

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR
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The Summer 2017 Issue has been on its way for some time now, and finally it is here! We just passed Banned Books Week in the United States. I always find this to be an interesting event as we mark periods within our nation's history where free exchange of ideas and the individuals who wrote those ideas were censored. I'd like to think we've come a long way from burning banned books in the town square. However, challenges to the stifling of innovation, new knowledge, a need for academic freedom, and controversy are in part what led to our modern day peer review system for research publications.

What better time than Banned Books Week for a refresher on the peer review process and what it means to scholars who regularly conduct research, write, and publish their work in peer reviewed outlets. First, a key hallmark of a true peer review process is that it is a masked process (this has historically been referred to as blind [sic] review) where neither the author nor the reviewers know the identity of one another. This masked process is intended to give authors a fair hand at having their work reviewed by a seemingly impartial slate of reviewers. The intent is to keep the focus on the writing and the research rather than the popularity, status, shortcomings, or even moral turpitude of the author(s). Masked peer review also serves to protect the reviewers from retribution for what might be perceived as offering a negative review to a colleague. It's not a perfect process, but it's one that those within academia tend to respect and hold in high esteem. Another key aspect of the publication process that goes hand in hand with peer review is the concept of journalistic autonomy. This idea refers to the position that the Editorial Board of a journal, including the Editor in Chief, Associate Editors, and Review Board Members, have the autonomy to decide on the content of a research journal. The process by which journalistic autonomy is played out in a research journal is through the peer review process. In other words, regardless of research content, regardless of tensions with authors or reviewers, regardless of an author's status or prestige, when a manuscript makes it through the masked peer review process it has been vetted and determined to be of quality fit for publication. Interference from entities outside of those individuals intimately involved in the peer review process constitutes censorship. These are processes that seem simple at face value, but can become complex. Luckily, there will be no burning of banned books in our town square this week!

I'm happy to report we have a full issue with five original research articles. Readers may notice four of the five articles deal with women's issues. First, we have Sylvia Mendez, Patty Witkowski, Amanda Allee, Bryan Christensen, and Colleen Stiles's article titled *Sorority Ritual Participation and Self Efficacy*. The authors used phenomenology to explore the relationships between sorority rituals and self-efficacy of the women who participated in rituals. Next, we have Roger Wessel and Molly Salisbury's article titled *Social Integration of Sorority Women Living in Residence Halls*. In their research they found that sorority women had positive community experiences and relationships through their involvement in both sororities and residing on campus, acknowledging the important impact of both of these college experiences. The third article in this issue is Sarah Cohen, Gentry McCreary, and Joshua Schutts's article titled *Conceptualization of Sisterhood within the Collegiate Sorority: An Exploration*. Their study extends previous research on brotherhood by delving into how sorority women conceptualize and experience sisterhood. Next, Jill Russett's article titled *Sorority Women, Drinking, and Context: The Influence of Environment on College Student Drinking*, adds to the literature on alcohol use among Greek-letter organization members by considering situational and contextual environmental

conditions related to drinking behaviors and the extent to which gender plays a role. The final article in this issue is titled *Living Memory: What it Portends When the Founders Still Live* and was written by Ari Stillman. Stillman's work contributes to the literature by investigating the "living history" of a young fraternal organization. His research explores organizational identity through the lens of living organization founders. Overall, this issue includes five original articles that offer new light on our collective understanding of sisterhood, brotherhood, and the college experiences that can shape student's outcomes.