

The Great Divide: Black Fraternal Ideals and Reality

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Abstract

Black Greek-letter fraternities (herein after “BGLFs”) are unique and complex organizations with a rich history. Holding the ideals of high academic achievement, developing and sustaining fictive-kinship ties, maintaining strong racial and gender identity, implementing a racial uplift agenda, and demonstrating a commitment to the perpetuity of their organizations together define BGLF members. Drawing upon the growing corpus of Black fraternity scholarship, this article first investigates the extent to which Black fraternities have remained faithful to these founding ideals. Second, it explores the ways in which Black fraternities articulate fidelity to these founding precepts. Third, it assesses the degree to which Black fraternities are currently consistent with these foundational ideals. And fourth, it examines the future of Black, collegiate-based fraternalism in specific to contemporary challenges to BGLF’s function and even existence, especially in regard to hazing. Broader implications, specifically in the legal realm, are discussed.

If you can walk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or talk with kings nor lose the common touch.
Rudyard Kipling (1910)

For generations, Black Greek-letter fraternities (hereinafter “BGLFs”) have stood as symbols of African-American achievement and status (Washington and Nuñez 2005). BGLFs are synonymous with membership in the African-American middle to upper class (Graham 2009), and the accomplishments of individual BGLF members have symbolized many “firsts” within the African-American community. Charles Hamilton Houston, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, was the first African-American to serve on the *Harvard Law Review* (McNeil 1984). Earl B. Dickerson, a Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity member, was the first African-American to graduate from the University of Chicago Law School (Blakely and Shepard 2006). William Hastie, an Omega Psi Phi fraternity member, was the first African-American to serve as a federal judge (Ware 1985). Alain L. Locke, a Phi Beta Sigma fraternity member, was the first African-American Rhodes Scholar (Harris and Molesworth 2010).

Despite the positive image that BGLFs have cast, they have not escaped critique. As far back as 1914, just 8 years after its founding, Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity members engaged in a period of organizational analysis and criticism. Members questioned whether Alpha Phi Alpha was living up to its own set of high ideals (Parks and Bradley 2011; Wesley 1995). By the 1920s, growing concerns emerged about the brutality of the BGLF pledge process (Parks and Brown 2005) – a concern that has only amplified with the passage of time (Jones 2004). Furthermore, in his influential book, *Black Bourgeoisie*, noted African-American sociologist and Alpha Phi Alpha member, E. Franklin Frazier (1957) characterized Black fraternity and sorority members as elitist and frivolous. Frazier wrote, “In their social activities these societies foster all the middle-class values, especially conspicuous consumption.

Moreover, they tend to divert the students from a serious interest in education ... In their enthusiasm for their fraternities and sororities, these adult leaders give the impression that they have never grown up” (1957, pp. 94–95). Recent scholarship has also focused on the ways in which BGLF members may embrace provincial and detrimental conceptions of masculinity (e.g., a “man’s man” or “ladies’ man”), eschew academic achievement and gentlemanliness, and distance themselves from conventions that mark social refinement (Anderson et al. 2011; DeSantis and Coleman 2008; Hughey and Parks 2011). In this vein, but also in light of other challenges facing BGLFs and their image, Hughey (2008b) wrangled with the notion of BGLFs as being increasingly seen as little more than “educated gangs”; Hughey and Hernandez (2013) found that media coverage reiterated stereotypes of Black fraternity men as either violent hazers or entertaining steppers, and Clarke and Brown (2011) grappled with the critique that BGLFs are anti-Christian. To the extent that these critiques and conflicts linger and BGLFs fail to carry out their collective mission and intended identity, we raise the following question (Jones 2009a): are they still relevant?

We analyze the extent to which BGLFs have remained faithful to their founding ideals. The common value orientations of these organizations are explicit commitments to the following: (i) scholarship, (ii) brotherhood/sisterhood, (iii) racial uplift, and (iv) the perpetuation of the organization (Parks et al.). First, we provide a history on the founding of the five BGLFs [Alpha Phi Alpha (1906), Kappa Alpha Psi (1911), Omega Psi Phi (1911), Phi Beta Sigma (1914), and Iota Phi Theta¹ (1963)] that are member organizations of the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) – the umbrella society to the nine major Black fraternities and sororities (McKenzie 2005). Specifically, we contextualize these BGLFs’ founding by analyzing the cultural and institutional factors that gave rise to BGLFs, and how these factors shaped the identity of BGLFs. Second, we explore the ways in which BGLFs articulate their fidelity to their founding precepts. Next, we assess the extent to which BGLFs are currently consistent with their foundational ideals. We close with our perspective on the future of Black, collegiate-based fraternalism.

The founding of Black Greek-letter fraternities: a contextualized history

Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, Omega Psi Phi, Phi Beta Sigma, and Iota Phi Theta were not formulated in a vacuum. A host of factors gave rise to their creation that shaped their contours and informed their respective identities. In this section, we sketch the details of the cultural, overarching institutional, and organizational elements that undergird BGLFs’ existence. We close with the founding histories of five BGLFs that are members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council.

Cultural context

In the decades leading up to the founding of BGLFs, a great ebb and flow occurred within Black society. In 1865, the Civil War ended and the US Congress passed the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, providing some constitutional basis for Black social equality. Blacks, in turn, saw a rise in political and economic power. Within a decade after the end of the Civil War, southern White Democrats began to implement efforts that worked to reverse gains Blacks had made. Furthermore, racial segregation began to spread throughout various parts of the United States. This began a period thus described as “The Nadir” – the low point of American race relations. During this period, Blacks witnessed a spike in lynching and disenfranchisement (Armfield et al. 2011).

As Armfield and colleagues (2011) indicate, Blacks created a host of institutions, out of necessity, to resist racial intimidation, exploitation, and oppression. For example, W. E. B.

Du Bois – an activist, an intellectual, and the first Black person to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard – argued that the “talented tenth,” the cadre of Blacks with the academic training and resources, should uplift the race. Accordingly, in 1905, he and more than two dozen other activists met during the Niagara Conference, the precursor to the NAACP, to search for pragmatic approaches to Black social and economic equality and self-determination (Harris 2012). An array of like-minded Black benevolent and secret societies emerged at the turn of the 20th century (Butler 2005). Moreover, the often-segregated yet resourced academic institutions of Cornell, Howard, Indiana, and Morgan State Universities provided the restrictive impetus, infrastructure, and networking resources for a Black fraternal movement to begin. Accordingly, the five major BGLFs of today began at these institutions.

Institutional background

Cornell University

Cornell University was founded in 1865 in Ithaca, New York. The land-grant university was the brainchild of Ezra Cornell and Andrew White. As Cornell University’s first president, White explicated the institution’s lofty ideals in his opening address. The university was founded not only to establish a certain form of education but also “to develop the individual man ... as a being intellectual, moral, and religious; and to bring the force of the individual to bear on society” (Becker 1943, p. 133). Cornell University’s Great Seal, as written by Cornell and refined by White, reads: “I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study” (Becker 1943, p. 74). Despite the growth in the number of Black Cornellians at the beginning of the 20th century, the small student population felt isolated amid the larger White student population (Kammen 2009). Although the university had technically opened classes to all ethnicities and races, Blacks and Whites spent most of their time separated and did little to initiate interactions. In addition, open racial discrimination existed at Cornell during this period. It is no surprise, in the context of segregation and isolation at Cornell, that young Black students felt the need to organize a Black activist, intellectual, and mutual-benefit society to ensure their solace and success.

Howard University

Founded in 1867 and named after Civil War General Oliver Otis Howard, many educators and administrators in Howard University’s history were among the first Black degree holders or were highly motivated in being responsible for their own education. Even more, the university symbolized growing racial consciousness and desires for equality (Moore 1999). Aside from being one of the first nationally recognized, predominantly Black universities, Howard also provided numerous outlets for advancing the race, particularly in the realm of confronting social issues. Howard excelled at mobilizing their students for reforms during, and after, college. A student protest against mandatory religious activities and group performances of certain controversial songs demonstrated the unity of the student body against unfair or unwanted policies (Logan 1969). For instance, at the semi-centennial celebration, the *Washington Times* reported that alumni had come back to the university after they “had gone into the world to fight and conquer difficulties” (Logan 1969, p. 178).

But just as Howard passed along the values of education and confronting social issues to its students, it also passed along a sense of elitism – at least to a certain social class of them. Organizations like Alpha Phi Alpha (with its Beta chapter founded at Howard in 1907), Omega Psi Phi, and Phi Beta Sigma (both founded at Howard in 1911 and 1914,

respectively) sought to select their members from the social, economic, and academic elite (Hughey 2008c; Moore 1999).

Indiana University

Indiana University was founded in Bloomington, Indiana, in 1820. Throughout the early 1900s, few African-American high school graduates in Indiana attended college. Those who did enrolled almost exclusively either at Black colleges in the South or at Indiana University in Bloomington. The very few Black students enrolled at Indiana University were able to play on athletic teams. However, they were barred from student dormitories, student cafeterias, and social activities and did not pay dues to the Student Union (Thornbrough 2000). In response to the university's restrictive Jim Crow environment that segregated and afforded unequal resources to Black students, African-American students were forced to create their own social networks and organizations.

The founding of Kappa Alpha Psi can be credited to Indiana University's restrictive environment. In the early 1900s, Samuel Saul Dargon used his resources as the curator of the law library to provide Black students with housing and a cafeteria. Dargon acted as an unofficial "Black dean of students," and the facilities that he provided allowed for greater association between Black students (Thornbrough 2000, p. 11). In 1911, the ability to associate with institutional resources gave rise to Kappa Alpha Nu. Kappa Alpha Nu began as a secret society founded by the only ten Black students enrolled at Indiana University at that time. Kappa Alpha Nu eventually changed its name to Kappa Alpha Psi and became a fraternity focused on providing Black students with an opportunity to attain achievement through "knowledge, fraternity, and fidelity" (Thornbrough 2000, p. 11).

Morgan State University

Morgan State University was established in 1867. Originally named the Centenary Biblical Institute, its name was later changed when Reverend Littleton Morgan donated the land for this educational institution (Lovett 2011). According to Phillips (2011), Morgan State University students were progressive during the Civil Rights Movement, as shown through their involvement in sit-ins. Morgan students, along with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), started a sit-in at a West Baltimore Read's Drugstore before this method of protest was widely used. Even when faced with threats for violating trespassing laws, the students remained in the drugstore so as to mandate desegregation. The students not only participated in the Civil Rights Movement but also produced tangible change in the area of Baltimore. Because of the sit-in, Read's Drugstore served African-Americans lunch and allowed them in the store. Today, one can see the pictures of this historic event when walking into Read's.

Although a latecomer to the NPHC, Iota Phi Theta was founded in the crucible of the Civil Rights Movement. The 12 founding members were all older, non-traditional students, of which many had served in the military, had families, and worked full time while matriculating (Ross 2000, p. 134). In the midst of the fraternity's formation, the 12 founders were Civil Rights activists who sought to eradicate racial segregation by participating in boycotts against businesses that held "White-only" policies (Slade 2010). Accordingly, the new fraternity possessed an activist ethos and challenged many of its new members to actively participate in the struggle for civil and human rights (Ross 2000).

The cultural milieu of harsh segregation and a White backlash to Reconstruction era advancements at the turn of the 20th century made for an environment that birthed four of today's five BGLFs. But to suggest that cultural and institutional factors were the only factor elements that gave rise to and informed BGLFs' identity would be erroneous.

Organizations like the Black church, Black secret societies, collegiate literary societies, and historically White college fraternities shaped the genesis, and early form and function, of BGLFs as they arose.

Organizational influence

The Black church

The Black church served as a nexus of social and cultural life in Black communities, and in that role, it influenced Black fraternities by providing fraternity leaders with organizational role models for leadership, blueprints for recruitment, and alignment with moral codes of behavior (Harris and Sewell 2012; Thornbrough 2000). In the early 1700s, White Baptist congregations in the South welcomed slaves into their churches to worship alongside White parishioners. However, such integration was conditional; Black slaves could attend only if their masters were also in attendance (Thornbrough 2000). This period of inclusion ended when Black Baptists came to outnumber White parishioners throughout the South, after which time, Black members of the congregation were forced to either sit in special galleries or to hold their own services (Harris and Sewell 2012). Eventually, distinct Black Baptist churches emerged in response to White Baptists' desire to worship separately from the slave population. In slave states, the Black church developed through the Baptist denomination, but in free states, the first Black churches developed through the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) (Thornbrough 2000). The AME played a similar role with southern Baptist churches in the history of the Black church, but after the Civil War, the Baptist denomination became the dominant creed of the Black church in the North as well as the South because of the migration of free Blacks there (Thornbrough 2000). The first Black church was organized in 1773 by George Liele. Liele's church and others like it were initially encouraged by White slave owners who viewed Christianity as a way to keep the enslaved population obedient (Harris and Sewell 2012). However, the early Black church somewhat liberalized the Black community. According to Gayraud Wilmore, "whenever these [religious] societies were organized, they began to protest against White prejudice and neglect, and with the objective of providing not only for religious needs, but for social service, mutual aid and solidarity among people of African descent" (Harris and Sewell 2012, p. 65).

Harris and Sewell contend that Black fraternities served as "secular extensions of the Black church" (2012, p. 71), by which they were open to believers of varied faiths, agnostics, and atheists but retained a liberal humanist worldview and praxis, especially along the lines of a dedication to racial equality. In this sense, BGLF founders took many of religious teachings related to personal development and collective and mutual assistance and infused them into the secular principles of their organizations. So also, members of Black fraternities were predominantly active parishioners of local Black churches and viewed their dual membership in a Black fraternity and Black church as mutually supplemental to one another (Harris and Sewell 2012). Black churches lent Black fraternities the ideals of brotherhood, community service, and civic action (Armfield et al. 2011). However, the Black church's most important contribution to the development of Black fraternities stems from the numerous "substitutions" that the Black church produced. These included the formation of mutual and benevolent societies and educational facilities and were geared toward providing aid to community members (Harris and Sewell 2012). The educational facilities that the early Black churches formed were Sunday Schools, which taught uneducated Blacks to read and write using the Bible

and instilled a desire for formal education. Eventually, this encouragement of scholastic achievement also became a staple of Black fraternities, culminating in some of these church educational facilities' development into historically Black colleges and universities. In sum, the Black church guided the Black fraternity leaders, instilled notions of brotherhood, and liberated the Black community through the creation of subinstitutions.

Black secret societies

Simply stated, Black secret societies arose because Blacks sought ways to deepen personal ties and embrace ritualized processes and because they were excluded from White secret societies (Butler 2005; Harris and Sewell 2012). In 1775, Prince Hall founded the "African Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons" (Black Freemasonry) in Boston, after being initiated into Freemasonry by an Irish military lodge. Hall was initiated into the Irish Lodge after he was rejected from St. John's Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in Boston because of his race. The Irish Lodge initiated 14 other Black men along with him. It was not until 1787 that these men were granted a charter from the Mother Lodge of England, authorizing them to form African Lodge No. 459. Throughout the 19th century, over 60 other Black secret societies formed nationally. The first Black secret societies emerged in response to the oppression Blacks experienced during the American Revolution. Other societies included the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows (1843), the United Brothers of Friendship (1861), the Knights of Pythias (1864), the Grand United Order of True Reformers (1866), and the Improved Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks of the World (1898) (Butler 2005).

By 1915, roughly two thirds of prominent Blacks were members of various Black secret societies (Butler 2005). Membership was seen to be equally as important as being a member of a Black church. Viewed as a complementary association to the Black church and fueled by Christianity, Black secret societies encouraged members to make society a better place through education and involvement in social movements (Harris and Sewell 2012). Freemasonry's inherent link to Judeo-Christian tradition and emphasis on truth, charity, brotherhood, and community building made it the model of early Black secret societies (Butler 2005). Early Black secret societies, like Prince Hall Freemasonry, encouraged members to "respect and help each other, work to end slavery, and show love to all humanity" (Butler 2005, p. 84).

Black secret societies played three major roles in the development of BGLFs. First, just as Black secret societies were created to give members "a sense of social relationship and responsibility to one another" (Butler 2005, p. 76) under a theme of racial uplift, Black fraternities were later created in response to racial hostility experienced by Black members of colleges and universities and encouraged the same racial uplift urged by Black secret societies (Butler 2005). Second, Black secret societies provided BGLFs with an effective organizational structure – e.g., local and national units, local and national officers, longevity of membership, and use of socially meaningful ritual. Finally, BGLFs used secret society rituals and were organized under the same multi-dimensional purpose of providing mutual support for one another as secret societies. The role that Black secret societies played in the development of BGLFs can be attributed to the fact that many fraternity founders were either members of Black secret societies or were connected to a Black secret society through a family member. For example, several of the founders of Alpha Phi Alpha were members of Black secret societies or were sons of members (Butler 2005). The first ceremony of college men to be initiated into Alpha Phi Alpha in 1906 was held in Ithaca, New York, at the Masonic Hall, also referred to as the Odd Fellows Hall or Red Man's Hall (Wesley 1995).

Collegiate literary societies

Literary societies were founded at colleges and universities between 1760 and 1860 in response to the restrictive nature of the American collegiate curriculum (Armfield et al. 2011; Torbenson 2012). Literary societies filled the void left in the restrictive curriculum by feeding students' desires to develop debate, writing, and public speaking skills (Armfield et al. 2011). Literary societies were, in a sense, "colleges within colleges," as the societies held their own classes, passed out diplomas, and published literature (Torbenson 2012). Literary societies also contributed to their respective colleges and universities by collecting books and creating independent libraries that were usually larger than their institution's own (Armfield et al. 2011). However, the popularity of literary societies declined as college curriculums expanded to cover the areas once controlled by them and as fraternities and sororities became available to provide students with greater social interaction (Torbenson 2012).

Since literary societies decreased in popularity and essentially became nonexistent decades before the first Black fraternity was created, the most important role that historically White literary societies likely played is that they gave rise to White fraternities, which would later provide the framework for Black fraternities (Torbenson 2012). However, literary societies also uniquely contributed to Black fraternities through instilling ideals of secrecy and broad intellectualism (Armfield et al. 2011). Literary societies existed at Black colleges as early as the mid to late 19th century with the establishment of such societies as the Garnet Literary Society (1865) and the Philosophian Society (1867) at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, the Eureka Society (1877) and the Phi Kappa Society (1878) at Atlanta University, and the Excelsior Society (1894) at Fisk University (Bacote 1969; Bond 1976; Cohen 2001).

Further, literary societies contributed to the structure of Black fraternities using secret initiation rites, mottoes, and badges to distinguish members. A link can also be drawn between literary societies and Black fraternities in that both organizations focused on spreading knowledge to their members and encouraged competitive scholastic achievement (Torbenson 2012).

Collegiate fraternities

Although literary societies were the first student-organized collegiate group, their popularity faded as universities began to expand curriculums to cover the areas these societies once occupied (Armfield et al. 2011). In response, like-minded students who sought to correct the perceived wrongs of college administrations, obtain more rights for students, and create a social escape from their mundane studies, designed the early college fraternity. The first White college fraternity, Phi Beta Kappa, was founded at William and Mary in 1776. By the 1820s, the fraternity movement became firmly established at colleges and universities across New York and Virginia (Torbenson 2012). Early fraternities like Phi Beta Kappa contributed to student life by providing opportunities for forming social bonds and engaging in social activities (Armfield et al. 2011). They adopted Greek-letter symbols and rituals from the Masonic order and initiated the rituals of "hazing" and "rush." In addition, early college fraternities borrowed from Masonic traditions such as symbology, secrecy, and the multiple-chapter structure. The Masonic influence stems from the fact that some fraternity founders were Masons. For example, two of the founders of Phi Beta Kappa and eight subsequent members were Masons (Torbenson 2012). The fraternities set goals for individual members including high academic standards and the pursuit of excellence. The fraternities also provided social escapes for students through drinking, card playing, smoking, and womanizing (Torbenson 2012).

White fraternities provided the framework for the creation of Black fraternities. The factors that brought about both were similar, just as White fraternities developed between like-minded individuals, Black fraternities were also created by minority students who shared a desire to provide a sense of brotherhood among one another (Torbenson 2012). For example, Alpha Phi Alpha was founded in 1906 at Cornell University by several Black students who were interested in “the struggles against segregation, discrimination, prejudice, mistreatment, and the advancement of themselves and their people...” (Torbenson 2012, p. 60). Further, the students at Cornell who founded the first Black fraternity observed the White fraternities on campus and sought to form a similar type of organization for Black students.² In sum, just as White fraternities provided a social escape for like-minded individuals, Black fraternities “filled a niche in the college experience” for Black students (Torbenson 2012).

The “practices” of Black fraternalism

The confluence of cultural, organizational, and institutional factors that gave rise to BGLFs shaped not only their organizational structure but their identity as well. These factors gave rise to complex organizations predicated on principles such as scholarship, brotherhood, race consciousness, and activism and members’ long-term commitment to their respective organizations.

Scholarship

Since their inception, BGLFs displayed a sincere interest in the ideal of scholarship. For example, Alpha Phi Alpha required a set number of study hours each day from prospective freshmen members. In fact, every member was pushed to take part in these study sessions because each member’s involvement could benefit all brothers academically (Wesley 1995). The organization’s mission statement demonstrates its continued perpetuation of scholastic achievement; its mission statement reads: “Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., develops leaders, promotes brotherhood and academic excellence, while providing service and advocacy for our communities” (Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. 2012). Kappa Alpha Psi also instituted study hours early on, and their Fraternity Purpose of personal and group achievement was often focused on academic achievement. Indeed, in 1914, A.A. Keene felt that fraternity brothers “[had] every reason to believe that the brotherhood [had] been an inspiration to better scholarship” (Crump 1993, pp. 25–26). Similarly, a dedication to academics can be observed in Omega Psi Phi’s principles and standards. As set forth in 1911, the first principle mentioned of their four cardinal values is scholarship (Dreer 1940). A commitment to this ideal could be seen as the organization began to expand, for example, Omega only wanted men who could attain at least an 80 percent in scholarship (Dreer 1940). While this standard certainly limited the pool of potential members they might recruit – and thus how quickly the organization might expand – the acceptance of this cost clearly demonstrates the fraternity’s belief in scholarship as an important value. Much like the other fraternities, the ideal of academic achievement is also recognized in the principles of Phi Beta Sigma: brotherhood, scholarship, and service (Hughey 2008c; Savage and Reddick 1957).

Early graduate chapters, such as those of Omega Psi Phi, were charged with explicit goals, including the encouragement of academic achievement through financial assistance (Savage and Reddick 1957). Omega Psi Phi was not alone in its endeavors. In 1946, Phi Beta Sigma sought to raise \$1000 from each of its regional districts for a scholarship fund of at least \$6000 (Savage and Reddick 1957). Additionally, Alpha Phi Alpha had established the Alpha Phi Alpha foundation in 1932, which was initially awarded a \$900 fellowship for graduate studies and three separate scholarships for undergraduates (Wesley 1995).

Brotherhood

Besides scholarship, the ideal of brotherhood is explicitly expressed in Alpha Phi Alpha's mission statement (Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. 2012). It is also observed in songs written by both the early Alpha and Beta chapters, which include "brothers, banded" and "real brothers," respectively (Wesley 1995). Alpha Phi Alpha undertook direct action to ensure its members understood the meaning and purpose of their brotherhood. This included sanctioning actions that could hurt the brotherhood, collectively joining together to ensure an individual brother could financially remain in school, and officers' statements at meetings regarding the importance of brotherhood (Wesley 1995). Article II of the Kappa Alpha Psi Constitution establishes one of their purposes as "[uniting] college men ... in a bond of fraternity." Some of the ways they went about fulfilling this purpose was through a fellowship, as well as undergraduate housing plans. The primary goal of the housing plan was to allow members to grow as companions in life and academia together (Crump 1993). The motto of Omega Psi Phi states that "Friendship is essential to the soul," while the preamble to their constitution enumerates the ideal of fellowship (Dreer 1940, pp. 13–14).

From the beginning, chapters knew that graduate or alumni chapters would provide a longer-lasting link to the fraternity and hoped that it might foster a stronger commitment to the lifelong brotherhood to which so many had pledged. As the first graduate chapters of Phi Beta Sigma were being established, some surmised that the reason fraternal spirit had dampened among alumni was because they lacked a connection to the undergraduate experiences that had stoked their loyalty (Savage and Reddick 1957). By establishing alumni chapters, fraternities are able to strengthen the spirit of brotherhood, not only between alumni chapter members but also between members of different alumni chapters, the undergraduates they interact with and assist, and the fraternity on a national level. Through their membership in alumni chapters, members could continue their fraternal experiences and expand upon their brotherhood at events such as Kappa Alpha Psi's Eight Grand Chapter. There, the first alumni chapter came together with undergraduate chapters to host brothers from around the country (Crump 1993). As previously mentioned, brotherhood is included in the meaning of Phi Beta Sigma's letters as well (Hughey 2008c; Savage and Reddick 1957).

The same brotherhood that was spreading its roots in the early decades of the last century has continued to flourish on college campuses across the country. Through its growth, it has bound many a man together in support of a common cause in a noticeable and meaningful way. A 2003 study of Black undergraduates showed that a large number of Black fraternity men cited their BGLO as an important peer support group during their adjustment to college. BGLOs not only helped their members through a difficult transitional period but also had a large impact on their subsequent college careers. The same 2003 study reported that many members of BGLOs found that the bonds they forged with their Black peers and the support they received from them were responsible for their persistence and success, whether in the classroom or outside of it (Harper et al. 2005).

Race consciousness

Alpha Phi Alpha showed an early concern on the issue of race consciousness. Roscoe C. Giles reminded them that Alpha Phi Alpha was composed of men of great character, intelligence, and worth and urged them to "arouse the slumbering giant, Ethiopia." As a reflection of this, fraternity members wrote songs referencing African roots and pride, the fraternity's shield depicts the Great Sphinx of Giza, and their journal is known as *The Sphinx*. Papers were also

read and speeches given on subjects such as “Race and Fraternalism” and “Negro Types in White Literature” (Wesley 1995). Omega Psi Phi was also aware of different problems facing African-Americans and pushed for a program that would emphasize African-American history as way to adhere to its cardinal principle of uplift and pursued progress for their race. In furtherance of their goals, Omega Phi Psi established Achievement Week. This project centered on educating African-American youth on achievement by African-Americans, specifically recent achievements. It covered areas such as science, art, academia, and literature and aimed at inspiring pride in the African-American race and belief in the younger generations that they might also successfully pursue such endeavors (Dreer 1940).

Alumni members showed early support for the idea of race consciousness and attention to history. As early as 1920, Omega Psi Phi had a speaker at their national conclave urging members to devote more time to the study of Black history and the spread of that knowledge. The organization heeded the call with the implementation of “The Campaign for the Study of Negro Literature and History” the next year (Dreer 1940). Omega Psi Phi was not alone in their efforts. Alpha Phi Alpha was busy donating large sums to the NAACP and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, among other organizations. Additionally, their “Education for Citizenship Movement” emphasized a response against the doctrine of racial inferiority (Wesley 1995).

These efforts have not been made in vain, as many BGLF members “see the fraternal system as a means of connecting with their African social and cultural identity” (Harper et al. 2005, p. 406). BGLFs are especially important in environments where African-Americans are the minority group and are expected to assimilate to the majority culture. This is because BGLFs foster a more positive racial identity in their members at a time when many students are finding themselves and shaping their worldviews. It is important to note that this is not just a learning experience that causes Black fraternity members to think on a different plane, but not act. BGLF involvement is also linked to social justice and action, particularly so in helping members of their own race as they are able to identify the injustices affecting them (Harper et al. 2005).

Organizational commitment

Each Black fraternity finds the collegiate campus as its nexus. Each was founded by college men to cater to their specific needs at the time of their creation. Inevitably, however, college men graduate and move out into the world, taking on graduate or alumni status. The purpose of the fraternity rarely dies though, and as the ranks of alumni members grew among Black fraternities, a push to create groups for them to continue their missions could be seen. Despite some voiced opinions that activity in, and control of, the fraternity should be limited to undergraduates, the first graduate chapter in the history of Alpha Phi Alpha, Lambda Alpha, was established on April 11, 1911 (Wesley 1995). The Chicago Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi was chartered on October 6, 1919 (Dreer 1940). In November 1920, the Lambda Chapter became the first chapter of Omega Psi Phi to be composed entirely of graduates (Dreer 1940). The year 1923 saw an impassioned plea for the undergraduate brothers of Phi Beta Sigma to assist in the establishment of alumni chapters for that fraternity as well (Savage and Reddick 1957).

All BGLFs aspire to attain high levels of organizational commitment. This is immediately evident in the fact that each of these organizations reflects a lifelong commitment. Fraternities show their belief in this ideal in many ways besides the initial requirement that members pledge themselves for life. Omega Psi Phi, like most fraternities, requires that an initiate not have been a member of another fraternity (Dreer 1940). This common practice

ensures that there is no duality in loyalties. Were members allowed to join multiple fraternities or move from one to another, their overall commitment to the organization might be weakened. Kappa Alpha Psi boasts a Life Membership Program in which members commit themselves financially to the fraternity. This program is encouraged by award recognition of the chapter with the highest participation and distribution of Life Membership Pins (Crump 1993). Phi Beta Sigma is an example of how commitment to the organization by alumni brothers benefits the undergraduates in a direct and meaningful way. Alumni members were often asked to help out the undergraduate members, from small things, like providing for scholarships, to larger ones, like assisting in the purchase of fraternity housing (Savage and Reddick 1957). Members evidence a strong commitment to their organizations through accepting administrative service positions and donating funds. The commitment can be shown by members who continue to give of their time by accepting positions within the administrative body of fraternities as well as through continued financial support of the organization.

That the four fraternities mentioned thus far have existed for the better part of a century, and the fifth (Iota Phi Theta) largely mirrors the structure of the first four, is the ultimate evidence of members' sustained commitment to their organizations.

The emperor and his new clothes: realism and Black fraternalism

While a number of elements have informed BGLF identity, in recent decades, that identity as it is related to BGLFs is arguably in tatters (Jones 2009b). Empirical metrics suggesting falling academic achievement indicates there is friction within the brotherhood. Racial consciousness may be undermined, and notions of Black masculinity may be provincial and retrograde.

Academic achievement

While BGLFs certainly strive for academic excellence, one may wonder whether they are achieving their goal. A study conducted by Shaun Harper (2008) investigated BGLOs at 24 institutions and found that a large majority (93 percent) of Black fraternities and sororities had average GPAs below their institutional average. Numbers and averages cannot tell an entire story. While on average, students in these organizations at the institutions Harper surveyed were performing below the institutional average, his data do not compare their averages to those of African-American students not involved in BGLFs. As such, BGLFs could be meeting their goal to an extent if they were helping their members achieve more academically than others in their same demographic. Admittedly, this would only be a partial victory, as academic excellence is not limited to besting the average of one's own demographic.

In a study by Johnson et al. (2011), researchers investigated the academic performance of Black fraternity and sorority members during the spring of 2008. Specifically, they looked at fraternity and sorority grade reports posted on 29 university websites. Overall, they found that non-NPHC groups (2.98) had higher mean GPAs than NPHC groups (2.69). Moreover, Black sororities (2.86) had higher mean GPAs than Black fraternities (2.54). The average GPAs for the fraternities were as follows: Alpha Phi Alpha, 2.77 (1.62 min., 3.45 max.); Omega Psi Phi, 2.77 (0.7 min., 3.25 max.); Kappa Alpha Psi, 2.42 (1.54 min., 3.13 max.); Phi Beta Sigma, 2.38 (2.27 min., 3.30 max.); and Iota Phi Theta, 2.40 (2.09 min., 2.85 max.).

In a study by Chambers et al. (2012), researchers attempted to account for a variety of factors when determining how well NPHC organizations were achieving academically in the spring of 2010. They tried to ensure that their analysis occurred between comparable institutions and Greek organizations by selecting 31 public "flagship institutions" with similar SAT math rankings, US News and World Report (USNWR) Selectivity Rankings, and ratios of applicants to

admitted students. They further determined that there were no statistically significant differences between NPHC and non-NPHC chapters based on SAT scores and USNWR rankings. The results of the study showed that NPHC chapters underperformed non-NPHC chapters by an average GPA of 2.77–3.09. In fact, the average GPAs for the fraternities were as follows: Alpha Phi Alpha, 2.9097 (2.25 min., 3.66 max.); Phi Beta Sigma, 2.7996 (2.31 min., 3.67 max.); Iota Phi Theta, 2.6976 (1.91 min., 3.30 max.); Kappa Alpha Psi, 2.5998 (1.53 min., 3.22 max.); and Omega Psi Phi, 2.5925 (2.10. min., 3.22 max.).

Because the study took generally accepted predictors of student success, such as SAT scores, into account throughout their analysis, in addition to determining that NPHC chapters and non-NPHC chapters were selecting from statistically comparable students, it seems that BGLFs are not necessarily living up to their stated ideals of academic excellence. There may be various explanations for why BGLFs are seemingly falling short of achieving academic excellence. As previously mentioned, one possible explanation touches upon the idea of knowledge gaps between dominant culture values and non-dominant culture values. It suggests one obstacle BGLFs might deal with in their quest to achieve academic excellence is helping their members overcome the social view of academic achievement as a negative concept (Chambers et al. 2012).

Brotherhood

While BGLFs are supposed to be brotherhoods that cut across an array of divides, to some extent, this is not an accurate portrayal of these organizations. In fact, these organizations experience fissures along sexual orientation, race, religious, and age lines. One of the areas whereby BGLFs seem to fail, with respect to the principle of brotherhood, is the inclusion and equitable treatment of homosexual and/or bisexual members. In one study, researchers conducted 18 interviews and gathered data through questionnaires among BGLF college and alumni members to investigate how non-straight sexual identities were viewed by BGLFs. They found that BGLF members worried about how accepting gay pledges might change the pledge process with some going so far as to call it “intolerable” (DeSantis and Coleman 2008). Ray and Spragling (2011) extended the work of DeSantis and Coleman, finding in their study that gay members of Alpha Phi Alpha were aware of, and affected by, opposition to their fraternal membership, with over half the respondents reporting that they felt their sexual orientation mattered at least some of the time and a large portion feeling as if they had to validate their membership. They noted that Alpha members justify their homophobic attitudes with references to Biblical law and tradition, heterosexual social norms, allusion to “laws of nature,” and even concern over the practical and pragmatic daily operations that heterosexual-oriented organizations supposedly possess.

DeSantis and Coleman (2008) identified three maxims by which they believed BGLO members’ conceptions of a proper and ideal heterosexual masculinity could be understood. These maxims are as follows: (i) be physically strong and dominating, (ii) be hypersexual and promiscuous in heterosexual relationships, and (iii) never be overly refined or academic. In trying to fulfill these maxims, it is necessary for BGLF members to stigmatize those who do not fulfill them, especially homosexual men. Anderson et al. (2011) describe this stigmatization as the evaluation of a flaw or difference followed by the devaluation of the individual from society. These maxims encourage the stigmatization of homosexual men who could be an asset to the fraternity if members were able to look past their sexuality. DeSantis and Coleman (2008) reference stories of highly qualified men, both academically and in terms of leadership positions on campus, who were turned away from BGLFs because of their sexual orientation.

Hernandez and colleagues (2012) describe how showing the right amount of heterosexuality through physicality, sexuality, intellectualism, and refinement (or lack thereof) helps BGLF members construct a secure masculine image. This delicate balancing act is one that the group, as well as the individual, must play in order to project the desired image and maintain prime social status. Anderson et al. (2011) reference the use of imagery, symbols, and monikers in an attempt to portray a view of the group in line with accepted notions of masculinity while glossing over their own or chapter's commitment to ideals such as service or academics.

Not only do these narrow conceptions of masculinity encourage the stigmatization of otherwise qualified men seeking to gain entry, they also discourage members from outwardly striving to achieve the very goals set forth in their missions and mottos. At the very least, an internal tug-of-war is created as one cannot strive to be masculine by refusing to be overly "refined" or "academic," while at the same time fulfilling his chapter's goal of striving for academic excellence. These conceptions of a narrow and normalized heterosexual Black masculinity could also eat away at the strength of brotherhood in chapters, as adherence to such concepts can cause members to second guess themselves for fear of not being accepted as they are (DeSantis and Coleman 2008).

Differences in race and religion can also play a role in preventing BGLOs from reaching an ideal brotherhood. Ray and Spragling (2011) determined that among non-Black Alphas, over half felt they were treated differently and felt the need to authenticate themselves because of their race at least some of the time, if not often or always. Some of these tensions might stem from non-Black members' disappointment at being frozen out of leadership positions, as well as Black members' resistance to allow another tradition to be "taken" from them by allowing non-Black members to join (Hughey 2007, 2008d, 2008a). Ray and Spragling also found that less than half of the non-Christian members they interviewed felt comfortable all the time around other Alphas.

Beyond sexual orientation, race, and religion, age may also create fissures within Black fraternities. As Hughey (2008d) notes, undergraduate Black fraternity members may "conceive of ideal Black masculinity as overly sexualized, anti-intellectual, and possessing street or urban sensibilities" (p. 401). Alumni members, especially those who are decades out of college, may have more traditional attitudes about Black manhood. This differing worldview may serve as a source of tension between the groups, especially where the latter believe the former think and act in ways inconsistent with their respective Black fraternal ideals.

Racial consciousness

During the 1970s, psychologist William Cross began researching his developmental theory of African-Americans' acquisition of Black self-identification. Research suggests that, when measured on Cross' metric, BGLO members have stronger Black racial identities than non-BGLO Blacks (Harper et al. 2005). Despite these consistent findings on self-reported racial identity measures, a better metric of their racial attitudes and beliefs may be at the automatic, implicit, and subconscious level. In one study, Porter and Parks (2011) investigated the implicit and explicit intergroup attitudes of Black fraternity and sorority members. Based on the stated goals of NPHC organizations, one might expect that members would hold positive intergroup attitudes, both explicitly and implicitly. However, based on their study, BGLO members express overall positive attitudes toward their own group (no participant of either test measuring explicit racial attitudes favored Whites over Blacks), but approximately 23 percent of participants showed an implicit preference for Whites over Blacks. This finding, which seems to contradict the very ideals of kinship and racial uplift that Black fraternities and sororities espouse, is made even more alarming by the fact that 40

percent of participants of college age showed an implicit preference for Whites over Blacks. Porter and Parks suggest these implicit attitudes could have a negative impact on BGLOs' ability to achieve their stated goals in the areas of academic achievement, facilitating brotherhood and sisterhood, and racial uplift activities. Specifically, Blacks with less-positive self-images may do more poorly on academic tasks when they believe their race is implicated in test performance, pursuant to stereotype threat theory. Individuals who have implicit pro-White/anti-Black biases tend to be less inclined to establish meaningful relationships with Blacks. With regard to racial uplift activities, while implicit bias research has not touched upon this, as Porter and Parks note, research demonstrates that Black race consciousness predicts, at the least, civic engagement (Chong and Rogers 2005).

The great demise? Legal implications

Just as the myriad challenges faced by BGLFs are manifested in the particular domains that comprise the hallmark features of the groups, so too have these challenges manifested themselves in a particularly crucial arena – the law. Specifically, this has been so with regard to hazing, financial malfeasance, and even sex trafficking.

In regard to hazing, evidence indicates that BGLFs receive more press for hazing than any other issues, inclusive of community service and stepping (Hughey and Hernandez 2013). So also, that press often focuses on a “culture of violence” that has supposedly beset BGLF, thus representing them as little more than “educated gangs” (Hughey 2008b). Moreover, since the 1970s, BGLFs have witnessed a steady increase of hazing-related injuries, deaths, civil litigation, and criminal sanctions (Foster 2008). While such an increase in criminal and civil litigation could be the result of society becoming more litigious or because prosecutors have recently set their scope on collegiate members, neither can account for the increase in hazing deaths and serious injuries (which, again, first appeared in the 1970s and have been fairly persistent in recent years). For example, in *Missouri v. Allen* (1995), it was determined that in February 1994, the Southeast Missouri State Kappa Alpha Psi chapter took on five pledges for initiation. One of them was Michael Davis. Between February 7 and 14, Keith Allen and other fraternity members subjected the pledges to repeated physical abuse. The young men were slapped on their necks and backs, caned on their buttocks and feet, and beaten with heavy books and baking pans. The pledges were also kicked, punched, and body slammed by the active members. After two of the five pledges had dropped out, the remaining three were put through a seven-station circle of physical abuse on February 14. Davis lost consciousness and died the following day. The autopsy revealed that he had suffered broken ribs, a lacerated kidney, a lacerated liver, and multiple bruises. A pathologist stated that the cause of death was a subdural hematoma of the brain.

Keith Allen was charged with five counts of hazing, which is a misdemeanor offense in Missouri. A jury found Allen guilty on all five counts, and he appealed, claiming that the Missouri hazing statute violates the First Amendment right to association and the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendment rights to equal protection and due process. The Missouri Supreme Court held that the statute was valid and affirmed the conviction (*Missouri v. Allen* 1995).

In *Snell v. Omega Psi Phi* (1997), Joseph Snell was beaten by members of the University of Maryland Omega Psi Phi chapter with a hammer, horsehair whip, broken chair leg, and brush over a period of 4 weeks in 1993. He and other pledges were made to eat vomit and received concussions and broken ribs. Six pledges suffered serious injuries ranging from a ruptured spleen to a fractured ankle. In addition to the beatings, the members once put a space heater next to Snell's face to darken his skin because he was not Black enough. As a result of the abuse, Snell called a suicide hotline and was hospitalized. Snell alleged he was assaulted and battered by the fraternity's members and they intentionally and/or negligently

inflicted emotional distress. The defendants argued the abuse did not occur, but if it did, they did not authorize the beatings and that Snell consented to the abuse by continuing to return to the fraternity house.

In July 1997, a jury awarded Snell a \$375,000 verdict against Omega Psi Phi, with \$300,000 of the award in the form of punitive damages and \$75,000 for physical and emotional injuries (Frazier 1997). Twenty-three members of the fraternity were charged with beating new members, but they avoided trial by agreeing to apologize to Snell, pay his medical bills, and perform anywhere from 100 to 150 h of community service. The fraternity is also required to make an open-ended offer to Snell for membership (Waldron 1994).

In *United States v. Davis* (2010), Terry Davis – former National Treasurer of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity – was accused of fraud and theft of more than \$200,000.00 from the fraternity. Davis defended his practice of writing fraternity checks to “cash” and commingling those funds with his own on the grounds that the deposited check took too long to clear, given an uncertain financial track record of the fraternity. That delay made it difficult to pay fraternity debts, Davis asserted. Thus, he explained, he needed to route the fraternity money through his account to promptly pay the organization’s debts using a personal check or money order. When questioned about the transactions by the National Treasurer – Jimmy Hammock – who succeeded him, Davis offered to split \$29,000.00 with Hammock. On appeal, Davis brought two evidentiary issues: (1) whether the testimony of Davis’ wife was properly excluded as hearsay and (2) whether Davis’ statements to Hammock constituted an offer to settle, making it inadmissible. The appellate court affirmed the lower court’s decision to exclude the testimony of Davis’ wife, Rhonda. Yet, on the other issue, the appellate court reversed the lower court, ruling that the statement to Hammock ought to be excluded. The prosecution aimed to use Davis’ statement that he would pay money to resolve the dispute as evidence tending to show liability. Since the Federal Rules of Evidence prohibit the use of offers to settle as proof of liability, the appellate court construed Davis’ remarks as an offer to settle (as opposed to an attempted bribe) and thus held those remarks inadmissible.

In *United States v. Murphy* (2010), the defendant – Kevin Murphy – operated an escort service where several adult females and one minor female worked for him. The escort service had an arrangement with an uncharged individual associated with Alpha Phi Alpha. During the fraternity’s regional and national conventions, the escort service would provide dancers. Moreover, in addition to dancing, prostitution was arranged: Murphy provided transportation and made the hotel arrangements so that the convention goers could engage in prostitution with the female escorts, one of whom was underage. Murphy pleaded guilty to transporting individuals for prostitution and transportation of a minor with the intent to engage in criminal sexual activity. The district court enhanced Murphy’s sentence, ruling that he serve five concurrent sentences of 120 months’ imprisonment, in addition to 5 years of supervised release. The issue raised by the defense was whether the sentence enhancement violated Murphy’s Sixth Amendment right to a jury trial. The appellate court rejected Murphy’s arguments, thereby affirming the lower court opinion.

Conclusion

Black Greek-letter fraternities arose during the early 20th century from a confluence of factors – cultural and institutional contexts along with the influence of the Black church and secret societies, as well as White collegiate literary societies and fraternities. These influences gave rise to complex organizations with the lofty ideals and identity of scholarship, brotherhood, race consciousness and uplift, and commitment to the longevity of the organizations. Over the generations, members have manifested these ideals in the form of

academic achievement, abiding commitments to one another, a meaningful articulation of race awareness, and efforts to sustain these organizations via the establishment of alumni chapters.

As the decades have progressed, a legitimate question can be asked: have BGLFs remained faithful to their founding precepts? This is a long-standing query, even among BGLF members in leadership positions and the rank and file, alike. Today, with a growth in scholarly attention paid to these organizations and at least “some” hard metrics, the facts seem to be cast in stark relief against a backdrop of high ideals. In the area of scholarship, if one were to use GPA as the metric for that concept, a remarkably high percentage of undergraduate chapters have GPAs below their institutional average. Low chapter GPAs are particularly acute for BGLFs vis-à-vis Black Greek-letter sororities. In the area of brotherhood, it may be argued that BGLFs are making strides in the area of inclusiveness around issues of race. However, is there any likelihood that a non-Black person could ascend to the highest heights of leadership within any of these organizations? The organizations still see themselves as “Christian” organizations, and homophobia and the treatment of gay members is the third-rail topic that goes unaddressed. Legitimate questions about the race consciousness of BGLF members and how that impacts outcomes like racial uplift activities on the part of members remain pressing issues for further study.

Short Biographies

Gregory S. Parks is an Assistant Professor of Law at Wake Forest University School of Law, where he has taught since the Fall of 2011. Professor Parks holds an M.A., an M.S., and a Ph.D. (all in Psychology) and a J.D. He served as a law clerk on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals to The Honorable Anna Blackburne-Rigsby and the US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit to The Honorable Andre M. Davis. After clerking, Professor Parks took a Visiting Fellowship at Cornell Law School and then worked as a Litigation Associate at McDermott, Will & Emery LLP in their Washington, D.C., office where he worked on trial and appellate matters. Professor Parks’ research interests lie in a number of domains: (1) how social and cognitive psychology explain legal phenomena; (2) the application of empirical methods to legal questions; (3) race and law issues; and (4) the ways in which Black fraternal networks intersect with the law. He teaches in the areas of civil procedure, social science and law, and race and law. Professor Parks’ scholarly books have been published with Oxford University Press, The New Press, the University Press of Kentucky, the University Press of Mississippi, and Fairleigh Dickinson University Press. He recently completed two books – one entitled *The Wrongs of the Right* (with Matthew W. Hughey, NYU Press) and another on implicit/subconscious race bias and the law (Oxford University Press). In 2013, he will turn his attention to writing two books – one on hazing within Black Greek-letter organizations through the lens of the law and other disciplines and another on the myriad challenges that face Black Greek-letter organizations and how to solve those problems. His scholarly articles have appeared in journals such as *Florida State University Law Review*, *Howard Law Journal*, *University of California–Irvine Law Review*, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review (PENumbra)*, *Cardozo Law Review de novo*, *Wake Forest Law Review Common Law*, *Cornell Journal of Law & Public Policy*, *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, *Maryland Law Journal of Race, Religion, Gender & Class*, *Rutgers Race & Law Review*, *William and Mary Journal of Women and the Law*, *Hastings Women’s Law Journal*, and *Psychology, Public Policy & Law*.

Matthew W. Hughey is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Affiliate Faculty in the Institute for African-American Studies at the University of Connecticut. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Virginia (2009) where he served as a research fellow with the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies and held the position of Instructor for the Departments of Sociology, Media Studies, and African-American

Studies. Professor Hughey's research examines the relationship between subjective social meanings and objective asymmetrical social relations, with a focus on racial identity formation, racialized organizations, and mass-mediated racial representations. His scholarly articles have appeared in *Social Problems*, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *Symbolic Interaction*, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *Critical Sociology*, *The Sociological Quarterly*, *Du Bois Review*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, and *Ethnicities*, among many others. He is the author of *White Bound: Nationalists, Antiracists, and the Shared Meanings of Race* (Stanford University Press, 2012) and is co-editor of *The Obamas and a (Post) Racial America?* (Oxford University Press, 2011), *Black Greek-letter Organizations, 2.0* (University Press of Mississippi, 2011), and *12 Angry Men: True Stories of Being a Black Man in America Today* (The New Press, 2010). He is also the author of three forthcoming books: *Race and Ethnicity in Secret and Exclusive Social Orders: Blood and Shadow* (Taylor & Francis, 2013), *The Wrongs of the Right* (New York University Press, 2014), and *The White Savior Film: Content, Critics, and Consumption* (Temple University Press, 2014). An active member of his discipline, he serves on the editorial boards for *Social Problems*, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, and *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, and he is a Founding Associate Editor of the American Sociological Association's first journal dedicated to the study of race: *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*.

Rodney T. Cohen is an Assistant Dean of Yale College and Director of the Afro-American Cultural Center at Yale University. He received a doctorate in higher-education leadership and policy from Vanderbilt University. While at Vanderbilt, he was the recipient of the American Association for Higher Education Graduate Student Award and was selected as a Peabody College Administrative Fellow. Prior to arriving at Yale (2010), Dean Cohen served as a senior student affairs administrator at the Presbyterian College in South Carolina; during his tenure, his portfolio included the total operations of the offices of multicultural student affairs, student activities, Greek affairs, and residence life and summer programs, in addition to overseeing special projects in the office of the president. Dean Cohen has also held positions at The University of Notre Dame, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Fisk University, and the University of Texas Medical Branch. Dean Cohen has served as a faculty fellow at the Washington Center for Academic Seminars and Internships and taught college courses related to social action and urban poverty, Black culture in the early 20th century, and select topics of the civil rights movement. His research interest explores select issues of African-Americans in higher education including the perceptions, attitudes, and giving behaviors of Black college alumni and the impact of involving colleges on Black student life. His scholarly articles have appeared in such journals as the *International Journal of Institutional Advancement* and the *Journal of Urban Education*. He has also authored publications highlighting the cultural history of select HBCUs commonly referred to as the Black Ivy League. Dean Cohen is a member of the Association of Blacks in Higher Education, the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History, and the National Association of Black Culture Centers where he serves on the board. He also serves on the Connecticut Board of Teach for America and the Quinnipiac University School of Medicine's Health Careers Advisory Council.

Notes

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¹ While Iota Phi Theta is a part of the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), it is the latest founded (1963), the newest member of NPHC (1996), and the smallest of the NPHC groups, and there exists minimal scholarship on the organization.

Accordingly, this article affords slightly less information on this organization in comparison to the other eight NPHC organizations.

² Our focus on Alpha Phi Alpha in this section – to the exclusion of the other four BGLFs – is solely because it is the only BGLO for which there are empirical data that it was founded as a direct result of WGLF influence and exclusion. While it could be argued that other WGLFs influenced other BGLFs indirectly, or arguably, through Alpha Phi Alpha, an in-depth discussion on all the supposed White fraternal influences on BGLFs is beyond the scope of this article.

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