

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON STUDENT CONDUCT

On March 24, 1981 the Committee on Student Conduct heard charges brought by the College against Delta Upsilon fraternity. These charges were based upon the nature of a party held by the fraternity on February 21 at the fraternity house. The party, advertised as a "Back to the Womb Party," with its attendant decorations, was considered offensive by a number of students and others. After investigation, Assistant Dean of Students Douglas H. MacEwan, acting on behalf of the College, charged the fraternity with failing to meet the standards of the Code of Conduct. Specifically, Delta Upsilon was charged with demeaning women students on campus by having a sign over the bar stating "Association of Lafayette Wombs," decorating parts of the party area as a womb, and having some members dressed in offensive costumes.

At the hearing, Delta Upsilon admitted to the charge and asked the Committee to take appropriate disciplinary action.

In its deliberation, the Committee considered a number of factors in attempting to establish a disciplinary action which would be appropriate to this particular violation of College regulations. After considerable discussion, the Committee agreed unanimously that,

Delta Upsilon is required to contribute to the college the sum of \$1,000.00 to be administered by the Joint Committee on the Cultural Program in support of lectures or symposia for all constituencies of the College to increase their awareness of the provisions and implications of the Code of Conduct, and in general foster better

communication and respect among all students on campus. Delta Upsilon is required to participate in the planning and implementation of at least one of the programs and demonstrate its understanding of "honorable, ethical and mature" behavior.

While this may be an unusual penalty to assess against an organization which admits guilt to a serious charge brought by the College, the Committee believes that value has been derived from this incident in discussions about the party on campus, the significant degree of indignation felt by many members of the College community and the dismay of many that a group of persons would be so disrespectful of the status of others. The Committee was concerned as well that the imposition of a more severe disciplinary action at this time would serve to focus attention on the action of the Committee and away from the basic issue involved: that of behavior, deriving from attitudes, that is demeaning to individuals and groups alike.

The behavior exhibited by the brothers of Delta Upsilon on the night in question falls far below the standards which this College holds for its students and student organizations. We will not accept as an excuse that the group did not know that what they were doing would be considered offensive. It is immaterial that the idea allegedly came from a party held at another institution of high reputation. A basic sense of human decency should have made clear to those planning this event that they had clearly stepped outside the bounds of propriety and had engaged in "behavior...that demeans others."

Therefore, the Committee on Student Conduct, by unanimous vote, wishes to advise the campus community and Delta Upsilon fraternity that the behavior evidenced by members of the

fraternity at its party on February 21 is repugnant, reprehensible and in clear violation of the expectations that Lafayette College has for its students and student organizations. Furthermore, this action by the Committee shall serve as a clear indication to the members of this community that behavior which demeans others, be it by individual students against other individuals, or groups against individuals or other groups, will not be tolerated and will be subject to severe disciplinary action by this Committee.

