BEHAVIORS VIEWED AS DEPLORABLE BY PEERS: A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO PROGRAMMING TO CURB UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS IN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES

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This article posits a different approach to social norm programming by presenting a targeted approach that centers attention on the degree to which members of a fraternity or sorority disdain excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, and homophobia rather than a focus on the frequency of such behaviors of their peers. An appendix to this article provides a survey instrument for fraternity/sorority advisors to gauge the social norms of their chapters in regards to a handful of specific illicit behaviors – homophobia, racism, sexual assault, drug use, and alcohol use. While social norms interventions have met with limited success historically with fraternity and sorority members, this instrument and its proposed implementation are designed to evade the pitfalls of past fraternity/sorority-focused programs.

Social fraternities, and to a lesser degree sororities, have historically been shown to be havens for numerous negative behaviors on American college campuses. Whether in regard to excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia, findings have repeatedly shown that a litany of negative behaviors can occur within the confines of single-sex social fraternities and sororities with affiliations with national/international organizations, creating social norms within these groups (Biddix, 2016). Defined sociologically as beliefs about expected or desired behaviors shared among a specific social population, social norms present as patterned behaviors for group members (Braxton, 2010; Gibbs, 1981; Rossi & Berk, 1985). Social norms provide a social group, such as a fraternity or sorority, with moral boundaries, and reflect the group's collective conscience (Braxton, 2010; Caboni et al., 2005; Durkheim, 1982; Merton, 1968). In highly insular and intimate social groups, the power and influence of social norms on college student behavior is significantly amplified, making problematic social norms in such groups crucial to confront and mitigate (Chickering, 1969; Milem, 1998; Perkins, 2002; Pettigrew, 1998). We elaborate further on each of the aforementioned student conduct issues within fraternities and sororities and then propose an instrument that can be used to audit the prevailing norms that proscribe behaviors regarding excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia espoused by members of chapters of fraternities and sororities. The information gained from such normative audits can be used in chapter-level behavioral interventions.

Student Conduct Issues

In the following paragraphs, we expound on the student conduct issues of excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia as they pertain to fraternities and sororities. We devote a sub-section to empirical findings about each of these conduct issues.

Alcohol Use

There is a long history of documentation of and research into the custom of excessive alcohol abuse within fraternities and sororities. Culturally, the image of the alcohol-centric

fraternity dates to Prohibition-era literature, and this reputation has gained steam in popular culture ever since (Hevel, 2014; Jakeman, 2012; Phillips & Heesacker, 1992). Corroborating this image, a 2006 survey of nearly 100 fraternity chapters found that 97% reported being drinkers, and 83% met the criteria for heavy drinking (Caudill et al., 2006; Wall, Hazen, Trockel, & Markwell, 2008). Moreover, evidence abounds that excessive alcohol use is higher among fraternity and sorority members than their unaffiliated peers (Abar & Maggs, 2010; Alva, 1998; Biddix, 2016; Larimer, Irvine, Kilmer & Marlatt, 1997; Sher, Bartholow, & Nanda, 2001). Excessive drinking has also been shown to be a more socially acceptable behavior within these organizations than outside of them, as it is often regarded as central to the fraternity/sorority socialization process (LaBrie, Huchting, Pedersen, Hummer, & Shelesky, 2007; Larimer et al., 1997; Sasso, 2015; Wall et al., 2008).

However, research findings consistently reveal that sorority members consume alcohol at less extreme rates than fraternity members, though at higher rates than non-affiliated students (Alva, 1998; LaBrie et al., 2007). One contributing factor to a lower rate of consumption is the difference in the social pressure experienced by women and men, as fraternity members have reported more social pressure to drink excessively in order feel socially accepted. In contrast, women report social pressure to not drink excessively because of the more severe perceived consequences for doing so than their male counterparts (Suls & Green, 2003). These same-sex drinking norms have been shown to be strong predictors of problematic drinking, and have led some researchers to recommend sex-specific, norms-based drinking prevention/intervention programs (Korcuska & Thombs, 2003; Lewis, 2007; Lewis & Neighbors, 2004; Russett, 2017).

Drug Use

The literature on drug use in fraternities and sororities is sparser than documentation and research examining alcohol use. However, consistent findings indicate more frequent and heavier drug use among fraternity and sorority members than among nonmembers. To elaborate, fraternity members have been found to be more likely to smoke marijuana than other students (Biddix, 2016; Collins & Liu, 2014), and fraternity/sorority members in general are more likely to partake in using cocaine, amphetamine, ecstasy, and hallucinogens than nonmembers (Biddix, 2016; McCabe, Teter, Boyd, Knight, & Wechsler, 2005). Additionally, fraternity members generally express less social disapproval of drug use than other college student populations (Caboni et al., 2005).

Sexual Assault

The issue of sexual assault on college campuses is pervasive, but nowhere else is it as notable as within fraternities and sororities. Fraternity men and sorority women are more likely than other students to be perpetrators and survivors of sexual assault, respectively (Bannon, Brosi, & Foubert, 2013). Fraternity members have been found to be three times as likely as non-members to commit sexual assault (Foubert, Tatum, & Godin, 2010; Loh, Gidycz, Lobo, & Luthra, 2005). Sorority members are 74% more likely to experience rape than other college women, and that number spikes to 300% for sorority members who live in sorority houses (Bannon et al., 2013). Studies indicate that the fraternity culture as a whole includes group norms that encourage and perpetuate sexual coercion against women, reinforcing rape culture, and promoting rape myths (Boswell & Spade, 1996; Foubert, Garner, & Thaxter, 2006; Martin & Hummer, 1989). Moreover, fraternity houses can create conditions where gang rape is both "feasible and probable" (Martin & Hummer, 1989, p. 458) as indicated by the estimate that over half of gang rapes on college campuses are committed by fraternity members (Foubert et al., 2006). However, a recent study indicated

that the general acceptance of rape myths is dropping among college students, including among fraternity and sorority members; in fact, sorority members are more likely to reject rape myths than non-sorority members (Navarro & Tewksbury, 2017). Should this trend continue, norm-based programs could be even more effective in the future as fewer chapter members hold negative beliefs.

Racism

Predominantly white fraternities and sororities are often regarded as environments where unchallenged negative racial attitudes thrive among members, and perpetuate through overtly exclusive recruiting practices (Grasgreen, 2013), racist party themes, and prejudiced behaviors (Morgan, Zimmerman, Terrell, & Marcotte, 2015). Overtly racist behaviors, such as chants featuring racist slurs, have also surfaced from predominantly white fraternities and sororities in recent years (Jaschik, 2014; Mendoza, 2018; Rivero, 2017; Whitford, 2018). Sororities have been notably criticized for reinforcing white standards of beauty, which contributes to a culture of racial exclusivity (Worthen, 2014). However, one study indicates that fraternity and sorority members do not differ from their unaffiliated peers on their development of intercultural competence, given that multicultural educational experiences have a positive outcome on sorority and fraternity leaders (Martin, Parker, Pascarella, & Blechschmidt, 2015).

Homophobia

Social fraternities are regarded as bastions of homophobic thought, given that they are single-sex organizations that have a reputation for upholding traditional gender roles and lauding heterosexual norms such as hetero-masculinity (Boswell & Spade, 1996; Hall & LaFrance, 2007; Hesp & Brooks, 2009; Kaloff & Cargill, 1991; Metzger, Williams, Chen, & Chartier, 2006; Trump & Wallace, 2006; Worthen, 2014). In particular, queer stereotypes and crass derogatory terms and actions have been found to be pervasive within fraternities (Hall & LaFrance, 2007; Rivero, 2007; Trump & Wallace, 2006; Whitford, 2018; Worthen 2014). Studies indicated that while sororities and fraternities do not have exclusionary clauses banning members of specific sexual orientations, most gay and lesbian chapter members conceal their sexual orientations from their peers, out of fear of social repercussions (Case, Hesp, & Eberly, 2005; Trump & Wallace, 2006). Interestingly, the handful of surveyed fraternity/sorority members who did come out as queer reported positive experiences in doing so, and subsequent alterations in the negative verbal behaviors of their peers (Trump & Wallace, 2006). Particularly in the case of fraternities, Trump and Wallace (2006) concluded that the use of gay slurs occurs as the result of ignorance regarding the effects of their language, rather than from deep-seated intolerance within the individuals.

Sororities have been shown to be more accepting of gay, lesbian, and bisexual peers than fraternities, given that sorority women have individually claimed to believe that "same-sex attraction is not inconsistent with sorority values (sic.)" (Neumann, Kretovics, & Roccoforte, 2013, p. 1). However, sororities are still regarded as highly heteronormative in their selective offers of membership, as they have been shown to seek stereotypically feminine members (Worthen, 2014). There is very little research to be found regarding fraternity/sorority acceptance of bisexual individuals, and even less on transgender individuals, which are both areas which direly require further exploration in order to assess potential prejudices (Worthen, 2014).

To sum up, excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assaults, racism and homophobia occur more frequently in fraternities and sororities than in other student groups. However, excessive alcohol use and homophobia tend to be less problematic in sororities than in fraternities. Given these particulars, we turn our attention to prevention and intervention programs designed

to deter excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assaults, racism, and homophobia among fraternities and sororities.

Prevention & Intervention Programs

Most prevention and intervention programs aimed at lessening any number of these behaviors (including punitive actions) on college campuses have met with disappointing success within the fraternity/sorority population, leading to numerous calls from researchers for new methods of programming (Alva, 1998; Ametrano, 1992; Collins & Liu, 2014; Hamm, 2016; Jakeman, 2012; Larimer et al., 1997; Martin & Hummer, 1989; Phillips & Heesacker, 1992; Russett, 2017; Sasso, 2015). Specifically, because of the social and peer-centric nature of fraternity and sorority behaviors, many researchers point to the potential of targeted interventions and education based on social norms (Alva, 1998; Baer, Stacy, & Larimer, 1991; Bannon et al., 2013; Collins & Liu, 2014; Gidycz, Orchowski, & Berkowitz, 2011; Larimer et al., 1997; Perkins, 2002; Sasso & Schwitzer, 2016; Sher et al., 2001; Suls & Green, 2003; Wall et al., 2008; Wechsler & Kuo, 2000), to create a new culture and environment in these organizations (Collins & Liu, 2014; Quintana, 2017; Zamudio-Suarez, 2017).

Social Norms Programming

As mentioned previously, social norms are defined as beliefs about expected or desired behaviors in a given situation shared among a specific social population, which present as patterned behaviors for members of said population (Braxton, 2010; Gibbs, 1981; Rossi & Berk, 1985). Social norms provide a social group with moral boundaries, and reflect the group's collective conscience (Braxton, 2010; Caboni et al., 2005; Durkheim, 1982; Mayhew et al., 2016; Merton, 1968). In highly insular and intimate social groups, such as fraternities and sororities, it is believed that the power and influence of social norms on college student behavior is significantly magnified (Chickering 1969; Milem, 1998; Perkins, 2002; Pettigrew, 1998). The confrontation and re-appraisal of in-group norms and customs constitutes a crucial step in effective prejudice reduction (Mayhew et al., 2016; Pettigrew, 1998).

Prevention programs using social norms often utilize the fact that individuals consistently overestimate the frequency and extent of negative behaviors of their peer groups and justify their own negative behaviors in turn (Baer et al., 1991; Borsari & Carey, 2001; Larimer et al., 1997; Lewis & Neighbors, 2004; Perkins, 2002). Such programs posit that confronting individuals with the real, misperceived norms of behavior of their peer group will lead to a reduction in their personal negative behaviors, out of a desire to fit in with their corrected view of their peer network norm (Stein, 2007; Wechsler & Kuo, 2000). While some poorly-targeted and ill-assessed norm-based programs have met criticism, particularly for their ineffectiveness at altering fraternity/sorority behaviors (Campo, Brossard, & Frazer, 2003; Carter & Kahnweiler, 2000; Keeling, 2000), other norms-based programs have shown noted success (Perkins, 2002). Many successful bystander intervention programs for preventing sexual assault include education about social norms, which have significantly decreased acceptance of rape myths among sorority members and shown a decrease in sexual aggression among male participants (Bannon et al., 2013; Banyard, Moynihan, & Crossman, 2009; Gidycz et al., 2011). Likewise, norms-based prevention programs have been effective at curbing eating disorders among college women (Sasso & Schwitzer, 2016). Still, only a small fraction of universities have implemented programs based on social norms (Wechsler & Kuo, 2000).

Two key themes emerged in the prior research related to social norms prevention/intervention programming and fraternities/sororities. First, more studies are required to test the efficacy of norm-based programs for curbing negative

behaviors in these populations. Second, better-targeted implementations are necessary to determine if norms-based programs can work within specific fraternity/sorority chapter populations.

A Different Approach to Social Norm Targeting

We address herein the second theme of prior research on the efficacy of social norms-based prevention and intervention programming for fraternities and sororities. We address this second theme by presenting a targeted approach that centers attention on the degree to which members of a fraternity or sorority disdain excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, and homophobia rather than a focus on the frequency of such behaviors of their peers. Put differently, the approach we advance focuses on the extent to which members of fraternities or sororities espouse norms that rebuke these negative behaviors. Behaviors viewed as highly inappropriate meet criteria for designation as a proscriptive norm based on Merton's (1968; 1973) definition of a norm as prescribed (promoted) and proscribed (banned) patterns of behavior. Centering attention on the proscriptive norms held by members of a fraternity or sorority provides a robust approach to the deterrence of these problematic behaviors. Deterrence of problematic behaviors more likely occurs because social norms provide a social group with moral boundaries by providing guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate student behavior and, in this case, the behavior of members of a fraternity or sorority (Braxton, 2010; Caboni et al., 2005; Merton, 1968). Norms denote behaviors important to most group members (Hackman, 1976). Moreover, enforcement of group norms, and by extension conformity to the norms by group members, occurs if adherence to the norms fosters the survival of the group (Feldman, 1984).

Consequently, the approach we assert entails an audit of the prevailing proscriptive norms regarding excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, and homophobia espoused by members of fraternities and sororities. Such an audit would provide fraternity/sorority professionals with a knowledge of the extent to which norms that disdain such negative student behaviors exists among members of the fraternity/sorority community at their college or university or for specific chapters. Accordingly, we recommend that fraternity/sorority professionals conduct such normative audits of the membership of all fraternity/sorority communities, or the membership of specific fraternities or sororities at their college or university. The choice to conduct audits of all fraternities or sororities or specific fraternities or sororities depends on the degree to which the student conduct issues occur across an entire fraternity/sorority system or within specific chapters.

The Normative Audit Instrument

In the Appendix to this article, we provide an instrument for fraternity/sorority professionals to conduct audits to determine the existence of norms that rebuke excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, and homophobia. This instrument uses empirically derived norms patterns for student behavior which provide empirical grounding for it.

Four empirically derived proscriptive normative patterns afford such empirical grounding (Caboni et al., 2005). Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, and Intrusive Substance Abuse constitute three empirically derived inviolable proscriptive norm patterns (Caboni et al., 2005). Inviolable norms denote behaviors that undergraduate college students view as warranting severe sanctions such as the student should be removed from the college or the student should be excluded from the group (e.g., class, organization, or peer group). Students also viewed Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance[1] as a normative orientation toward

behaviors befitting some level of rebuke but not the severity of actions suitable for inviolable norms (Caboni et al., 2005).

Put differently, students regarded this normative pattern as admonitory. All four of these norms directly relate to the student conduct issues of excessive alcohol use (Intrusive Substance Abuse), drug use (Intrusive Substance Abuse), sexual assault (Predatory Sexual Advances), racism (Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance) and homophobia (Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance and Homophobia). Each of the specific behaviors that comprise the proscriptive normative patterns of Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, and Intrusive Substance Abuse meet the criterion for designation as an inviolable norm, requiring the most severe consequences. Each of the specific behaviors that make up the normative pattern of Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance meet the criterion for designation as an admonitory norm.[2] Admonitory norms require a response but not one as severe as inviolable normative behaviors trigger.

Thus, each of these specific behaviors also justify designation as proscriptive norms. Caboni et al. (2005) report the twelve specific proscriptive norms that comprise one of the four normative patterns. They note that the normative pattern of Predatory Sexual Advances includes the proscribed behavior of a student rapes another person, a student date rapes another person, and a student sexually assaults another student. The normative array of Homophobia includes the proscribed behaviors of a student physically assaults someone of a different sexual orientation, and a student posts derogatory comments or materials on the door of a queer student (Caboni et al., 2005). The proscribed behaviors of a student drinks to excess and drives others, a student comes to class obviously high on drugs, a student urinates in public, and a student sells marijuana comprise the normative configuration of Intrusive Substance Abuse (Caboni et al., 2005). Caboni et al. (2005) indicate that the normative pattern of Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance consists of such rebuked behaviors as a student verbally abuses someone of a different sexual orientation, a student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different race, and a student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different sexual orientation.

Caboni et al. (2005) empirically derived the four normative patterns and their specific proscribed behaviors using a sample of 214 undergraduate students enrolled at a highly selective, residential, private research university. These norms emerged from the responses of the 214 students to "The College Student Behaviors Inventory." This instrument was designed to identify behaviors that meet criteria for designation as a norm. Proscriptive norms emerged from student responses to this instrument because this instrument consists of items negatively worded following Durkheim's (1951) contention that norms are best recognized when they are violated. Violations of norms provoke varying degrees of outrage or anger that signify its social significance (Durkheim, 1912/1995). Outrage or anger manifests itself in the responses students register about the negatively-worded behaviors of "The College Student Behaviors Inventory" by indicating the degree to which they viewed them as being inappropriate behaviors and the action that should be taken because of the behavior (Caboni et al., 2005).

An additional study offers empirical backing for the norms of Predatory Sexual Advances,

[1]Caboni, et al. (2005) named this norm Verbalized Racial/Homosexual Intolerance. We changed the name of this norm to Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance because homosexual is a dated and somewhat limited as it excludes sexual orientations such as pansexual and asexual behaviors, both of which may be considered "different" as described in several specific instrument items that comprise the norm. "Queer" is a more inclusive term.

[2]We refer readers to Caboni et al. (2005) for a more detailed description of the methodology and statistical procedures (including the factor analyses and Cronbach alpha for each normative pattern) used to derive these four norms as such a description lies outside the scope of this article.

Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, and Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance (Akin & Park, 2015) in a very different institutional setting than a highly selective research university. Akin and Park conducted their study in a rural community college, and yielded empirically identified norms very similar in their composition of the specific behaviors to those identified by Caboni et al. (2005). In the development of the normative audit instrument displayed in the Appendix, we use the previously delineated 12 specific behaviors that comprise each of the four empirically discerned normative patterns by Caboni et al. (2005) as the foundation for this instrument.

The normative audit instrument uses a five-point scale for students to register their degree of outrage or anger evoked by each of the twelve specific behaviors of this instrument. This five-point scale is as follows: (1) very inappropriate behavior, the student should be removed from the college; (2) very inappropriate behavior, the student should be excluded from the group (class, organization, or peer group); (3) inappropriate behavior, someone should talk to the student about the behavior and suggest change or improvement; (4) mildly inappropriate behavior, generally to be ignored; and (5) behavior which is neither appropriate nor inappropriate.[3]

A pilot test of the normative audit instrument exhibited in the Appendix has not been conducted. However, we assert that fraternity/sorority professionals can use the instrument with confidence for two reasons. First, the normative audit instrument was designed to identify specific behaviors that meet the criterion for designation as a norm. This criterion stems from Durkheim's (1951) assertion that norms are best recognized when they are violated. Accordingly, the specific behaviors of the normative audit instrument take a negatively worded form. Violations of norms provoke varying degrees of outrage or anger that signifies its social significance (Durkheim, 1912/1995). Outrage or anger manifest itself in the responses students convey about these negatively stated behaviors by indicating the degree to which they viewed them as being inappropriate behaviors and the action that should be taken because of the behaviors (Caboni et al., 2005). Studies used this approach to empirically identify specific highly rebuked behavior and the underlying proscriptive normative patterns for college and university presidents (Fleming, 2010), academic deans (Bray, 2010), faculty (Braxton & Bayer, 1999; Braxton, Proper, & Bayer, 2011), institutional advancement officers (Caboni, 2010), admissions and recruitment officers (Hodum & James, 2010), graduate teaching assistants (Hellend, 2010), and housing and residence life professionals (Hirschy, Wilson, & Braxton, 2015).

Another reason for use of the normative audit instrument without the results of a pilot test centers on the empirical backing for each of the twelve specific behaviors of the instrument as meeting the criterion for designation as a proscriptive norm. This empirical support stems from the research of Caboni et al., (2005) and Akin and Park (2015) in two different institutional settings. Put differently, the utility of the instrument to the work of fraternity/sorority professionals does not depend on the instrument as a totality, as fraternity/sorority professionals may choose to focus their attention on particular problematic behaviors pertaining to excessive alcohol use drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia. For example, if date rape constitutes a significant problem, the administration of the normative audit instrument enables fraternity/sorority life professionals to ascertain the degree of disdain members of fraternities and sororities view such a behavior.

[3]This five-point scale differs from the nine-point scale (1=very inappropriate to 9=very appropriate) used by Caboni et al. (2005) and Akin and Park (2015). We chose to use the five-point scale because of its use for consistency with other studies designed to empirically delineate proscriptive normative patterns for other constituents of colleges and universities (Fleming, 2010; Bray, 2010; Braxton & Bayer, 1999; Braxton et al., 2011; Caboni, 2010; Hodum & James, 2010); Hellend, 2010; and Hirschy, Wilson, & Braxton, 2015).

Administration of the Normative Audit

The development of normative profiles of the membership of all fraternities and sororities of the fraternity/sorority community, or the membership of specific fraternities or sororities at their college or university, constitutes the primary objective of the administration of the normative audit. We discuss the development of normative profiles in a subsequent section of this article.

The administration of the normative audit instrument to the membership of all fraternities and sororities permits the identification of specific behaviors of the four normative patterns that evoke levels of distain that warrant status as a violable norm. The decision by fraternity/sorority professionals to administer the normative audit instrument to the membership of specific fraternities or sororities at their college or university depends on the degree to which student conduct violations occur across an entire fraternity/sorority system or chapters of specific fraternities or sororities.

We recommend that the normative audit instrument be administered anonymously to the entire membership of the focal fraternities or sororities. We recommend the use of a web-based platform, such as SurveyMonkey, to assure respondents a degree of privacy while completing the instrument. If the normative audit instrument was administered during a chapter meeting, then privacy for respondents may be problematic. Moreover, the social desirability of responses to each of the behaviors that comprise each of the four norms might be more problematic given the group setting of a chapter meeting. For these reasons, we do not recommend the in-person administration of the instrument. Fraternity/sorority professionals may possess the needed technical skills to carry out the administration and computation of the level of disdain expressed for Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, and Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance. However, we recommend that fraternity and sorority life professionals partner with research units within the division of student affairs or the institution's institutional research office to share responsibility for these tasks. We make this recommendation to increase the response rate to the instrument as well as to enhance the veracity of the level of disdain fraternity and sorority members express for the behaviors that comprise the normative audit instrument.[4] Because of the level of suspicion with which some fraternity and sorority members may view their offices of fraternity/sorority life professionals, students might choose not to complete the normative audit instrument or to express spuriously high levels of disdain for the behaviors of this instrument to avoid reprisals against their chapter by either fraternity/sorority life professionals or by the administration of their college or university.

In addition to the above considerations, the administration of the normative audit instrument gives rise to several issues meriting attention. The first issue pertains to the timing of the administration of the normative audit instrument.[5] We recommend that fraternity and sorority life professionals use their professional judgment in consultation with student leaders to determine effective timing for administering the instrument (Blimling, 2011). For example, if all chapter members were invited to participate, scheduling the audit every two or three years would ensure that each student member would have at least one opportunity to participate, and the process may be more manageable to collect, analyze, and report the findings than an annual audit. Additionally, certain times of the year such as during mid-term examinations, final examination periods, and before and after vacations might lead to lower response rates.

Another strategy is to administer the instrument when higher levels of disdain for one or more of the four norms have a high probability

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of occurrence. This perspective resonates with Durkheim's (1951) assertion that norms are best recognized when they are violated. Moreover, norms emerge from the consequences of the behavior of others (Demsetz, 1967). Behaviors that result in harm might evoke high levels of disdain for such behaviors (Horne, 2001). Members of fraternities or sororities who either directly or indirectly experience the harm such behavior afflict on other students may express high levels of disdain for the specific behaviors that comprise the norms of Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, and Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance. Thus, the administration of the normative audit instrument could occur after an incident of excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, and homophobia within a specific fraternity or sorority or across an entire fraternity/sorority system. Alternately, the administration of the instrument could be scheduled during a semester when a large number of new members enter fraternities and sororities, or during a subsequent semester after new members have more interactions to learn what behaviors are acceptable and not acceptable in their chapters.

Another issue concerns individual chapters of fraternities or sororities that achieve a low response rate to the normative audit instrument by their members. A response rate of two thirds or 66.5% stand as an optimum for inclusion in the compilation of results. In his study of campus climates, Pace (1969) asserted that the college rather than the individual student constitutes the appropriate unit of analysis for the depiction of particular attributes of campus climates. If two thirds or more of individual students agree with a particular statement about the climate of their college or university, then that statement depicts an aspect of the college's climate (Pace, 1969). By extension, we posit the application of this optimum response rate to the normative audit instrument to the compilation of results for individual chapters as well as for the determination the existence of each of the four norms patterns and each of their specific behaviors as meeting the criterion for designation as a norm. The application of the two thirds threshold also permits the administration of the normative audit instrument to chapters of fraternities and sororities with a small numbers of members.

To reiterate, we present this rate as an optimum level of response given the contentions of Pace (1969). However, we fully realize that the attainment of a response rate of 66% or greater seldom occurs in the administration of surveys to undergraduate college students. When much lower response rates occur, the existence of a sufficient number of responses for statistical analyses becomes the primary criterion for the use of the results of the normative audit. Nevertheless, the organizational unit (e.g., research unit within the division of student affairs or the institution's institutional research office) charged with the administration of the instrument should work to achieve the highest response rate possible.

Development of Normative Profiles

The development of normative profiles entails the calculation of the level of disdain expressed for Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, and Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance. Such a computation summarizes an individual's level of disapproval for each specific behavior of these four patterns of behavior as indicated by their response to the five-point scale previously described divided by the total number of specific behaviors that comprises each of the four patterns of behavior.

Table 1 (on the next page) displays the specific behaviors that make-up each of norms of Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, and Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance. We derived these specific behaviors from the research of Caboni et al. (2005) and Akin and Park (2015).

Inviolable or admonitory norm status is

Table 1
The Four Norms and Their Specific Behaviors

Predatory Sexual Advances
a student rapes another person
a student date rapes another person
a student sexually assaults another
Homophobia
a student physically assaults someone of a different sexual orientation
a student posts derogatory comments or materials on the door of a homosexual student
Intrusive Substance Abuse
a student drinks to excess and drives others
a student comes to class obviously high on drugs
a student urinates in public
a student sells marijuana
Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance
a student verbally abuses someone of a different sexual orientation
a student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different race,
a student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different sexual orientation

Source: Caboni et al. (2005); Akin & Park (2015).

obtained using the means computed for each of these four patterns of behavior exhibit in Table 1. We posit the use of the mean values used by Fleming (2010), Bray (2010), Hodum and James (2010), Hellend (2010), Braxton and Bayer (1999), Braxton et al. (2011), and Hirschy et al. (2015) to allocate inviolable or admonitory norm status to both each of the four patterns of behavior as well as the specific behaviors that comprise each of these behavioral configurations. A mean value of 4.00 or higher warrants designation as an inviolable norm whereas a mean value of 3.00 to 3.99 defines a behavioral pattern as an admonitory norm.

Normative Profiles can be formed using the mean values, standard deviations, and inviolable or admonitory norm determination for Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, and Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance for each specific fraternity or sorority. In addition to means and standard deviations, Cronbach alpha estimates of internal consistency reliability should also be computed for each of these behavioral patterns. Such a normative profile could also include the mean values, standard deviations, and inviolable or admonitory norm designation for each of the 12 behaviors that comprise the four patterns of behavior. The institutional research office or the student affairs assessment unit that conducts the administration of the normative audit instrument should also develop these normative profiles.

Fraternity/sorority professionals can use these Normative Profiles to answer the following questions:

1. What is the average level of disdain members of fraternities and sororities within the fraternity/sorority community of a college or university espouse for Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia,

Intrusive Substance Abuse, and Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance?

2. What is the average level of disdain members of fraternities and sororities within the fraternity/sorority community of a college or university espouse for such behaviors as a student rapes another person, a student date rapes another person, a student sexually assaults another student, a student physically assaults someone of a different sexual orientation, a student posts derogatory comments or materials on the door of a queer student, student drinks to excess and drives others, a student comes to class obviously high on drugs, a student urinates in public, a student sells marijuana, a student verbally abuses someone of a different sexual orientation, a student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different race, and a student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different sexual orientation?
3. Do members of sororities differ from members of fraternities on their level of disdain for Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, and Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance?
4. Do specific chapters of fraternities or sororities have higher or lower levels of disdain for Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, and Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance?
5. Do specific chapters of fraternities or sororities have higher or lower levels of disdain for such behaviors as a student rapes another person, a student date rapes another person, a student sexually assaults another student, a student physically assaults someone of a different sexual orientation, a student posts derogatory comments or materials on the door of a queer student, student drinks to excess and drives others, a student comes to class obviously high on drugs, a student urinates in public, a student sells marijuana, a student verbally abuses someone of a different sexual orientation, a student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different race, and a student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different sexual orientation?

Uses of the Normative Profiles

Fraternity/sorority professionals can use Normative Profiles for each fraternity and sorority at their college or university to advise on institutional policies and practices and for consultations with specific chapters of fraternities or sororities. Moreover, a Normative Profile aggregated for the fraternity and sorority community of a college or university can also be compiled. The use of the Normative Profiles depends on answers to the above questions.

Institutional policies and practices. If fraternity/sorority campus-based professionals are held accountable for the actions of members of fraternities and sororities regarding current institutional policies and practices that exist to address excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia then they can explain the effectiveness of such policies and practices. To elaborate, the effectiveness of extant institutional policies and practices in reducing the occurrence of these behaviors by members of fraternities or sororities depends to some extent on the existence of norms espoused by members of fraternities and sororities that are supportive of such policies and practices. This assertion stems from Durkheim's (1951) contention that nonconformity is the normal human condition and that conformity is abnormal. Thus, norms are needed to assure conformity. In this case, norms supportive of institutional policies and practices are needed to assure adherence to them (Reiss, 1951).

If the normative profiles indicate that inviolable or admonitory norm status exists for Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, or Verbalized Racial/

Queer Intolerance, then some confidence in the efficacy of institutional policies and practices results. In contrast, if inviolable or admonitory norm status does not exist for any of these four proscribed behavior patterns then such policies and practices are likely to be ineffective in reducing the occurrences of targeted student behaviors such as excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia by members of fraternities or sororities.

The absence of supportive norms suggests that fraternity/sorority campus-based professionals should develop programs to encourage the development of inviolable or admonitory norms held by members of fraternities and sororities. We recommend that such programs develop activities that help program participants understand the harmful effects of excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia on the victims of such behaviors. Our recommendation stems from the perspective that norms emerge because of the behavior of others (Demsetz, 1967). Some behaviors might evoke approval because of benefits derived from the behavior. In contrast, other behaviors may result in harm and elicit disapproval (Horne, 2001). By extension, the development of inviolable or admonitory norms results from the awareness of the harm that results from such student behaviors as excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia.

The fraternity and sorority community. Portfolio advising models are becoming more common in fraternity and sorority life departments. This model has a staff member working with a council, but also advising a group of chapters from all councils. Portfolio advising enables larger campuses to support their chapters more directly, as well as providing staff with a more comprehensive focus on the entire fraternity and sorority community instead of a singular council. The norms audit results could inform the advising staff style in two ways:

a. Prioritizing the groups that need support – if the department staff cannot manage assigning all chapters in a portfolio, the norms data would allow them to identify groups that need the most support. Balancing the other things known about a group and context with these data would provide more advanced insight into how to make those decisions.
b. Improved coaching – The resources can be more specifically matched to the group based on the results of the normative audit. Instead of focusing on the general needs of a group, the resources can be tailored to match the chapter culture. For example, the norms data can help advisors pinpoint groups who may be more open to change or ready to receive a well-timed intervention.

The normative profiles created for each chapter can be taken in aggregate to understand the dynamics within a council and full community. This usage has a broad impact to the way that campus-based professionals do their daily work. Specifically, programmatic goals from learning outcomes can be adjusted to the campus culture so that professionals are neither over estimating or under estimating the readiness of their communities for change.

The normative profiles about the fraternity and sorority community specifically could help to address broader campus goals in a variety of ways. Alcohol and other drug educators frequently use norms for passive programming and marketing campaigns aimed at addressing student substance use. These data can help administrators target a known community with higher risk behaviors around alcohol and other drugs in a traditional norms campaign. Additionally, knowledge about the norms could help inform work done both proactively with diversity and inclusion as well as in response to bias incidents. For example, a fraternity and sorority life office could work with other departments supporting students of color or queer students to provide collaborative programs with groups who show a low tolerance

for discrimination. Alternatively, this might help to focus interventions on groups who have higher levels of tolerance for discriminatory practices.

Alumni advisors represent an important stakeholder group in working with fraternity and sorority communities. They tend to have a different, and sometimes unheard, perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of chapters, councils, and the community. Sharing the normative profiles both specific to their chapter and more broadly for the campus could help advance their buy-in to new or revised programs, approaches, and interventions with groups. This process could also help address the generational gap between advisors and students by painting a more realistic picture for the group they are working with now.

Individual chapters of fraternities and sororities. Fraternity/sorority professionals may choose to have consultations with the leadership of the chapters of specific fraternities or sororities in which problematic levels of excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia occur. Fraternity/sorority campus-based professionals can use the normative profiles developed for the focal chapter as a basis for their consultation. If the normative profiles for a focal chapter indicates that inviolable or admonitory norms prevail for Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, or Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance, then fraternity/sorority campus-based professionals can provide the leadership of the focal chapter with such information for them to use in conversations with their members who frequently violate these norms and place the chapter at risk for institutional action. In their conversations with frequent offenders, chapter leaders could use the normative profile to show such individuals that other members of their chapter disapprove of behaviors such as Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, or Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance or of such specific behaviors as a student date rapes another person, a student sexually assaults another student, a student physically assaults someone of a different sexual orientation, student drinks to excess and drives others, a student sells marijuana, and a student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different race. If an offending individual fails to change their behavior, then punitive action might occur.

Moreover, an educational conduct process and philosophy can benefit from better understanding a chapter's culture. Educational programs and interventions can be more specifically aligned with the norms within the chapter. Additionally, this helps to guide the decisions of institutional leaders wrestling with the balance of restorative to the chapter and protecting the community from harm. Institutional leaders can examine where educational interventions can more likely influence behavior and places where restrictions and administrative actions, such as probation, are more apt. For example, in a case with an alcohol policy violation, chapters that demonstrate higher levels of disdain for substance abuse can cue the conduct officer to assign outcomes that address bystander intervention specific to alcohol abuse. In contrast, a similar violation with a chapter that has low levels of disdain in the same scale may require social restriction or similar administrative functions to reinforce the need for a culture change.

Normative profiles that indicate that Predatory Sexual Advances, Homophobia, Intrusive Substance Abuse, or Verbalized Racial/Queer Intolerance do not have admonitory status in specific chapters of fraternities or sororities presents a different situation to fraternity/sorority professionals. For this situation, we recommend fraternity/sorority campus-based professionals require the membership of such specific chapters to participate in the norm development program described under Institutional Policy and Practices.

Concluding Thoughts

We present a different approach to using social norms to deter or reduce excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia by members of fraternities or sororities. Rather than focusing on the frequency in which peers engage in such behaviors, the approach we offer centers attention on the degree to which peers espouse strong disapproval of such behaviors. This approach requires that fraternity/sorority professionals conduct normative audits to provide such information to the leaderships of chapters for consultations with offending members of their fraternity or sorority. In the Appendix to this article, we provide an instrument for fraternity/sorority professionals to conduct the necessary normative audits.

Because of the importance of norms to members of social groups such as fraternities and sororities and the concomitant desire to comply with them, individual fraternity or sorority members who frequently engage in such problematic behaviors as excessive alcohol use, drug use, sexual assault, racism, or homophobia may cease their engagement in such behaviors. Accordingly, we highly recommend this approach to fraternity/sorority campus-based professionals.

Appendix

This survey is being conducted to help identify member opinions about specific fraternity/ sorority behaviors and expectations. You are asked to participate in the study. This survey consists of a list of behaviors related to being a member of a fraternity or sorority. Some behaviors may appear to be appropriate and/or inappropriate to some students but not to others. Using the response codes listed below, give your opinion on each of the behaviors as you think they might ideally apply to a member of your specific chapter. There are no right or wrong answers, only your much-needed opinions. All responses will be treated confidentially and will in no way be traceable to individual respondents. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Response categories

1 = very inappropriate behavior, the student should be removed from the college
2 = very inappropriate behavior, the student should be excluded from the group (class, organization or peer group)
3 = inappropriate behavior, someone should talk to the student about the behavior and suggest change or improvement
4 = mildly inappropriate behavior, generally to be ignored
5 = behavior which is neither appropriate nor inappropriate

		very inappropriate behavior, the student should be removed from the college	very inappropriate behavior, the student should be excluded from the group (class, organization or peer group)	inappropriate behavior, someone should talk to the student about the behavior and suggest change or improvement	mildly inappropriate behavior, generally to be ignored	behavior which is neither appropriate nor inappropriate
1	A student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different race	1	2	3	4	5
2	A student date rapes another person	1	2	3	4	5
3	A student makes intolerant remarks about someone of a different sexual orientation	1	2	3	4	5
4	A student sexually assaults another	1	2	3	4	5
5	A student posts derogatory comments or materials on the door of a homosexual student	1	2	3	4	5
6	A student drinks to excess and drives others	1	2	3	4	5
7	A student comes to class obviously high on drugs	1	2	3	4	5
8	A student urinates in public	1	2	3	4	5
9	A student physically assaults someone of a different sexual orientation	1	2	3	4	5
10	A student rapes another person	1	2	3	4	5
11	A student verbally abuses someone of a different sexual orientation	1	2	3	4	5
12	A student sells marijuana	1	2	3	4	5

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