants (Ritalin [methylphenidate], Dexedrine [dextroamphetamine], or Adderall [amphetamine, dextroamphetamine mixed salts]) than did nonmembers (3.5%). Rates were higher for members who lived in fraternity/sorority houses (13.3%) compared with students

living in university and off-campus housing. A follow-up study using a large random sample of undergraduate students (N = 9,161) at a single institution revealed comparable rates for living in a fraternity/sorority house, versus living a residence hall, as well as for increasing use as a member during the past year (McCabe, Teter, & Boyd, 2006). Weyandt et al. (2009) confirmed higher rates of use among members using a single-institution convenience sample (N = 390), although the percentage of fraternity member participants was small (4.1%). In general, members acknowledged atypical stimulant use among peers, perceived a higher prevalence of use, and perceived a higher safety threshold for stimulant use. DeSantis, Noar, and Webb (2009) collected data from a convenience sample of fraternity members (N = 307) at a single institution and found that more than half (55%) reported nonprescription drug use. This rate was higher among upperclassmen, those living off campus, and regular marijuana smokers. The most prevalent reasons users gave were related to academic purposes: 74% to stay awake to study, 59% to concentrate on work, and 30% to help memorize. Only a small percentage of the drugs were reported as being used for social purposes.

DeSantis, Noar, and Webb (2010) followed the survey with interviews of 79 fraternity members and found that most first-time uses took place during times of high academic stress, such as finals. Participants discussed the ease of obtaining stimulant drugs, articulated a lack of health-related information about misuse, and justified misuse with academic pressures. Participants perceived that use of the drugs enhanced their cognitive ability by reducing fatigue, increasing reading comprehension, and enhancing memory functions.

Researchers also examined differences in nonprescription opioid analgesic use (i.e., pain relievers) between members and nonmembers. McCabe, Teter, et al. (2005) found a higher use by fraternity/sorority house residents compared with those in all other student living environments. Otherwise, there was no significant difference in the percentage of member and nonmember users. When McCabe, Schulenberg, Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Kloska (2005) accounted for group differences, they found that fraternity members reported higher levels of annual illicit drug use (other than marijuana) than did nonmembers.

Additional Drugs. Scott-Sheldon et al. (2008) surveyed college students (N = 1595) at a single institution on self-reported cocaine, amphetamine, ecstasy, and hallucinogen use and found fraternity/sorority members had used the drugs more often during their lifetime and in the past 30 days than nonmembers; however, the researchers did not report drug use rates. Collins and Liu (2014), using 2006 NCHA data, found that fraternity members were more likely to smoke marijuana than nonmembers, although membership accounted for only a slight increase (+1.0%) in likelihood. As part of a broader study on student drug use, McCabe, Schulenberg, et al. (2005) reported that members used marijuana at higher annual rates than nonmembers in all three waves of the study and that use rates increased with age. Notably, this increase was associated only with marijuana use. Further, in a random sample of college students (N = 1516) at a single institution, Lange, Reed, Ketchie Croff, and Clapp (2008) found that 4.4% of students reported using *Salvia divinorum*, a hallucinogen that is legal in some parts of the United States, at least once in the past 12 months. Characteristics associated with use included being male, White, and a fraternity/sorority member and risky alcohol or drug use in the past 2 weeks.

Hazing

Following the hazing-related death of a drum major at Florida A&M University, Hoover

(2012) noted that despite the prevalence of hazing among high school and college students, little research has offered guidance in addressing the problem. Most findings in the past decade have related to incongruence between student, institutional, and organizational definitions of *hazing*. Recognized, but not included in this review, are book-length viewpoints on hazing (e.g., DeSantis, 2007; Nuwer, 2004; Syrett, 2009); notably, however, these authors suggested that hazing beliefs and practices often are embedded in and perpetuated by organizational cultures.

In what is considered a foundational study, Hoover and Pollard (2000) noted that hazing trends often begin in high school and then continue and, in some cases, escalate in college. Their results, informed by a national, random sample of students, showed that nearly half of participants reported being hazed in high school, with one quarter of those saying behaviors occurred even earlier. Findings were consistent for what students (i.e., hazed students) were willing to tolerate as well as what they (i.e., hazers) were willing to perpetrate. Campo, Poulos, and Sipple (2005) extended these findings by identifying three factors that significantly increasing the likelihood of hazing: being male, being a fraternity/sorority member, and approval of friends. Both studies influenced the most prominently cited hazing research to date, *Hazing in View: College Students at Risk* (Allan & Madden, 2008).

Allan and Madden (2008) undertook a national survey of 11,482 undergraduate students from a regional and Carnegie classification stratified sample of 53 postsecondary institutions. The researchers defined *hazing* as, "any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person's willingness to participate" (p. 2). Group analysis showed hazing activities were not limited to fraternal organizations (73%) or athletic teams (74%) but were prevalent in club sports (64%), performing arts organizations (56%), and service fraternities/sororities (50%). Similar to Hoover and Pollard's (2000) results, Allan and Madden found that students associated more positive outcomes from hazing than negative outcomes. One critical finding may explain one of the reasons hazing prevention is difficult to address: Nearly all respondents who self-reported at least one instance of being hazed in college did not consider themselves to have been hazed.

Other researchers have noted this incongruence between identifying and experiencing hazing behaviors. Owen, Burke, and Vichesky (2008) asked members ($N = 342$) of student organizations at a single institution, including fraternities, sororities, and athletic groups, to rate hazing behaviors from 0 (*definitely not hazing*) to 10 (*definitely hazing*). Results suggested students considered hazing along a continuum, at odds with more rigid hazing definitions espoused by organizations and institutions. Similarly, examining new member perceptions of hazing (700 sorority members and 381 fraternity members) at a single institution, Knutson, Akers, Ellis, and Bradley (2011) found participants could identify egregious forms of hazing but were unable to classify others that did not include bodily injury or risk of death. This led the researchers to conclude that new member perceptions did not align with the campus language regarding hazing. This finding validated previous and methodologically similar work by Campo et al. (2005), who drew conclusions from a smaller random sample of students at a single institution. In the study, the researchers selected activities that met the university defining of *hazing* and asked students to indicate whether they had ever participated. The highest proportion of self-identified hazers was for fraternity/sorority members

(38.3%), followed by varsity athletes (29.7%), then other student group leaders (22.6%). Considering these results along with those of Campo et al. and within the context of Allan and Madden's (2008) conclusions, Knutson et al. observed that "the challenge then for educators is to more clearly define 'hazing' to the student population and identify those forms of hazing that students are most likely to encounter in their organization" (p. 16).

Ellsworth (2006) explored this perceptual difference in terminology by using a 42-item Likert-scale survey in which students (N = 114) were asked to rate whether they believed a listed activity was hazing. Participants were differentiated by membership in a fraternity, a sorority, the ROTC, an athletic team, and the marching band. Ellsworth found the groups similarly rated a number of items as hazing behaviors, including being forced to consume excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages, being struck by an object, being handcuffed or tied to a building or structure, receiving a brand or tattoo, drinking or eating substances not intended for normal consumption, being deprived of beverages or food by others, performing sexual acts, participating in streaking or other activities while naked, being deprived of sleep, and stealing. Significance tests revealed slight differences between groups for related activities, although small group sizes likely limited statistical power.

Other Topics

A number of topics were the subject of only a few studies. In most cases, researchers reported prevalence rates of behaviors in comparison to nonmembers. Unless otherwise noted, similar to the other drug and hazing research, membership was seldom disaggregated by gender.

Gambling. In studying prevalence rates for potential pathologic and problematic gamblers, Rockey, Beason, Howington, Rockey, and Gilbert (2005) found that fraternity members had a higher probable pathologic gambling rate than did nonmembers. Further, fraternity members had a higher prevalence rate of probable problem gambling than did nonmembers. These findings should be interpreted with caution, however, as Rockey et al. did not specify the time frame for the prevalence questions (i.e., in the past year or lifetime). Following the design of Rockey et al., Biddix and Hardy (2008) also used the South Oaks Gambling Screen in a single-institution study of fraternity members. Although the small sample size calls findings into question, a unique contribution of the study was the inclusion of several demographic variables including membership status, years of membership, and place of residence. Analysis revealed gambling online and betting on skill games increased the likelihood of problem gambling among fraternity members. Stuhldreher, Stuhldreher, and Forrest (2007), also drawing on single-institution data, analyzed data from a locally developed instrument for correlates and prevalence of gambling. Fraternity members were more likely to play the lottery, to play cards/games of chance, and to gamble on sports than were nonmembers. The researchers did not distinguish online as separate than in-person gambling, which Biddix and Hardy (2008), as well as Shead, Derevensky, Fong, and Gupta (2012), found to be prevalent among males and fraternity members.

Academic Dishonesty. In a single-institution, multiyear study, Vandehey, Diekhoff, and LaBeff (2007) examined student behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs related to academic dishonesty. The primary population of interest was freshmen and sophomore students; each indicated whether they had cheated on examinations, quizzes, or class assignments. The researchers found college cheaters more likely to be fraternity/sorority members but noted two stronger predictors: depending on parental

financial support and intramural involvement. Researchers also reported mixed effects when examining cheating among fraternity/sorority members when differentiating by academic subject. Premeaux (2005), in a national study of business students from institutions across the nation, found that only living in a fraternity or sorority house increased cheating among members. In study of students enrolled in economics classes at two institutions, Burrus, McGoldrick, and Schuhmann (2007) found a small link between cheating and membership, although the effect was larger for athletes and for students who witnessed others cheating. The researchers pointed out some disagreement about what constituted cheating; for example, 93% of students agreed glancing at a quiz was cheating, while only 42% saw asking for help on a take-home examination as dishonest. In a study of engineering students at 11 institutions, Passow, Mayhew, Finelli, Harding, and Carpenter (2006) found fraternity/sorority membership led to increased examination cheating but not homework cheating. Other activity involvement had no effect.

Campus Civility. Caboni, Hirschy, and Best (2004) evaluated campus civility in a variety of campus contexts including classrooms. The researchers administered a survey to 1,000 randomly selected students living in campus residence halls. Results showed that fraternity members viewed disrespectful disruption and insolent inattention in the classroom as less problematic than did sorority members or nonmembers. Scores for fraternity members on both measures were higher than normative scores for college students. This led the researchers to suggest fraternity membership was less conducive to classroom civility. Caboni et al. (2005) found fraternity members perceived harmful personal attacks, negligent endangerment of others, verbalized intolerance, and blatant personal disregard as less problematic than did sorority members and nonmembers. The researchers posited these findings were more problematic for fraternity members because their member peers do not seem to espouse supportive norms for the behavior.

Fake ID Ownership and Use. Researchers found that more members of fraternities owned and used a fake ID than nonmembers. Martinez and Sher (2010) studied how fake IDs were obtained, used, and confiscated, using a convenience sample of students at a single institution. Results showed 21% of students possessed a fake ID; of these, 55% belonged to fraternities as opposed to 42% of men who were not members. The likelihood of obtaining a fake ID also was higher for members than for nonmembers. Nguyen, Walters, Rinker, Wyatt, and DeJong (2011) questioned first-year students about fake ID use in a national survey (N = 7233 from 194 colleges). Slightly less than 8% of students owned a fake ID; however, the odds of owning one were higher among students intending to join a fraternity or sorority.

Summary

As a prima facie statement, it might be said that fraternity members tend to exhibit more problematic behaviors in college than do nonmembers. Yet, an evaluation of the methodology informing the research suggests caution. Nearly all findings related to sexual aggression (e.g., Corprew & Mitchell, 2014; Gidycz et al., 2007) and many findings on use of "other drugs" (e.g., DeSantis et al., 2009; Scott-Sheldon et al., 2008) were based on single-institution convenience samples. Hardly any other drug, no academic dishonesty (e.g. Premeaux, 2005), and only one of the hazing studies (Owen et al., 2008) reported data disaggregated even by gender, despite the use of large-scale, nationally representative samples (e.g., Allan & Madden, 2008; McCabe, Schulenberg, et al., 2005). To put this limi-

tation in context, research on alcohol misuse has revealed substantial variation in rates for fraternity/sorority binge drinking (e.g., Fairlie, DeJong, Stevenson, Lavigne, and Wood, 2010) as well as weekly and monthly consumption (e.g., Hummer, LaBrie, Lac, Sessoms, and Cail, 2012) when accounting for gender; the effects for resident status are even more pronounced (e.g., Wechsler, Kuh, & Davenport, 1996). Further, despite the proliferation of prevention approaches in the past decade, little evaluative research has been published on their effectiveness aside from sexual assault bystander intervention programs (e.g., Foubert, Newberry, & Tatum, 2007). This is especially problematic given the significant resources that campus leaders and national/international groups have invested to address issues. A critical need revealed by this review, which also has been suggested by others (Biddix, Matney, Norman, & Martin, 2014), is a refinement of research informing what is known specifically about fraternity problem behaviors and what has been effective in altering them.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The contemporary relevance of several of these issues was recently highlighted with the launch of two major initiatives in 2014. In January 2014, Vice President Biden joined President Obama when he created the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. As part of the initiative, campus leaders and representatives from the fraternity and sorority national and international communities have been participating in discussions in Washington, DC. In August 2014, the North American Interfraternity Conference announced three independent commissions to address alcohol use, hazing, and sexual violence. Each commission, composed of subject matter experts, policy makers, and practitioners, is charged with producing a report with direct recommendations by April 2016. While both efforts are commendable, it is unclear at this time what policy or programmatic changes may result or the extent to which they may apply directly to campus-based efforts. In the interim, I offer several recommendations stemming from the research synthesized in this article as well as from the broader research on professional practices.

Linking Fraternity Values to Campus Priorities

In *The Role of Fraternity and Sorority Advising Programs*, the contextual statement framing the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) Standards and Guidelines, the CAS (2012) noted, "A question to be answered by fraternity/sorority professionals is to what extent these organizations augment the institution's educational mission" (p. 1). An essential first step for the fraternity community is to demonstrate that core fraternity values directly parallel and support institutional priorities. Both hold scholarship, service, community, and responsibility as critical to meeting their missions. To accomplish this goal, fraternity/sorority campus professionals should link effective fraternity programming to campus strategic initiatives. Most colleges and universities are working to increase recruitment, retention, graduation, satisfaction, and learning. Making intentional efforts to bridge these priorities with fraternal programing is a necessity. For example, fraternity chapters that excel in supporting members academically could be encouraged to establish study groups in conjunction with academic support services to aid struggling students. Chapters with outstanding philanthropic initiatives could co-sponsor and organize service-learning programs with academic departments, other student groups, and the external agencies to create broader service-learning experiences.

Mobilizing Stakeholders

Fraternities can benefit more from their built-in partnerships with campus-wide fraternity governing councils, fraternity/sorority campus professionals, alumni and volunteers, and national/international office staff. Given the number of issues associated with involvement, a shared governance approach to bringing together constituents is crucial (Biddix, 2004, Summer). As individuals who should be in contact with all stakeholders, fraternity/sorority campus professionals could take the lead on these efforts by facilitating and maintaining relationships, a recommendation strongly endorsed by the CAS (2012). Campus professionals who identify, work with, and ultimately rely on external stakeholders, especially alumni, may find their ability to support members positively and substantially strengthened. This extends beyond maintaining accurate records and holding occasional meetings and into development, which may require supplemental training. By providing this training, national/international organizations, or, more inclusively, the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA), could see a significant return on investment. Further, an attractive aspect of fraternity membership is the prospect of tapping into the larger alumni network to aid in career guidance and placement. Intentionally linking fraternity alumni with career services could facilitate chapter and community programming on topics such as interviewing skills, networking, social media outfalls, and resume assistance.

Focusing on Peer Education

Discussing the recent resurgence in peer education on campus, Wawrzynski, LoConte, and Straker (2011) observed that college and university administrators "have taken note of the power of peer influence and have capitalized on using peers to play pivotal roles in enhancing the lives of undergraduate students by encouraging peers to consider, talk honestly about, and develop healthy lifestyle choices" (p. 17). The benefits of developing peer educators, particularly within the fraternity community, are multifaceted. According to the designation of Newcomb (1962), a fraternity constitutes an influential peer group; it is small to moderate in size, isolated from outside influences, homogeneous, and, in many ways, conformist. Newcomb cautioned that the direction of influence within peer groups is not always positive. For example, researchers studying fraternity alcohol abuse (e.g., Durkin, Wolfe, & Clark, 2005; Phua, 2011) and sexual aggression (e.g., Adams-Curtis & Forbes, 2004) have found that peer culture strongly influenced problem behaviors. Fortunately, the literature relating the benefits of peer influence is broad and sustained (e.g., Astin, 1993; Ganser & Kennedy, 2012), with students successfully working with their peers in academic advising, orientation, leadership, residence life, personal and career counseling, health and wellness, alcohol and drug, and sexual assault trainings. Specific to fraternities, Biddix and Underwood (2010) reported that when members participated in a national/international fraternity's leadership programming emphasizing peer and relational leadership skills, they believed they could affect and enact change in both their chapters and the larger fraternity community.

An additional benefit is the positive developmental effects for students who serve as peer educators. Using data from the Multi-Institutional Study on Leadership, Dugan (2011) found peer educators showed a higher capacity for socially responsible leadership, directly enhancing their real-world skills and self-efficacy. Heys and Wawrzynski (2013) found that male peer educators showed growth along five learning domains: cognitive

complexity, intrapersonal development, interpersonal development, appreciation and awareness of diversity, and presentation and communication skills. Implementing peer training as part of a campus-sponsored leadership retreat or leadership class for emerging or existing fraternity leaders might be first step in developing a program, which could benefit from mobilizing stakeholders and be tied to linking fraternity and campus values. These efforts also relate to the Campus Save Act bystander intervention programming initiatives, which offer an opportunity to connect affiliated students with athletes to lead in changing campus culture with regard to sexual assault prevention and drug use and misuse.

Connecting Efforts

Fraternity/sorority campus professionals could have a much more expansive influence on fraternity members; however, due to limited personnel resources, they may only be able to interact with a few student leaders who actively seek them or who are in positions of authority. Coupled with day-to-day office management and overfocus on problem chapters, professionals can find themselves with little time for long-term investment in the fraternity community. It is unlikely in this era of expediency that campus staff dedicated to fraternity/sorority advising will expand; therefore, better support for fraternities may best be accomplished by connecting members to other campus initiatives.

For example, a recent national resurgence in peer education has made peer training resources more available to campus professionals, and these efforts are expected to expand following National Association of Student Personnel Administrator's (NASPA) formalized relationship with the Boosting Alcohol Consciousness Concerning the Health of University Students (BACCHUS) Peer Education Network in 2014. Resource-limited campus professionals may find it beneficial to enhance fraternity membership in existing peer training groups, such as those sponsored by leadership or health and wellness offices. Ideally, this effort would involve a cross-campus coordinating role, rather than an attempt to develop and administer in-house programs (e.g., Greeks Advocating the Mature Management of Alcohol, GAMMA). If a critical mass of fraternity members becomes involved in campus-based efforts, they might form a subgroup to specifically address issues within the fraternity community. This may require agreement from other administrators to expand and extend current educational efforts; however, offering peer programming directly to fraternity members could be highly effective in addressing problem behaviors. Specifically, having several chapter members trained in peer intervention has the potential to substantially alter the member and new member socialization processes within chapters.

Publishing Results

Likely, many fraternity/sorority campus professionals and national/international office staffs have implemented initiatives successful at reducing problem behaviors and enhancing member responsibility. Yet, little is known about the outcomes of exemplary practices, necessitating greater emphasis on research and assessment. Equally important, campus professionals and fraternity staffs should seek outlets for publishing findings from their work—relating both the positive outcomes and significant challenges. While circulating results in a journal article or professional publication would be ideal, simply providing a link to an online report hosted by the campus or national/international would be a start. Ideal would be a database, created and maintained by a professional association such as AFA, charged with collecting and, to the extent possible, collating results from such studies.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR RESEARCH

As previously noted in the summary, much of the published work linking fraternity membership with detrimental outcomes in the past decade can be characterized by lack of specificity. A few researchers statistically interacted membership with gender to separate men and women, but a surprising number did not even consider this distinction. This limitation was not exclusive to quantitative designs; researchers interviewing members frequently failed to report any details on the organization referenced.

This research constraint is intensified by the lack of distinction for what is meant by "fraternity/sorority organization." Not all groups are single-sex, social organizations belonging to a national/international association. Fraternal organizations may be distinguished by a core focus (or foci) on social, cultural, professional, service, and academic missions. Other differentiations among groups adopting Greek letters could include honor societies, co-curricular–based organizations, secret societies, and community service groups (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Consider a member of Beta Upsilon Chi ("BYX"), a national Christian fraternity, versus a member Beta Theta Pi, a North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC)-affiliated social fraternity. If asked, members of both groups likely would respond they belong to a fraternity, though mission and primary focus are considerably different.

Further, students do not all participate in the same way (Dugan, 2013). Some spend many hours a week on fraternity-related activities, others are listed only on rosters with no other involvement, and still others may hold formal leadership positions. Researchers who have considered involvement status (Capone, Wood, Borsari, & Laird, 2007) and time spent participating (Park et al., 2008) have found notable differences in alcohol use and problematic behavior. For example, Huang, DeJong, Towvin, and Schneider (2008) showed that the more involved students were in any type of social organization, the less likely they were to abstain from alcohol use. In short, the degree to which students participate can significantly affect outcomes (Astin, 1984).

Fraternity members frequently belong to other student organizations. Researchers have suggested differentiated effects based on membership in multiple groups. Turning again to the alcohol research as a referent, Spratt and Turrentine (2001) found that students with leadership positions in two student organizations reported drinking three times as much as other students and twice the national average. Comparing students who were members of fraternities and sororities with members of volunteer organizations, Pace and McGrath (2002) found that when membership in multiple organizations was considered, students had higher occurrences of alcohol use over the past 30 days and the past year, as well as a higher incidence of binge drinking. The research in this area is admittedly dated, suggesting the need for further research to uncover nuanced membership effects.

Researchers should consider implementing several revisions to future research designs. At a minimum, fraternity/sorority membership needs to be disaggregated by gender. An additional step toward introducing precision to the research would be to use either an engagement scale or a frequency participation measure to more accurately represent involvement. If possible, it would be beneficial to distinguish by core focus (e.g., academic, cultural, professional, service, and/or social) or, even better, by council membership (e.g., IFC, National Multicultural Greek Council (NMGC), NPHC, National Panhellenic Conference (NPC)). For many researchers, especially those using quantitative designs,

this would mean collecting larger samples. Each characteristic added to a statistical calculation can result in smaller group sizes, as demonstrated by limitations in Ellsworth (2006) and Biddix and Hardy (2008). Qualitative researchers also could narrow their focus when researching aspects of fraternity membership. For example, interviewers could ask participants to specify they type of organization to which they are referring and the degree of involvement. As a step toward incorporating fraternity membership into the larger literature on involvement, Dugan (2013) has advanced a taxonomy that may be beneficial for researchers considering ways to differentiate membership based on patterns of involvement and membership in multiple groups. These recommendations likely would require significant revision to current instruments and potentially larger samples in survey designs to account for statistical power. However, the resultant findings could substantially contribute to a more accurate understanding of fraternity membership experiences and associated outcomes.

FINAL THOUGHTS

After acknowledging several benefits of joining a fraternity, including lifelong friendships, praiseworthy philanthropic efforts, and instillment of laudable personal values, Flanagan (2014, March) criticized fraternity members' espoused values as substantially inconsistent with their behaviors. Highlighting a number of high-profile media stories concerning fraternity behavior and cover-up, she posed two questions: "Are fraternities acting in an ethical manner, requiring good behavior and punishing poor decisions? Or are they keeping a cool distance from the mayhem, knowing full well that it occurs with regularity?" Further, she noted, "Clearly, too, there is a Grand Canyon–size chasm between the official risk-management policies of the fraternities and the way life is actually lived in countless dangerous chapters." Fraternity advocates hoping to address and counter these criticisms need to be both able and willing to provide research-based evidence of membership effects as well as outcomes (good and bad) resulting from educational programming and preventative efforts.

The argument against keeping fraternities on campus is strong, yet students continue to join and institutions continue to devote resources to supporting them. This is due to a number of factors, including institutional engagement, retention, and alumni giving. Fraternities are unique among campus organizations in the broad support on which they might be able to draw, yet few chapters benefit from the breadth of their stakeholders—both on and off campus. The present arrangement of a small office or, at best, one professional staff member charged with advising these groups is not conducive to major change. Fraternity/sorority campus professionals who can reprioritize core functions and mobilize available support may be able to manage this task effectively, but they need the time, commitment, and training to refocus their day-to-day work and long-term priorities. Finally and critically, fraternity research needs specificity to be an effective means of informing solutions. Membership is not a singular experience, but it is treated this broadly in the majority of research. This fundamental limitation has created an inability to account for the breadth of experiences and effects what we might say conclusively positively or negatively about fraternity membership.

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