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# Becoming "Bros": Hegemonic Masculinity and Peer Effects in the Hazing Rituals of College Fraternities

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Becoming “Bros”: Hegemonic Masculinity and Peer Influence in the Hazing Rituals  
of College Fraternities

by

Noelle K. Smart

A Thesis

Presented to the Graduate and Research Committee

of Lehigh University

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

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Noelle K. Smart

This thesis is accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in Sociology.

BECOMING “BROS”: HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY AND PEER INFLUENCE  
IN THE HAZING RITUALS OF COLLEGE FRATERNITIES  
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## ABSTRACT

Although prevention efforts exist on many college campuses, hazing remains a continual threat to the well-being of students in social organizations. Acts of hazing committed by current group members vary in levels of emotional and physical harm to initiates. My research seeks potential risk factors for more relatively extreme forms of hazing, examining a link between the groups' performance of masculinity and the severity of aggression and violence enacted by members in their hazing rituals. At a single university, I conducted thirteen interviews with brothers in four all-male social fraternities – two exhibiting low-level and two exhibiting moderate-level hazing behaviors. From this data, I identified three salient themes that contributed to differences in hazing severity: conceptual perceptions of hazing; performance of masculinities; and isolation from non-fraternity social life. In this paper, I explore these findings and offer recommendations for future hazing prevention efforts, especially those targeted toward college fraternities.

Key words: *gender, masculinity, hazing, fraternities, Greek life, initiation, college*

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Chun “Michael” Deng was eager to join a fraternity. Several of the Pi Delta Psi brothers at Baruch College took him and three other members of his pledge class to a “weekend retreat” in the Poconos last December, where Michael’s hopes of becoming a brother were cut short. As part of a pledging event, the initiates were blindfolded and forced to carry backpacks filled with twenty pounds of sand while crossing a patch of snow toward one of the fraternity brothers (Daily Mail 2014). Their goal was to reach that person, despite being punched, tackled, and pushed by other brothers along the way. During this activity, Michael fell and sustained a severe brain injury. He passed away from his injuries the following day at only nineteen years old. His death was ruled a homicide, the chapter was disbanded, and a local district attorney plans to file criminal charges against Michael’s fraternity brothers who were involved in his death.

Another young man, Robert Champion, was a music major at Florida A&M University. As one of several drum majors of his college marching band, Robert wanted to become the lead drum major of the Marching 100. He was forced to participate in a ritual known as “Bus C” – where individuals would have to travel from the front of the bus to the back of the bus, walking through a “gauntlet of fists,” being hit with bare hands, then with drum sticks and other musical instruments, along the way (Montgomery 2012). It took Robert about fifteen minutes to reach the back of the bus, after which he complained of having difficulty breathing. He died within an hour of extensive internal bleeding and hemorrhaging. He was twenty-six years

old. His death was also ruled a homicide, and eleven former A&M students are facing criminal charges.

These cases are the extremes – snapshots of the worst-case scenario consequences for hazing in university settings. They are certainly not the intended outcomes of hazing. Research shows that group members tend to care deeply for their initiates and are greatly distraught when something happens to one of them (Sweet 1999). The brothers who haze typically do not mean to cause lasting harm – yet still, they do. Even in cases of hazing where injuries are not sustained or where students can recover from those injuries, hazing can still leave enduring emotional and psychological scars.

Through this research, I aim to identify factors that contribute to an individual's participation in relatively extreme forms of hazing, specifically within all-male social fraternities, by analyzing the performances of masculinity among Greek men. By identifying such factors, I believe that hazing intervention strategies can be improved upon by designing differing preventative programs that target the specific needs of individual fraternities. It is my hope that my research also may inform the research design of future risk assessments and studies related to hazing, with the identified risk factors in mind.

## BACKGROUND

Despite policies at higher education institutions across the nation that forbid hazing, it remains a common feature of initiation rituals in campus groups, especially

among Greek organizations. It is difficult to pinpoint a specific definition of the term, because a wide assortment of practices can be considered hazing. (Please see Appendix A for a sample university hazing policy which features a list of hazing behaviors.) Hank Nuwer offers a generalized definition, stating that “hazing is an all-encompassing term that covers silly, potentially risky, or degrading tasks required for acceptance by a group of full-fledged members” (2004).

Hazing occurs in a variety of social spaces, including military units, fire departments, medical residencies, professional athletics, sports teams, high schools, fraternities, sororities, and marching bands (Chetkovich 1997; Hoffman 2002; Crow and Rosner 2002; Allan and DeAngelis 2004; Peluso 2006; Krikorian 2007; Chang 2011). Despite its existence in other groups, students in Greek-letter organizations are at greater risk of experiencing hazing. In the National Study of Student Hazing, seventy-three percent of respondents affiliated with social fraternities or sororities admitted experiencing at least one hazing behavior during the pledging process, compared with fifty-five percent of all college students (Allan and Madden 2008).

For my master’s thesis, I am interested in exploring the role of masculinity and peer influence among the hazing rituals of college fraternity men. I hope to identify through my research the factors that foster an environment in which individual members commit hazing. In particular, I seek to determine factors that contribute to more extreme forms of hazing enacted by group members.

This topic stems from my interest in the intersections of adolescent masculinity, violence, and group behavior. In Western culture, a strong association

exists between violence and masculinity, creating real, negative consequences for men immersed in this culture. I am especially concerned with the social influences of violent masculinity for young men, who are in the unstable phase of transitioning from childhood to adulthood. More specifically, I am interested in these behaviors among male residential college students, many of whom are newly separated from their families to live on their own. The event of moving to college brings newfound independence from regular adult supervision, leaving individuals in constant proximity with others in the same transitional position.

I especially focus on the behaviors of young men in positions of social privilege. Besides having male privilege, the power enjoyed by men who are white, heterosexual, able-bodied, cisgender, middle- and upper-class may position them to be less aware or less critical of cultural views of gender, leading them to accept and embrace hegemonic masculinity as a model for their own gender performances.

Among these college men, I intend to analyze the dynamics within structured, all-male groups that may influence individuals to participate in extreme forms of hazing behaviors. It is my hypothesis that the ways that masculinity is presented and performed by the group, as well as by respected group members, can have a powerful influence on individuals' gender performance, especially when they are in the presence of other group members. When the group's presentation of masculinity is aligned with cultural associations of men and violence, I suspect that individuals will be more motivated to participate in violent behaviors with the group when such

opportunities arise. For this reason, I am interested in groups where initiation and hazing is an integral part of the membership experience.

I focus on fraternities, rather than other all-male groups, because social bonding and interactions are the primary purposes of the organizations' existences. The historical context and collective identity within individual fraternity chapters may have an important role in the factors leading individuals to participate in violent group behavior through hazing. Through interviews with individual fraternity brothers, I aim to understand such motivators for hazing.

#### PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The purpose of this research is to identify risk factors in all-male social student groups for minor versus extreme forms of hazing, in order to equip institutions of higher education with information when developing prevention strategies. I hope that my research will help to prevent physical hazing and its devastating consequences.

Through completion of this study, I seek to address the following research questions: What factors indicate that a fraternity chapter is likely to be at risk for physical forms of hazing, as opposed to hazing in other forms only? What factors foster environments that encourage fraternity members to participate in hazing with other brothers? How does the initiation process lead initiates to participate in hazing when they become brothers? How does the role of masculinity relate to a chapter's hazing rituals? Are there different representations or degrees of masculinity

demonstrated, and does this differentiate the attitudes toward hazing conducted by the group? What steps can be taken to reduce the risk of more extreme forms of hazing?

## SUMMARY

The primary purpose of this research is to identify risk factors for more extreme forms of hazing through interviews with brothers of multiple fraternities. It is my hope to add to an existing body of research that will aid in hazing prevention efforts at institutions of higher education, especially those targeted toward fraternities.

This thesis is organized into five major sections. In this chapter, I have explored the need to study masculinity and hazing behaviors and provided an overview of the study. The second chapter reviews current theoretical and empirical literature on gender, masculinity, Greek-letter organizations, and hazing rituals. This exploration of previous research assisted me in the development of my research questions, as I intend to expand current knowledge of hazing behaviors through the completion of this work. In the third chapter, I will explain my methodological approach regarding research design, sample selection, data collection, and data analysis. The fourth chapter is dedicated to the reporting and analysis of my findings. In this section, I explore the themes of hazing perception, performance of masculinity, and isolation as major contributors to differences in the severity of hazing rituals. I conclude my research in the fifth chapter, where I summarize my project and provide recommendations for hazing prevention strategies.

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

### THEORETICAL CONCEPTIONS OF GENDER

#### *Defining the Concept: The Sex/Gender Binary*

“It’s a boy!” In Western culture, the process of gendering individuals begins before birth. After acknowledging one’s existence as a fetus, the first piece of information that others receive about an individual is whether the fetus is a girl or a boy, signaling the importance of gender in society. Girly pink or boyish blue merchandise is then gifted away at baby showers, the parents-to-be decide on their top picks for feminine names and masculine names, and trendy “gender reveal parties” continue to grow in popularity across America (Lack 2012). At this *in vitro* life stage, an individual’s social role of gender is born, fashioned from biological markers of sex.

While the terms sex and gender are often used interchangeably in everyday speech, they are unique concepts typically assumed to have a linear relationship. Sex refers to a biological status based on reproductive organs, DNA, and hormones, identifying individuals as a girl/woman, boy/man, or intersex. While sex is rooted in biology, gender remains purely a social construction – a “doing” instilled in us that we internalize and replicate. Judith Butler has explained gender not as an absolute state of being, but as an identity which one performs. “Gender is always a doing,” meaning that it is constituted by the thoughts, speech, and behaviors of an individual (Butler 1990).

Society exclusively recognizes a binary of sexes, man and woman, which leads to a binary of genders, male and female. Traditionally, it has been assumed that individuals who are biologically men identify with the male gender, exhibit masculine traits, and exclusively are attracted to women, while those who are biologically women identify with the female gender, demonstrate female qualities, and are attracted solely to men. In this binary, individuals are assumed to be cisgender (where gender identity “matches” biological sex) and heterosexual until proven otherwise. The gender assumption leaves no room for those who do not identify as either male men or female women, marginalizing all who do not fit within that model: individuals who are intersex, transgender, or gender non-conforming. The binary of sexuality excludes those who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, or asexual. Thus, the gendered unborn are generally assumed to be heterosexual and cisgender once they emerge from the womb; any other combination would violate societal norms and would likely cause the individual to face some sort of social stigma as a result.

Butler reimagined the male/female gender binary, asserting that the connection between sex and gender is socially constructed (Tong 2009). She claimed that individuals do not choose a gender, but rather describe the process of identifying with gender as “[interpreting] received gender norms in a way that organizes them anew” (Butler 1987). In addition to gender being socially constructed, Butler asserted that sex itself was constructed as well through actions of individuals. She exemplified this point by considering hermaphrodites, individuals who biologically display both male and female sex characteristics. While hermaphrodites have an ambiguous

gender, they are generally considered to be “oriented in either male or female directions” rather than being considered as a unique gender category (Tong 2009).

Thus, biologically-based support of a gender/sex binary is baseless, as Barrie Thorne explains:

“Two inter-related dimensions of gender – the culturally constructed dichotomous gender categories (male/female, girl/boy, man/woman) and core gender identity, or the deep sense of self as either male or female – are the only gender differences that are fully binary. All biological phenomena – including chromosomes, hormones, reproductive physiology, and secondary sex differences like facial hair and breasts – come in a complex range rather than in tidy, isomorphic polarities. Nor... do organizational and symbolic gender sort into neat dichotomies.” (Thorne 1993)

While the basis of the gender/sex binary is not supported by biology or any external truth, its pervasiveness in society has real consequences. The strength of the binary does not allow for expressions of gender to transcend maleness/femaleness, not matter how hard one tries:

In Butler’s scheme of things, if you decided to ignore the expectations and the constraints imposed by your peers, colleagues, etc. by “putting on a gender”... you could not simply reinvent your metaphorical gender wardrobe or acquire an entirely new one... In other words, your choice of gender is curtailed, as is your choice of subversion – which might make it seem as though, what you are doing is not “choosing” or “subverting” your gender at all. (Salin 2002)

Individuals are forced to identify as male or female, and those who disagree with the binary remain limited within a spectrum of maleness and femaleness. One cannot thwart the binary; it is a socially constructed reality within which they are forced to operate. According to this viewpoint, true androgyny is not achievable because it falls at a point between two rigidly defined genders.

In spite of feminist criticism, society honors the continuation of gender roles, which some feminist scholars view as a consequence of a patriarchal system that privileges men over women:

...Patriarchal society uses certain facts about male and female biology (chromosomes, anatomy, hormones) as the basis for constructing a set of masculine and feminine gender identities and behaviors that serve to empower men and disempower women. In the process of accomplishing this task, patriarchal society convinces itself its cultural constructions are somehow “natural” and therefore that people’s “normality” depends on their ability to display whatever gender identities and behaviors are culturally linked with their biological sex. (Tong 2009)

Individuals born into societies that support this sex/gender system face real social pressure to conform to a gender role within the binary model. Though many feminist scholars critique the persistence of a gender binary, the path of least resistance for individuals in real life involves conforming to a gender identity of masculinity or femininity. Many individuals do so without question and are unaware that gender itself is socially constructed.

### *Developing Self-Concept*

After a baby’s grand entrance into the world, the importance of gender continues to grow throughout childhood and remains an important marker of the self throughout the life course. In order to understand how individuals internalize socially-constructed gender identities, one must begin by looking at the ways that the self is conceptualized more generally.

Though the idea of “self” may seem intuitive – a fixed understanding of “I am” – the development of self has been explored in sociological theory as a social process. Charles Horton Cooley argued that the idea of self is not innate, but is learned through the ability to see ourselves the way that others see us, a concept he called the “looking-glass self” or “reflective self” (Bain 1962; Cooley 1902). In addition to understanding a mirrored reflection of ourselves from the perspective of another, Cooley asserted that we place a judgment on that image of self that we believe reflects the way that others see us, which affects that way we feel about ourselves. Cooley thus identified three components to the realization of self: “the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance, and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification” (1902). Through the view of a reflective self, we are able to develop self-concept, our satisfaction of which depends upon how we think others perceive us.

Cooley also asserted that children become able to distinguish themselves as objects separate from other persons through the comprehension of personal pronouns: an understanding that “I” and “me” are different than “you,” “he,” and “she” (Bain 1962). He notes that children do have a strong sense of self prior to gaining understanding of themselves as objects by their assertion of their needs and desires. During childhood, the self is shaped through the process of social interaction before the conceptualization of self as an object is realized.

Symbolic interactionist theorist George Mead is also noted for his works on the genesis of self. Mead described childhood self-development as occurring in three

phases: play, the game, and the generalized other. Within the first stage, children purposefully take on the role of others during playtime while role-playing as parents, soldiers, astronauts, or pop stars. When playing with peers, children acknowledge certain stimuli that are associated with the role they are playing. A child playing “doctor,” for example, makes use of the stimuli by playing as doctor and patient: pretending to be sick, and then providing medical care. The fluidity of assuming one character after another allows the child to shift roles and act as “another to one’s self” (Mead 1934). From “play” to “a game,” children switch from assuming multiple roles to assuming only one role, while their peers take on their own roles. The child cannot shift from one role to the next, but instead must anticipate the moves of others performing their own roles in order to respond to them. After learning to adopt the attitudes of others, children develop a role for themselves and eventually perform this role in their own lives. Children then take on the role of the “generalized other,” which they use to anticipate a role that others expect them to assume.

Further, Mead dissected the self into two components: an “I” self and a “me” self. The “I” self is defined by a person’s inner self, including impulses, reactions, or subconscious thoughts. The “I” self is both aware of and shaped by the “me” self, which is characterized as the social self:

The “I” is a response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the “me” is the organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes. The attitudes of others constitute the organized “me,” and then one reacts toward that as an “I.” (Mead 1934)

Together, the “I” and “me” components of self establish an individual’s personality “as it appears in the social experience,” according to Mead (1934). Similar to Mead’s “I” and “me” self, Erving Goffman developed the idea of the frontstage/backstage self as part of his dramaturgical metaphorical imagery of the social self. Emerging from this theoretical perspective is the idea of the gendered self. A number of theorists and researchers have sought to explain the ways that social norms influence individuals’ sense of self (Butler 1990; Williams and Best 1990; Kimmel 2000).

### *Gender Socialization and the Self*

Children determine their gender identities as either male or female between the ages of eighteen months to three years old, which become a core component of their self-concepts (Lips 2001). While children are still establishing the idea of self, gender identity is already in place, shaping their development. Because an understanding of gender identity precludes an understanding of self-concept, messages about gender from society have a powerful influence in developing the self in a child’s early years.

As they grow up, children are socialized to adopt specific gender roles, or “the patterns of behavior which the two sexes are socialized, encouraged, or coerced into adopting, ranging from ‘sex appropriate’ personalities to interests and professions” (English 1977). Little boys are socialized to be “masculine” interests and little girls are socialized to be “feminine”. Numerous social units in children’s lives – their families, peer groups, schools, recreation – work interdependently to socialize

children to gender-appropriate behavior, though children “are not expected to adopt gender-typed behaviors consistently until after they regard themselves unalterably as a boy or a girl, which is usually not achieved until about 6 years of age” (Bussey and Bandura 1999).

The process of gender socialization incorporates all aspects of children’s lives – family, peers, educational institutions, and recreations. Social learning theory originally focused on the idea that children received messages from others reinforcing gendered behavior. Parents giving positive feedback to their little boy for selecting a masculine toy, G.I. Joe, over a feminine Barbie doll at Toys ‘R Us exemplify the idea of reinforcement. Over time, this theory expanded to include the idea that children model gendered behavior from others in their lives. The inclusion of modeling in addition to gender reinforcement allows for agency of children as social objects to be considered, in addition to the effect of agents of gender socialization (Stockard 1999).

In addition to gender socialization, the influence of peer groups has been shown to have a profound affect on the ways that boys and girls act. Sex-segregation is quite common among children, who tend to play with children of the same gender far more frequently than children of the “opposite” gender when given a choice (Whiting and Edwards 1988). Barrie Thorne asserted that “the cognitive awareness of being a girl *or* a boy is clearly a prerequisite for creating separate girls’ and boys’ groups” (1993). Children also have a strong tendency to “police” their peers for failing to behave in appropriately gendered ways (Fagot 1994). The importance of peers in the gendered behavior of children should not be underestimated.

Young children are influenced by messages about gender. Generally, masculinity is conceptualized by “technical mastery, aggression, competitiveness, and cognitive abstraction,” and femininity by “emotional nurturance, connectedness, and passivity” (Kimmel and Messner 2007). The traits associated with these gender roles are defined in opposition to each other, and individuals are pressured to conform to their own role and not cross a gendered line. “The woman who displays characteristics her social group regards as masculine will be viewed as less than a *real* woman; the man who shows so-called feminine traits will be considered less than a *real* man” (Tong 2009).

The idea of gender socialization is limiting, as it remains stagnant within the defined gender binary. Once children understand gender-appropriate behaviors, they are influenced by their social location. The nuances of various masculinities and femininities are dependent upon the particular culture, race, ethnicity, and class of the child (Tong 2009; Kimmel and Messner 2007). A performative view of gender opens the doors for a range of gendered behaviors and identities.

## PERFORMING MASCULINITIES

Beyond gender socialization is the theory of gender performativity. As mentioned earlier in this text, Butler asserted the idea of gender as a “doing,” rather than something that one “is” (Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin 1999). Any actions conducted by an individual are carried out through a lens of gender: “manly” or “womanly” (Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin). These actions are evaluated by others, and

are evaluated as appropriate or inappropriate gender performances. The meaning of manhood lies in individual performance and external perception:

To be a man is to participate in social life as a man, as a gendered being. Men are not born; they are made. And men make themselves, actively constructing their masculinities within a social and historical context. (Kimmel and Messner 2007)

According to the social constructionist perspective, masculinity is “neither transhistorical nor culturally universal, but rather varies from culture to culture and within any one culture over time” (Kimmel and Messner 2007). R.W. Connell conceptualizes masculinity as “simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices on bodily experience, personality, and culture” (1995). Sociologist Mimi Schippers summarized Connell’s point as three components of masculinity:

First, it is social location that individuals, regardless of gender, can move into through practice. Second, it is a set of practices and characteristics understood to be “masculine”. Third, when these practices are embodied especially by men, but also by women, they have widespread cultural and social effects. (2007)

There is not one role of *masculinity*, but rather a matrix of *masculinities* qualified by one’s social position (Connell 1995; Kimmel and Messner 2007). However, all masculinities do not enjoy the same privilege -- an idea that will be explored in the section to follow.

### *Hegemonic Masculinity*

The concept of hegemony, referring to a cultural group positioned as dominant in social life, illustrates a cultural ideal of “hegemonic masculinity”, where “one form of masculinity rather than the others is culturally exalted” (Connell 1995). While a multiplicity of masculinities may be present within a culture, they are not equally valued:

In an important sense, there is only one complete unblushing male in America: a young, unmarried, white, urban, northern, heterosexual Protestant father of college education, full employed, of good complexion, weight, and height, and a recent record in sports... Any male who fails to qualify in any one of these ways is likely to view himself -- during moments at least -- as unworthy, incomplete, and inferior. (Goffman 1963)

Connell notes that hegemonic masculinity must be rooted in some kind of real connection between “cultural ideal and institutional power” (1995). Those in power hold steady an image of masculinity that has yet to be interrupted by the ranks of women or men who display alternate forms of masculinity. The “successful claim to authority” defines hegemonic masculinity. The image of masculinity described by Goffman in the passage above is replicated by men in power across America, particularly by men in higher positions of politics, military, and business.

Interestingly, there is a connection between these men in power and their participation in Greek life. (For a partial list of fraternity men in power, please see Appendix B.) While those at the top tend to be white, heterosexual men, they also tend to be former members of fraternities:

Fraternity men make up 85 percent of U.S. Supreme Court justices since 1910, 63 percent of all U.S. presidential cabinet members since 1900, and,

historically, 76 percent of U.S. Senators, 85 percent of Fortune 500 executives, 71 percent of the men in “Who’s Who in America”. And that’s not counting the 18 ex-frat U.S. presidents since 1877 (that’s 69 percent) and the 120 *Forbes* 500 CEOs (24 percent) from the 2003 list, including 10—or one-third—of the top 30. In the 113th Congress alone, 38 of the hundred Senate members come from [Greek life]... as does a full quarter of the House. (Konnikova 2014)

These men in power – those who continue to replicate and define hegemonic masculinity – emerge from the same fraternity system as the participants in my study. The concept of hegemonic masculinity is inseparable from fraternity life because its members are the same ones who produce hegemonic masculinity and who reap the rewards from the power associated with it.

Not only is the connection between powerful leaders and fraternity men important for its perpetuation of hegemony, but also for the kind of leadership that emerges from fraternity culture. George W. Bush went from serving as president of Delta Kappa Epsilon at Yale to serving as President of the United States. This man, who was once quoted in the *New York Times* in 1967 saying that his chapter’s branding of DKE pledges with a red-hot coat hanger was “insignificant,” was the same one who declared war on Iraq and was criticized for the torture of foreign prisoners during his two-term presidency (Chow and Mirkinson 2005). Though it would be hasty to imply that his experience with hazing in his fraternity caused his callousness toward similar atrocities toward prisoners, Bush did spend time in an environment that supported the mistreatment of lowly pledges, and later echoed that behavior in his defense of the inhuman treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay detention camp (Siems 2012). Though Bush is but one of the many former fraternity

men in power, his experiences with hazing and torture raise the question of the nature of the leadership cultured in college fraternities. The types of masculinities fostered within fraternities are concerning, as the Greek system produces many leaders that will hold power within society and, through that power, will define and replicate hegemonic masculinity.

### *Adolescent Masculinities*

Young men in America are subject to messages about masculinity from all directions - from their peers, mentors, family members, the greater community, and the media. Michael Kimmel navigated the experiences of men in this age group, who are positioned between being a child and an adult in a life stage he called “Guyland”: “A kind of suspended animation between boyhood and manhood, Guyland lies between the dependency and lack of autonomy of boyhood and the sacrifice and responsibility of manhood” (Kimmel 2008). This stage of life is a space that allows young men to reject a man’s responsibility and enjoy a boy’s lifestyle, while desperately seeking validation as men “despite all evidence to the contrary” (Kimmel 2008).

While many members of Guyland lack direction and focus, the fraternity men in my sample are the exception to this trend. Kimmel notes that high-achieving, motivated men may still exist in Guyland: “their stories of resilience and motivation will provide a telling rejoinder to many of the dominant patterns of Guyland” (2008). However, these men have much in common with others stuck in Guyland in regards

to their behavior. “It’s the ‘boyhood’ side of the continuum they’re so reluctant to leave,” Kimmel explains, which underscores the irresponsibility of this life phase. It’s about hooking up (not dating), drinking (not studying), and porn (not prayer). It’s the watching of sports, playing of sports, and talking about sports. It’s the late nights of video games, Netflix, beer, and pizza with their “bros”. These are the behaviors prominent in Guyland that “[make] the real grownups in their lives roll their eyes and wonder, ‘When will he *grow up?!*’” (Kimmel 2008).

For male university students, including those in my sample, college acts as a stable space and time where Guyland persists, as students enjoy newfound freedom from their parents without the worries that accompany adult life:

College is considered the last hurrah before the real demands of adulthood begin. Most know that when they graduate, they’ll be expected to get jobs, support themselves, and be responsible. As they see it, they’ve only got four more years of boyhood left, and they’re going to make the best of it. (Kimmel 2008)

After the switch from living with family to living with roommates, residential college students are free of constant adult presence. Instead of turning to their fathers, coaches, or other adult mentors, college men in Guyland seek validation of their own masculinity from each other. In acts of desperation, they are willing to let their moral compasses stray from due north if it means proving their masculinity to their peers:

They lie about their sexual experiences to seem more manly; they drink more than they know they can handle because they don’t want to seem weak or immature; they sheepishly engage in locker-room talk about young women they actually like and respect.... With no adults around running the show, they turn to each other for initiation into manhood. (Kimmel 2008)

Female college students have their place in Guyland as well. Within a strong culture of homophobia, they deemed necessary in order to mitigate the homosocial atmosphere. However, it is “girls,” not women, who are valued – as sex objects (Kimmel 2008). Women bring the responsibility of adulthood: the pressures to grow up, to act maturely, or to define the relationship. Girls fulfill the role of a sexual toy for guys to treat as they will. The amount of girls that a guy is sexually involved with also serves as evidence that he is a “man.”

Kimmel identifies three distinct cultural dynamics of Guyland: a culture of entitlement, a culture of silence, and a culture of protection (2008). The combination of these three forces enables the men of Guyland to repeat negative behaviors, because they are part of a culture that allows them to persist. Within the culture of entitlement, young men feel a powerful sense of “male superiority and a diminished capacity for empathy” (Kimmel 2008). Kimmel notes that men of Guyland who support acts of violence by partaking in them, by witnessing them, or by joking about them are ones who “fully subscribe to traditional ideologies of masculinity” (2008). Growing up in a social system that privileges men causes those in Guyland to feel entitled to the power associated with maleness. Kimmel argues that advances in equality for women or people of color have chipped away at the male privilege that guys expected to be awarded.

The culture of silence mandates that guys accept the ideals of Guyland, whether they personally agree with them or not (Kimmel 2008). Those who criticize these ideals risk being alienated by their male peers. Instead being able to access a

network that may validate their masculinity, they believe that they would be shut out of their peer group if they spoke out against other guys' negative behaviors. Thus, they do not raise their voices in objection when they witness their male peers acting cruelly or violently:

They learn not to say anything when guys make sexist comments to girls. They learn not to say anything when guys taunt or tease another guy, or start fights, or bully or torment a classmate or friend. They scurry silently if they're walking down the street and some guys at a construction site – or for that matter, in business suits – start harassing a woman. They learn to not tell anyone about the homoerotic sadism that is practiced on new kids when they join a high-school or college athletic team, or the school band, or a fraternity. Or when they hear that a bunch of guys gang raped a classmate. They tell no parents, no teachers, no administrators. They don't tell the police. And they certainly don't confront the perpetrators. (Kimmel 2008)

Speaking out against these behaviors has its costs, and there is a high price to pay to remain in Guyland. The risk of being ostracized is far too great for most guys to be willing to speak up against these behaviors. They protect and enable their peers through their silence. "Silence is one of the ways boys *become* men" (Kimmel 2008).

In conjunction with cultures of entitlement and silence, Guyland is supported by a culture of protection. Those on the outskirts of Guyland who know and love these guys support the system through their protection of them. When negative consequences of Guyland are exposed, whether they be a hazing death at a local state school or a gang rape at a high school party, their greater community bands together in disbelief:

...Parents, teachers, girlfriends, school administrators, and city officials make the decision to look the other way, to dismiss these acts of violence as "poor judgment" or "things getting a little out of hand." ...Communities rally around "their" guys, protecting the criminals and demeaning their victims. This

shields the participants from taking full responsibility for their actions... and sometimes, parents' efforts to protect and defend their young adults may actually enable them to transgress again, to even escalate the severity of their actions... (Kimmel 2008)

The cultural dynamics of entitlement, silence, and protection empower the social structure of Guyland, allowing guys to replicate negative behavior with little risk of punishment. In this system, the instigators of violence are able to remain in power, because their peers feel pressure to remain silent and their community leaps to protect them when extreme events do transpire. Kimmel argues that in order to dismantle this system, society must begin "to empower the silent guys to disable the predators" by redefining what it means to be a man in our culture with respect to ethics, courage, and compassion (2008).

#### MASCULINITY AND THE FRATERNITY EXPERIENCE

Performance of gender for young men is guided not only by their social location, but more specifically, by their social groups. As a "fluid variable that can shift and change in different contexts and at different times," gender performance must be examined in the context of subcultures (Gauntlett 2002). Alan DeSantis researched the relationship between individual Greek members and the effect the Greek system has on their behavior and ideas. He spoke of both fraternities and sororities as "gendered clubs," social units segregated by gender, where "traditional ideas of masculinity and femininity are reaffirmed – and, in some cases, even

reformed or replaced” (DeSantis 2007). The subcultural environment of a fraternity can greatly influence the expressions of gender for individual members.

### *The Politics of Fraternity Rush*

Men desire to be surrounded by high-status men to increase their own status. In order to achieve this goal, fraternities are selective in awarding bids to prospective members, as their pledges must be guys that they’d be willing to be associated with their organization (Tiger 2004). Recruitment tends to allow the character of the organization to be replicated in years to come, because brothers choose pledges who are similar to themselves and who exemplify high-status masculinity.

Initiation processes themselves serve to assure that a pledge is a good “fit” for the group. Since the pledge will represent the organization during pledging and as a full brother, it is important to brothers to test whether he is worthy of membership. Initiation also tests the trustworthiness of pledges (Tiger 2004). Since fraternities hold many secrets within their organization - their ritual ceremonies and hazing practices, among other things - initiation is a time to prove that new members can be trusted with the secrets of the brotherhood.

For those college men wishing to join fraternities, Levine and Sussmann found that socioeconomic status and gregariousness were of upmost importance for being selected to join a brotherhood. Men from upper-class families were more likely to receive a bid than those from middle-class or working-class backgrounds, regardless of their sociability. For prospective members with lower family income,

“sociability makes the difference” (Levine and Sussman 1960). Both stratification and mobility were reflected in prospective pledges’ chances of being selected to join a fraternity. From this study, Levine and Sussman concluded that fraternities reflect the values of the American class system.

### *Restructuring the Self Through Pledging*

Once the brothers select potential members for a pledge class, they manipulate the pledges’ senses of self to conform to the ideals of the brotherhood. Pledges are figuratively rebranded through a series of symbols. The material self is defined through tangible objects – the clothes we wear, the houses we live in, or the cars we drive, for example. Erving Goffman explained that these artifacts create an image of ourselves that we portray to others and create our “identity kits” (1961). For fraternity pledges, identity kits are reconstructed through the use of material objects. Sweatshirts, t-shirts, shorts, baseball hats, pledge pins, bottle openers, shot glasses, paddles, books, and other merchandise are distributed to pledges; all physically marked by their fraternity’s Greek letters, these objects symbolically mark the pledge as part of the group (Sweet 1999). Pledges’ material senses of self are manipulated, and are repackaged to conform to the same image as the rest of the fraternity members.

Social selves are defined through individuals’ social interactions with other individuals and groups in society. William James asserted that a considerable amount of self-identity is constituted by these social interactions (1983). Throughout the

pledging process, new members become so closely affiliated with the fraternity that they reduce the strength of their other social ties:

Fraternities deliberately and systematically limit the social relations of their pledges, forcing them to form tight groups with intimate contact... Fraternity initiation rites are designed to terminate or curtail many of the associations that pledges previously held outside of that organization. (Sweet 1999)

As pledges become increasingly isolated from outside relationships, they become more dependent upon the fraternal structure as a node of self-identity. As such, the stakes are higher if pledges wish to quit the pledging process, because “pledges literally lose a major part of themselves by withdrawing through depledging” (Sweet 1999).

## HAZING

Those who choose to join a fraternity are faced with revered initiation rituals, which serve the purpose where each member will “ideally [move] ever more from the periphery to the center” of a social unit (Kiesling 2005). Hazing is common in Greek life and is valued by many chapters. Alan DeSantis found that “without exception, every one of the thousands of brothers [he has] known across America has identified the fraternity hazing process as *the* key to brotherhood” (2007).

There is a common conception that hazing varies across gender lines: male-on-male hazing tends to be more physical in nature, while female-on-female hazing is typically more psychological. This conclusion draws on anecdotal evidence and traditional stereotypes of gender, where men are typically more violent than women.

This is not a false assumption, but such conclusions tend to oversimplify the gendered dynamics of hazing. Rather than collapsing these aspects into a one-dimensional understanding, hazing must be understood as a performance of gender, not only an effect of gender. Unfortunately, empirical research is lacking in this area. The available data do support the notion that female organizations tend to haze less, although definitive reasons for this phenomenon remain unclear or superficial (Allan 2004). Though an increasing number of hazing incidents in all-female groups have been reported in recent years, it is suspected that this can be attributed to an increase in reporting rather than an increase in prevalence (Nuwer 1999). As of 2004, merely five out of seventy reported hazing deaths were women (Allan 2004). Overall, research emphasizes that hazing in women's groups, regardless of prevalence, is less common and less physical than that of men's groups (Tiger 2004; Allen 2004).

A wealth of research exists on hazing in men's groups (Nuwer 1999; Allen 2004; Allen and DeAngelis 2004; Sanday 2007; Kimmel 2008). All-male hazing is particularly concerning among all-male groups because of cultural connections between masculinity and violence (Kimmel 2004). As fraternity men enter the process of initiation, they mimic the transition from boy to adult as they transition from a pledge to a full brother. "Initiations [in Guyland] are all about masculinity -- testing it and proving it" (Kimmel 2008). Masculinity is tested through a collection of feminizing hazing practices:

Somehow, by humiliating and degrading a man and stripping him of his humanity, he becomes less than a man. The only people who aren't men in

this world are women, and... someone's got to take that role in a man's world where women don't exist. (Robinson 1997).

Through degrading and emasculating hazing practices, brothers feminize their pledges in the weeks leading up to initiation. Such rituals purge initiates of "any femininity that dares to exist in them" (Robinson 1997). Additionally, Kimmel argues that in hazing rituals, "the manhood of the members themselves rather than of the initiates that is on the line," as those committing hazing must assert dominance over the initiates (2008).

DeSantis noted that not every fraternity chapter has extreme forms of hazing; some have rituals that are tame by comparison, including activities that force pledges to "[wrestle] each other," "serenade sororities," "go on scavenger hunts," "spend the night together in the chapter room," and "play sports together" (2007). However, hazing rituals are "always about manhood" (Kimmel 2008). Hazing rituals in all-male groups "frequently involve partial or complete nudity of initiates, and in many, there are homo-erotic implications of greater or lesser clarity" (Tiger 2004).

Further, those who commit hazing often display the same sense of entitlement that characterizes Guyland itself. Since others committed such deeds against them when they were pledges, they now consider it their right to do the same unto the next cohort of pledges. Fraternity members justify the practice by noting that it's "part of tradition" (Nuwer 2004). This framing allows specific hazing rituals to live on long after the original instigators graduate.

## SUMMARY

Though there is a wealth of information connecting fragments of these concepts -- masculinity, adolescence, hazing -- there remains a lack of research about the intersection of all of them. Hazing as a violent act has yet to be understood in the context of gender performance. Since the historical and social context of an organization can influence the gender performance of its members, it logically follows that these factors may have an important role in understanding the reasons why individuals participate in hazing. I hope that my research for this thesis can build on others' understanding of hazing behaviors in order to identify risk factors for extreme forms in all-male groups.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

### RESEARCH DESIGN

For this research project, I conducted semi-structured interviews with brothers of three different fraternity chapters at a single institution. Using a set of pre-selected questions as a guide (see Appendix C), I was able to maintain flexibility in how I asked the questions and was allowed the freedom to add follow-up questions throughout my interviews. Interviewing multiple brothers within the same fraternities allowed me to gain insight about the group dynamic of the fraternity, in addition to individual-level factors related to my research topic.

Prior to each interview, participants were required to read and sign consent forms after receiving a verbal disclaimer (see Appendices D and E). To protect confidentiality, pseudonyms have been used for the names of the institution, the fraternities, and the participants. Some information that would make it possible to identify participants has been changed minimally. For example, the specific sport that a participant played would be changed to make it more difficult to identify a subject. Any changes made were minimal to protect confidentiality, but to allow the sentiment of the information to remain the same.

This research project was approved by Lehigh University's Institutional Review Board. Due to the nature of this topic, I faced a number of methodological challenges that prolonged the approval process. For more information about these obstacles, please see Appendix F.

## SAMPLE SELECTION

### *Institution*

My research was conducted at Barton University, a pseudonymous research university in the northeast United States. Barton is highly competitive academically, consistently ranked among the best colleges in the nation. The students tend to come from affluent, upper-middle class backgrounds, with some exceptions with students who are offered financial aid. Over half of Bachelor's Degrees awarded are in business or "STEM" (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) majors, which are traditionally male-dominated fields.

### *Gender and race on campus*

This university is noteworthy for its problems with gender and race relations throughout its history. For over a century, it existed as an all-male university. Students and faculty were steadfastly resistant to the idea of coeducation when it was being considered in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and the first cohorts of female students on campus faced significant difficulties in being treated as equals by their peers and professors. The institution has been coeducational for less than fifty years, during which time problems with gender inequality have not diminished.

Consistent with other universities, there have been many cases of violence against women reported on campus, particularly sexual assault and rape facilitated by alcohol. Barton stands out from other American colleges in that there have been several cases (greater than one but less than five) of violence against women that have

resulted in murder committed on the campus itself. These crimes all occurred in a close span of time approximately twenty years ago while the university was coeducational. Although murder has not occurred on this campus for several years, students are generally aware of this part of Barton's history. Additionally, Barton has had a series of problems related to racism on campus, especially in recent years. The implications of these gender and race problems throughout the university's history speak to the white, male privilege rampant on Barton's campus. White men in this social location do not frequently have their privilege challenged, allowing them to enjoy the power associated with that privilege without pause.

#### *Greek life on campus*

Greek life dominates the campus social scene at Barton, with over forty percent of students joining a social fraternity or sorority during their time in college. At Barton University, there are twice as many fraternity chapters than sorority chapters, resulting in smaller chapter sizes (and pledge classes) for fraternities than sororities. (For a glossary of Greek-specific terms, please see Appendix G.)

There are various types of Greek-letter organizations at the university, including Interfraternity Council ("IFC") fraternities, Panhellenic Council ("Panhel") sororities, multicultural chapters, professional societies, academic fraternities, and special interest fraternities (i.e. community service, music). For this study, I focused solely on IFC-affiliated social fraternities.

Most Greek chapters at Barton have their own on-campus house, clustered in close proximity to all other Greek houses. After joining a fraternity, brothers are required to live in their chapter house for at least a year. These students are literally segregated from other peers, as they hang out with each other, eat meals prepared by their house's chef, study, and sleep all under one roof. Many of these houses are not within convenient walking distances of other campus buildings, requiring Greek students to take the bus to get to class, the libraries, on-campus dining halls, or other spaces frequented by freshmen and non-Greek upperclassmen. This housing system isolates Greek students and creates structural distance from non-Greek students outside of class time. Even when Greeks are no longer required to live in their fraternity house, many choose to live off-campus with their brothers, creating off-campus fraternity houses that perpetuate the divide between Greek and non-Greek students.

#### *Hazing perceptions at Barton*

Recently, Barton University's Office of Greek Life conducted a hazing assessment among the undergraduate population. At present time, a full analysis of this data was not available, and I was not granted permission to access this data. However, the director of the Office of Greek Life allowed me to access descriptive statistics from this assessment. The data was collected through a survey distributed via email to the entire student population.

The assessment found that male students in Greek life are less likely than female students in Greek life to consider hazing to be a problem at Barton. For all Greek students, there is no less of a difference by class year for believing that hazing is an issue at Barton. The reported victimization of hazing increases slightly for Greek students by class year, but first-year Greek students are equally likely as upperclassman to not consider hazing as problematic at Barton. For both male and female Greek students, nearly half (46.8%) reported to have witnessed hazing, while a third (33.6%) identified as having been a victim of hazing. Compared with non-Greek students, students in Greek life are less likely to consider hazing a problem at Barton, but more frequently reported experiencing or observing hazing practices. Greek and non-Greek female students were more likely than male students to label certain behaviors as hazing: sleep deprivation, line-ups, being yelled at, engaging in or simulating sexual acts, acting as a personal servant, and “other” humiliating activities. A Chi-Square test conducted by an external reviewer found these differences to be statistically significant.

### *Participants*

Participants were recruited in a multi-stage process. After choosing Barton University as my research site, I contacted the presidents of every fraternity chapter at the institution to describe my project and invite their chapter to participate. This step was strategic: if the chapter president supported my project, I believe I would have greater success in recruiting participants. Nearly half of the presidents indicated

positive interest, and several of those presidents eventually distributed information to their fraternity brothers. My final sample included brothers from four fraternities: Delta Sigma, Zeta Lambda Nu, Nu Omicron Sigma, and Kappa Tau Omega (all of which are pseudonyms).

As an incentive to participate, I offered a \$25 gift card to a popular local restaurant to be distributed to every third person to schedule an interview. These incentives were made possible through graduate research grants from the Department of Sociology & Anthropology and the College of Arts & Sciences at Lehigh University.

Interestingly, it appears that the pledges of Zeta Lambda Nu (“Zeta”) may have been required to participate in the study by the brothers in their chapter. Shortly after I began scheduling interviews, I asked the president of Zeta to send me a list of members, so I could identify the fraternity of which a student was a member when they signed up for an interview. Instead of a full membership list, the president sent me a list of “people who should be signing up,” consisting of the entirety of the pledge class and one current brother. Though not all of the pledges did contact me to sign up, it appears that the house leadership believed that all of the pledges were going to participate. I asked the president whether the majority were current pledges, because I wanted more current brothers to sign up. He explained that the “only reason they haven’t is because they are more involved in the core operations of the house, on top of their course load so they’ve been really busy.” Though I cannot declare this with certainty, it seems to be more than a coincidence that all of the pledges were

interested in participating in my study while only one brother was willing to do so himself.

Upon realizing this circumstance, I proceeded with greater caution in the consent process for the participants in Zeta. I ensured that they were aware that they could opt out of the interview at any point and continually asked if they had questions for me regarding the consent form. All participants in Zeta consented to be interviewed in accordance with the guidelines defined by the Institutional Review Board.

## DATA COLLECTION

I conducted a total of thirteen interviews with brothers from four different fraternities at Barton University: six brothers in Zeta Lambda Nu, two brothers in Delta Sigma, two brothers in Kappa Tau Omega, and three brothers in Nu Omicron Sigma. For brief descriptions of the participants, please see Appendix H.

On average, interviews lasted an hour and a half in duration, with the shortest being only an hour and the longest being two-and-a-half hours in length. All interviews were audio recorded using the Voice Record Pro software for Apple iPad. Audio files were stored on a password-protected, secure server and were deleted after data analysis was completed.

Throughout the interviews, I emphasized my role as a graduate student and as a recent college graduate. I hoped that the participants would see me as a peer, rather than a stranger that threatened the secrets of their fraternity. It seems this strategy was

successful, as many participants seemed comfortable when speaking with me for the duration of the interview. At times, some of the participants were less open when speaking about pledging, but most of them appeared to speak freely and without hesitation.

## ANALYSIS OF DATA

Interviews were partially transcribed using the Express Scribe Pro software package. I created an overview of the interview itself, taking notes throughout the session and transcribing verbatim wherever relevant. These files were stored on a password-protected, secure server.

Though I had originally planned to code interviews in Atlas.ti, significant delays in my project prohibited me from completing this task. Three interviews were fully coded in Atlas.ti, which allowed me to review trending themes across chapters. The remaining data were reviewed in their original files and were sorted by fraternity and category using the program Microsoft Word.

## CHAPTER IV: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Through the process of conducting interviews, it became apparent that the four fraternities were at varying points on a spectrum of hazing behaviors. Despite my intentions to compare chapters with physical versus non-physical hazing behaviors, none of the participants admitted to violent forms of hazing conducted within their chapter. Two of the fraternities (Zeta Lambda Nu and Delta Sigma) admitted to hazing rituals that were more moderate, while the other two fraternities (Kappa Tau Omega and Nu Omicron Sigma) described hazing behaviors that were more minor. In the following sections, I will provide descriptions of the four fraternities and discuss the hazing practices that the participants revealed.

Later in this chapter, I compare the fraternities that haze moderately with those that haze mildly, discussing the patterns I identified through my interviews. The data revealed three salient themes related to hazing behaviors: perceptions of hazing, performance of masculinities, and isolation. I will explore these patterns in depth in the sections to follow.

### MEET THE FRATERNITIES: HOUSE DYNAMICS AND HAZING RITUALS

#### *Zeta Lambda Nu*

Zeta Lambda Nu (“Zeta”) is one of the oldest fraternity chapters at Barton University, having been founded only a few years after the university itself. While many fraternities have had large gaps in their presence at the university (due to losing their charter and recolonizing), Zeta is one of the only chapters that has been present

at Barton almost continuously since it was first colonized in the late nineteenth century. According to their president, there were several times when the chapter was in danger of losing its charter, but it has never entirely ceased operations at Barton. As a result, it has a large alumni network spanning several decades and churns out new alumni each year, who give back to their chapter through donations and networking support.

Several years ago, Zeta had an incident during recruitment that landed them in trouble with the university administration. They received a number of violations and were at serious risk of losing their charter and housing privileges. Their Greek and non-Greek peers believed they were going to have their charter revoked, which hurt membership recruitment in the years that followed. Currently, the brothers are striving to change their negative image in the eyes of administrators and peers.

The group is essentially homogeneous in terms of wealth, with the majority of members from middle-class and upper-class backgrounds, and race, with the majority of members identifying as white. “A lot of people that come from affluent backgrounds are in Zeta” (Ross, Zeta). Nevertheless, brothers repeatedly bragged about the diversity in the house, describing it with respect to their hobbies, interests, and academic goals. Daniel said that there were some brothers who were more athletic with whom he could go to the gym or play sports, while there were other brothers that were “more chill” who he could “hang out with and play video games.” J.R. was excited to befriend the brothers in the house because they are “really

diverse.” “You learn something new about people in the house every day” (J.R., Zeta).

For spring recruitment, Zeta brothers splurge on their rush events, the costs of which come from individual members’ social dues. Many of the events revolve around athletics:

We take kids paintballing. We take them to basketball games, like the Knicks games. We had a Super Bowl party and they came up and watched the Super Bowl with us. (Daniel, Zeta)

In addition to athletic rush events, there are also parties and dinners for students rushing Zeta. J.R. stressed that the dinners were one of his favorite events during rush. They would consist of about thirty brothers going out to dinner with those rushing at nicer restaurants. At one of the dinners, Jack snuck a peek at the check: “The bill was like \$5,000, so they definitely splurged on us.” J.R. added that they also went to a strip club with the brothers of Zeta when he was rushing. The participants were unanimous in their enjoyment of rush events, saying that the process was useful in getting to know the brothers:

First semester [of freshman year], you really only got to know them at a party, but during rush there was more of actually talking to them, seeing who they were, what their values were, what their interests were as a person and getting to know the idea of what the organization was like. (Tyler, Zeta)

Though the participants were eager to discuss the rushing period, they were reluctant to talk about pledging and seemed cautious when discussing hazing in general. Compared with the other fraternities, participants in Zeta were not as open in talking about the specific pledging activities. However, I was able to gauge a general

level of involvement of the hazing process through my interviews. Daniel said that he thought the hazing rituals in other fraternities at Barton were “less intense” than those in Zeta. “I think there’s no easy way to talk about [hazing], but to be honest, I’ve gone through it” (Daniel, Zeta). When I asked him to elaborate on Zeta’s hazing practices, Daniel said that they were unique and were rooted in past traditions in their chapter, but declined to provide more detail.

DANIEL:                   The events that we do with brothers and whatnot, I’m speaking from a pledge standpoint, it like, they’ve been just passed down through generations.  
INTERVIEWER:        Could you elaborate a little about those events?  
DANIEL:                   Um. No.

Despite their reluctance to discuss the more unique events, the participants did mention some general things that they were required to do during pledging. Multiple participants noted having to do chores and favors for brothers, like doing their laundry or getting supplies for parties. “It’s a lot of cleaning every house. Even if they don’t say it’s a lot of cleaning, it’s a lot of cleaning” (J.R., Zeta). They also had to do “waits,” which involved serving lunch to the brothers. Several participants also said that there was a large time component to their pledging process. They are required to do something fraternity-related every day.

### *Delta Sigma*

Along with Zeta, Delta Sigma (“Tri-Sig”) is another of the oldest fraternities at Barton. One of the participants, Ryan, emphasized that a number of brothers in the house in recent years have been members of the football team at Barton. “If you’re

gonna understand one thing about Tri-Sig, you have to understand that, because almost everything else flows from that” (Ryan, Tri-Sig). Ryan went on to explain the ways that this factor had a great impact on the house dynamic. He noted that they were slightly more racially diverse than other fraternities at Barton because of athletics recruiting. They hold one of the lowest grade point averages of all the Greek chapters, because “Barton makes certain exceptions for athletes.” Ryan explained that their house is put in a difficult position, because the Office of Greek Life does not make the same exceptions for them as a house that the Barton Athletics program does. “We struggle with the administration, I think, because the administration struggles to get the limitations we have because of football” (Ryan, Tri-Sig). The administration wants them to hold more philanthropic and social events, especially in collaboration with other Barton groups, but the football schedule limits their ability to plan and host such events.

Along with the high concentration of athletes in the house comes the emphasis on physical strength. Luke and Ryan both said that the brothers in the house enjoy playing sports and working out together. Ryan said he did not think this was different from other fraternities at Barton, though Luke added that there is more of it in Tri-Sig because the football players in the house also have built-in workouts together. The value placed on physical strength is apparent in the house’s performance of masculinity, which will be discussed further in sections to follow.

Tri-Sig tends to have several cliques in the house. Though it is not uncommon for larger fraternities to have multiple groups of friends within it, Ryan thought that factors beyond just the chapter's size contributed to those cliques:

I think there are definitely some cliques... Adam, Kendrick, and Dane, you would almost never see them. They'll be in their dorm hanging out watching TV, drinking beers, whatever. You're not gonna see them downstairs with Isaiah, Marshall, and Drew smoking, right? I don't know if it's drinking and smoking, or if it's white and black, and that's a thing. Those three are all white, and those three are all black. I don't know what it is, but those exist. (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

Ryan said it was not as much of a divide between football players and those who are not on the team. He thought of himself as one of the few guys who could easily hang out with guys in multiple cliques.

The participants in Tri-Sig divulged the most details about their hazing rituals, compared with participants from other fraternities. Their pledging program begins the week after students receive and accept their bids to Tri-Sig, and thus begins their weekly rituals. Pledges start by memorizing the first, middle, and last names, birthdays, hometowns, and parent's names of every pledge and brother. Luke said they must be familiar enough with the names to be able to quickly list all the information in order, "sorted by pledge class in alphabetical order." There's also a list of additional information they have to memorize, including chapter history, Tri-Sig national history, and select phrases.

Every Monday, pledges walk down to the Tri-Sig house to have dinner, where they are told to wait in a hallway for two hours before the activity begins. Sophomores cook the meal of spicy ramen noodles, adding ingredients such as

cayenne pepper, jalapeños, chipotle peppers, curry powder, garlic cloves, hot sauce, and Tabasco sauce. “Totally edible. Very spicy. Rather unpleasant to eat.” (Luke, Tri-Sig). Luke said that pledges were required to quickly answer questions about the memorized material while eating the spicy dish. If a pledge hesitates, provides an incorrect answer, or otherwise responds in a way that brothers deem insufficient, the pledge sitting to their right is forced to take a bite out of a whole habanero pepper.

On Tuesdays, pledges are made to stand atop a tall stool. They stand still with their arms crossed and held out, with their elbows as furthest away from their body and arms are parallel to the floor (“genie style”). Again, the brothers ask them questions about the memorized information and force another member of their pledge class is forced to eat a habanero pepper if they respond incorrectly. After the question phase ends, pledges remain still with their arms held out while staring at a portrait of the fraternity founder on the wall. The pledges are supposed to feel fatigue from holding their arms up and standing on the tall stool. After twenty minutes, the sophomore brothers walk over to “give [pledges] their head to rest their arms on, and so it’s supposed to build unity or whatever” (Luke, Tri-Sig).

Ryan described the overall new member process for the first few weeks of pledging:

The concept is, for two nights a week, you’re gonna be here late reciting things you’re supposed to memorize, either eating spicy ramen or holding your arms out. Then the rest of the week, you’re responsible for doing dishes and cleaning up the house and working the duties of parties and things like that. So as far as pledging goes at Barton, it’s the easiest around.” (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

While the weekly events remain the same for most of pledging, Luke described “Hell Week” – the week leading up to the pledges’ initiation – as a time when new hazing rituals are introduced. The first night, referred to as “Box Dinner,” begins in the same manner as the previous spicy ramen nights. Pledges are forced to eat the spice ramen, except they are required to trace an imaginary square in the air with their utensil each time they take a bite. They may drink water, but they must drink it from the opposite side of the glass. After the pledges start eating, the brothers take away their forks and replace them with any object they can find around the house:

Brothers get to find objects around the house and it could be like a trophy or a plaque or something random and say, “Eat with this instead of the fork. Figure it out.” It’s funny because people come up with all these weird objects, could be a shoe, you know, anything they can get their hands on. (Luke, Tri-Sig)

Pledges then eat the slippery, spicy noodles with awkward utensils that are difficult to use, all the while tracing a box in the air each time they take a bite. After eating all of the spicy noodles – which takes a while because they slide off the utensil – brothers hand the pledges a concoction they call the “fruity splooge”:

What it is, is whatever gross shit they can find in the kitchen and throw it together into a cup. It’s gross. That’s the only time I threw up during pledging. But it’s ephemeral. It’s over and done. Throw up and you’re done. (Luke, Tri-Sig)

The second night of Hell Week is called the “Carrot Party.” Luke described the event, saying it was another favorite night for the brothers:

They come downstairs in their boxers and they’re led into the chapter room. They sit down and in front of them is a rubber glove, a carrot, and a flashlight, and they’re asked what they think they’re going to have to do with the carrot.

Invariably, every one of them says, “Well, you’re gonna make me put the pickle up my butt,” something like that. It’s all a mindfuck. Obviously, we’re not gonna do anything like that, but it’s, “Okay, stand up, turn around, bend over, drop your pants.” And as soon as they start, “NOOOOOOOO!” Right, so it’s all a joke. Obviously, they find it’s harmless. (Luke, Tri-Sig)

After this “joke,” pledges are asked a series of embarrassing questions:

We get to ask them questions like, “Which brother uses the Slut Escape the most? The Slut Escape is a back hallway... that’s sort of like, where the guys send the one-night-stands out the door. “So, which brother uses the Slut Escape the most?” “Ah, so funny, he uses it the most!” “Which brother has the hottest girlfriend? Which brother has the ugliest girlfriend?” (Luke, Tri-Sig)

In addition to asking questions where pledges have to betray the brothers, they are forced to target individual pledges as well. On a night that occurs toward the end of the pledging process, which is said to bond pledges together, pledges are asked questions that intend to prompt a divide between them:

“Alright, your pledge class is on an airplane. It’s gonna crash. There’s not enough for everyone – who’s gonna get a parachute?” And they always go, “I’m not gonna get a parachute.” And we say, “No, you have a parachute. Who’s not getting a parachute and why?” So they have to explain who wouldn’t get a parachute and throw them under the bus. Really sort of would-you-rather and dumb questions and stuff like that. (Luke, Tri-Sig)

The Carrot Party during Hell Week is one of the last nights of pledging. The remaining nights are designated for suggested and required rituals from Tri-Sig nationals. One exception is an event called “Water Torture,” which happens once every three years. When a pledge class that went through Water Torture becomes seniors, the ritual is added to the Hell Week itinerary for them to do to the current pledge class:

You’re led down into the basement and circled up and you lock arms in a circle, facing out of the circle... They’ve got the windows open and they’ve

got a bucket of ice water and a bucket of warm water. So they take the ice water buckets and they throw it on you and you get soaked. And after thirty seconds of that, they take some warm water and pour the warm water over your back. This repeated for probably around fifteen minutes... It sucks, you're cold as shit. But as far as things people do for Hell Week, that's not so bad. (Luke, Tri-Sig)

The Water Torture event is conducted every three years when the current pledge class eventually becomes the senior class, when they repeat the activity unto new pledges. This three-year cycle persists because of this mindset that brothers can only enact the hazing behaviors that were done unto them, as Luke explained. The pledge classes that do not undergo Water Torture have not earned the right to commit the event themselves.

After initiation at the end of Hell Week, the majority of hazing events end, but some continues until the new pledge class accepts their bids during the following year:

The first thing I said to them once they were initiated was, "Look, pledging is over. You don't have to eat any more habaneros. You don't have to eat any more ramen. You don't have to do any more stool nights. That stuff's over. But, the stuff that actually sucks – the cleans, the dishes, the party duties, the rides – you get to keep doing that until you get new pledges in the spring." So they're gonna be responsible for doing that stuff in the fall. (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

Though the New Member Education process ends six weeks after it begins, hazing behaviors toward new members occurs continuously throughout the year. While pledges are not subject to outright violence during the pledging events, the rituals that are carried out each year demand much of the pledges' time and stamina. There is also the potential for psychological or emotional trauma from these events,

particularly during the “Carrot Party” event. For these reasons, Tri-Sig will be designated as having moderate-level hazing.

### *Kappa Tau Omega*

Kappa Tau Omega (“KTO”) was recently recolonized at Barton after having lost its charter for several decades. Since it has not become residential yet, brothers do not live together in a house. Many of them live with non-brothers, which is uncommon for students in other Greek chapters. One aspect that makes KTO unique is that no stereotype about their chapter had been established since they are a newer fraternity. “I think one of our advantages is our relatively unknown factor. We don’t have a reputation” (Nick, KTO). The members of KTO are still trying to shape their identity as a chapter.

Climbing the social ladder would be a long process for KTO because new Greek organizations at Barton are viewed as “lower tier” by default. Nick thought that they were perceived by other students as “sort of lower-level because [they’re] new and [they] don’t have a house.” However, the brothers of KTO did not emphasize a desire to climb that social ladder:

As part of being a new fraternity, I feel like it’s our job and we have the opportunity to be different, to not get stuck in “Well, that’s the way it’s always been done,” or get caught in this inertia of “that’s the way it’s done.” ...So I feel like it’s our duty to deal with some of these things. We should be a fraternity that is accepting of everyone, that is involved in the community, and that isn’t just about climbing the social standing. Although it’s nice, you know, be more than that. (Nick, KTO)

The participants in KTO expressed dissatisfaction with the Greek system at Barton. Brendan said that he and his brothers felt that there was a lot of unnecessary competition between fraternities, especially surrounding recruitment:

We're competing for freshman... I've never talked down any other house. I always told the rushes to get to know the brothers in [other fraternities] to see if [they] get along. But I think recruitment in general, just the competition of, "We're better than that house so you shouldn't go there," that creates some of the divide as well. (Brendan, KTO)

Brendon continued to speak of the lack of unity within Greek life, which he and his brothers want to change:

[Our chapter president] wants to reshape the whole Greek structure where there is more cooperation between fraternities just in general, so it's not like, "Oh, you're in that house. That means I can't really associate with you." I want that, too. I have a number of friends in different fraternities. I don't see the reason why there's such separation. I want to see more involvement and I know that's kind of what we've been pushing for. (Brendan, KTO)

Nick talked about the future of their chapter as a "possibility to change the way that Greek culture is at Barton, to start something new and generate something that's sustainable." Nick hoped that KTO would continue to grow as a more progressive fraternity:

In a couple of years, I'm optimistic, I think it'll be viewed as one of the best chapters to get involved with. I think it'll be, "Hey, these guys do it right." We're just now getting a foothold here. (Nick, KTO)

In contrast to participants in Tri-Sig and Zeta, who looked forward to continuing the traditions of the past, the participants in KTO felt distant from their chapter's history and instead looked toward new possibilities for their chapter's future. As a new fraternity, brothers have not established hazing rituals do not plan to do so in the

years to follow. However, Brendan noted that a handful of isolated behaviors have occurred, which the chapter as a whole did not support. The pledges are required to conduct interviews with every brother and get their signature at the end, which is intended to help them “meet the brothers and go talk to the brothers” (Brendan, KTO). However, Brendan said that some brothers might begin to cross a line:

...Part of it is to get a signature from a brother, and some people are doing more creative things [than just the interview], like listening to music with each other or just hanging out, which is fine. But then sometimes where it’s almost crossed the line is when [brothers] ask [pledges] to do everyday tasks that the brothers have to do in general. I don’t want people going to clean [a brother’s] room to get that signature and stuff like that, so I’ve been trying hard to make sure none of this happens. [We] want to make the pledging process be beneficial to the pledges, so they actually get things out of it, instead of doing stupid stuff other fraternities might make them do. (Brendan, KTO)

While the brothers in Tri-Sig and Zeta have planned hazing activities during pledging, the brothers in KTO do not include hazing rituals in their planned pledging process, nor do they support the random, unplanned incidents that have occurred without the prior knowledge of the entire chapter. With this crucial difference, KTO will be classified as chapter with a low-level of hazing.

### *Nu Omicron Sigma*

In addition to KTO, Nu Omicron Sigma (“Nu Sigma”) experienced discontinuity in its presence at Barton. The chapter was recolonized within the last two decades. Nu Sigma is smaller than other fraternities at Barton, but they are closer because of it. Without the cliques that arise in larger organizations, they are “tight knit” and cohesive as a group (Kevin, Nu Sigma).

Nu Sigma members take pride in the absence of hazing within their pledging process. Before I actually brought up the topic of hazing, all of the Nu Sigma brothers I interviewed told me that it was important to them that their chapter does not haze:

One of the things we always emphasize during the recruitment process is we don't haze and it definitely is a point of pride. We're not embarrassed to say, "We don't haze." ...Like, sorry, we're not gonna haze you. I mean, it's definitely a point of pride. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

Though the participants were proud of their fraternity for their lack of hazing, they described parts of the pledging process that fall under Barton's definition of hazing.

Pledges have two primary responsibilities: "sobers" and "cleans":

At every party, we have two [pledges] on sober, so things don't get a little too weird... And in the morning we would have to do cleans, so we would go clean up after the party. (Kyle, Nu Sigma)

Besides "sobers" and "cleans," the rest of pledge's responsibilities were from the New Member Education plan that was submitted to and approved by the Office of Greek Life. There are two distinct activities that pledges participate in that are not reported in the New Member Education plan – a scavenger hunt in New York City, and a jousting tournament.

We had to find certain things in the city. Play chess with a hipster. Find someone from another chapter of Nu Sigma. Take a picture with the doorman at Trump Tower. Propose to a stranger... So we had to do a lot of silly stuff like that just to get to know each other better. It was a lot of fun. We were forced to do it and they didn't tell us what we were doing. They were just like, "This Saturday morning at 10AM, you have to be at this house or else you're in trouble." ... The new class goes around with about two brothers who are a little more familiar with New York City. But yeah, that was a lot of fun – some of the brothers that led us around, we didn't know as much about 'cause most of our interactions were with our pledgemaster or the president or the leaders who are visible, but that was a good time when we got to meet other brothers. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

In addition to the New York City scavenger hunt, the brothers also planned a jousting tournament that occurs annually during pledging:

It's a gladiator type thing where there's an emperor and we fought with Nerf swords or whatever. And if he liked the fight, he'd give a thumbs up and everyone would clap, and if he didn't he'd give a thumbs down... you had to get pied in the face. And eventually everyone got pied – even the regular brothers and stuff... Jousting and gladiator, the brothers participate and they looked forward to the event every year too... There were brothers who went with us on the scavenger hunt, too. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

Although these events meet Barton's definition of hazing, they are different from those enacted by Tri-Sig, for example, because brothers participate in them alongside the pledges. "It's definitely not hazing, I think, if the brothers are excited and willing to be a part of it as well" (Kevin, Nu Sigma). Kevin stressed that this difference was important; brothers are participating in the same way as the pledges and they are not degrading them. This idea will be explored further in the following section, "Perceptions of Hazing."

Even though there are some hazing practices in Nu Sigma, brothers are quick to condemn other hazing practices. Kevin discussed this point when he recalled an incident that happened when he was pledging:

I heard one story. It happened to just one kid [in my pledge class] where one fraternity brother kidnapped him and took him up to the barn. He was just like quizzing them on Nu Sigma fun facts and trivia, so it wasn't like hard or anything, but eventually the guy in my class was just like, "Okay, this is stupid. Take me back." Eventually, some other people in the fraternity found out about it and it was kind of a big stink about it, like how he shouldn't have done that. He didn't tell anyone about it. It was unauthorized. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

Nu Sigma is similar to KTO in this regard. Though moments that brothers identify as hazing have occasionally occurred, there is a consensus among current members that their house will not condone such behavior. In the past, violators of their no-hazing agreement have been immediately disciplined by the chapter.

Additionally, Nu Sigma was the only chapter within which a participant gave an example where he was comfortable refusing to participate in something as a pledge without consequence:

For example, this one time [at a party], one of the kids was trying to get to the bathroom to vomit and he missed. It was all over the shower curtain, all over the toilet, and they were like, “Kyle, clean this up,” and I was like, “I’m not cleaning that up. No. I’m not dealing with that. Sorry.” And I just didn’t. It was fine. (Kyle, Nu Sigma)

Since pledges appeared empowered to decline their participation, and because brothers also participate in events that may fit the definition of hazing, I will consider Nu Sigma to be at a low-level of hazing.

### *Summary*

From the participants’ descriptions of hazing, I assessed Nu Sigma and KTO to be at a low-level point on a hazing spectrum. I have categorized Zeta and Tri-Sig at a moderate-level point on a hazing spectrum. It is difficult to determine exactly where Zeta might fall because the participants were secretive about secretive hazing incidents. However, because Daniel acknowledged that he thought the chapter hazed more than other chapters at Barton, I will consider Zeta a moderate-level house.

## PERCEPTIONS OF HAZING

One of the themes that arose during interviews concerned the conceptualization of hazing behaviors. Though each of the four chapters displayed hazing behaviors in some fashion, only one of the participants, Daniel in Zeta, admitted that the activities he experienced during pledging would be considered hazing. Despite the differences in hazing classification levels between Tri-Sig, Zeta, Nu Sigma, and KTO, participants shared the same perspective: they were not hazed during pledging. Most admitted that some of the behaviors were “technically” hazing, but found that they did not meet the requirements for their own understanding of hazing. This section will explore this barrier and its consequences.

### *Labeling*

As mentioned above, a glaring pattern throughout interviews pointed out that fraternity men do not consider themselves to be victims of hazing during their pledging process, even when they admit that certain behaviors do meet Barton University’s definition of hazing.

Brothers in Nu Sigma repeatedly emphasized how proud they were that hazing did not occur in their organization. Kevin proudly claimed that Nu Sigma “doesn’t haze at all,” yet shortly afterward, he admitted that some of their practices contradicted this point:

Scavenger hunts are in the definition of hazing, but that’s one of my favorite memories from my new member process. And we also had a gladiator event

and a jousting event and those things are probably considered hazing but those were my next two favorite events. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

Despite his awareness that the events objectively are considered to be hazing, Kevin did not believe his chapter hazed because the activities did not meet his own criteria. Brothers in Zeta also discussed hazing incidents that happened to them during pledging, but did not label them as hazing. Daniel mentioned some tasks they were forced to do, but considered it a natural component of pledging a fraternity:

The pledging process we went through definitely brought us closer together because you spend almost every waking minute with these kids that... so that brings you together, and having to clean up and stuff like that. (Daniel, Zeta)

Similarly, Jack demonstrated this mindset when talking about his own pledging process:

If they're putting you down, well, I wouldn't consider that the red-light hazing. They're just speaking down to you a little bit. I guess that's considered hazing, but it doesn't bother me. (Jack, Zeta)

Daniel and Jack, along with other Zeta participants, attributed these requirements to a normal part of the pledging process, which they separated from the idea of hazing. "I don't really consider anything hazing, like what I do... I knew it was going to come up in the fraternity life" (Jack, Zeta).

Like the participants in Zeta, Luke in Tri-Sig was certain that he had not been hazed, either:

When I saw it was just habanero peppers and spicy ramen, to be honest, I was relieved. So, I am adamant that I was not hazed. Despite what I just told you, I am adamant I was not hazed... So yeah, I came away from it thinking, "Our pledging is a joke. This is nothing." (Luke, Tri-Sig)

Luke told me the most detailed, extreme forms of hazing that came up during any of the interviews. He told me about how the brothers made the pledges believe they were going to be sodomized during the Carrot Party. He told me about the Water Torture event that is conducted every four years. All of those incidents were at the forefront of his mind, as he was able to recall them in detail during the interview. Contradicting what he described, Luke insisted that “[he] was not hazed”.

Within each of the fraternities, the participants repeatedly denounced the notion that they were hazed, regardless of the severity of their actual hazing practices. This trend occurred despite participants’ discussing at length about the hazing they endured. If they did not consider any of these incidents as hazing from their own perspectives, what did they consider hazing to be? This contradiction points to another pattern within the interviews: participants struggled to conceptualize a satisfactory definition of hazing.

### *Defining the Term*

All thirteen of the participants rejected Barton’s definition of hazing, noting that it was too broad to be practical. Instead, they preferred to view it as a spectrum of behaviors with varying degrees of seriousness. Some hazing behaviors on the lower end posed little risk to pledges, they believed, while others on the higher end of the spectrum were serious infractions. For many of them, the idea of a spectrum of hazing stemmed from the inclination to think of the most extreme behaviors as a reaction to the word:

I don't like using the term "hazing," because it has a really negative connotation. It's assumed that you're putting people in danger and you are just degrading them and humiliating them on a daily basis. (Daniel, Zeta)

Their own interpretations of hazing, as only the "extreme" behaviors, were in conflict with Barton's definition, which included a wide scope of practices with varying severities. Within the university policy, "you can really specify anything as hazing" (J.R., Zeta). Luke from Tri-Sig said the hazing policy was "asinine," a sentiment that many other participants expressed as well:

I think that the Barton definition and the national definition, I think that's stupid. I mean, if you go by that, I think anyone who's ever been a part of any organization has been hazed. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

Some participants did not seem to take hazing seriously, because they did not believe that Barton administrators were serious about hazing:

I think they're more worried about covering their ass than anything else. If a house does get caught and the school didn't have that in their thing, they're worried about getting lawsuits and so they want anything that could be considered hazing to be in there. (J.R., Zeta)

The illegitimacy of Barton's hazing policy was a notable barrier to participants' ability to consider hazing as problematic at their university and within their own organizations. After they mentioned their disagreement with official definitions of hazing, I asked participants to define the term in the way that they conceptualize it. Some struggled to put it into words, although most participants stressed that hazing involved a wide spectrum of behaviors, with some relatively harmless and some "obviously" harmful:

There is very much so a range of things with hazing... I've heard stories of kids who have to just sit down and interview brothers, and get to know

everything about them and that's their New Member Education process. I've also heard of kids being forced to drink until they puke and they have to do that every night... I would say like those are the two extremes. (Daniel, Zeta)

Jack from Zeta discussed the behaviors on the lower end of the spectrum, noting that he personally did not consider them to be hazing:

I feel like there's such a wide scope. It ranges from so many things. [A staff member from the Office of Greek Life] even said study hours could be considered hazing, because if a kid has ADD for example and can't work in that kind of setting, then I guess you're making him feel uncomfortable. So I guess it's technically hazing. Having like a pledge pin that represents your fraternity, like that could be considered hazing. And then there's other stuff where cleaning a house could be considered hazing. So there's just such a wide scope of things that could be considered hazing. (Jack, Zeta)

Jack's fraternity brother, J.R., agreed:

In anything you compare it to the extreme. I guess it's why I consider certain things not hazing. Like you can consider study hours hazing, I don't consider study hours hazing. He considered pledge pins hazing, I don't think that is hazing... I don't know, stuff like that." (J.R., Zeta)

Participants expressed frustration that all behaviors were treated as equally wrong under Barton's hazing policy. In their own interpretations, many mentioned a "gray area" where behaviors may technically be considered hazing, but which they personally did not deem problematic. "That's where the gray area comes in, because I don't think it should be called hazing, because hazing is so terrible" (Daniel, Zeta). In order to separate the gray area from the clearer versions of hazing, brothers I interviewed explained that there was a fine line that should not be crossed during pledging, lest they enter a category of hazing.

### *Crossing the Line*

Instead of labelling all behaviors on the spectrum as true hazing events, participants often spoke of a “line” that you should not cross during pledging. They insinuated that only when brothers crossed this line would the behaviors would be defined as hazing. “Hazing occurs when you’ve crossed the line. And that’s about the best answer I can give” (Ryan, Tri-Sig). Despite sharing this idea, participants in different fraternities tended to conceptualize the point of “crossing the line” in different ways. Participants in Zeta said they would label behaviors as hazing when brothers clearly risked someone’s physical well-being:

When you’re put in physical harm, for example, or you’re endangered – that’s what I would consider hazing. Doing chores or things that you just don’t wanna do, I don’t really consider that hazing. (Jack, Zeta)

Daniel repeated the same ideas as Jack: “You know what, I think there’s different severities to hazing. If at any point you’re putting somebody’s life in danger, that’s just completely uncalled for” (Daniel, Zeta). J.R. agreed with this location of “the line”:

If you’re gonna be putting someone’s life at risk, then it’s problematic... Forced drinking, like throwing three kids in a room with a handle. Food deprivation. Violent hazing. Stuff like that. (J.R., Zeta)

While members of Zeta framed the line as a point to avoid, Luke from Tri-Sig expressed a need to flirt with that line for successful pledging:

Personally I think for pledging you wanna be sitting right at that line... If you’re always in danger of crossing that line, then you’re in the right place, I would say.” (Luke, Tri-Sig)

Luke's perspective was not shared by members of other fraternities, although the location of "the line" differed by group. Brothers in Zeta thought of the violent forms of hazing as crossing the line, but failed to consider any enduring implications of other forms of hazing – sexual, psychological, emotional. They did eventually acknowledge that the line might be different for others after being prompted. Jack thought that the main aspect of hazing was "doing something that you don't feel is right," and he added that he guessed "it is just different for everybody." Ryan from Tri-Sig agreed, saying he couldn't say where the line is, because "they line's pretty much different for pretty much everyone."

Despite their awareness that others may define hazing differently, they lacked a mature understanding that others may have differing reactions to pledging activities. The brothers in KTO held a more inclusive conceptualization of hazing behaviors. Brendan stressed the negative effects of hazing, not only for more extreme forms, but seemingly minor forms of hazing as well. Here he discusses examples of hazing and the associated risks:

Obviously any time you mix heavy drinking in there, there's always the risk of health and safety. The sleep deprivation, that doesn't help, especially with school. ...The reason we came here is to learn, so that's obviously a huge negative effect. You're either very tired or you're doing stuff all the time so you don't have time to focus on your school work. (Brendan, KTO)

Brendan from KTO, however, realized the risks of hazing at less severe levels in addition to the extremes. When brothers in Tri-Sig or Zeta described hazing scenarios in which they would refuse to participate, they usually named behaviors that were physically violent. In contrast to his brothers' responses, Tyler from Zeta

had a different understanding of hazing, because he did grasp the idea that others may react differently in the same situation because of their previous life experiences. His alternative viewpoint, though, may stem from his own past. Tyler said that his conceptualization of hazing prior to high school was rooted in media portrayals: “forced drinking and drugs.... elephant walks... things like that definitely come to mind when you think of hazing. So that’s kind of what I thought hazing was.” Tyler developed an awareness of hazing during his freshman year of high school. A big hazing scandal occurred where the senior girls hazed the freshman girls, and it was eventually covered by national media. The hazing was not physical, but was psychological in nature. Tyler described how this situation developed his own view of hazing behaviors:

It’s kind of sick, like messed-up sick... that was a big part of my definition of hazing, because I experienced that as a freshman in high school. Seeing that right in front of my eyes in my own community definitely added to what I saw as hazing. (Tyler, Zeta)

This incident became unveiled during Tyler’s freshman year, so it was his peers – the freshman girls – who were victimized when this story broke. Tyler was able to see another side of hazing years before he joined an organization where he was at-risk for it, which shaped his definition of hazing as a concept.

With this background experience, Tyler was more receptive of learning the harm associated with hazing than other brothers in his fraternity, saying that it has much to do with the intention behind the behavior:

It’s a lot about the intent. If it’s intending to embarrass you or make you feel bad about yourself or scare you or cause you physical or emotional harm, then

I think it's considered hazing. Whereas if the intentions are good, but it does cause you some stress, I don't know if that's necessarily considered hazing, because that's not the intention of the entire thing. (Tyler, Zeta)

He explained how his pledge class attended a seminar with a representative from the Office of Greek Life. The representative talked about intentions, giving an example about hazing and pledge pins. If a pledge is required to wear a pledge pin, it may or may not be considered hazing, depending on the purpose of that requirement. If the intention is to wear the pin to show pride in the organization, it's different than if the intention is for brothers to catch the pledge without their pledge pin and get them in trouble for it. Tyler told me this example and said that this talk "definitely opened [his] eyes to what hazing could be considered." Though his entire pledge class heard this example, Tyler was the only one I spoke with who labelled it as "hazing," albeit on the less extreme level. Jack and J.R. both told me this scenario from the seminar as well, but they had strong convictions that requiring someone to wear a pledge pin did not count as hazing, regardless of intention. Perhaps the exposure to hazing during Tyler's freshman year helped him to connect with the idea that hazing is related to the brothers' intentions.

Tyler was also more aware that those who are hazed come from all life experiences, much of which is unknown to the brothers committing hazing. He retold another story from the seminar about an "extreme" form of hazing in a fraternity:

This was many years ago at some other school, but they would put you in a dark room just by yourself on a chair surrounded by brothers and they'd hand you a gun. They'd be like, "If you trust your brothers, put it to the head and pull the trigger." And obviously that's an extreme, I never heard anything like that. And obviously the gun wasn't loaded. But [one of the pledges] went

through that, and his dad actually had committed suicide from shooting himself. So when they did that to him, the kid had a breakdown. He smashed all the chairs in the room and just ran out and was like, done. Where obviously that would stress anyone out, and that's obviously an extreme example, but things like that could be applied... so I think that the definition [of hazing] is very broad based on personal experience and just who you are as a person. (Tyler, Zeta)

This form of hazing did not explicitly align with the cases that “crossed the line” as defined by other brothers of Zeta. The pledge was never in any physical harm since the bullets were not in the gun, so it would not fit in with J.R.’s definition of hazing that is problematic. However, Tyler understood that psychological hazing can have even worse effects on people based on their past life experiences. In this story, the brothers were unaware that the pledge’s father had committed suicide via a gunshot wound to the head. While their intention was to create moderate discomfort during a trust exercise, they unintentionally brought back memories of his father’s suicide. Tyler also provided a less extreme example of a pledge with a learning disability being forced to participate in study hours in the reading room, when it is stressful for him to try to study in a group setting. Tyler was able to grasp that people have differing triggers and situations that make them uncomfortable, which are often unknown to brothers.

Tyler’s understanding about past life experience is lacking from other members of Zeta, while Luke in Tri-Sig demonstrated an opposing perspective. He failed to recognize the potential for personal triggers when discussing the “Carrot Party” ritual during Hell Week. As explained in a previous section, brothers lead the pledges to believe that they are going to be sodomized with a carrot, only to stop the

process once pledges bend over and begin to remove their boxers. The brothers then share a laugh about how the pledges were willing to participate in that activity. Obviously to its homoerotic and sexually violent undertones, Luke found the event humorous:

It's all a mindfuck. Obviously, we're not gonna do anything like that... Right, so it's all a joke. Obviously, they find it's harmless... That's a fun night. It takes forever, but it's a fun night. (Luke, Tri-Sig)

Luke neglects to recognize that it would be traumatic for pledges, standing around in their underwear, to be led to believe their brothers were going to force them to be sodomized by the carrot. Additionally, he does not consider the possibility that one of the pledges may have been sexually assaulted in the past, thus resurfacing past traumatic memories. Luke attributes the incident as a “harmless” prank without understanding that other people could perceive it differently than he did when he was a pledge. In fact, it remains possible that one (or more) of the pledges *was* upset by the idea that he would be sexually assaulted or did experience flashbacks from a previous assault when this incident occurred. Luke's recollection of the night as “fun” minimizes the effect that it could have on others. He notes that it is “a favorite night” of the brothers, so it is unlikely that many brothers of Tri-Sig have a different view of this event.

Ryan from Tri-Sig also did not understand the importance of the way that pledges perceive the hazing events. He noted the brothers' rationale for requiring the pledges to remove their clothing:

We do make them strip down to their underwear for certain things, like the ritual stuff and when we want to scare the crap out of them, make them think that they're gonna get it real bad." (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

Ryan understood that events requiring stripping would inspire fear among pledges, but since he and other brothers knew that nothing bad would happen, he is apathetic toward their state of mind during the activity. It is humorous to him to consider how worried pledges will be as they wonder how the event will unfold. They are not brothers to him yet -- they are just pledges. In his perspective, standing clad in boxers and believing for a few moments that you'll be violated with a carrot does not have lasting harm. Ryan misses the point that others may react in a different way, particularly based on past life experiences.

Ryan continued, explaining that hazing depends on whether or not the pledges trust the brothers during pledging activities:

I would say that it has a lot to do with trust. If you get told, "Okay, strip down to your underwear, put your right hand on my right shoulder, and keep your head down, and follow me." Do you trust that person or not that it's all gonna be alright? And whatever's gonna happen is gonna be relatively harmless. If you do, then that's not hazing. If you don't, then you're getting into an area of hazing. (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

Ryan positioned the onus on pledges, rather than brothers, for whether an event crosses the line. However, the brothers are solely responsible for planning and conducting hazing rituals. While other participants usually placed the responsibility on brothers to some extent, the participants who attributed hazing to pledge perception were in Tri-Sig, which hazed to the greatest extent of the four fraternities in the study. The participants in Tri-Sig, as well as most of the participants in Zeta,

did not realize that the life experiences of pledges could cause someone to react in a different way than they would react themselves.

Regardless of the severity of hazing in their chapter, participants in each fraternity failed to label activities in their pledging process as hazing, despite admitting that some of these behaviors violated Barton University's hazing policy. The conflict between their own ideas about hazing and the official definitions served as a barrier to identifying as victims of hazing. The inherent suggestions in the hazing policy that all hazing behaviors were equally harmful to pledges acted as a major hesitation for participants in accepting this definition. They did not feel accountable to the policy because it did not align with their own views on hazing, which tended to jump to the extremes for members of Tri-Sig and Zeta.

Overall, participants favored a model that treated hazing behaviors as a spectrum, ranging from most harmful to least harmful. They did not see the behaviors listed in the policy as equally wrong, but because the policy treated them as such, they felt that the entirety of the policy did not apply to them. Brothers in Nu Sigma and KTO were more understanding of the negative consequences of hazing at multiple points along a hazing continuum, but they too were hesitant to label their own pledging activities as hazing within their own definitions. Suggestions to overcome this conflict are described in the next chapter.

The struggle to agree upon an absolute definition of hazing is related to participants' views of masculinity. Many minimize the impact of hazing on their own lives so that they will not be perceived as weak, which becomes apparent when the

participants discuss their pledging processes. This idea will be discussed further in the upcoming section on masculinities.

## PERFORMANCE OF MASCULINITIES

In addition to differences in hazing perspectives, there were noticeable variations in the masculinities performed and conceptualized within each of the fraternities. In particular, brothers in the moderate-hazing chapters, Tri-Sig and Zeta, tended to conform to singular forms of masculinity as a group, although the ways they portrayed that masculinity differed between the organizations. Zeta brothers converged to “fratty masculinity,” while Tri-Sig brothers performed “meathead masculinity,” two differing concepts that I will explain further in the paragraphs that follow. On the contrary, the brothers in the low-hazing chapters, Nu Sigma and KTO, noted multiple forms of masculinities being portrayed within their chapters; though some brothers in these chapters did perform fratty masculinity and meathead masculinity, there were many brothers who embraced alternate masculinities and were accepted by their peers. In the fraternities whose hazing behaviors were lower in extremity, the brothers did not tend to conform to a specific type of masculinity, and a multiplicity of masculinities was present throughout the group.

### *Fratty Masculinity: Zeta Lambda Nu*

All of my participants helped to define a stereotypical caricature of fraternity men – an image I will refer to as “fratty masculinity.” As a group, Zeta Psi tended to

converge to this specific performance of masculinity. Fratty masculinity was most commonly described by participants in terms of physical appearance:

You can picture the masculinity, like guys in tank tops, showing their muscles, backwards hats, sunglasses, flip flops, pretending like they don't give a shit. That type of cool, tough image... That's the kind of image of masculinity that is presented by fraternity life, I think. You're "in a fraternity!" ...It almost becomes what the image of a fraternity is, and that is also associated with masculinity, so the two are kind of intertwined. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

The perceived material culture of fratty men was apparent throughout the interviews, with participants continually rattling off the same name-brand designers to illustrate fratty men: "Sperry's, Timberlands, Polo [Ralph Lauren]." (J.R., Zeta) Some participants added behaviors or beliefs that they associated with being fratty. "I think a lot of people who join fraternities are expecting like the whole 'drinking, get chicks' type of attitude," Kevin from Nu Sigma explained. He believed the image of frattiness also included how brothers treat others:

Being cocky, or being a dick to other people... You know, the whole, when you give someone a hard time at the door of your party like, "Who do you know here. Oh, you didn't bring enough girls with you." All of that I think comes with the image of being fratty. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

J.R. from Zeta added that frattiness included "being a douchebag to girls, drinking a lot, wanting to be wealthy, driving nice cars." While the fratty image reflects much of the masculinities of mainstream Guyland, it is distinguished by its admiration of consumerism, pedigree, and capitalism. The material aspects of the fratty image are rooted in social class. The participants typically did not describe the style of clothing, but named the expensive designers. Frat boys don't wear boat shoes – they wear

Sperry's Topsiders. They don't just wear pastel pants – they wear Vineyard Vines. It's not a golf shirt – it's Polo Ralph Lauren. The fratty image is not only defined by a style of clothing, but by the social capital transferred onto the men that brand themselves with these high-end designers. It is primarily an embodied status symbol – a prerequisite to being fratty that is rooted in wealth. Fratty masculinity is defined by consumerism and branding, as well as the ability to flaunt wealth. Those that demonstrate fratty masculinity replicate the image of hegemonic masculinity as a microcosm of the capitalist elite, achieving social capital among their peers through their testament to high-end designers.

As discussed in the literature review, fraternities themselves reflect the values of an American class system through the rushing process, with wealthy students experiencing swift entry into these social clubs than less wealthy students. Not only is membership itself more easily accessed by wealthy students, but the brothers from chapters that perform fratty masculinity replicate images of upper-class social standing.

In addition to the designer-worshipping attitudes that accompany fratty masculinity, participants in Zeta also strived to follow the persona of wealthy men. Five of them were business majors with dreams of successful finance or wealth management careers. Zeta brothers valued the success and power that came with business careers, and related that to successful manhood:

I'm just thinking about the show *Mad Men*... They portray men and women very differently. And then, I guess there is stereotype or whatever because

everyone knows that a man's meant to be that sort of man, act like this certain way. (Jack, Zeta)

Through valuing material possessions associated with the upper-class, as well as striving for a career associated with wealth, brothers in Zeta performed fratty masculinity that values the privilege that is tied to the American class system. Upper-class status is embedded in the image of fratty masculinity, connecting both to the concept of hegemonic masculinity.

Participants in Zeta repeatedly described their brothers in a way that aligns with fratty masculinity. Daniel talked about frattiness in his chapter when discussing how his brothers treat women, but did not identify himself as similar to other brothers' portrayals of masculinity:

In my fraternity, there are kids who are like, "Oh, I'm the man, because I have sex with many women and lift this amount of weight," and all that stuff. If that's what makes you the man, like, great. I like to get good grades and go out and have fun. (Daniel, Zeta)

Daniel was bothered that the fratty persona involved disrespecting women; I will address this point further in the section, "Awareness and Assertions of Social Privilege." However, it is important to note that he continued to portray the fratty image to a certain degree, despite rejecting a certain component of it. He accepted the physical image of fratty masculinity, and had aspirations of pursuing a wealth management career. Despite his lack of agreement with the entirety of the image, he noted that he felt pressure to bite his tongue when other brothers shared these views.

Aside from Daniel's critique of interactions with women, the other Zeta brothers embraced frattiness without reservation. Although they did not identify with the term itself, they admitted to enacting the fratty image:

I don't even think about the word fratty at all, but if someone were to call me fratty, I could see why they would think that... I am fratty. (Jack, Zeta)

Additional factors that constitute masculinity for Zeta brothers are comparable to those demonstrated by brothers of Tri-Sig, including the role of brotherhood in their chapter and their attitudes toward minority groups. For the sake of organization, these components will be discussed further in the section, "Awareness and Assertions of Social Privilege."

#### *Meathead masculinity: Tri-Sig*

In addition to the brothers of Zeta, those in Tri-Sig also tended to converge on a specific type of masculinity. While Zeta brothers portrayed themselves as fratty, Tri-Sig brothers demonstrated what I call "meathead masculinity." My participants noted an emphasis on physicality, strength, athleticism, and fighting within their house. "I think there's a lot of emphasis on physical masculinity" (Luke). Luke attributed this mentality to the brothers' love of football: "Tri-Sig is sort of the natural extension of football stuff." While multiple football players are brothers of Tri-Sig, many of the remaining brothers are former football players themselves or simply fanatics of the sport.

Ryan said that his house was essentially “a bunch of jocks,” and he found that the house dynamic asserted power through physical means:

There’s a lot of testosterone running through the house... It’s more like, who could win in a fight? All of those things are more physical, and I say this as one of the smallest guys in the house, more physical strength and size I guess is more valued. (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

In contrast to Zeta brothers, who valued wealth within their portrayals of fratty masculinity, there was not a significant emphasis within Tri-Sig. Many of the brothers of Tri-Sig attended Barton on full athletic scholarships or through financial aid packages. They did not come from wealth, as had many of the Zeta brothers, but they did come from athletic backgrounds. My participants both played sports throughout the childhood through college years and internalized the competitiveness of the game in their own lives. Proving their masculinity was achieved through physical conflict and assertions of dominance:

The term masculinity, I think there’s a lot of interpretations of it. One of them for sure is the more physical prowess kind of interpretation of it that I think is a big part of Tri-Sig’s culture. (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

The assertion of physical power appeared in a number of facets of fraternity life, including the pledging process. The Carrot Party during pledging involves scaring pledges into believing they would be violated with a carrot. This event involves the same power dynamics of sexual assault. While the “prank” ends before an assault occurs, for the time span that pledges believe that it is about to happen to them, the brothers temporarily enjoy the same power over the pledges as rapists do over victims. In addition to brothers exerting their dominance over new members, the

pledges are granted one opportunity to display their own dominance over the brothers. Ryan explained this incident from the time he was pledgemaster:

Once they've been initiated, we do a brother shot, and after the brother shot, the pledges are told, okay, you're gonna get one shot at your pledgemaster. And so it's like a fifteen-on-one sort of deal. So they get to basically wrestle you, and you don't really have much of a shot in winning this. It's thirty seconds of dog-pile and then people will come in to start pulling people away and stuff. When I did it, I basically dove at somebody's legs, got him to fall on top of me, and went into the fetal position with people punching my back. It was over pretty quickly, but so that points to the same sort of physical prowess valued more heavily type of deal. (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

One of the first things that new members do after becoming brothers involves exerting their physical strength over another person, in this case, their pledgemaster.

Up to this point, the pledgemaster acts as a dominating figure, taking caution to hide any vulnerability. Ryan mentions this point when discussing recruitment during the year he was pledgemaster:

I wanted to take a hands-off approach to recruitment... I didn't wanna meet the kids that I was gonna be pledgemaster for. I didn't wanna have any sort of relationship where they felt that there was any sort of, I guess for lack of a better phrase, a sign of weakness... I wanted to remain pretty much anonymous. (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

Ryan was a self-described "sports guy," having played sports all his life and, at one point, considering a career in coaching. However, Ryan was not as buff as his brothers, causing him to assert his masculinity in a different manner than did his brothers:

Is it important to me? Not as much. I'm a smaller guy, so in a Darwinian sort of way, I have to learn to play to my strengths. I have to know when to pick my battles and be the fox and not the lion, so to speak. So I certainly put more value in the more diplomatic or consensus building aspects of masculinity than in the meathead sort of kind. (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

Though Ryan did not exhibit standard meathead masculinity, he remained connected with other brothers through athleticism. With his size, he likely cannot win a head-to-head fight with them, so he instead bonds with them through cooperative demonstrations of strength – taking turns spotting each other when weight-lifting, playing team sports, or going to the gym simultaneously. Ryan also said he enjoyed discussing sport games of all types with his brothers. Even when a brother deviates slightly from the typical meathead masculinity, he still exerts masculinity in ways related to physicality.

*Co-existing masculinities: KTO and Nu Sigma*

The brothers of Nu Sigma and KTO were each less homogenous in their presentations of masculinity and their ideas about manhood. Members of both chapters were critical of the term “fratty” and noted that their chapter did not portray that image as a group, especially compared with other fraternities at Barton. “I think Nu Sigma doesn’t portray that as heavily, the idea of being fratty, as much as other fraternities on campus do” (Kevin, Nu Sigma). Though they defined the term “fratty” in a similar way as had the brothers in Zeta, they did not find that image to be a fitting characteristic of their chapter:

But like, sort of the idea of a frat comes [with] the connotation of just partying a lot, being wild, being crazy, and being just doing stupid things sometimes. Dressing a certain way, as well. (Brendan, KTO)

We are definitely not over halfway toward being that generic cutout fraternity boy. But it exists everywhere you go, like trying to drink lots of beer to prove a point, just trying to be cool, people trying to impress other people. That comes with the image of being like fratty or whatever.” (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

Along with the members of Nu Sigma, brothers in KTO also did not put forth a fratty image. Brendan noted that their rejection of frattiness was a conscious choice:

Recently, we had a retreat day where we were talking about the core values of the fraternity, and one of the things we said is that we want to define ourselves not as a frat, but as a fraternity... I try to look at us as a fraternity, I don't really refer to us as a frat, and when other people call us a frat, it always sounds weird in my head. It's a fraternity, that's what I try to define ourselves as.... when someone says frat I think of the stereotypical guy drinking all the time, having beer all the time, cans everywhere, just a mess in general. Just like very drunk and stuff. (Brendan, KTO)

The brothers of KTO wanted to distance themselves from the "fratty" caricatures of Greek life that were present at Barton. Despite the agreement to not behave like a frat, Nick from KTO mentioned he occasionally felt a certain degree of pressure to act more manly in general:

There's certainly that pressure of "Nick, you should go talk to that girl" or "Here, talk to her, come here," "Come to the gym with us," "Buy these clothes." I don't know how much that has to do with masculinity but it's the pressure. I got the pressure of "oh, you need to dress better at events." (Nick, KTO)

Although Nick admitted feeling pressure to be more masculine from certain fraternity brothers, he said that it was not a pressure that existed within the entire group:

Most of my close male friends are in my fraternity and so that's where a lot of the pressure comes from. But one of the things I like about KTO is that they respect people. There is still that respect for, "You have a different idea of this, or you might not do this the way I do, but that's fine, I still respect you for that." (Nick, KTO)

The consequences for failing to conform to a specific form of masculinity appeared minimal in KTO and Nu Sigma. Despite the presence of nominal pressure, brothers did not face sanctions for expressing alternate forms of masculinity. Conformity to

one type of masculinity, such as Zeta with “fratty masculinity” and Tri-Sig with “meathead masculinity,” was not nearly as pervasive within KTO and Nu Sigma. Instead, brothers enjoyed the freedom to “be themselves” and did not face social consequences for failing to perform a certain masculine image.

#### *Awareness and Assertions of Social Privilege*

In addition to their performances of masculinity, brothers’ perceptions of minorities and privilege varied greatly between the groups with minor-level and moderate-level hazing. All of my participants were male, and all but one of my participants were white, yet their views on inequality differed by chapter.

The members of KTO and Nu Sigma were significantly more aware of their male privilege than the members of Tri-Sig and Zeta, who tended to reveal sexist attitudes at times. Participants in KTO and Nu Sigma reflected on the ways that they, as men, experience a privileged position in society that they acknowledged was unfair:

Brendan from KTO talked about advances for women over time, though he acknowledged that there was much progress to be made:

There’s still problems in the workforce where men get paid differently than women, or there’s more men in charge, but also at the same time I see women being successful as well... I don’t think there’s as defined roles as there were in the past, which is I think a good thing. There’s a little more equality. Granted there’s still a long way to go. Obviously, being a white male, I feel a certain way. But um, I’m obviously not a minority in any sense so I don’t feel any of [the discrimination]. But I feel there is some sort of equality. (Brendan, KTO)

Brendan expressed an awareness of the intersectionality of his social privilege as a white, heterosexual man and a desire for equality:

I'm literally, as they call it, a WASP. A white Anglo-Saxon Protestant, and a male too, coming from some wealth. So I've never had that struggle to be a minority in any sense. I do want equality. I don't want people to be treated differently just based on who they are. I want everybody to be at the same playing field... I support the equality here [at Barton], trying to get everyone to have an equal chance at whatever they have going on. (Brendan, KTO)

Reflecting on his experience at Barton, Kevin from Nu Sigma spoke of the ways that the Greek system perpetuates male privilege. In the past, fraternities have held parties with a range of sexist themes, such as "CEOs and Office Hoes," "Golf Pros and Tennis Hoes," or "Army Bros and Navy Hoes." These kinds of parties are problematic for numerous reasons, but Kevin discussed the issue of clothing. Men and women alike are expected to dress in a themed costume, but the theme itself suggests that women's costumes should be more revealing.

I mean, we've never really been into those kinds of themes, and I don't think any fraternity should be into those themes. But then at the same time, the girls almost feel like, "Oh, I have to dress slutty because that's what the girls do and the girls have to please the guys," and I think that's messed up. But I think that's definitely prevalent on campus in general, just the idea that the girls could dress slutty for the guys. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

Kevin stressed that Nu Sigma did not host these types of parties, even though many fraternities at Barton have done so in the past, which he considered an expression of masculinity:

I think that is part of the idea of being fratty, that you're having parties with these girls that are dressing slutty. If [girls] wanna dress a certain way, I think they can do that, and I think that's the whole point, but a theme [party] that forces [girls] to do that if they don't want to? That's wrong. (Kevin, Nu Sigma)

In addition to party culture, participants in low-level hazing chapters noted other ways that gender inequality existed at Barton. Nick from KTO thought of the ways

that he is privileged as a male on Barton's campus, saying that he did not have to worry about safety when walking home alone late at night. He also recalled specific incidences of gender inequality that he has noticed at Barton:

In terms of the general Barton female experience, I feel like I'm privileged as a guy, to some extent... I was talking to a female friend of mine who told me her aerospace engineering professor was a misogynist who thought that all female engineers needed help in order to pass the class. I heard things every day where I'm just like, "What?!" And so I feel like a male at Barton, I mean, there's still some male privilege that exists and I'm not proud of it at all. I do everything I can to minimize it and sort of make it more equal, you know, try and encourage a more equalist attitude about it. But it's something that is endemic. (Nick, KTO)

Raised by a "politically-active" single mom, Nick grew up with an awareness of the ways that gender inequality affects women. "I was sort of raised to be mindful of male privilege and that sort of thing" (Nick, KTO). He spoke of the ways that men can help disrupt the nature of gender inequality by avoiding pressures to conform to a predefined image of masculinity:

If you're aware that we as men have these privileges, and masculinity is defined this way and the culture's trying to push us this way, being aware of that we can sort of say, "Okay, this is where I want to be." (Nick, KTO)

Nick was perceptive of pressures from society and from individuals in his life that encouraged him to conform to masculine ideals. However, he felt empowered to reject the pressures that went against his beliefs, particularly those that threatened gender equality.

While brothers in KTO and Nu Sigma were easily able to discuss examples of male privilege in their lives, members of Zeta and Tri-Sig did not recognize this point overall. They recognized the benefits of being male, but they did not see a problem

with that privilege. “I would consider myself relatively masculine. I just feel like it just makes you confident and it just helps you in the real world. You don’t get pushed around” (Jack, Zeta). Jack acted surprised when I asked him whether masculinity was important to him. He thought that the benefits of masculinity were obvious:

I feel like it should be important to everybody, almost. It just helps you for the future. When you’re out of the education system, you’ll be thrown to the dogs, so you need to survive. (Jack, Zeta)

Jack did not demonstrate an awareness of the inequality associated male privilege. He treated the concept of dominant masculinity as something for which to strive, so that one can reap its benefits, particularly in the work force.

Not only did brothers in Zeta and Tri-Sig show a lack of understanding of privilege and inequality, but at times they hinted at sexist and racist attitudes within their chapters. As mentioned in a previous section, Daniel was an outlier in Zeta, expressing his dissatisfaction toward his brothers’ treatment of women. He spoke of a recent occasion when one of his friends demonstrated this behavior:

I’d sit there and listen to him talk about all of these girls that he’s been with. And he talks about it openly, like you would talk about, you know... I don’t know. It’s just, I don’t like that. I was just brought up that way, like you respect yourself, you respect the people you have relationships with and whatnot, and you go from there. (Daniel, Zeta)

Daniel said that his father instilled his respect for women, threatening to “come down on [him] with the wrath of god” if he failed to do so. In addition to his upbringing, Daniel said that his ex-girlfriend had much to do with his beliefs about respecting women. They were in a long-distance relationship, during which time he worried about her safety at parties while she was at college:

I just know that like the environment in which she goes to school... and I just I have a problem with people who don't respect women... And like, I guess that's where my like disgust toward the matter comes from, because I had a problem all of last year. She was at this school and I know how the school is, and I know the culture and environment of which it is, and it's the scariest thing a boyfriend could think of who's miles and miles away. So that's why I don't like it.

Despite Daniel's strong convictions about objectifying women, he admitted feeling as though he could not stand up for his beliefs without a negative response from his friends, which caused him to remain quiet about it. This demonstrates the "culture of silence" in Guyland that allows negative behaviors to persist (Kimmel 2008). The men in groups who disagree with the norms do not reject negative behavior for fear of being alienated, which allows these attitudes to persist unchallenged.

Daniel said he was disgusted with his brothers who embraced a Total Frat Move ("TFM") mentality, referring to a website that features articles, photos, and a forum for "fratty" fraternity men. The site addresses a variety of topics that exalt fraternity life, especially related to parties, drinking, and sex. However, it is notorious for the ways that women are portrayed on the site, as dehumanized objects valued on their potential for sexual conquest. Bikini-clad or partially nude photographs of women adorn pages such as, "Why You Should Dump Your Girlfriend Before Rush," "The United States of Chicks: Map and Field Guide," "Why Girls Should Not Cut Their Hair Short," or "The Five Types of Drunk Girls that I Inevitably Hit on at a Bar." For the men who visit TFM, women are thought of only with respect to their sexuality in the TFM world.

Further, TFM reinforces a superiority of Greek men above all other peers, as demonstrated by one article, “Why the Fraternity Gentleman is the Superior Gentleman”:

There is little argument the fraternity gentleman is the superior gentleman. But once in a while, you’ll find yourself at a local sock hop or barn raising where some GDI will try and wax on about the inferiority or meaninglessness of frats. You’ll sit there, dumbfounded, unable to form a counterargument as you lightly caress the backs of the two ladies that are sitting on your lap, because, well, how do you argue something as intrinsic as the superiority of frats? This is like trying to argue why sunsets are beautiful, or why flying doves make gunfights look cooler. Luckily, I’m here to help. Below you’ll find a handful of arguments in our favor, carefully laid out with consideration for the inferior try hard brain. Obviously, the reasons are endless, so these are only a handful, with more to come in future installments. Maybe print this out, keep it in your jacket pocket, and just hand it to the next guy that questions you. Then watch his face sink as he reads, hand him your hunting knife when he asks for it, and cover the eyes of the two ladies in your lap as he plunges the blade deep into his heart, twisting, then tearing it down and over through his lungs and liver, because he wants no longer wants any part of living, and I don’t blame him. Though I wouldn’t call his existence up until that point “living,” exactly.

Superiority is continually asserted in TFM posts, whether fraternity men are claiming dominance over women, “GDI’s,” or others. Though Daniel said he hates those sites, many of the participants in Zeta found them to be enjoyable.

Brothers of Tri-Sig also demonstrated a perspective of women as sexual objects. Luke explained that brothers in his fraternity did not develop serious relationships with women, instead focusing on “hooking-up” with women:

I think there’s a pretty large amount of two things – casual sort of hookups on the dance floor, maybe never see the person again. Hookup, one night stand, never see the person again type of thing. And then there’s also the most consistent where there’s some kind of relationship but it’s not anything serious. “It’s 12:30 – hey, what are you doing?” You know, this is going to sound horrible, but a bullpen of girls of girls to choose from, to

hit up, “maybe I’ll try you,” kind of thing, and I think that definitely happens.” (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

Tri-Sig brothers share the view of Zeta brothers in that they primarily view women as objects of sexual desire. A lack of committed relationships means that brothers do not have to be vulnerable. Instead, they continue to assert their dominance as men through casual hook-ups.

In addition to sexist attitudes, members of Tri-Sig and Zeta also revealed racist attitudes within their chapter. Luke mentioned that some of the comments made by his brothers in Tri-Sig surprised him. Though the nature of such comments varied, Luke was shocked that such attitudes existed within a fraternity that is slightly more racially diverse than most at Barton:

There were things that I’ve heard said by people in Tri-Sig... just racist things. Some of it might be to be funny or to joke and stuff, but some things were said in a more serious tone that I was honestly surprised were being said. So, I think despite having more black people in the house than most other Greek houses, I think we have the same issues that the rest of the Barton campus has regarding race. (Luke, Tri-Sig)

Ryan from Tri-Sig shared a story where one of his brothers made a racist comment when they were discussing recruitment:

One of the guys said, last fall getting ready for pledging, he said, “We’re not taking any black kids this year. We’ve got too many of them.” ...But there was surprising agreement, and I was a little horrified at it. (Ryan, Tri-Sig)

Along with Tri-Sig, the brothers of Zeta perpetuated racist attitudes within their chapter. A video posted online exemplifies this point. One Barton alumnus was speaking with Zeta brothers when he mocked one of the historically African-

American fraternities while pretending to be a member: “Alright, I’m in Alpha Pi Iota. I’m a n-gga, yo, I’m a n-gga! Hahahaha. My house is the n-gger house.” Instead of speaking out against these slurs, the Zeta brothers in the video laughed along with the alumnus. Though it is unclear whether the students actually found his joke to be humorous or if they felt pressure to react positively as part of a culture of silence, they did not display an urge to combat racist behavior.

In addition to jokes, Ross from Zeta mentioned that his brothers frequently use inappropriate language without reflecting on its meaning. He said his brothers often called each other “fags” and “pussies” whenever they did “anything stupid.” When Ross initially brought this up, he did not think that the language was a big deal:

That word [fag] directly applies to a certain group of people, but the social context of it doesn’t really apply to anything anymore. Like, calling someone a fag literally means nothing at this point. It means nothing. (Ross, Zeta)

As the conversation progressed, though, Ross changed his perspective, realizing that those slurs carry weight regardless of intention. “Honestly, it’s kind of a shame how homophobic slurs, racial slurs, they’re tossed around like nothing.” He said that this type of language is used frequently at Barton and within his fraternity:

But that’s one thing I’ve noticed about Barton, it’s more prominent here than where I came from. If it was a minority – well, I am a minority, like I look very white so it doesn’t really affect me as much – if I was *clearly* a minority, I wouldn’t wanna come to this school at all. I wouldn’t want to. Cause I feel like this school has a lot of underlying homophobic and racist ordeals... Those simple slurs that we were just talking about get tossed around a little more often here than I’m used to... and they get tossed around with a little bit more purpose here. I feel like there’s some fire behind the words sometimes. I’ve heard way more uses of the N word here than I ever have in my entire life. (Ross, Zeta)

Ross admitted to using this type of language himself: “I think I’m bad with the homophobic slurs. I call my friends fags a lot, and... I’m always saying, ‘That’s so gay.’ I don’t like it when I think about it, but it’s embedded.” Although Ross noticed that this language was ubiquitous at Barton and in his chapter, he has not confronted his brothers about their use of slurs. He was reflective of the greater meaning of his offensive language during the interview, but had not spent much time considering it before:

I can’t believe people actually talk to each other like this, now that I sit here and think about it. But when you go about your day and people say things like that, it doesn’t even register. (Ross, Zeta)

Language and offensive joking are part of the Zeta culture. Ross said that he and his other brothers often did not think of the implications of their language. Their social privilege allows them to be oblivious, because they are not the targets of such slurs.

While Tri-Sig and Zeta brothers do not acknowledge their social privilege and exert their superiority in numerous ways, brothers in KTO and Tri-Sig demonstrated a respect for others who were different from themselves, including those in their own fraternity. Nick from KTO discussed a chapter event hosted by Barton’s Office of Greek Life that helped his brothers to forge unity in spite of their differences. Brothers were asked to consider a list of hypothetical situations and rank them according to their level of morality. The list included “pretty crazy things like child pornography, child abuse, sexual abuse, rape, murder” as well as more general items like “eating boogers, spitting, pornography in general” (Nick, KTO). When one of the

KTO brothers put homosexuality as number-one-ranked, most-immoral offense, discussion among the brothers grew a bit heated. “Literally everyone else in the room had it at the bottom, and we had a half hour discussion, just like ‘Well, why? What’s your reasoning?’” (Nick, KTO). The brother explained that he was an international student and that’s the way it is in his home country, which helped Nick to understand his perspective:

It’s something I wouldn’t have known about this guy or just something that you don’t actually discuss, but it was also a bonding experience to some extent because going though that and knowing where people stand and discussing this with people really brings you together... Having that discussion and talking about that and coming to an agree-to-disagree is like, “I know this is the way you think, and it’s not the way I think, but I know where you stand and I sort of understand why you think that, at least. I understand what your logic is.” And we’re stronger for having had that discussion. (Nick, KTO)

Although the majority of brothers did not consider homosexuality to be relatively immoral behavior, their conversations helped them to respect their brother’s culture and opened a path of communication for such topics in the future.

## ISOLATION

In addition to their conceptualizations of hazing and their portrayals of masculinity, varying levels of isolation existed among the fraternities that haze at lower-levels versus moderate-levels. The brothers in chapters that hazed moderately, Zeta and Tri-Sig, had far less connections outside of their fraternity compared with brothers in Nu Sigma or KTO. Zeta and Tri-Sig brothers were substantially less involved in other aspects of campus life, and did not have deep personal relationships

with friends outside of the brotherhood. This was not the case for the brothers of Nu Sigma and KTO, who were involved in other organizations at Barton and had many close friends outside of their fraternity chapters.

Nick stated that it was easier for him to stay connected with other aspects of campus life because KTO was non-residential. His brother echoed the same sentiments when describing his chapter: “There’s people like myself and a couple other seniors who have been super involved, and this is just another thing we got involved with” (Brendan, KTO). In addition to Greek life, their brothers are involved on campus as resident assistants (RAs), orientation leaders, musicians, student senators, a capella singers, and other groups with significant time components. KTO brothers remain connected to the rest of the Barton community, while brothers in Zeta and Tri-Sig – with the exception of the football players – are less so.

Even within their pledging process, Tri-Sig and Zeta exhibited an isolation factor that Nu Sigma and KTO did not. Though brothers in each of the four fraternities considered pledging to be a significant time commitment, wasting time for the sake of wasting time was built-in to the hazing process in Zeta and Tri-Sig. Luke in Tri-Sig explained that time-wasting was done at least once per week on Mondays, while pledges waited for the spicy ramen dinner to begin:

One of the things we do is say like, “Get here at eight o’clock.” Then, we’ll make them sit there in the Slut Escape we have for like two hours before we start doing the dinner or something. So, you know, we eat up time just to eat up time, but it’s pretty clear to me that that Slut Escape time is time you’re supposed to get to spend getting to know your pledge class. So there’s a time commitment aspect. (Luke, Tri-Sig)

Ryan from Tri-Sig also noted the time-wasting component to pledging: “I knew what it was going to be like. It was going to be arbitrary time-wasting.” (Ryan, Tri-Sig). While time wasting may seem like a mild form of hazing in terms of trauma, it takes away time that pledges have for non-fraternity activities, including homework, sleeping, other organizations, and socializing with non-fraternity members. It does serve the function to allow pledges to spend time with each other, but at the cost of their other friendships with individuals outside the fraternity.

During their first semester of college, many of my participants said they established their primary friend groups starting with the students who lived in their dormitory. Once pledging began, most participants described the strain that pledging had on their early college friendships. As a freshman in his second-semester, J.R. still lives on the same hall as his old friends, but their friend group is not as it once was: “We still talk and stuff, it’s just different because we’re not together twenty-four-seven like we used to be.” (J.R., Zeta).

At one point during most interviews, I asked participants the average number of days per week that they spent doing fraternity-related activities while they were pledging. All the members of Zeta – most of whom were current pledges – responded that they were at the fraternity house every day:

Definitely something every day, whether it’s spending time learning about founders of the house and that type of stuff or just being up there... And they don’t *make* you go to the parties, but they *expect* you to go to the parties. If you’re part of the fraternity, they want you to have fun and go out with them. (Tyler, Zeta)

After a semester of pledging, fraternity initiation occurs shortly before summer break. Once the pledge class returns in the fall semester as brothers, they are essentially isolated from their former friends. They no longer live with those friends from their hall, but in the fraternity house with their brothers. Following a semester where they spent the majority of their time with their fraternity, they drift apart from their old friends. Jimmy from Zeta noted this change from old friendships:

We were living together, great friends and everything, and I would always be like, “Alright, I gotta go up to the house now, I’ll see you guys later.” And that just kept becoming more and more frequent, so I’d see them less and less... But now that I’m living in the house, I see them less, obviously. (Jimmy, Zeta)

Even if they do still have some sort of relationship, their loyalties lie with their fraternity brothers. J.R. demonstrates this loyalty even while he is still pledging:

If my brother were to get into a fight with my friend from the hall, I’d have to take my brothers side. Even though we were friends first semester, going through the New Member Education plan together, that definitely brings you close together. (J.R., Zeta)

While brothers in Zeta and Tri-Sig did not tend to remain close with their friends from the beginning of college, many brothers in Nu Sigma and KTO maintained those relationships. During his freshman year, Kevin from Nu Sigma established a close friend group that emerged from his hall-mates and expanded to a sizeable group. “They’re still my good group of friends right now” (Kevin, Nu Sigma). Prior to pledging Nu Sigma, his friend group spent a considerable amount of time together. Next year, Kevin plans to live with these friends – one of whom is his fraternity brother, two of whom are in different fraternities, and one is not affiliated with Greek

life. At Barton, it is rare for fraternity men to live with students who are not their brothers. Once students are initiated, they typically live with their brothers in the fraternity house for two years and then move off-campus with their brothers.

Part of this difference may be due to residential status. Nu Sigma acquired a fraternity house within the past ten years, so it does not have a long tradition of brothers living with brothers. KTO is currently non-residential; many brothers live with friends outside of the fraternity. Tri-Sig and Zeta, however, have been residential chapters for a number of decades, establishing a pattern of isolating brothers through the housing system.

## SUMMARY

Of the fraternities in my sample, Zeta and Tri-Sig appeared to be at a moderate-level of hazing, while Nu Sigma and KTO demonstrated a low-level of hazing. Participants within all four of these fraternities struggled to grasp the meaning of “hazing,” and all but one of them failed to label any behaviors as “hazing” within their pledging process. Many eventually admitted that some parts of their pledging experience met the criteria outlined in Barton’s hazing policy, but were assertive that they did not feel that they had been hazed themselves. This disconnect in hazing perceptions existed among all fraternities in my sample, regardless of the degree of their hazing behaviors. The participants were frustrated by a hazing policy that treated all possible hazing behaviors as equally harmful. Instead, they tended to prefer a model with a continuum of hazing behaviors with varying degrees of severity. This

conceptualization aligned with their own understandings of hazing, with some acts noted as worse than others.

Although the majority of participants noted some point on the hazing spectrum that would “cross a line,” brothers in KTO and Nu Sigma tended to consider a greater amount of things to be a violation of pledges’ dignity. They were more perceptive of ways that pledges might respond to hazing incidences at all levels of the spectrum. One participant in Zeta had a similar view. He discussed the differing ways that behaviors on all parts of the continuum could be potentially harmful, because pledges perceive things differently and have unknown past life experiences. However, the rest of the Zeta brothers and the brothers in Tri-Sig did not think about the varying levels of consequences to pledges. They often described off-limits activities as those that risked the safety of pledges, with little regard for other types of negative reactions.

Masculinities also varied between houses that hazed at lower and higher levels. While members of Tri-Sig and Zeta converged to performances of a specific masculinity, brothers of KTO and Nu Sigma were able to express variations of masculinity within their chapters. Though pressure to act “manly” was present within KTO and Nu Sigma, brothers were able to express alternate masculinities. Tri-Sig brothers performed “meathead masculinity,” characterized by athleticism, physicality, and strength. Zeta brothers had less of an emphasis on the body, but embodied their “fratty masculinity” through the clothes they wore. They branded themselves with the image of wealth, aligned with the values of consumerism and capitalism. Brothers of

both Tri-Sig and Zeta asserted their dominance over women, minorities, and non-Greek students, while brothers of KTO and Nu Sigma were aware of their privilege and desired change within that system.

Isolation was another major theme throughout the interviews. Tri-Sig and Zeta, both chapters with a long history of occupying their residential facility, were less connected to other people and groups at Barton University. Additionally, the pledging processes of Zeta and Tri-Sig demanded more of the pledges' time, which systematically isolated them from their friends outside of the fraternity.

Overall, the themes of hazing perceptions, performance of masculinity, and isolation proved salient throughout the interviews. In the next chapter, I offer suggestions for hazing prevention programs and directions for future research.

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

While hazing exists in the shadows of countless social groups within the United States, initiation processes should not require harmful components. It is my hope that this research will add to the existing body of research on the pervasiveness of hazing rituals among all-male student groups, guiding the design of prevention programming in the future.

Through thirteen interviews with fraternity men at Barton University, I categorized the hazing rituals within four fraternities. I found Zeta Lambda Nu (“Zeta”) and Delta Sigma (“Tri-Sig”) to conduct moderate-level hazing behaviors, while Kappa Tau Omega (“KTO”) and Nu Omicron Sigma (“Nu Sigma”) were shown to practice low-level hazing behaviors. Within these interviews, I identified three prominent factors related to hazing behaviors in fraternities.

Regardless of the level of hazing in their chapter, fraternity men were unlikely to identify as victims of hazing, even when they admitted that they experienced acts that violated with their university’s hazing policy. Their own conceptualizations of hazing did not align with official definitions, which prohibited them from viewing a multitude of behaviors as hazing. When the policy addressed seemingly minor hazing violations were addressed in the same manner as more dangerous ones, students did not believe that university administrators were serious in banning all of those behaviors. This may have allowed them to justify the perpetuation of moderate behaviors.

Instead, it seems that participants would benefit from an alternate approach. Rather than practicing a zero-tolerance perspective of hazing, it may help to have a multi-dimensional approach. Breaking down different types of hazing and a range of consequences would be useful in helping students understand why hazing hurts initiates on a variety of levels. My data revealed that brothers in fraternities that haze moderately view the behaviors the risk injury or death as the ones that cross the line. Brothers in low-level hazing chapters had a better understanding of the wide-range of effects that the behaviors might have on initiates. Reframing the ways that hazing is defined in policies may assist in students' abilities to label varying types of behavior as "hazing."

My data also revealed differing emphasis on masculinity among moderate-level-hazing and low-level-hazing chapters. In the fraternities that hazed moderately, brothers enforced a group performance of a specific flavor of masculinity. Though the exact type of masculinity differed, with one group emphasizing social class and the other emphasizing physical strength, both chapters exhibited a lack of understanding of social privilege and the propensity for sexist, racist, and elitist attitudes. The two low-level-hazing fraternities displayed less pressure to conform to a model of masculinity, were aware of their social privilege, and expressed a desire for equality. Conformity surrounding the performance of masculinity was a strong theme throughout the interviews, displaying significant variations between houses that hazed minimally versus moderately.

Additionally, an isolation factor proved relevant to hazing behaviors. Participants in fraternities that hazed minimally were more plugged in to the rest of campus, while the brothers in chapters that hazed moderately were less involved with other groups and did not have many genuine friendships with students outside of their fraternity. Residential status was relevant to this point. The chapters that hazed less were the ones that were non-residential or had a shorter history of living in the same house, while the moderate-level chapters had extended histories of living in their houses.

One of the limitations of this research lies with my sample. Originally, I intended to interview several fraternities with a full range of hazing practices: minimal, moderate, and severe. I recruited four fraternities to participate, but through the process of interviewing, I discovered that my sample likely lacked a severe-level fraternity. Within the timeframe of my research, I was unable to recruit additional fraternities to participate, so my data is lacking a high-level-hazing chapter. Consequently, my results do not represent the chapters with high-risk hazing rituals. However, these findings do address chapters on part of the hazing continuum. Though I cannot speak to the dynamics in high-risk fraternities, this analysis is generalizable to chapters with low-level and moderate-level hazing rituals.

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## APPENDIX A: Sample University Hazing Policy

To protect the confidentiality of my participants, I have not included the hazing policy from Barton University for concern that the true identity of the institution may be realized. Instead, the following definition of hazing is an excerpt from the Dartmouth University Membership Contract and Hazing Policy for Greek-letter organizations. This excerpt is similar to the way that hazing is defined at Barton in the Campus Code of Conduct (Dartmouth):

Hazing consists of a broad range of behaviors that may place another person in danger of physical or psychological harm or activities that demonstrate disregard for another person's dignity or well-being. Even when demeaning or embarrassing behaviors do not appear overtly harmful in themselves, as where the participants appear to engage in them willingly, they may constitute hazing if they are part of an organization's initiation or membership activities and if they might cause humiliation. The determination of whether a particular activity constitutes hazing will depend on the circumstances and context in which that activity is occurring. Some examples of conduct that may constitute hazing, when used to mistreat, intimidate or humiliate the participant, include the following: consumption of alcohol; paddling in any form; creation of excessive fatigue; physical and psychological shocks; inappropriate scavenger hunts or road trips; wearing of apparel likely to subject the wearer to embarrassment or ridicule; engaging in public stunts and buffoonery; degrading or humiliating games and activities; activities that would unreasonably interfere with students' other activities or obligations (academic, extracurricular, family, religious, etc.); any other activities devoid of legitimate educational value that subject the participant to humiliation; and any such activities that violate College policy, fraternal/sororal policy, or federal, state or local law.

## APPENDIX B. GREEK MEN IN POWER

The proportion of men who hold the highest positions of power in the United States who were formerly members of fraternities is significantly higher than the percentage of Greek men in the general population. The following is a partial list of men in power in the United States, their positions, and their fraternity chapters (North-American Interfraternity Conference 2014, Dukceovich 2003):

- Ackerman, F. Duane – former CEO and chairman of BellSouth Corporation, twenty-eighth ranked in Forbes 500, Lambda Chi Alpha, Rollins College.
- Arthur, Chester – 21<sup>st</sup> President of the United States, Psi Upsilon, Union College.
- Buffett, Warren – CEO and chairman of Berkshire Hathaway, twenty-fifth-ranked in Forbes 500, Alpha Sigma Phi, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.
- Bush, George H.W. – 41<sup>st</sup> President of the United States, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Yale University.
- Bush, George W. – 43<sup>rd</sup> President of the United States, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Yale University.
- Cleveland, Grover – 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, honorary member of Sigma Chi.
- Clinton, Bill – 42<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States, honorary member of Phi Beta Sigma, member of Kappa Kappa Psi, Georgetown University.
- Coolidge, Calvin – 30<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Phi Gamma Delta, Amherst College.
- Duke, Michael – CEO of Wal-Mart, Delta Sigma Phi, Georgia Institute of Technology.
- Eisenhower, Dwight D. – 34<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, honorary member of Tau Epsilon Phi.
- Ford, Gerald – 38<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Delta Kappa Epsilon, University of Michigan.
- Garfield, James – 20<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Delta Upsilon, Williams College.
- Greenberg, Maurice – Former CEO of American International Group, fourth-ranked in Forbes 500, Sigma Alpha Mu, University of Miami.
- Hayes, Rutherford – 19<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Kenyon College.
- Harrison, Benjamin – 23<sup>rd</sup> President of the United States, Phi Delta Theta and Delta Chi, Miami University.
- Harrison, William B., Jr. – former CEO and chairman of J.P. Morgan Chase, twelfth-ranked in Forbes 500, Zeta Psi, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Kennedy, John F. – 35<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, honorary member of Phi Kappa Theta, Harvard College.

Lafley, A.G. – President, CEO, and chairman of Procter and Gamble, twenty-first-ranked in Forbes 500, Psi Upsilon, Hamilton College.

McKinley, William – 25<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Mount Union College.

Nardelli, Robert – former CEO and chairman of Home Depot and Chrysler, twenty-seventh ranked in Forbes 500, Tau Kappa Epsilon, Western Illinois University in Macomb.

Paulson, Henry – 74<sup>th</sup> United States Secretary of the Treasury, former CEO and Chairman of Goldman Sachs, nineteenth-ranked in Forbes 500, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Dartmouth College.

Reagan, Ronald – 40<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Tau Kappa Epsilon, Eureka College.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. – 32<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States, Alpha Delta Phi, Harvard College.

Roosevelt, Theodore – 26<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Delta Kappa Epsilon and Alpha Delta Phi, Harvard College.

Taft, William Howard – 27<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Psi Upsilon, Yale College.

Thompson, G. Kennedy – former CEO, President, and Chairman of Wachovia Corporation, Beta Theta Pi, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Truman, Harry S. – 33<sup>rd</sup> President of the United States, honorary member of Alpha Delta Gamma and Lambda Chi Alpha.

Wagoner, G. Richard – former CEO and chairman of General Motors, twenty-ninth ranked in Forbes 500, Delta Tau Delta, Duke University.

Weill, Sanford I. – former CEO of Citigroup, first-ranked in Forbes 500, Alpha Epsilon Pi, Cornell University.

Wilson, Woodrow – 28<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Phi Kappa Psi, University of Virginia.

## APPENDIX C. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The following text was used as a rough guide during the semi-structured interviews with participants. Not all questions were asked of each participant, and follow-up questions were frequently added based on the flow of the conversation.

1. Individual information
  - a. Background information
    - “Could you tell me a bit about yourself?”
      - Age
      - Class year
      - Family structure
      - Socioeconomic status
      - Geographic roots
      - Activities they were involved with in high school and primary school
    - What semester did you join this fraternity?
  - b. Academic life
    - What are you studying (including majors, minors, any electives of interest)?
    - Why did you choose to come to Barton? What factors influenced your college search? What other schools did you apply to during your college search and what did you find appealing about those schools?
    - What kind of student are you in the classroom?
      - Time put into school work
      - How are you performing academically? Are you satisfied with your grades/GPA?
    - What do you hope to do with your degree? How did you come to this decision?
  - c. Free time
    - i. What club/organizations are you involved with? How much of your time is spent doing fraternity-related activities?
  - d. Could you tell me about your political views? (Would you say you are more liberal or more conservative? Do you identify with any political party? Are there any specific issues that you have a firm stance on, such as healthcare, abortion rights, immigration, gay marriage?)
2. Fraternity information
  - a. General

- i. Could you tell me a bit about what your fraternity is like? How would you describe your group to others?
  - ii. What are the best aspects of being a brother in this fraternity? The most appealing aspects of Greek life?
- b. Relations with other groups
  - i. In what ways does your chapter collaborate with other fraternity or sorority chapters at Barton? Are there collaborative social or philanthropic events?
  - ii. How do you think your chapter compares with other fraternities at Barton?
  - iii. How do you think your chapter is perceived by other fraternities at Barton? ...by other sororities? ...by administrators?
  - iv. What other Barton fraternities are most similar/different to your chapter and why?
  - v. How, if at all, does your chapter interact with other chapters of this fraternity at different schools? In what ways does this chapter compares with other chapters in the national fraternity organization?
  - vi. How involved are alumni of your chapter? What place do they have in the fraternity? How do members interact with alumni?
- c. Their experience
  - i. Before college:
    - 1. What were your conceptions of fraternity life before coming to Barton? What were they like when you were at Barton, but before rushing? How did those change?
  - ii. Rushing
    - 1. Prior to college, had you ever considered joining a fraternity?
    - 2. What made you decide to rush a fraternity? What factors influenced this decision?
    - 3. Were you open-minded about what house you wanted to be in, or did you have a particular fraternity in mind initially?
    - 4. What was the rush process like? What events did you attend?
  - iii. Pledging/Initiation
    - 1. How did you end up pledging this particular fraternity? What was most appealing about this chapter?
    - 2. Prior to pledging, what were your perceptions of this chapter?

3. What was the pledging process like *for you personally*? (Explain process from rush to getting a bid to pledging to brotherhood.)
  4. How did you feel about the process as you went through it?
  5. Did your perceptions of fraternity life change throughout the process?
  6. What was your pledge class like? (Size, characteristics.) Were members of your pledge class close? What contributed to your bonding as a class?
  7. What were your perceptions of older members as you went through initiation?
  8. What was your pledge master like? How did you interact with older members? What types of interactions occurred between other pledges and older members? Could you provide an example or anecdote of such interactions?
  9. Did pledges in your pledge class attend all of the fraternity events, or were there certain events that you were unable to attend? Did you have different roles in those events? (ex: giving people rides to the party, etc.)
- d. Being a brother
- i. How have your perceptions of this fraternity changed since becoming a brother?
  - ii. How do you define brotherhood? How is brotherhood formed? Does your chapter have a strong sense of brotherhood? Are there ways your group could improve upon this? How is this concept meaningful for you personally, and for your chapter as a group?
  - iii. What values does their chapter consider important?
  - iv. What are the social events like that their chapter hosts? What types of events occur? Who attends? Describe a typical event.
  - v. What is dating like for brothers in your fraternity? Do brothers tend to be in casual relationships or serious relationships? Do these relationships tend to be based on romantic connections, physical connections, or a combination of both?
  - vi. How is leadership in the house decided? What leadership positions exist and how are they chosen? What is the relationship between official leadership and the rest of the brothers?
- e. On recruitment process as a brother
- i. What are their perceptions of initiation now that you are a brother? Could you tell me the work that is involved with

planning and carrying out initiation events such as recruitment or ritual?

- ii. What is the role of ritual within their chapter? Would you say it is an important part of being a brother in this organization? Why is it important?
  - iii. What is the role of the brothers in initiating new members?
  - iv. Have initiation rituals changed at all since you were a pledge?
- f. Hazing
- i. How would you define hazing?
  - ii. Do you think that there are different degrees or severities of hazing? Or that there's an absolute definition?
  - iii. What are your overall thoughts on hazing?
  - iv. What are your chapter's views on hazing?
  - v. What are the benefits associated with hazing?
    - 1. Do you think that hazing can strengthen the bond within a pledge class?
    - 2. Do you think that hazing can strengthen brotherhood within the chapter?
  - vi. What some risks are associated with hazing? How do you think these compare with the benefits?
  - vii. Do you think that your chapter has a similar role in hazing as other fraternities at Barton?
  - viii. Have you ever experienced anything that might be considered hazing? What happened and how did you react to it?
    - 1. If not – was there anything that happen in the pledging process that you wish was done differently? Would you change anything about your pledging experience?
  - ix. Has hazing or initiation changed at all in your chapter since you had pledged? How do you think it has changed since the founding of this chapter? Have you heard any stories from alumni about initiation?

### 3. Masculinity

- a. What role do your guy friends play in your life?
- b. What is it like to be a member of a fraternity at Barton? How do you think your Barton experience differs from that of a non-Greek male student on this campus?
- c. How do you think your experience at Barton differs from that of a student in a sorority?
- d. How would you define the term masculinity?
- e. What traits are "masculine"? What traits would make someone less masculine?
- f. Do you think that masculinity in the United States has changed over time?

- g. Is the idea of masculinity important to you? Do you consider yourself masculine? In what ways do you think you demonstrate masculinity?
  - h. In what ways would you consider yourself to be masculine?
    - i. Has your own masculinity changed or evolved since joining a fraternity?
  - i. How would you describe the important male figures in your life? (Fathers, siblings, fraternity brothers, coaches) In what ways do they demonstrate masculinity?
  - j. Do you think brothers in your fraternity demonstrate masculinity? In what ways?
    - i. How does this compare with the ways that brothers from different fraternities demonstrate masculinity?
  - k. Do you ever feel self-conscious about your own masculinity?
  - l. Do you feel any pressure to be more masculine while in the presence of fraternity brothers of your own chapter? ... in the presence of brothers of different fraternities? .... in the presence of sorority women? ... in the presence of non-Greeks?
  - m. Do you think that people who are in a fraternity feel more pressure to be masculine than those who are not in a fraternity? Do you think that being affiliated with a fraternity might make someone appear more masculine?
  - n. How would you define the term “fratty”? Is that image important to you or your fraternity brothers? Do you see people being “fratty” at Barton?
  - o. Have you ever heard of websites like Total Frat Move? What do you think of them?
  - p. What do you think of the issues of gender/race on Barton’s campus?
  - q. Have you ever heard of the “Bro Code”? What does it mean to you?
    - i. Examples:
      - 1. “Bros before hoes”
      - 2. “Bros don’t date their bros’ ex girlfriends.”
      - 3. “Bros do not share dessert.”
      - 4. “All bros shall dub one of their bros his wingman.”
  - r. What differences do you see between your friendships with your male friends and with your female friends?
4. Concluding thoughts
- a. “I have one last question. What do you think about everything we’ve been discussing about your experience at Barton, Greek life, your fraternity, and masculinity?”

## APPENDIX D. INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

The following text is copied from the consent form that participants were required to sign prior to the start of the interview. This form was edited by the IRB committee and a representative attorney at my own institution, Lehigh University, to ensure that my research procedures respected the rights and confidentiality of my participants. Some of the information on this form was specific to Barton University (i.e. the name and phone number of the counseling center), and such information was changed. Except for information that would identify the participants' university, all other text remains the same.

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### **CONSENT FORM – INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW**

Noelle Smart – Sociology Master's Thesis

You are invited to be in a research study involving fraternity group dynamics as they relate to initiation processes. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a member of one of the fraternities that showed interest in participation. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

**This study is being conducted by:** Noelle Smart, Graduate Student, Department of Sociology, under the direction of Dr. Heather Johnson, Associate Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

#### **Purpose of the study**

##### **The purpose of this study is:**

To examine fraternity brothers' attitudes toward and role within their chapter's recruitment and initiation processes, as they relate to personal identity and group membership.

#### **Procedures**

##### **If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:**

- Participate in one individual interview with the researcher which will be approximately an hour in length. These interviews will be audio recorded.

#### **Risks and Benefits of being in the study**

##### **Possible risks:**

Possible embarrassment or discomfort in discussion in front of the interviewer; discussion of fraternity behavior surrounding initiation processes.

If you choose to disclose illegal activity or violations of the Campus Code of Conduct, as described below, please be aware that I may be required to disclose this information to third parties (e.g., University or law enforcement officials, courts).

This would include information that:

- **(1) relates to suspected child abuse;**
- **(2) must by law be disclosed to a third party (e.g., a court order requesting my research);**
- **(3) relates to serious violations of the law or the Campus Code of Conduct; or**
- **(4) indicates that a research subject or another identified individual poses a threat to himself/herself or others.**

As a participant in this study, you are not required to share detailed accounts of illegal activity or activity that violates the Campus Code of Conduct. You may skip questions or withdraw from the interview if you wish to do so.

**The benefits to participation are:**

Having the opportunity to reflect on one's experience as a fraternity member.

**Incentives:**

As a "thank you" for participation, every third person to schedule an interview up to the 36<sup>th</sup> participant will receive a \$25 gift certificate to [a local restaurant] upon attending the interview. If the participant chooses to withdraw from the study after the interview has begun, he will still be eligible to receive the gift certificate.

**Confidentiality**

- In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject.
- Research records will be stored securely and, except as described in the following sentence, only researchers will have access to the records. This information will not be shared **except as described above (see Risks and Benefits of being in the study).**
- Names and information that will make it possible to identify a subject will be changed in the research report. Names and other identifying information **will not** be shared with others, including but not limited to other participants, other fraternity members, and [Barton] administration.
- Names of the fraternity and the chapter will also be changed in the research report. This information will only be known to the researcher, her advisor, and the members of the fraternity chosen for inclusion. This information **will not** be known to others, including but not limited to participants of the study who are in different fraternities or [Barton] administration.
- The name of the institution will not appear in the research report.
- The audio recording files from interviews will be stored on a secure, password-protected computer and will only be accessible to the original interviewer (Noelle Smart). The audio recording file will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study**

**Participation in this study is voluntary:**

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the university. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships. If you withdraw, you will still be eligible to receive the \$25 gift certificate.

**Resources**

If you are in need of support services following the interview, you are encouraged to contact [Barton University Counseling and Mental Health Services]. They offer free individual counseling and group therapy for enrolled students, as well as consultation services regarding a peer or friend. To make an appointment, contact the office by phone at [REDACTED].

**Contacts and Questions**

**The researcher conducting this study is:**

Noelle Smart, Graduate Student, Department of Sociology, under the direction of Dr. Heather Johnson, Associate Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact Noelle Smart at [REDACTED]. You may reach Dr. Johnson at [REDACTED].

**Questions or Concerns:**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact Susan E. Disidore at [REDACTED] or Troy Boni at [REDACTED] of Lehigh University’s Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. All reports or correspondence will be kept confidential.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent**

I have read the above information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have my questions answered. I consent to participate in this interview and to allow the researcher to record an audio file of the interview.

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Fraternity: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E. VERBAL DISCLAIMER

After participants read the text of the consent form, I read them the following text verbatim and outlined examples of situations that would violate the confidentiality agreement for each of the four categories:

If you choose to disclose illegal activity or violations of the Campus Code of Conduct, as described in this statement, please be aware that I may be required to disclose this information to third parties (e.g., University or law enforcement officials, courts). In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Names and information that will make it possible to identify a subject, their fraternity, and the university will be changed in the research report. Research records will be stored securely and, except as described in the following sentence, only researchers will have access to the records.

This information will not be shared except where the information:

- (1) relates to suspected child abuse;
- (2) must by law be disclosed to a third party (e.g., a court order requesting my research);
- (3) relates to serious violations of the law or the Campus Code of Conduct; or
- (4) indicates that a research subject or another identified individual poses a threat to himself/herself or others.

I then provided an opportunity to ask any questions about the interview, confidentiality, or the consent process prior to obtaining their signature on the consent form. This process was recommended and required by the IRB committee.

## APPENDIX F. METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

Throughout my research process, I experienced numerous obstacles related to the nature of my topic. I wish to share these problems in this report for the sake of transparency and for the benefit of other researchers attempting similar work in the future.

Prior to submitting an application for IRB approval, I sought permission from the Director of Greek Life at Barton University to conduct my research with Greek students. I contacted him in May 2013 to request a meeting, but received no response. I contacted him again in August 2013 to schedule a meeting to discuss the possibilities for data collection at Barton. Again, I received no response. I continued attempting to contact him about collecting data. He eventually replied weeks later to an email my thesis advisor sent out. We set up a time to meet together with Barton's Judicial Administrator (JA). However, I was only able to speak with the JA during this meeting; the Director of Greek Life cancelled at the last minute. The Director and I rescheduled the meeting, but when I showed up for this appointment, his assistant told me that he was out of town. Again I rescheduled this meeting, and I finally met the director in mid-October. Fortunately, he was supportive of the project, and I was able to proceed with the IRB process. He also agreed to write a letter of support for me to include with my IRB application.

Since I planned to discuss hazing in my interviews, I knew that I would not be able to apply for an exempt review, which is a less-detailed process for projects that

pose minimal risk to human subjects. I expected to be able to submit my application through expedited review:

The expedited review category is used for certain types of research involving no more than minimal risk and minor changes to research previously approved by the full committee, during the period for which approval has been authorized. Proposals are reviewed by three members of the University's IRB. Agreement of all reviewers is needed for approval. Reviewers may refer the proposal to the full committee. The following types of research may fall into the expedited review category:

- Surveys which can be linked to participant and may request "sensitive" information
- Blood draws
- Non-stressful research on individuals or group behavior
- Study of existing data or pathological specimens if information recorded can be linked to participant
- Recording of data using non-invasive procedures

However, a staff member informed me that my proposal would require full committee review, which is described as follows:

Any research not covered under the exempt or expedited review categories is referred to the IRB for full committee review. The principal investigator may be invited to attend the review. The committee will either: (i) approve the research; (ii) approve the research pending modifications that must be verified by committee members; or (iii) not approve the research. The committee will notify the principal investigator in writing about the committee's decision. The following types of research may fall into the expedited review category:

- Surveys Invasive medical treatments
- Physical or Psychological risk
- Special Populations (minors, pregnant women, prisoners, incompetent persons)

The full committee meets only once per month, so this created a major obstacle in the timeline of my project. Due to the delays in acquiring permission from the Director of Greek Life, I was unable to apply prior to the September and October meetings. I submitted my application and the drafted consent forms at the end of

October 2013, so the committee reviewed my project during the November meeting. The committee recommended nineteen modifications following this meeting. They requested slight adjustments to my consent forms, which I had anticipated. The committee also raised concerns regarding confidentiality and the disclosure of illegal activity. They required that I consult the JA at Barton to understand the types of information shared by participants that would require me to break confidentiality. The JA referred me to a staff attorney at Barton, who worked with me to revise my consent form. The IRB required me to create a “verbal script” for disclosure of these activities, which the attorney helped me to create. (The final consent form and verbal script are found in Appendices D and E.)

The IRB also required that I craft a debriefing form to distribute to participants, as is common in psychology experiments. Though I was unfamiliar with the use of debriefing forms in interviewing for sociological research, the committee recommended that I distribute a debriefing form to participants “regarding the purpose of the interviews in which they shared sensitive information.” I created the form based on recommendations from the committee and sent it to all participants after the conclusion of my data collection. The purpose for this timing was to avoid the disclosure that my core research hypothesis was related to hazing while I was still conducting interviews with other brothers.

Additionally, the committee recommended that I include an extra fraternity, as I originally planned to have two fraternities in my sample:

Given that this is a small student population, it is likely that some individuals being interviewed will also know which other fraternity is being interviewed, thus allowing them to know what information can be attributed to the other fraternity if it does not apply to theirs. Having three groups would remove the certainty.

I eventually used four fraternities in my sample. I was fortunate that many fraternities at Barton were interested in participating.

In addition to these points, the IRB was concerned that participants “may become upset or distressed during or after the interviews.” In the event that this occurred during an interview, I agreed to remind participants that they may skip questions or withdraw from the interview, after which I would explicitly ask them if they would like to continue. I also included information about Barton Counseling and Mental Health Services on the consent form, of which all participants received a copy. None of my participants showed signs of distress during my interviews.

I also learned that the Director of Greek Life had not submitted a letter of support to the IRB as anticipated. This letter was supposed to be received at the same time as my initial application in November, but it was not submitted until the beginning of December.

In addition to these delays, I encountered issues related to the use of incentives. The IRB would not approve my project until the incentive was finalized. The Director of Greek Life mentioned that the students in Greek life had previously participated in a national hazing study which offered an iPad as an incentive, distributed to one participant selected at random. He said that this incentive worked well for the Greek students, as it is a high-status item that students desire. I originally

designed my research incentive to be an iPad mini, which one participant would receive at random. Its popularity would help recruit participants, and its price point would amount to approximately ten dollars per participant. I obtained a research grant for incentives from the College of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Lehigh University. However, the IRB informed me in January 2014 that they would “not approve an application that uses an iPad Mini or other high price item due to concerns over the possibility of coercion.” Thus, I diverted the funds to cover the cost of twenty-five dollar gift cards instead.

Finally, I received IRB approval in mid-February and I was able to begin the research process. I contacted fraternity presidents and finalized which fraternities would be in my sample. Unfortunately, this step coincided with Barton University’s spring break, so I had to wait to schedule interviews with participants. I asked fraternity presidents to send information about the study to their chapters at the end of spring break. Because of all the delays in this project, I began conducting interviews in mid-March and wrapped up the interview phase in the beginning of April.

If I had fewer delays, I believe I would have been successful in recruiting a larger sample. Originally, I wanted to incorporate panel interviews into my research design. Conducting interviews with three to five brothers from each fraternity would reveal whether participants’ views about masculinity differed while in the presence of their brothers. However, the time frame of this project did not allow for this to occur following these delays.

## APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY

Active Member	A current member of a fraternity who is enrolled at the university, has paid dues, and is expected to fulfill all the requirements associated with membership.
Alumni/Alumnus	Alumni status is granted to a former active member of a fraternity who has graduated from the institution.
Associate Member	The formal name for “pledges,” or those who have accepted their bids and are currently undergoing New Member Education to eventually become active members.
Bid	A formal offer from a chapter inviting an individual to join the fraternity.
Big	A nickname for “big brother,” a mentor assigned to each pledge, who is their “little.”
Brothers	Typically “brothers” refers to active members of a fraternity. Most fraternities view their former members as “brothers for life,” so this may also refer to alumni members, depending on the context. This term is not used to refer to pledges until after the pledge class is initiated.
Chapter	A local branch of a national Greek-letter organization.
Charter	An agreement from the national Greek-letter organization that gives chapters permission to operate and to be affiliated with the fraternity.
Colony	Temporary status of a local Greek-letter organization prior to being installed as a chapter.
Depledge	When a pledge decides to discontinue the pledging process, or is asked to do so by the brothers.
Dues	Fees paid for membership, charged once per semester. Dues are paid to the national organization as well as the local organization.
Fraternity	A national-level Greek-letter organization. Though some co-ed or all-female “fraternities” exist, the use of this term throughout this paper refers exclusively to all-male Greek organizations. Fraternities exist for various purposes – academic, professional, service, special interest – but the term in this paper will be used to describe IFC-affiliated social fraternities. Fraternities are made up of numerous chapters at different high-education institutions.
“Fratty”	A nickname for a fraternity. See Chapter IV for further description.

GDI/ "Geed"	A slang term that stands for "God Damn Independents," used to refer to students who are not a part of Greek life. This term is a pejorative one, and it is used by students outside of Barton University as well as by students at Barton.
Greek Week	A week-long event in which various fraternity and sorority chapters compete as teams to unite the Greek community.
Hazing	A spectrum of behaviors by pledges that include "silly, potentially risky, or degrading tasks required for acceptance by a group of full-fledged members" (Nuwer 2004).
Hell Week	The week before pledges are initiated. In many Greek organizations, this is the most strenuous week of pledging and specific events are held during this time, depending on the chapter.
Honorary Member	Membership granted to honor a person who is no longer in college.
Initiation	A ritual ceremony in which pledges become active members.
Interfraternity Council	Referred to as "IFC," the Interfraternity Council serves as a governing body for numerous men's social fraternities. At Barton, there is a student IFC consisting of chapter representatives and presidents that serve to regulate fraternity activities.
"Meathead"	A performance of masculinity characterized by an emphasis on physicality, athleticism and strength. For further description, see Chapter IV.
Nationals	The official headquarters of a fraternal or sororal organization.
New Member Education	The time period referred to as "pledging" after pledges accept their bids but prior to their initiation. This
Panhellenic Council	Referred to as "Panhel," the Panhellenic Council is the governing body for many sororities. There is a student Panhellenic Council at Barton that regulates sorority activities.
Philanthropy	The community service component to Greek life, typically dedicated to a specific charity or cause.
Pledge	An associate member of a fraternity, who is not yet a full member. Pledges exist only in the pledging/New Member Education phase. After initiation, they are brothers.

Pledge Pin	A pin, also referred to as a badge, is typically decorated with the fraternity's crest and given to pledges after they accept their bids.
Pledging	The period after pledges accept bids but prior to their initiation. This phase, also called "New Member Education," is when most hazing activities occur.
Recruitment	The period in which a fraternity attempts to recruit individuals interested in joining the brotherhood.
Ritual	An official ceremony of the national fraternity conducted by individual chapters, which is held secret among brothers. This word may also refer to hazing rituals, which are not sanctioned by nationals but have ceremonial, secretive aspects.
Rush	The recruitment process, characterized by events intended to allow potential pledges to get to know the brotherhood.
Sisters	Active or alumni members of a sorority.
Social dues	Unofficial dues that are designated for the expenses of parties and social events – primarily the cost of alcohol. This cost is decided by the chapter and is not reported to the university. As such, many members are not completely unaware of this hidden cost when they join.
Sorority	All-female Greek letter organizations. In this document, the term refers to those organizations affiliated with the National Panhellenic Conference.
Spring barbecues	At Barton, spring barbecues are held at least every other Saturday during the spring once the weather becomes warmer. Fraternities typically host these barbecues, and students who attend show up in a hodgepodge of random costumes for outdoor, daytime drinking.
Total Frat Move (TFM)	A website that posts articles and provides a forum related to stereotypes of fraternity life. Many of the participants frequently visited this website. Some appreciated this portrayal of Greek life, while others viewed it as satirical.
Violation	Violations are received when a fraternity or sorority fails to adhere to the campus code of conduct as a group. Violations are addressed by the campus judiciary committee, headed by the Judicial Administrator (JA).

## APPENDIX H. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Please note that all names and some identifying information have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

### ZETA LAMBDA NU ("ZETA")

#### *Daniel*

Daniel is a 19-year-old sophomore who transferred from the University of New Hampshire after his freshman year. He is a student athlete on the lacrosse team. He hopes to start a career in wealth management after graduation from Barton.

#### *Jack*

Jack is a 19-year-old freshman who grew up in North Carolina as the youngest of six children. For primary and secondary school, he attended a small, private, German international school in the United States. He played football, rugby, and basketball prior to enrolling at Barton. He plans to study finance and accounting with a minor in German to eventually work in international business. He is involved in one minor academic club in addition to Greek life.

#### *J.R.*

J.R. is a 19-year-old freshman from New York City. Lived with his parents and his sister. Attended a private school in the city where kids “had a lot of money and liked to flaunt it a lot.” He played basketball in high school, but is not involved with sports or other clubs at Barton. He currently is studying economics. J.R. was interested in joining a fraternity, because his dad was in one in college and it seemed like a positive experience.

#### *Tyler*

Tyler is an 18-year-old freshman from a suburban town. He is the oldest of four siblings in a close, “stable” family. He described his upbringing as “pretty comfortable,” with no money problems. Tyler was a member of the crew team and Relay for Life club in high school. The transition to Barton was difficult for Tyler, saying that he was feeling homesick and depressed for the first few months of college. It’s still difficult for him missing his long-distance girlfriend and his friends from home, but after joining Zeta, he’s “definitely happier.” He is studying business at Barton. Currently, Zeta is the only extra-curricular organization he’s involved with in college, but he is considering getting more involved next year.

#### *Ross*

Ross is a 19-year-old freshman who grew up in a middle-class town in Connecticut. While Ross graduated as salutatorian of his graduating class, many of his friends did not attend college like he did; some dropped out of their public high school and some

are currently incarcerated. At Barton, he studies biochemistry as a pre-med student, with the goal of becoming a doctor.

*Jimmy*

Jimmy is an 19-year-old sophomore. He attended private, Catholic schools before college. Though he was involved with music and cross country in high school, he has not continued those interests through clubs at Barton. Jimmy is a mechanical engineering student.

NU OMICRON SIGMA (“NU SIGMA”)

*Kevin*

Kevin is a 20-year-old junior majoring in chemical engineering. Grew up as the youngest of three brothers living with their working dad and stay-at-home mom. Attended a private, all-boys’ Catholic school until he came to Barton. Was not a partier in high school. He is currently the president of Nu Sigma. In addition to Greek life, he is involved with intramural sports, student government, and the cycling club.

*Kyle*

Kyle is a 20-year-old junior studying accounting. He grew up in California and noted that he was surrounded by progressive-minded people his entire life, prior to attending Barton. He lives with non-brothers who he befriended his freshman year before joining Nu Sigma.

*Travis*

Travis is a 19-year-old sophomore studying engineering. He grew up in New Jersey with his parents and three brothers. Travis currently is an officer in Nu Sigma, serving as parliamentarian.

DELTA SIGMA (“TRI-SIG”)

*Ryan*

Ryan is a 21-year-old senior. Ryan is a former football player, having grown up with the sport. He has previously served in officer positions of Tri-Sig, including as pledgemaster in the past.

*Luke*

Luke is a 21-year-old junior majoring in finance. Luke grew up in a suburban area about two hours away from Barton. He played football in high school, and continues to play at Barton.

KAPPA TAU OMEGA (“KTO”)

*Nick*

Nick is a 19-year-old sophomore studying engineering and performing arts. He was raised by a single mom with feminist values. They moved frequently, and Nick

attended over ten schools before earning his high school diploma. Initially, he did not foresee himself joining a fraternity, because he didn't drink at the beginning of college. However, his father was in a fraternity at a different college, and he joined KTO as a legacy to feel included in a new friend group. He currently lives in a program house (or special-interest house) with people who are not members of his fraternity.

*Brendan*

Brendan is a senior business major who grew up in New York City, where he attended an elite private school on the Upper East Side. He moved with his parents and four siblings to Maryland in his early teenage years. He said he is "very involved" at Barton, having been a Resident Advisor (RA), a member of the club volleyball team, and member of student government.

NOELLE K. SMART

CONTACT

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. **Northeastern University**, 2018 (expected)  
Criminology and Justice Policy
- M.A. **Lehigh University**, 2014  
Sociology  
Thesis: *Becoming "Bros": Hegemonic Masculinity and Peer Influence in the Hazing Rituals of College Fraternities*, under the direction of Dr. Heather Johnson
- B.A. **Lehigh University**, 2012  
Women's Studies  
Health, Medicine, and Society minor

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Gender and sexuality; masculinity; criminology; violent behavior; collective behavior; transition to adulthood.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Lehigh University, 2012-2014. Courses include: Introduction to Sociology; Medicine and Society; Doing Archaeology; Greek Archaeology.

PUBLICATIONS

Smart, Noelle K. 2014. "Becoming 'Bros': Hegemonic Masculinity and Peer Influence in the Hazing Rituals of College Fraternities." Master's thesis, Lehigh University.

PUBLISHED MEDIA

Brealey, C., C. Brown, S. Bruno, T. Sinclair Evans, J. Garcia, O. Handerek, K. Johnston, R. Kelley, G. Mason, N. Smart, M. St. Denis, M. Trauger, K. Weber, and J. Wheatcroft. 2011. Documentary film, "The Development of Masculinity: Lehigh, Coeducation, and Its Impact" published within "Archival Materials into Documentary Film." *Archive Journal*, Issue 2, Fall 2012. (<http://www.archivejournal.net/issue/2/archives-remixed/archival-materials-into-documentary-film/>)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant for Dr. Ziad Munson, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Lehigh University. 2013-2014.

## AWARDS

Williams Writing Prize in History, Political Science, and International Relations, Lehigh University. 2012.

Finalist: Lehigh Libraries Student Research Prize. 2012.

Model Ally Award, LGBTQIA Services, Lehigh University. 2012.

Undergraduate Gender Equity Award, Women's Center, Lehigh University. 2012.

Excellence in Educational Programming (as producer of V-Day Lehigh), Dean of Students, Lehigh University. 2012.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting. 2014. Paper session, "Becoming 'Bros': Hegemonic Masculinity and Peer Influence in the Hazing Rituals of College Fraternities." Baltimore, MD.

LVAIC Women's Studies Coalition Undergraduate Conference. 2012. Paper session, "Un-'Covering' the Sexism Behind Virginity Pledges." Bethlehem, PA.

LVAIC Women's Studies Coalition Undergraduate Conference. 2012. Paper session, "'Yielding Never, Fighting 'Til They Fall': Examining the Masculinity Within the Lehigh University Marching 97." Bethlehem, PA.

## GRANTS

Research Grant, College of Arts and Sciences, Lehigh University. Awarded for expenses related to master's thesis research. 2014.

Research Grant, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Lehigh University. Awarded for expenses related to master's thesis research. 2014.

Travel Grant, College of Arts and Sciences, Lehigh University. Awarded for travel to Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD. 2014.

Travel Grant, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Lehigh University. Awarded for travel to Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD. 2014.

Travel Grant, Graduate Student Senate, Lehigh University. Awarded for travel to Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD. 2014.

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Eastern Sociological Society, 2014.

American Sociological Society, 2013-2014.

School and College Organization for Prevention Educators, 2011-2012.

## RELEVANT SKILLS

Qualitative research methods; quantitative research methods; classical sociological theory; feminist theory; Atlas.ti; Stata; Microsoft Office; research interviewing; regression modeling.