

A History of Fraternities and Sexual  
Assault: How Hyper-Masculinity and  
Over-the-Top Heterosexuality Perpetuate  
Rape Culture on College Campuses

WGS 340: Sexuality Studies

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In 1981, a group of young women get dressed together to go to a party. They are going out together at a fraternity, because the sororities are not allowed to host parties themselves. This party is a themed one, as many are, but nobody knows the theme before attending. When the women get inside the house, they can tell immediately that something is wrong with the theme: the stairwell is covered in pink tissue paper and red light bulbs to resemble the inside of a body, with a mattress rolled up to look like a tampon. There are men dressed with coat hangers around their necks, meant to look like aborted fetuses. This party, called “Back to the Womb Night”, was hosted as a joke by the fraternity, Delta Upsilon, to make light of women’s issues and their bodies. What is especially alarming, is that this party occurred right here at Lafayette College.<sup>1</sup>

Detailed in the archives of the Lafayette College Special Collections Department are a variety of articles, correspondences, and writings about this night. Although this incredibly disturbing party was punished, its effects can still be seen on campus today. The “Back to the Womb Night” party is about more than just sexism at Lafayette—it gives us a look into the ways in which fraternities belittle, harass, and objectify women as a form of male bonding. This type of behavior can be seen within a variety of colleges around the country. A statistic from one article showed that men in fraternities are way more likely to commit sexual assault than men who are not in fraternities.<sup>2</sup>

We as a society tend to associate sexual assault with fraternities, but that in itself has become a problem. By simply expecting sexual assault from fraternities, we normalize the behavior and allow it to continue. In order to fight against the frequent sexual assault, harassment, and misogynistic behavior that comes from fraternities, we must look into why these groups are so

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<sup>1</sup> “The Wrong Theme”, *Lafayette College Alumni Quarterly*, Spring 1981, Greek Organizations Reference Files: Delta Upsilon Fraternity, Special Collections and College Archives, David Bishop Skillman Library, Lafayette College.

<sup>2</sup> Angela Carone, “Fraternity Culture Linked to College Sexual Assault Problem”, *KPBS*, October 21, 2014, accessed May 6, 2018, <http://www.kpbs.org/news/2014/oct/21/fraternities-and-campus-sexual-assault-problem/>

prone to these misogynistic and abusive behaviors in the first place. Fraternity culture enables and even encourages rape, which can be evidenced through the intense brotherhood and male competitive behavior associated with fraternities, the social dominance of fraternities over sororities, and the normalization of rape within fraternities by the institutions themselves. Through looking at the history of sexual harassment, assault, at not just Lafayette, but at other institutions as well, we can get a larger look into these occurrences at other colleges. The normalization of rape in fraternities is not due to simply the reality that this will occur, but instead to heightened toxic masculinity and a normalization of abusive male behavior.

While the "Back to the Womb Night" party at Lafayette was definitely an alarming wake-up call into the misbehaviors by fraternities towards women, especially at Lafayette, it is only the tip of the iceberg. Sexual assault has occurred frequently at Lafayette, more often than not from fraternities.<sup>3</sup> An article for *The Lafayette* details the history of sexual assault on campus by telling the story of a woman in the December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1980 addition. The anonymous woman was a victim of attempted sexual assault, and the report was done so casually in a nonchalant way.<sup>4</sup> Sexual assault is prevalent at Lafayette and other campuses, but one especially common thread is the tie to men's varsity sports and fraternities. When groups of men come together, it frequently leads to sexual misconduct. One article that calls for all fraternities to be banned, talks about many instances of fraternity brothers coming together to encourage rape, make rape jokes, or commit rape.<sup>5</sup> This same article explains that women in sororities have a 74% more likeliness to experience rape than other women in college.<sup>6</sup> Women in sororities will frequently party with

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<sup>3</sup> Grace Reynolds, Email to Faculty and Administrators, January 14, 2008, Sexual Assault Reference Files, Special Collections and College Archives, David Bishop Skillman Library, Lafayette College.

<sup>4</sup> DW. "Student Night Patrols". *The Lafayette*, December 5, 1980. Print.

<sup>5</sup> Jessica Valenti, "Frat Brothers Rape 300% More. One in 5 Women is Sexually Assaulted on Campus. Should We Ban Frats?", *The Guardian*, September 24, 2014, accessed May 6, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/24/rape-sexual-assault-ban-frats>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

men in fraternities, so it is clear that the increased exposure to fraternity brothers puts many women in danger. Fraternities are filled with a competitive nature, telling men to fight to achieve the ideal image of the successful man who gets all the women.<sup>7</sup> By encouraging this type of competition, fraternities lead men towards sexual assault.

Jonathan Katz, in his novel *The Invention of Heterosexuality*, writes that the purpose of catcalling and other public group forms of harassment, are for cisgender, heterosexual men to use the objectification of women to bond with one another.<sup>8</sup> By ostracizing and harassing an entire group of people, these men are able to become the inside group and get closer to one another. This idea can be seen among fraternities, by looking at how men in fraternities will bond through taking down women. This example can be seen through Lafayette's "Back to the Womb Night" party, as well as through other graphic exploits by fraternities. Jessica Valenti in her article explains that while she attended Tulane University, multiple fraternities were known for putting hard alcohol and other drugs in the punch at parties to lower women's inhibitions and coerce them into sex.<sup>9</sup> Sexual harassment and assault then become a group bonding activity, with men in fraternities encouraging one another to get sex, no matter whether or not the women in question consent to sexual behaviors. This problem can be seen on a severe scale at many universities. It is one that we see over and over again, with loyal fraternity brothers protecting one another from consequences while at the same time encouraging and assisting in these acts.<sup>10</sup> This is a pattern in fraternities, which will cause us to look at why exactly we have fraternities, and what purpose they have aside from asserting male dominance.

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<sup>7</sup> Valenti, "Frat Brothers Rape 300% More. One in 5 Women is Sexually Assaulted on Campus. Should We Ban Frats?".

<sup>8</sup> Jonathan Ned Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995, 30.

<sup>9</sup> Valenti, "Frat Brothers Rape 300% More. One in 5 Women is Sexually Assaulted on Campus. Should We Ban Frats?".

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

Katz writes in *The Invention of Heterosexuality*, “So the heterosexual ideal displays, from its inception, a fundamental tension. Heterosexual affirmation encounters a basic conflict between the pleasures of the flesh and the yearning for a pure, fleshless spirit. The sexual in the hetero ideal was a troublemaker from the start”.<sup>11</sup> Katz argues that part of being a heterosexual person is not just being attracted to the “opposite sex”, but rather it is overtly showing an interest in the opposite sex, to the point of very clearly showing differentiation between males and females.<sup>12</sup> He is saying that by overtly showing an interest and an attraction to the opposite sex, heterosexual people reaffirm their sexualities. In addition, sex and gender are so closely rooted together. In order to understand somebody’s sexuality, we immediately turn to that person’s gender roles. By outwardly showing an attraction to the other sex, heterosexual people are not only reaffirming their sexualities, but they are reaffirming their gender roles. Especially with college men in fraternities, there is an intense pressure to be hyper-masculine and incredibly heterosexual.

Angela Carone in her article says about fraternities, “Experts and Greek insiders agree that a competitive, testosterone-driven environment fueled by alcohol and casual sex is part of fraternities’ sexual assault problem”.<sup>13</sup> Fraternities encourage men to prove their masculinity and their heterosexuality in order to stay in the fraternities. Often in Sexualities Studies, the topic comes up of fragile masculinity, and how men’s worst fear is being seen as “not a real man”, and them losing their male privilege. In order to keep this privilege, men must be overly masculine, and thus overly heterosexual. They must claim women as their objects and show that they truly do not see women as people, in order to claim their spaces in society as dominant men. In groups, men become even more hyper-masculine and hyper-sexual to show one another that they

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<sup>11</sup> Katz, 30.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Carone, “Fraternity Culture Linked to College Sexual Assault Problem”

are truly deserving of their male privilege and titles as men. The problem with these men showing off their sexualities and their genders to one another in groups, is that they become incredibly dangerous to anyone who does not fit into their group. These groups of cisgender, heterosexual men become especially dangerous to women, as well as anyone who is LGBTQ+ or does not fit into the gender binary. They become intent on proving that other people do not fit in, so that they prove that they do fit in. This leads to acts such as rape and sexual harassment, so that the men can claim women as their own and prove to other men that they can get sex from women. By looking at how hyper-masculinity in heterosexuality and gender roles can lead to fraternities committing sexual misconduct, we can examine the systems set in place to allow and even encourage this intense male bonding.

Another way in which fraternities perpetuate rape and rape culture is through the dominance of fraternities socially on college campuses. There are a bunch of laws that make it so that sororities cannot host parties.<sup>14</sup> These laws have a variety of supposed reasons for being in place, but the reality is that by giving fraternities total social control, institutions leave all the social (and sexual) activity in the hands of the men on campus. While writing about her experiences as a member of a sorority, writer Carly Stern says, “The media is quick to spotlight fraternities for recent scandals...but people rarely question why only half of the participants in Greek life—fraternity members—control the social scene in the first place”.<sup>15</sup> Men dominate the social scenes on campuses, because only they are allowed to host parties. This same article adds that of the 26 sororities, most are not allowed to have alcohol in their houses or male guests.<sup>16</sup> Sororities are given so many strict rules and standards about what they are allowed to do, so they

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<sup>14</sup> Carly Stern, “The Outdated Double Standard Plaguing Greek Life”, *The Huffington Post*, February 2, 2017, accessed May 6, 2018, [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/carly-stern/the-outdated-double-standard-plaguing-greek-life\\_b\\_8739486.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/carly-stern/the-outdated-double-standard-plaguing-greek-life_b_8739486.html)

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Carly Stern, “The Outdated Double Standard Plaguing Greek Life”.

begin to lose control of their own social lives. If their national chapters do not allow them to throw parties, have alcohol, or have men in the house, then automatically, women in sororities are forced to go find somewhere other than their own sorority houses to host parties. Because this may be seen as a loophole and not recognized by many as true parties, women turn to attending parties, rather than hosting them. If women on campus want to party and attend parties, they must do so by giving into the rules and regulations of the male groups on campus.

A Lafayette Delta Upsilon fraternity brother wrote a complaint letter to the administration in 1981 after the "Back to the Womb Night" party, urging the administration not to charge Delta Upsilon \$1000 due to emotional distress.<sup>17</sup> He argued that the fraternity was just having fun with their party, and that women did not have to show up, and that these women had choice of which parties they attended.<sup>18</sup> However, one thing has not changed since 1985, neither at Lafayette nor at many other schools, and that is the fact that these parties are not a choice for many women. All students in college are encouraged to participate in parties and other social parts of college, in order to get the full experience. If women want to party, they cannot host their parties themselves, due to outdated rules of sororities not being allowed to have alcohol.<sup>19</sup> Because of this, women have to give into male norms and attend men's parties if they want to have active social lives. They have to look and dress a certain way to get into parties at fraternities, and they have to act a certain way to maintain their attendance. The fraternity brothers have all the control.<sup>20</sup> They get to choose who attends their parties, so the women in question have to prove their worth, and the fact that they should be able to attend these parties, by showing the men who

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<sup>17</sup> Delta Upsilon Fraternity, Statement to the Committee on Appeals at Lafayette College, April 16, 1981, Greek Organizations Reference Files: Delta Upsilon Fraternity, Special Collections and College Archives, David Bishop Skillman Library, Lafayette College.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Carly Stern, "The Outdated Double Standard Plaguing Greek Life".

<sup>20</sup> Valenti, "Frat Brothers Rape 300% More. One in 5 Women is Sexually Assaulted on Campus. Should We Ban Frats?".

host them who fun and sexually viable these women can be. Thus the women actually have very little control, because they must direct their actions towards a very specific male audience.

Many women attend parties for the hope of having fun, either with their friends, or with an attractive man that they may meet. A lot of women, especially in modern times, believe that they are sexually liberated by attending parties in whatever revealing clothing they want to wear, and doing whatever they want to sexually with the men they meet. In theory, this new, embracing of bodies take on partying and women's sexualities may seem sexually liberating. However, incorporating the ideas of Michel Foucault, we can see that sexual liberation does not exist, and that in actuality, these women who attend parties and engage in sexual behavior with the men hosting the parties are further giving into their own oppression. Michel Foucault argues that the ideas of sexual liberation and repression do not exist, because liberation is still giving into the label given by the oppressor, and repression does not get rid of the marginalized group.<sup>21</sup> While this idea is traditionally used in relation to sexual orientation and different identities within the LGBT+ community, we can also apply it to women's sexualities. If a straight woman goes to a party and dresses in revealing clothing, she may be doing so to look good and embrace her body. However, the idea of "looking good" is completely subjective. When looking into what is deemed good party clothing, and what makes women look attractive and desirable, we can see that a lot of it traces back to how they can dress in order to best attract men, and seem desirable to the men. This is not simply so that straight women can get men, but rather it is done for the purpose of giving them the most inclusion and acceptance within the dominant group. If the men, who have the power and the ability to host parties, find these women attractive, then these women will seem socially successful because they are desired by men.

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<sup>21</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., 1978, 34-35.



Foucault's perspective can be used to look at women's sexual behavior as well. When women go to parties to be sexually liberated, they are giving into their oppressors. The whole reason the men host many of these parties, and why fraternity brothers give acceptance to female freshman and not male freshman, is to get women to have sex with them. While it may seem liberating for women to have sex without being labelled sluts, they are still giving into the male dominant system of fraternities. By having sex with these men, the women give them what they want and show the men that they have sexual value. It is not liberating, because the men are still in charge of the system that tells them what makes them sexy, and defines what they should look like and how they should act. The system represses women even further. As Foucault says, giving into the system just strengthens it.<sup>22</sup>

When looking into the reason why fraternities are even allowed to host parties in the first place, but sororities are not, the most obvious answer is blatant sexism. These harsh rules started for a variety of reasons, claiming that it is cheaper, safer, and better for keeping clean houses if women do not host parties.<sup>23</sup> While it may be cheaper not to worry about damages in sorority houses, fraternities seem to have no problem getting ahold of money for parties. It is so easy for men in fraternities to gain resources to host parties, because partying is seen as a crucial, pivotal part of men's social lives in college. While an active social life is seen as a mandatory for men, women are told that their social lives do not matter as much as men's social lives, and thus that they can choose whether to get involved, either by hosting or attending parties. Since women cannot host, they are forced to attend parties if they want to have any sort of college social life. Foucault explains that institutions have both the power to restrict and empower marginalized groups.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Foucault, 32-33.

<sup>23</sup> Carly Stern, "The Outdated Double Standard Plaguing Greek Life".

Women see it as a gift and a benefit if institutions give sororities any sort of rights even remotely similar to those that fraternities get, but the reality is that sororities are being oppressed by the system, and we accept it for two main reasons. One is that men are in control of the system, and so women will be willing to do anything they can to even gain any sort of acceptance or power. In Norah Vincent's novel, *Self-Made Man*, she writes about her time as a cisgender woman disguised as a cisgender man, and her alarm at seeing a man taking his son to a strip club.<sup>25</sup> She writes, "But the more I observed about the painful compulsions of male sexuality while in the company of men as a man, the more I understood about the deep insecurity that goes along with being a man in the company of women..."<sup>26</sup> Men show off not just for one another, but for women in order to gain their interest and get them as sexual objects and even partners. This puts women at such a risk when around them, that women must work in order to be accepted, desired, and wooed, rather than ostracized or abused. We also accept our oppression by the system, because we give into the idea to some extent that we as women deserve less in society than men do. We see social lives and sexual lives as something all men deserve, while focusing on how we as women can best serve the group in power. We are quick to accept whatever we can for fear of losing anything we do have, as well as fear of violence, but there is also that idea that we are just lucky to get anything because men, as naturally social and sexual creatures, are more inclined to host parties, attend parties, and enjoy themselves than we as women are.

Many men are so quick to combat the accusations of sexual assault and harassment at parties by reminding the women that the women do not actually have to attend. However, they fail to mention that the men do not actually have to attend either, and in fact that there is nothing

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<sup>25</sup> Foucault, 142-143.

<sup>26</sup> Norah Vincent, *Self-Made Man: One Woman's Year Disguised as a Man*, Toronto: Penguin Books, 2006, 63.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

that says that fraternities need to have parties. We as a society automatically go into social situations with the focus in mind of how we can best cater to the men in question. Yet, we do not spend very much time worrying about the social lives of the women in question, because we set the bar for women incredibly low. Norah Vincent explains that the biggest fear in relation to gender of a woman is being raped or killed, while the biggest fear of men is being seen as not real men, by either being too feminine or not heterosexual enough.<sup>27</sup> We tell women that the worst thing that can happen to them is being raped or killed, and thus they become a lot more accepting of bad situations, because they still feel a sort of relief that at least they are not being raped or killed. By simply having a sort of physical safety, women become grateful for this and do not want to put their safety at risk and try to search for more rights. They accept what they have, even when faced with sexual assault, because they are taught so often by society that it could always be worse for them, and that they must just be grateful to be alive. Men, however, are taught to always get as much out of a situation as they can. They rarely have to worry about their sexual or physical safety, so they focus instead on pleasure, comfort, and partying, to reach the best social and personal life possible.

This can be compared to the idea of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Looked at as a concept of Psychology, this hierarchy of needs argues that when people do not have a certain physical safety or security, then they cannot worry about things higher on the set of needs and wants, like emotional and social relationships and pleasure.<sup>28</sup> This may seem strange to compare to sororities and fraternities, because it was made to look at survival. However, young women are in constant danger in our society, so it can be argued that they have to fight every day to stay

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<sup>27</sup> Norah Vincent, 63-64.

<sup>28</sup> Saul McLeod, "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs", *Simple Psychology*, last updated 2017, accessed May 8, 2018, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

safe. So many women in college are raped or killed by men at parties, abusive boyfriends, and even strangers. They have to constantly be on guard to protect themselves, that they do not even get the chance to seek pleasure at parties through social fun and romantic relationships. If they let their guard down by getting intimate with a man and the man abuses them by taking it farther than they want, then the women are blamed for even starting something with the men in the first place. When women drink alcohol at parties and then get assaulted while under the influence of substances, they are blamed for drinking in the first place. Women are never safe, and then when they let their guard down, they get blamed for doing so. Men on the other hand do not have to worry about their safety at parties, so they get to relax, enjoy themselves, and focus on having as much fun and enjoyment as possible. Fraternity brother do not just have the privilege of being men at parties. They have the privilege of hosting these parties, and thus having a say in who attends, what they wear, how they act, and what goes on at the party. With so much control over the social scene on college campuses, fraternity brothers are literally luring women into their parties so that they have control over the women's bodies. Fraternity brothers are then able to show off their masculinity and sexuality to one another, while at the same time gaining sexual and social pleasure, even at the expense and danger of the women attending their parties. With the sorority and fraternity organizations encouraging this gender divide, we often look to colleges themselves to try to fight against sexual assault on their campuses, but they rarely give even close to enough effort at disbanding these issues in play.

So many colleges, universities, and other institutions claim to be working to fight against sexual assault and harassment on their campuses. They implement Title IX and sexual assault awareness groups on campuses, such as Lafayette's own PASA (Pards Against Sexual Assault). However, the implementation of these organizations and rules is not nearly enough. Many

institutions use the excuse of implementing Title IX as a reason that they are fighting against sexual assault, but Title IX is not even that explicit. Title IX states, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance".<sup>29</sup> Title IX only protects women from discrimination, but it says nothing explicitly about sexual assault. It focuses on institutions themselves and works to fight against the discrimination of women by colleges. Title IX makes it clear that colleges and institutions within the colleges cannot discriminate against women, but it says nothing against specific individuals. It does not say that individual people on college campuses are not allowed to harm or discriminate against women, and it does not dole out any punishment for specific individuals who harm women. While fraternities are an institution and could qualify under a "program or activity", their parties and social events (which often give alcohol to minors) are not considered an activity that the school sponsors or claims. Because of this, fraternities and the men in them can commit violent and abusive acts against women without receiving proper consequences. There are so many college-aged men who commit rape, many of whom are in fraternities and still maintain their statuses within the groups.

At Lafayette specifically, there was a reported rape in 2016 of someone who was not a student, by an unidentified assailant who it was unclear whether he was a student.<sup>30</sup> Title IX was apparently only applicable to students, because sexual assault is now seen as discrimination against women, but because the victim was not a student, the college did not use it to help her.<sup>31</sup> It is instances like this one on the campus of Lafayette, to show how Title IX can only do so

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<sup>29</sup> NCAA, "Title IX Frequently Asked Questions", NC-LA, last updated 2018, accessed May 8, 2018, <http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/inclusion/title-ix-frequently-asked-questions>

<sup>30</sup> Christina Shaman, "Non-Student Reports Sexual Assault on Campus", *The Lafayette*, April 29, 2016, Print.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

much. Recording rape as a form of discrimination feels like a serious crime is being given such an invalidating term. Rape is often not given the seriousness that it should be as a crime, and by grouping it with other discrimination crimes, colleges normalize it. Colleges call it another form of discrimination, and schools like Lafayette only work to make sure that their campus is not blamed for committing these acts. Title IX feels like it is really just used to protect the institution, doing very little for the victims. First of all, it says nothing about the punishments that will go to those who commit rape, and thus does not give proper consequences for such awful crimes. Second of all, it does nothing to prevent rape. Title IX simply says that these acts should not happen, but the reality is that they do happen. Most colleges just go with the mindset that because these acts occur so frequently, there is little that institutions can do to reduce them, and nothing that institutions can do to prevent them. However, if institutions did more to protect and look out for the women on their campuses, then they could stop normalizing rape and start taking it seriously. The root of sexual misconduct on all these campuses is the failure of men to recognize women as people. When men see only themselves as people and women as sexual objects, then they do not think of what their cat-calling, harassing, and assaulting of these women will do to the women themselves. Institutions tend to see rape as an inevitable, but this just excuses the behavior. They need to spend more time and effort on protecting and valuing the women on their campuses, and really emphasizing that these women need to feel just as safe on campus as the men do every single day.

Frequently, institutions will act as though rape is so frequent and normal, that they will not treat it like a real thing anymore. Just recently this year, in Lafayette College's newspaper, *The Lafayette*, there was a crime report made in which, alongside crimes related to alcohol and vandalism, there was a report of a rape that occurred in Ruef Hall.<sup>32</sup> The rape was listed casually,

as if it were any other crime. This alarming casual telling of a violent crime is just one way in which institutions normalize rape. By casually reporting rape as though it is not even that big of a deal, colleges excuse it as just another normal crime. When a student died at Lafayette earlier this year, an entire front page was dedicated to him.<sup>33</sup> However, when a woman on campus is raped, there may be a simple article written, but usually there are just brief reports in the crime log. It is an incredibly normalized crime, seen as an inevitable crime to occur on a college campus. We fall into the "Boys will be boys" mindset, acting as though rape is just something to be expected of young men, without asserting appropriate actions and consequences in the wake of such crimes. It is a problem that has not been able to be solved. Fraternities and other male groups commit rape, and they do not get punished accordingly for their actions, so they go on committing these actions. Institutions also need to put more of an emphasis on keeping the men from committing sexual misconduct, rather than simply allowing these crimes to occur. They need to be harsher with the punishments of men who commit sexual harassment and assault, and they need to make it clearer to all these men that this behavior is not normal. Institutions must work harder to prevent these acts, and must fiercely unite against assailants. Especially in fraternities, many colleges and universities make the mistake of associating sexual assault and wrongful sexual behaviors with fraternities. By assuming that sexual assault will occur in fraternity parties and urging women to be extra careful at these parties, institutions tell fraternity brothers that this behavior is to be expected of them. These institutions thus give the fraternity brothers a certain leeway to commit sexual crimes, because the fraternity brothers, as a group of men, see sexual assault as something within the nature. When women attending the fraternity

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<sup>32</sup> Clare Grunewald, "Sexual Assaults and Rape Reported: Total Number Reaches 6 for School Year", *The Lafayette*, February 2, 2018, Print.

<sup>33</sup> Kathryn Kelly, "College Mourns Sudden Loss of McCrae Williams '21", *The Lafayette*, September 15, 2017, Print.

parties are sexually assaulted, the fraternity brothers can twist the situation to imply that the women were not careful enough, or did not take the warnings seriously. However, by issuing these warnings, institutions are saying that the blame should fall on the victims. By stepping up and harshly punishing fraternities for incidents that occur at their parties, the institutions can work to stop normalizing this behavior.

When women graduate high school and go on to college, they cannot simply focus on educating themselves, making friends, and having fun at parties. Instead, they have to be constantly on guard at these parties, to protect themselves from sexual assault. When they are assaulted, they are blamed for not being careful enough. However, if they do not attend the parties or participate in sexual behaviors, they are either seen as not taking advantage of their time in college, or they are not valued by the men in these organizations. Fraternities perpetuate rape culture, which can be clearly looked at through the intense proving of one's heterosexuality and masculinity in a fraternity, the sheer dominance of fraternities over sororities on college campuses, and the normalizing of rape on campuses by the colleges themselves. Fraternities are organizations that are heavily associated with rape, and although it seems unlikely to get rid of them altogether, there are ways that the institutions themselves can work to prevent rape in fraternities. If colleges and universities want to keep fraternities without perpetuating rape culture, then they must find a way to somehow dismantle the intense, hyper-masculine idea of a fraternity brother. Remaking an entire gender sounds nearly impossible, but there are ways in which the institutions can take some power away from the fraternities. First, these institutions can allow sororities to throw parties and have alcohol as well. By giving sororities the opportunity to throw the kind of parties that fraternities do, institutions can give women more power over their social lives, instead of leading them to men. Second, by holding men



Collections and College Archives, David Bishop Skillman Library, Lafayette College.

- 17) Stern, Carly. "The Outdated Double Standard Plaguing Greek Life". *The Huffington Post*, February 2, 2017, accessed May 6, 2018. [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/carly-stern/the-outdated-double-standard-plaguing-greek-life\\_b\\_8739486.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/carly-stern/the-outdated-double-standard-plaguing-greek-life_b_8739486.html)
- 18) Valenti, Jessica. "Frat Brothers Rape 300% More. One in 5 Women is Sexually Assaulted on Campus. Should We Ban Frats?". *The Guardian*, September 24, 2014, accessed May 6, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/24/rape-sexual-assault-ban-frats>
- 19) Vincent, Norah. *Self-Made Man: One Woman's Year Disguised as a Man*. (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2006). Print.