Belief, Truth, and Positive Organizational Deviance

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Belief, Truth, and Positive Organizational Deviance

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Abstract: Black Greek-Letter Organizations (BGLOs) are unique institutions. Though few in number, they claim some of this country’s most renowned African American leaders—e.g., Charles Hamilton Houston (architect of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund’s Brown v. Board strategy), Rosa Parks (mother of the Civil Rights Movement), Earl B. Dickerson (civil rights lawyer and first black University of Chicago Law School graduate), Sadie Alexander (first African American woman to earn a PhD, and first to earn a JD from the University of Pennsylvania), and William Hastie (first African American federal judge). Uniquely, BGLOs’ members tend to remain deeply committed to their organizations over a life-course. Even more, BGLOs tend to initiate large numbers of members into highly functioning alumni chapters. One thing that is most striking about BGLOs, however, is a particularly violent brand of hazing employed to initiate their new members. While there have been reforms within BGLOs to curtail hazing injuries, deaths, and legal wrangling (both civil and criminal), violent hazing within them persists. A host of reasons may explain why law fails to constrain legally consequential behavior within organizations like BGLOs. This article seeks to empirically ascertain (1) what beliefs may undergird BGLO hazing and (2) the extent to which beliefs about the utility of hazing as a means to actualize the essential ingredients of BGLO existence (i.e., commitment to the organization, its ideals, and members) are well-founded. We close by reconciling the tension between these findings and how law attempts to constrain behavior.

Introduction

While the juncture at which law and organizations has been fertile ground for scholarly inquiry,¹ little legal scholarship focuses on the organizational behavior construct of “organizational deviance.” Organizational deviance occurs when an “organization’s customs, policies, or internal regulations are violated by an individual or a group that may jeopardize the well-being of the organization or its citizens.”² Organizational deviance can have a wide and

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¹ For example, in 1985, Oxford University Press began publishing The Journal of Law, Economics, & Organizations.
lasting effect on organizations, including legal. It appears that at the individual level, deviant behavior within organizations distills not to personality traits alone, but to a combination of social psychological variables and organizational factors. In addition to social psychological and organizational factors, determining variables of the likelihood of deviant organizational behavior are supervisory behavior, unfair treatment, as well as organizational culture and climate.

While considerable scholarly attention has been paid to organizational deviance, organizational behavior research pays scant attention to how deviance may be defined by positive sets of behavior in addition to negative ones. While Sagarin’s research found over forty different definitions of deviance with only two being nonnegative, Dodge broadened the study of organizational deviance to include “positive deviance.” In short, positive deviance is defined as “… intentional behaviors that depart from the norms of a referent group in honorable ways.”

In essence, positive deviant behaviors entail actions with honorable intentions, irrespective of the outcomes. Positive deviant behaviors may consist of behaviors that organizations do not authorize, yet help the organization reach its overall goals.

The growing interest in the study of positive organizational behavior derives, at least in part, from the increasing acknowledgment of positive organizational scholarship. As Cameron and colleagues describe, positive organizational scholarship focuses on the “… dynamics that lead to developing human strength, producing resilience and restoration, fostering vitality, and cultivating extraordinary individuals, units and organizations.” While most organizational behavior research centers on organizational deviance (both its negative and positive aspects), and even positive organizational scholarship focuses on corporate entities, some organizational behavior scholars have turned their attention to other types of organizations. Case in point:

4 See generally, Regina A. Robson, Crime and Punishment: Rehabilitating Retribution as a Justification for Organizational Criminal Liability, 47 AM. BUS. L.J. 109 (2010).
7 Gretchen M. Spreitzer & Scott Sonenshein, Toward the Construct Definition of Positive Deviance, 47 AM. BEHAV. SCIENTIST 828, 829 (2004).
8 Id. (citing EDWARD SAGARIN, DEVIANTS AND DEVIANCE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF DISVALUED PEOPLE 830 (Praeger 1975)).
10 Gretchen M. Spreitzer & Scott Sonenshein, Positive Deviance and Extraordinary Organizing, in POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP 207 (Kim S. Cameron et al. eds., Berret-Koehler 2003).
11 Id.
13 For more on positive organizational scholarship see OXFORD HANDBOOK OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND WORK (P. Alex Linley et al., eds., Oxford University Press 2009).
Roberts and Wooten analyzed black Greek-getter organizations (hereinafter BGLOs) through a positive organizational scholarship lens.¹⁵

This article extends the research on organizational behavior, organizational deviance, and more specifically, positive organizational deviance to non-corporate entities. Similar to the Roberts and Wooten’s scholarship, this article focuses on BGLOs. Emotionally, financially, and physically active BGLO alumni make BGLOs particularly salient subjects of inquiry.¹⁶ In addition, BGLO membership has long-defined contemporaneous membership in the black middle- and upper-class.¹⁷ What makes these organizations appealing as an area of legal scholarship, aside from the crucial role that they and their collegiate and alumni members played in African Americans’ quest for civil rights and social justice,¹⁸ is violent hazing within their ranks.¹⁹ We explore the issue of hazing within the framework of positive organizational deviance with two overarching questions in mind: What are the belief structures among BGLO members that undergird violent hazing within these groups, despite the constraint that the law seeks to place on such behaviors? And, to what extent are these beliefs well-founded? The latter of these questions raises a broader question about the complexity of prophylactic measures needed to minimize, if not eradicate, hazing within BGLOs.

In section I, we explore the tensions between BGLO hazing and the law. In section II, we analyze the relationship between belief-systems about BGLO hazing among BGLO members, and how those beliefs serve to perpetuate violent hazing within these organizations. In section III, we explore the various theories that explain the beliefs of BGLO hazing proponents as well as empirical tests of those theories. In section IV, we share the results of our empirical research that explores (1) the beliefs that BGLO members have about the utility of hazing within their ranks and (2) the extent to which those beliefs are warranted. We close by trying to reconcile our empirical findings with BGLOs’ organizational needs and the law.

I. BGLO Hazing and the Law

Hazing is defined as “… the practice of subjecting initiates, whether to a fraternity, a service club, a school, or an interscholastic, collegiate or professional sports team, to effortful, painful, or embarrassing rituals.”20 Although many policies and laws are now in place to curtail hazing,21 it remains a pervasive problem in a variety of group settings.22 The types of hazing incidents vary within each group. However, some of the common activities initiates experience include beatings with paddles, binge drinking, sexual conquest assignments, performing tedious tasks, and running fools’ errands.23 The hallmark of BGLO hazing has been its supposed brutality, resulting in injuries, deaths, civil suits, and criminal prosecutions.24 Below, we enumerate just a few examples:

1970s

Bradley University. During the 1970s, a Bradley University an Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity pledge was beaten with fists and paddles, then treated for acute kidney failure. Twelve Alpha Phi Alpha members pled guilty to hazing charges.25

University of Florida. Also during the 1970s, eighteen Omega Psi Phi fraternity pledges were violently hazed, with some of the pledges indicating that they were forced to consume large amounts of alcohol and marijuana. One pledge indicated that he needed to spend the night in a psychiatric ward.26

1980s

Van Watts. Van watts died from alcohol poisoning following an Omega Psi Phi party given as an initiation ceremony in 1983.27 His blood-alcohol level was 0.52, five times the legal limit.28 Watts, a junior from Birmingham, Alabama, had been coerced into drinking the alcohol and

20 Judy L. Van Raalte et al., The Relationship Between Hazing & Team Cohesion, 4 J. Sport Behav. 491, 492 (2007).
21 Id. (noting that “44 states currently have laws on the books . . . with specific penalties for hazing and for failing to report hazing”).
22 See, e.g., id. (discussing the prevalence of hazing in athletics and noting that such activity “exposes athletes to physical and psychological risks”); Keating et al., supra note __, at 106 (discussing the widespread presence of hazing the existence of hazing in military units, athletic teams, GLOs).
23 See Keating et al., supra note __, at 106.
26 Id.
28 Id.
carried bruises on his dead body. Tennessee State suspended the Omega Psi Phi chapter for five years as a result of the incident.

Joel Harris. On October 17, 1989, Joel Harris, an eighteen year old sophomore at Morehouse College, collapsed during a fraternity ritual at an apartment complex and later died at the hospital. Harris, who was pledging Alpha Phi Alpha, collapsed during a ritual involving slaps, blows, and punches. The ritual lasted between three and five hours, and the post-mortem examination revealed two abrasions on Harris’s chest that looked like fingernail marks and may have come from a beating, although members denied striking Harris. Harris died of an abnormal heart rhythm linked to congenital heart disease.

The evening had begun with the pledges reciting historical events of the fraternity. An array of physical abuse punished any errors. One option was “Thunder and Lightning”, which involved the receiving of blows to chest and face. Another method, called “Free Fall”, involved elbows, slaps, and punches to the chest.

Joel Harris’ mother, Adrienne C. Harris, vowed to begin a crusade to end hazing in response to her son’s death. The response to the incident by black fraternities and sororities was swift—the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), which represented eight traditionally black fraternities and sororities, asked member organizations to ban pledging at a special summit in February 1990. At the meeting, which took place just four months after Joel Harris’ death, the council unanimously recommended each organization eliminate pledging and related activities, including dressing alike, head shaving, and walking in straight lines. The name of the initiation process changed from “pledging” to “membership intake process,” and now involves the mere application for membership and successful testing without enduring the rigors of hazing and pledging. Despite these formal changes, de facto hazing persisted.

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30 See Green, supra note __.
33 Id.
34 Id.
35 Id.
36 Id.
37 Id.
38 Id.
42 Id.
Wardell Pride. Wardell Pride was pledging Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity at Tennessee State University in 1991 when he was hazed in ritualized “heat sessions.” At these sessions, pledges were subjected to physical abuse in various forms, including “the cut” and “bringing the knowledge.” “The cut” involved the pledges bending over, covering their genitals with one hand, and taking a beating with a wooden cane. “Bringing the knowledge” featured a member jumping down and slamming a heavy book on top of a pledge’s bowed head. Pledges were also reportedly punched in the chest with a knuckle and had sums of money extorted from them to pay for members’ rent and car repairs. Pride alleges that he was pummeled, poked with needles, branded on his arms and chest, and beaten with a cane so hard that it snapped. Pride survived the hazing and became chapter president of Kappa Alpha Psi, but filed a lawsuit against the fraternity in October 1994.

Kendrick Morrison. Kendrick Morrison, a freshman at Louisiana Tech University, applied for membership in Kappa Alpha Psi in 1994. Morrison was physically beaten by Jessie Magee, the chapter president, in Magee’s dorm room and was subsequently treated for head and neck injuries at the local hospital. Kendrick suffered a drop in grades following the incident and claimed that this drop in performance would prevent him from realizing his dream of being admitted to physical therapy school. Magee and the local chapter were suspended by both the university and the national fraternity following an investigation of the incident.

Kendrick and his parents filed suit against Kappa Alpha Psi, its insurer, Jessie Magee, and Louisiana. A jury found all parties liable, apportioning the fault for the $300,000 award of general damages as follows: 33% to Kappa Alpha Psi, 33% to the state, and 34% to Magee. Additionally, the jury found that the fraternity was responsible for Magee’s portion through vicarious liability. The appellate court found that there should have been no vicarious liability for Kappa and reduced the damages to $40,000.

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45 Id.
46 Id.
47 Id.
48 Id.
49 Id.
50 Id.
52 Id.
53 Id.
54 Id.
55 Id.
56 Id.
57 Id.
58 Id. at 1123.
In affirming the liability on behalf of the state, the court found that Louisiana breached a duty owed to Kendrick, and is breach was both cause-in-fact and legal cause of his injuries.\textsuperscript{59} The court found that a duty existed because (1) the school had knowledge of prior hazing of incoming freshmen in Kappa; (2) the school was aware that at least one student had hid his involvement with Kappa in the past, presumably from fear or a desire to become a full member of the organization, and; (3) the pledging process is not an activity which an incoming pledge would regard as dangerous.\textsuperscript{60} These findings create a special relationship between the pledge and the university, and this relationship in turn creates a duty.\textsuperscript{61}

In affirming breach by the school, the court found “… there was ample evidence from which the jury could have concluded that the university’s response to and investigation of reports of Kappa hazing in 1993, the year prior to the incident involving Kendrick, were inadequate.”\textsuperscript{62}

Regarding the cause in fact element, the court found the jury’s conclusion that the school’s substandard conduct was a substantial factor in Kendrick’s injuries.\textsuperscript{63} On the legal cause element, the court found that the injuries were within the contemplation of the duty—that is, that a student might be injured as a result of hazing is within the scope of protection contemplated by imposing the above duty.\textsuperscript{64}

Regarding Kappa’s liability, the court found that “Kappa National undertook a duty to regulate, protect against and prevent hazing by its collegiate chapters and thereafter failed to act reasonably to fulfill this duty.”\textsuperscript{65} The fact that Kappa was aware of prior abuse in this particular chapter served to differentiate it from prior Louisiana cases where the fraternity was found to owe no duty to the victim.\textsuperscript{66}

\textit{Donald Edwards.} In July 1996, Donald Edwards attempted to join the Northern Illinois University chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi.\textsuperscript{67} He was given the option of going through the unofficial “process” of joining or merely getting written-in, and Edwards chose to go through the process along with five other initiates.\textsuperscript{68} On July 15, 1996, Edwards was called and told that he and the other initiates needed to bring pizza, movies, and drugs to a member’s apartment.\textsuperscript{69} That evening the members poured candle wax onto Edwards’s arms and slapped his head.\textsuperscript{70} On July 18, 1996, the initiates were coerced into each giving a member $50.\textsuperscript{71} Two pledges dropped out on July 19 when they discovered that not going through the written intake process might bar

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{59} \textit{Id.} at 1113-14.
\item \textsuperscript{60} \textit{Id.} at 1115.
\item \textsuperscript{61} \textit{Id.}
\item \textsuperscript{62} \textit{Id.} at 1117.
\item \textsuperscript{63} \textit{Id.}
\item \textsuperscript{64} \textit{Id.}
\item \textsuperscript{65} \textit{Id.} at 1118.
\item \textsuperscript{66} \textit{Id.}
\item \textsuperscript{67} Donald Edwards v. Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, 1999 WL 1069100, at *1 (N.D. Ill. 1999).
\item \textsuperscript{68} \textit{Id.}
\item \textsuperscript{69} \textit{Id.}
\item \textsuperscript{70} \textit{Id.}
\item \textsuperscript{71} \textit{Id.} at *2.
\end{itemize}
them from membership, but Edwards and the others continued.72 Over the next month, Edwards was paddled on the face and buttocks, and a cigarette was put out on him.73 On about August 21, 1996, Edwards went to the hospital with a small contusion on his skull, and he returned the following day with blood in his urine.74

Edwards filed suit against Kappa Alpha Psi.75 He alleged that Kappa was liable for battery because its members were agents of the organization.76 Additionally, Edwards alleged negligence by Kappa for permitting an aura of violence.77 The court refused summary judgment for the defendant on both counts.78 The court denied summary judgment on the agency issue because Kappa may have possessed some control of its members and their residences.79 The court also denied summary judgment on the negligence issue because the facts in the claim were disputed.80

**Shawn Blackston.** Fifteen members of Omega Psi Phi at the University of Louisville were involved in the off campus hazing of Shawn Blackston on April 2, 1997.81 Blackston, a twenty three year old freshman, was beaten at the four hour long ritual, and police speculate paddling may have been involved.82 Blackston suffered kidney and spleen damage as a result of the beating, and sought treatment at the hospital.83 The University of Louisville suspended Omega Psi Phi as a result of the incident.84

**Nathaniel Gullatt.** Nathaniel Gullatt sued Omega Psi Phi for personal injury. Gullatt alleged that he was struck by an automobile on April 1, 1998.85 Because his claim was filed within two years after the right of action accrued, the Georgia Court of Appeals held that the complaint was timely filed and defendants were not entitled to dismissal.86

**2000s**

**Michlen Robinson.** Michlen Robinson claims in a lawsuit to have been a hazing victim of Phi Beta Sigma fraternity at Norfolk State University.87 Robinson was allegedly swatted with paddles on the buttocks and punched with double fists at the incident, which took place

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72 Id.
73 Id.
74 Id.
75 Id. at *1.
76 Id. at *3.
77 Id.
78 Id. at *6.
79 Id.
80 Id.
81 Student Possibly Paddled in U of L Fraternity Hazing, LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER (Ky.), Apr. 11, 1997.
82 Id.
83 Id.
84 Id.
86 Id. at 928-29.
87 Lou Misselhorn, Ex-Student at NSU Sues Frat, Members over Hazing- Norfolk Chapter has been Suspended, THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT, Mar. 21, 2002.
September 21, 2000.⁸⁸ About a dozen pledges were lined up, assaulted, and berated for hours that evening.⁸⁹ Some suffered “Thunderclaps”--two-fisted punches to the chest.⁹⁰ Robinson claims that these punches caused him a punctured lung, which forced him to stay in a hospital for two weeks.⁹¹ Robinson also alleges in the suit that pledges were paddled, kicked, punched, denied sleep, and forced to run errands at all hours for the members.⁹² Robinson left the school soon after the assault, and criminal charges were never filed.⁹³ The lawsuit sought $500,000 in damages from the fraternity.⁹⁴

Brandon Sylve. Brandon Sylve and his mother filed suit against Louisiana State University and Kappa Alpha Psi for hazing activities which allegedly took place in the spring semester 2001.⁹⁵ Sylve was paddled, beaten, and caned three times per week during off-campus events early in the semester according to the complaint.⁹⁶ As a result of his injuries, Sylve missed several weeks of school to undergo two surgeries for damaged skin on his buttocks.⁹⁷ The surgery was necessary to fight infection and remove dead tissue from the area, as well as a skin graft to close an open wound.⁹⁸ Sylve is seeking damages for his medical treatments, surgeries, and hospitalization.⁹⁹

Brian Chambers. Every night for a month during the summer of 2003, Phi Beta Sigma members at St. John’s University took pledge Brian Chambers to Kissena Park.¹⁰⁰ The members would pound Chambers with a two pound paddle in the chest, back, and buttocks so severely that Chambers felt his back was being tightened “in a vise” after the beatings.¹⁰¹ On one occasion, Chambers was hit one hundred times with a foot long wooden paddle.¹⁰² The strikes were so severe that Chambers had to take a step backward to avoid toppling over after each blow.¹⁰³ When he was not struck with the paddle, he was subjected to “thunder and lightning”-closed and open hand slaps to the chest and stomach.¹⁰⁴ Chambers woke up that night urinating blood.¹⁰⁵ He had “Crayola box purple” bruises from his lower back to his upper thighs upon checking into Brooklyn’s Victory Memorial Hospital.¹⁰⁶ He was eventually hospitalized for

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⁸⁸ Id.
⁸⁹ Id.
⁹⁰ Id.
⁹¹ Id.
⁹² Id.
⁹³ Id.
⁹⁴ Id.
⁹⁶ Id.
⁹⁷ Id.
⁹⁸ Id.
⁹⁹ Id.
¹⁰⁰ Scott Shifrel, Xtreme Hazing Trial to Begin; 3 Face 7 Years for Severe Injuries, N.Y. DAILY NEWS, Nov. 14, 2000.
¹⁰² Id.
¹⁰³ Ginsberg, supra note __.
¹⁰⁴ Id.
¹⁰⁵ Id.
¹⁰⁶ Id.
fourteen days, suffering bruises, acute renal failure, seizures, and temporary blindness in both eyes. 107 Three members of Phi Beta Sigma were charged with second-degree assault. 108

All three men were acquitted by a court in Queens after two days of deliberation following a five week trial. 109 The jurors stated that it came down to Chambers’ word against that of the three defendants, with one juror stating he just “… couldn’t put a paddle in any of their hands.” 110

**Akeem Alexander.** In September 2004, Akeem Alexander, 19, participated in an underground pledge program for Kappa Alpha Psi at Fisk University. 111 Every night, hazing sessions of up to three and a half hours subjected Alexander to beatings with a cane and paddle. 112 Additionally, members ordered Alexander to purchase food and alcohol for members. 113 On September 13, 2004, one particularly violent session caused a number of other injuries, including a deep laceration on Alexander’s right buttocks. 114 The following day, he regurgitated three times and complained to members that he was sick. 115 Despite his protests, that evening members beat Alexander with a cane. 116 The next morning he continued to throw up. 117 Finally, a friend took him to the emergency room, where he was diagnosed with dehydration and severe lacerations. 118

Alexander spent a total of five days in the hospital as a result of the injuries. 119 Members of Kappa Alpha Psi phoned his room during his stay to warn him against revealing the source of his injuries. 20 Alexander’s GPA dropped from a 3.5 to a 3.3 as a result of his injuries, he dropped his seventeen enrolled hours, and he lost his full scholarship. 121

In a negligence suit against Kappa Alpha Psi, the fraternity moved for summary judgment on the grounds that they owed no duty to prevent the hazing injuries, that comparative negligence should bar Alexander from recovery, and that punitive damages are inappropriate. 122 On the duty issue, the court held there was a genuine issue of material fact as to whether the Kappa headquarters knew about the hazing at the Fisk chapter. 123 For this reason, there could exist a duty to prevent the injuries which may have been breached by a failure to properly

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110 *Id.*
112 *Id.*
113 *Id.*
114 *Id.* at 753-54.
115 *Id.* at 754.
116 *Id.*
117 *Id.*
118 *Id.*
119 *Id.*
120 *Id.*
121 *Id.*
122 *Id.*
123 *Id.*
investigate. On the comparative fault issue, Tennessee law prevents recovery if the plaintiff’s fault is equal to or greater than the combined fault of the tortfeasors. The court held that a reasonable jury could have labeled Alexander’s fault in submitting to the hazing at less than fifty percent, thus denying summary judgment on this motion as well. On the punitive damages issue, however, the court held that there was no evidence to support a jury finding that the fraternity acted recklessly, and punitive damages were therefore inappropriate. Summary judgment was granted on the punitive damages issue.

Joie Jolevare and Salome Tinker. Jolevare and Tinker were sorority members and graduate advisors of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority at Howard University. On March 22, 2005, the women supervised a member rehearsal for a campus “introduction show” in a Maryland parking lot. The rehearsal—which occurred after midnight and in temperatures below forty degrees Fahrenheit—terminated upon the arrival of the chapter president and others. After reviewing the incident, Alpha Kappa Alpha determined that it violated the organizations anti-hazing policy and suspended Jolevare and Tinker on September 3, 2005.

On October 6, 2005, Jolevare and Tinker filed a complaint alleging violation of the District of Columbia Human Rights Act (DCHRA), breach of contract, and negligence against Alpha Kappa Alpha. The DCHRA claim asserted that Alpha Kappa Alpha committed age discrimination by suspending the graduated advisors, but not the undergraduate participants in the rehearsal. The court, however, held that the plaintiffs failed to establish their relationship with Alpha Kappa Alpha as an employee-employer relationship within the meaning of the DCHRA. Additionally, plaintiffs asserted that defendant had breached its contract by not following its own policies before suspending the plaintiffs. The court, however, held that that the plaintiffs were granted ample procedural fairness in the proceedings and rejected the breach of contract claim.

Plaintiffs further asserted that defendant had made defamatory statements about them when the sorority published statements on its website that the ladies had been suspended for hazing. The court held that plaintiffs failed to present sufficient evidence regarding the falsity of Alpha Kappa Alpha’s statement, as required in a defamation claim. Finally, the plaintiffs

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124 Id. at 756.  
125 Id. at 757.  
126 Id.  
127 Id. at 758.  
128 Id.  
130 Id.  
131 Id. at 5.  
132 Id.  
133 Id. at 2.  
134 Id. at 6.  
135 Id. at 8.  
136 Id.  
137 Id. at 11.  
138 Id. at 11-12.  
139 Id. at 12.
also asserted that Alpha Kappa Alpha was negligent when it suspended them because it had a duty to abide by its own policies and procedures regarding the investigation. However, the record clearly showed that the sorority had abided by its policies within its Anti-Hazing Handbook, and the court rejected plaintiffs’ argument. Defendant’s cross-motion for summary judgment was granted.

E. Martyn Griffen. E. Martyn Griffen, 20, aspired to become a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha at the University of Pennsylvania. On October 12, 2005, Griffen and co-aspirants were summoned to the fraternity house for studying. Griffen and the other aspirants were punished that evening because another aspirant had revealed fraternity secrets to a non-member. Griffen was punched repeatedly in the thighs and had a rubber band snapped repeatedly on his arm. As a result, he suffered permanent damage and ossification of his thigh muscles, as well as permanent scarring on his upper arm from the rubber bands.

Griffen filed a ten count complaint against Alpha Phi Alpha and two individuals alleging that he assault and battery during hazing. Alpha Phi Alpha filed a motion to stay the litigation pending arbitration, which centers on the validity of an arbitration clause in the membership application initialed by Griffen when he applied to join the fraternity. The court found that there was neither substantive nor procedural unconscionability in the membership contract which would invalidate the arbitration clause. As a result, the arbitration clause is enforceable and the court stayed the litigation pending arbitration.

Terry Hall. Terry Hall, 20, was pledging Phi Beta Sigma at the University of South Carolina in 2006. On October 9, 2006, Hall was subjected to a hazing ritual where he was hit more than one hundred times with fists and open hands. Hall was choked, blindfolded, and struck multiple times with a wooden paddle, baseball bat, and belt. As he was beaten, Hall lost control of his bowels and nearly lost consciousness. He later went to the hospital for treatment of the resulting injuries.

140 Id. at 14.
141 Id. at 15.
142 Id. at 2.
144 Id. at *3.
145 Id.
146 Id.
147 Id.
148 Id. at *1, *3.
149 Id. at *1-2.
150 Id. at *5-7.
151 Id. at *3.
153 Id.
154 Id.
155 Id.
156 Id.
Hall sustained bruises to his upper arms, chest, feet, back and buttocks during the incident and was punched an estimated sixty times that evening. The beating continued until Hall was gasping for air through his bleeding nose. The university subsequently suspended Phi Beta Sigma and seven members were arrested and charged with hazing, a misdemeanor punishable by a maximum of one year in prison and $500 fine.

North Texas. Twelve pledges of Kappa Alpha Psi at the University of North Texas were repeatedly slapped on their chest and back, and also paddled on their buttocks with wooden paddles in hazing activities. Six members of the fraternity were arrested for the abuse. The hazing, which took place in October 2009, resulted in visible welts, scratches, and bruises on one victim’s chest from an October 10 beating. The pledges were made to “take wood”—repeated beatings with wooden paddles at the ceremonies. The fraternity was temporarily suspended pending the results of the investigation.

2010s

University of Tampa. Three members of Delta Sigma Theta sorority at the University of Tampa were suspended on April 5, 2010 until August 2011 for allegedly hazing pledges. The women sought a temporary injunction on the grounds that UT treated the sorority members more harshly than those from white Greek groups disciplined in the past for hazing. UT claims that the members hazed pledges for the sorority, making them run, do pushups, squat, eat garlic wrapped in Big Red gum and hold a match between their fingers while reciting a pledge. Additionally, the members allegedly threw rocks at the pledges and paddled them.

The three women admitted to the running, squatting and pushups, but denied the remaining allegations. According to the court paper, the allegations were not proven against the women and no pledge named the sorority sisters individually.

Brent McClanahan, Jr. Brent McClanahan, a 25 year old Cal State Bakersfield student seeking membership in Kappa Alpha Psi, was hospitalized on April 26, 2011 with herniated and ruptured

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159 Id.
161 Id.
163 Id.
164 Id.
165 Howard Altman, Hazing Allegations Send Sorority Sisters to Court, TAMPA TRIB., May 8, 2010.
166 Id.
167 Id.
168 Id.
170 Id.
discs in his back, numbness in his right leg, bruises, swelling, and an inability to walk.\textsuperscript{171} McClanahan and three other students were beaten on twenty three occasions by members and alumni of the fraternity for over a month.\textsuperscript{172} The students were struck with three various sized paddles, horse whips, canes, and shot with pellet guns while lined up against a wall.\textsuperscript{173} McClanahan passed out at home on April 26 and had to undergo surgery to repair damage from the incidents.\textsuperscript{174} He now requires a walker to move around and attends physical therapy three times a week.\textsuperscript{175}

The ceremonies were part of an initiation process to join Kappa Alpha Psi, which was not a university-sanctioned group on campus.\textsuperscript{176} Police arrested five members for suspicion of torture, conspiracy, assault with a deadly weapon, and hazing.\textsuperscript{177} The college also suspended the suspects pending the results of the investigation.\textsuperscript{178}

II. Beliefs, BGLOs, and Hazing

A 1992 study by John Williams documented the perceptions of undergraduate members of BGLOs on the no-pledge policy for new member intake.\textsuperscript{179} The following themes emerged from the study. Many of the activities designated as hazing by the National Pan-Hellenic Council—such as “walking in line, practicing steps, history sessions, dressing alike, and speaking in unison”—should not be considered as hazing.\textsuperscript{180} The reduced period for membership intake did not provide initiates with sufficient time to learn the history and traditions of the organizations.\textsuperscript{181} The no-pledge process would not improve the quality of members because it did not adequately screen applicants who were not committed to the organization’s members and ideals.\textsuperscript{182} Members initiated under the no-pledge process would not have strong bonds with one another.\textsuperscript{183} The no pledge policy fosters disunity between pledged and non-pledged members; some non-pledged members feel left out because they do not share the experience of having pledged into the organization.\textsuperscript{184} The need for respect is so great that undergraduate students are willing to participate in an underground pledge process.\textsuperscript{185}

\textsuperscript{171} Jorge Barrientos, \textit{Alleged Hazing Injuries Detailed in Recently Filed Arrest Warrants}, BAKERSFIELD CALIFORNIAN, May 26, 2011.
\textsuperscript{172} \textit{Id.}
\textsuperscript{173} \textit{Id.}
\textsuperscript{174} \textit{Id.}
\textsuperscript{175} \textit{Id.}
\textsuperscript{176} \textit{Id.}
\textsuperscript{177} \textit{Id.}
\textsuperscript{178} \textit{Id.}
\textsuperscript{180} \textit{Id.} at 93.
\textsuperscript{181} \textit{Id.}
\textsuperscript{182} \textit{Id.} at 93, 97.
\textsuperscript{183} \textit{Id.} at 98.
\textsuperscript{184} \textit{Id.} at 93.
\textsuperscript{185} \textit{Id.}
Williams concluded that his findings support the “rites of passage” theory as a basis for maintaining pledging as a condition for membership in BGLOs. The rites of passage theory, as conceived by Van Gennep, posits that most cultures develop certain rituals and ceremonies to affirm the movement of people from one social circumstance to another. The undergraduates in Williams’ study repeatedly indicated that some social activity (e.g., a ritual) was necessary to prove one’s worth for membership in a BGLO. The respondents in Williams’ study also indicated that pledge processes not only allow initiates to prove they are worthy for membership by completing certain tasks and responsibilities, but also creates an environment in which initiates can bond with one another and develop a sense of loyalty to the organization.

Walter Kimbrough’s 1999 replication study found BGLO undergraduates more optimistic about the membership intake process than the undergraduates in Williams’ 1992 study. The study focused on four variables: chapter members’ participation in new member selection, the ability of post-initiation education to instill new members with history and tradition, whether the no-pledge policy reduces lifelong commitment of new members, and whether current members could screen out uncommitted applicants. 69.4 percent of respondents in the 1992 study felt that the new policy provided undergraduates with less of a voice in the selection of new members, while 60 percent of the 1999 sample felt this way. 33.6 percent of the 1992 sample felt that post-initiation education could instill new members with a sense of history and tradition, while 54.9 percent of Kimbrough’s 1999 sample believed that post-initiation education was effective. A slight majority, 55.9 percent, of Kimbrough’s 1999 sample believed that the no-pledge policy would reduce lifelong commitment, whereas more than two-thirds of the 1992 study feared such a reduction. The smallest amount of change occurred with respect to the ability of the no-pledge policy to screen out uncommitted applicants. 84.8 percent of the 1992 respondents believed that members were not able to screen uncommitted aspirants under the new policy, while 80 percent of the 1999 sample believed the same.

Kimbrough also conducted an analysis of variance test on several variables to determine any significant differences with regard to awareness of the no-pledge policy, hazing tolerance and endorsement of the no-pledge policy. A comparison of fraternity and sorority members revealed no statistically significant differences in any of the three scales. It bears mention, however, that “… fraternity members were less aware of the policies concerning membership intake ... [and] “were slightly less supportive of the membership intake process than were sorority members.”

186 Id. at 114. 187 Id. at 115 (citation omitted). 188 Id. 189 Id. 190 WALTER M. KIMBROUGH, BLACK GREEK 101, at 80 (2003). 191 Id. at 84-85 192 Id. at 85. 193 Id. 194 Id. 195 Id.
There were no statistically significant differences based on geographic region of the country or the type of institutions students attended (i.e., PWI or HBCU). The only variable that provided any degree of significance was the acknowledgment of participating in an illegal pledge process. Respondents who admitted to pledging had lower awareness of the no-pledge policy, a higher tolerance for hazing, and a lower level of endorsement of the no-pledge policy.

In sum, Kimbrough’s study demonstrates that although undergraduates had a more favorable attitude toward the no-pledge policy, the basic assumptions about the benefits of pledging remain consistent among members of BGLOs. As Kimbrough notes, many of the study’s respondents participated in a pledge process, demonstrating that more favorable attitudes toward the no-pledge policy have not translated into a reduction in hazing incidents.

A 2003 study by Teresa Saxton found that black Greek-letter fraternity (hereinafter BGLF) aspirants endure hazing initiations for a host of reasons. These reasons include the desire for belonging, bonding, proving one’s manhood, developing self-esteem and self-confidence, garnering respect, and continuing tradition. Participants believed that pledging provided a sense of belonging “... to a group of men with whom they share a common goal and common circumstances.” Participants explained that they formed bonds with their line brothers by protecting and supporting each other during the pledge process. The pledge process, participated argued, also created an environment in which they learned about and formed bonds with older members of the fraternity. The shared experience of having completed the same or a similar pledge process served as the strongest bond.

Participants also explained that the pledge process allows aspirants to prove their “manhood” by demonstrating their ability to withstand pain, violence and mental intimidation. In addition, some participants viewed the “... lesson of enduring hazing as a way of preparing for the anticipated oppression and behavior a black man would experience in the general society.” Saxton also discovered that BGLO members view hazing initiations as a way of rebuilding a more self-confident identity. Pledging, the argument goes, make members more confident they can overcome obstacles presented in their daily lives.
Participants also cited the desire for respect as a reason for enduring the violence associated with the pledge process.\textsuperscript{207} Participants explained that members who pledge into the organization receive much more respect from the campus community and older members of the fraternity than do those who take the “paper” route into the organization.\textsuperscript{208} Finally, with respect to tradition, the participants explained that members view pledging as a way of continuing the tradition of overcoming enduring and overcoming adversity to become a member of the organization.\textsuperscript{209}

Dewayne Scott’s 2006 study deployed a qualitative methodological approach to investigate why BGLF members impose acts of hazing upon prospective members during membership intake activities and why prospective members endure acts of mental and physical abuse in order to gain membership in the organization.\textsuperscript{210} Scott’s research revealed that BGLF members distinguish between pledging and hazing based on the purpose of the activity.\textsuperscript{211} Participants characterized abusive activity as pledging when the “… acts could be tied to the organization’s goals and objectives.”\textsuperscript{212} The same abusive activity was characterized as hazing when it was employed for a superficial purpose.\textsuperscript{213} Paddling an aspirant for failing to correctly execute an assignment or recite organizational history was considered pledging because the act was employed to make the aspirant more productive and accountable for his actions.\textsuperscript{214} However, paddling an aspirant for failing to acknowledge a member’s girlfriend was considered hazing because it did not directly or meaningfully relate to the fraternity.\textsuperscript{215}

BGLF members also cite tradition as a justification for hazing.\textsuperscript{216} According to participants, many hazing acts are chapter-specific and have been passed down, in some cases, for decades.\textsuperscript{217} Members therefore expect aspirants to “… consent to, and actively participate in, certain hazing traditions.”\textsuperscript{218} Alumni members also contribute to the persistence of hazing at the undergraduate level. Participants explained that alumni often provide conflicting positions on hazing.\textsuperscript{219} In formal settings, alumni denounce hazing.\textsuperscript{220} In backstage social settings, however, alumni members express that the current membership process is unacceptable because it departs from tradition, is too short in duration, and does not provide meaningful interaction among all involved in the process.\textsuperscript{221} Moreover, alumni members often tell stories about their pledge

\textsuperscript{207} Id. at 93-94.
\textsuperscript{208} Id. at 94.
\textsuperscript{209} Id. at 97-98.
\textsuperscript{210} Dwayne J. Scott, Factors that Contribute to Hazing Practices by Black Greek Letter Fraternities During Membership Intake Activities, in BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS 2.0, at 235 (Matthew W. Hughey & Gregory S. Parks, eds., 2011).
\textsuperscript{211} Id. at 238.
\textsuperscript{212} Id. at 246.
\textsuperscript{213} See id. at 238.
\textsuperscript{214} See id.
\textsuperscript{215} Id. at 246.
\textsuperscript{216} Id. at 238.
\textsuperscript{217} See id.at 239.
\textsuperscript{218} Id.
\textsuperscript{219} Id.
\textsuperscript{220} Id.
\textsuperscript{221} Id.
experiences and describe the current membership process as “easy” in comparison to their own initiation processes.\footnote{222 Id. at 246.} Undergraduates interpret such statements from alumni as pressure to continue hazing.\footnote{223 Id. at 240.}

Scott found that aspirants know hazing is not a formal condition of membership and are well-aware of the dangers of engaging in such activities.\footnote{224 Id.} He discovered, however, that aspirants willingly submit to hazing rituals in order to feel accepted by their peers.\footnote{225 Id.} This finding is consistent with the research of Kimbrough and Sutton, who concluded that fraternities exert more peer influence than non-fraternal organizations and thus aspirants are more likely to submit to hazing rituals to gain acceptance within the organization.\footnote{226 Id. (citation omitted).}

The bonding experience generated during membership intake is another factor contributing to hazing among BGLFs.\footnote{227 Id. at 241.} BGLF members believe that the difficulties associated with hazing forces aspirants to build meaningful relationships with one another and with chapter members.\footnote{228 See id. at 241-42.} These relationships, participants explained, are similar to those between biological family members.\footnote{229 Id. at 242.}

Scott also found that aspirants endure hazing processes in order to gain respect from chapter members.\footnote{230 Id.} Participants explained that the level of respect a brother receives from his chapter members remain inextricably linked to the type of initiation process he experienced.\footnote{231 Id.} “Paper brothers”—those who do not experience hazing—receive much less respect than brothers who endure abusive hazing processes.\footnote{232 See id. at 242-44.} Participants noted, however, that “paper brothers” might gain more respect if they perform top-quality work on behalf of the organization.\footnote{233 Id. at 244-45.}

BGLF members also believe that hazing solidifies important intrinsic values.\footnote{234 Id.} According to participants, hazing is an important means of socializing pledges to adopt the fundamental values of the organization.\footnote{235 Id.} Moreover, participants believed that enduring the hazing process builds character, allows pledges to better analyze and understand their strengths and weaknesses, and provides pledges with the discipline necessary to be successful.\footnote{236 Id. at 244-45.}

To summarize, both members and aspirants believe that hazing has an appropriate place in the membership intake process. Hazing, according to members, provides a unique opportunity
for bonding among all involved in the pledge process, inculcates important organizational values in aspirants, and is consistent with tradition and alumni desires. Aspirants believe that enduring hazing is necessary in order to gain acceptance and respect from fraternity members. The majority of participant’s in Scott’s study “… believed hazing will persist as long as collegiate chapters exist.”

Joyce Ester examined the relationship between racial identity and hazing attitudes among 109 black Greek-letter sorority (hereinafter BGLS) members and nonmembers in 2009. The findings failed to support the hypotheses that participants with low racial regard would rate hazing more positively than those with high racial regard, that membership in a BGLS would moderate the relationship between racial regard and acceptance of hazing, and that high levels of membership centrality (i.e., the degree to which members of BGLSs viewed the sorority as an important aspect of their identities) would be positively correlated with positive attitudes about hazing, regardless of racial regard level.

Partial support was found for the hypothesis that BGLS members would rate hazing more positively than non-members. The study used three factors to define hazing attitudes: purpose, pledging and conformity. Only the purpose factor produced a main effect; that is, members were more positive in their belief that hazing behaviors are a necessary requirement for membership into a sorority than non-members. According to Ester, the secret nature of the BGLS membership process might explain why non-members did not view hazing as a necessary requirement for entry into the sorority. Non-members are not aware of all of the requirements for membership and may therefore believe that hazing is not necessary for entry into the sorority. Members, however, may have a more positive attitude toward hazing “because they see it as a unique experience that binds them together in both shared knowledge and shared experience.” This explanation, according to Ester, is consistent with Social Identity Theory (SIT). SIT holds that individuals determine what behavior is appropriate by referencing the norms of the groups to which they belong. Applying that theory, Ester concluded that BGLS members may adopt more positive attitudes toward hazing activities simply because such activities are a sign of group affiliation.

The data also supported the hypothesis that BGLO members with high levels of centrality would endorse hazing more than those with lower levels of centrality. “When group membership is central to identity, a member more strongly accepts hazing as a function of the pledging process and more highly endorses conformity to pledging rules.”

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237 Id. at 247.
239 See id. at 65-70.
240 Id. at 68.
241 Id.
242 Id.
243 Id. at 69 (citation omitted).
244 Id.
245 Id.
246 Id. at 69-70.
this finding is significant because it “… highlights the importance of the meaning of membership within African-American sororities.” Sorority members identities strongly connected to their organization are more likely to have positive attitudes about hazing regardless of their racial identities. Ester contends that one way to reduce the acceptance of hazing is to address both the perception and meaning of membership for the individual members. Toward that end, Ester suggests that “… membership activities should focus on reducing the link between membership and hazing and instead focus on a more balanced identity that includes enhancement of members’ racial identity.”

III. Theoretical Support for Rationale behind BGLO Hazing

A number of theories support the contention that challenging experiences commit individuals to others who share in that experience concurrently as well as to organizations to which they are seeking membership. In subsection A, we explore the relevant research on hazing and undergraduate organizations. In subsection B, we explore how external threat and self-sacrifice come to bear on group cohesion. In subsection C, we explore the research on how severity of initiation to an organization predicts liking for said organization. In subsection D, we explore research on the Stockholm Syndrome—the extent to which bonding to one’s captors in a hostage situation exists. In the final subsection, subsection E, we explore the research on how investment in social relationships facilitates commitment in those relationships.

A. Hazing Research and Undergraduate Organizations

Keating and her colleagues proposed that “… threatening initiation practices such as hazing rituals function to support and maintain groups in at least three ways: (1) by promoting group-relevant skills and attitudes; (2) by reinforcing the group’s status hierarchy, and (3) by stimulating cognitive, behavioral, and affective forms of social dependency in group members.” Keating et al., tested these propositions on samples of undergraduate students in laboratory and field settings. The following sections explain the rationale and results for each of these propositions.

a. Conceptual Overview and Hypotheses

As Keating et al. explained, hazing is typically a complex event and can have fun, embarrassing, disgusting, painful, and challenging facets. The initial stages [early events] of an initiation my require “… simple efforts that are only mildly arousing, such as turning out in particular attire for an occasion, spending time engaged in prescribed, social exchanges with group members, or waiting for extended periods of time before being interviewed by representatives of the group.” Initial compliance with such low-cost efforts makes subsequent,
costlier forms of compliance more likely. Subsequent events often require increasingly more effort and may require newcomers to endure various types of discomfort and contrived threats.252

Case studies reveal that hazing is a complex event and can have fun, embarrassing, disgusting, painful, and challenging facets.253 The spectrum of activities ranges from relatively mild forms to severe and sometimes violent hazing ceremonies.254 Adopting a functional perspective, Keating et al. posit that pursuance of particular goals orchestrate specific initiation processes.255 Thus, the experiences of newcomers will vary based on the mission of the group.

According to Keating et al., the initiation rituals of Greek-letter organizations (hereinafter GLOs), athletic teams, and military units often activate feelings of threat.256 Contrived threats, such as hazing activities, create group identity and inspire obedience and devotion among group members.257 Keating et al. specified the initiation activities: physical challenges and social deviance.258 Ostensibly, initiations that incorporate physical challenges or pain prepare initiates to withstand physical duress, while initiations that require social deviance carve out distinctions between in-group and normative groups in the minds and emotions of initiates.259

The first proposition, that initiations cultivate group-relevant skills and attitudes, was tested by “unpacking” the initiation practices of college athletic teams and GLOs (both fraternities and sororities).260 Keating et al. reasoned that because the success of athletic teams depends on physical endurance, physical challenges would predominate the induction practices of these groups. On the other hand, they reasoned that since GLOs are dedicated to creating exclusive social networks, activities highlighting social deviance (and thus social distinctiveness), would typify the initiations of these groups. From a functional perspective, they predicted that (1) athletes would report relatively greater degrees of physical duress in their initiations than members of GLOs and (2) members of GLOs would report initiation activities entailing more social deviance than members of athletic groups.

Keating et al. posited that the second function of initiations is to create and maintain the hierarchical authority and power structure where group leaders are superior to the newcomers of the organization.261 They argued that preserving the hierarchy would require groups to sponsors initiations that effectively tuned initiates’ responses to them.262 Hierarchical groups were expected to rely on the long, psychological reach of stressful initiations as a means of establishing social control more than were groups with less hierarchy.”263 “Groups characterized

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252 Id.
253 Id. (citation omitted).
254 Id.
255 Id. at 106.
256 Id. at 105.
257 Id.
258 Id.
259 Id. at 106.
260 Id.
261 Id. at 107 (citation omitted).
262 Id.
263 Id.
by relatively complex, vertical formalized hierarchies maintain greater social distances between leaders and new members than do groups with flatter, informal hierarchies.”

The specific prediction made was that “… members of groups with more structured hierarchies, operationally defined by greater role diversity and power differences between leaders and few members, would report more severe initiation practices and more frequent engagement in initiation activities than groups with less hierarchy.”

Keating et al. argued that a third function of initiations is to promote cognitive, behavioral, and affective forms of social dependency. While earlier research confirmed this claim, Keating and her colleagues posited a new explanation. They observed that dissonance theory, discussed supra, is the standard explanation for why “… initiation experiences that induce threat, duress, or discomfort rally rather than discourage the loyalties of those who endure them.”

They noted, however, that replication studies failed to support the basic notion that severe initiations foster greater liking for the group, and that subsequent field studies failed to find evidence of dissonance effects. They conclude that “the formal evidence on hazing effects on social emotional bonds is quite mixed.”

Alternatively, Keating et al. proposed that attachment theory explained individual attachments to social groups. The theory of attachment, as developed by Bowlby, proposes that humans are motivated to seek proximity to significant others in times of danger, stress or novelty. Originally developed to explain parent-infant bonds, the theory now extends to explain the bonds that form between adults. Recent studies on attachment theory suggest that the attachment behavioral system has evolved such that it can now “… configure individual relationships with collectives as well as with other individuals.” Building on recent studies, Keating et al. proposed that “a unique aspect of the attachment system, maltreatment effects, applies to human connections with groups and can help explain how group initiations function to promote behavioral, cognitive, and emotional forms of social dependency.

Keating et al. described “maltreatment effects” as the “phenomenon whereby harsh conditions trigger goal-directed responses in organisms seeking refuge from duress.” When

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264 Id.
265 Id.
266 Id.
267 Id. (citation omitted).
268 Id.
269 See id. at 110 (discussing Hautaluoma et al., *Early Socialization Into a Work Group: Severity of Initiations Revisited*, 6 J. SOC. BEHAV. & PERSONALITY 725 (1991)).
270 See Keating et al., *supra* note __, at 110 (discussing Lodewijks & Syroit, *supra* note __, and Lodewijks & Syroit, *Affiliation During Naturalistic Severe & Mild Initiations: Some Further Evidence Against the Severity-Attraction Hypothesis*, 6 CURRENT RES. SOC. PERSP. 90 (2001)).
271 Keating et al., *supra* note __, at 110.
272 Id. at 107.
273 Id.
274 Id.
275 Id. (citations omitted).
276 Id.
277 Id.
an individual feels threatened, there will be an instinct to seek out safety within a selected social network. They argue, moreover, that the social dependency fueled by maltreatment could aim toward the very agent of the threat. This research is grounded in earlier studies on maltreatment effects in parent-child dyads, and in a variety of non-human subjects. The researchers also point to the psychology literature on Stockholm Syndrome as anecdotal evidence that severe treatment can stimulate social bonds in humans.

Taken together, the researchers concluded “individuals who undergo mental and physical duress can become dependent on and even attached to those inflicting the treatment, especially when a clear power differential is present and alternative social options are unavailable.” Adopting a functional perspective, they suggested that treatment that includes both punishment and reward may create the most effective social dependency amidst its agents.

To summarize, Keating et al. proposed and gathered evidence for what they call a social dependency interpretation of maltreatment effects. This interpretation suggests, “… when maltreatment is connected to involvement with a defined group, the social dependency that it fuels will be manifested cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally.” At the cognitive and emotional levels, the need to defend the sense of self against threat and uncertainty can be remedied by transforming the personal concept of the self into a group identity. At the behavioral level, dependency generated by maltreatment is likely displayed through compliance with group norms and attraction to group members.

Keating et al. tested whether social dependency manifest in the ways described above by assessing group and personal identity and by tracking conformity and attraction to groups. Identity was assessed among the members of campus groups with varying initiation practices. The first measure of identity asked participants to rate the importance of group identity to them. The second measure asked participants to rate his or her perceived belonging to the group; that is, participants rated their perceived importance to the group. The researchers predicted that individuals who rated their initiations as severe would also rate the group’s level of importance to them as greater than those who reported less severe initiation practices. Member perceptions of their individuated perception of the group, by contrast, were not expected to relate to severe treatment.

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278 Id.
279 Id.
280 Id.
281 Id.
282 Id.
283 Id. (citations omitted).
284 Id. (citation omitted).
285 Id. (citations omitted).
286 Id. at 108.
287 Id.
288 Id. (citing Roy F. Baumeister & Mark R. Leary, The Fundamental Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as Fundamental Human Motivation, 117 PSYCHOL. BULL. 497 (1995)).
289 Keating et al., supra note __, at 108.
290 Id. at 108-09
The researchers measured conformity through experimental manipulations, as they found it too difficult to measure in the field. They noted that previous studies have “… linked social dependency in the form of compliance or conformity to experimentally induced discomfort.” For example, two studies by Duuren and Di Giacomo found that harsh treatment (operationalized as public failure) increased social compliance, while an earlier an study by Schopler and Bateson increased the initiate’s dependency on the opinion of the experimenter. As discussed above, Schopler and Bateson argued that their severe condition generated dependence by establishing, in the perception of the initiates, that the experimenter was the more powerful person in the relationship. Following Schopler and Bateson, Keating et al. “… predicted that the social dependency engendered by relatively severe treatment would be manifested in high rates of conformity to group opinion.”

Finally, the researchers relied on attachment theory to make predictions about the emotional expression of social dependency. As discussed above, attachment theory posits that threatening conditions motivate individuals to seek protection by establishing affective bonds with potential caregivers. In cases where a caregiver is unavailable, the affiliative responses might direct toward the agent of the threat. Applying those principles, Keating et al. hypothesized that “… a possible outcome of severe initiations is the development of interpersonal attraction toward its agents.” Laboratory experiments (“study two” and “study three”) tested this hypothesis. In study two, confederates staged either discomforting or innocuous initiations. Discomforting initiations were predicted to increase the attractiveness of the initiates in the eyes of the initiates. In study three, the researchers assessed two additional measures of attachment, proximity maintenance and separation anxiety. Researchers predicted that initiates who experienced a severe initiation would maintain close physical distances to the confederates and experience greater anxiety when confederates left them alone.

b. Findings

The functional propositions were in the field and in the laboratory on samples of undergraduate students. Study one, a field study, tested whether initiation practices related to the development of group relevant tasks and skills, to reinforcement of group hierarchy, and to group identity. The participants were 138 men and 131 female undergraduates who were members of single-gender groups. As predicted, the initiation activities of different groups varied based

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291 Id. at 109.
292 Id.
293 Schopler & Bateson, supra note __, at 648.
294 Id.; Keating et al., supra note __, at 109.
295 Id.
296 Id.
297 Id.
298 Id.
299 Id.
300 Id.
301 Id. at 111.
302 Id.at 112.
on group mission. The adjusted mean ratings of a 2 x 2 analysis of covariance\textsuperscript{303} showed that members of athletic groups characterized their initiations as physically challenging and painful, whereas members of GLOs reported more embarrassment and social deviance than athletic groups.\textsuperscript{304} Accordingly, Keating et al. concluded that initiations function as training grounds for group-relevant skills and attitudes.\textsuperscript{305} Future studies on a wider variety of groups remain necessary for confirmation.

As to the second proposition, Keating et al. confirmed the hypothesis that initiations typified by social deviance were associated with “... enhanced perceptions of the relative power leaders have over new members and to role diversity.”\textsuperscript{306} They also confirmed the prediction that “... more frequent engagement in initiation activities was associated with greater role diversity.”\textsuperscript{307} However, the second measure of hierarchy, power differentials, failed to predict more frequent engagement with power hierarchies.\textsuperscript{308} The analysis of harshness of initiations and power perception also failed to support predictions; Initiations characterized by harsh treatment were associated with lowered differentials for each index hierarchy.\textsuperscript{309} The researchers concluded that initiations requiring newcomers to endure physical and psychological hardship “... actually seemed to empower [the newcomers] by diminishing perceptions of ingroup power differentials.”\textsuperscript{310}

As noted above, the third proposition—initiations create social dependency—was measured in three parts, with study one focusing on identity. Researchers measured identity in two ways: importance of the group to the individual and importance of the individual to the group. Predictions were based on initiation experiences, taking into consideration the extent to which the initiation was perceived as fun or harsh. The regression analysis for the first measure revealed that harsh initiations were associated with enhanced perceptions of importance to the individual, as predicted.\textsuperscript{311} The data on social deviance, however, showed no relationship with this measure of identity. The second measure revealed that perceived fun during initiations was associated with increased perceptions of individuated importance to the group.\textsuperscript{312} In sum, the level of importance these individuals ascribed to the group they identified with most was predicted by both how fun and perceptions of initiation activity difficulty..\textsuperscript{313} Accordingly, Keating et al. concluded that, assuming “... social identity is a social-cognitive consequences of social dependency,” that the results of their study are compatible with earlier explanations of dependency explanations of maltreatment effects.\textsuperscript{314}

\textsuperscript{303} Id. at 113 (ratings of how much fun participants attached to initiations were covaried in order to control for possible dissonance effects).
\textsuperscript{304} Id.
\textsuperscript{305} Id. at 122.
\textsuperscript{306} Id. at 123.
\textsuperscript{307} Id.
\textsuperscript{308} Id.
\textsuperscript{309} Id.
\textsuperscript{310} Id.
\textsuperscript{311} Id. at 116.
\textsuperscript{312} Id.
\textsuperscript{313} Id.
\textsuperscript{314} Id. at 123.
Studies two and three, tested whether relatively severe inductions spawned conformity and attraction to group members as manifestations of social dependency.\textsuperscript{315} The participants in study two were eighty 1st- and 2nd-year male undergraduate students. On measures of conformity, the results showed that participants who experienced severe initiations conformed most by yielding to the pressure from the group.\textsuperscript{316} The predictions regarding social-emotional bonds were that harsh initiations would boost ratings of the groups’ attractiveness and increase the perceived enjoyment of the experience.\textsuperscript{317} The results revealed that those who experienced severe initiations perceived the confederates as more powerful than did those inducted via innocuous procedures.\textsuperscript{318} Participants in the severe condition also tended to report having more fun than those who received innocuous inductions.\textsuperscript{319} Perceptions of power, rather than aspects of compliance, were the more powerful predictor of compliance.\textsuperscript{320} Taken together, these results confirmed the dependence interpretation.\textsuperscript{321}

The researchers noted that the uniformly attractive demeanor of the charismatic group in study two may have masked the effects of attractiveness of the group.\textsuperscript{322} Thus, group attractiveness was varied in study three (attractive group and an unattractive group).\textsuperscript{323} The researchers also changed the experimental design by inviting “qualified” participants to choose whether to join the group.\textsuperscript{324} This modification simulated the “rush” process that occurs in real-world fraternities and sororities.\textsuperscript{325}

The participants in study three were forty female undergraduate students. The prediction was that, consistent with maltreatment effects, a relatively severe initiation would promote dependency in the form of greater conformity and proximity to confederates, regardless of whether their demeanor was attractive.\textsuperscript{326} As predicted, participants who experienced a severe initiation reported higher levels of social dependency than did those who endure a mild initiation.\textsuperscript{327} The portrayal of the confederate as attractive or unattractive made no difference in the results. Moreover, the participants who experienced a severe initiation showed signs of what the researchers construed as maltreatment effects: They maintained close proximity to confederates and had a more negative mood when confederates left them alone. The results also revealed that affective reactions (the desire to be in close proximity) were the stronger predictor of the participants’ tendency to conform to the group opinion.\textsuperscript{328} Attributing greater power to group members was also associated conformity, but to a much lesser extent.\textsuperscript{329}

\textsuperscript{315} Id. at 117.
\textsuperscript{316} Id. at 118.
\textsuperscript{317} Id.
\textsuperscript{318} Id.
\textsuperscript{319} Id.
\textsuperscript{320} Id.
\textsuperscript{321} Id.
\textsuperscript{322} Id. at 119.
\textsuperscript{323} Id.
\textsuperscript{324} Id.
\textsuperscript{325} Id.
\textsuperscript{326} Id.
\textsuperscript{327} Id. at 121.
\textsuperscript{328} Id.
\textsuperscript{329} Id. at 121-22.
Keating et al. addressed the third proposition in full after having reviewed the data on each independent measure of social dependency. The results from the identity measures are compatible with a dependency explanation of maltreatment effects in that whether an individual identified with the group was based on his/her perception of the initiation experience. Individuals who reported experiencing severe initiations identified more with their groups than did those who had more mild experiences. The combined results of the conformity measure also supported a social dependency; that is, harsh treatment was associated with an increased dependence on the opinions of members in the group, regardless of the group members’ attractiveness. Measurements of more traditional attachment behaviors revealed that participants who experienced harsh treatment maintained close proximity to confederates and experienced negative affect after confederates left. Taken together, Keating et al. concluded that these results support a social dependency interpretation.

In summary, Keating et al. found evidence for a functional approach to understanding hazing activities and group initiations. Their approach contends that the overarching function of an initiation is to enhance dependency on the group. The dependency elicited from the maltreatment is expressed cognitively, behaviorally and emotionally. These needs can be met by transforming individuated identity into group identity, conforming to group norms, and remaining in close proximity to group members.

In a later study on hazing, the researchers addressed the narrow issue of team cohesion and athletic organizations. Specifically, they evaluated the claim that hazing is associated with enhanced team cohesion. Participants in the study included 167 athletes from six colleges and universities from across the United States. Data was obtained through questionnaires that assessed sample demographics (Demographic Questionnaire), team cohesion (Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ)), initiation activities (Team Initiation Questionnaire (TIQ)), and social desirability (Social Desirability Questionnaire (SED)).

Responses on the TIQ were used to determine the appropriateness and inappropriateness of initiation activities. Activities categorized by the majority as majority of respondents as inappropriate were designated as hazing and activities categorized as appropriate were designated as appropriate team building behaviors. The acceptable and unacceptable activities were grouped into subcategories. The categorical definition of hazing is: being the passive victim of physical or psychological abuse, being coerced into self-abuse, or being coerced to abuse others. The categorical definition of acceptable team building includes: being coerced to engage in deviant behavior, required skill development or assessment, required team socialization activities, and required positive behavior.

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330 Van Raalte et al., supra note __, at 492.
331 Id. at 498
332 Id.
333 Id.
334 Id.
335 Id.
336 Id. at 500 (these behaviors included “tattooing, piercing, head shaving, branding, and engaging in or simulating sex acts.”); Id. at 499 (citation omitted) (it should be noted, however, that some of the coerced deviant behaviors (continued…)}
A Hazing Index and an Appropriate Team Building Activity Index were compiled based on the sum of the number of inappropriate (i.e., hazing) and appropriate (i.e., team building) activities done or seen by each participant. Each Index was then correlated with the four components of team cohesion:

… group integration task (GIT; e.g., We’ll all take responsibility for the loss or poor performance by our team; group integration social (GIS; e.g., Our team would like to spend time together in the off-season); attraction to the group task (ATGT; e.g., Some of my best friends are on this team); attraction to the group social (ATGS; e.g., Some of my best friends are on this team).

Hazing was negatively correlated with task attraction and integration, and unrelated to social attraction and integration. These results indicate that “… the more hazing activities the participants did or saw, the less they were attracted to the group’s task and the less bonding and closeness they felt about the group’s task.”

Appropriate team building activity was positively correlated with social attraction and group integration. These results suggest “… the more appropriate activities the participants did or saw, the more positive feelings they had toward the group.” Separate correlation analyses for both gender differences and social desirability biases did not change the magnitude of any of the correlations.

A subsequent, more parsimonious analysis confirmed that hazing was negatively related to task cohesiveness and unrelated to social cohesiveness, whereas appropriate team building activity was positively related to social cohesiveness and was unrelated to task cohesiveness. The researchers noted that the fact that the insignificant relationship between appropriate team building activity and task cohesiveness was unexpected, especially considering that appropriate team building activities were associated with higher levels of social cohesiveness. One explanation of this result is that “task building activities.” The implication, then, is that team building activities not narrowly tailored to a specific sport may have little impact on team cohesiveness, though social cohesiveness may be enhanced. Another plausible explanation is that “[i]t may be that task cohesiveness develops primarily from shared positive experiences rated as acceptable team building behaviors by the participants in this study may appear to be unacceptable to a many segments of contemporary American Society. In fact “they were considered to be questionable or unacceptable in the original [study by Hoover in 1999], but . . . were rated as acceptable by the participants in this study.”

337 Id. at 498.
338 Id. at 499.
339 Id. at 497.
340 Id. at 499.
341 Id.
342 Id.
343 Id.
344 Id.
345 Id. at 503.
346 Id.
347 Id.
348 Id.
from performing the team task in practice and competition.” If this is the case, then coaches would be well-advised to “… structure practices to foster the development of cohesiveness more effectively.”

The final analysis conducted by Van Raalte et al. concerned the relative balance of hazing and acceptable team building. The results showed “… the less hazing and the more team building that the athletes experienced, the higher the levels of their overall attraction and integration.” This result contradicts previous research and is consistent with the findings of Lodewijkx & Syroit who also found no support for the efficacy of severe initiations in fostering group attractiveness in natural settings unrelated to sports.

In summary, Van Raalte et al. evaluated and found no support for the claim that hazing is associated with enhanced team cohesion. The results showed, conversely, that hazing is associated with reduced team cohesion. The researchers note that their study was limited to individual athletes rather than teams. They suggest that future studies assess large teams at a single institution or a single sport but at different institutions. They also note that research on the attitudes and beliefs of athletes, coaches and administrators may help identify strategies to reduce hazing and that research-based team building programs could be designed to replace hazing initiations. As an immediate remedy, they suggest that vigorous enforcement of anti-hazing policies could deter hazing veterans from “hazing because they were hazed.”

B. External Threat, Self-sacrifice, and Group Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the factors that cause a group member to remain a member of the group. Unfortunately, there is much uncertainty about the nature of group cohesion. Research on the development of cohesion suggests that several factors may be important. First, simply assembling people into a group may be sufficient to produce some cohesion, and the more time people spend together the stronger the cohesion becomes. Second, cohesion is stronger in groups whose members like one another, so anything that produces liking can strengthen the group. Third, groups that are more rewarding to their members are more cohesive. Fourth, external threats to a group can increase the group’s cohesiveness, but only when everybody in the group is affected and people believe that they can cope with such threats more effectively by

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349 Id.
350 Id.
351 Id.
352 See id. at 494 (collecting studies).
353 Id. at 503 (citing Lodewijkx & Syroit, supra note ___).
354 Van Raalte et al., supra note ___, at 503.
355 Id.
356 Id.
357 Id. at 504.
358 Albert J. Lott & Bernice E. Lott, Group Cohesiveness as Interpersonal Attraction, 64 PSYCHOL. BULL. 259, 259 (1965) (citation omitted).
359 Id. at 260.
360 Id. at 260-62.
361 See id. at 261-70 (discussing examples such as propinquity, competence, real or perceived similarity).
362 Id. at 284 (citations omitted).
working together rather than alone. Fifth, groups are more cohesive when leaders encourage feelings of warmth among followers.

Cohesion can have several effects on a group and its members. One positive effect is that the group is easier to maintain. Studies also reveal a positive relationship between group cohesion and performance. Another generalization supported by research is that the presence of cohesion is associated with member behavior. The interrelationships among sacrifice behavior, team cohesion, and conformity to group norms in sports teams were examined by researchers Harry Prapavessis and Albert Carron. They found that sacrifice behavior—individual behavior that involves voluntarily initiation an action or giving up prerogative or privilege for the sake of another person or persons without regard to reciprocity—was positively associated with task and group cohesion. Moreover, the researchers found that individual sacrifice behavior lead to increased social sacrifice, which in turn contributed to increased conformity to group norms. This result confirmed earlier findings.

C. Severity of Initiation on Organizational Liking

Researchers have found that severe initiations facilitate greater liking for a group. There are a number of psychological perspectives that help explain this phenomenon. The research summarized in this section is based upon three theoretical perspectives: (1) cognitive dissonance theory; (2) affiliation theory; and (3) dependence theory.

a. Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Cognitive dissonance theory holds that under the proper conditions, inconsistency among cognitions causes an uncomfortable psychological tension. A person experiencing dissonance seeks to reduce the tension, often by altering one or more cognitions to bring about a greater degree of consonance. Elliott Aronson and Judson Mills were the first to deploy cognitive dissonance theory to explain the effects of severe initiations on organizational liking. They found that severe initiations lead to increased group cohesion, which in turn contributes to increased conformity to group norms.

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363 See id. at 264-66.
364 Id.
365 Id.
366 Id. at 277.
368 Id. at 235-36.
369 Id. at 231, 235.
370 Id.
371 See, e.g., Lott & Lott, supra note __, at 301 (finding that uniformity is not always expected and a positive relationship between cohesiveness and conformity can be predicted).
373 See LEON FESTINGER, A THEORY OF COGNITIVE DISSONANCE 2 (1957) (discussing and explaining theory of cognitive dissonance).
374 Id. at 2-3.
dissonance theory to explain the effects of severe initiations on liking for a group. They explain this relationship in the following way:

No matter how attractive a group is to a person it is rarely completely positive, i.e., usually there are some aspects of the group that the individual does not like. If he has undergone an unpleasant initiation to gain admission to the group, his cognition that he has gone through an unpleasant experience for the sake of membership is dissonant with his cognition that there are things about the group that he does not like.

Dissonance can be reduced either by denying the severity of the initiation or overvaluing the attractiveness of the group. Aronson and Mills posited a “severity-attraction hypothesis,” which predicted that individuals who undergo severe initiations find the group more attractive than those who undergo mild or no initiation.

The subjects in Aronson and Mills’ study were sixty-three college women who volunteered to participate in a series of group discussions on the psychology of sex. The ostensible purpose of the study was presented to the subjects as “investigating the ‘dynamics of the group discussion process.’” The subjects were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions: a severe initiation condition, a mild initiation condition, and a control condition. Subjects were informed that before they could become a member of the discussion group, they had to pass an “embarrassment test” that was designed to weed out people who were too shy to discuss topics related to sex. In the severe condition, subjects had to read twelve obscene words (e.g., “fuck, cock, and screw”) and two erotic passages aloud to the male experimenter. In the mild condition, the subject read aloud a list of five words that were more innocuous (e.g., “prostitute, virgin, and petting”). After the initiation, each subject was informed that she passed the test and could therefore join the group. Participants in the control condition were admitted to the group without having to take the “embarrassment test.”

Each subject’s “participation” in the first meeting with the group was limited to listening (via headphones) to what was presented to her as an ongoing discussion by the group on aspects

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375 See Hein F. M. Lodewijx & Joseph E. M. M. Syroit, Severity of Initiation Revisited: Does Severity of Initiation Increase Attractiveness in Real Groups?, 27 EUR. J. SOC. PSYCHOL. 275, 278 (1997) (“Aronson and Mills . . . were the first to text experimentally the dissonance reduction hypothesis of the effects of a severe initiation on group attractiveness.”).
376 Id. at 177.
377 Id.
378 Id. at 180.
379 Id. at 178.
380 Id.
381 Id. at 177-78.
382 Id. at 178.
383 Id.
384 Id.
385 Id.
386 Id.
of sexual behavior in animals. She was informed that she could not participate actively in the
discussion because the other three girls had prepared for the discussion by reading a book on the
sexual behavior of animals. She was also told that listening to the discussion without
participating in it would give her an opportunity to become acquainted with how the group
operates. What she heard was not an ongoing discussion but was instead a standardized
recorded discussion on the sexual behavior of animals that was extremely boring.

After hearing the taped recording, the subject was asked to rate the content of the
discussion and the members of the discussion group. The findings of the experiment
supported the severity-attraction hypothesis; that is, the subjects in the severe initiation condition
evaluated the discussion more favorably than did the mild or control subjects.

In a subsequent study, Harold Gerard and Grover Mathewson controlled for the possible
effects of heightened sexual arousal induced by the embarrassment test in the severe initiation
condition. Gerard and Mathewson operationalized severe and mild initiation conditions via
severe and mild electric shock. The results of this study were similar to those reported by
Aronson and Mills and confirmed the severity-attraction hypothesis.

In summary, the severity-attraction hypothesis predicts that individuals who voluntarily
undergo severe initiations to become members of a group will find the group more attractive than
do those who become members through mild or no initiation. Severe initiations facilitate greater
liking for a group because they arouse dissonance in the initiates. Dissonance can be reduced
either by denying the severity of the initiation or overvaluing the attractiveness of the group.
The more severe the initiation, the more difficult it will be for the individual to believe that the
initiation was not very bad, and the more likely it is that he/she will reduce his/her dissonance by
overvaluing the attractiveness of the group.

b. Criticisms of the Dissonance Findings

A later study examined the generality of the finding that a severe initiation leads to
greater liking for a group. Jacob Hautaluoma and Helene Spungin noted that previous studies
had only involved women. Hautaluoma and Spungin therefore attempted to replicate the
phenomenon with men and women. Severe initiation tasks included copying notes that were “...sloppily handwritten, smudged, and at points illegible”; learning a list of ten difficult trigrams
presented with a memory drum at a very rapid pace; and reading aloud a very difficult article

387 Id. at 179.
388 Id.
389 Id.
390 Id.
391 Id.
392 Id.
393 Gerard & Mathewson, supra note 1, discussed in Lodewijks & Syroit, supra note __, at 279.
394 Id.
395 Id.
396 Jacob E. Hautaluoma & Helene Spungin, Effects of Initiation Severity and Interest on Group Attitudes, 30 J. Soc.
under .25 seconds delayed-auditory feedback. Mild initiation tasks included copying notes that were typewritten and easy to read, learning ten tri-grams presented at a very relaxed pace, and reading aloud an article with delayed-auditory-feedback.

Hautaluoma and Spungin also manipulated interest in joining the group prior to initiation. Individuals assigned to a high-interest condition were told that several professors were seriously interested in understanding the effects of group participating in learning of college material, that highly selected students were being asked to participate in the study, and that the experience would likely be both interesting and beneficial. Subjects assigned to the low-interest condition were informed that some graduate students wanted to study the learning of college material in groups and need a few randomly chosen students to help them standardize their tasks, which were described as brief, routine and easy. After this experimental manipulation, but prior to the initiation procedure, subjects were required to complete a questionnaire which assessed their interest in joining the study group.

The results indicated a gender by initiation condition interaction. Hautaluoma and Spungin replicated previous findings for women but found that men in the mild initiation condition evaluated the boring group most positively. This finding suggests gender differences in the severe initiation phenomenon. However, the finding could result from several other factors.

First, the analysis of the initial interest measure showed that men began the experiment much less interested in joining the group than women, which might have affected the subsequent reactions of men to the initiation procedure. Second, Hautaluoma and Spungin found subjects “… who were most interest in joining before the initiation saw the initiation as more severe than did subjects who were little interested in joining.” Thus, the evaluations of the group could be a result of the differing perceptions of the initiation procedures. If the creation of dissonance is interpreted as dependent upon perceived severity of initiation, then men may have been less susceptible to the dissonance manipulation as a result of their lower initial interest level.

To summarize briefly, the results of this study somewhat supports the earlier conclusions about the effects of severe initiations on liking for a group. Hautaluoma and Spungin found that women liked the group most after a severe initiation, while men like the group most after a mild initiation. Moreover, subjects who were most interested in joining the group in the beginning perceived the initiation as most severe. Accordingly, Hautaluoma and Spungin concluded that

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397 *Id.* at 248-49.
398 *Id.*
399 *Id.* at 248.
400 *Id.*
401 *Id.* at 251
402 *Id.* at 251, 257.
403 *Id.* at 257.
404 *Id.* at 254.
405 *Id.* at 257.
406 *Id.*
gender and interest in joining the group are both potent variables that deserve further examination.\textsuperscript{407}

A later study by Ward Finer, Jacob Hautaluoma and Larry Bloom also criticized the severity-attraction hypothesis. The researchers compared the effects of severe, mild, and pleasant initiations on attraction to an interesting group.\textsuperscript{408} This study was unique in that prior studies had only examined the effects of severe and mild initiations on attraction to an uninteresting group.\textsuperscript{409} Results of this study showed no main effect for initiation condition and liking for the interesting group.\textsuperscript{410} The only significant finding was that all of the subjects liked the discussion and members of the interesting group more than those of the boring group.\textsuperscript{411} This data seems to suggest that dissonance is not created when individuals go through severe initiations in order to join an interesting group and, therefore, “attitude formation about initiation may be more complex than originally conceptualized.”\textsuperscript{412}

c. Alternative Interpretations of the Dissonance Findings

i. Dependence Theory

Other interpretations have been offered for the results of the Aronson and Mills experiment. For example, Schopler and Bateson contend that the results could be explained in terms of Thibaut and Kelley’s interpersonal dependence theory.\textsuperscript{413} According to Thibaut and Kelley, all interpersonal relationships involve some degree of dependence and power.\textsuperscript{414} Dependence can be defined as the degree to which an individual relies on a given partner or relationship for the fulfillment of important needs, or the degree to which an individual “needs” a relationship.\textsuperscript{415} An individual’s level of dependence is based upon the degree to which that individual’s actions are influenced by the partner’s actions.\textsuperscript{416} When an individual’s outcomes in a given interaction are determined by his own actions, he will experience low levels of dependence on his partner.\textsuperscript{417} By contrast, partner control or joint control determines an individual’s outcomes, the individual will experience high dependence on the partner.\textsuperscript{418}

Within this general framework, there are severe different situational structures that create power differences between the individuals in a dyadic relationship.\textsuperscript{419} Schopler and Bateson focus on the “fate-control” situation; one party has unilateral control over the other’s

\textsuperscript{407} Id. at 258.
\textsuperscript{408} Ward D. Finer, Jacob E. Hautaluoma & Larry J. Bloom, The Effects of Severity and Pleasantness of Initiation on Attraction to a Group, 111 J. SOC. PSYCHOL. 301 (1980).
\textsuperscript{409} Id. at 302.
\textsuperscript{410} Id.
\textsuperscript{411} Id.
\textsuperscript{412} Id.
\textsuperscript{413} Schopler & Bateson, supra note ___, at 633.
\textsuperscript{414} Id. at 634.
\textsuperscript{415} Id. at 633-34.
\textsuperscript{416} See id. at 633-36.
\textsuperscript{417} See id.
\textsuperscript{418} See id.
\textsuperscript{419} Id. at 636.
outcomes. In this situation, high dependence is created by causing an individual to endure some very poor outcomes in the relationship, though the individual knows that some very good outcomes are also possible. There are a variety of ways to deal with the emotional tension associated with high dependence, one of which is “to conform to the powerful partner’s wishes, attitudes, and opinions.” Conformity in this context, means selecting behavior sequences which are seen as desired by the partner. Such conformity can increase the counter-power of the conformist and thereby reduce the range of experienced outcomes. The following example is illustrative:

[T]he more powerful member, A, states an opinion that he wishes his partner, B, to adopt, although it will be assumed to hold true anytime a states or implies a preference among B’s behaviors. By giving an opinion he wishes his partner to adopt, A is in effect both making B fully cognizant of what little power he does have at present and indicating that B can increase his power. He teaches B about his (B’s) present power resources in the following way. A demonstrates to B that he prefers some of B’s behaviors (namely, those which indicate B’s adoption of the opinion) over others (namely, those which indicate that B has not adopted the opinion). In this way A makes salient to B the fact that B can move him through a range of outcomes. The relationship between the two men is now one of mutual dependence each has the ability to reward or punish the other. If A now gives low outcomes to B, B can retaliate by indicating to A that he has rejected A’s opinion. If A wishes to maximize the outcomes he receives from B, and assuming that he has no strong dislike for B, he will have to eliminate from his repertoire those behaviors that give poor outcomes to B. Therefore B’s conformity should have the effect of restricting the range of outcomes he experiences in interaction with A to the good ones only. Moreover the request that B adopt his opinion also presents B with the prospect of [the] future increasing his power over A. If B complies with A’s request, the mere act of obedience is likely to be gratifying to A, as is the fact that B has provided consensual validation for A’s opinion.

Schopler and Bateson replicated the severe-initiation and control conditions used by Aronson and Mills. In addition, they ran a third condition (the “disparage” condition) that was identical to the severe initiation condition except that, after subjects were initiated but before they heard the discussion, the experimenter “incidentally” remarked that he personally had found previous discussions to be “pretty dull” and that the present discussion “… probably won’t be all exciting.” This group was added to test the hypothesis that “… when an [experimenter] makes a negative comment about a discussion, the [subjects] will give it a lower rating than when the [experimenter] implies approval.”

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420 Id.
421 Id. at 634.
422 Id.
423 Id.
424 Id.
425 Id. at 635.
426 Id. at 641.
427 Id. at 646.
Schopler and Bateson found, as Aronson and Mills had before, that subjects in the severe initiation condition valued the discussion more highly than subjects in the control condition. They also found that subjects in the disparage condition gave a lower rating for the group than did the subjects in the severe condition. These results led to the general conclusion that subjects who undergo severe initiations for membership in a group are more likely to conform to an experimenter’s expectation that they should like or dislike the group.

The Schopler and Bateson experiment also revealed results that are inconsistent with the dissonance explanation of the severity-attraction relationship. According to dissonance theory, subjects in the severe initiation condition who felt most embarrassed by the initiation should have rated the discussion group most favorably. Contrary to this hypothesis, the opposite relationship was observed. Subjects in the severe condition who felt most embarrassed rated the group less favorably than those who felt less embarrassed. This finding suggests that subjects in the Aronson and Mills experiment gave a high rating of the discussion group not to reduce dissonance, but to satisfy the experimenter’s implicit expectation that they should like the group. More generally, it suggests that the subject-experimenter interaction is critical in determining how subjects will rate the group.

**ii. Affiliation Theory**

Lodewijkx and Syroit offered a different interpretation of the severity-attraction relationship. They argued that the severity-attraction relationship could best be explained by Schachter’s work on affiliation under threat. According to affiliation theory, individuals who go through stressful or threatening situations will seek the company and comfort of others who have gone through similar situations and who share the same emotional experience. The need for affiliation arises when people do not know how to react or label their emotions in a given situation. In other words, people facing threat or danger affiliate in order to compare the appropriateness of their emotional reactions with the reactions of other people.

Lodewijkx and Syroit contended that the need for affiliation during threatening “real life” initiations would be “reflected in the exchange of rewarding interactions, social approval and companionship among the initiated novices.” Companionship, in this instance, means a short-term, rewarding, and spontaneous interaction. During these companionate exchanges, “...
Contact with others is sought voluntarily” with the “only intention and goal [being] pleasure.” These companionate exchanges display themselves in various ways, including “having a few laughs with another person ... making jokes and chatting, or ... talking about personal things like hobbies, sports etc.”

Lodewijkx and Syroit assumed that initiations are threatening. The study consisted of two longitudinal field studies conducted amongst newcomers of two different Dutch student organizations. The first study (study one) involved a sample of 202 undergraduate females who agreed to undergo a severe initiation for membership into a sorority. The second study (study two) consisted of forty-six students (20 male, 26 female) who consented to a mild initiation for membership in a “progressive” and “historically religious” student organization.

The study tested four hypotheses. As many studies found prior, Lodewijkx and Syroit expected a positive correlation between the severity of the initiation and the newcomers’ liking for the group (H1). Further, they expected that feelings of frustration and anger would mediate the relationship between severity and group attractiveness (H2). The second set of hypotheses departs from the earlier studies on the effects of severe initiations. Building upon Schachter’s affiliation theory, Lodewijkx and Syroit proposed an affiliation-attraction hypothesis (AAH). The AAH predicted that, irrespective of their severity, initiations induce a common fate increasing the newcomers’ attraction to the group through the process of companionate exchanges (H3). It also predicted that “… companionship would mediate the severity-attraction relationship[,]” such that “the expected severity and group attractiveness will disappear when statistically controlling for companionship” (H4).

Results of this study indicated no support for the dissonance interpretation of the severity-attraction relationship, at least in the context of a longitudinal study involving “real life” groups. The data showed a negative relationship between severity of initiation and attractiveness of the group. The results also revealed that severe initiations induce feelings of loneliness, depression and frustration, and that these negative moods lead to lower attractiveness ratings of the group. Lodewijkx and Syroit contend these results are consistent with the earlier findings of Schopler and Bateson. As discussed above, Schopler and Bateson found a negative relationship between strong embarrassment and group attraction in their severe initiation condition. The results of both studies contradict the dissonance hypothesis of the effects of a severe initiation. The results can be construed, therefore, as indicating that
loneliness, depress, frustration, and embarrassment are all important variables in the severity-attraction relationship because these negative moods lead to less favorable cognitions about the group. It should be noted, however, that low attractiveness of the group does not necessarily mean that newcomers are willing to leave the group. There are other factors that might weigh equally in the decision to leave or to join. For example, the newcomers might also consider the “[t]he possibility of future friendship bonds with a few individual members and the likelihood of amelioration after the initiation is over” in determining whether they will remain in the group.

Lodewijkx and Syroit recognized that the divergent results between the laboratory experiments and their longitudinal field study may attribute to any of the differences between the two settings. For example, the subjects in the laboratory experiments did not have the expectation that they would be subjected to a harsh and perhaps demeaning initiation. The initiates in the field study had such expectations. The laboratory experiments were characterized by a fate-control relationship between the experimenters and the subjects, while such a relationship did not exist in the field settings. Moreover, “… the settings also differ with respect to the use of severe treatment of the newcomers as a selection device.” In the laboratory situation, subjects were informed that they were the only ones who were required to take a screening test before they were admitted to the group. The same is not true for the field studies.

Lodewijkx and Syroit also found partial evidence indicating support for their AAH. A path analysis was conducted on the affiliate exchanges newcomers had with their counterparts throughout the initiation. The results showed a “positive but non-significant” relationship between the newcomers self-reported affiliate exchanges and group attractiveness. A comparison of the results in studies one and two revealed that the severity of the initiation is not an important variable in fostering companionate exchanges. Severe initiations do not foster stronger companionate exchanges than mild initiations.

The results of this study do not support Aronson and Mills’ dissonance interpretation of the severity-attraction hypothesis. The results instead support a general “initiation-attraction” relationship, which suggests that newcomers become more attached to the group through companionate exchanges that result from initiation conditions in general. As the authors note, this study suffered from at least two methodological limitations. First, the separate studies only provide correlational data, compromising causality. Second, in the absence of a “no initiation”

454 Lodewijkx & Syroit, supra note __, at 296.
455 Id. at 298.
456 Id.
457 Id. at 296.
458 Id.
459 Id.
460 Id.
461 Id.
462 Id.
463 Id. at 286.
464 Id.
465 Id. at 288.
control group, there was no evidence as to whether an initiation is necessary for companionate exchanges to increase group liking. Further studies on these two topics would help determine whether “positive treatment” of newcomers would be an effective socialization tactic in “real life” groups.

D. Stockholm Syndrome

Stockholm Syndrome is a paradoxical psychological phenomenon wherein affectional bonds develop between hostages and their captors. There have been various theories proposed to describe and explain the phenomenon. Most individuals working in the field of crisis negotiation agree that “Stockholm Syndrome is an automatic, often unconscious, emotional response to the trauma of victimization.” The condition is not a result from a hostage’s rational choice that the most advantageous and safe from of behavior is to befriend his captor.

Other researchers describe Stockholm Syndrome as a form of “… identification with the aggressor.” This concept was coined in 1936 by Anna Freud who explained it as a basic form of ego defense against anxiety in a traumatic situation. Through such identification, the ego “… avoid[s] the wrath and potential punishment of the enemy.” The “identification with the aggressor” concept is often used in evaluating incidents of domestic violence, or when there is a preexisting relationship between the victim and the offender. In the context of hostage-taking, however, the definition of Stockholm Syndrome is “restrict[ed] ... to include the essential element of no prior relationship between the hostage and the hostage-taker prior to the incident taking place.”

a. Diagnostic Criteria for Stockholm Syndrome

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467 Nathalie de Fabrique, et al., supra note __, at 92.

468 Id.

469 Id.

470 See id.

471 Id.

472 Id.

473 Id. (hostage-taking has been defined as “the holding of one or more persons against their will with the actual or implied use of force.”); Id. (citation omitted) (this definition does not “delineate whether the subject and victim are, or were, previously known to each other.”) Yet, authorities working in the field of crisis negotiation have limited the definition to include only those situations where there is no previous relationship between the victim and the perpetrator(s).; Id. (the authors did not provide further explanation for why authorities have narrowed the definition in this way. The reason appears to be based upon anecdotal evidence provided by a veteran law enforcement officer.); See Nathalie de Fabrique, Vincent B. Hassett, Gregory M. Vecchi, & Stephen J. Romano, Understanding Stockholm Syndrome, in 76 FBI L. ENFORCEMENT BULL. 1, 12-13 (July 2007), http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/law-enforcement-bulletin/2007-pdfs/july07eb.pdf/at_download/file (discussing the experience of a retired FBI investigator who reported that “for Stockholm Syndrome to occur, the incident must take place between two strangers”).
There is no precise, universally accepted definition of Stockholm Syndrome. According to experts in the field of crisis management, Stockholm Syndrome usually consists of three components that may occur separately or in combination with one another: “negative feelings on the part of the hostage toward authorities, positive feelings on the part of the hostage toward the hostage-taker, and positive feelings reciprocated by the hostage-taker toward the hostage.” These characteristics fall along a continuum, such that an individual may show different degrees of each.

Not all individuals in hostage situations fall victim to Stockholm Syndrome. In addition to the contextual variables listed above, a number of personality characteristics are relevant to whether an individual develops Stockholm Syndrome. A 2005 study by Paul Wong suggests that individuals with any combination of the following characteristics are most vulnerable:

… lacking a core set of values that define one’s identity; lacking a core sense of meaning and purpose for one’s life; lacking a track record of overcoming difficulties; lacking a strong interpersonal faith in God’s character and goodness; feeling that one’s life has always been controlled by powerful others; having a strong need of approval by authority figures; and wishing to be somebody else.

Accordingly, researchers seeking a better understanding of Stockholm Syndrome should consider both the contextual variables and personality characteristics associated with its development.

b. Case Analysis

A recent study by de Fabrique et al. examines the factors associated with the development of Stockholm Syndrome. In that study, the researchers reviewed five crisis situations in which some or all of the Stockholm Syndrome indicators were present at the time of a resolution. The case information was obtained from the Hostage Barricade Database System of the FBI’s Crisis Negotiation Unit. The study included only cases involving “hostage-takings” and addressed how developing Stockholm Syndrome can increase the likelihood of hostage survival. As discussed below, some, but not all, of the factors thought vital to the development of Stockholm Syndrome received confirmation in this study.

Previous research speculates that a key factor influencing the development of Stockholm Syndrome is that the duration of the captivity. Many studies have suggested that the hostage

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474 de Fabrique, et. al., Common Variables, supra note __, at 92.
475 See id. at 92-97.
476 See id. at 97-98.
477 Id. at 98 (citation omitted).
478 Id. at 93.
479 Id.
480 See id. at 96.
must remain in captivity for a “significant length of time.” The primary difficulty with this variable is determining what constitutes temporal significance. In the cases examined by de Fabrique et al., for example, none of the incidents exceeded seven hours, yet some victims reported signs of Stockholm Syndrome. The researchers recognize that seven hours probably feels like a very long time to those individuals being held hostage, but question the validity of this factor because there have been other scenarios in which the incident lasted days or weeks and the hostage(s) did not develop Stockholm Syndrome.

The researchers also cast doubt on the notion that hostage-takers must refrain from physically abusing or verbally threatening the hostage. They point to one case in which “the female hostage was not only taken from her home and family in the middle of the night, she also reported that [both captors] physically and verbally abused her during the car chase and the ensuing standoff with the police.” While this incident seems to “contradict” the assumption that a lack of physical and verbal abuse is necessary to the development of Stockholm Syndrome, it should be noted that de Fabrique et al. did not fully understand what the victim meant by “abuse” and whether her “perception of being physically or verbally abused differs from what police and mental health experts, who have studied this phenomenon, may have defined as abuse or maltreatment.” Solving this conceptual problem would aid psychologists in explaining the indicators of Stockholm Syndrome.

The case analysis supports assumption that interpersonal communication and physical proximity are factors that influence the development of Stockholm Syndrome. In all of the cases examined, “the hostages were free to communicate, and were in close physical proximity to the hostage-takers.” Confirmation of this variable led the researchers to speculate that close physical proximity between the victim and the captor creates an emotional bond that leads to the development of an “us against them” philosophy. The researchers also maintained that whether a hostage succumbs to Stockholm Syndrome is “more strongly influenced” by the proximity variable, rather than the duration of the captivity or the existence of abuse.

Moreover, of the five cases reviewed in this study, four of them involved situations in which multiple hostages were taken. Indicators of Stockholm Syndrome were found in a majority of the victims; however, several victims denied experiencing feelings and emotions associated with the condition. Accordingly, de Fabrique et al., suggest that future studies

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481 Id. (citation omitted).
482 Id.
483 Id.
484 Id.
485 Id. at 96-97.
486 Id. at 97.
487 Id. at 96-97.
488 Id. at 97.
489 Id.
490 Id.
491 Id.
492 Id.
493 Id.
494 Id.
include “[a]n assessment of the personality characteristics of hostages involved in the same incidents where different outcomes occurred[,]” and “of those who have apparently resisted [the syndrome].” A more nuanced understanding of the cognitive and emotional traits that contribute to the development (and resistance) of Stockholm Syndrome would be helpful in describing and explaining the phenomenon in academic literature.

E. Investment Model

The investment model is a process-oriented theory, which is based on the constructs of traditional exchange theory and extends the basic principles of interdependence theory. As discussed in Part I, interdependence theory holds that satisfaction with and attraction to an association is a function of the discrepancy between the outcome value of the at-issue relationship and the individual’s expectations concerning the quality of relationships in general. The goal of the investment model is to predict an individual’s degree of satisfaction with and commitment to a particular social relationship. Rusbult and Farrell applied the investment model to examine satisfaction, commitment and turnover in employment relationships. Rusbult and Farrell’s investment model conceives of four variables that influence satisfaction, commitment and turnover in the workplace: job rewards, job costs, alternative quality, and investment size.

Satisfaction can be defined as the degree of positive affect associated with a relationship. An individual’s job satisfaction is reflected in the degree to which he or she positively evaluates his or her job. Rusbult and Farrell’s investment model predicts that satisfaction with an employment relationship will be greater to the extent that the organization offers high rewards and low costs.

Commitment, however, is a more complex phenomenon. Rusbult and Farrell’s investment model posits that satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment size work together to produce job commitment. Rusbult and Farrell define commitment as the “…likelihood that in individual will stick with a job, and feel psychologically attached to it, whether it is satisfying or not.” That is, commitment is influenced not only by level of satisfaction, but also by an individual’s quality of alternatives and investment size. Quality of alternatives is a concept borrowed from Thaibuat and Kelley’s interdependence theory, and refers to the quality of the best available alternative to the existing relationship. In the employment context, his or

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495 Id. at 98.
497 See id. at 437.
498 Id. at 430-31.
499 See id. at 430, 436.
500 Id. at 430.
501 Id.
502 Id.
503 Id.
504 See id (citation omitted).
her perceived ability to find a different job serves as a measure for an individual’s alternative quality. \footnote{Id.}

Investment size concerns the amount of resources put into a relationship. \footnote{Id. at 431.} Investments can be classified as either intrinsic or extrinsic. \footnote{Id.} Intrinsic investments are resources put directly into the employment relationship (e.g., years of service, non-portable training, non-vested portions of retirement programs), whereas extrinsic investments are resources or benefits developed over time as a result of employment relationships (e.g., housing arrangements that facilitate travel to and from work, friends at work, extraneous benefits uniquely associated with a particular job). \footnote{Id. at 432.} The investment model contends that in situations where investments are of the non-portable type, and would thus be lost upon dissolution of the relationship, individuals who have made such investments should be more committed to the relationship. \footnote{See id.} The Rusbult-Farrell model also acknowledges that since employees tend to accumulate investments over time, employees should become more committed to the job over a period of time. \footnote{Id.} In total, the investment model predicts that job commitment will be greater to the extent that satisfaction is high, alternative quality is poor, and investments are great.

The subjects in the study were eighty-eight newly hired accountants and nurses who were members of their respective professional service organizations. \footnote{Id.} Initial contact with each subject was made within two weeks of entry into the professional organization. \footnote{Id. at 433.} On that occasion, 136 employees completed the first questionnaire, which concerned their willingness to complete additional. The eighty-eight subjects who agreed to participate completed one questionnaire every four months, for a total of four questionnaires over the one-year period. The questionnaires, though written in lay language, contained items designed to measure all elements of the investment model. \footnote{Id. at 434.} Subjects continued to participate in the study until they (or company records) reported separation from the firm. \footnote{Id.} Twenty-eight of the eighty-eight (32%) subjects voluntarily left the organization in the first year. \footnote{Id. at 435.}

As noted, Rusbult and Farrell examined the nexus between commitment and voluntary employee turnover. Previous studies found that decreases in commitment preceded turnover. Though suggestive, the previous studies remain unclear about the direct effect of commitment on turnover. \footnote{Id. at 430.} Rusbult and Farrell hypothesized that turnover was a direct function of job commitment. \footnote{Id.} Accordingly, they proposed that declines in rewards, increases in costs,
divestiture (i.e., declines in investment size) and improvements in job alternatives would lead to decreases in commitment, and in turn, job turnover.\textsuperscript{518}

Rusbult and Farrell conducted correlation and multiple regression analyses to determine the best predictors of job satisfaction for both groups of employees.\textsuperscript{519} The results show that job satisfaction significantly correlated with reward and cost values at each phase of data collection. A two-factor multiple regression analysis confirmed that the reward and cost values significantly predicted job satisfaction for both groups.\textsuperscript{520} Subsequent multiple regression analyses revealed that adding investment-size and alternative-quality variables to the two-factor model (rewards and costs) did not improve the prediction of job satisfaction for either group.\textsuperscript{521} Accordingly, the most accurate prediction of job satisfaction for both groups followed from a two-factor model consisting of the reward and cost values of the job.\textsuperscript{522}

A full four-factor model provided the best prediction of job commitment for those who stayed.\textsuperscript{523} However, the results differed for those who left. Job commitment for those who left was significantly correlated with rewards, costs, investment size and alternative quality.\textsuperscript{524} The multiple regression analysis of these four factors onto job commitment was also significant.\textsuperscript{525} A subsequent regression analysis revealed that the investment size factor could be eliminated without reducing the model’s predictive power.\textsuperscript{526} Thus, the most accurate model for predicting job commitment for those who left consisted of job rewards, job costs, and alternative quality.\textsuperscript{527}

Although investment size was unnecessary to the prediction of commitment for those who left, the zero-order correlation between investment size and commitment was significant, and decline in investment size did not distinguish the employees who left from those who stayed.\textsuperscript{528} Rusbult and Farrell thus speculated that the non-significant contribution of investment size to the prediction of commitment resulted from multicollinearity.\textsuperscript{529} They alternatively suggested that employees who left might have reported low commitment regardless of the degree invested in their jobs, or that some individuals in the group may not possess the time to invest much in their jobs because they quit at such early stages of employment.\textsuperscript{530}

Rusbult and Farrell found that investment the model variables did not effectively distinguish employees who stayed from those who left. A comparison of the mean levels of each model variable revealed that those who left did not experience “… lower levels of rewards or
investments or higher levels of costs of alternative value than did those who stayed.\textsuperscript{531} As predicted, the “process of change” is what distinguished between the two groups.\textsuperscript{532} That is, employees who left experienced greater decline in rewards, increase in costs, declines in investments, and improvements in alternative quality than did those who stayed.\textsuperscript{533} These findings provided “strong support” for investment model predictions about the process by which commitment increases and declines over time.\textsuperscript{534}

Rusbult and Farrell conducted three types of analyses to evaluate the role of commitment in predicting job turnover.\textsuperscript{535} First, they compared mean job commitment level between groups and found that employees who left had “significantly lower” commitment levels than those who stayed.\textsuperscript{536} Next, they computed average decline in commitment scores and found that those who left “… evidenced significantly greater decline in commitment over time than did those who stayed.”\textsuperscript{537} In other words, “those who left became less committed to their jobs over time.”\textsuperscript{538} Rusbult and Farrell then assessed the role of commitment in directly influencing employees’ stay or leave decisions. A series of multiple correlational analyses revealed that the “[d]ecline in commitment and the stay or leave measure were strongly correlated” and that the “multiple correlation between stay or leave and decline in job rewards, costs, alternatives, and investments was also significant.”\textsuperscript{539} However, when “the decline in commitment measure was added to [the] four-factor equation … the prediction of staying or leaving improved substantially.”\textsuperscript{540} Moreover, “adding the decline in commitment measure to the four-factor equation also resulted in substantial reductions in the standardized regression coefficient for rewards, costs, alternatives, and investments.”\textsuperscript{541} Rusbult and Farrell concluded that declines in job commitment have the most direct and powerful impact on employees’ stay-leave decisions.\textsuperscript{542}

In summary, Rusbult and Farrell’s study confirmed the general proposition that employees experience greater job satisfaction when rewards exceed costs, while high rewards, low costs, greater investment of resources, and poor alternative quality induce greater job commitment.\textsuperscript{543} The study also revealed that the process of change—declines in job rewards, increases in job costs, divestiture and poor alternative quality—is what distinguishes employees, who stay from those who leave.\textsuperscript{544} The results suggested that declines over time in job commitment mediates turnover.\textsuperscript{545} Subsequent studies should find that decreases in rewards,
increases in costs, divestiture, and improvements in alternative quality result in decreases in job commitment, and in turn, job turnover.\textsuperscript{546}

IV. Empirical Study

There appears to be empirical evidence to undergird the beliefs of those BGLO members who assert that “pledging” or violent hazing commits aspiring members to organizational ideals, the organizations, and each other. However, two issues remain. First, and this is mere speculation, it is doubtful that most BGLO members even apprise themselves of the literature reviewed in section III. Second, if they have, none of this research has been focused on BGLOs, so it is unknown as to whether and what extent this scholarship bears on these groups.

At least in theory, what propels this belief-system is anecdotal experience—a personal (or awareness of others who have a) commitment to their respective BGLO’s ideals, members, and the organization itself. What may also undergird this belief system is, quite simply, a need for it.

In short, BGLO members may be motivated to believe that violent hazing has some utility.\textsuperscript{547} Social cognition research notes the ways in which “hot” or “emotional” concepts have motivational influences on cognition.\textsuperscript{548} Motivated cognition is self-deceptive. For example, challenges to ones’ preexisting beliefs trigger negative affect, which in turn, results in an increase in the intensity of cognitive processing.\textsuperscript{549} That added processing potentially results in new evidence that is more fitting with one’s already-held beliefs. When that new information is affirming of the already-held belief, the urgency dissipates, and the decision-making process ends.\textsuperscript{550} In addition, motivated cognition may lead people to gather evidence that is consistent with the beliefs they already hold.\textsuperscript{551} And that motivated manner in which people may engage in both of these processes (cognitive processing and seeking-out evidence) may lie outside of conscious awareness.\textsuperscript{552} In this section, via empirical methods, we attempt to provide some well-researched and nuanced answers about the effects of hazing on membership commitment within BGLOs.

a. Methods

Sample

\textsuperscript{546} Id.
\textsuperscript{547} It is our contention that proponents of BGLO hazing may believe in hazing’s utility, absent supporting facts, because they are motivated to believe so. Still, a similar finding can be found among BGLO hazing opponents. Aside from the opponents’ moral and legal arguments, arguably, their assertions that hazing does not facilitate the types of commitments that proponents believe are often based on mere anecdotal evidence. Even hard data gleaned from specific BGLOs’ membership rolls often lack nuance, simply focusing on when BGLO members were initiated into their respective organizations.
\textsuperscript{549} Leonard S. Newman, Motivated Cognition and Self-Deception, 10 PSYCHOL. INQUIRY 59, 60 (1999).
\textsuperscript{550} Id.
\textsuperscript{551} Id. at 60-61.
\textsuperscript{552} Id. at 60-61, 62.
The sample \( n=1,357 \) was comprised by a female majority (62.1% female) and an overwhelming majority of African-Americans (90.9%), followed by Caribbean (2.8%), African (1.8%), Caucasian (1.1%), and self-identified “others” (3.4%). The mean age was 40.41 (standard deviation = 12.9). 96.5% self-identified as heterosexual. 87.1% indicated they were Christian, followed by spiritual, but not religious (7.5%), with others indicating Islam, Bahá’í, Judaism, none, or other.

**Measures**

Attitudes toward Membership Intake Process (MIP). There were 11 items \( (\alpha=.91) \) that assessed attitudes toward membership intake process as a form of initiation. Example items included “MIP has effectively eliminated hazing within my fraternity/sorority,” and “Generally, MIP is sufficient for the needs of my fraternity/sorority.” Items were scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with higher values indicating more positive evaluations of MIP.

Membership Process. Participants were asked to describe the process by which they joined the fraternity or sorority. Choices were (1) pledging, (2) membership intake process (MIP), and a combination of pledging and MIP. The modal category was a combination process (43.8%), followed by pledging (32.8%), and MIP only (23.4%).

Current membership Type: The overwhelming majority (91.5%) of the respondents were alumni, while the remaining (8.5%) were college members.

Chapter Initiation Type: Most (74.1%) of participants indicated they were initiated through a college chapter, with the remaining (25.9%) initiated through an alumni chapter.

Ghost Membership: members who pledged and crossed into a chapter, but were never initiated into the national organization are referred to as “ghost members.” Only 1.6% fell into this category.

Year of Initiation. There was a wide range of when participants were initiated, from 1945 to 2010. (mean=2002; median=1998).

Fraternity/Sorority: Paralleling gender, the majority of respondents were members of a sorority (60.5%)

Region. Participants were asked to indicate the state in which they were initiated. States were combined to represent major geographic regions in the United States and abroad. Nearly half (47.3%) indicated they were initiated in the southeast. The Midwest was the second most common region (21.0%), followed by the northeast and Washington D. C. (19.3%), southwest (5.0%), west (4.2%), and international (0.8%).

Type of College/University. Most participants (60.5%) attended Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), followed by Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) (38.3%).
Organizational Commitment. Organizational commitment was assessed by a modified version of an organizational commitment scale, developed by John P. Meyer and Natalie J. Allen. The items were adapted to apply to general organizational commitment, as opposed to workplace commitment specifically (which was the original intent of the measure). Three subscales comprise this measure. Affective commitment refers to being emotionally attached, content, and connected to one’s organization (7 items; \( \alpha = .85 \)). Continuance commitment (6 items; \( \alpha = .80 \)) describes the fear, difficulty, or having a lack of other options that prevents one from leaving their organization. Lastly, normative commitment (revised) indicates the extent to which an individual feels a sense of obligation, guilt, and loyalty to one’s organization (6 items; \( \alpha = .88 \)).

Financially Active Members and Peers. Participants were asked to indicate whether they were currently financially active with their organization, as well as whether the peers with whom they crossed were financially active. These items were strongly correlated (\( r = .78 \)), and thus summed to form a composite measure.

Grade Point Average. Respondents were asked to indicate their grade point average (on a four-point scale) at the end of their membership intake process. The mean GPA listed was 3.05 (standard deviation= .54).

Communication. Participants were asked to indicate how many of the individuals with whom they crossed have communicated in the last three months. The response categories included none (1), a few (2), some (3), most (4), and all (5). The mean score was 3.03, indicating that the average respondent remains in contact with most of the brothers/sisters with whom they crossed.

Organizational Participation. This construct was assessed with two items: (1) “In the past year, how many of your fraternity/sorority’s national programs have you participated in?”; and (2) “In the past four years, how many of your fraternity/sorority’s state, regional, or national conferences/conventions have you registered for and attended?” These items were strongly correlated (\( r = .68 \)), and thus summed to form a composite measure.

Hazing Experiences. Participants were asked whether or not they were subjected to hazing as part of their initiation process. They were presented with a total of 27 different acts, ranging from relatively mild and positive (e.g., pledges required to perform community service) to severe and dangerous (e.g., pledges being hit with hands/feet, paddles, or other objects) forms of hazing. The mean number of different acts participants reported was 16.29 (standard deviation= 7.44; range 0 to 27), indicating many participants were subjected to a wide variety of hazing behaviors.

Procedure

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In order to reach as many individuals as possible, emails and listservs were used. In 2003, one of the authors began compiling an email list of BGLO members and chapters. From that time until the time of this study, the author selected email addresses from organizational directories and Yahoo groups as well as chapter, district, provincial and regional websites for Alpha Phi Alpha, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, Omega Psi Phi, Delta Sigma Theta, Phi Beta Sigma, Zeta Phi Beta, Sigma Gamma Rho, and Iota Phi Theta. At the time of this study, the author had an email list of approximately 30,000 email contacts. In the emails and listserv announcements, individuals were provided some basic information that indicated one of the study’s authors was conducting a study about experiences and opinions of Historically Black College and University. Recipients were provided a hyperlink to the study.

Once a recipient clicked on the hyperlink, they were redirected to an online survey (using Qualtrics). The survey began with an explanation of the purposes and goals of the study, followed by a question inquiring as to whether or not they were interested in participating. If the recipient checked “yes,” they were redirected to an informed consent page (approved by an institutional review board). Recipients agreed to participate by clicking an acceptance to participate radio button. At that point, recipients became study participants and were asked a series of questions. As detailed above (under Measures), questions were descriptive (e.g., age, race, type of college attended), attitudinal (e.g., organizational commitment), and behavioral (e.g., experiences with hazing). Participants were provided with the opportunity to withdraw at any time. Anonymity was guaranteed. Specifically, one author of the study collected all the data, which was de-identified by the Qualtrics computer system. Thus, no IP addresses were collected, which made all responses anonymous. Upon completion of the survey, participants were thanked for their time and cooperation.

b. Results

Beliefs

The mean score on attitudes toward MIP was 40.64 (standard deviation=16.60; range of 12 to 84). This score indicates that many participants endorsed moderate levels of acceptance of MIP, with relatively few either not endorsing it or strongly endorsing it.

The core issues examined in this section are how different aspects of membership, organizational commitment and participation, and demographics are related to attitudes toward MIP. Analyses indicated that the process by which the participant joined the fraternity/sorority was significantly related to the endorsement of MIP (F (2, 1378) = 47.03, p < .001). Post hoc tests indicate that those who went through MIP had significantly higher evaluations of MIP than those who only pledged or did a combined pledge and MIP. College inductees (t (503.997) = -6.61, p < .001) were significantly less likely to hold positive attitudes toward MIP. There were no significant differences in MIP attitudes among current college (as opposed to alumni) members, nor among those who were ghost members (compared to those who were initiated into the national chapter). Those who were initiated more recently (r (1307) = .06, p = .02) and had a shorter pledge process (r (1309) = .10, p < .001) were more likely to endorse MIP, although these relationships were weak. Lastly, sorority members were significantly more likely to endorse MIP than fraternity members (t (1205.383) = 2.72, p = .007).
There was evidence that location of schooling influenced their attitudes about the initiation process. There was significant variation in the endorsement of MIP across geographic regions ($F_{(5, 1372)} = 9.37, p < .001$). Post hoc analyses indicate that respondents initiated in the northeast were significantly less likely to hold positive views of MIP compared to those initiated in the southeast, midwest, and southwest. There was no difference between those in the northeast and west. International inductees were more likely than all other regions to positively evaluate MIP. The type of educational institution was significantly related to the endorsement of the continuation of hazing practices ($F_{(2, 1377)} = 6.54, p < .001$). Post hoc tests reveal that those attending historically black colleges are significantly less likely to endorse MIP than those who attend predominantly white institutions. “Other” institutions were not significantly different from historically black colleges or predominantly white colleges.

Organization commitment and participation were largely unrelated to attitudes about MIP. For instance, those who held positive attitudes toward MIP scored higher on continuance commitment ($r_{(1366)} = .05, p = .046$), but lower on normative commitment ($r_{(1370)} = -.06, p = .032$). There was no relationship between MIP attitudes and affective commitment, organizational participation, or being (currently) financially active in the fraternity/sorority.

A variety of demographic factors were also examined. Race, sexual orientation, and religious affiliation were unrelated to views on MIP. Participants who were female ($t_{(1109.44)} = 2.61, p = .009$) and older ($r_{(1291)} = .25, p < .001$) were significantly more likely to endorse the continued use of hazing in the future.

Given that the handful of empirical studies on BGLO members’ attitudes about the means by which members were brought into the organizations found that beliefs about the utility of MIP in facilitating commitment to other members, the organizations, and their ideals, we explored those variables as well. We analyzed what percentage of members either agreed or disagreed with the following three questions that were part of the 11-item Attitudes toward MIP measure: (1) MIP is sufficient to build brotherhood/sisterhood among initiates to my fraternity/sorority (Agree, 30.6%; Disagree, 59.8%); (2) MIP is sufficient to help aspirants develop commitment to my fraternity/sorority (Agree, 34.1%; Disagree, 55.6%); and (3) Generally, MIP is sufficient for the needs of my fraternity/sorority (Agree, 27.0%; Disagree, 59.8%).

Truth

Several analyses were performed to assess whether the type of initiation was related to important and desired outcomes. Type of initiation was related to GPA ($F_{(2, 1440)} = 52.68, p < .001$). Post hoc tests indicate that those who went through MIP had higher GPAs than those who pledged only and those who had a combined pledge and MIP experience. Those with the combined pledge and MIP had significantly higher GPAs than those who pledged only.

554 See supra notes ___ to ___ and accompanying text.
Type of initiation was also related to financial participation of the study participants ($F_{(2, 1593)} = 4.50, p = .011$) as well as the peers who crossed at the same time they did ($F_{(2, 1619)} = 5.37, p = .005$). Specifically, those who went through MIP were less financially active than those who went through the combined pledge and MIP. Conversely, the financial activity of one’s peers (who crossed at the same time) was higher among those who went through MIP compared to those who did the combined pledge and MIP.

Continued communication with individuals with whom one crossed was significantly related to type of initiation ($F_{(2, 1579)} = 25.73, p < .001$). Post hoc analyses indicate that those who went through the combined pledge and MIP were significantly more likely to remain in touch with those with whom they crossed compared to both those who pledged only or those who went through the combined (pledge and MIP) process.

For the most part, organizational participation and commitment were unrelated to the type of initiation. For instance, type of initiation was unrelated to organizational participation, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. The only significant relation was with affective commitment ($F_{(2, 1527)} = 6.19, p = .002$). Those who went through MIP had lower ratings of affective commitment than those who pledged only or those who went through the combined (pledge and MIP) process.

A second set of analyses focused on whether being hazed was related to specific desired outcomes. Participants were asked whether or not they were subjected to hazing as part of their initiation process. They were presented with a total of 27 different acts, ranging from relatively mild and positive (e.g., pledges required to perform community service) to severe and dangerous (e.g., pledges being hit with hands/feet, paddles, or other objects) forms of hazing. The mean number of different acts participants reported was 16.29 (standard deviation = 7.44; range 0 to 27). These results indicate that many participants were subjected to a wide variety of hazing behaviors.

The next series of analyses focused on what factors related to being hazed. Those who experienced more types of hazing behavior were significantly, but weakly, more likely to be financially active with their organization, ($r_{(1324)} = .07, p = .013$), and have higher ratings on affective ($r_{(1343)} = .13, p < .001$) and normative ($r_{(1335)} = .14, p < .001$) commitment. Yet, being hazed was unrelated to continuance commitment. A slightly stronger positive relationship was observed between higher levels of hazing and staying in communication with those who initiated at the same time as the participant ($r_{(1328)} = .26, p < .001$). However, being hazed was negatively related to the financial activity of those with whom the participant was initiated ($r_{(1345)} = -.17, p < .001$). Lastly, one’s level of hazing was unrelated to past year participation in national programs, as well as participation in state, regional, and national conference/conventions attended within the past four years.

**Conclusion**

Black Greek-Letter Organizations are unique organizations with both a particular identity and a particular set of needs. Scholars have argued that the BGLO identity is defined as personal excellence (largely defined in terms of high academic achievement), the development and
sustaining of fictive-kinship ties (i.e., brotherhood and sisterhood), and dedication to uplifting African American communities.555 Accordingly, these organizations need members who are not only committed to these ideals but also committed, in practical ways, to the organizations themselves via dues payment, meeting attendance, and the like. These organizations require that such commitment be long-term if they are to measure-up to their identity ideal. These organizational needs, the beliefs among members about how they can best be actualized, the factual basis of these beliefs, and the growing constraints of the civil and criminal law, have created a conundrum for BGLOs.

The process by which BGLO members come into their organizations is a complicated matter. Ultimately, it appears that “pledging” has a negative relationship with academic performance among newly initiated BGLO members. Those who define the process by which they were brought into their organization as consisting of both MIP and pledging are more connected to those with whom they were initiated than those who simply pledged or went through MIP. Those who define the process by which they were brought into their organization as having some element of pledging are more financially active with their organization. The opposite must be said for those initiated with respondents. Having some “pledge” experience was also related to greater affective commitment to one’s BGLO than having, simply, gone through MIP. When focusing more specifically on what experiences individuals were subjected to in their pursuit of BGLO members—as opposed to, simply, what they labeled their process—those who experienced more hazing were slightly more likely to be financially active as well as be more affectively and normatively committed. Those who experienced more hazing were slightly more likely to stay in contact with those whom they were initiated. Being hazed, however, made those initiated with respondents less likely to be financially active. Importantly, being hazed had no relationship to recent participation in the community uplift activities that BGLOs are known for or to being engaged in the decision-making processes of the organizations. Finally, over 50 percent of BGLO members do not believe that the very process implemented by BGLOs to supplant hazing actualizes the needs of BGLOs, generally, and does not facilitate commitment to the organization or to other members.

In short, these findings contradict the arguments of “pledging” proponents—i.e., that it is a panacea for BGLO ills and necessary to actualize BGLOs ultimate identity. These findings also eschew the arguments that MIP advocates embrace—i.e., that “pledging” is an evil that, in total, must be abolished in order to preserve BGLOs. The reality, from this data, is that the story is much more complex. In order to realize BGLO founders’ intentions related to personal excellence, fictive-kinship ties, and African American uplift, some elements of the old process are needed to identify, attract, select, and train new members. But they are insufficient to address a wider range of needs that BGLOs have. For example, if BGLOs wish to amplify their role in the areas of civil rights and public policy, they will need several things from their members: intelligence to identify and devise novel solutions to the problems facing African Americans as they change from decade to decade, dedication to each other that is meaningful and supports systematic cooperation toward problem-solving, a true desire to engage in uplift

activities, and a commitment to ensuring the longevity of the organization(s) that make all of this possible.

The crux of the challenge is that the law attempts to place constraints on the ways in which BGLOs operate in this regard. Beliefs can be powerful motivating factors, shaping and driving people’s behavior, even in regard to violating the law. This is particularly so, within organizational contexts, people believe their behavior serves the highest ideals of the organization. While an understandable response to such behavior is for an organization to internalize law and seek to regulate such behavior, often quite harshly. However, such an approach may be highly ineffective. What may prove a more effective tactic is a focus on what BGLO members claim to hold dear—i.e., their respective organizations. The passing reference, at an organization’s national convention, about vague lawsuits pending against the organization does not suffice to curtail hazing within these groups. Rather, a deep education about both civil and criminal law governing these organizations, how they initiate members, and the impact of violations on the organizations, may prove more effective. This is particularly so if facts about the limits of “pledging” are articulated to BGLO members. This deep education, however, necessitates that BGLOs can honestly embrace the hard facts as they pertain to what activities help shape the types of members they need. To the extent that these activities violate the law, the organizations must abolish them and find a cogent way to articulate this need for abolishment to its members. But they must also be creative in developing processes that are mindful of both the ceiling that the law (and other factors) place on what types of process they can craft as well as the interstices that are pregnant with possibilities between that ceiling and the conceptual floor.

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557 See W. Jonathan Cardi et al., *Does Tort Law Deter?*, (August 9, 2011) (unpublished manuscript) (on file with Gregory S. Parks) (finding that although the threat of potential criminal sanctions had a large and statistically significant effect on subjects’ stated willingness to engage in risky behavior, the threat of potential tort liability did not).