

The purpose of the North American Interfraternal Foundation shall be to promote and support leadership, educational and research initiatives that advance the North American college fraternal experience.



www.nif-inc.net

Winter 2005

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Note from the President

It has been an honor to serve this year as President of the North American Interfraternal Foundation (NIF). The Board of Directors has created an exciting vision for our future and we are very proud to be involved in the important study "Transforming the Campus Hazing Culture" conducted by Dr. Elizabeth J. Allan.

The bulk of this issue of NIF Notes is devoted to a project update and article by Dr. Allan "Understanding the Link Between Gender and Hazing," because we believe the issue of hazing continues to be of extreme



Ken Tracey

importance to the interfraternal community. As the NIF continue to search for additional funding sources, she has continued making great progress and has developed a pilot study.

I look forward to another rewarding year as President and am very proud to serve with my fellow board members who are an extraordinary group of individuals, eager to forge a new and exciting future for this organization.

My best to you for a successful 2005!

Sincerely,
Ken

Ken Tracey, President

2005 Officers and Board of Directors

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New NIF Board Members Announced

At the Annual Meeting of the North American Interfraternal Foundation held in Indianapolis on Saturday, November 6, 2004, three new Board members were elected to serve for the 2004-07 term. These new members, representative of various NIF constituents, were welcomed enthusiastically into leadership. Each brings gifts of talent, knowledge and experience that will serve the NIF well in this era of growth and development.

Doris M. Ching, Ed.D.

Doris is Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Hawaii.

She is the Past President of NASPA and Immediate Past President of the NASPA Foundation Board of Directors.

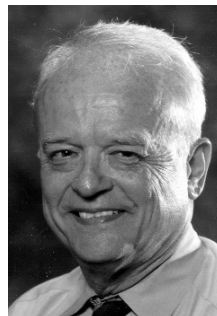


She has also served on the national MADD College Commission, the Board of Directors of Golden Key International Honour Society, and commissioner on the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education. Doris is active in her local community and a volunteer faculty member for the Leadership Development for Professionals in Higher Education program in California. She is a member of Alpha Gamma Delta Fraternity.

Thomas G. Goodale

Tom was hired as the Executive Director of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity in 2000 following

service in many volunteer roles including as a faculty member of the Leadership School, a chapter advisor and National Educational Advisor. He has



been recognized for his outstanding service through the Order of the Lion and the Distinguished Service Award and is a founder and Moseley Member of the SAE Foundation. Prior to taking his current position, he was on the faculty of William & Mary, the Dean of Students at the University of Florida, and the Vice President of Student Affairs at American University, Virginia Tech and the University of Denver. He is a past president of NASPA and founded and

continues to serve on the board of Bacchus Gamma.

Cindy H. Stellhorn

Cindy is Vice President and Partner at M-J Insurance, Inc. in Indianapolis, Indiana. Prior

to affiliating with M-J Insurance, she worked as Marketing Vice President for CIGNA Insurance and Chief



Operating Officer and Executive Vice President of Conesco Risk Management. She graduated from Indiana University where she was initiated as a member of Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity. She and husband Jeff have two children. M-J Insurance handles 36 NPC and PFA organizations.

Outstanding Scholarship Recipients Selected

We are pleased to announce the 2004 recipients of the NIF Scholarships and Fellowships!

Mary Louise Roller Scholarship

Kirsten I. Gibbs \$1,000
Phi Mu

Jack Anson Fellowships

Elizabeth Doggett \$ 700
Alpha Chi Omega

Christopher D. Jensen \$1,000
Delta Chi

Lloyd G. Balfour Fellowships

Dawna A. Boone \$2,000
Alpha Kappa Alpha

Allison L. Brown \$2,500
Alpha Chi Omega

Helen R. Flaberty \$1,000
Chi Omega

Kirsten I. Gibbs \$1,000
Phi Mu

Traci L. Hartmann \$2,500
Delta Gamma

Katherine A. Kennedy \$2,500
Sigma Kappa

Virginia M. LeBlanc \$1,000
Delta Sigma Theta

Sidharth G. Rupani \$1,000
Alpha Chi Rho

Carrie L. Vollmer-Sanders \$1,000
Sigma Alpha

Steven R. Wilson \$1,000
Sigma Chi

STATUS REPORT: Examining and Transforming Campus Hazing Cultures

by Elizabeth J. Allan, Ph.D., Principal Investigator

(Note: The following report builds on the summary printed in the Spring 2004 NIF newsletter which provided an overview of the national hazing study initiative including research goals and anticipated outcomes).

Pilot Study

First, I am very pleased to share some good news! The NIF (North American Interfraternal Foundation) has committed funding for the implementation of a pilot study in Spring '05. The NASPA Foundation has also contributed to this effort by agreeing to fund researcher travel and interview transcription costs.

The primary purposes of the pilot study are to test the procedures to be used in the larger national study including:

- Strategies for gaining access to participants
- Validity and reliability of the data collection instruments and interview protocols
- Implementation of data collection via web-based survey
- Techniques of data analysis

Further, we will produce preliminary findings that will place us in a stronger position to leverage funds needed to implement the more extensive national study.

Projected Timeline

Now that funding is secured, we are moving quickly to refine the web-based survey instrument, select sample sites,

and devise strategies for recruiting respondents for the survey and participants for our interviewing. I am working closely with Dr. Mary Madden, a full-time researcher at the University of Maine, who has agreed to serve as the Project Director. Our anticipated timeline for the pilot includes: survey data collection in early February, preliminary analysis of those data in March, and campus interviews in April, followed by further analysis in May and June.



Elizabeth J. Allan, Ph.D.

Current Status

A conference call with members of the Research Advisory Group for the study was held December 2, 2004 to gain input on critical issues related to the pilot study including site and sample selection, institutional and participant incentives, and survey design. The survey is currently in development; we are working on approvals for research with human subjects from institutional review boards and getting bids from various data vendors to assist with the web-based survey data collection and analysis.

Update on Funding for National Study

I have recently heard from both the Lumina and Balfour Foundations. While both acknowledged the impor-

tance of our project, neither sees it as a good fit with their current funding priorities. We estimate the national project to require approximately \$250,000 for 2-3 years, so we are continuing to search for potential funders for this important project. I have been in contact with a division of the U.S. Department of Education and understand that they will soon be posting an RFP for projects related to high risk drinking and violence among college students. We will be pursuing this in Spring 2005 as we proceed with the pilot study.

Building a Coalition of National Support

I am very encouraged by the growing coalition of support we have received from key national associations and organizations who have signed on to be co-sponsors of the project. In addition to the NIF, the list of project sponsors currently includes:

- The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
- National Collegiate Athletic Association
- Association of Fraternity Advisors
- American College Personnel Association
- National Association of Campus Activities
- National Orientation Directors Association
- National Consortium for Academics and Sports
- National Panhellenic Conference
- Association for Student Judicial Affairs
- Fraternity Executives Association
- Center for the Study of the College Fraternity
- Professional Fraternity Executives Association
- Kappa Alpha Order
- Pi Beta Phi Fraternity
- Sigma Alpha Epsilon Foundation

NIF scholarship and fellowship applications available

Applications for the Lloyd G. Balfour Fellowships, the Jack L. Anson Scholarships, the James H. McLaughlin Scholarship and the Mary Louise Roller Scholarship are now available at the NIF website www.nif-inc.net. Criteria for the funds are fully described on the website. Applicants may download a scholarship/fellowship application or apply directly online.

Thank you **NIF 2004** Thank you **DONORS!**

The generous gifts of our donors support the programs and operations of the North American Interfraternal Foundation including CFEA Awards, grants to support the Transforming the Campus Hazing Culture project, NASPA, the Greek Summit and other interfraternal educational programs. Thank you to all the 2004 contributors below whose gifts make these outstanding programs possible.

Founders' Circle (\$10,000+)

Jeanne and Louis
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Chairman's Circle (\$2,500+)

Theta Chi Funds for
Leadership &
Education

Leadership Circle (\$1,000+)

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Phi Kappa Tau Foundation
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Did You Know?

*That the 2004 Annual Fund had:
24% new donors and
An increase of more than 110% in contributions*

Analyzing the Obvious: Understanding the Link Between Hazing and Gender

by Elizabeth J. Allan, Ph.D., Principal Investigator

A national study on hazing among NCAA athletes (Alfred University, 1999), revealed differences between the types of hazing experienced by male and female athletes. Notably, “women were much less likely than men to be subjected to unacceptable acts: destroying or stealing property, beating up others, being tied up or taped, being confined to small places, being paddled, beaten, kidnapped or transported and abandoned” (p. 3). This finding supports the assertion that sex/gender differences in hazing do exist. For some, this distinction is simply attributed to innate biological differences between the sexes. However, an analysis from a social constructionist perspective would contend that these differences are largely the result of learning to perform gender roles differently. In other words, how men and women are taught to live in the world affects patterns of violence, abuse, and other factors involved in hazing.

Gender Differences—Nature or Nurture?

Many people assume that biological differences (anatomical, hormonal, chromosomal) between women and men are the primary cause of behavioral differences between the sexes. In fact, there are few scientific studies that currently support a biological basis for substantial differences between the way women and men think. Rather, research indicates there is more variation *among* women (or men) on cognitive, emotional and psychological variables than between the two groups (Fausto-Sterling, 1992; Kimmel, 2001; Kivel, 1999). Despite this research, however, the idea persists that women and men are vastly different in their thinking (i.e. “Mars and Venus”) and that they are hard-wired to assume different social roles. In my view, the persistence of this idea speaks to the power of gender role expectations that have become so familiar and taken-for-granted that they are often invisible. Importantly, it is this very invisibility that often prevents us

from considering the influence of gender role expectations on behavior.

Why Gender Theory?

Gender theory provides an additional lens through which to understand the dynamics of hazing. The power of the gender lens is that it can shed new light on what is typically seen as quite obvious and familiar. Since gender norms are so often taken-for-granted, they can be easily overlooked. The more we can understand the cultural dynamics serving to support hazing, the more effective we will be in designing interventions.

Gender theory suggests that versions of masculinity and femininity are largely *learned* rather than simply a consequence of biological sex. In other words, masculinity represents socially accepted beliefs about appropriate behavior for boys and men in a given context, and femininity represents socially accepted beliefs about appropriate behavior for girls and women in a given context. For instance, emotionality is most often associated with femininity, even though we know that both women and men experience a range of emotions.

The use of the term *gender*, then, refers to the predominant understandings of masculinity and femininity in a particular cultural context. Since gender is largely learned through a process of socialization, images of gender can shift over time and in relation to cultural differences. As Michael Kimmel (2000) cogently describes:

Within any one society at any moment, several meanings of masculinity and femininity coexist. Simply put, not all American men and women are the same. Our experiences are also structured by class, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, religion. Each of these axes modifies the others (p. 10).

Nevertheless, particular versions of femininity and masculinity rise to ascendancy during particular social periods.

However, Bem (1993) points out that even while the predominant versions of masculinity and femininity may shift periodically, they generally operate as two poles of a gender binary. For example: active/passive, strong/fragile, aggressive/submissive, independent/dependent, and invincible/vulnerable are commonly held characterizations that depict dominant images of masculinity and femininity as polar opposites of a vast gender divide.

Gender theory contends that individuals are active in defining themselves as masculine and/or feminine. However, alternatives to the dominant gender norms are often overshadowed by the power of the ascendant images (e.g., “Marlboro Man” and “Britney”). While each of us can choose to be different, adopting alternatives is often deterred by the likelihood that these alternatives will be labeled deviant. For instance, if a young boy plays with a doll in the presence of older boys, it is likely that he will be teased and will quickly learn that having a doll is outside the bounds of acceptable masculine behavior. Beginning in early childhood, boys learn to de-value activities that are associated with female-identified qualities while they simultaneously learn that rough and aggressive play are acceptable for boys, as evidenced by the frequently referenced maxim “boys will be boys.”

I do not subscribe to the view that individuals are simply blank slates waiting for a cultural imprint. Rather than negating the role of biology, considering gender as a socially constructed performance highlights the strong and pervasive messages children receive since the time of birth about sex-appropriate behavior. “These messages often involve unconscious, subtle, or indirect signals, rather than intentional instruction”

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(Rhode, 1997, p. 44). Many adults are largely or even completely unaware of their role in the gender socialization process. For instance, when my son was three years old in 1999, his grandfather made him a toolbox and included some real tools (a screwdriver, hammer, tape measure etc.) as a gift. When my daughter turned three and was also capable of safely handling such implements with adult supervision, he was taken by surprise when I asked him if he would be willing to make a toolbox for her as well. Indeed, the thought had never crossed his mind.

Hazing, Gender, and Manhood

The connection between masculinity and hazing is not a difficult one to make. Nonetheless, it is a connection that is not often thoroughly addressed or even articulated in most accounts of hazing. One need not look very far to find examples of how hazing behaviors in male groups often serve as a test of masculinity—or as an opportunity to prove one's manhood. Some attributes commonly associated with masculinity in the U.S. include: strength, aggression, rationality, dominance, control, independence, and courage. When hazing occurs among men, regardless of the type of group, it is often framed as a test of "strength," "courage," and "determination." For instance, accounts of hazing incidents among high school boys and college men frequently include tests of physical endurance, forced/coerced alcohol consumption, paddling and other forms of physical assaults/beatings (Nuwer, 1990; 1999; 2000). In support of hazing, men will often say that such "traditions" are necessary to "weed out" those unworthy of membership. Some men who have been hazed are firm believers in the process of hazing and insist that they "enjoyed the challenge." Such arguments are embedded in cultural expectations around masculinity and what we are taught to expect of "real men."

Drawing on gender theory helps to illuminate why it can be so difficult to eradicate hazing practices. When hazing is so closely tied to the performance of masculinity, it is difficult to untangle the two. Hence, boys and young men who identify with predominant cultural constructions of masculinity are likely to fear their manhood will be called into question if they resist an opportunity to prove their masculinity through hazing. This also explains, at least in part, why some pledges and rookies will *ask* to be hazed even if the fraternity chapter, club or team is working to eliminate such traditions. They know they will likely be subject to scrutiny by other members of the group who endured hazing (and hence proved their own masculinity). Such scrutiny is not entirely external—but also self-imposed—as many boys/men have been taught to think of manhood in terms of physical prowess/ strength, toughness and conquest.

Social anxieties around masculinity are central to sustaining hazing practices. The more that boys/men are fearful of being labeled as weak, the more likely they are to participate in hazing practices that are often dangerous and even life-threatening. For example, in her examination of violence in Canadian hockey, Robinson (1998) interviewed a 16 year-old boy subjected to hazing as a junior hockey player. His comment is illustrative of the way in which hazing preys upon anxieties around proving one's masculinity: "they were persistent in giving us alcohol. Lots of beer. We might look like a wimp if we turned it down" (p. 66).

Gender, Hazing, and Womanhood

Hazing activities among women's groups sometimes resemble the kinds of hazing behaviors typically associated with men and masculinity. Increasingly, we see that girls and women (in society at large) can gain credibility and status by proving they are tough, rugged, and strong. This dynamic plays out in hazing. Excessive consumption of alcohol (especially in predominantly white organizations and teams), forced sleep deprivation, ingestion of vile substances, brandings, paddlings and beatings have all been documented among groups of women. Recently, a study from Finland found that violence is carrying an increasingly positive connota-

tion among girls and is something "that makes the girl feel powerful, strong, and makes her popular" (Kimmel, 2000, p. 250). Nevertheless, even while violent hazing practices have been documented among women's groups, reports of this are relatively few in comparison to men's groups (Hoover, 1999; Nuwer, 1999, 2000).

Sexual objectification of girls/women and sexual harassment is often a component of hazing activities among single sex and mixed groups (i.e. ski clubs, pep club, marching band). At both high school and college levels, sexual simulation is a common hazing/initiation practice among women's groups where men are frequently present as voyeurs. For example, the highly publicized case of a high school gymnast in Vermont, who along with other new recruits to the team were asked to simulate oral sex with a banana while members of the football team encircled them (Nuwer, 2000). Interestingly, it is typically the female members and leaders of the group who are responsible for planning and executing such activities and inviting boys/men to witness and/or assist. Here lies one of the paradoxes of sexism as women themselves actively participate in sustaining the "object" status of other women. This can be explained within the context of hazing—a practice that is designed to humiliate, degrade and disempower people. Thus, hazing practices generally prey on particular vulnerabilities that may be common to most people—or may be different between women and men due to the gendered arrangements and power differences in the broader culture. For instance, hazing reported among women is frequently appearance-related such as requirements for women to wear sexually provocative clothing in public—or to undergo peer assessments of their body shape and size—with directives for improvement. These types of hazing practices are more likely to occur among women than men because they reflect dominant cultural ideals of female beauty.

While the stated intent of hazing may be to "have a good laugh," "build character," and "create unity," girls/women who haze other girls/women (like their male peers who haze) are purposefully designing

analyzing, *see page 7*

Directors Emeritus Elected Under New Criteria

During the 2004 year, the Governance Committee, under the direction of Chair Louise Kier Zirretta, reviewed and revised the criteria for election of an NIF Director Emeritus. The Committee's report was presented and accepted at the Annual Meeting in November.

The new criteria stipulates the qualifications for election as a "retiring member of the Board of Directors, who has served with distinction as a Director and/or Officer of the Foundation elected by a majority vote of the Board of Directors conducted by secret ballot." Distinction was defined as "devotion, tireless efforts, and the demonstrated desire to enhance the NIF through individual and collective efforts."

Individuals must have served as an "officer and/or committee chair and/or Board member during seven or more



Sidney H. Guller

years at a level of achievement that is consistent with those whose service has been so recognized throughout our organizational history."

The Executive Committee brought forth the names of two distinguished past board members, Sidney H. Guller (Sigma Alpha Mu) and George W. Spasyk (Lambda Chi Alpha), for consideration.

Following a secret ballot, Guller and Spasyk were duly elected as the first two Directors Emeritus under the new criteria.

Sidney has been an NIF board member since 1981 and has served in nearly every official capacity including president. He has generously provided an endowment fund which reached its \$100,000



George W. Spasyk

goal in 2004. Grants from the fund will be available for use in 2005. Sidney retired from the Board in 2004 but plans to continue serving the NIF as Chair of the Investment Committee.

George, past president of the Fraternity Executives Association, served as an active and loyal NIF board member from 1990-2003 and held the offices of Vice President, President and Chair of the Board in addition to service on numerous NIF committees. George retired as Executive Director of Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity in 1990 after forty years of service.

Congratulations to Sidney and George. They have set an appropriately high standard for election to this prestigious position, reflective of their exemplary service to both the NIF and the interfraternal community.

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scenarios that often result in humiliating, degrading uncomfortable and sometimes frightening experiences for new members of their organizations or teams.

Beyond Gender

Just as hazing differs for male and female groups, and reflects gendered power dynamics in the larger culture, hazing practices are also shaped in relation to other systems of power operating in society. According to Walter Kimbrough, a scholar of higher education who has written about historically black fraternities, "organizations are always greatly affected by the culture of the larger society" (in Nuwer, 1999, p. 184). As an artifact of culture, gender is historically situated and influenced by other culturally mediated factors (such as race and socioeconomic status) that affect the ways in which individuals experience the social world.

If hazing among men and women is shaped by cultural expectations around

masculinity and femininity, then it is also shaped by race, socioeconomic status and other identity-related factors. For instance, John Williams (2001) and Paula Giddings (in Nuwer, 1999, p. 180) describe their own experiences and reflections on how pledging and hazing in NPHC (historically Black) fraternities and sororities was specific to conditions resulting from centuries of racial oppression in the U.S. In her book on the history of Delta Sigma Theta, Giddings writes, "hazing had always been a part of the initiation period...but may have a particular meaning and character among Blacks" (in Nuwer, 1999, p. 180). She cites the "stripping away of individuality," emphasis on unity and unconditional respect for sisters, as having "a particular resonance in terms of the Black experience" (p. 180). Clearly, racial, cultural, and other identity-based differences must be taken into account as we work to understand hazing and find more effective prevention strategies.

Implications for Hazing Prevention

Working to understand the social construction of gender (masculinity and fem-

inity) provides another lens through which to interpret hazing differences between male and female groups. A "gender lens" is another tool for the practitioner's toolbox in working with student groups to promote increased awareness and develop more viable alternatives to hazing. For instance, some hazing practices are tolerated (and even invited), despite their humiliating and degrading effects, because they provide a means by which to prove one's courage or fortitude. In designing effective alternatives to hazing, it is important to consider activities that can help these students feel they have exhibited courage, bravery, and strength without having to be humiliated, degraded, or placed in harm's way in the process. For example, many fraternal groups and athletic teams (both male and female) have enjoyed some success taking an "Outward Bound" type of approach by implementing supervised challenge activities with ropes courses and team building activities to promote a sense of individual and group accomplishment.

Developing such alternatives requires looking beyond the obvious. In order to eradi-

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analyzing, *cont'd from page 7*

cate hazing, we need to consider the social pressures and expectations related to gender (masculinity and femininity) while working to find alternative ways for students to “earn respect” of their peers and feel validated as young women and men. At the same time we work to help students navigate their way amidst these pressures, we also need to continue our work to help them develop the life skills needed to resist rigid gender-role expectations. For example, we can encourage and reward students for emphasizing forms of bravery and courage that are not predicated upon narrowly defined masculinity—or working to broaden images of femininity that emphasize women’s achievements and strength rather than conformity to a media-driven standard of perfection. Applying a gender lens to the problem of hazing, can enable us to see old patterns in new ways and can help cultivate meaningful membership activities that reframe limiting notions of manhood and womanhood. By working to broaden the limits of

“acceptable” femininity and masculinity, we will not only strengthen hazing prevention efforts, we will also send a message to students about the importance of living lives that are more fully human.

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Notes

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