

WHITE CLAUSES IN TWO HISTORICALLY WHITE FRATERNITIES: DOCUMENTING THE PAST & EXPLORING FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

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This study offers a critical analysis of the appearance and subsequent removal of white clauses in historically white fraternities (HWFs) using the theoretical framework of Critical Race Theory. Archival records are examined to document the first men of color in two HWFs. Data are then presented using phenomenological research methods from interviews with men who were members of these HWFs at the time of racial integration. Themes of colorblindness and internal and external influence on integration are presented followed by implications for fraternity/sorority communities, campus based professionals, and inter/national organization staff.

Fraternities have been a salient part of the ethos of U.S. higher education since the first Greek-letter organization, Phi Beta Kappa, was established at the College of William and Mary in 1776 (Torbensohn, 2005; Wilkie, 2005). Fraternities have endured times of turmoil and fluctuating college-going rates since the late 1700s and continue to have a strong presence at many colleges and universities today (Cohen & Kisker, 2009). The focus of this research, race and racism in historically white Greek-letter organizations, was recently put on the national radar in the Fall of 2013 at the University of Alabama when two Black women, who were very competitive for historically white sorority membership, failed to receive bids, reportedly due to pressure for alumnae (Luckerson, 2013; Willingham, 2013). The outcry to this intentional racial segregation has resulted in a new continuous open bidding process whereby a sorority could offer membership to any woman at anytime throughout the formal recruitment process (Willingham, 2013). The pattern of racism is not only relegated to historically white sororities at the University of Alabama, for it was not until 2001 that the HWFs on the same campus initiated a Black member (Chang & DeAngelo, 2002). Moreover, the situation

at the University of Alabama is not an isolated incident, rather it is representative of enduring racism in historically white fraternities and sororities.

Original research using primary and secondary historical documents to examine the history and contemporary role of race in two U.S. fraternities established prior to 1900, Sigma Chi and Delta Chi, is presented. These fraternities are among the 15 members of the NIC with more than 50 active chapters and more than 100,000 total initiates established prior to 1900 (North-American Interfraternity Conference, n.d.). These criteria were used because the methodology is inclusive of the groups which have had the most significant impact on the U.S. given longevity and breadth of membership. Additionally, because this historical research involves archival research, the two fraternities on which this study focuses are selected because the author has access to these organization's historical documents and staff historians.

Research questions which guide this analysis include: When did Sigma Chi and Delta Chi first establish in written records that membership was restricted to only white men? When did Sigma Chi and Delta Chi remove

these restrictive membership clauses, and who were the first men of color initiated into each organization? Finally, how did the fraternities, nationally and locally, make the decision to remove these membership restrictions and for what reasons? Critical Race Theory is used as a theoretical framework for analyzing the removal of restrictive membership clauses, using archival research methods. This research and analysis then informs the second component of the research presented, qualitative interviews with eight members of Delta Chi and Sigma Chi who were members of their organizations at the time the first men of color were initiated. Finally, implications for higher education are explored using more recent scholarship on HWFs. Throughout this analysis “historically white fraternities” is used to identify fraternities that historically consisted of exclusively white men (Syrett, 2009). Also, “white clause” is used to refer to any membership clause, formal (de jur) or implied (de facto), restricting fraternity membership to white men.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

The review of literature framing this examination is presented in the form of a historiography, or a succinct overview of a body of historical work (Cheng, 2012; Pocock, 2005). A historiography is necessarily political and subjective in that the search for resources is a reflection of the strategic decisions by the researcher as to what to include and exclude (Pocock, 2005). Historiographies are generally a focused history of a defined subsection of a larger history or body of historical writing (Cheng, 2012). This historiography is concerned primarily with what has been written about race in historically white fraternities. The topic of race in historically white fraternities has been largely ignored by researchers and scholars, perpetuating a narrative of color-blindness which functions to obfuscate race and

subsequently white privilege in predominantly or entirely white spaces (Bonilla-Silva, 2009; Tuitt & Andrews, 2013).

During the mid part of the nineteenth century the number of HWFs grew, and in 1879 William Raimond Baird published the first edition of his seminal text, *Baird's Manual of American College Fraternities*. This text, which is currently in its 20th edition last published in 1991, is universally regarded as the most influential and noteworthy literary classification of college fraternities, and later sororities, in U.S. history (Syrett, 2009). Baird's virtually universal celebration of college fraternities is notable throughout his text in both the glorification of their history and the sociological justifications for their existence. For example, the acquisition of land by fraternities, and the associated erection of structures, occurred during a time of increased rhetorical justification for U.S. expansion through Manifest Destiny (Cohen & Kisker, 2009; Stephanson, 1996). Given the longevity and vast readership of Baird's text, it is easy to deduce that no other book in the history of higher education has had such a profound impact on the expansion of U.S. fraternities. It is therefore essential to note that this text has no mention of clauses restricting membership of HWFs to white men, or the later integration of these organizations.

More recently, little has been written about race in HWFs, and even less about the actual process of racially diversifying these organizations. Tangential exceptions include a recent study, *The Fraternity Project* funded by the Kinsey Institute and the Center for the Study of the College Fraternity (Rashawn, 2013). The study compared the experiences of historically Black and white fraternities in the same university context and focuses on normative institutional arrangement structures and their impact on social interactions (Rashawn, 2013). Additionally, in his comprehensive and critical account of HWFs, Syrett (2009) documents the

founding of historically white fraternities, with a focus on the maintenance and perpetuation of violent and oppressive hegemonic masculinity, which he generalizes as “fraternal masculinity.” The text does a decent job of highlighting the support, and largely the resistance, to HWFs racial integration in the mid and latter part of the twentieth century before returning to examples of misogyny and homophobia in HWFs (Syrett, 2009). Similarly, Turk (2004) comes close to discussing race in her overview of historically white women’s fraternities from 1870-1920. However this detailed examination, centering on archival research related to the first women’s fraternity in the US, Kappa Alpha Theta, focuses on gender and at times religious exclusion and not race.

In a creative research project relevant in part for its examination of an institutional context important to this study, Wilkie (2010) uses contemporary archeology methods to present themes related to fraternity, masculinities, and gender roles woven as a fantastical narrative of Peter Pan for organizational structure. She offers a rich and detailed microhistory about Zeta Psi Fraternity at the University of California-Berkeley in 1870, focusing on the role of fraternity in transitioning homogenous men to adulthood (Wilkie, 2010). The focus of this narrative, however, pre-dates the integration of Delta Chi/Abracadabra at Berkeley, and it focuses little on race or racial integration. Additional research touching on race include Sanua’s (2003) focus on Jewish Fraternities pre 1945, Whaley’s (2010) engaging research on Black Greek-letter organizations with a specific focus on the oldest such sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, and Ross Jr’s (2002) comprehensive history of African American fraternities and sororities.

That HWFs tend to attract people of similar backgrounds, including race and socio-economic status, has remained largely unproblematized in scholarly literature until recently (Park, 2008;

Tobenson, & Parks, 2009). Moreover, Syrett (2009) argues that HWFs have always been vehicles for prestige, and that prestige has been linked to hegemonic conceptions of masculinity, a masculinity which is raced white. That no studies could be found focusing on white clauses and the integration of HWFs highlights the importance of the present study, which helps fill the identified gap in the literature.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Archival research was assisted by Sigma Chi archivist, Noah Phelps, and Executive Director, Mike Dunn. This access to the Sigma Chi archives is a privilege typically reserved for members of the fraternity. Delta Chi Executive Director, Raymond Galbreth, was similarly accommodating. He scanned and e-mailed copies of 1954 fraternity meeting minutes concerning the removal of the white clause (see Appendix A), and helped guide archival research. Because Delta Chi does not keep track of race as a component of membership demographics, Mr. Galbreth was unaware of the first Delta Chi initiate who was a man of color. He subsequently suggested surveying the fraternity archives of The Delta Chi Quarterly, a publication dating back to the 1900s which frequently published pictures and names of fraternity brothers. This visual scanning to identify a man of color was methodologically limited because of the diverse array of skin tones and poor copy quality. Nonetheless, the research did reveal a picture and name of a man of Asian descent believed, and later confirmed, as being, the first Delta Chi man of color (see Appendix B).

White Fraternities Established Prior to 1900

HWFs in the U.S. evolved from literary societies which were prevalent in higher education from 1760 to 1860. However, in the

mid 1800s social fraternities quickly supplanted literary societies, and by the end of the 1850s fraternities for men were on virtually every college campus in New England and the mid-Atlantic, and much of the South and Midwest (Cohen & Kisker, 2009; Syrett, 2009). Originally, these social fraternities embraced a political bend to their socializing, “Though purportedly nonpolitical, fraternal groups often aggressively support Americanism, and membership in them is beneficial to those who have political aspirations or who hold political office” (Schmidt & Babchuk, 1973, p. 275). Interestingly, in 1854 a Chinese student, Yunh Wing, was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon at Yale, and he is believed to be the only man of color in a HWF during the entire antebellum period (Syrett, 2009).

The White Clause

Delta Sigma Phi has the first known published white clause which appeared in Baird’s Manual first published in 1879 (Brown, 1923). The clause, which represents common language seen in white clauses, stated that “Membership is confined to men of the Caucasian race, whose ‘ideals and beliefs are those of modern Christian civilization’” (Brown, 1923, p. 144). Syrett (2009) reveals:

By the early 1910s...fraternities were adding codes of exclusion to their constitutions mandating that members must be white, Christian males. Although these codes were largely moot, as de facto exclusion had already been established by that point, these codes demonstrate the concern that some renegade chapter might initiate an unsuitable member if it was not explicitly forbidden. (p. 172)

References to Christianity illustrates that restrictive white clauses extended beyond race to religious homogeneity.

Sigma Chi, founded in 1855 at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, possessed one of

the earliest documented white clauses added to a public fraternity constitution in 1870 (Sigma Chi Fraternity, n.d.). The clause was contested almost from inception by a vocal minority within the organization, and the Omicron Omicron Chapter from the University of Chicago gave up their national charter in protest of the discriminatory policy shortly after the appearance of the clause in 1870 (Sigma Chi Fraternity, n.d.). The clause nonetheless remained in place for almost a century.

Delta Chi was founded in 1890 at Cornell University by pre-law students. Though the organization had a de facto white clause since inception, it officially added its white clause in 1922 (Delta Chi Fraternity, n.d.a). The white clause was added as part of a larger fraternity debate over restricting the organization’s membership to pre-law students or opening up the fraternity to all collegians. Due to low membership in the early 1900s, the decision was made in 1922 to open membership to all (white) students regardless of major (Delta Chi Fraternity, n.d.a).

Removal of White Clauses

There was always opposition to white clauses. In the 1950s that opposition was given national attention, and fraternity headquarters staff could not remain ambivalent once universities began demanding that fraternities remove their restrictive clauses or lose campus recognition (Syrett, 2009). In the 1950s several universities, supported by the U.S. Supreme Court, took issue with fraternity racial segregation including the University of Connecticut in 1954, the State University of New York in 1958, and the University of Minnesota in 1961 (Jewish News Archive, 1961; Lee, 1955; Syrett, 2009). These university stances and court decisions helped shift public perception against fraternity racial discrimination, pushing organizations to integrate, even before passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Tobenson & Parks, 2009).

Sigma Chi Removal

The idea of removing the Sigma Chi white clause came up at a fraternity business meeting in 1948 (Hutchens, 1991). More than a decade later the fraternity removed the white clause in 1961, “though this single word was deleted from the legislation, other procedures were put in place continuing the prevention of initiating non-white men” (Sigma Chi Fraternity, n.d., p. 1). These obstructionist procedures were tested in 1965 when the Stanford University Sigma Chi chapter pledged a Black student, Kenneth M. Washington, resulting in the chapter’s charter being suspended by national headquarters (Syrett, 2009; Tobenson & Parks, 2009). Stanford administrators intervened, and the case became national news with the U.S. Commission of Education stating that not pledging the Black student was a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Tobenson & Parks, 2009). However, Sigma Chi was able to avoid compliance through a membership clause which stated that members must be “socially acceptable” (Tobenson & Parks, 2009, p. 249). This same pattern played out at Brown and Yale in 1965, at Stanford in 1966, and at Davidson and the University of North Carolina in 1967, each time with Sigma Chi headquarters evoking the “socially acceptable” clause to avoid initiating the men of color despite the earlier removal of the white clause (Tobenson & Parks, 2009).

Sigma Chi further controlled membership based on race by requiring chapters to submit pictures of all men who were given bids (Syrett, 2009). “They had made it known to all their chapters that while discrimination might not be codified, nonwhites would never meet with the approval of the committee” (Syrett, 2009, p. 255). Again, opposition to this misleading incongruence existed, with some members pushing for integration, “Rather than trying to ‘sneak one by’ universities and other critics by removing one word and replacing it with

less actionable wording” (Marquard, 2003, p. 19). By late 1969, “it seemed that every other major fraternity had changed restrictive rules... most allowed their chapters to initiate African-American and other minority students. Sigma Chi was the only holdout” (Hutchens, 1991, p. 8). After much debate within the organization through the 1960s, in 1970 the fraternity decided to stop collecting demographic information on new members, essentially avoiding the race issue and passively allowing men of color into the organization (Hutchens, 1991). That next year, 1971, the first Black member, Michael A. Sims, was initiated into the Gamma Pi Chapter at the University of Rochester (Sigma Chi Fraternity, n.d.).

Delta Chi Removal

The only mention of Delta Chi’s white clause in publically available documents is a parenthetical reference stating that the white clause was removed in 1954 on a webpage examining the decision to open Delta Chi membership to non-lawyers (Delta Chi Fraternity, n.d.a). Through reviewing meeting minutes from the 1954 Delta Chi convention, it is clear the removal of the white clause was contentious and framed in a north vs. south manner (Ellis, 1954). A fraternity delegate from Illinois, Bruce Bower, asserted:

There is talk here about integrity, et cetera, however a lot of us feel that if we strike out our ‘white clause’ altogether and...if it so happened that a Negro was pledged in one of the Fraternities in the North, it would harm...It would be very harmful to Southern Chapters in the South, not that they’d get kicked off campus, but the Southern boys would be hesitant to join Delta Chi down South. (Ellis, 1954, p. 453)

Therefore the debate over the white clause was substantial, in large part due to Delta Chi’s intentional efforts in the middle of the

20th century to establish more chapters in the southern U.S.

The actual amendment removing the white clause, appears as a passive and perhaps unanticipated alteration, as the meeting minutes show the word “white” merely crossed out in the meetings transcripts (see Appendix A) (Ellis, 1954). The Delta Chi committee contemplating the issue recommended removing the clause to assist in fraternity expansion, “...the aforementioned clause must be eliminated...[because] some of our Chapters are now threatened with expulsion from their campuses by this segregation method (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan State)...This problem seriously hinders expansion moves of the fraternity toward major universities and colleges” (Ellis, 1954, p. 418-419). The clause was therefore removed after considerable debate spanning two days at the 1954 convention.

In 1961 at the University of Iowa, Delta Chi offered fraternity membership to an African American student, Andrew J. Hankins (New York Times, 1961). The Delta Chi national office, despite the fact that a white clause no longer existed, told the University of Iowa chapter to withdraw the bid (Tobenson & Parks, 2009). Despite the removal of the clause, it was a decade before the first man of color was initiated. When asked about the first man of color in Delta Chi, Executive Director Galbreth stated that the organization does not keep track of race, that they are unaware of who their first member of color is, and it was suggested that looking through the Delta Chi Quarterly magazine’s pictures provided the best method of attempting to find this information (R. Galbreth, personal communication, April 9, 2012). Research subsequently revealed that the first man of color in Delta Chi to appear in the Quarterly appears to be Paul Lin (see Appendix B) from the University of California at Berkeley (UC-Berkeley)/Abracadabra chapter, a finding was later confirmed from an interview with Mr. Lin (Buchanan, 1963). Abracadabra was initially

a local fraternity which later merged with, and become a member chapter of the national Delta Chi fraternity; therefore at times both chapter names are used in this paper to refer to the organization at UC-Berkeley.

The topic of HWFs, and a specific analysis of white clauses is important because fraternities often have a substantial impact on the historical legacy of institutions, intergroup relations, and psychological perceptions which all affect the campus climate related to diversity and inclusion (Park, 2008; Tobenson & Parks, 2009). For decades the homogeneity of HWFs has been condemned, and Lee (1955) called this homogeneity Aryanism, which represents a basic threat to U.S. democracy. He asserted that if, “social fraternities will rid themselves of this disastrous theory and practice [Aryanism], they can contribute greatly to the development of democratic leadership” (Lee, 1955, p. ix). Yet it has been found that HWFs currently contain members who are less conscious of social injustice and less culturally aware than unaffiliated white students (Hughey, 2009). This racial ignorance often goes unchallenged by educators in higher education as many avoid the topic of exclusivity in HWFs altogether or take more Draconian measures, such as attempting to or actually banning fraternity systems entirely (Park, 2008; Tobenson & Parks, 2009). Such sweeping stances ignore the virtually unlimited positive potential HWFs can and do have on individual members, college campuses, and larger society.

Race and the U.S. fraternity system is an understudied area in higher education, surprising given the long history and prominence of fraternities (Hughey, 2009; Park, 2008). Not much is known about, “the day-to-day encounters that shape student perceptions of the role of race in the Greek system” (Park, 2008, p. 104). Therefore this study aims to help expand the body of knowledge related to race and HWFs.

Theoretical Framework-Critical Race

Theory

The removal of white clauses from fraternity policies was not intrinsically motivated in the spirit of Civil Rights or racially progressive politics. Critical Race Theory (CRT) offers a lens through which to view the removal of Sigma Chi and Delta Chi's white clauses, which reveals a more selfish motivation. CRT was derived during the mid-1970s by legal scholars as a response to Critical Legal Studies failing to adequately address the effects of race and racism in U.S. jurisprudence (Bell, 1987; DeCuir & Dixon, 2004). The critical race movement chiefly began to emerge in response to a failure to adequately address race, racism, privilege, and power in legal scholarship as well as other academic disciplines (Delgado, 1987).

CRT has several tenants, including the permanence of racism, whiteness as property, and the tenant most relevant to this discussion, the critique of liberalism (Crenshaw, 1988). Within the CRT tenant of critiquing liberalism is the concept of interest convergence, which asserts that gains in racial equity are advanced only when it benefits white people (Bell, 1980, 2004). These gains, such as the integration of HWFs, are tolerated by white people only if it does not cause a major disruption to the status quo which privileges white people as a group (Castagno & Lee, 2007; DeCuir & Dixon, 2004). Park (2008) found that most studies about race and HWFs do not focus on cross-racial interactions or outcomes, and even fewer use CRT as a lens of analysis, highlighting the importance of this study. With this lens of analysis a deeper exploration of the removal of Sigma Chi and Delta Chi's white clauses follows.

Sigma Chi White Clause Removal

As established earlier, pressure by colleges and universities on HWFs to integrate had a substantial influence on the removal of white clauses in Sigma Chi and other fraternities

(Jewish News Archive, 1961). Also, Sigma Chi alumni sent dozens of letters to fraternity headquarters in the 1960s pleading with the fraternity to formally integrate (Hutchens, 1991). Finally, some astute Sigma Chi delegates realized as early as 1959 that de jour or de facto white clauses may leave the fraternity in a vulnerable place legally. A Grand Chapter Delegate remarked, "We are like a guinea pig sitting in a fish bowl with the word 'white' in the Constitution. No lawyer, no matter how skillful, can defend it, and no judge, even a Southern judge, will sustain it" (Marquard, 2003, p. 20). These forces, the risk of banishment by universities, the risk of losing alumni support, and the risk of legal susceptibility converged to make it in the best interest of Sigma Chi to remove their explicit white clause for solvency and survival.

Delta Chi White Clause Removal

Pressure from alumni was also a factor in Delta Chi's decision to formally remove their white clause in 1954. However, at this time the national hostility toward integration coupled with few legal victories up to that point for Civil Rights likely made fear of legal repercussions associated with the white clause largely moot. The desire to maintain the status quo is clearly seen in the 1954 annual convention meeting transcripts, with several fraternity delegates pointing out that the NIC had not taken a stand on the issue (Ellis, 1954). The conference chairman, Mr. White, shared that, "Many fraternities in recent years have considered this question. Many have refused to take any action whatsoever. A few fraternities have taken positive action. Some have done the things we are considering here" (Ellis, 1954, p. 455). After prolonged debate, "The Committee on Constitution and By-Laws, after careful and prolonged consideration of all arguments pro and con has concluded that in the best interests of the Delta Chi Fraternity that the so-called

'white clause' of the constitution be eliminated" (Ellis, 1954, p. 416). After a majority vote, the de jour white clause was removed by Delta Chi in 1954.

However, careful analysis of the convention meeting transcripts using CRT, and interest convergence specifically, reveal a less altruistic covert solution to the "white clause problem." Chairman White explained that:

Informal polls [reveal that] many fraternities have never had such a statement in their constitution or their ritual and yet observe that practice very religiously, and indeed one of the most prominent fraternities recently has severely disciplined a chapter, expelled it, because of an action specifically of initiating a Negro, although it was not in either their constitution or their ritual, but it was their accepted practice. (Ellis, 1954, p. 454-455)

An idea proposed by delegate Craig Ritchie from Kentucky became popular:

I would suggest a straw vote if you think it is necessary or would do any good, if we could form a gentlemen's agreement, not put it in the Ritual and take it out of the Constitution, but have a gentlemen's agreement and a gentlemen's word is as good as his bond, and we are all gentlemen, I am sure of it. A gentlemen's agreement to the effect we would not pledge anybody (laughter), of any other race. (Ellis, 1954, p. unknown)

It is unclear from the meeting transcripts if there was an actual vote on this "gentlemen's agreement," however shortly after this suggestion the committee voted to remove the white clause from their constitution and the meeting concluded (Ellis, 1954). Given that a man of color was not officially initiated into the fraternity for at least another six years, it is a strong possibility that the clever fraternity men found a way for their interests, maintaining racial homogeneity, to converge with their

other interests, a public image of integration. Informed by the above literature review and archival research, data gleaned from qualitative interviews with Delta Chi and Sigma Chi men around the time of their organizations initiating the first men of color are presented below, guided by the theoretical framework of CRT.

INTERVIEW METHODS

After identifying the first members of color in Sigma Chi and Delta Chi, participants were recruited for involvement in this phenomenological study using several different strategies. The primary recruitment strategy was searching public websites for fraternity alumni groups, subsequently contacting the men listed, introducing the study, and soliciting contact information for fraternity brothers who were in their chapters at the time chapters initiated the first men of color. E-mail was used as the primary method of initial contact, and approximately 80 e-mails were sent. In response to the e-mails, seven men responded, and interviews were set up with these participants. Utilizing snowball sampling, these men helped the researcher secure another two participants. The first Delta Chi man of color, Paul Lin, quickly responded and enthusiastically participated in the research project. The first Sigma Chi man of color, Michael Sims, did not respond to several e-mails, phone calls, and voice-mails. Audio-taped semi-structured phone interviews took place utilizing an eight question interview protocol (Padgett, 2012), with interviews lasting from 20-50 minutes in length. Questions included, *What role, if any, did your race and the racial makeup of the current fraternity members play in your decision to join the fraternity? And, How would you summarize the conversations about race within your fraternity at the time you joined?* Organic follow-up questions and probes were utilized as needed to facilitate interview depth and to clarify and contextualize comments (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Participants

The eight participants ranged in age from 64-78. Except for one participant, Paul Lin, all participants identified as white/Caucasian. All of the men graduated from their undergraduate institution, and while not solicited, most men shared their religious affiliations which

were predominantly Protestant with one man identifying as Catholic. Two men requested that pseudonyms be used in data reporting and the other seven men consented to use of their real names. Additional demographic information is contained in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Participant Demographics

First Name	Fraternity	Chapter	Date Initiated
Robert	Sigma Chi	University of Rochester	1961
Ed	Sigma Chi	University of Rochester	1964
Mark	Sigma Chi	University of Rochester	1968
Pete	Sigma Chi	University of Rochester	1968
Paul	Delta Chi	University of California-Berkeley	1960
Michael*	Delta Chi	University of California-Berkeley	1957
Ralph	Delta Chi	University of California-Berkeley	1958
Jim	Delta Chi	University of California-Berkeley	1961

*pseudonym

Analysis

Interviews were transcribed and coded using Atlas.ti software. Each participant was provided a copy of his transcript for review which served as a member check of the data (Creswell, 1998). The data were coded using phenomenological methods including data-driven first level inductive open coding procedures (Boyatzis, 1998; Creswell, 1998) with a focus on horizontalization (Moustaka, 1994) with the researcher being careful to bracket individual biases or experience (Creswell, 1998). Codes were then collapsed into thematic headings or clusters of meaning, which guide the presentation of data below (Moustaka, 1994; Saldaña, 2012). The final analytic write-up was guided theoretically by CRT (Bell, 1980; Crenshaw, 1988; DeCuir & Dixon, 2004).

Author Positionality

Prior to the presentation of results and analysis, my positionality and identities are

important to note to help contextualize the research. I am interested in this topic because I am a member of a HWF, Delta Chi, and when joining the organization I was naively unaware of our white clause. I believe that HWFs are a site for incredible opportunity and have great responsibility to be national leaders for social justice reform in higher education and society writ large. In order to be change agents those of us in HWFs need to document our historical inventory, including legacies of racial discrimination. Finally, I must acknowledge that my whiteness and the decision to use CRT as the guiding theoretical framework for this research cause me trepidation. CRT was developed by scholars of color to critique the normality of whiteness in law, and eventually in education. However, over time white scholars have sometimes appropriated and/or co-opted the intellectual efforts of CRT and the scholars of color who utilize the framework. I use CRT to provide structure and grounding

for this research and analysis because it is the best framework available for understanding the complexities of racism and achieving the social justice principles to which I strive.

RESULTS

Data analysis revealed four macro themes under which salient codes are described below. First, participants did not enter college intending to join a historically white, or any, fraternity. Second, participants indicated that their race, or the race of other fraternity members, did not play a role in the selection of their fraternity. Third, individual campus and chapter experiences with race were contextualized by larger organizational, political, and social events and politics. Fourth, racially integrating Sigma Chi and Delta Chi was seen by members at the time as the right thing to do. A final heading in this section presents data from the interview with the first man of color in the Delta Chi fraternity, Paul Lin, separated to assist readers in identifying similarities and differences in his data from the other white participants in the study.

Theme One: Lack of Intentionally in Joining Fraternity

All of the participants indicated that they did not specifically enter college with intentions of joining any fraternity. Their decisions to join were typically motivated by friendships they made on campus or more pragmatic reasons such as the attractiveness of a fraternity house or filling residential needs. Participants reflected an awareness of the negative stereotypes relating to fraternities and stated that their specific organization differed from the stereotype. Pete, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester, indicates that his chapter of Sigma Chi was attractive because it “was not like most other Sigma Chi fraternities in the country, we had a 4.0.” Participants were drawn to the opportunity to develop deeper

friendships in the fraternity, but not necessarily “brotherhood.” Regardless of the motivations, all participants made the decision to join their respective organizations yet each participant indicates that race was not a factor in their decision, a theme further explored below.

Theme Two: Race as a Non-factor

All participants, including Paul Lin from Delta Chi, shared that their race and the racial homogeneity of the chapter members at the time did not have an impact on their decision to join their chapter. This espoused value of color blindness was salient in every interview, articulated by Ralph, a Delta Chi from the University of California (UC)-Berkeley, “I was not aware that there was any race bias or preference at the time.” Despite values of color blindness, Ed, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester, notes some intentionality in terms of desiring a broadly defined diverse chapter, “I was looking for a very diverse group of people, you know, not a jock house or nerd house, and I found it there.” Several members indicated that the racial homogeneity of their fraternity was a reflection of the lack of racial diversity on campus at the time. Comments also frequently reflect the perpetuation of a Black-white binary when discussing race common among participants. This Black-white binary is seen in a comment from Pete, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester, who initially speaks of race, and then narrows to only Black students:

Race did not play any role at all, at least in my case. There were just not that many Blacks on campus. In 1970 or 1971 Rochester opened up admissions and took a lot of students who could not make grades.

The implication is that when admissions standards were lowered, campuses, and subsequently historically white fraternities, diversified racially.

Despite initial statements of color blindness, some members did share examples of when

race was pointed out as an issue, despite their lack of awareness. “We did have a Black speaker come into the chapter...who...talked about the problems that a lot of us did not really realize were happening. I know some of the people of the fraternity said, ‘it is really like that?’” (Michael, Delta Chi, UC-Berkeley). Similar to the initial lack of awareness about race, most fraternity members were also unaware at the time of joining their fraternities of the existence of white clauses restricting membership to white men.

Race and White clauses. The topic of a clause restricting membership to white men was the primary focus of the interviews, and participants had strong opinions about these clauses. Ralph, a Delta Chi from UC-Berkeley shared what many other participants voiced, “I was not aware, and I don’t think I believed it. If they had a clause it would be ignored.” Other participants shared learning of the white clauses after they joined their organizations. Despite the general lack of awareness, Robert, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester shares that he was very aware of the white clause at the time he joined the fraternity, “It was well publicized in the campus newspaper, I believe the house was even being picketed during pledging.” A frequently appearing code under the theme of color blindness for participants was the role their service in the U.S. military played in their color blind values. Several participants shared that the military was more progressive than the rest of the country related to race issues, and that when they enrolled in college after serving in the military they were surprised that society had not advanced toward a color blind equality they observed in the military.

Religion and the White clause. An issue that came up in most interviews was that religious integration of Delta Chi and Sigma Chi occurred before racial integration. Most participants indicated being aware that white clauses restricted not only race, but also limited

membership to Protestant men. However the religious component of the clauses was harder to enforce, and several participants indicated knowing Jewish and Catholic men in their fraternity before men of color. Jim, a Delta Chi from UC-Berkeley shared, “It was part of the unspoken white clause at the time, not taking Jewish members, but our particular chapter did not seem to be too concerned about it.” Robert, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester, presented an even more malleable understanding of the clause, “We were aware that nationals might not be real thrilled with Jewish members but we were not concerned about it at all.” The religious integration was not presented by participants as intentional, but as a reflection of mere demographics, as Mark, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester indicates:

U of R had a very heavy Jewish presence, and of course in the 60s it was hard to figure out who was disdained more, particularly down south, Jews or Blacks. But I never paid much attention, it was irrelevant...I did learn how to eat lox and bagels though.

While views of color blindness were apparent in each interview, participants did identify issues related to race and racism contextualized by larger social issues occurring at the time.

Theme Three: Organizational, Political, and Social Politics

Most participants indicated their frustration with both fraternity national staff, and also the local university administrators as they struggled to integrate their fraternity chapters. While some participants indicated that alumni were a barrier to racial integration, others spoke about the important role alumni played in pushing an integration agenda. “We had local support from alumni who knew what was going on and supported us. One really rich guy in particular, I don’t remember his name. It is very important

to have the local alumni support” (Pete, Sigma Chi, University of Rochester). Mark further paints a dramatic picture of the conflict with nationals:

We got into it pretty hard with nationals, we went head to head. I find this irritating, 40 years later, but we were going head to head with nationals, and we were thinking about starting a new chapter, Sigma Nu, and really coming down to a show-down (Sigma Chi, University of Rochester)

Perhaps due to these challenges over racial integration, most participants indicated feeling disconnected to their fraternities nationally, “I do not have deep love for Sigma Chi, but I respect and appreciate the institution and what it did for me” (Mark, Sigma Chi, University of Rochester). Additionally, no men spoke of allies on campus in terms of university administrators as assisting with integration efforts. Often, university administrators were seen as putting undue pressure on fraternities which were struggling internally. Mark further noted that the university officials, “made our lives very difficult. They piled it on and made it harder for us to negotiate with nationals.”

The most tangible way national fraternities wielded influence to restrict integration was through the unspoken process both Delta Chi and Sigma Chi implemented following official retraction of white clauses of reviewing each individual membership bid via photograph. Mark, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester explained, “I don’t recall the exact details, but what you call the white clause was really a socially acceptable clause, they required photos of our brothers at nationals.” This process was commonly referred to as the “black ball” system. “Sigma Chi had a white clause in its constitution, they got rid of it in 1966 I think, but they replaced it with an under the table black ball system” (Pete, Sigma Chi, University of Rochester).

Ed, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester demonstrates the difference between

de jour and de facto discrimination in his fraternity, “So the discrimination, or subtle discrimination, was still going on for some time even after it was supposedly ended.” In addition to campus and national struggles related to integration, a national climate pitting north vs. south was described by most participants. Men described Delta Chi and Sigma Chi chapters pushing for integration being located in the north as not coincidental. Robert, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester, shared:

I had been elected president of our fraternity, and I went to a workshop at the University of Tennessee. I remember some alumni standing up and saying, using the term Negro, that was the politically correct term at the time, that no clause did not mean they had to be brothers with any Negroes.

Mark, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester, voiced similar north v. south issues, referencing the Ku Klux Klan, “Sigma Chi was an old line, rooted in the deep south, fraternity, which I did not appreciate until I was there. You know, guys wearing white hooded robes down south.” Despite the local, regional, and national challenges, participants all shared that they saw integration as the right thing to do, despite forceful opinions to the contrary.

Theme Four: The Right Thing to Do

None of the participants identified as activists, nor was there any intentionality present in their decision making around pushing their fraternities to racially integrate. All participants indicated that the men of color, Mike in Sigma Chi and Paul at Delta Chi, were good guys and therefore having them as fraternity brothers was the right thing to do. Pete, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester, modestly declared that, “It was just simply a matter of justice.” This concept, that the participants liked the men of color and had intrinsic values of fairness, drove their actions to integrate. “We just thought that ending discrimination was the right thing to do.

We did not think it was a big deal. We were not looking to make a statement, Michael was a good guy, and we just did it” (Pete, Sigma Chi, University of Rochester). Despite opposition, even internal to the fraternity, participants described entrenched feelings that they were on the right side of history, as reflected by Mark, a Sigma Chi from the University of Rochester:

They threatened to black ball us over Mike, we were in a conflict to see if the other guy would blink. It was really a very interesting and intense struggle. At the time, you know, we were like, we gotta do this. I look back on the bothers of the house who questioned the decision. But this was our pledge. We like this guy. This is our stand... we were ready to throw down over this issue.

Jim, a Delta Chi from UC-Berkeley concisely shared his feelings, “They removed the white clause, but it was an understanding that we should still adhere to it. Kind of bullshit. We ignored it.” Despite the overall minimization of struggles for integration, one participant shared some awareness of the much larger implications of their efforts, “We were not just rushing a Black and fighting Sigma Chi, we were also fighting the war, all of it” (Pete, Sigma Chi, University of Rochester). One salient theme was sincere pride that they were a part of integrating their fraternity, with one participant even asking if the researcher would help him create a documentary encapsulating the struggle. The presentation of data now concludes with specific attention paid to the comments of Paul, the first man of color in the Delta Chi Fraternity.

Paul's Experience

Paul Lin grew up in Berkeley, California and is the son of a professor. He was born in China and moved to the U.S. when he was five, and was the valedictorian of his high school. He initially sought out being a member of a fraternity, as Paul did not want to live at

home, and living in a fraternity house in close proximity to classes was attractive. Paul was not initially aware of the trailblazing nature of his fraternity involvement. “I went through the whole rush process...of a number of fraternities. Delta Chi was actually the only one that gave me an offer, and I accepted it. I did not know at the time that it was a big deal.” Paul did later learn of the historical significance of his initiation, something he has become proud to discuss.

At the time of his initiation, Paul indicated that his race, and the exclusively white fraternity he was joining, seemed irrelevant. “At that time, it (race) played almost no part. I had no idea there was any prejudice or discrimination.” Paul shared that he slowly became more aware that his race did have an impact on his experience in Delta Chi. He recalls a social event in his first year on campus with women from Mills College, in which his fraternity brothers attempted to set him up with a Chinese woman at the dance. “So I danced with her. But then I also started dancing with other Caucasian girls. I found out after that this girl was offended I did not spend the entire evening with her.” This subtle recognition of his race, and therefore his difference from his fraternity brothers, caught Paul off-guard. Also surprising to Paul was his retroactive learning of the contentious nature of his initiation:

I found out after that Abracadabra wanted to pledge me but it only took one black ball, and it turned out one member of Abracadabra black balled me, it turned out that when Abracadabra and Delta Chi merged, this guy quit, and then I fit in with the rest of the fraternity, because that guy quit...It was at least a semester until I found out all of this stuff.

Paul acknowledges that within Delta Chi, at Berkeley, and also nationally, the politics of race were volatile beyond his awareness at the time, “These days when I read the history I think geez, was that all going on? I was not an activist in any

sense. I went to school, and got good grades.” This strategy of being studious was productive for Paul, and he recalls his undergraduate experience fondly, albeit academically consuming.

Despite his consuming academic focus, Paul does have a salient memory when his race and his role in Delta Chi history were acknowledged by the national organization:

After a year we had a visit from a guy from nationals, a leader, or president or something, and he came over and congratulated me. I did not know why. He never said you were the first, but I figured it out. I may have been the first on the entire campus.

This visit from a national Delta Chi representative confirmed for Paul that regardless of his ignorance of the situation, his initiation into the fraternity represents a historic moment in the history of a fraternity dating back to 1890. Paul indicated that recently administrators at UC-Berkeley contacted him about writing a biography on him, though it never came to fruition. Paul shared that he was surprised when, “About a year ago I went and visited the Abracadabra chapter and talked about what it was like being the first, and they had no idea about the history.” The lack of acknowledgment of Paul’s role in the fraternity at the local and national level came as a surprise to Paul and his fraternity brothers. These findings, and other important implications, are presented below utilizing CRT as a frame for analysis.

LIMITATIONS

Several methodological limitations influence the qualitative data presented from participant interviews. First, while the data were member-checked, the use of only one coder does not allow for the presentation of inter-rater reliability scores which would add to validity. The sampling and data collection strategies are also limiting. Participants were cumbersome

to identify given poor membership records. Finally, phone interviews were necessary given the geographic spread of participants, however in-person interviews may have allowed for the collection of richer data.

DISCUSSION

Analyzed through a lens of CRT, and specifically the tenant of interest convergence, the motivations for HWFs to racially integrate reflect a combination of internal and external factors. Outside of the specific fraternities, a national evolution on the topic of race and integration in the middle of the twentieth century put great pressure on HWFs to integrate. This external influence may have forced otherwise reluctant fraternity alumni and staff to integrate, for failing to do so may have resulted in the abolition of chapters on many college campuses. However, interview data from this study simultaneously reveals an internal interest in integration on behalf of some alumni and chapter members, albeit from a color-blind perspective. Nonetheless, the effort of men to integrate their HWFs is laudable, and documenting this history has relevance for members of these organizations today who aspire toward social justice goals.

Interestingly, studies find that white students are less likely to participate in fraternity life at more racially diverse campuses, validating the assertion that racial exclusionism can breed more exclusionism (Chang & DeAngelo, 2002; Lee, 1955). Therefore predominantly white colleges and universities should be particularly aware of the potential negative impact HWFs can have if they are slow to embrace multiculturalism. Many fraternities reluctant to initiate people of color publically support diversity but through, “the rhetoric of ‘color blindness,’ and even politically correct buzzwords like ‘diversity’ and ‘multiculturalism,’ need to be recognized as discursive strategies of obscuration, hoodwinking the modern racial inequalities”

(Hughey, 2009, p. 238). This color-blindness, also readily apparent in interview participant transcripts, however well-intentioned, represents a regression of racial consciousness in the U.S. and functions to limit critical conversations on campus about the systemic and institutional nature of racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). Substantial work needs to be done by higher education administrators, fraternity alumni, and headquarters staff to counteract centuries of white privilege embedded in most HWFs organizational histories (Syrett, 2009).

Despite historical and structural challenges, phenomenal opportunity exists for HWFs to critically examine racist histories in an effort to learn and grow as organizations and to educate their members. Sigma Chi presents a model for this engagement through their direct confrontation of the history of their white clause in multiple venues. For example, they document specific examples of strategies their members can engage with to strive for racial justice in their 1991 magazine about diversity which centers the voices of several members of color, with specific sections about African American and Asian American men (Hutchens, 1991). They also include contributions from current members of their fraternity discussing diversity, including a white 20 year old member who shares that, "multiculturalism involves more than just not being racist; it is the continual attempt to learn from and develop a real appreciation for people and practices outside our own; not just for PR...but because other cultures honestly have important lessons." (Hutchens, 1991, p. 61). In Sigma Chi's 2003 magazine, which specifically addresses the history of their white clause, another white collegian challenges his brothers to avoid making "diversity a non-issue...but to actually be embraced by the fraternity" (Marquard, 2003, p. 27). This same edition highlights experiences of gay men, Jewish men, and men who explore their intersecting identities (Marquard, 2003). Interviews from this study revealed that men in

their HWFs at the time of racial integration did not see themselves as activists or change agents, and documenting and celebrating this history may make similar engagement by college students today, who similarly may not want to be activists, more likely.

Conversely, Delta Chi has been slow to address diversity, multiculturalism, or social justice directly, instead adopting a color blind approach to race. Delta Chi has an educational curriculum called the KEY Program chapters are encouraged, but not required, to adopt. One of the "areas for mastery" in the KEY program is "diverse perspectives," which encourages men to complete activities to secure mastery through; cultural diversity, positive diverse interactions, evaluation of different points of view, and Emotional Intelligence (Delta Chi Fraternity, n.d.b). In the absence of any other educational intervention, this educational option, lacking a critical perspective of understanding of social justice, leaves members open to have a fraternal experience void of any understanding of the history of racism in the organization or any encouragement to work for racial equity on campus and beyond. Delta Chi and other HWFs can look to Sigma Chi as an example of how to document and use racist histories and demonstrate a commitment to developing race-conscious collegians devoted to making chapters, campuses, and society more inclusive for all people.

CONCLUSION

Archival research informing a phenomenological study aimed at understanding the experiences of fraternity men at the time of integration is novel in higher education literature, and therefore offers an important contribution. The dual purpose of this research, first to document in the historical record the integration of two HWFs, and second to explore the experiences and context of men in the fraternity at the time of integration using CRT,

offers much fodder for reflection. The research presented here may be of unique interest to members of Delta Chi and Sigma Chi, but the larger fraternity and sorority community can use the findings to help motivate critical conversations about the history of race in individual organizations and the contemporary engagement, or lack therefore, of international organizations and chapters in social justice efforts. It is important to note that there is great variance between and within HWFs and from campus to campus. Some individual chapters of HWFs are very racially diverse, while others remain racially homogenous (Tobenson & Parks, 2009). Moreover, race is complex, and “casting racial significance in a binary between color blindness and explicit discrimination does a disservice to how we understand race” (Park, 2008, p. 128). Therefore, future research on the topic should examine race from a lens of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991).

Examining historical research presents an opportunity for educators to develop deeper understandings of race and racism in the U.S. and a critical analysis of primary sources helps illuminate some of the racial underpinnings which still have an impact on race in today’s fraternity communities. While primary document analysis must be historically contextualized, this should not excuse racism when it is uncovered. Similarly, stories of people who spoke out against racism from places of privilege, such as white fraternity men, are important to narrate to help weave together a more complex and nuanced narrative of race, racism, privilege, power, and oppression in U.S. white fraternal organizations. History is contested and subject to interpretation. It is therefore the aim of this research to challenge versions of history which may excuse or pardon racism in HWFs in the spirit of evolving consciousness and inspiring racial justice activism among members, like myself, of Historically White Fraternities.

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

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Appendix A

1954 Delta Chi Meeting Minutes

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fellow brethren, we have a partial report prepared at this time. Last night we met with the committee on Expansion and Discrimination and we have agreed to this more or less together. I feel that our committee has very little to do other than those things which are strictly of a constitutional nature.

of all. So we have a very short recommendation prepared to put on the floor at this time.

Expansion: I will read this recommendation:

Action: The Committee on Constitution and By-Laws, after careful and prolonged consideration of all arguments pro and con has concluded that in the best interests of the Delta Chi Fraternity that the so-called "white clause" of the constitution be eliminated and therefore unanimously recommends and moves that Article VI, Section 47 of the constitution be amended by eliminating the word "White" in Sub Sections (1) and (2) of said Section 47 of Article VI of the constitution.

CHAIRMAN WHITE: Would you read the amended article of the constitution, then as you have amended it?

MR. PHILLIP SPRINGER, Florida: "The following shall be eligible for membership in the Delta Chi Fraternity: (1) Any male white student registered in any school, college, or university having a chapter of the Fraternity; (2) Any male white member of the teaching or administrative staff of

THYRA D. ELLIS

Appendix B

1964 Delta Chi Quarterly



MADISON W. O'KELLEY, JR.
Alabama '64

Commerce School President; Scabbard and Blade (Military Honorary); Delta Sigma Phi (Commerce Honorary) Chancellor; Chi Alpha Phi (Statistics Honorary); Student Government Representative; Homecoming Parade Chairman; Dean's Advisory Council; Druids (Sophomore Honorary); I.F.C. Representative; Chapter "C", "E".



PAUL Y. LIN
Abroadabra (California) '64

Edward Kraft Award to outstanding Freshman (awarded to top one percent); Tower and Flame, Lower Division Honor Society; Upper Division Honor Society; Fraternity Scholastic Honor Society; Eta Kappa Nu; Tau Beta Pi; Cal Camp Counselor and Board member (Cal Camp is sponsored by the Associated Students for the benefit of underprivileged children); I.F.C. Representative; Chapter "A", "D", "C", "F"; House Manager, Scholarship Chairman, Intramural sports, Chairman of Social Activities, Rushing Committee.



DONALD H. SHAW, JR.
Arizona State '63

A.S.U. Agriculture Club; A.S.U. Social Board; Blue Key Carnival Booth Chairman; M.U. Birthday Party Steering Committee; I.F.P.C.; I.F.C. Representative; Greek Week Steering Committee; Intramural Volleyball, Football; Outstanding Pledge Award; Chapter "B", "F", House Manager, Rush Chairman.



WILLIAM T. WARNE, II
Hobart '63

Schola Cantorum President; St. John's Chapel Choir; Canterbury Club; Chapter "B", "F", Rush Chairman, Song Chairman, Pledge Counselor, Steward, Representative to Hobart College Charity Drive.



GLENN P. MORIN
Florida '63

Florida Union Forums Committee; I.F.C. Presidents Council, Rush Committee, Summer Steering Committee; Mortar and Pestle Society (branch of the American Pharmaceutical Association); Kappa Psi (Professional Pharmacy Fraternity) Vice-Regent, Secretary, Chaplain, Historian, member of National Executive Committee, delegate to National Convention; Chapter "A" (two terms), "E", Assistant Rush Chairman, Blood Drive Chairman, Scholarship Chairman, Chaplain.



DANIEL S. MILLS
Florida State '63

Chapter "A", "D", Pledge Counselor, Intramural Baseball.