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BECOMING A FRATERNITY MEMBER

By

John H. Newman

B.A., University of Montana, 1970

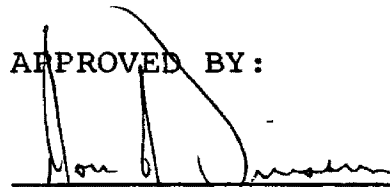
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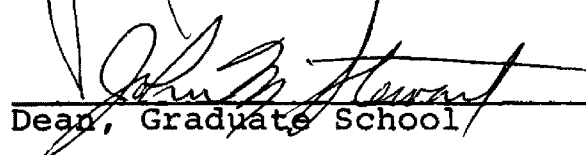
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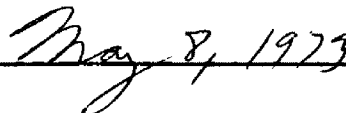
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In the course of the college career, the student is faced with many things which are new and different for him. One such experience may be that of becoming a member of a fraternity. This is an interesting point. Persons become members. By doing so, certain things take place. These things were to become the topic of this study. On the campus of the University of Montana there are over three hundred men and women who are members of a fraternal system. These persons go through an "entering into" process to become members of a college fraternity. Through a process of informally talking with many members of fraternal organizations, it was apparent that they were able to account for how they became members of the fraternal system. This study involved the documentation of those accounts. It was my intention to gather those data necessary to produce an accurate and concise statement of the processes of entering into a fraternal organization and, from this, to find dominant themes of such a process.

The topic for this study was derived largely through my experience in dealing with fraternity members in a classroom setting. In the fall of 1971 a graduate student at the

University of Montana organized a class to allow members of sororities and fraternities to engage in research about their own organizations. Through participating in this class, I became interested in how persons became members of a fraternity system. There were many matters pertaining to the process of membership which were unclear to me, and it was at this point that I began preliminary research which guided the topic to its present state of refinement. Here I propose to describe briefly the preliminary work that took place.

BRIEF ELABORATION ON BACKGROUND WORK

As mentioned earlier, this work started to take form in the fall of 1971 at a class meeting, and as already mentioned, the students were fraternity members. The initial search started with the gathering of information about the notion of becoming a member or joining a fraternity. Nine fraternity members were interviewed and asked to tell their stories of joining the fraternity. Persons were interviewed simply because they said they were members of a fraternity. I sought simply to find out if the members could give a narrative account of their experiences of entering into the fraternity. The initial interviews also served to guide the nature of the proposed research. In the process of perusing the initial interviews I noticed that their talk suggested that there was a language that the members knew and used and which was descriptive of their experiences. A glossary of

terms and phrases was developed (Appendix A).

These terms and their definitions were collected from interviews with members. While there was variation in the usage of the terms, the informants agreed that these definitions were generally acceptable to them.¹ The order of the terms as set forth in the glossary reflects the order of their appearance in the members' accounts of membership.

The glossary is not intended to be exhaustive. It includes only the words and phrases uniquely used by the fraternity members. These and other words and phrases pertaining to fraternities were used by members in their accounts and were words which had special meanings for the members in the context of the fraternity.

It was essential to pay close attention to the meaning of the words to enable the researcher to speak the language of the informants and to make sense of their narrative accounts.

From the initial interviews with the members of fraternities, it became apparent that there was a socially-organized way of becoming a member. Preliminary work suggested that fraternity members had the ability to give a narrative account of their experiences of joining the fraternity. From these initial contact interviews, questions were formu-

¹I gathered together my informants and had them decide on these definitions. As a group they felt that these definitions adequately described the terms and phrases in question.

lated for gaining insight into the members' accounts of membership. The general question at hand was: How did you become a fraternity member? This question was asked in a way which was intended to encourage informants to talk about their history as members from their first contact with the fraternity until the time of the interview. Questions of a clarifying nature were asked throughout each interview to make sure that the experience was fully accounted for by the member. Becker speaks of this method as "playing dumb."²

Each person was asked to tell of his first contact with the fraternity and how this came about. They were then asked to describe in the greatest detail, their particular experiences in becoming a fraternity member. They were asked to relate this story in the sequence in which it took place in their life so as to yield data which was of a sequential nature. As the person told the story, he was asked to clarify certain terms and phrases which he used in his account. These terms and phrases are those which appear as "foreign" phrases in the glossary.

Upon looking at the early contact work, it was decided, as mentioned, that the member of a fraternity could indeed account for his membership in a way that could be understood. It was seen also that the informants had at their dis-

²Howard S. Becker, "Field Methods and Techniques: A Note on Interviewing Tactics," Human Organization #12 (Winter), pp. 31-32.

posal a language which they used to convey their experience of joining the fraternity. The decision was made that one fraternity would be studied since the aim of the project was to gain the "own story" of the member and the idea of one fraternity gave spatial limits to the research. This fraternity, Eta Theta (not its real name), was chosen on the basis of its size and availability. According to the statistics of the fraternity, the membership of this fraternity had been one of a very few that had remained stable over the past ten years. It had neither increased nor decreased in size to any great extent. The most important consideration, however, for choosing this particular group was that the members displayed an interest and enthusiasm for the project. They were, in the initial contacts, always willing to help in any way they could and it was through their urgings that the final study took place.

AIMS OF THE STUDY

It was my intention to take into account the process by which persons became members of a fraternity. How I accomplished this was stated clearly in the section dealing with the methods for collecting data. By doing this study I intended to show that the process of fraternity affiliation could be described and that, through this, descriptive propositions concerning the nature of members and membership could be generated.

Methodologically, I sought to demonstrate that through inductive research it was possible to arrive at substantive propositions regarding the nature of members and membership and to do so without utilizing specific, preconceived notions about them. In the following chapters, the description of the process of becoming a fraternity member unfolds to the reader in the same sequence in which it was revealed during the study.

PRIOR LITERATURE

Insofar as this study was not designed to be of a replicative or verificative nature, prior literature is merely presented here to show the reader that the social organization of being a member has not been examined fully in prior research.

McQuilkin³ collected data from 365 first-quarter freshmen at the beginning and the end of a ten-week period. The questionnaires which McQuilkin administered were designed to determine why a person pledges a fraternity, how the pledging affects the person's grades and how a pledge spends his time during the pledge period. This study gave the reader a general idea of why persons join a fraternity, although it was specifically designed to find out if study

³Paul R. McQuilkin, "Differential Effects of Group Factors on Fraternity Pledge Class Allocation of Time and Academic Achievement" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Iowa State University, 1969).

time were directly related to grade achievement. In 1961 Sanford W. Pridy⁴ administered questionnaires to 237 pledged and nonpledged students. Pridy discussed in this study the attitudes found among students who were not pledged by the fraternity compared to the attitudes toward the fraternity of those who were successful in attaining membership. The relationship of this study to the study undertaken here was that the information was valuable insofar as it shows that the successful pledge tends to have a more positive attitude toward the fraternity than the unsuccessful pledge. This suggested that the informants of the study at hand possessed a positive attitude toward the organization. Milton Walker⁵ in 1968 conducted a participant observation study of twenty-nine fraternities on the campus of the University of Washington. This study was concerned with the rite of incorporation called "hell week." Walker measured the degree of group solidarity among the pledges as compared to the severity of the ritual of hell week. This study was designed to explore the effects of hazing upon the recruitment of these college

⁴Sanford W. Pridy, "Comparison of Certain Qualities of Fall 'Rush' Week Participants at the University of Missouri, 1956-1959" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Missouri, 1961).

⁵Milton C. Walker, "Organizational Type, Rites of Incorporation, and Group Solidarity: A Study of Fraternity Hell Week" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Washington, 1968).

fraternities. G. W. Bohrnstedt⁶ examined the process of membership seeking by nonmembers and recruitment by the groups of nonmembers. To a sample of freshmen students he administered questionnaires which were designed to measure the pre- and post-rush expectations of these persons. This study took into account the reciprocity between the member-to-be and the fraternity as a body. The initial work for this study suggested that there was, in fact, the reciprocal relationship described by Bohrnstedt and that it was a very important facet in the members' experiences of becoming members. Raymond Mulligan⁷ in 1951 studied 1,944 members of fraternities. Essentially, the aim of this study was to determine what the socio-economic background of the ordinary fraternity member was. This study was related to the present study only in the sense that it was an indicator of the social class of the fraternity members. Robert Thompson⁸ in 1955 administered a questionnaire to 257 fraternity pledges concerning personal background factors, high school achievement, and college achievement. The study was concerned with what type of person was able to successfully meet the requirements of fraternity

⁶G. W. Bohrnstedt, "Process of Seeking Membership in and Recruitment by Voluntary Social Organizations" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1966).

⁷Raymond A. Mulligan, "Socio-economic Background and College Enrollment," American Sociological Review, XXXI, 2(1961), 188-196.

⁸Robert V. Thompson, "An Experimental Study of Freshman Social Fraternity Pledges and the Factors Affecting Eligibility for Initiation" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, 1954).

initiation. John Svann⁹ administered six attitudinal scales to seventy-four entering freshmen at the beginning and end of the academic year. Svann found from these data that the persons who became fraternity members had a tendency to look at the college as their group of reference, whereas the non-fraternity group had a tendency to look toward parents and home as their reference group.

In summarizing these works it appears that they relate only indirectly at best with the scope of this study. The prior literature deals mostly with attitudes as measured by analytic instruments, occasions such as hell week, rush, and college achievement, and factors which are suspected causative agents of membership. No previous studies were designed to document the process by which a person becomes a member. Since these studies were cross-sectional, with the exception of one of the prior works, they all utilized questionnaires and attitudinal scales to measure correlations between attitudes and behavior in relationship to fraternity membership.

CONTRIBUTIONS

This study was designed to produce a document of the fraternity members' own stories or accounts of membership. Any theory, concept, or idea developed from this study can

⁹John Svann, "The Effect of Fraternity Hazing on College Socialization" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, 1966).

contribute to knowledge of the socially organized nature of persons' becoming members of any group or voluntary association.

All persons are members by virtue of their membership in any number of groups and voluntary organizations. Possibly this study can provide people with a better understanding of the processes they go through to become members. This study sought to illuminate the idea that membership is not solely a function of affiliation through contact but is also an affiliation through a sense of belonging which is attained from an interactive process where a person learns to "be a member."

METHODS OF OBTAINING AND HANDLING DATA

As mentioned earlier, qualitative methods were employed to gather the information for this study. There were many reasons for having done this. Glaser and Strauss¹⁰ state that "qualitative research is more often than not, the end product of research within a substantive area." They advocate the use of qualitative procedures when its use tends to be adequate and efficient in obtaining the type of information necessary to the research. In the case at hand, the documentation of a specific process--the process of becoming

¹⁰Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, The Discovery of Grounded Theory (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 18-19.

a member of a college fraternity--qualitative methods lent themselves readily and efficiently.

The data for this study were obtained by a series of tape recorded interviews with informants who, by their affiliation with the fraternity as either a pledge or active member had expertise in the process of becoming a fraternity member.

According to Denzin¹¹ there are three major kinds of interviews. The types are differentiated on the basis of the structure of each. The most structured type is the scheduled standardized interview, characterized by standardly worded questions in which each informant is asked each question precisely as it is written and in the order set forth prior to the interview. The nonschedule standardized interview is characterized by a list of items or areas in which an interviewer wants to explore. In this type of interview the questions may be tailored to each informant. It is, in fact, information-oriented. The nonstandardized interview, used mainly in formulating research objectives and questions, is characterized by friendly conversational form with no specific questions or order.

At the outset of this study, as noted earlier, I elected to use a nonstandardized form of interviewing technique in order to find a ground upon which to work. From

¹¹Norman K. Denzin, The Research Act (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 123-126.

this I derived such information as the nature of the informants' talk, a general feeling for the process, and contact with the jargon employed. From these nonstandardized interviews a gradual and steady shift to a nonscheduled, semi-standardized interview was made. As the information gathering progressed the area of interest became more clear. Thus, the interviews became more standardized. At all times care was taken to take into account any new topics generated by the informants.

In the pre-study, six fraternity members were interviewed. Of these six members, three were active members, two were pledges or associate members, and one was an alumnus or past member of a fraternity. These informants were told that the general area of interest was the documentation of the process by which persons become members of fraternities. They were asked to suggest topics which the researcher should attend to in order to gain pertinent information. From the initial interviews, specific areas of interest and steps of the process were isolated. These stages were labeled and presented to other informants as topics for discussion. The interviews remained flexible enough to allow the informants in the study to propose new experiences relating to joining a fraternity. The new experiences were then added to the list and the informants already interviewed were interviewed again concerning these suggested stages. Twenty to fifty interviews is generally regarded as the number necessary to obtain theor-

etical saturation, and it was this arbitrary range which the author guessed to be the number necessary to achieve complete documentation of the process. As it turned out, after thirteen interviews no new information was being presented, so with a total of fifteen interviews¹³ it was felt that the process was adequately described and saturated by the informants.¹⁴

In the process of interviewing it was apparent that some informants were considerably more willing to discuss their experiences and the experiences of others. The author reinterviewed these persons (six in particular) a number of times. These ensuing interviews served the purpose of clarifying certain recounted experiences. These interviews were not transcribed verbatim as were the original fifteen. Instead, they were left on labeled tapes and filed under the topic which the person discussed. These shorter, more in-depth interviews served to fill the many gaps in the data.

While questioning the informants, I continually asked them to describe those processes with which they were familiar in regard to becoming a fraternity member. By doing this it

¹³Two of these were to see if any new information could be elicited.

¹⁴It has been suggested that twenty-five to fifty interviews is the typical size of the sample. This is usually the case when dealing with comparative data. These data are concerned with description of the experience of a process.

was possible to find out not only what the person being interviewed had done, but also what other persons had done. This method of questioning facilitated proposing a classification of all possible ways by which a person could become a fraternity member. Often, an informant described the process of becoming a member that was the experience of a friend, rather than his own experience. When this happened, the informant was asked to supply the name of the person who experienced this kind of route. This suggested person was then interviewed and asked to provide information pertaining to his own experiences. Each interview, then, could be said to fall into two accounts: the account of ordinary processes by which a person became affiliated with a fraternity, and accounts of unique aspects of affiliation experienced both by self and others.

As mentioned earlier, the data was collected through tape-recorded interviews. These interviews were transcribed verbatim. From the transcribed accounts more information was gained. This permitted a more direct and intense questioning of informants during the next interviews with them. A topical outline was derived from the interviews. To do this each interview was outlined, noting differences and similarities between the interviews. In the end analysis it was noted that there were recurring similarities throughout the group of interviews. The topics of difference were then concentrated upon in order to find the atypical experiences and

to identify members' methods of dealing with them. It was found in general that these differences were seen by the informants as optional methods in executing the same process which led to the same goal--that of becoming a fraternity member.

In order to facilitate the handling of the data in an orderly manner, descriptive data was ordered into a temporal sequence. The reason for doing this was that the informants, in accounting for their experiences, had a tendency to "start at the beginning," and to tell of the experiences in a chronological order.

Throughout the study, a deliberate attempt was made to follow closely the ideas of Dr. Jon Driessen in dealing with narrative data. In his article, "Topical Analysis: A Method for Collecting, Classifying and Developing Concepts and Models from Narrative Data,"¹⁵ Driessen set forth a useful procedure for dealing with the data of this study. As suggested in his account, the verbatim transcriptions of the informants' stories were looked at for topics and subtopics. Each topic was itemized in each interview. At the point when all possible topics dealing with joining a fraternity were itemized and accounted for, theoretical saturation was apparently attained. As noted by Driessen, when subsequent inter-

¹⁵Jon J. Driessen, "Topical Analysis: A Method for Collecting, Classifying and Developing Concepts and Models from Narrative Data." (Mimeographed).

views fail to yield any new topics, a consistent classification is present.

The topics were cut out of each interview and stapled onto 5x8 file cards. Each card contained one topic and was filed into a section containing cards of a similar topic. Each section then was filed in order of its occurrence in the experiential world of the informants.

From the classification of the data, a move was made toward the generation of hypotheses concerning membership. In order to do this it was necessary to generate substantive propositions from the data, which were derived from the components of the process.¹⁶ These components can be called occasions and were included in this report to describe the process of becoming a fraternity member. All of the occasions of all persons were taken into account to show how persons manage that process. The occasions themselves became the categories of the classification scheme.

Observation was another method employed for collecting data. While observing during the course of the study, no actual attempt was made to affiliate with the members. However, some of the social gatherings in the fraternity setting were attended. This was done in an effort to pick up information pertaining to the participants' interaction with one

¹⁶These components are seen as occasions in the total process of becoming a fraternity member. For a discussion of the concept of the occasion, see Erving Goffman, Behavior in Public Places (New York: The Free Press, 1963), pp. 18-19.

another by watching them engage in their activities. The relationship between myself and the participants was what Gold calls the "pure observer role."¹⁷

SELECTING THE SAMPLE

As mentioned earlier, the method used for the selection of this sample was theoretical sampling as proposed by Glaser and Strauss.¹⁸ Since the intention of this study was to document a process, a statistical or random sample was unnecessary. No attempt was made to find the distributions of characteristics as random sampling is designed to do. Instead, the study centered about discovering categories of a process and the interrelationship of these categories. To accomplish this, theoretical sampling seemed appropriate. According to Glaser and Strauss' discussion of theoretical samples in general,¹⁹ the adequacy of this sample can be judged further by the power it had to describe the process of becoming a fraternity member and to explore the various themes about fraternity life, such as the ways in which persons come to see themselves as members of a particular fraternity and their own ideas about the nature of being fraternity members.

¹⁷Raymond L. Gold, "Roles in Sociological Field Observation," Social Forces 3 (March, 1958), p. 221.

¹⁸Glaser and Strauss, The Discovery of Grounded Theory, pp. 45-77.

¹⁹Glaser and Strauss, The Discovery of Grounded Theory, pp. 45-77.

In order to obtain information, the informants who were interviewed were permitted to suggest new persons to be included in the sample. This selection was often indirect in the sense that if the informants mentioned a particular person who uniquely experienced the process under consideration, this person then became a new informant.

The criteria for selection were twofold. Primarily, the informant necessarily had to be a person who had experienced the process of becoming a fraternity member. Secondly, this person had to be willing to tell of his experiences.

In order to be sure that the sample was one which gave the desired information, an effort was made to include in the sample persons having just become members, members of short standing (less than two years), members of long standing (more than two years), and persons who became members and disaffiliated. Unfortunately, only one disaffiliated member could be interviewed and he was a member of another fraternity.²⁰

The pledges of the fraternity were interviewed and observed throughout the duration of their pledge period. Observation of pledge interaction provided the substance of the last chapter of this report.

²⁰The informants remembered between two and five persons who did not make it through the process, but they did not remember any names.

PROBLEMS IN THE RESEARCH

Prior to the pre-study many problems were anticipated. Some of these problems were met in the course of the work and some were not. Difficulties were anticipated in gaining entry into the fraternity insofar as I was not a member and had never dealt with fraternity members. Within three or four interviews the informants seemed willing, if not eager, to help in any way possible. It seemed as though they were thrilled at the opportunity to "teach" an outsider about the nature of this process of becoming a fraternity member.

At the outset, however, there was some difficulty in allowing the informants to dwell on those areas which were of importance to them. With practice, a smoother style of interviewing, characterized by friendly conversation, was arrived at and the difficulty overcome.

Another problem, which was anticipated and met, was that some of the informants did not keep appointments as scheduled. Originally, as many as five to seven interviews were scheduled in a single day. Upon realizing that the arranged appointments were not being kept, it became imperative to go to the fraternity house for a few hours each day in order to corner the informants during their free moments. This seemed to work well for the informants since they had no obligations to keep as far as this study was concerned. Interviewing at the fraternity house also afforded the opportunity

to observe the members and to gain a better understanding of their interaction with one another.

Early in the study there was concern about the collection of data which was not relevant to the study. This problem, however, was largely artificial, since it was discovered that much useful data was found in the so-called "irrelevant junk." Also, although the conversational style of interviewing necessitated some collection of nonuseful data, this was easily weeded out during the classification of each interview.

This chapter told of gathering data, sampling, and data analysis. The following chapters included in the study describe membership process as explained by informants.

Chapter 2

HOW IT STARTS: CONTACT

The informants were, at the outset, asked to tell of their first encounter with the fraternity system. After having talked with a number of persons, it became apparent that there were two general ways in which the process of becoming a member was started. These two ways varied from each other especially according to the type of initial contact persons had with the fraternity. One form of contact was characterized by exposure of the prospective member to persons who were seen as recruiters. In the other form of contact, a prospective member was exposed to symbols of the fraternity, such as jackets, houses, the rush table, and so forth. The personal form of contact was differentiated still further on the basis of who initiated the contact. For the most part, the process of recruitment on the personal contact level was initiated by a fraternity member. (In a later section of this study is a discussion about the necessity for recruitment.) When the contact was initiated in this way, the person being sought as a member was said to be a recruit. Contact was not always started by members, however. For various reasons and by a number of methods, persons sometimes initiated the contact with the fraternity through their own

design. These persons were called volunteers.

The following discussion concerning recruits and volunteers was included in order to make clear the distinctions between them. It should be noted, however, that while members made this distinction, whether a person was a volunteer or a recruit, the result was essentially the same--that of affiliation with the fraternity.

RECRUITS

As mentioned earlier, a recruit was any prospective fraternity member whose primary contact with the fraternity was through present members of the fraternity or any agents acting on their behalf. The data collected showed that the vast majority of the members first made contact in this manner. The case of informant number 9 reflected the contact procedure of the recruit type of prospective members:

A good friend of mine, Rich, pledged the house and when he came back to the dorm we gave him a lot of B.S. about it. I had never really looked into the fraternity system or tried to figure out what it was all about. I guess I was prejudiced against it in a way. Anyway, Rich started talking to me and he got me to come down to the house for dinner one night and I did. I was a little apprehensive about it. I didn't think I'd really fit in and I didn't think I'd like it. Well, I came down and the guys were just great, you know. They came up and started talking--that's when it all started.

In this short account of his first contact, informant number 9 made clear that it was not he who initiated the contact. Instead, the contact was made by a person who was already a fraternity member. Informant number 3 recalled

similar events:

My roommate happened to know a few of the guys in the fraternity. He introduced me to them and they sort of befriended me, so I guess this is why I chose to join this particular house.

Informant number 3 made clear in his account that it was not he who initiated the contact but, again, he was the recipient of the action. Also, in both of these cases the persons had either no feelings toward the fraternity or were not in favor of joining prior to the first contact. In some instances, as in the case of informant number 2, the recruit was not only reluctant to become affiliated, but had quite strong feelings against affiliation:

The first quarter I was at school they [the members] kept inviting me down to dinner, and I kept making excuses. I had to do this or I had to do that, I had to go here or there, or I'd make excuses that were lies and say that I couldn't possibly go. It finally got to the point that it was embarrassing for me to even turn down an invitation so I finally said, 'All right, I'll come to dinner,' and I went to dinner and I thought it was all right. Nothing special I didn't think, but I never even gave the dinner much more thought or considered joining because that was strictly out. I never considered it.

The fact that informant number 2 went on to join the fraternity and became active in its affairs indicated the effectiveness of recruiting procedures.

In the case of the recruit it was possible to note that in all cases the decision to become affiliated with the fraternities in general arose out of contacts made with persons who were fraternity members. The action in the case of the recruit was directed from members to prospective members.

The decision to join was arrived at as a result of informally talking with and the implicit or explicit coaxing of members.

In accounting for the first contact with the fraternity, the recruit felt swayed to the decision to join through the association with members at a time when the person was spatially close to the fraternity. This is to say that recruits were generally enrolled in college and taking part in a college activity at the time of the recruiting effort. The recruit was, more importantly, either ambivalent or even against affiliating with the fraternity prior to the recruiting procedure, but through this effort they accounted for a change of attitude from negative to positive. Presented in the next section is how the volunteers were typically characterized by an initial positive attitude toward fraternity affiliation.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers were distinguished from recruits in that the volunteers made the decision to affiliate prior to attending college. While the recruit made the decision to join on the basis of his judgment of various presentations²¹ given by the fraternities or their agents after he came to school, the volunteer made this decision on the basis of informal presentations prior to coming to college. Recruiting presen-

²¹During rush week, fraternities made themselves available to prospective members through rush tables or tours of the house. This availability allows fraternity members to advertise their fraternity.

tations were distinguished from volunteer presentations on the basis of intent. The intent of the formal presentations was to recruit new members by projecting the fraternity image to an audience in order to cause a desire in the audience to become affiliated. On the other hand, volunteer presentations were seen by the informants as informal, unstructured presentations which took place in smaller, less formal surroundings and were characterized by small group conversations. These informal presentations took place at any time or at any place. Also important was that the volunteers had not all decided upon a particular fraternity, but nevertheless had decided that they would join a fraternity.

Oftentimes the prospective member saw himself coming in contact with the fraternity in an indirect manner. This was the case of informant number 4, who decided to affiliate prior to attending college. The volunteering was seen by him as coming through the influence of persons in the fraternity who had a close relationship with the prospective member. In the case of number 4, this agent of the fraternity was the prospective member's brother:

Once he [the brother] went away to college I was never around him very much anymore, but I used to pick up these little stories about him, the fun they had and so forth, and the things they did, and then when I came, you know, and was looking for the kind of college I wanted to attend, I asked my brother, 'Hey, do you think I ought to go through rush?' and he said, 'Don't you know I can't tell you to do anything. For me it was great, but for you it might not be so great.' So the first thing I did when I got here was to call up an old friend

of my brother, and he brought me down to the house and I pledged the next day. It was kind of one-sided. I had wanted to go [join] Eta Theta.

Informant number 4 stated that he established a contact by calling his brother's friend, thus demonstrating that he had decided to affiliate with the particular fraternity prior to the self-initiated contact. The act of calling his brother's friend was seen as the act of volunteering.

Another example of making the decision to join prior to attending the university was shown in the account of informant number 5:

I came from a real small town where there was this kid that everybody liked. He was the kind of kid everyone looked up to. He was four years older and I'd notice that he was being elected to this and to that and finally he was president. When I came to Missoula I got ahold of him and he took me down to the house even before rush or anything had started. That's where it all started.

Again, the prospective member initiated the contact with an agent of the fraternity.

Throughout the accounts of the volunteers it was evident that the decision to join was made prior to any physical contact with the fraternity and prior to any experience with the rules and regulations regarding the conditions of living in the fraternity situation. The decision was based largely upon information given to the prospective member by persons who were familiar with the situation.

Some volunteers came to the university with the decision to join a particular fraternity already made, as in the case of informant number 10:

I knew guys that were Eta Thetas when I was in high school and I liked them. There never was any thought in my mind about which fraternity to join.

On the other hand, the vast majority of the volunteers stated that while they intended to join a fraternity they had not decided upon a particular house. Informant number 5 noted:

There was no question in my mind whether fraternities were good or not. It was just that I wanted in. It was a matter of which one. I didn't want to live in the dorm.

Informant number 4 stated in response to the question about whether or not he had considered any other fraternities:

Yes, I hate to say it 'cause I'm not a Chi [another fraternity] fan anymore, but I do like the guys over there. I think that if Eta Theta had not let me join I would have gone to another one.

Volunteers, then, were those persons who did two things in common which recruits did not do. The first thing was that the volunteers decided to affiliate with a fraternity prior to attending college. Secondly, it was they, the prospective members, who initiated the first contact with the fraternity.

In this chapter a description of some of the elements of persons' initial contacts with a fraternity was presented. The differences between recruits and volunteers were noted. For purposes of clarity, these elements of becoming a fraternity member necessarily were discussed as parts of the first step in that process. These and other stages of the

process recounted in the following chapters were natural steps insofar as they were recognized by the informants themselves as stages in their path toward membership. The discussion of recruiting through rush in the next chapter was included to elaborate upon the next step of this process.

Chapter 3

RECRUITING THROUGH RUSH

Recruiting members took place during rush and most commonly was organized through the rush table.²² Accounts of these factors provided the bases for the descriptions presented in this chapter.

SETTING THE SCENE

Rush was conceived of by the fraternity members as being synonymous with recruiting. One aspect of rush involved setting the scene so as to attract new members. In the words of informant number 6:

We try to plan things such as an outsider kegger. We'd also see a guy and say, 'What are you doing tonight?' And if the guy said, 'Nothin,' we'd say, 'Well, stop out and have a look around the town and hit a few bars or something.'

Informant number 9 stated:

It's up to the members. If a kid comes down here and everybody seems to like him quite well, it's up to us to make sure we take care of this kid's time.

Informant number 7 added to this by saying:

We try to keep the house clean, things picked up, so the new guys will get a good impression of us.

²²The rush tables are tables at which prospective members can talk with members about fraternity life. The tables are sponsored by all the fraternities collectively.

CLOSED AND OPEN RUSH

With the scene set, the members felt that they were in a position to carry out the rest of the rush procedures. When the rush tables were set up, "closed rush" began.

According to informant number 4:

Closed rush is when we [prospective members] sign up at a table set up in a convenient location. You pay a dollar. Then we all met in front of the lodge down there by the baby oval, by University Avenue, and these guides took us around to each house for about twenty or thirty minutes, and in that time you met the people in each house and talked with them--they'd sit and give you a spiel, and the whole bit.

The term "closed" in closed rush referred to the idea that the touring procedure was highly structured in the sense that the prospective members were divided into groups and taken from house to house. Informant number 4 said further that closed rush was "like a cattle drive." Closed rush eventually was completely replaced by open rush during which the prospective members were allowed to visit each house as they wanted to and in their own free time.

In either method of rush, closed or open, the members saw the same purpose. This purpose was the exposure of prospective members to the fraternity system. From the standpoint of the member, rush was not seen as the rush tables or other advertisement of the fraternity, but rather as those things that the members did to and for prospective members. The rush tables were viewed as artifacts of rush. In the words of informant number 12, "The rush tables are really

just a place where a person starts being rushed. It isn't rush itself."

FORMAL ADVERTISEMENTS: I.F.C.

Another method employed by the fraternities to attract new members was the use of printed information which was sent by mail to incoming college freshmen. This effort to attract new members was spearheaded by the Interfraternity Council, an organization comprised of delegates of each campus fraternity, whose function was to present the Greek (collective fraternities) system to the college audience. This organization was involved in various collective efforts related to campus affairs. The I.F.C., for example, compiled a list of persons who notified the university of their intention to attend school in the fall. During the summer the I.F.C. mailed information to these persons to notify them of the existence of the fraternity system. This information did not advertise any specific fraternity. Instead, it tried simply to persuade the new student to take into consideration the possibility of joining any fraternity.

THE MEMBERS' OBLIGATIONS: SELLING THE HOUSE

During the time when the recruits and volunteers were employing their strategies to gain membership in the fraternity, the active members were employing varying strategies to attract new members. As evidenced in the following para-

graphs, an investigation of the perspectives of the fraternity members illustrated other facets of rush and recruiting.

Rush played an important part in the ongoing activities of the fraternity actives. At the beginning and throughout a person's fraternity career, he was taught that rushing was an obligation he necessarily assumed as a part of his membership. Informant number 6 reported:

The rush chairman is in charge of the organization of rush. One thing that he has to do is take all the sophomores who are just moving into the house in the fall--they've never rushed before. In order to teach them we have some kind of a clinic and we sort of explain how to rush these guys [prospective members] that are going to be coming down and how to rate them.²³

An active member, number 6, viewed rush in this way:

We have a time set aside where guys can come into the house and see the house. The way it usually is is the house was open all the time and what we tried to do was keep the house clean, keep everybody dressed up somewhat, maybe with slacks and sport shirt, and we made sure their rooms were clean and things like this, so in case guys [prospective members] did come through, the house wouldn't be a dump.

It was a concern of the members to present their living place as a desirable place to live. This was done mostly through personal interaction which took place during rushing. Informant number 1 said:

I think the new members choose the house for a number of reasons; usually the most important thing is the guys he's met from each house and the ones that he's the most impressed with--the nicest guys. I think the mate-

²³Rating was a judging of prospective members which the members did throughout the rushing. Judging is dealt with in Chapter 6.

rial things have something to do with it: the financial status of the house, like whether it's on the verge of going broke; the physical plant, like the house, if it's a nice house. It helps to an extent, things like this. The house's standing on campus, but I'd say the impression the guys have of the members has the biggest influence, but I think all these things do come into it to a certain extent.

"Selling the house" on the basis of the persons living in the house was a theme which ran throughout each interview. As informant number 6 stated:

What we like to do at the house is we try to sell the house on its members, on the diversity of the house, because we think we're pretty well diversified. We're not just one type of guy in this house. We push that a guy can be an individual and still be in this house.

SUMMARY

From the preceding accounts it became apparent that the members' functions during rush were twofold. First, it was necessary for them to set the proper scene in order to conduct a successful rush. Included in setting the scene were activities centered about attending to the physical aspects of rush, such as cleaning the house, preparing the new members to rush effectively, dressing properly, and planning events to attract new members. Secondly, "selling the house" was necessary during rush. This process involved their establishing friendly associations between themselves and the prospective members. Informant number 5 aptly summarized this by saying:

Everyone has their strong and weak points. The juniors and seniors can rush because they talk easier. They do most of the planning for rush and they do the talking and keep the conversation going once the new guys are

here. But initially it has to be the freshmen you already have and the sophomores that really conduct the rush. They know more new guys. It's the freshmen and sophomores that take them out to the Heidelberghaus and to the games or whatever. The rush where you attract a guy is nothing. It gets important after that. You really have to put the rush on him to keep him going.

Thus, members of the house recruited new members by a process called rush. This served the function of attracting prospective members to the various fraternity organizations. Once this was accomplished, the prospective members then had to make a decision about which house, or fraternity, they preferred to join. Choosing a house was based upon many considerations which are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

CHOOSING A HOUSE

After a person was rushed, regardless of whether he was a volunteer or a recruit, most prospective members had to make a choice of a particular fraternity house and let this choice be known to the fraternity. To explore this stage in becoming a member, the following questions became important to answer during the study: How did they make this choice? What were the criteria for selection? How did they let their choice be known? Finally, what strategies did the prospective members employ to be accepted? Data concerning these questions became the substance for this chapter.

Like rushing, choosing a house was a reciprocal act; that is, prospective members and members interacted with each other in this process. The prospective members looked over the houses during rush while the members looked over the prospective members. During rush the members employed strategies for attracting new members. Similarly, prospective members employed strategies of their own for making the members accept them.

BID CARDS

During rush the prospective members carried with them a card with the name of each fraternity written on it. Every

prospective member was required to have each house stamp or sign adjacent to the printed house name.²⁴ After seeing all the houses, the rushee was allowed to choose three of the houses. This was done by numbering each of the three houses in order of preference on a card. This card was taken to the office of the Interfraternity Council.

The choice of house was left entirely up to the prospective member. Informant number 1 stated:

I feel that the people in the house had a great deal to do with my choice of Eta Theta. The people I met and got a good impression of. They were real good guys. Like I was really impressed the second time I came down here during rush. The guys [members] were playing baseball and as they were leaving to play they asked me to come with them. That means something to kind of a stranger who doesn't know anybody. The main reason I tried to get into this house was because of the people.

Informant number 6 further said:

I know the one thing that impressed me when I was a rushee was just the guys in the house. They were really friendly. I'd been to the other houses, and this was the thing that sold this house to me was just how friendly everyone was, and how easy it was to get to know them.

During the process of going from house to house during rush, many prospective members compared the houses. It seemed that for at least some persons the decision to join was based upon the comparison of the other houses with the Eta Theta house. Informant number 5 stated:

I went to parties at a lot of the other houses and they talked about how great their house was and how cool

²⁴This rule was devised by Interfraternity Council to give each house an equal chance during recruitment. The card was called a bid card.

they were and everything. But the guys at the Eta Theta house just talked to you about yourself and about themselves and about life in general. The relationship wasn't a Greek relationship, or what I think of as a Greek relationship, like we won the homecoming float contest or we did this or we did that. But that stuff was just canned and we just settled on talking to you and introducing you to other people. You felt at home. They emphasized that it's not so important that we won homecoming but rather they emphasized the guys working together and showing interest and pride.

Every informant stated that he saw fundamental differences between the recruiting methods of the other fraternity and those of Eta Theta. These fundamental differences existed in the other fraternities' emphasis upon achievements of the house, whereas Eta Theta members reported that their emphasis tended to be upon individual members' efforts. In summary, for the Eta Thetas the choice of a house, if it was not selected prior to attending the university, was based largely upon the prospective member's judgment of how well he felt he would fit into the life of the Eta Theta house. The house, according to the accounts of both members and prospective members, was characterized as being neat and orderly. More importantly, it was viewed as being comprised of a group of people who were interested in the performance of the individual, individual differences, and the right of individual autonomy.

EXTENDING A BID

The idea of the bid referred to fraternity members collectively making a selection of a new member and extending

to this person an invitation to affiliate with the organization. This invitation itself was known as a bid. Concerning this process of extending a bid, the following questions seemed paramount: How were these new members selected? What was the process by which the prospective member recognized the acceptance of himself? The following section was intended to deal with these and other questions relative to the act of the members' selection of new members.

At the outset the members had the opportunity to observe the prospective members as they went through the rush procedure. The rushees had, in the words of informant number 7, "passed in review," had selected their three choices of houses and were then at the stage of waiting.

The members had specific sanctions set forth regarding methods of selection. Informant number 6 described this sanction:

We hold a sectional meeting called 'new membership.' During this meeting someone will bring up the names of people who have shown a preference for Eta Theta. For instance, somebody will bring up the name of Joe Blow or something like that; he's been down to the house three or four times [during rush] and he's a good guy, he'll do a good job for the house so I think we ought to pledge [make him a member] him. What we have to do is to extend him a bid [invitation] and everybody has to go along with this. If three people in the meeting don't want this guy in the house, they can say 'ding.' It takes three dings and the person won't get a bid. Usually everybody is pretty much sold on the guy by the time his name is brought up or else his name isn't even mentioned. We just select guys that we want to be actives [full members]. Some houses take forty or fifty pledges; we want maybe fifteen or twenty a quarter that we think will go active and that will be active in the house.

The preceding statement demonstrated the entire procedure for selecting new members, who were called "pledges." The selection of pledges was based on two things. First, the members "brought up names" of persons who demonstrated a desire to become affiliated by stating a preference for Eta Theta. Members were selected on the basis of the impression they made upon the members. According to informant number 10:

Really there is no specified criteria for selecting a pledge. He doesn't have to be a Catholic or he doesn't have to be white, or he doesn't have to comb his hair a certain way, or he doesn't have to be a real sharp looking guy or he doesn't have to be an athlete. He can be just about anything he wants to and if he makes a good impression down here he can become a pledge.

It should be noted, however, that the members had the final say about who actually became a pledge and who did not. For example, informant number 11 stated, "The pledge can say that he wants to join us but there is nothing he can do if we ding him." From the standpoint of the fraternity's apparent need for members as a result of the declining membership of all fraternities, there were economic pressures within the group to allow persons to become part of the process without a great deal of selectivity.

According to the registrar's office at the university, the total membership of fraternities had declined steadily for the past ten years even though the enrollment of the university had risen considerably. At the time of this study, there were about 332 members in the fraternities.²⁵ This decline in num-

²⁵This number reflected the membership of all fraternities as of March, 1972. Between March, 1962 and March, 1972, membership dropped by 50%. In March, 1962, there were 663 members. These numbers were furnished by the Dean of Students, University of Montana, July, 1972.

bers was recognized as a difficult situation, thus setting the scene for a new need for recruiting additional members. Informant number 3 explained this new need:

There seems to be a strong need for a good recruiting program. Due to the fact that the membership is declining, something has to be done. See, it revolves around money essentially. Membership is money. There is a greater need of money than members.

In the last section it was shown that the fraternity selected new members on the basis of the members' feelings about or impressions of the prospective members. Members and prospective members had a reciprocal relationship insofar as the names considered for membership were the names of persons stating a preference for Eta Theta. Thus, there was a relationship in which the members depended upon the prospective members for preference, and the prospective members depended upon the members for their judgment and selection capabilities.

At this point in the process, the fraternity members had to choose persons to whom they wanted to extend bids. At the same time, these persons had to decide for certain to become prospective members. To confirm this and to set the stage for further association between members and prospective members, the participants in rush activities began the next step in the membership process described in Chapter 5: Pledging.

Chapter 5

ACCEPTING THE INVITATION: PLEDGING

In the preceding chapter, was a description of a social process whereby the members and the prospective members of a fraternity sought to attract attention to themselves with the implicit purpose of providing favorable impressions to each other. Their association was generally informal with each group having its repertoire of general strategies for fulfilling the function of attraction. As was noted, there were general similarities between the prospective members' strategies and the strategies of the members. It was also evident that each group was distinctly set apart from the other and each group was concerned with a separate goal: the prospective members were concerned with gaining entry into the fraternity of their choice and the fraternity members were concerned with selecting new members.

At this point in the process, the actual selection was completed. Prior to pledging, the prospective members made their choices as to which fraternity they wanted to become affiliated with. The fraternity members selected the persons whom they wanted to ask to join the fraternity. They further signified this choice by giving a bid to those persons.

Upon accepting the bid the prospective member was at a point in the process where "pledging" took place. Pledging, unlike any other of the former steps of the process of affiliation, took the form of being structured. The pledging part of becoming a fraternity member required face-to-face interaction between the prospective member and the active member. The actual act of pledging was ceremonial in form and thus was temporarily and spatially locatable to both groups.

POCKET PLEDGING

The act of pledging for Eta Theta was divided into two parts: informal or "pocket" pledging and formal pledging. The informal or pocket pledging preceded formal pledging and served the function of allowing the prospective member to affiliate with the fraternity prior to the prescribed time. Informant number 5 described his informal pledging in this way:

During open rush I was down there all the time, trying not to let up one bit. There were a lot of guys down there one day and one of the officers came up to me and asked me to come into another room. I went into the room with him and he asked me if I wanted to pledge. There were four or five actives in there. I pledged right there even though it was a few days early.

In this account many things of interest were made visible. This informant's idea about "not letting up one bit" expressed an aforementioned strategy employed by prospective members.

Being approached by an officer was the general way in which informal pledging occurred. As set forth by their

national organization, the rules of Eta Theta stated that informal pledging must be performed by an officer of the fraternity.²⁶

Secrecy

During the study it was felt that the statement pertaining to being "taken into another room" was one of the most fascinating parts of pledging. The idea of secrecy was set forth in virtually all accounts of the pledging process. Secrecy was maintained in pledging by the use of isolation techniques. When questioned about the reason for the isolation, informant number 6 stated:

I suppose pledging could take place anywhere, but you don't want somebody walking in on it because it is secret. So to keep it secret the actives take him upstairs to a private room.

Informant number 7 added:

Pledging is the first one-to-one contact. When they pledge they put their pin on you and you pledge yourself to their fraternity. You do this pledging in the sanctuary of a private place.

Pledge Pins

Virtually all the prospective members were pocket pledged, or informally pledged, prior to formal pledging. The pledging rite was culminated by the presentation of a pledge pin to the new pledge. The pin was recognized as a

²⁶All of the informants were cognizant of this rule, yet two of them reported that they had heard of persons being pledged informally by persons who did not hold an office. An attempt to locate persons pledged in this way proved futile.

sign which identified the person wearing it with the particular fraternity and which indicated his specific status as pledge. To be pocket pledged was synonymous with being informally pledged. The term pocket pledge was derived from the idea that the new pledge was not allowed to wear this pin until he underwent the formal pledging ceremony. Instead of wearing the pin he was asked to carry it inside of his pocket.

FORMAL PLEDGING

Formal pledging took place during the third week of each quarter. Essentially, all of the prospective members were informally pledged before this time. The pledges gave their pins back to the members at the beginning of the formal pledging ceremony. The ceremony consisted of the recitation of an oath²⁷ which included a promise to pledge oneself to the fraternity and its members. After completing the oath, the pins were returned formally to the new pledges. They then were allowed to wear the pin on their shirts. This ceremony took place within the fraternity house and was closed to all nonmembers.

SUMMARY

In summary, during pledging the prospective members were taken aside by active members, who were generally officers,

²⁷The contents of this oath were considered secret and, out of respect for the fraternity's secrecy, shall remain as such.

in order to take an oath in private. At this time they also received a pin which was to be kept in each new pledge's pocket. Later, a formal pledging ceremony took place. During this ceremony, prospective pledges were gathered together with the active members, were asked to recite an oath, and were given a pledge pin to signify the passage from non-member to pledge. It was at this point of the process that the new members, or pledges, actually saw themselves as fraternity members of a conditional nature.²⁸

Prospective members thus became conditional members during pocket and formal pledging rites since they thereby were recognized by both groups, members and pledges, as being within the fraternity framework and in a position to demonstrate their ability to attain full membership through appropriate future conduct. In the process of becoming a fraternity member, persons went through a definite trial period for such demonstrations of worthiness. This trial period was called "the pledge period."

²⁸Except where substantiated from quotes, the data for this section on pledging were obtained largely through observation. The observations took place throughout the data-gathering period and were dictated onto tapes as field notes.

Chapter 6

THE PLEDGE PERIOD: FROM INDIVIDUAL TO BROTHER

Becoming a fraternity member, seen as a temporal process, has progressed in this study to an important juncture in the experience of the new member. As described in terms of stages of this process in previous chapters, persons became prospective members of the fraternity through their association with active members. When the actives and a prospective member finally agreed upon his decision to affiliate, the prospective member entered a new status in the fraternity, which was known by participants as the status of pledge or of associate member.²⁹ For purposes of uniformity and clarity during the study, this status was referred to as the pledge status. Persons who occupied the status were called pledges.

The status of pledge carried with it certain implied and explicit expectations for conduct. The pledges themselves also came to expect certain forms of conduct for themselves, for other pledges, and for the active members. To describe and discuss these expectations in terms of the next stage

²⁹The status, associate member, is one which is designated by the formal literature of the fraternity. However, in their accounts both actives and nonactives refer to this status as "pledge."

within the process of becoming a members thus became the subject matter of this chapter. Fraternity members labeled this stage the pledge period. The pledge period was seen by the informants as a "trial period." It was a time in which all the participants observed and associated with each other during specific routinized events and casual, informal encounters. It was also a time period designed to allow each group to decide whether or not the pledges eventually should become active members of the fraternity. For the pledges this trial period was also a time of learning, both formal and informal, the nature of fraternity life.

A TRIAL STAGE

Informant number 1 stated:

The pledge period is really just a trial period for the pledge to see if the house is really what he wants. And it's a period for the house [active members collectively] to see if the pledge is the type of guy they [active members] could fit into the house and if he [pledge] could do the job expected of him.

The account of informant number 1 describing the general characteristics of the pledge period revealed two points. First was the idea of the reciprocal relationship of pledges and members who observed each other for purposes of judging and evaluating each other. The second idea was one of testing of preconceptions and expectations of each other. During interviews with the informants, these expectations and preconceptions were either implied or made explicit through-

out their accounts of the pledge period. Ordinarily, as in the preceding quote of informant number 1, these two points were presented together during interviews. For this reason they were treated together in this analysis.

According to informant number 9:

In this house the pledge is expected to pull his weight and do the jobs that he's supposed to do. He's expected to come down to the house because that's what the pledge period is all about. After you pledge there is a trial period for the members to get to know the pledge and the pledge to get to know the members.

From the viewpoint of a pledge, number 7 said:

Being a pledge is really just going through a trial period--so you get to know the house on a better basis. You can just come to the house and just walk right in and you can use just about anything in the house. You can sit down and have dinner. You do jobs around the house. When you get to know all the guys in the house and get a closer contact with them--closer than just the ordinary person in the street.

Learning about the House

The trial period consisted also of educative functions. The pledges divided their education into two types--the "formal" and the "informal" education. Informant number 7 gave a general statement about the nature of pledge education:

When a person is a pledge he goes through a trial period. He gets involved in the house. He goes through all the activities and the pledge functions and becomes almost like an active. He gets educated. He gets to stay here for a week and gets educated to all the things the house does. Then he gets a formal education, like we have our meetings [pledge meetings] nights. This is where he is formally educated about things like what the house's coat of arms stand for, certain rituals of the house, the history of the house, or how our officers

work--our executive council, what they go about doing. So they're given a formal education at their pledge meetings and they got an education on, not things you can learn at a meeting, but things you can learn by participating in, by just seeing and being a part of the house, by coming to its activities, just be staying here for a week being a call boy [a pledge whose job is to awaken persons in the morning] and by interacting and drinking with the guys . . . so I think you could say he's educated in two ways--formally and informally.

As could be predicted, the formal education was given to the pledges during scheduled times in house settings such as during the pledge meeting every Monday night. The informal education, on the other hand, was unscheduled and took place in emerging situations with the exception of being a "call boy." Here the pledge was assigned by the actives a specific time in which to act as a call boy. However, as informant number 13 stated, playing the role of call boy was actually an educative process and was unstructured except for the specific duties of the position.

Pledges spend time as call boys. The intent behind that is to learn guys' names when they wake them up. When a pledge starts, he's going to have trouble. It'll take him a little bit to learn the other guys' names and having to wake them up is a good way to learn them. The best thing about being a call boy, though, is getting to live in the house and seeing what really goes on. Like he'll stay up late talking to the guys usually, and mess around and do other things and he eats all his meals here and he's just like an active and that's probably where you find out more about the house than anytime else.

Another instance of informal education took place throughout the pledge period. The pledges learned to work together through their association with each other. Informant number 6 stated:

During the pledge period they learn how to work together. Since they are a group they must learn to organize things like parties. We try to get our pledges together so they can rush for us.

Fitting In

Throughout the pledge period, there was a planned progression from individualism toward a group orientation. This was seen in all of the interviews in the form of the move to "brotherhood." The pledges were selected on the basis of the members' judgments as to how well the new member might fit into the house. The idea of "fitting in" the house was not in regard to spatial arrangement, but rather in regard to social cohesiveness. The persons in the house viewed themselves as a unit by the very nature of their use of the terms "house" to denote the collective fraternity, "fraternity" to denote an organization, "Greek system" to denote all fraternity members, "national" to denote the entire organization, and "brother" to denote all the active members in the fraternity. These words, house, fraternity, Greek system, Greeks, and brothers, are collective terms. Therefore, an important function of the trial period was for the members to see if through contact and education the new members "fit in" or displayed their desire to be fraternal as much as individual.

Voluntary Disaffiliation and Blackballing

The education which the pledge received was one of acquaintance with the group concepts. As mentioned earlier, this education was seen as being accomplished in two ways,

informal and formal. Both these ways, however, were similar in that in each the importance of group behavior was impressed upon the pledge. As informant number 6 noted, "the pledges are to be a group, and thus the education they receive is to show them how to act, feel and function as a group." If a pledge, for one reason or another, would not or could not "fit in" or play the appropriate roles expected of pledges, the result was disaffiliation from the pledge period. Informant number 1 commented on this aspect:

Once in a while we get somebody that just doesn't get along with anybody in the house. Usually if this happens he'll quit, 'cause usually only guys go active if they really like the house. There's two ways this takes place. If a guy's been around for a quarter and he doesn't get along and there's already seven or eight hard feelings, he either quits or we [actives] kick him out.

As noted in this account, disaffiliation could be instigated by either the particular pledge or the actives as a group. The active members of Eta Theta had a procedure which they utilized in an effort to force the disaffiliation of a pledge. This disaffiliation procedure took place just prior to the end of the pledge period. The procedure was called by the members the balloting system or blackballing. Informant number 4 accounted for this procedure by stating:

The whole group gets together and votes on each pledge [at the end of the trial period]. We vote on him no more than three times. We each pass by the ballot box and drop in a white marble for yes and a black marble for no. The first time we ballot on him and if he gets just one blackball we discuss him. If the box is clear [no blackballs] you don't even have to discuss him. After the discussion we vote again and if there is still a black-

ball, he can't go active with his pledge class. He's got to stay a pledge. On the third time a blackball means he can never be an Eta Theta.

Each pledge was judged by the active members prior to becoming a full member. The actives, when recalling their experiences during the pledge period, stated that they had heard of a person or persons being blackballed on the third ballot, but none of these persons could supply any names. None of the informants reported having any members of their own pledge class blackballed on the third ballot.

Disaffiliation at the discretion of the pledge was possible at any time during the trial period. If at any time he felt that he was not fitting into the group he was permitted to quit. Those persons, too, who were asked to remain a "pledge" for another quarter as a result of the second ballot blackball were also allowed to quit (informant number 12):

If a person is asked to remain a pledge another quarter he is likely to take this as an insult, like someone is trying to tell him something, and would probably drop his pledge [quit].

Big Brother

The results of balloting seldom came as a surprise to the pledge. Throughout the pledge period, he was affiliated with a big brother who was seen as a liaison between the active membership and a particular pledge.

The big brother was selected by the pledge at the beginning of the pledge period. According to informant number 1:

The pledge picks his big brother. He puts on a piece of paper three names in the order that he wants them. Of course, these are kept confidential by the officers. He puts his first choice on top, second choice, then third choice. Then these are given to the actives and in active chapter meeting they say, 'So-and-so, would you like to be Joe Blow's big brother?' And then so-and-so says, 'Yes, I would,' or he might say he's too busy this quarter to devote enough time to it, so they go to the second name.

Informant number 6 described the big brother as:

. . . sort of a liaison between this person and active chapter. There's a sectional meeting where we have pledge comment, and if there's been a pledge that doesn't seem to be coming across the way he should it is discussed at the sectional meeting. Then it's that person's big brother's responsibility to talk to this person and if the pledge has any bitches, the pledge talks to his big brother and it's the big brother's responsibility to try and straighten him out.

From the point of view of the pledge, the big brother served a different function from that of liaison. The pledges tended to view the big brother as a friend who helped and protected them. Informant number 9 stated that the big brother was:

. . . someone you can go talk to when you're having problems about anything and someone you can go out with and have a good time partying. Now, of course, I realize that a big brother is really to help the pledge along within the house; he's supposed to help him get down to the house and every once in a while at the sectional meetings some of the guys complain about what the pledges are doing and it's up to the big brother to either justify his actions or go speak to him about it.

Informant number 9 made a distinction between the real and the ideal in his description of the pledge-big brother relationship. He stated that there were certain functions which the big brother was expected to perform, such as to insure the

pledge's participation in the activities. He also illustrated that the real value of the big brother was that he provided the pledge with friendship and also gave the pledge somewhat of a voice of defense in matters in which the active chapter was acting in a judgmental manner.

Pledges and the Pledge Trainer

As mentioned earlier, the pledges viewed themselves and were viewed by the actives as being a group. The fact that they were a group was signified by certain conduct which the actives and pledges expected of the group. Among other activities, they were expected to engage in holding meetings of both a business and educative nature, electing officers, planning activities, doing house duties, and collecting money. Each of these activities was supervised directly or indirectly by a person who was an active member. This active member who supervised the pledges was given the office and title of pledge trainer. The pledge trainer, in the words of informant number 7, was described as such:

First of all, his first responsibility is to orient the pledge to all aspects of the fraternity and campus life. He is a link between the pledges as a group and the actives as a group. He coordinates everything we do.

Informant number 8 further stated:

The pledge trainer comes down every Monday night [when the meeting is held] and tells us how our pledge class is to be run. We are expected to do certain things and he makes sure we do them right.

The pledge trainer was given the job of overseeing the

pledge activities and handling the responsibility for their well-being. Ordinarily the pledge trainer proposed to the pledge class the specific procedures to follow during their formal meetings.

The proposed guidelines from the pledge trainer appeared to be of standardized form since the format of the pledge meetings did not vary from quarter to quarter or from year to year. The first thing the pledges were expected to do was to meet weekly. In the case of Eta Theta, this took place every Monday night throughout the pledge period. The first meeting was comprised of an introduction to the format of the pledge period and the election of officers for the pledge class. As informant number 12 said:

We all got together and Dave [the pledge trainer] told us what he expected of us and then we elected a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. These were all pledge officers.

Formal pledge education, as noted earlier, also took place during these pledge meetings.

Becoming More Informal

During the trial stage, there were a number of activities in which pledges participated. The trial stage was seen as a period in which a pledge was making another step toward becoming a member of the fraternity. The frequent contact with each other as a group and with the active members afforded the pledges the chance to become members. During the trial or pledge period the pledge recognized, often

in retrospect, that there were certain events which were seen as significant to progress toward membership.

As the Monday night meetings progressed, pledges saw a change from a formal educational experience to a more informal type in which activation was discussed. Informant number 7 stated:

I think as the meetings go on through the quarter, you see a big change between an educational type of meeting to a meeting where activation is talked about. Also, your big brother starts talking to you about whether you like the house and sees if you want to go active.

The change to informal meetings and the talk between the pledge and his big brother were seen by the pledges as signals which denoted that the pledge period was coming to an end. The signals of the termination of this stage were generally quite subtle and subject to the interpretation of the individual pledge. The account of informant number 13 stated this well:

The pledge knows when the end of the quarter rolls around he's pretty well educated, and he feels more comfortable around the house and if this is true, if he does feel more comfortable, if it is something he likes, he begins thinking about activation. In the meetings activation is talked about. If everything in the pledge period goes the way it's supposed to and he's down here a lot and he really feels good about things, and he likes what he sees, then the actives stress and talk about activation to him in an informal way.

The pledge recognized, thus, that the pledge period was coming to an end because of these signals that he received. These signals included the change from formal to informal meetings, a feeling of comfort in the house as opposed to feelings of being an outsider, and, in general, as a result

of exposure, a feeling of being "part of the house" or a feeling of membership. Informant number 6 summed up these signals by saying:

Usually right after a guy pledges, he's still really uncomfortable around the house. You can see it like when a guy comes down to the house the first four or five times 'cause he doesn't know the house real well and he's still real jittery and stuff, but by the time activation comes around, if he's been down to the house quite a bit and he takes part in the house activities, then he'll feel like a part of the house, because he's more comfortable with the guys in the house and he gets to know them better.

Faced with the end of the pledge period, actives and pledges joined together to move to the next step of the membership process.

Chapter 7

CULMINATION OF THE PROCESS: HELL WEEK, INSPIRATION, AND ACTIVATION

The final stage of the process began with hell week or inspiration week. Until 1969, hell week was an event that was seen by pledges and active members alike as the culmination of the trial period and the beginning of the final stage. In general it involved a three- to five-day period of time during which actives ritually required the pledge group to go through a series of actions which were defined by the University of Montana as "degrading and an act of buffoonery." It consisted of various events in which the actives made the pledges perform tasks which caused the pledges to play the role of stupid, subservient persons. By an act of the university, hell week was no longer allowed by the time of this study, although some of the informants reported that hell week still took place in other fraternities at the university. Nevertheless, the data which accounted for this phenomenon called hell week were included in this study. The decision for inclusion of such findings arose from the fact that each and every informant made mention of this phenomenon. In most cases, the informants did not see hell week as an act of debasement and "buffoonery," but rather as an important force which united the pledge class. Included in the discussion

of hell week was a look at the new phenomenon, inspiration week, which was the culmination of the trial period. The informants felt that inspiration week and hell week had in common only two facets. These were the fact that inspiration week took place at the same time that hell week took place and that each one was a ceremony signaling to the pledges the end of pledgship. The data led to the conclusion that both inspiration and hell weeks served the function of uniting the pledge class together and against the active membership. The data presented in the following paragraphs substantiated the view that inspiration week served a function of uniting the pledge class. However, according to the informants, inspiration week did not serve the uniting function as effectively as hell week did. The phenomenon of hell week is discussed in this section, followed by a discussion of inspiration week, and summarized with a comparison of the two events.

HELL WEEK

During the first week of the quarter following the quarter in which persons pledged a fraternity, the pledges were invited to stay at the house for a few days. In general, the informants who experienced hell week reported that they knew prior to hell week that this phenomenon existed and would take place at this particular time. However, they revealed further that they did not know exactly what was going to take place. Concerning this, informant number 5 stated:

At the end of your pledge period hell week starts. I was a fall quarter pledge and hell week started the first part of winter quarter. In order to go through hell week you had to get a 2.0 [university grade point average] the quarter before. If you made grades you were invited down to the house for initiation. We didn't really know much about hell week except that it was there. We knew that we were coming down to the house for four days but we didn't know what to expect.

Informant number 14 mentioned"

I came back to the house and told everybody that I had made grades and nobody said anything. My big brother brought me a card and told me to come down to the house and bring the card on Thursday. I had no idea what was going on. I had heard about hell week. I really wasn't led to assume anything but I figured I'd have to go through this before they [active members] would consider me for going active.

From the outset of hell week the pledge was cognizant of the fact that the active members were directing the action. Hell week was characterized by general humiliation or subservience for the pledge. Informant number 7 observed:

Hell week isn't torture exactly, but rather humiliation. When I went through hell week we started out by being down in the basement wearing old grubby clothes. We were standing down there and the president was giving us a serious talk and all the actives were upstairs jumping up and down, screaming and yelling and we [pledges] thought we'd had it. We didn't know what to expect.

In the accounts of hell week it was found that specific events were usually recalled by the informants. However, to list any specific incidents peculiar to particular accounts of hell week was not intended since this study was designed to show the general process involved in becoming a fraternity member. Thus, the reader should refer to Appendix B for specific hell week accounts.

According to members, hell week apparently rose out of a desire to strengthen the interpersonal relationships of the pledges as a group. Whose idea hell week was and when it started was unobtainable information. The function of hell week was explained, however, by informant number 1, who said:

The original intention of hell week was to strengthen the pledge class. You'd get so mad at the actives and what they were telling you to do that you [the pledges] would all bind together and be a stronger pledge class. This experience of hell week always causes the pledges to feel like brothers because you'd be so mad at the actives. All you could do is stick together and fight it out.

Some informants stated that they thought that at its time of origin hell week was not as rough as it turned out to be. Instead it was a period of time when the pledges lived together for a short while and attended to all the exigencies of life together, such as eating and sleeping. The original intention of hell week, therefore, was to culminate the trial period with a test of this nature to emphasize the general function of the pledge period which was to mold the pledges into a group.

In the spring of 1968 the University of Montana passed a rule concerning the fraternities in general which outlawed the use of hell week or any other form of torture in their rules of initiation. Informant number 12 stated a reason for this rule:

I guess there's too many guys like me that can't sit there and look at a guy that you've been running around with for three months and scream and holler at him and shake up cokes and squirt them in his face. That kind of

thing I just can't do. I think it was our pledge class winter quarter that really pushed getting away from it [hell week]. I guess there were enough of us that we swayed everybody.

FROM HELL WEEK TO INSPIRATION

With the phenomenon of hell week being outlawed, the fraternities were given the task of devising a new culmination ritual for the pledge period. This new ritual was called by two names--inspiration week or help week. The duration of the new ritual was still three to five days. The pledges still spent these days living in the house. In general, the informants, while not approving of the tactics of hell week, did not feel that inspiration week served the function of uniting the pledge class as adequately as hell week. Informant number 5 told of inspiration:

We just sit around and talk fraternity. We also clean up the whole house. We get the kitchen cleaned, pull everything out of storage and pull all the shelves out and paint them. We do all the major work. Mostly this is done just to get everybody together, talking together, studying for their test to go active. I really don't think it does the job like hell week did.

This account by informant number 5 was typical of others interviewed. At the beginning of this section it was stated that although the informants claimed that inspiration week was not intended to serve the same function as hell week, there were still similarities between the two. The main similarity was that both hell week and inspiration week had similar explicit goals. Both were designed to force the pledge

class into a self-defined group. The informants reported that the two events were dissimilar for two reasons. The first reason was simply that since hell week was not allowed, to replace hell week with a like or similar event would be in blatant disregard for the rule set forth. The second reason dealt with the question of effectiveness. Since the informants felt that the week of inspiration was not as effective as hell week in causing the pledges to feel an esprit de corps and for them to define themselves as a group, informants believed that the two events were not specifically the same. Still, however, in terms of purpose, the two forms of ritual were similar.

ACTIVATION

Activation was the final event of the process of becoming a fraternity member. The time lapse between first contact and activation was generally about four months. As stated earlier, the entire process spanned a time period which included a change in academic quarters. If a person pledged a fraternity he was due to go through the activation ceremony no earlier than the next quarter. The reason for this, according to University rules, was that the pledge was required to attain a C scholastic average during the full quarter prior to becoming an active fraternity member.

The activation ritual was a distinct ceremony which served as a culmination activity of inspiration week, or as in

the past, a culmination of hell week. Informants did not report that hell week or inspiration week was the point which they saw themselves as members. Instead, only a part of inspiration week, activation, was seen as the point at which a person actually became a full member. Taken as a unit, inspiration week was described in the words of one informant, as "draining out and filling up" the pledge.

Prior to going through activation the pledge had his final opportunity to disaffiliate with the fraternity. Informant number 1 described this lead up to activation in this way:

About two weeks prior to the end of the quarter, he's asked by his big brother if he wants to go active [attain active membership] and if he says he definitely wants to go active, then the rest of the pledge period is spent in getting ready for it and the pledge really gets anxious about it because he realizes that his pledge period is coming to an end. There's no real activities that go on to stress the end of his pledge period other than the activation itself.

While the pledge was given his final chance to disaffiliate at this time, the actives, too, through balloting, had an opportunity to disaffiliate or drop a pledge.

Activation was viewed as a ritual which, in effect, tied the pledge to the fraternity by making him an active member. The activation ritual itself was a closely guarded secret; therefore, no specific information in terms of what took place was obtained as to its nature. Informant number 7 stated:

The activation ritual is secret. It's something that you don't feel like a real member all the way through because of what the ritual is like. You're more or less unsure of yourself, but the minute the ritual is over, it's the neatest feeling in the world. I felt like a member. There is definitely a different feeling before and after.

Activation, then, was a ceremony which was characterized by secrecy in the choice of settings, ritual, and specific time, and which served the functions of terminating the process of becoming a fraternity member and placing the former pledge in the position of being an active fraternity member.

Chapter 8

SUMMARY OF THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A FRATERNITY MEMBER

The preceding chapters have described the process by which persons became fraternity members. The process was one which took place over time and one in which two groups, active members and prospective members, participated. The result of the participation was that persons assumed the status of membership. The process took place, usually, over a ten-week time period and was characterized by identifiable steps or stages. In general these steps were regular and predictable to both groups.

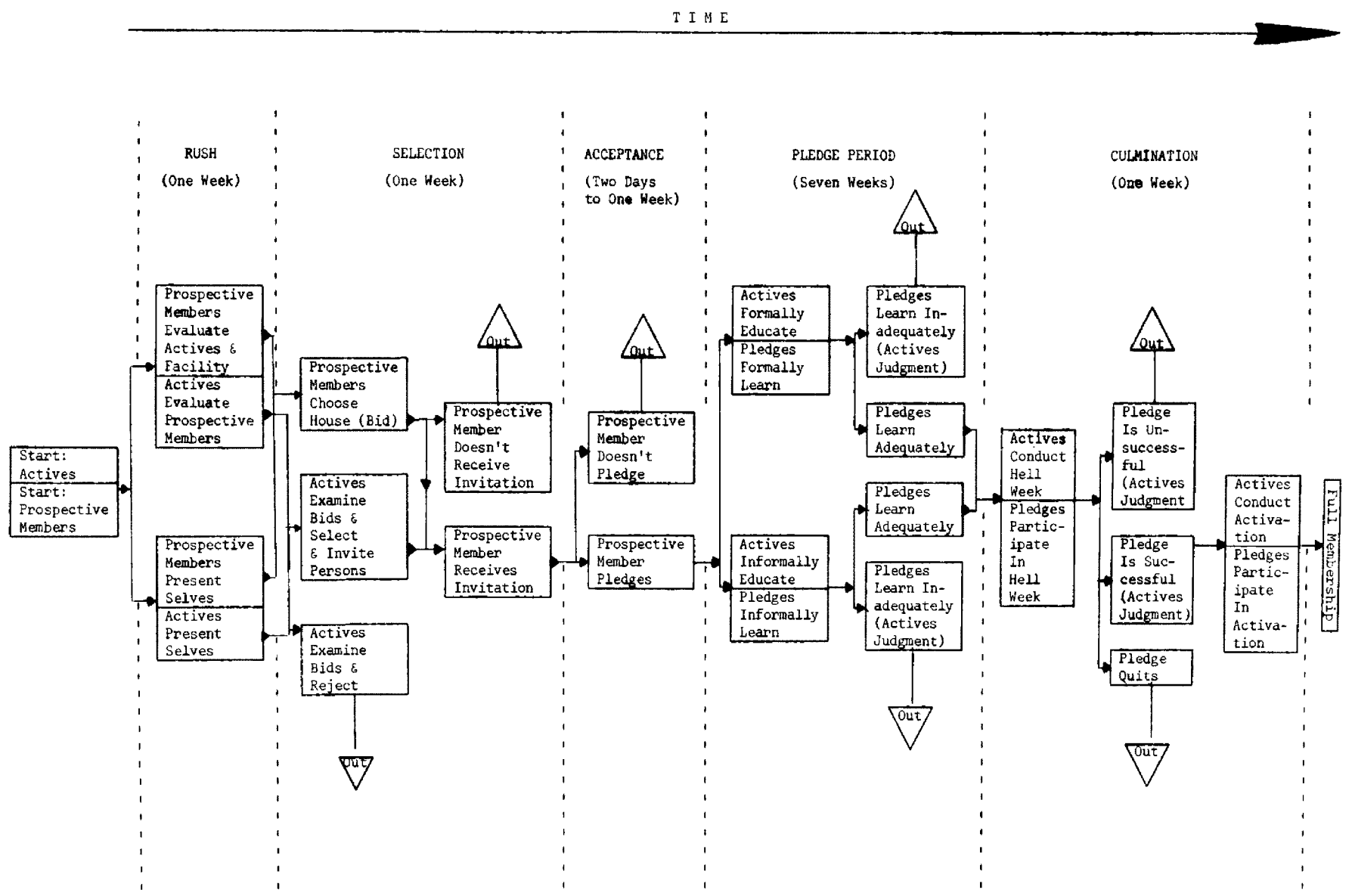
The first step involved in becoming a fraternity member was that of initial contact. At this time persons with a desire for membership first took notice of the fraternity. They then presented themselves to the fraternity in a way that encouraged active members to take these prospective members into account through rush activities. Rush comprised the second stage. Step three involved conduct in which both the prospective members and the active members made a selection or choice. For the prospective members this was a choice of the fraternity with which to affiliate. For the active member the choice involved a decision concerning which prospective members they wanted to ask to participate in fraternity life. Having made these deci-

sions both groups entered a short stage in which each determined whether or not to accept the decision of the other group. That is, actives decided which of the persons who selected their house they would allow to affiliate, while the prospective members decided whether or not to affiliate with the fraternities from which they received bids to pledge. This stage was called "acceptance." The signal denoting that this step was terminated was when the prospective member either pledged or dropped out. Having pledged, the prospective member was known then as a pledge and the fifth stage, the pledge period, began. This step was characterized by both formal and informal pledge education and lasted about seven weeks. The sixth, and final, stage involved various culmination events. These began after the completion of the pledge period and consisted of the hell week or inspiration week and the activation ritual. After successfully completing all of these steps, persons finally were entitled to become members and assumed the status of membership.³⁰

Having described the process by which persons became fraternity members, it seems reasonable to move now toward a theory of member and membership, which is discussed in the next chapter of this study.

³⁰These steps are represented graphically in the following flow chart which shows the reader the process through which persons move in order to become fraternity members. (See figure 1).

Figure 1
Procedure for Becoming a Member of Eta Theta



Chapter 9

TOWARD A THEORY OF MEMBER AND MEMBERSHIP

The Oxford English Dictionary³¹ defines member as "each of the individuals belonging to or forming a society or assembly." It defines membership as "the condition or status of a member of a society." Therefore, persons who become members through a process are said to occupy the status of membership. In the previous chapters the process by which persons became fraternity members was described. For purposes of clarity a diagram of that process was included in Chapter 8 (See figure 1). From that diagram it can be seen that persons moved from one status (nonmember) to another (member) through the successful completion of successive stages in the process.* Those successive stages provide a framework which can be used to guide the discussion toward a theory of member and membership in this chapter.

Fraternities, in general, are social organizations characterized by varying kinds of association between its members. These forms of association are discussed extensively in the literature.

³¹Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "member."

*Note: Underlined sections denote propositions generated from the data.

Early in the history of sociology, Ferdinand Tonnies³² differentiated two types of social association: Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. Loosley translated the terms as accepted to mean community and society. Nisbet differentiated community and society by noting that the concept of community is founded on the wholeness of man rather than upon one or another of the roles that he plays.³³ The prototype of Gemeinschaft or community is the family or friendship group, whereas the prototype of Gesellschaft lies in associations which are end- or goal-oriented and in which persons are seen as the means of attaining the planned goals. Later Emile Durkheim³⁴ discussed "mechanic" and "organic" types of solidarity which, in general, refer to the same types of association as Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. These two typologies were followed with others expressing essentially the same meaning but in different words. For example, Simmel³⁵ spoke of metropolis as the term denoting society at large. Charles N. Cooley³⁶

³²Ferdinand Tonnies, Gemeinschaft und Gessellschaft, 1887, trans. by Charles Loomis (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1963).

³³Robert A. Nisbet, The Sociological Tradition (New York: Basic Book, Inc., 1966).

³⁴Emile Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society, 1893, trans. by George Simpson (New York: The Free Press, 1933).

³⁵Kurt Wolf (trans.), The Sociology of Georg Simmel (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press of Glencoe, 1950).

³⁶Charles N. Cooley, Social Organization (New York: Charles Schocken Books, Inc.), pp. 23, 38.

made the distinction between primary and secondary types of association. Finally, Talcott Parsons³⁷ discussed expressive and instrumental solidarity, once again denoting what is essentially *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* in character.³⁸

For the purposes of this study, these terms all are referred to in this chapter in the same sense. They are seen as types of social organization at the ends of a continuum. They are ideal types which provide a useful framework in which to look at the roles, rituals, and organization found in the process of becoming a fraternity member. However, instead of using any of these particular terms, the term "house-like" is employed in this section to denote *Gesellschaft*, organic solidarity, instrumental solidarity, secondary association, or society. The term "home-like" is used to denote *Gemeinschaft*, mechanic solidarity, expressive solidarity, primary association or community. The words "house" and "home" were chosen simply because they better reflect the language used by the fraternity pledges and members.

All of the above theorists stated that in social organization there exists a typology of association. The preceding chapters of this study discussed the various types of associa-

³⁷Talcott Parsons, The Social System (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1951), pp. 537-38.

³⁸Robert Nisbet in his book Quest for Community (1953) discusses persons in complex societies who have for years expressed a desire to move back toward the "Good old days." Perhaps this desire toward a "union of *gesselschaft*" could explain the reason for the existence of fraternal organizations within the framework of the university society.

tion found in the steps involved in becoming a fraternity member. Looking back at the content of those chapters, one can see both house-like and home-like association experiences.

Since both member and membership were found in the fraternity, it is important here to distinguish and take into account each of these types of association within the organization. The organization of the fraternity was such that the prospective member was introduced to both house-like and home-like association. The data suggested that persons saw effective recruiting as a procedure which emphasized the home-like association. Both the prospective member (person being recruited) and active member (the recruiter) recognized the importance of projecting a home-like image of the fraternity. This emphasis was seen in the account of informant number 6 which was cited previously:

I know the one thing that impressed me when I was a rushee [recruit] was just the guys in the house. They were really friendly. I'd been to the other houses [fraternities] and this was the thing that sold me was just how friendly everyone was, and how easy it was to get to know them.

This theme of friendliness was found to be characteristic of the recruiting phase of becoming a member of the fraternity. The importance of this was recognized also by those persons who were engaged in recruiting. For example, informant number 1, an active, stated:

I think the new members choose the house for a number of reasons; usually the most important thing is the guys he's met from the houses and the ones he's most impressed with--the nicest guys.

Recruiting and being recruited was conducted as a home-like affair. It was characterized by friendliness, "nice guys," and informality.

The selection of pledges by the actives clearly was based on both home-like and house-like considerations. The emphasis throughout, however, was more home-like. Persons were selected by the actives in a sectional meeting, which was described on page 38 of this study, in which the actives made a decision about the desirability of having a particular person become a member. This selection was home-like in the sense that the active members took into account how friendly a prospective member was. It was additionally a house-like consideration, in the sense that the members tried to predict how well the prospective member might operate under the constraints of fraternity living. Informant number 6 accounted for both the house-like and home-like qualities in this statement:

[We select on the basis of] . . . he's a good guy and he'll do a good job for the house. We don't want a person who nobody likes or who can't fit into the rules of the house.

It can be seen, then, that both the home-like and house-like types of association were recognized as essential to membership by the members of the organization.

Pledging as a ritual contained both home-like and house-like components. Like the selection procedure, the act of pledging took into account the need for both types of associ-

ation in order to permit persons to attain membership. As mentioned earlier by the time of the pledging ceremony, the actives had made their selection of persons to pledge and the prospective members had accepted the invitation to become a member. After being pledged the prospective member moved to a new status, that of pledge. The ritual of pledging itself caused and signified this status change. According to informant number 8, pledging was characterized by:

. . . giving yourself, in a sense, to your new friends and to the fraternity. You take a new responsibility to the house and you gain new friends by doing it.

The nature of any ritual,³⁹ such as pledging, is guided by formal rules and tends to be ideological in nature. This certainly gave the fraternity pledging ritual strong house-like overtones. However, included in the house-like ritual was a personal touch especially evident in pocket pledging (page 42), which was characterized by taking the prospective member aside and personally enabling him to pledge.

In summary, recruiting and pledging displayed both house-like and home-like types of association. They integrated both types of association in one identifiable stage of becoming a member. The pledge period, however, revealed more distinct types of interaction.

The pledge period, as noted earlier, was a time during

³⁹Erving Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1959).

which education of the pledge took place. The education of the pledge in this study was divided naturally into formal and informal education. These educational types can also be viewed as corresponding to house-like and home-like association. The significant roles found in these educational types were those of the pledge trainer and the big brother in providing normal and informal education respectively. The pledge trainer was a person who formally educated the pledge while the big brother handled his informal education. It was during this stage, the pledge period, that the pledge was exposed to both house-like and home-like types of association. These types of association were shown to the pledges during what was called "education." The pledge period was seen by all persons concerned as a trial period in which ". . . the pledge sees if the house and the people are what he wants and for the actives to see if they really want him."

The education types and the roles of the educators were shown nicely in the following account of informant number 7 found on page 48:

He [pledge] gets educated. He gets a formal education at our pledge meeting. This [formal education] is where he gets educated about things like what the house's coat of arms stand for, certain rituals of the house, the history of the house, or how the officers work. So they're given a formal education at their pledge meetings and they [also] get an education on, not things you learn at a meeting, but things you participate in.

Informant number 2 discussed what he felt was the most important aspect of pledge education. His discussion can be seen

as dealing with home-like learning through participation.

The formal education consisted of learning about the founding fathers and the rules. Where I learned the important things was from my big brother and friends. I learned about etiquette, mixing a drink and just getting along. I learned a lot from my education but I learned more from the people in the fraternity than from any organized program. I learned just from friends, not so much from teachers.

The two parts of pledge education took place during the stage called the pledge period. This trial period thus gave the prospective member an opportunity to come to know about the organization. The education involved was, as indicated, both home-like and house-like in the sense that it introduced the pledge to the rules and the formal and informal aspects of learning necessary for getting along with people. A distinction can be made here, then, between managing or getting along with the house and managing or getting along with the people; the former education being house-like and the latter being home-like.

The culminating ritual was activation. As noted in the section of this study entitled "Activation," this event was preceded by a build-up hell or inspiration week and was comprised of a confirmation ritual, known as the activation ceremony. This build-up can be regarded as primarily a house-like phenomenon in that it was characterized by a status differentiation between pledge and active and by formalized rules for the ritual. These rules were prescribed. Their prescriptions were goal-oriented. The orientation was toward bringing

together the new members on the basis of mutual plight (note page 61). When this was assumed to have taken place at the end of the build-up the pledges were then allowed to pass from the status of pledge to new status, that of active member.

From the preceding discussion, it can be seen that the process of becoming a fraternity member involved both house-like and home-like association. It also is evident that member and membership are imbedded in the organization.

The emphasis of association is interesting when looked at in the natural temporal sequence of becoming associated. In this study, for example, beginning with rush, the emphasis was placed on home-like types of association. When pledging took place the emphasis was decidedly house-like although not completely. The pledge period was both house-like and home-like. The start of the pledge period was characterized by pledge meetings, which were house-like. As each pledge became more familiar with his big brother and started to form personal relationships, pledge education appeared to take second place to this more home-like association. The culmination ritual, activation, together with hell week or inspiration week, was house-like in nature. This shows that in the organization a pledge must deal with house-like associations prior to dealing with home-like associations. When either of these associations were not successfully managed in the judgment of the actives, the result was either a warning or disaffiliation.

The actives typically expected the pledge to master house-like association at first and from this mastery, to move toward an understanding of home-like association. To move too quickly to home-like association seemed to invoke negative feelings from the actives.

In general, then, it seems reasonable to suggest that membership and member are based upon the knowledge and use of the prescribed house-like and home-like association presented during the process of becoming a member.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

Active

A fraternity member. One who occupies the status of full member as opposed to pledge member.

Active Chapter

The group of actives in a fraternity house. (One informant was quite articulate in his definition of Active Chapter. "They are the ones who are active and promote the well being of that fraternity by participating in campus affairs, sports activities and seeing to it that the fraternity is represented in every phase of campus life.")

Big Brother

A person picked by the pledge on the basis of friendship. The function of the big brother is to help the pledge through his pledge period. He helps the pledge in the areas of grades, dates, studies, and any other problem that the pledge might encounter in any phase of his process of becoming a member. Pledges consider big brothers to be enormously important figures in their lives as pledges.

Brother

Calling someone "brother" signifies a relationship based on trust, intimacy and reciprocal dependence. A close friendship between fraternity members. (This relationship might be considered an ideal type, since persons said it is not found in its pure form anywhere within the fraternity.)

Chapter

A local group of fraternity members which is recognized to be legitimate by the National.

Fraternity

An organization of persons formed for social and supportive reasons consisting of persons who see themselves as having the traits and feelings of brotherhood for one another.

Function

A social gathering sponsored and attended by the fraternity members and their invitees. It is analogous to a party which is exclusive of outsiders.

Going active

This is what happens during the activation ritual which is a formal ceremony where a pledge responds to the ritual and by doing so is allowed to assume the status of member.

House

The dwelling place of the fraternity members. This place is the focal point of the group's activities. House also refers to the members in a collective sense. (House and house-like refer to two different concepts--see Chapter 7).

National

The organization which serves as the central governing body for the fraternity. All local fraternities are bureaucratically accountable to this organization.

Pledge

An associate member; one who designates that he likes a particular house by pledging.

Pledging

The act by which persons designate the house which they want to affiliate with. This is done by receiving an invitation and responding to that invitation in a positive manner.

Pledge Chairman

The active member of the fraternity charged with the formal education of the pledges.

Rush (noun)

The method used for getting the boys to make themselves available for recruitment into the fraternity.

Rush (verb)

The act of recruiting new members.

APPENDIX B

The following are excerpts from quotes of fraternity members when recounting experiences during hell week.

Starting Hell Week

Informant number 7.

. . . we were all down in the basement and we had on old grubby clothes--we were standing down there and the president was giving us a serious talk and all the actives were upstairs jumping up and down, screaming and yelling, and we thought we had had it--we didn't know what to expect.

Informant number 5.

. . . we came down and they told us to bring a suit, a pair of tennis shoes, levis, and a tee shirt. When we got there you went down into the basement, and two old members came down for that, two guys that were both out of school, and they talked about the house and they were real good speakers, and you were ready to say yeah to anything they said. All the actives were upstairs jumping up and down and screaming. All the actives then came downstairs and started laughing at you. You didn't know what to do. All of a sudden this real big kid, one of the craziest guys I've ever known came down in his ROTC uniform and sunglasses and a swagger stick and a whistle and that's where it all started.

Informant number 4.

M. We got in line and we had spray painted numbers on us--we all had a number and we started running in place and doing push-ups and when you answered the phone it was 'Through the grace of God and the courtesy of Bell Telephone Company you've been connected with the greatest fraternity on campus, with whom in these hallowed halls would you wish to speak?' I've remembered it for four years! And things like that, and you found out how to act, how you hop through every doorway, and everything you did, everything somebody asked you to do, you replied, 'I'm doing it because I want to become a Eta Theta, Sir.' And every . . . between every push-up was that way, everything you did, and you cleaned and they had you singing

songs, beer-drinking songs and stuff like that. They had you sing altogether and somebody who didn't know the words, he stood and watched while everybody else did a hundred push-ups or something like that. And everybody just kind of looked at him and just hated him. And it went like that. And then they took us to a cold shower when we got up every morning. And we had to put on our suits and go to the library at 8:00, and we had practice there. They made sure you were studying or at least looking at the pages. You went to your class and came back to the library, and then you went home and ate, went back to classes and came home at 5:00 again and ate supper, which was just a glass of water and a piece of toast without butter and a little piece of meat. Then you got to sit around for a couple minutes, have a cigarette or something, and relax, and then all of a sudden it's upstairs and off with the suits and back into the dirty clothes and you're . . . these things last from 7 until 10 . . . and you constantly just exercise and then you'd work until 2 or 3 in the morning. And then every hour on the hour you were up for roll call. And we were sleeping on the floor with no pillow or mattress or anything.

- I. Did you get to speak with the actives, could you just come up and start talking to them?
- M. You could only answer. But they'd tell you what you could answer, they'd give you your limits, and . . . but all during this, you know, at least once a shift, there'd be a couple actives that would grab you, you know, and take you in a room and you'd have a cigarette and a cup of coffee or a bottle of pop, whatever you wanted, and they just . . . they'd ask you if there were any problems, you know, and just like that you'd sit there and then they'd send you back down. And then we went on missions where you had something to do, 'do not fail,' and you were blind-folded and they'd throw you out the back door, and you'd have to roll a keg end-over-end over Higgins Bridge, and like get an autograph of the fry cook at the 4 B's, things like that, where she'd already been contacted, you know, and she put up a real hassle. And there was this one girl that was really fond of the guys, that was kind of a whore, and one of the guys would have to go . . . Well, this guy would have to go . . . a pledge would always have to go to her house to get a rubber in the middle of the night and she'd have this sleazy negligee on that you could see through and everything and she'd open the door and start working on a guy. And it was . . . you know, you always take the shyest, most timid guy to go, the kind that would just melt when he had to say hi to

his mom, you know, he was embarrassed because she was a girl, and that guy would just come back . . . just all eyes and didn't know what to do! Just things like that, that really a . . . it's really funny, I really enjoyed it, you know. That's something that everybody talks about for years--what they had to do on their mission.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE INTERVIEW 1

Date: April 26, 1972

I: How long have you been a member?

M: I've been a member for almost two years.

I: Were either of your parents members of a fraternity or a sorority?

M: No sir.

I: Were they college educated?

M: Yes sir.

I: Both of them were? First, I want you to tell me the absolute first contact, the first cognizance you had of the fraternity.

M: The first contact I had in the fraternity was when I was a freshman. A couple of my friends were blank and they brought me down to the blank house a couple of times for dinner, but at the time I was involved in football and I never really thought about the fraternity, and when I was down at the blank house, I liked it and enjoyed it but I didn't think it was for me. I'd heard a lot about the blanks, too, which we went into last quarter, and it's just something I didn't think was for me. I never really looked into a fraternity or knew what it was about. I knew a lot of falsehoods about it and things you hear, but I actually never looked into it, but I just assumed it was something that I never really would be interested in. After that summer, I came back here in September and a couple of good friends of mine from here before asked me to dinner at this house and I came down here a couple of times and then came to a couple of parties and this impressed me in a completely different way, and much more so than the blank house did. Not only because I knew more people in this house, but just the way they went about things and everything I'd heard. And I started asking questions about the blank and everything I heard was good. I had realized that everything you always hear about fraternities you usually hear from other people about

other people, and half the things you hear aren't true at all. So I decided to look into it a little more, and the more I looked into it, and found out actually what it was all about, I began to like the idea and, although before I'd never thought about joining a fraternity, once I really saw what was going on--and gosh, every guy I met here I really got along with and liked, and I thought it's something that I really would like and I began to get involved in it and, as a result, several of my other friends outside of the fraternity came down with me. I asked them, then I pledged here, and I asked them down to dinner and they came and they began to like it and get involved, too, and it just really worked out great.

I: These friends that you mentioned, were these friends that you met while you were at college or were they hometown friends?

M: No, they were friends that I met up here when I came to play football. These are guys who were all good friends that I met when we were freshmen. We all felt the same way about fraternities. Dan had seen fraternities when he was a freshman, and Randy--and we all thought that it wasn't for us, but the more we got into it and involved with it, and the more we saw, we kind of changed our idea about it. Although we had all said we would never join a fraternity, once we saw what it was all about, it was something that really appealed to us, so we all got into it.

I: Judging from your experience, what are the possible ways that you can think of that a person can come in contact with a fraternity?

M: I think there's many--well, probably the primary way is during fall rush. There's guys there from all over Montana and they know sharp guys, or friends of theirs let them know when sharp guys come over here, and either people they know from back home or people that friends of theirs know from back home that may come here. They usually get together and bring them in for dinner or get them to house parties or functions during fall rush, and that's probably the biggest way we get our fall rush. But also, I remember last fall, a number of guys just walked into the house. Lunch tables were set up and rushees, they've heard about fraternities, and they either want to see what it's all about or come in and see one. And a lot of times they just come in on their own. They can go to these rush tables and pick up a card and then they walk around to all the houses to see what they're about. And that's probably the second biggest.

I: Then they can make contact through the rush tables or through friends?

M: Through friends, yes.

I: You'd say this is the primary way, though, through friends?

M: Yes, and I think there's two ways you could categorize that: either freshmen that come here and know guys in the house--like from Great Falls; we have a third of the house is from Great Falls because there's so many guys from here and they all know somebody in the house and they bring them down and, as a result, we've really built up a large number of Great Falls guys. I'd say either that, or a lot of guys join their sophomore year, mainly from coming in contact, like through athletic events. Maybe being involved, playing against the house or hearing a lot of things about the house, or guys within the house they get to know after being in college a year or two. We have several members here that I was good friends with as freshmen and now they've been involved with the house, like either playing against the house in athletics or seeing the house participate in a number of things, and they're just starting to come down here now and two of them just pledged that were good friends of mine as freshmen. So I think that you can either get the new guys coming in that are friends from hometown, or you can get guys that have become friends while they've been in college and been here awhile and began to see the house and be involved with guys in the house and then come down after they've been here awhile.

I: Now, I'm given to understand that there is mail literature that goes out to incoming freshmen, that they mail stuff out to them: how effective do you think this is in attracting people?

M: I think it helps in a way, but if an incoming freshman sees this it makes him curious. The literature is pretty well presented, I think, and a lot of times if he sees this it makes him curious and it makes him want to look into fraternities just to see what they're all about. I don't know, maybe it's just prejudiced attitude, but I think once a person comes down here and sees what it's all about, he'd like to get involved. I think the majority of the people that don't get involved really don't know what they're all about. But I think once a person gives the house a chance and comes down and looks into it, I think they usually like what they see.

- I: As a member, how do you see your contact, first contact, with incoming people? How does it happen?
- M: We try to emphasize, especially during rush periods, all the time we try to emphasize the point, a stranger comes into the house and we usually get up and ask him what he's interested in, but usually during rush they make it a point. If a rushee or a new guy is down here, everybody makes it a point to go up and introduce themselves and talk to him. And like, if he eats a meal here, he's introduced to everybody, and usually that's just part of rush that we always make an effort to communicate or talk or meet a new person because you have to get bids on them. And you can't really get a bid on a guy if you haven't talked to him or met him. So it's something all the guys try to do. Then once they establish contact, that's the hardest part. . . .
- I: Do you get recommendations from alumni; do they send you letters saying that such and such is coming?
- M: Very rarely, 'cause usually our alumni are older and they don't have quite as much contact with younger guys coming in. They usually leave the rush up to us.
- I: This rushing you're talking about, what would you say is the general function of rushing?
- M: I think in rushing is the survival of the house. The main function of rushing is, sometimes it's an imposition, but you've got to put yourself out; that's part of being in the house. The general function of rushing is to show guys what our fraternity is all about, and I think your goal is you want to get them involved, you want to get them to pledge, and you want to get them in the house. Usually guys that come down here are guys that have been here before. In rushing, you try to get as many guys down here as you can, and it's kind of bad in a way, but the house judges that guy if he's the type of guy you'd like in the house, and in most cases, most of the guys living here generally are pretty good guys; they're the type of guys you want in the house. So it's all based on rush and it's the survival of the house.
- I: In other words, you've got the rush as the general strategy for attracting new members? Are there various kinds of ways that you go about attracting new members?
- M: Through rush. Like, you could have a guy down here for lunch or for dinner, for a meal, but also during rush

period you have certain things, like casino parties or kegs out in the mountains. You try and create a kind of fun atmosphere or a relaxed atmosphere, but all of this is based around the intent of getting somebody down here; you always have something to do, but the basic intent is still to have actives meet the rushees and talk to them. We have many different kinds of events, but it all centers around this; this is our primary goal.

I: How do you decide what type of person you want?

M: Usually by all the guys that meet him. That's why when we have a new guy here, we try and get as many guys to talk to him, and then they more or less make a hasty discussion, and almost invariably, it's good to the point where we give a guy a bid. And then if the guy has a bid, he has the right to pledge or not. But when he pledges, the pledge period is a trial period, there's no obligation. It's a trial period where, for one quarter, he'll be put down here and involved and see see if the house is what he wants, what he really wants. But also, on the other hand, the house, the guys, see how they get along with him, and almost invariably they go active. Once in awhile we get somebody that just doesn't get along with anybody in the house; he becomes a member of the house, but already just after a quarter there's seven or eight or ten guys that he doesn't get along with at all. Usually if this does occur, he won't want to go active, 'cause usually guys only go active if they really like it and get into it and enjoy it. But it's only a trial period, and if this occurs, he'll have to wait to go active because, although it's bad, it's the only system there is; the house can decide whether they want him to go active or not. And I think it's the only way you can work it because if a guy has been here a quarter and he's not even living in the house, and if already there's seven or eight hard feelings, where they don't think he'd fit in the house, this is what it's all about. Pledging is just a trial period.

I: When a person is given a bid, what do you think the criteria are that he used for selection, say he's given three or four bids, how did you go about selecting, or how do people you know go about selecting?

M: You mean a rushee that's given three or four bids by different houses?

I: Yes, how would he select?

M: Usually I think the most important thing is the guys he's met from each house and the ones that he's the most impressed

with--the nicest guys or the guys that, or a house where brotherhood really exists. I think material things have something to do with it, the financial status of the house, like whether it's on the verge of going broke, the physical plant, like the house, if it's a nice house; it helps to an extent, things like this. Standing on campus helps, and I'd say though, your impression of the members you've met probably has the biggest influence, but I think all of these do come into it to a certain extent.

- I: Are there certain requirements that a pledge has to have in order to get into a house?
- M: The only thing to pledge, if he comes down here, seeing that pledging is such an experimental period, when he comes down here and meets everybody. To get a bid you have to make a good impression on the guys and the guys meet him and he gets to meet enough guys, and so really, bid is based almost on first impression. You made a good impression, he'll get a bid and then he has the entire pledge period to get involved and then, 'cause I think it would be unfair not to get a bid just on a first impression, 'cause if he made a fair impression or a good impression and you gave him a bid, but you were kind of not sure but then maybe once you got to know him and he was down here a lot, through the pledge period, you might think he's the greatest guy in the world. On very few occasions, maybe one out of fifteen or ten, does somebody not get a bid--makes a bad impression, 'cause most guys make a pretty good first impression.
- I: Is there any education that you feel you should give the future pledge before you pledge them?
- M: The education you get before you have a pledge is you just sat down and talked to him, 'cause pledging is probably your biggest step. Once you get them to pledge, next, the second biggest, would be after the pledge and going active, but the biggest decision is getting them to pledge. Usually, the way we go about it, when somebody has a bid, usually at rush parties, a lot of times myself and a couple of other guys in the house will get a rushee in the officer's room or something and just talk to him for an hour or two just about the house in general. Ask any questions he has to have, we tell him the function of the house, the brotherhood that exists, the things we do, what pledging is about, our experiences being an active as compared to when we weren't a Greek. We educate him to the point that we make sure, before anybody pledges, they know all the financial obligations, for instance pledge

fee, pledge dues, activation fee, then the amount of cost to live in the house once you're in the house compared to the dorm, what it costs to live in the dorm, and we make sure he knows every financial obligation there is to know before he pledges. Second, we tell them just about all we know about the house and its function and what it is to live in a group, the fraternity, and things like this.

- I: As a nonmember, they have to make a number of decisions, too. Now, for one thing, they have to have kind of strategies for choosing the fraternity, but what do you think some of the strategies for choosing a fraternity are?
- M: Maybe it's like I said before, but I feel the people within the house have a great deal to do with it--the people he meets and the impression he gets from them . . . The good guys, like I was really impressed because the second time I came down here the guys were leaving to play ball and they asked me to play with them. That means something to kind of a stranger who doesn't know anybody. Also, I think, to me, the physical plant and the reputation of the house have a lot to do with it. Compared to this and the blanks, I never got worried about the Eta Theta house. I knew it was in great shape, so there was no chance of it folding. Whereas, if I would have become a blank, the house would have collapsed the next quarter or two and then I could never have been in another group house, because once you join a group house, that's it. But I think the main reason I got in this house was the guys in it. 'Cause that's really what makes the house are the people in it. I think that's the most important thing to a rushee.
- I: The house has now decided to pledge a nonmember or a rushee, and this rushee is amenable to this situation, what are the various ways in which a house can pledge a person?
- M: First thing, when a guy is given a bid, there's a great effort. Usually the rush chairman will assign a certain number in the house to get him down here, and once he's given a bid--the first time they're down here, before they're more or less just talked to and the guys get to meet them and everything. But once he's given a bid, he's asked down here again. There's usually an active assigned to him, but the primary method, now, of change is instead of just talking, getting to meeting with him, is with the intent that you want to pledge him because he does have a bid. So usually we have three or four functions during the pledge period where at first we get a guy down, get to know

him, and get him a bid. Then the second, third or fourth times, once they have bids, you get them down here with the intent of pledging them. Sooner or later during the function or whatever it is, you try and get alone with him or get him alone with a couple of actives and talk to him and explain things to him. And always an officer has to pledge him, so you get an officer with you--secretary, vice-president, president--and then you talk to them that you have a bid out on him and you'd like to pledge him. Then you explain everything to him and usually, just about fifty-fifty, half the time they'll pledge right then, but a lot of times he says he'd like to wait a week or so, or a couple of days, and he'd like to talk to his parents about it or just wait a bit on it.

I: Now you mentioned that you got an officer who could administer the pledge, now, is this a ritual?

M: Yes, when you pledge the only ritual that's involved really is he just repeats an oath or so many phrases. The officer says it and then the other guy will repeat it and they'll go through this and he makes no real obligations but he's given a pledge pin that says "pledge" in Greek. So it's a ritual to an extent because it's a pledge period, it's just a trial period, you can't compare it to the ritual of going active. The ritual of going active is very much more involved. So you could call it a ritual, but more or less it's just like administering an oath or something.

I: Who are the persons necessary to administer this oath?

M: You have to have an officer, I think, and two witnesses.

I: Two witnesses and the rushee, so there's got to be at least four persons then. Is it conceivable that there might be twenty-five persons, say, there?

M: Oh, yes, but usually it's done in a room that's locked, and I have pledged people before--a real good friend of mine pledged and there must have been fifteen, twenty of us in the room. But usually it all depends, like if a lot of guys are in there talking to the guy, and finally says he wants to pledge, they'll all stay in there and pledge him. But a lot of times, too, there'll only be a couple, three guys in there with him. But if one guy is talking to him and he says he wants to pledge, then he'll just go in there and get the number, an officer and another guy, and they'll pledge him. So it varies.

I: Can you name a place in this house where you wouldn't pledge somebody?

- M: Yes. We wouldn't pledge him in the living room, the music room, the dining room. The majority of people we pledge in the officer's room 'cause you can get in there. Usually you want to get a place that's quiet and like if there's a lot of other rushees around and you just want to talk to him, it's some place you can close the door and just talk to him. You go in the officer's room or up in somebody's room, but I'd say about 80 percent of the pledges that are administered are in the officer's room.
- I: In other words, it's a private place?
- M: Yes. A private place.
- I: What times do these take place--any time of the day or night?
- M: Yes. It can take place any time of the day. The majority of our pledges, I think, we get when they're down here at a function and I think the majority occur at night. But then again, the people that want to pledge that night, when we have that long talk with them, it usually occurs at functions that are at night. But usually the people that tell us about half the time they'd like to wait for a day or two or week or so, it seems to me a lot of times they come down at lunch, have lunch, then say they'd like to pledge. And then we pledge those guys usually in the afternoon. It's probably fifty-fifty, day and night, but I'd say about 80 percent of the time it occurs in the officer's room.
- I: When you pledge a person, have there been any changes since you've been a member?
- M: No, really, it's pretty much the same procedure that was followed when I was a member. I pledged, finally, at an alumni party, and I waited several times. I didn't pledge the second time. I decided to wait several times to see if it was what I wanted. I was one of those type guys who waited about a week and a half or two. It's pretty similar, I guess.
- I: Now that person has pledged and he's officially on his way in the pledge period, what is the function of the pledge period?
- M: The pledge period is pretty much of a trial period for the rushee or the pledge to see if the house is really what he wants. And it's a period for the house to see if he's the type of guy they could really fit in the house and could do a job for the house.

- I: Tell me a little bit about the formal education.
- M: Like I said, when he's a pledge he's in a trial period. He gets involved in the house, he goes through all the activities and the pledge functions, and becomes almost like an active, so he gets educated in that respect, too-- what the house does and the brotherhood and the interactions that occur within the house. He gets to stay here for a week and gets educated to all the things the house does. Then he gets a formal education, like we have our meetings Monday nights; the actives have their meetings, and the pledges have their meetings. And he's formally educated in the pledge meetings as to things about, let's say, what the house's coat of arms stand for, certain rituals of the house, the history of the house, or how our officers work--our executive council, what they go about doing. So they're given a formal education at their pledge meetings and they got an education on, not things you can learn at a meeting, but things you can learn by participating in, by just seeing and being a part of the house, by coming to its activities, just staying here for a week where they're a call boy and by interacting and maybe going drinking with the guys. So I think you could say he's educated almost in two different ways.
- I: There seems to be some certain supportive functions that go on during the pledge period; that is, some people are more significant to them during this pledge period than others, because they are persons that support them through, carry them through. Maybe you could tell me a little more about this kind of thing.
- M: During this pledge period there's several members of the house that he's closer to than others, and he gets involved with them and seems to do a lot more things with them than others--like he'll go drinking with them; also he's given a big brother. All pledges have a big brother and the intent of the big brother, since the pledge is still new, is to help him to understand things and to get him down to the house and get him involved in the house. But I try and go drinking with my little brother or do something with him at least once or twice a week. We try more or less to get with other guys, to get him doing things with other brothers and to make sure he gets to the house enough and gets involved in the house. A lot of times if a guy isn't called up and asked to do things, he might not come down to the house for three or four weeks. And if that occurs, the pledge period isn't effective because he's not really finding out about the house.

- I: Then you feel that the effectiveness of the pledge period depends mainly on the depth of contact?
- M: Yes. A pledge period can only be effective if he gets down to the house enough so he can really get involved with it and see what it's like. If a person comes down only once every two or three weeks, he's really not getting anything out of it, and it's not even as if he's a pledge, really.
- I: When a person is a pledge, there must be certain things that indicate back, act as feedback in his environment that he is a pledge. What are some of these things?
- M: I think things are different than they were. It used to be the pledges were almost considered inferior, several years ago in all fraternities, but I think now a pledge is treated just like an active, and he is an active more or less. The only difference is in the meetings. They have their own pledge meeting downstairs and they're not allowed up here. They can come up here at certain points of the meeting, but they're not allowed up here, like, during the ritual. A pledge also has certain house duties that he has to do, all pledges have to do. They are all assigned like once a week to come down and do house duties, and that's more or less intended to get them down here. There are house duties on Saturday morning, but still then the actives and the pledges come down and do them together, so other than these things, he's made pretty well to feel just like an active.
- I: What does the pledge expect of himself?
- M: I'd like to think that once he's a pledge he expects of himself to get down here when he can and to make a point to know people. Really, the only thing he should expect of himself is to come to the meetings and just to come down here when he can, and if he does that, if he's down here enough, I think that pretty well takes care of himself, because you can't help but get involved if you're down here enough. And once you get involved, the house pretty much sells itself. (End of side of tape--tape continues with . . .) Pledges are down here for call boys. The intent behind that is they get to live in the house for a week and that's when they get to find out more about the house than at any other time, and when he wakes guys up in the morning, that's the best way I know of getting to learn guys' names. When a pledge comes in here, he's going to have trouble. It'll take him a little bit to learn other guys' names, and that's the best way, when I was a pledge, to learn guys' names, that I can think of.

And the guy has to get up early in the morning for a day or two 'cause we usually have a couple of guys, and one guy might have to get up like two or three times, at most during a week, but that's more or less how he lives in the house and really sees what goes on. Like he'll stay up late talking to guys usually and mess around and do other things and he eats all his meals here and he's just like an active. And that's probably when you find out more about the house than anything.

- I: Then, in some areas, the behavior of the pledge is different than the active?
- M: Yes. He's not made to feel inferior in any way. It's just that there are certain things that he does which are all designed with the primary intent of getting him down here and getting him involved with the house and with the actives. 'Cause he's not treated any different. They all have their own specific purpose--everything he is made to do.
- I: How does a pledge know when his pledgeship is coming to an end?
- M: Usually he knows when the end of the quarter rolls around he's pretty well educated and I think in himself he feels more comfortable around the house, and if this is true, if he does feel more comfortable around the house, if it's something that he likes, he begins thinking about activation. In the meetings activation is talked about and usually 60 or 70 percent go active. If everything in the pledge period goes the way it's supposed to be and he's down here a lot and he really feels good about things, and he likes what he sees, activation is stressed and talked about and then we have balloting up here and then almost invariably, if a guy has gone through a pledge period, then the decision is his if he'd like to go active or not.
- I: Does he know balloting is going on?
- M: Yes. He does know that it exists. I think all guys know that it exists.
- I: This is not an activity that he recognizes as an indicator --he doesn't know that it's going on at that specific time.
- M: No. Balloting is something that--they never know what's going on up here, at these meetings.
- I: What are some specific activities that they recognize as indicators of the end of pledgeship?

- M: I think as the meetings go on through the year, you see a big change between an educational type meeting to a meeting where, usually the last several meetings, activation is talked about. The big brother usually starts talking about going active and seeing if that's what you like, and if you like the house and if that's what you want to do. Up here, prior to balloting, several weeks before we have pledge comments, and the guys give their opinions on guys and if there's a problem, a big brother will try and go straighten it out ahead of time so there's still time to straighten it out. And the pledge group is getting together and they have a function towards the end of the quarter, or they have a prank, or they get together and do things. The biggest thing a pledge can tell his pledge period is ending is primarily his own feeling, how comfortable he feels when he gets to know the guys. 'Cause no matter what, when you're a pledge down here at the beginning you feel like a pledge, but towards the end of the quarter you begin to feel like an active. It's more or less the feeling than the person.
- I: Are there certain activities that go on, like I've heard of inspiration week, does he recognize this at the time as being an activity ending pledgship?
- M: Well, our inspiration week, that's another name they give to the activation ritual, isn't quite like that. Ours is more or less like a two-day activation. Instead of calling it inspiration week, our whole thing is only a two-day, two-night activation deal. About two weeks prior to the end of the quarter, after balloting, he's more or less asked if he wants to go active and if he says, yes, I definitely want to go active, then that whole period is spent in getting ready for it, and he becomes anxious about it usually, and I think then he officially recognizes that it is the end of his activation. There's no real activities that go on to stress the end of his pledge period other than the activation itself.
- I: For what reasons would a person fail to become an active?
- M: A lot of times in balloting, I know a couple of examples. A couple of quarters ago a guy made a great first impression, but once he was down here and when we'd have little sisters and girls down here, he'd be cussing and saying four letter words all over the place, and there's several guys in the house that he didn't get along with at all and he made a point of telling them so, and this was really a bad situation. We had an alumni party down here once and he came in drunk and cussing and yelling, and it was

just something that was kind of an unfortunate situation, and that's the only case I know where a guy was dinged in a balloting situation three different times and that means he could never become an Eta Theta. But that's a rare occasion; that never happens, except for that one time. Usually the worst that could happen if a guy doesn't get along with the actives, a lot of times they'll put off his activation and they'll say he is going to have to wait another quarter if he wants to. Like there's a couple of actives in the house now that were asked to wait another quarter to go active, and they did and they went active the following quarter because they were told why and they realized themselves that they were wrong and they made a very good intent to change their ways. There's still another way where the pledge himself might be involved in the house and quite didn't see the house as what he thought it would be that first quarter, and he himself might decide that he wants to hold on as a pledge. So he might have been asked to go active, but then he might have decided himself that he wants to hold on as a pledge. We had a president of a pledge class decide he didn't want to go active because he said that the house, that one quarter, which was true, didn't quite get many activities going, and he wasn't sure it was what he thought it would be. He had his doubts so he decided instead of going active when he wasn't sure, to hold out another quarter and be a pledge. So he held on another quarter and found out it was what he wanted and went active. So there's really more or less two ways--either the actives or the pledge can decide.

I: At what point does a person consider himself a member?

M: During activation a ritual is made so, it's kind of a funny activation; it's the neatest thing in the world, I think. It's something that you don't feel like a real member all the way through because of the ritual; you're more or less unsure of everything, but the minute that ritual is over, it's the neatest feeling in the world. Everybody gets together and goes out, you know, breakfast about one or two in the morning and, speaking for myself, the minute that activation was over, I felt like a member. Because it's the neatest feeling in the world. There's definitely a different feeling after and before.

I: Then you didn't feel as much like a member during your pledge period as you did after activation?

M: No, because there is no significant activity that ends one's pledge period, other than activation, and he feels a lot more comfortable around the house prior to the end

of activation, and he feels a lot more like an active. But that final activation ceremony, the minute that's over, that's when you get the best and the deepest feeling that is the real bond between everybody 'cause everybody has gone through that.

I: Would you say that the activation causes brotherhood?

M: I think that it is a bond which is created prior to this, but I think activation is the biggest thing. It makes a guy appreciate everything so much and there's nothing like the feeling after activation--you can just sense in the air the brotherhood and the closeness.

I: Can you think of anything that I haven't hit in regard to pledging?

M: No, I think we covered everything.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW 2

I: Okay, . . . , essentially what I'm doing here, I don't know, maybe you've heard something about this project. I'm gathering information on the experience, the youth hosteling experience to pledge a fraternity and what I'd like you to do is tell me a logical story of how you pledged and what it was like, and don't tell me anything secret or ritual or anything like that. You probably know better than to do that.

M: First of all, I had no intentions when I was being rushed into going and joining a fraternity. That never entered my mind. I thought, well, I'll do it only to appease the people that were rushing and since they were from my hometown I felt that basically I had to almost join, I don't know. The first quarter they kept inviting me down to dinner and I kept making excuses. I had to do this or had to do that, I had to go here, or making excuses that were lies, and saying I couldn't possibly go. And it finally got to the point that it was embarrassing for me to even turn down an invitation, so then I started to say, 'All right, I'll come to dinner,' and I go to dinner and it was all right, nothing special I didn't think, but I never even gave it much thought or considered joining because that was strictly out. I never considered it. But then one night I was invited to a pledge party and I went and it was a really nice affair and I enjoyed myself and had a good time and I got a little liquored up and

they tried to get me to pledge then and I wouldn't do it then either. And so they kept calling me up and inviting me down to dinner, and finally I thought, all right, I'll pledge. It was just another like going to dinner thing. I thought well I'll appease them this far. So I went and I did pledge and it was April 20, I'll never forget it, it was a real cool time. I came back to my room and thought about what I'd done, and then I thought I probably won't go active, we'll see.

So I went through the pledge period and went through pledge education and got to know pledge brothers, and now this was spring quarter. It was all during spring quarter that I had pledged. And then everybody started talking about activation all at once and I kind of got swept into the swing of things. All my pledge brothers were going active and I had a good big brother and he did not pressure me to go active. He said it has to be your own choice and do what you want . . . if I'm going to pressure you into it, you're not going to be worth too much. So the choice was mine and we would not be going active until October 20th after we came back from the summer break. So it gave me quite a bit of time to think about it.

During the summertime I was back home and there were a number of Eta Thetas that were in the city and they stayed in close touch and we had a good thing going. It was something to do. It was more social than anything, and of course you didn't realize the deeper part of it until you have gone active and been in the fraternity a while. You don't realize those things. It was more of a social thing. And all of a sudden I found myself back in the fall and it was something to do, a place to go. I liked the people. Then I began to think I can't see any reasons why I shouldn't pledge. Everything I've seen is positive and, well, I can afford it, I guess, cut a little here and cut a little there. So I thought, well, I might as well. So I did.

- I: Okay, . . . You've probably noticed that while you were talking I've been writing stuff down. You mentioned rushing. Will you explain to me exactly what this rushing is, in definition form or explanation form?
- M: All right. Now you are talking about it in the sense that it applied to my going active or in the sense that we generally explain rushing?
- I: Well, both senses.
- M: All right. Well, when you generally explain rushing, you

just say that it's the process of meeting people in large groups and individually, where you get to know the person and it's an opportunity both ways for that person to look at the house, and for the guys to look at that person to see if he would become a good brother and be the kind of person that could offer something to the house. Basically, rushing was to me being invited down to dinner, out to parties, social contacts off campus, on campus, whatever. Social contact is what it would be, social contacts.

I: Is it anything akin to, say, recruitment?

M: I would say recruitment on the area of, that the universities recruit football players. In other words, if they can provide something for that team, whether it be if they can make a good waterboy, or whatever, then they would be rushed and they would fly them all over the country or, you know, to see their university and house them and wine them and dine them. And that's basically what we do. We wine and dine the people that we think can provide something for our house.

I: It sounds to me, correct me if I'm wrong, as if the potential member is in a way rushing the fraternity, and in a way the fraternity is rushing the potential member. It's almost a reciprocity.

M: Almost, I'd say almost exactly on that case. However, there are times when you get a reluctant member, such as myself. I really had no care to. I wasn't rushing the fraternity. They could go hang for all I cared. And in that sense, you have to get this person jacked to join and gung ho about fraternity. You have to point out the things that are good. It's a difficult task.

I: Now, you also mentioned here 'going active.' What is going active?

M: My little brother thought that going active was when you gave in the check for the activation. But going active is a formal ceremony when we go through inspiration week, which is not a week, just a few days, three days, depending on the fraternity. But it's a time when you do not degrade yourself, but you make yourself humble for the fraternity. In other words, in our fraternity we clean--top to bottom; we clean the whole house top to bottom, and it's not much fun and it's kind of degrading, kind of humiliating, but it's nothing like activation used to be when they had to drink cows' piss and things like that. It's much more civilized and the reason for this is it's kind of like when you go through all this work and all this

activity it kind of drains you mentally and physically and everything else. And then when you go through this formal activation ceremony it kind of fills you up again, and you see things in almost a different way. It fills you with the ideals of brotherhood, in other words, the secrets and the rituals of the fraternity. Going active is a very moving experience. It's a very secret experience, something that is well worth the time put in, well worth the time put in.

I: Is Inspiration Week in any way analogous to what used to be Hell Week?

M: No, I have said before that this university doesn't have Hell Week anymore. Well, I have since found out that that isn't true. There are two fraternities who have a form of Hell Week. They don't have quite as harsh tones as they used to have; in other words, they don't go out and do some of the really hard-core, raw things that are very humiliating, dangerous to do, for health and mental health. But in our fraternity, no. The only thing they have to do is that they have to go out on a mission and they have to procure something. Like someone will have to procure a pair of ladies' white panties and have them signed by the waitress whose middle name is Emma at the 4 B's Cafe. Well now, there are two 4 B's that are open all night long and in the time that they have allotted to do this there are two shift changes, so that means they have to run between the two 4 B's without a car in the dead of night and with this pair of panties. It's something that's fun to do. I enjoyed mine immensely, but it's not degrading.

I: Is that what you did?

M: That's exactly what I did.

I: You referred to brothers. What are brothers?

M: Boy, well, that's very difficult to explain to you. I'd say brothers are more people that you know through the heart rather than through the head. In other words, when the chips are down, when you need something, whether it be a kind word or a loan or a car or information on a girl or a book, they are there. When you really need it. They are different from other people only by the fact that they haven't gone through the activation ceremony. Brothers are people that you live with. In other words, imagine, if you put thirty people in a house that had never known each other before, or had known each other before, in an apartment house and living in the close

quarters that a lot of fraternities do. Imagine how they would get along. But for some unexplainable reason we don't have fights in our fraternity. We don't have major disagreements. There are petty things like you borrowed my book without telling me, but it isn't, there are no major hassles, no major hassles, and I don't know why, I can't explain it. It's just a heart feeling that people have between themselves and among those that they bring into the fraternity, too.

I: Is a brother, then, one who has gone through activation?

M: Yes. Yes.

I: Maybe you could . . . well you've already explained to me what activation is. Big brother. What's a big brother?

M: A big brother is one of the active members of the fraternity that is picked by one of the pledges of the fraternity. A pledge will go through and during the rush period he will have two or three weeks to pick a big brother. Just through rush and social contacts he will get to know who he thinks would be best to guide him along whatever routes he may need, whatever information he might need. And he helps in any way he can. And the little brother picks his big brother. He puts on a piece of paper three names, in the order that he wants them. Of course, these are kept confidential by the officers. Of course, he puts his first choice on top, second choice, and then third choice. And then these are given to active chapter and in active chapter of course the pledges are downstairs at this time. They say, 'So-and-so, would you like to be Joe Blow's big brother?' And then So-and-so says, 'Yes, I would.' Or he might say he's too busy this quarter to devote enough time to it, so then they go to the second name.

I: Does it ever happen that some active person doesn't get picked by any of the pledges to be a big brother?

M: Of course, because you know sometimes we have large pledge classes and small pledge classes. It's interesting to note, however, that many times the same people get picked over and over for big brothers. I don't know, this could happen for a number of different reasons, but it's an honor to have a little brother.

I: In looking back on your pledge period, how do you distinguish it essentially from your active period?

M: It was a honeymoon. I was being rushed. I didn't have to

do a lot of setting up for parties. I did some cleaning, but I didn't have to worry if the house perpetuated itself through rush. You don't have to worry about public relations for the house. If some of the brothers throw snowballs at an old lady, you don't have to worry because you can just get the hell out. You're not there in firm. You come down when you want to, go to things you want to, get to know who you want to. Whereas when you are active you are forced into all these things, which is good for you. It's good for you. You learn a lot, but it's just more fun and easier for you when you are a pledge. Of course, it's nerve-racking, too, because it's new to you and you think that people are judging you all the time.

- I: You mentioned people judging you. I imagine that being a pledge there are a lot of worries along with the good things. Would you explain to me some of the, what you feel would be typical emotions of a pledge, the emotional state.
- M: I suppose first of all, being a freshman you are not quite as up on things as most of the people who live in the house, sophomores, juniors and seniors. So you're kind of behind the 8 ball, you're riding a slow horse, and yet they're being so damn nice to you, you can't figure it out why they're being so nice to you. So you're always kind of on the lookout to be more like them perhaps. You're worried that you aren't going to measure up to what they think you should be or that they won't accept you as you are. You think maybe you should put on a front for them. You buy a few more clothes than you would if you, you know, whatever. I don't know, it could be a lot of things. I don't know, some pledges are trying to impress people; myself, I don't really think I did because I wasn't that super jacked about it in the first place. I thought it was a going deal, but I wasn't that jacked to get in. If they want me they'll take me and if they don't, well . . . no, being honest, I guess I knew I had a pretty easy way of getting in because these guys had rushed me and at that time a lot of guys from my hometown were living in the house and they had a lot of good words to say evidently. So, it would be one of being judged, nervousness as far as your own personal worth, and perhaps . . . those are the only two I guess. I'm sure there must be more, but right off hand those are the only two.
- I: Do you think the world of the pledge that rushed the fraternity as opposed to the world of the pledge the fraternity rushed, if you follow that, do you think those are different worlds?
- M: I'm not quite certain I understand.

- I: Okay, the guy that is really gung-ho to get into this fraternity as opposed to the guy that like you did, if they want me they'll take me and if they don't want me, that's fine, do you think that they live in a different world? Do you think that they experience things differently?
- M: I think they would. I think things would be more heightened to them, things would be more intense, more acute than the person who said, well, maybe I've got an easy in or if they want me they'll take me, because this guy really wants, is pushing to get in. And I've seen it happen in a couple cases where the guy has tried too hard, has pushed too hard and becomes overbearing. And the actives cringe, they back away. They're not sure of him, they don't like that, they're not used to that--people who are just so super jacked to get in.
- I: It seems to me that there are many steps along the way to finally becoming an active member of a chapter. Pledging seems to be one of these steps. Can you think of any other steps within the pledging or logical follow-ups?
- M: Yes, I can think of--now you're saying one of the steps to become an active or to become a pledge?
- I: Steps to becoming a fraternity member.
- M: A fraternity member, okay. I'd say that steps to becoming a fraternity member would include getting down to the house and getting to know the guys that are going to be balloting on you, getting to know the actives. Now, it's different in each fraternity, but in our fraternity each name is brought up. It's kind of a long story. Each name is brought up every week, pledge comments. Does anybody have any unfavorable comments, derogatory comments, about any of the pledges. And then _____ says, 'Well, Joe Blow was at the Ball last weekend and he knocked my date down and spilled a drink all over her dress, and he didn't even say "excuse me" and that really pissed me off.' And then Joe Blow's big brother would say, 'Well, I'll speak to him about it.' And they try to get to the root of the problems before balloting comes out. Now, balloting is the process in which we select which members would be allowed to go active which are ready to go active in the fraternity. And it takes, there are three sessions of ballots and it's all done in one night. The first session is all names are brought up, the first batch of names are brought up. They'll say 'Joe Blow' and all the people line up and cast a black ball or white ball. And this is a secret ballot, they can't see. They are standing ten or twelve feet behind the per-

son who is voting and they have a covered box with a trough in front where he can pick out what color he wants, black or white. A black ball means that a person should not go active this quarter; a white ball means that he may go active. And he picks up one of the marbles, his choice, puts it in the trough, and the next person goes on through. The marshalls, the people who regulate the voting, who take care of the casting of the votes and things like that, take this covered trough, this covered bin, to the president's table. The president lifts the lid and looks in and he will say, 'The ballot box is clear on Joe Blow,' or in case it isn't, 'The ballot box is not clear on Joe Blow.' Now, assuming that it was clear, his name will not be brought up again, and he will be allowed to go active. Now, last quarter we had twenty names brought up, no, twenty-two names brought up, and of these only five made it clear the first ballot. Then we go to the second ballot, and then we bring up each name. Now . . . all right . . . Joe Blow didn't go active, he wasn't allowed to on the first ballot, so we say 'Joe Blow' and then whoever wants to, if they want to, and if they don't want to that's fine, too, we'll say, 'I think he's a simp; he spilled a drink on my date, didn't say excuse me, and he's got a really dirty mouth, doesn't show any respect and doesn't care; he's never down at house duties.' Then So-and-so will get up and say, 'I've seen him shoveling the sidewalk at 8:00 in the morning when it snowed out. I've seen him carry out the garbage a hundred times.' Well, they bicker it out. And if they don't want to say anything, if anybody doesn't want to say anything, whoever cast the black ball, it's completely all right. So, the second ballot determines if this pledge will be allowed to go active this quarter. Otherwise he will be held over one more quarter only. So then they go through the same process and the president will say, 'The ballot box is clear on Joe Blow,' and his name is not brought up again, or he will say, 'The ballot box is not clear on Joe Blow,' and he will go to the third ballot, wherein this will determine if Joe Blow will ever be able to go in this fraternity. Only one black ball in any of these three rounds and that means he has to be carried on to another ballot. So, if he gets a black ball on the third ballot that means that Joe Blow will not be allowed to go in the fraternity.

I: Then let me see if I got this straight. The first black ball means bringing up to think about it again; the second black ball means not this quarter but maybe in a future quarter; the third black ball means no way at all.

M: Zip. Right.

- I: Okay. Does this happen fairly often that they get into a no way at all situation?
- M: It happens . . . I been in, well, now . . . I've been through about five ballotings and I've seen three people who were not allowed to go at all. One was a mistake, and two were . . . it was good for the fraternity.
- I: If in fact they are allowed, say, to go active, then they continue their pledge period on up to activation; is this it?
- M: Yes. Now, currently we've got a number of people that are not going active, did not go active just recently; just recently we had our activation. Instead they decided financially, for financial reasons, to remain on as a pledge for one more quarter. They can remain as a pledge two quarters total is all. Then they go right back downstairs to the meetings, they go through pledge education things, and they are a pledge in every sense of the word again.
- I: You don't go to active chapter?
- M: No, you do not. They are given no special privileges or anything like that. They are like a pledge.
- I: I see. It sounds like you kind of liked the pledge period, you enjoyed it.
- M: I did really. It was something that did me a lot of good and opened my eyes. I'd been sitting in the dorm for two quarters and I got to know the same people over and over and over again. Didn't meet anybody new. The only learning I was doing was in the classroom and on television. That's not enough. I had to get out and meet some more people, so this was an excellent opportunity.
- I: You talked about affording going active or affording being a pledge. Is this more expensive than say run-of-the-mill college dorm living?
- M: I'd say right of hand, I'd say that we looked into this and we found that dues in the fraternity was about, I'd say \$12 per quarter more expensive than living in the dorm. Now that's concerning room and board. And dues of course. It's about \$12 more expensive. Now you consider that in the dormitory you don't pay dues for anything, you just live there. So it's just a trifle bit more expensive. There's a great myth that the fraternities are an elite

social club for the . . . white class and that's a farce. It really is, because we've got guys in the house that worked three months to pay off their activation fees. It is a little bit more expensive, just a trifle. And then you can live, once you get in you can live it as you want--you can drink as much as you want or whatever. And that will up your costs, and that will provide a lot of other costs that you normally wouldn't have if you lived in the dorm, like going to functions, things like this.

I: The functions cost you . . .

M: The only way the functions cost you money is if you decide to go. There's no entrance fee or anything like that. There's no special appropriations. It's just what you decide to spend on liquor, if you want to buy new clothes for it, how much you want to spend on your date, whatever. That's all that a function costs.

I: Now, what is the difference, say, in cost of being a pledge and being an active--you mentioned three members deciding they couldn't afford to be an active.

M: Yes. Now when you go active in our fraternity there's an \$80 activation fee. Once we get this money it goes straight to national. And they use it for things like building new chapters, flying around the country, whatever--who knows. This is national money, this \$80, and this gives them their lifetime membership in the fraternity, a lifetime membership to the journal, a lot of different things. When you are pledged . . . this summer they just recently increased the pledge fee to \$15, up from \$10. It's \$15 when you pledge and thereafter it's \$15 per month for a pledge. Whereas for an active it's \$20 a month if you live out of the house, and if you live in the house then it's \$17, plus your room and board. The reason there's a difference between live-in and live-out is that there's a \$3 parlor fee to live out of the house. Don't ask me what that's about, but there's just a \$3 parlor fee.

I: Well, can you think of anything that I missed since I'm trying to tell a story of a typical pledge or becoming a pledge, becoming a member of a fraternity or of the Greek world. Can you think of anything that I've missed?

M: One of the things you might bring up, I don't know, what you felt was lacking in the pledge period. You know, some people have stereotypes of what a fraternity should be and what was lacking in it and what they found that

they did not expect to find. For instance, my pledge education was just drivel. There was just nothing to it, you know. We learned some of the founding, well we learned all of the founding fathers, but there was not much to it as far as etiquette lessons, as far as a sociable club, how to mix drinks, or anything like that. You know a young guy doesn't know anything like this and I was expecting to find something like that. I learned a lot, you learn more from the people that you are around in the fraternity rather than any organized process. Perhaps that's how it should be, but it might be interesting to find out just what people missed.

I: What do you think that you missed? You mentioned that you didn't learn how to mix a drink . . .

M: Well, no . . .

I: No, I would agree with you that that's a very important thing.

M: I didn't have a clue about things. I didn't know what rum tasted like and I wasn't sure about the difference between sloe gin and regular gin, and one of the . . . this is a social institution, by golly, and I think we could get more pledges if we gave them more social ineptness, more confidence, more self-confidence. Show them how to mix drinks. This is going to interest some people, it's not going to interest others, but in the same sense your pledge football team might interest some and might not interest others. The point is it will give a well rounded area for the pledge to live in later life. Social etiquette, how to eat, social graces, politeness, courtesy, respect, how to make yourself comfortable at a function. The reason so many actives are comfortable at a function is not because they know all these things, it's only because they know all the people there, where a pledge doesn't, you see.

I: What would be, do you think, the best function that a pledge period could serve?

M: I would say that it would be . . . would be to have almost all the aspects of a fraternity presented to them that are possible, having everything from a formal ball, which like this quarter will provide, a formal, tuxedo ball, and then seeing to it that during the pledge period we have a real ripper, you know, a real floor-stompin', _____ drunk, you know, with the brothers . . . getting to know these people under all these different situations and seeing that a fraternity is not just a bunch of drinkers and

party-goers . . . that they do have the formal balls and things like that, seeing that they do have to get up at 9:00 Saturday mornings to clean the house, seeing that they will go out in the snow and help a guy push his car out of the snow bank. Or, having a Christmas party for children who aren't so well off as some other children. Difficult things. The pledges are busy, too. I mean they've got school and sometimes they can't attend all these things so they get only a warped side of the picture. They don't see the whole picture because they just visit. They can't be there all the time.

- I: Okay, you've given me a lot of information. I'll have to go over this tape again to pick it all up again, but right off hand, once more, can you think of anything that I may have missed?
- M: John, I really can't, when I think of it . . . the only thing is . . .
- I: What might be a good idea--I just thought of this--once I get the transcript of the interviews written out I could give these to you and you could take another sheet of paper and comment on it . . .
- M: Another thing is, you see this is a new question to me and I haven't thought of it before, and I'm sure I can come up with a couple other things, but it will take just a little bit of time . . . and if I have some more time I'm sure I can come up with a few more things that will be of help to you, and I'll be happy to clue you in on some things . . .
- I: I'm not too sure what we're going to use, just trying to get a good story.
- M: I see.
- I: Okay, real good. Thank you, _____.
- M: You're more than welcome.
- I: What I should do is get some information. Let's see, this is _____'s interview, January 11, 1972, member of Eta Theta; you are a junior, right? Were your mother and father ever in a fraternity?
- M: Never.
- I: Are they college educated?
- M: My father is but my mother isn't. She's a business school graduate.

I: Any brothers or sisters?

M: Yes, two older brothers, both college graduates, neither one fraternity.

I: So you're the first member of the family . . .

M: Yeah, and like I said, I never expected to join.

I: Okay. There's something else . . . oh, your age . . .

M: Oh, 20.

I: Okay, real good, _____. Thank you very much.