

THE IMPACT OF MORAL JUDGMENT AND MORAL DISENGAGEMENT  
ON HAZING ATTITUDES AND BYSTANDER  
BEHAVIOR IN COLLEGE MALES

by

GENTRY RUSSELL MCCREARY

NATHANIEL BRAY, COMMITTEE CHAIR  
STEPHEN THOMA, COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR  
KATHLEEN CRAMER  
JENNIFER BENSON JONES  
WAYNE URBAN

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## ABSTRACT

Over half of students involved in collegiate clubs and organizations report that they have participated in hazing activities (Allan & Madden, 2008). Prior research has shown a link between moral development and the perpetration of various anti-social behaviors, including sexual assault (Carroll, 2009), bullying among adolescents (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorellie, 1996) and cheating and academic dishonesty among college students (Cummings, Dyas, Maddux & Kochman, 2001). To date, no studies have examined the relationships between hazing, moral judgment and moral disengagement. This study supplemented the existing explanations for hazing by hypothesizing and testing a model in which moral judgment and moral disengagement influenced hazing-supportive attitudes and willingness to intervene as a bystander in a hazing situation. Comparisons were made between fraternity members and non-members.

The Defining Issues Test-2, the Moral Disengagement Scale, and a pair of hazing and bullying vignettes were administered to undergraduate college students from four large research institutions in the Southeastern United States. The sample included both fraternity members (N=75) and non-members (N=125). The results indicated significant differences between fraternity members and non-members on measures of moral disengagement ( $t(198) = 2.22$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $d = .32$ ), moral judgment as measured by the N-2 score ( $t(198) = -2.10$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $d = -.31$ ), hazing-supportive attitude ( $t(198) = -2.73$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $d = .37$ ), and willingness to intervene as a bystander in a hazing scenario ( $t(198) = 2.06$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $d = .30$ ). Path analysis indicated a significant path for fraternity members between moral judgment, moral disengagement, and willingness to intervene as a bystander in a fraternity-hazing scenario compared to willingness to

intervene in a bullying scenario. A test of difference in independent  $R^2$  indicated differences in the paths between fraternity members and non-members. The relationship between the constructs indicates that moral development may be a valuable tool in hazing prevention, and indicates that further research in this area is needed.

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, John and Rebecca McCreary, who instilled in me a life-long dedication to learning, the belief that I could do anything I set my mind to, and the drive to achieve my goals. They never allowed me, or my siblings, to settle for “good enough,” when “better” was still possible.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

<i>a</i>	Cohen's test of internal consistency
BullyInt	Bullying intervention response, as measured by the bullying vignette
<i>d</i>	Cohen's measure of effect size
<i>df</i>	Degrees of freedom – the number of values free to vary after certain restrictions have been placed on the data
<i>F</i>	Fischer's F ratio – a ration of two variances
HazeInt	Hazing intervention response, as measured by the hazing vignette
HazeResp	Hazing response – a dichotomous measure of whether or not the student would pursue conduct charges against the fraternity depicted in the hazing vignette
IntDiff	The difference in response time between the hazing vignette and the bullying vignette
<i>M</i>	Mean – the sum of a set of measurements divided by the number of measurements in the set
MD	Moral disengagement, as measured by the Moral Disengagement Scale
N-2	N-2 score, a composite score of moral judgment, as measured by the Defining Issues Test-2
<i>n</i>	Number of members in a limited portion of the total sample
<i>N</i>	Number of members in a total sample
<i>p</i>	Probability associated with the occurrence under the null hypothesis of a value as extreme as or more extreme than the observed value
PI	Personal Interest Score, a measure of moral judgment showing the degree to which individuals use personal interest in making moral decisions
<i>r</i>	Pearson product-moment correlation

$R^2$	Measure of strength of relationship between variables
$SD$	Standard deviation
$t$	Computed value of $t$ test
$<$	Less than
$=$	Equal to

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are those among us who like to claim that there is no such thing as luck, or that we make our own luck – that everything that happens to us, good or bad, is the tangible result of something we did or did not do. I disagree. Some of the things that have had the most significant positive impact on my life have happened completely beyond the scope of my control and can only be attributed to sheer luck.

I was lucky to be born into a family with a mom and a dad who cared about me and, despite the fact that neither of them attended college, never for a second let me think that higher education was only optional. I was also lucky to have an extended family – grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles – who took an interest in my development and pushed and encouraged me throughout my educational career. I especially thank my uncle, Jack Queener, who has always encouraged and taken an active interest in my educational endeavors and was always eager to listen and share advice throughout this process.

I was lucky that my mom and dad graced me with two pretty cool siblings – my older sister Jennifer, who has always been and continues to be my role model, and my younger brother Joel, who is the funniest person I know and has become a talented and gifted educator in his own right. I thank them, and their families, for the support they have given me throughout this process.

I am lucky to have so many great friends that have helped me along the way – you all know who you are, and I can't name you all here, but know that your friendship is very much responsible for helping me make it through this process. I will only call two by name – Ben Sanders and Elizabeth Clement Webb. The two of you have been a constant support of encouragement in this endeavor and so many others. You push me to be a better person every day. I am blessed to have you both in my life.



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I was lucky the day that Ashley Carroll walked into my office at the University of Alabama to talk to me about her dissertation and to ask for my help in collecting data. Before that meeting, I had never heard of moral disengagement, had forgotten most of what I had learned in graduate school about moral judgment, and it had never been suggested to me by anyone that I take a class under Dr. Stephen Thoma. That single conversation started me down the path that eventually led to this study and what has become a big piece of my professional identity. Since that day, she has been an incredible sounding board for me, and her dissertation, which is groundbreaking in its own right, has proven an invaluable resource to me in the completion of mine.

I was lucky that my friend and colleague Nathaniel Clarkson published an article in the Sigma Nu magazine about the things the fraternal world could learn from the Stanford Prison Experiment. Until I read his article, I had never heard of the SPE, which went on to become a large piece of the framework for this study.

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I consider myself a pretty lucky guy.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Hazing is a problem impacting adolescents and young adults on many high school and college campuses (Allan & Madden, 2008). Hazing is particularly problematic in colleges and universities across the United States. Between 1838 and 1969, 35 deaths occurred on college campuses as a result of hazing or alcohol abuse. In the next thirty years, that number climbed to over 210 (Nuwer, 1999) and has continued to grow. Hollman (2002) reports that more hazing-related deaths occurred between 1990 and 2002 than all previous college and university campus deaths of that nature on record. High profile hazing deaths have resulted in the criminal conviction of college students, the indictment of college administrators, and millions of dollars in punitive and compensatory damages awarded to the families of hazing victims (Rutledge, 1998). While hazing exists on college campuses in a variety of organizational types, it is most commonly associated with social fraternities (Nuwer, 2001; Allan & Madden, 2008). Universities and fraternal organizations devote a tremendous amount of resources in terms of both time and money to combating hazing, yet it persists. According to Campuspeak, a company that provides speakers and training programs to a variety of educational institutions and organizations, college campuses and national fraternal organizations spent nearly \$700,000 with their company for hazing prevention programs between January 2009 and December 2010 (T. J. Sullivan, personal communication, May 24, 2011). The problem is so pervasive that some campuses have gone so far as to ban fraternities and sororities from their campuses because of liability concerns related to alcohol and hazing (Trustee Task Force on Greek Life, 2002).

While there are studies that have examined the perceived negative impacts of hazing, there is no high-quality research showing the long-term negative impacts of hazing victimization. Much of what we know regarding the impact of hazing comes from anecdotal evidence. In the short term, hazing victims have reporting experiencing physical trauma, depression and anxiety, feelings of guilt, lowered self-esteem and problems developing relationships (Nuwer, 2001; Allan & Madden, 2008).

Hazing is not only a public health, concern, however. A number of studies have shown that fraternity membership, and presumably the hazing inherent in that membership (Allan & Madden, 2008), has a negative impact on a number of cognitive and academic outcomes for first-year students, including lower levels of critical thinking, reading comprehension and mathematics skills (Pascarella, Edison, Whitt, Nora, Hagedorn & Terenzini, 1996), higher levels of academic dishonesty and cheating behavior (Kirkvliet, 1994; McCabe & Bowers, 1996), and lower levels of moral judgment (Sanders, 1990; Kilgannon & Erwin, 1992; Derryberry & Thoma, 2000).

Compounding the hazing problem is the disconnect between hazing activities and students' perceptions of whether or not they have been a victim of hazing. One study that examined NCAA varsity athletes around the United States found that only 6.7% considered themselves to have been hazed, but 36% indicated that they had engaged in activities that would constitute hazing (Campo, Poulos & Sipple, 2005). Allan & Madden (2008) found that, while 55% of college students involved in clubs, organizations and sports teams reported experiencing hazing activities, only one out of ten experiencing hazing considered themselves to have been hazed. The same study found that, even among students who considered themselves to have been hazed, they were unlikely to report hazing. The reasons for not reporting hazing included

minimization (“it was no big deal”), voluntary participation (“I had a choice whether or not to participate”), rationalization (“it made me a stronger person”) and normalization (“it was a tradition, so I didn’t mind”).

Challenges exist in even defining what constitutes hazing. Ellsworth (2006) found significant differences between various types of student organizations regarding their definitions of hazing and their awareness of campus hazing policies. For the purposes of this study, hazing will be defined as any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers them regardless of a person’s willingness to participate. This is the same definition used in the National Study of Student Hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008).

Unfortunately, very little is known regarding the psychological underpinnings of hazing, and there is surprisingly little high quality research to shed light on the question of why students haze. Research has suggested that students haze because they perceive there to be positive outcomes associated with hazing, particularly feeling more like part of a group, having a sense of accomplishment, and feeling stronger (Allan & Madden, 2008). Other explanations have been offered as to why hazing occurs, particularly within the fraternity context. Reese (1993) has suggested that hazing is uniquely an issue of the fraternity and sorority subculture, arguing that the roots of hazing behavior stem from the shared cultural values and esoteric rituals of these organizations. This suggestion, however, is contradicted by the National Study of Student Hazing, which reported that 47% of students come to college having experienced hazing in high school and that hazing is more prevalent among students participating in varsity athletics than those participating in Greek organizations (Allan & Madden, 2008). It has also been suggested

that toughness, in and of itself, is a desired outcome of the fraternity process and provides the rationale for fraternity hazing (DeSantis, 2007).

Another explanation offered for hazing among male fraternity members is that hazing represents a form of sadomasochistic, homoerotic bonding in which new members are expected to sacrifice their own masculinity in order to become part of the group (Finley & Finley, 2007). Sweet (1999) considered this explanation from a sociological perspective, and suggested that sadist hazing requires hostility towards the victim while, in fact, the perpetrator may in fact care deeply about the victim. Sweet concludes that fraternity members view hazing as a necessary component of the initiation rites of new members, and posits that fraternities use the systematic manipulation of symbols and situations to reshape the self-awareness of new members as they are indoctrinated into the social norms of the organization (Sweet, 1999).

Despite the fact that we have little empirical evidence to help us understand why hazing occurs, a number of theories in the field of social psychology are available and may be useful in helping us better understand the hazing phenomenon, particularly moral judgment (Kohlberg, 1984) and moral disengagement (Bandura, 1991). Both of these theories have been strongly linked to pro-social behavior (King & Mayhew, 2002; Carroll, 2009). Scholars in both of these areas have suggested that future research related to these theories should investigate the possibility that contextual and environmental factors influence these constructs in both groups and individuals (Pasciello, Fida, Tramontano, Lupinetti & Caprara, 2008; Detert et al., 2008; King & Mayhew, 2002). With a few notable exceptions, little of this has been done.

One such exception, and one that provides a great deal of inspiration for the current study, is the study that has become popularly known as the Stanford Prison Experiment. Conducted in the summer of 1971, SPE was originally designed to be a study of the effects of

prison life on prisoners and guards. Twenty-four students, randomly assigned to be either prisoners or guards, took part in what was supposed to be a two-week experiment. Instead, the experiment was cut short after only six days because of the extreme behavior of the guards, resulting in the emotional breakdown of two of the prisoners (Zimbardo, 2007). The guards subjected the prisoners to a wide array of violence and degradation, including verbal abuse, deindividuation, sleep deprivation, starvation, extensive line-ups and calisthenics and a host of other abusive behaviors. In explaining the behavior of the guards, Zimbardo has used the analogy of “bad apples.” When people exhibit inhumane or evil behavior, society has a tendency to characterize those individuals as bad apples. The SPE, Zimbardo suggests, demonstrates how otherwise “good” people can allow themselves to commit unspeakable evil if placed in a bad environment. The “bad barrel,” he suggests, eventually takes its toll on even “good apples” (Zimbardo, 2007), and he offers a number of psychological processes and theories, most notably moral disengagement, that may be responsible for this phenomenon. This study made use of the “bad apples/bad barrel” analogy in examining the behavior of fraternity members as it relates to hazing. Specifically, this study attempted to find whether or not fraternity members are more predisposed to violent behavior than non-affiliated college males (bad apples), or whether the contextual and environmental factors and social norms of the fraternity environment bring out the violent behavior associated with hazing in otherwise “good” students (bad barrels), and whether moral development has a moderating effect on the impact of context and environment on behavior.

The current study increases the understanding of why fraternity members engage in hazing activities by using developmental cognitive perspectives of moral theory. The researcher gathered unique information related to the hazing attitudes of fraternity members and the

cognitive orientations in the ethical decision making patterns of these members. The study gives university administrators and other professionals that work with fraternity populations a better understanding of why students engage in hazing activities, which will lead to better insight into behavioral interventions aimed at preventing hazing. The study also increases the body of knowledge related to the connections between moral judgment, moral disengagement, attitudes and behavioral choices.

The first chapter of the dissertation presents the problem of fraternity hazing and the purpose of the study, describes its significance, and presents an overview of the methodology. The chapter concludes by discussing the limitations and assumptions of the study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Most researchers that study hazing within the college and university setting agree that hazing is both more prevalent and more accepted in fraternities than in most, if not all, other college clubs and organizations (Allan & Madden, 2008; Campo et al., 2005; Drout & Corsoro, 2003). These findings are consistent with the myriad of news reports involving hazing-related deaths involving fraternity members. Although it is generally accepted that hazing-related deaths are underreported, 23 students died from hazing incidents in 2000, 24 in 2001, and 42 in 2002 (Nuwer, 2010). Nuwer (2011) reported that 27 hazing deaths have occurred between 2002 and 2010.

In a groundbreaking effort, the National Study of Student Hazing represented the first comprehensive, national study of student attitudes and behaviors related to hazing. The study confirmed that a majority of students (55%) involved in clubs, teams and organizations experience hazing, that more students perceive positive rather than negative outcomes associated with hazing, and that students recognize hazing as a normal part of the campus culture. As noted

previously, the study also found that 47% of college students come to college having already experienced hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008). This finding debunked critics suggesting that hazing was merely a college or a fraternity problem, and is consistent with other findings suggesting that hazing and bullying among adolescents is a significant problem (Whitney & Smith, 1993; Vaillancourt, Hymel & McDougal, 2003) and presents hazing in a broader context and suggests that, rather than a fraternity or college issue, it is a societal problem.

Perceptions of hazing on the college campus are a powerful motivational factor behind hazing activities. Students in fraternities overwhelmingly perceive that hazing is worse in other organizations on their campus than in their own (Owen et al., 2008). This finding suggests that hazing is in large part shaped by campus mythology and that inaccurate information can result in skewed perceptions of the reality of hazing on a campus. Taken in combination with another study which found that believing your friends approve of hazing increases the likelihood of participating (Campo et al., 2005), one can begin to piece together how college students allow their perceptions, or misperceptions, about hazing to impact their attitude and willingness to participate, either as a victim or a perpetrator.

Hazing also perpetuates a “cycle of violence” in which students that experience hazing as a victim are more likely to support hazing and participate in hazing activities in the future (Owen et al., 2008). Much like perceptions of hazing, experience with hazing represents an environmental factor that allows students to rationalize their participation in hazing activities. This study explores how those environmental factors impact moral disengagement and hazing attitudes.

In summary, hazing is a significant problem on college campuses, particularly within men’s fraternal organizations. Hazing has lead to multiple deaths and serious emotional,

psychological and physical injuries. A majority of college students that belong to teams and organizations on campus participate in hazing, even though an overwhelming majority do not consider themselves to have been hazed. Misperception, experience and other non-cognitive factors play a role in allowing students to justify hazing behavior.

### **Purpose and Significance of Study**

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the attitudes of college males related to hazing in the fraternity culture by evaluating the fraternity environment's influence on the cognitive processes of its members. This study goes beyond traditional studies of why fraternity members haze by examining the social context, cognitive orientations and moral justification associated with fraternity hazing.

Past studies have empirically linked perceptions, hazing victimization, leadership status and the thought that hazing is "fun" to hazing-supportive attitudes among fraternity members. This study examines the relationships between hazing tolerance, moral judgment and moral disengagement among college males. While a variety of theories have been espoused regarding the psychosocial underpinnings of hazing activities, no studies have empirically tested the relationships between moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing.

This study closely models the methodology and framework used by Carroll (2009) in studying the relationship between moral judgment, moral disengagement and sexual assault. In her study, Carroll found significant differences between fraternity members and non-fraternity members in regards to their attitudes towards sexual assault, as well as strong correlations between moral judgment, moral disengagement and attitudes regarding sexual assault. This study builds upon Carroll's work by attempting to confirm her findings related to differences between fraternity and non-fraternity men on moral judgment and moral disengagement



measurements and will explore whether the path models in her study correlating moral judgment, moral disengagement and sexual assault attitudes are replicable when hazing attitudes are measured as a variable instead of sexual assault attitudes.

The results of this study should be of tremendous practical importance to both researchers and practitioners. Understanding hazing in the context of moral judgment and moral disengagement is of incredible value to both student affairs practitioners and other professionals working with fraternities. Currently, these professionals have little research to guide their work in hazing prevention efforts. As previous studies have shown that college-aged students are amenable to interventions related to moral judgment and development (Boss, 1994; Adams & Zhou-McGovern, 1994), understanding hazing in context of these cognitive processes may give practitioners an entirely new set of tools to combat hazing in fraternities. It also provides valuable information to researchers interested in hazing, bystander intervention, moral judgment and moral disengagement.

### **Study Design and Overview of Methodology**

As noted by Kolivas and Gross (2007) and others, conducting research regarding anti-social or illegal behavior (such as sexual assault or hazing) can be problematic. Individuals are prone to report false information in order to make themselves look “better” in the eyes of the researcher. Additionally, gathering reliable data from fraternity members can be problematic, as they are often eager to protect themselves, are leery of outsiders, and are often shielded from research that could prove to be embarrassing by influential alumni or by university administrators that personally benefit from a healthy Greek system (DeSantis, 2007).

The methodology of this study closely mirrors that used by Carroll (2009) in her study of the impact of moral judgment and moral disengagement on sexual assault attitudes. Specifically,

participants were asked to complete the Defining Issues Test - 2, the Moral Disengagement Scale and a validated hazing vignette. The methodology in this study differs from Carroll's in one regard. The sexual assault vignette used in the Carroll study was "context-specific to the fraternity climate where the study was administered" (Carroll, 2009). A limitation to this approach is that the fraternity members who participated in the study very likely viewed the vignette through the context of a fraternity party, a setting with which they were familiar and could empathize with the antagonist. Non-fraternity members participating in the study, however, may never have personally experienced a party as described in Carroll's vignette and very likely viewed the story from an outsider's perspective. It is likely that these students were unable to empathize with the "perpetrator" in Carroll's story to the same extent that the fraternity members did. It could easily be argued that, with a vignette that was less context-specific, the differences between fraternity members and non-members may have been significantly less or non-existent. Other studies have shown that the social norms of groups can have significant effects on individuals' perceptions of aggressive or anti-social behavior (Levine & Crowther, 2008). Therefore, this study employs two separate vignettes. The first is a hazing vignette specific to the fraternity context. The second is a vignette related to general violence that is not contextually related to the fraternity experience. Differences between intervention time on the two vignettes will be measured for both fraternity members and non-members and comparisons will be made between the two groups.

As in the Carroll study, this research did not ask participants to disclose any past behaviors. Rather, it measured their attitudes towards hazing and violence through two validated vignettes. The first vignette contains a story about hazing specific to the fraternity context on the campuses at which the research will be conducted. In this vignette, the student witnesses a

hazing scenario at a fraternity house. The hazing begins with mild verbal abuse, but becomes progressively worse, resulting in extreme physical violence. In the second vignette, the student witnesses a group of teenagers playing football in a park and a bullying scenario in which a group of boys singles out one of their teammates and bullies him. Again, similar to the first vignette, the violence begins with mild verbal abuse and becomes progressively worse, ending in extreme physical violence. In both vignettes, the violence escalates at eight distinct points, and those points mirror one another. The participants were asked to identify at what point in each scenario they would intervene, either directly or indirectly, to stop the violence.

The researcher hypothesized that the differences between fraternity and non-fraternity members on the hazing vignette in this study would mirror Carroll's findings – specifically that fraternity members will hold a more hazing-supportive attitude and will be less likely to intervene in a hazing situation than their non-affiliated counterparts. Furthermore, the researcher hypothesized that the differences between fraternity members and non-fraternity members in the adolescent football-bullying vignette are less significant than the differences in the hazing vignette and in Carroll's sexual assault vignette, and perhaps not significant at all. Finally, the researcher hypothesized that the difference in response time of fraternity members between the two separate vignettes will be positively correlated with their moral disengagement score, with moral judgment acting as a moderating variable.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions included the following:

1. RQ1 – Are there differences between fraternity members and non-members in measures of moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing-supportive attitudes;

2. RQ2 – Are fraternity members less likely to intervene in a fraternity-hazing situation when compared to non-fraternity men? Are fraternity members less likely to intervene in an adolescent bullying situation when compared to non-fraternity men;
3. RQ3 – Is the difference in response time between the fraternity hazing vignette and the adolescent bullying vignette different between the two groups;
4. RQ4 – Are there differences in intervention response time for the fraternity hazing vignette and the adolescent bullying vignette between students in different classes (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior);
5. RQ5 – Do the data fit the theoretical path model? Are moral judgment and moral disengagement predictive of the difference in intervention response time between the two vignettes; and
6. RQ6 – Are the paths between the observed variables different between the two groups?

### **Organization of the Dissertation**

Chapter I has introduced the problem of hazing on college campuses, presented the background, significance of the study, has provided an overview of the methodology and research questions, and has addressed definitions of key terms, limitations and assumptions. Chapter II provides an overview of the literature related to hazing, moral judgment, moral disengagement and bystander intervention. Methodology for the student is presented in Chapter III and includes the research design, selection of the sample, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures. The results are presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V presents a discussion of the results, including implications for practice and suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review for the proposed study is divided into the theoretical and empirical research related to fraternities and hazing, the theoretical and empirical research related to the proposed moral theories, and the theoretical and empirical research related to the action variable in this study, bystander behavior. The review of literature begins with a brief review of the history of college fraternal organizations, and a summary of the literature related to the impact of fraternity membership on college students. The section related to fraternities and hazing summarizes the research related to hazing attitudes, practices and perceptions. A majority of the research reviewed in this section comes from the National Study of Student Hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008), as it represents the most comprehensive and extensive research into hazing attitudes and practices to date. The section related to moral theories is divided into two subsections. The first summarizes research related to moral judgment, and the second summarizes research related to moral disengagement. As two of the instruments used in the present research (Vignette 1 and Vignette 2) involve students making decisions about intervening in a violent situation, this chapter also contains a review the literature related to bystander behavior. This section also presents an overview of an integrated moral model combining moral judgment and moral disengagement. The chapter concludes by presenting the conceptual and theoretical framework for the study.

### **History of Fraternities**

It is necessary to briefly explore the history of the American college fraternity in order to provide a historical context for the current study. While a number of Greek-lettered fraternal orders and societies exist on college campuses, this study will focus specifically on social fraternities. Social fraternities includes any Greek-lettered organizations that are not affiliated with a certain profession or academic field of study and are not considered honorary or literary societies. The first Greek-letter college society founded in the United States was Phi Beta Kappa, founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary. While Phi Beta Kappa was founded as a literary society, it had all of the makings of the modern day fraternity: secrecy, ritual, a grip, a motto, a badge, a background of high idealism and a strong emphasis on friendship and camaraderie (Owen, 1991). Nuwer (1999) describes Kappa Alpha Society, founded in 1825 at Union College in New York, as the “grand-daddy of social fraternities” (p. 116). Kappa Alpha was followed at Union by Sigma Phi and Delta Phi, both founded in 1827. These three fraternities, often referred to as the Union Triad, became the pattern for the American college fraternity system (Owen, 1991). In the next three decades leading up to the Civil War, college fraternities grew and expanded throughout the United States. The “western frontier” saw the founding of the Miami Triad – Beta Theta Pi in 1839, followed by Phi Delta Theta in 1848 and Sigma Chi in 1855. From their birthplace at Miami University, these three organizations spread over the western and southern states just as the Union Triad had spread over the northeastern states (Owen, 1991).

The original men’s fraternities were segregated institutions intended only for affluent, white, Christian men (Winston, Nettles & Opper, 1987). The first women’s group, the Adelpian Society, the forerunner of the current Alpha Delta Pi Sorority was founded in 1851. They were followed by a bevy of other women’s groups that sprang up across the United States

(Owen, 1991). Zeta Beta Tau was the first national Jewish men's fraternity, founded in 1898 in New York City. The organization's original Zionist objectives were eliminated as it determined to take its place as a traditional college fraternity (Owen, 1991). The first African American fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, was started in 1906 at Cornell University (Owen, 1991).

Unprecedented growth after World War II led to major expansions in the American college fraternity system. Many young men who, ordinarily, may not have been able to afford the financial obligations of fraternity membership were able to do so because the GI Bill largely covered these expenses (Owen, 1991). As a result, chapters became increasingly large, and a desire among the returning war veterans to share camaraderie with their brothers led to dramatic increases in fraternity housing in which to hold their meetings, serve meals, and hold their social gatherings (DeSantis, 2007). In the 20 years leading up to the civil unrest of the 1960's, college fraternities experienced their most prolific era of growth since their founding. More college campuses opened to national fraternities and more new chapters started during this 20-year period than any other on record (Owen, 1991). Today, the North American Interfraternity Conference, the trade association representing men's fraternal organizations, boasts 75 member organizations with approximately 5,500 chapters located on over 800 college and university campuses in the United States and Canada with approximately 350,000 undergraduate members. (North American Interfraternity Conference, 2011).

As colleges and universities came to realize both the opportunities and challenges associated with the growth of the college fraternity system, many began to employ advisors in the field of student personnel services who concentrated their time and attention in making these organizations of greater service to their members and their campus (Owen, 1991). The Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA) was founded in 1976 as a professional association for

these administrators. By 2010, AFA had grown to nearly 1,700 members (Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, 2010).

### **The Impact of Fraternity Membership on College Students**

While the area of fraternity hazing contains a dearth of research, the broader impact of fraternity membership on the college experience has received a moderate amount of scholarly attention. In order to better understand the context of this study, it is necessary to examine the literature related to the impact of fraternity membership on a wide array of cognitive, developmental and behavioral constructs.

Previous research has found broad-based negative effects of Greek affiliation on the cognitive development of college freshmen. Pascarella, Edison, Whitt, Nora, Hagedorn and Terenzini (1996) conducted a longitudinal study that traced the cognitive impacts of Greek affiliation on a sample of college freshman from 18 four-year institutions. The study estimated the net impact of fraternity and sorority membership on standardized measures of reading comprehension, mathematics and critical thinking after the first year of college. Controlling for a wide set of pre-college factors, fraternity membership was found to have a significant negative effect on each of the three cognitive measures, as well as on a composite score including all three measures (Pascarella et al., 1996). Pike and Askew (1990) used the College Outcomes Measurement Project (COMP) Objective Test developed by the American College Testing Program to investigate the cognitive impact of Greek affiliation in a single institution study. Their results indicated that, after controlling for pre-college variables, students in Greek organizations had significantly lower COMP scores than their non-affiliated counterparts (Pike & Askew, 1990). Studies have also associated Greek membership with higher levels of academic dishonesty and cheating behaviors (Kirkvliet, 1994; McCabe & Bowers, 1996).



Collectively, these studies appear to give some credence to the criticism that fraternities are bastions of anti-intellectualism (Schnur, 2007).

Greek membership has also been strongly linked to alcohol and drug abuse. A Harvard study found that 86% of men who live in fraternity houses are binge drinkers (Wechsler & Nelson, 2008). Another study by Columbia University found that nearly 64% of fraternity and sorority members are current binge drinkers, compared to only 37% of their non-affiliated counterparts (CASA, 2005). The same study found that fraternity and sorority members are more likely to be current marijuana users and are more than twice as likely to be current cocaine users. These findings are consistent with a number of studies that have consistently found that fraternity and sorority members are significantly more likely to abuse alcohol or other drugs than their non-affiliated counterparts (Wechsler, Kuh & Davenport, 1996; Cashin, Presley & Meilman, 1998).

Studies have specifically linked fraternity membership to increased prevalence of sexual assault, rape-supportive attitudes and hypersexuality. Carroll (2009) found that fraternity members measured higher in rape-supportive attitudes than non-affiliated students, and were more likely than non-members to blame the victim in a sexual assault. DeSantis (2007) extensively discussed the manner in which fraternity membership often leads to the objectification of women, specifically noting party themes such as “golf pros and tennis hoes” and “pimps and hoes” at which fraternity members dressed like prototypical males and women were encouraged to wear tight, revealing clothing. A number of studies have consistently found that college fraternity men are more likely to sexually assault a female than non-fraternity members (Bohmer & Parrott, 1993; Sanday, 1990). Kimmel (2008) has suggested that sexual

assault attitudes among fraternity members relate to their social prestige on campus, noting that higher prestige fraternities promote higher levels of sexual entitlement among their members.

Fortunately for fraternities, the news is not all bad. A handful of studies have suggested that there are some positive outcomes associated with fraternity membership. Greek affiliation has been linked with increased levels of college persistence and degree completion (Astin, 1975), increased capacity for teamwork and ability to function as part of a group (Pike & Askew, 1990), and increased levels of satisfaction with college (Pike & Askew, 1990; Bureau, Ryan, Ahren, Shoup, & Torres, 2011). A study of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) national dataset found that fraternity and sorority members measured higher on a majority of the items, including academic collaboration, faculty interaction, enriching educational experiences and higher order thinking (Bureau et al., 2011). A follow-up to the Pascarella et al. (1996) study found that the negative cognitive effects of Greek affiliation during the freshman year were much less pronounced during the second and third years of college (Pascarella, Flowers & Whitt, 2001). Data from a newly developed survey, the Universal Learning Outcomes Assessment (UniLOA), has suggested that fraternity membership has a positive impact on a number of outcomes related to leadership development, civic engagement, and self-awareness (Center for Measuring College Behaviors and Academics, 2010).

### **History of Hazing**

Initiation rituals steeped in violence and degradation, similar to what would today be called hazing, can be traced back to the very foundational beginnings of higher learning. Plato, who founded the Academy in 387 B.C., noted the savagery with which young men taunted and bullied their younger counterparts (Nuwer, 1999). Augustine, writing of his experiences with hazing at the learning centers of Carthage in the fourth century, noted that the behavior of older

students was very much like that of devils, and noted the cyclical nature of hazing – those who in their first years at the academy were the hazed thereafter became the hazers (Nuwer, 1999). The first codified laws against hazing appear to have come from the Byzantine emperor Justinian I, who in the sixth century issued a decree outlawing the common practice of hazing law students (Nuwer, 1999). Throughout the middle ages, hazing became a common practice among young male university students who saw themselves as guardians of a culture of honor and as gatekeepers of the halls of academe (Nuwer, 1999). During the 1600's formalized hazing was widely accepted among both students and faculty as a means by which to civilize and groom new students (Finkel, 2002). This behavior manifested itself in many ways. Students were made to consume mass quantities of alcohol, were made to dress in ridiculous clothing, wear beanies or other indentifying headgear, and were often subjected to physical violence. These hazing requirements, known as pennialism, were broadly outlawed in the 1700's due to increasing numbers of serious injuries and death (Finkel, 2002). In England, the practice known as "fagging" replaced pennialism and perpetuated a culture of servitude in which older students were entitled to require a younger boy to act as his personal servant (Finkel, 2002; Nuwer, 1999). The "fag" would fetch food and tea and perform other errands for his "master," and would find himself the subject of mild physical violence if he formed to carry out his duties in a satisfactory manner. The practice of fagging in England flourished well into the twentieth century (Nuwer, 1999).

In the United States, hazing traces its roots to the earliest days of Harvard College in colonial America. As early as 1657, acts of servitude similar to European fagging were recorded. The 1657 incident resulted in a judgment by the administration in favor of two Harvard first year students, with severe sanctions handed down to the perpetrators (Nuwer,

1999). Fagging continued as a marginally accepted practice at other Ivy League institutions well into the nineteenth century. Often, these practices were not only accepted, but were codified as part of institutional policy. Regulations at Williams College, aimed at promoting order and due subordination, specified that members of the inferior class must show proper deference and respect to members of the classes above them (Nuwer, 1999). Freshmen were required to allow upperclassmen to enter doors and gates ahead of them, were instructed to knock before entering the rooms of upperclassmen, and were told to acknowledge, in both language and behavior, the superior rank of the upperclassmen (Nuwer, 1999). “Freshman Laws” were in place on a number of college campuses, and largely centered around the introduction of freshman students to campus traditions. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, class identity was an important part of college life, and the ritualistic hazing of freshmen was viewed as a necessary means of reminding them of their place in the college hierarchy (Syrett, 2009). In the post-bellum period following the Civil War, as campuses grew larger and class identity and solidarity waned, many of the freshman hazing traditions fell by the wayside at many colleges. Fraternity identity took the place of class identity, and fraternity hazing became the means by which the manliness of new members was tested by the upperclassmen (Syrett, 2009).

The first recorded fraternity-related hazing death took place in 1873 at Cornell University. Two members of Kappa Alpha Society blindfolded a group of pledges and dropped them off in the countryside, where they were to meet for an initiation ceremony. Unable to find his way in the darkness, one of the pledges, Mortimer N. Legget, fell into a gorge and was killed (Nuwer, 1999; Finkel, 2002). Despite the death, the fraternity was allowed to remain on campus, and history repeated itself less than thirty years later. In 1889, twenty members of the same fraternity instructed eight pledges to get off a train near Geneva, New York, and were instructed

to hike through the darkness to a location at which an initiation ritual was to take place. One of the pledges, Edward Berkley, stumbled in the darkness and fell into a canal, where he drowned (Nuwer, 1999). Hazing-related deaths have continuously plagued fraternities, with escalations in violence noted after 1945 (Nuwer, 1999) and throughout the 1980's (Rutledge, 1998). In all, there have been nearly 300 recorded fraternity-related hazing deaths in the United States, with most coming in the last 40 years (Nuwer, 1999).

Despite hazing's long and colorful history in the United States, hazing litigation is a relatively recent phenomenon. The first reported civil case in which a plaintiff sought recovery for hazing appeared in Nevada in 1979. In that case, *Davies v. Butler*, the parents of John Davies brought suit against members of an unofficial drinking club at the University of Nevada at Reno known as the Sundowner Club. The facts of the case involved a group of initiates being forced to consume large quantities of alcohol, and then loaded into the back of a truck and driven into the desert for an initiation ceremony. Upon arriving at the desert location, it was discovered that John Davies was not breathing. A group of the students left with Davies to take him to the hospital, but ran out of gas before they arrived. An ambulance was called, which picked Davies up and transported him to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead. Since the *Davies* case, a number of other civil and criminal hazing cases have been brought in multiple states in every region of the country. While a few of the cases have been resolved in favor of Greek organizations or universities, most of the cases have recognized a duty on the part of Greek organizations, universities, or both, and many of these cases have resulted in substantial settlements for plaintiffs (Rutledge, 1998).

Today, hazing is both a commonly accepted and widespread practice on most college campuses. While hazing exists in many forms, it is generally considered to be any activity

expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers them regardless of a person's willingness to participate (Allan & Madden, 2008). Hazing can be psychological, physical or both physical and psychological in nature (Ellsworth, 2006). The National Study of Student Hazing found that over half of college students involved in athletic teams and campus organizations experienced hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008). Hazing occurs within varsity athletic teams, sport clubs, fraternities and sororities, marching bands, military organizations and even honor societies and campus religious organizations (Allan & Madden, 2008; Ellsworth, 2006; Hollman, 2002).

### **Hazing in Fraternities**

Despite a long history of injury, death and litigation, hazing within fraternities remains both a widespread and commonly accepted practice on most college campuses. Allan and Madden (2008) found that 55% of students participating in clubs, organizations and sports teams experienced hazing. The most widely reported forms of hazing include forced alcohol consumption, humiliation, isolation, sleep-deprivation and forced sex acts (Allan & Madden, 2008; Campo, Poulos & Sipple, 2005). The same study found that 69% of all students were aware of hazing practices on their campus, and that one in four students had personally witnessed hazing activities. The study also debunked the myth that all or most hazing takes place behind closed doors. In 25% of hazing incidents, coaches or advisors were present, and in 25% of the hazing taking place on-campus, the hazing occurred in a public setting. That hazing is such a widely accepted part of the campus culture makes its eradication even more difficult.

Not only is hazing widely accepted, but it is rarely reported. Part of this lack of reporting stems from students' failure to recognize that they are being hazed. The National Survey of Student Hazing (NSSH) found that in 90% of cases where hazing activity had occurred, students

did not consider themselves to have been hazed (Allan & Madden, 2008). This gap is wider than the one previously reported by Campo, Poulos and Sipple (2005), which found that while 36% of those surveyed had participated in hazing activities, only 12% considered themselves to have been hazed. This discrepancy is likely due to the varying breadth of those surveys. The Campo et al. (2005) study was administered at a single institution, while the NSSH was administered to students enrolled at 53 institutions and had a sample size of over 11,000 respondents. Even in cases where students recognize that hazing has taken place, they are unlikely to report it, either because they justify the behavior through various means, do not want to get the group or team in trouble, or fear personal retribution or isolation from the group if they do report the behavior (Allan & Madden, 2008). In 95% of the cases where students identified their experience as hazing, they chose not to report the events to campus officials.

Several studies have examined how students define and conceptualize hazing. Two studies focusing exclusively on fraternity members at single institutions had similar findings. The studies presented fraternity members with a list of items and asked respondents to indicate whether or not they defined the individual items as hazing (Baier & Williams, 1983; Jenson, Poremba, Nelson & Schwartz, 1980). Forced consumption of alcohol received the highest score in both studies. These findings are consistent with a more recent study in which Ellsworth (2006) compared how members of different collegiate groups perceive and define hazing. While a significant amount of variation existed among respondents from the various types of organizations (including band, ROTC, fraternities and sororities, and varsity athletics), there was consistency among the most common responses. Specifically, forced alcohol consumption, physical abuse, and branding/tattooing were among the top activities defined as hazing by all student groups (Ellsworth, 2006).

More students perceive positive rather than negative outcomes associated with hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008). Previous research (Allan & Madden, 2008; Campo et al., 2005; Baier & Williams, 1983; Jenson et al., 1980) has explored the justifications for hazing offered by students and, again, the findings of multiple studies offer similar findings. A desire to build organizational unity and group cohesiveness is the most consistent rationale offered by students in justification of hazing activities. Other perceived positive results offered by students include upholding a sense of tradition (Baier & Williams, 1983), feeling a sense of accomplishment (Allan & Madden, 2008), and that it makes members stronger (Allan & Madden, 2008; Owen et al., 2008). DeSantis (2007) has suggested that toughness in and of itself is a desired outcome of hazing, as the fraternities perceived to be the toughest on campus are also the most socially desirable among females. This suggestion is consistent with a study of bullying in prisons by South and Wood (2006), which found that both bullying and victimization had a positive relationship on the perceived importance of social status, with bully/victims valuing social status more than pure victims, pure bullies, or those not involved in bullying. With the understanding that perceived toughness is a major component of social status, and given the cyclical nature of hazing and bullying (Owen et al., 2008), the suggestion that hazing continues as means by which to “toughen up” new members, thereby improving the fraternity’s social status, makes a great deal of sense, particularly in fraternity chapters that place a high degree of importance in attaining or maintaining social status.

In looking at hazing from the perspective of the psychology of initiation rituals and group behavior, Keating, Pomerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller and McCormick (2005) have suggested a variety of outcomes of the hazing and initiation rites of various student organizations, including the cultivation of group-relevant skills and attitudes, the reinforcement of group hierarchy, and



the stimulation of social dependency. They found that the groups with which students most identified belonging were predicted by how much “fun” they reported having as part of hazing activities and by how harsh those activities were perceived to be. From an indoctrination standpoint, this study would suggest that hazing appears to accomplish the intended outcomes.

Owen, Burke, and Vichesky (2008) have conceptualized a three stage cycle of hazing as a theoretical model for understanding how hazing occurs and persists in organizations. First, hazing occurs. Secondly, victims process the hazing through organizational sensemaking. The process, according to the researchers, allows individuals to create their own meanings of the organization based on their experiences, interactions and perceived norms. Through the process of cognitive dissonance, hazed persons come to accept their experience as normal and their perceptions of hazing become more positive. Third, pro-hazing norms become internalized, leading to groupthink. This is consistent with the findings of Keating et al. (2005), who observed that harsh initiations aroused cognitive dissonance in individuals who engaged in activities that violated their own moral boundaries. The more voluntary the engagement, the greater the dissonance aroused and the more motivation there was to resolve it. That dissonance, they suggest, is mitigated by either cognitively diminishing the negative aspects of the hazing, or by placing too much value on the organization or group (Keating et al., 2005). In their analysis of the cycle leading to groupthink, Owen et al. (2008) pointed to a number of unique aspects of the fraternity experience that mirror the theory of groupthink as outlined by Janis (1982). These include illusions of invulnerability, self-appointed mindguards or, as they describe them, high-rate perpetrators who rate hazing positively and actively defend its practice, and illusions of unanimity, whereby non-perpetrators may choose to not make an issue of hazing, thereby granting it tacit approval in order to maintain group harmony (Owen et al., 2008).

Owen et al. (2008) also found a high correlation between hazing received and hazing committed, and their study found that positive hazing attitudes are strongly correlated with victimization – the more you were a victim of hazing, the more likely you are to engage in hazing behaviors and have a pro-hazing attitude. These internalized organization norms, they argue, have staying power that can have a powerful influence on members (Owen et al., 2008). This cycle of violence in which victims become perpetrators is especially troubling given some of the literature related to the bully/victim phenomenon observed among adolescents and incarcerated adults. Bandura, Barbaranelli, Carpura and Pastorellie (1996) found that bullying behavior is positively correlated with past victimization, specifically pointing out that high moral disengagers are more readily angered and ruminate about past grievances and dwell on punitive retaliations. Ireland and Power (2004) pointed out that prisoners who are both bullies and victims tend to have higher avoidance scores and emotional loneliness scores than any other category of prisoner. In the context of fraternity hazing, these findings would suggest that the cycle of violence in which victims become future aggressors could lead to damaging and potentially long-term negative psychological effects.

### **Moral Judgment**

Current research on moral action breaks the process of moral decision-making into four separate and distinct parts: (a) the ability to interpret a situation as a moral problem, (b) the ability to make a moral judgment, discerning right and wrong, (c) the ability to choose a moral path over competing interests, and (d) the ability and wherewithal to follow through on the moral decision (Rest, Bebeau & Volker, 1986). The first component, moral sensitivity, has strong linkages to bystander behavior in that when subjects are unclear about what is happening in a moral dilemma, then they are less likely to intervene in a pro-social manner. Research also

indicates that social situations can arouse strong feelings before any cognitive processes take place, suggesting that dehumanization and de-individuation in moral disengagement theory may affect moral sensitivity. That is, notions about an individual's worth or attractiveness may cause us to feel a strong dislike or feel empathy for someone before we cognitively assess the moral dilemma in a situation (Zajonc, 1980). The second component, moral judgment, involves an individual making a judgment about a moral dilemma, determining which course of action is morally right, thus labeling a particular course of action as what a person ought to do in a given situation (Rest et al., 1986). The third component, moral motivation, requires that a person give priority to the moral values above other personal values such that a decision is made to do what one believes is morally right (Rest et al., 1986). Lastly, the component of moral action, suggests that an individual must have the perseverance, strength and skill necessary to implement the decision to behave morally and to overcome obstacles that would prohibit the moral behavior (Rest et al., 1986). These four dimensions, which Rest (1986) described as The Four Component Model, represent a synthesis of the processes that direct moral action. The second component, moral judgment – the measure of how a person discerns right from wrong in choosing a course of action in a moral dilemma- is the primary lens through which fraternity hazing will be viewed in this study.

Moral judgment is a valuable theoretical framework for a study of hazing, because moral judgment has been so closely linked with pro-social behavior in a number of studies. This link between moral judgment and moral behavior, as noted by Thoma (1994), is critical for researchers to understand, as it may be seen as an “acid test” (p. 199) of the usefulness of research on morality. Fortunately, several studies have indicated a strong relationship between moral judgment and moral behavior. In the collegiate setting, moral judgment has been shown to

have strong, positive relationships with honesty in a potential whistle-blowing case (Brabeck, 1984), optional fee payments for course materials (Ponemon, 1993), and clinical performance in the “caring” professions, such as nursing (Ducket & Ryden, 1994), as well as strong negative correlations with cheating and academic misconduct (Cummings, Dyas, Maddux & Kochman, 2001; Malinowski & Smith; 1985) and rape-supportive attitudes (Carroll, 2009). No studies have attempted to link moral judgment with hazing attitudes. Based on the research available correlating moral judgment with pro-social behaviors, the researcher in the present study hypothesizes that moral judgment will have a negative correlation with hazing attitudes.

While there are competing theories regarding moral judgment, this study will employ Kohlberg’s moral development theory, a stage theory in which individuals ascend from simple levels of judgment to more complex ones. As noted by Rest, Edwards and Thoma (1997), Kohlberg’s theory has been a leading influence in driving research of the internal processes of moral judgment, and his theory is among the most empirically validated of all theories of moral development. Kohlberg studied the processes by which individuals justify moral decisions and hypothesized a six-stage theory of moral development in which moral judgment happens on three levels. Rather than studying the decisions that people actually made, Kohlberg studied the processes that people used in making decisions involving moral dilemmas. Kohlberg made use of the Moral Judgment Interview (MJI), in which he presented moral dilemmas and participants were asked how they would respond and were asked to give their reasons for why they would respond in such a way. These interviews were evaluated using a scoring rubric, and a determination was made regarding a subject’s level of moral judgment reasoning. In describing moral judgment as a cognitive stage development theory, Kohlberg pointed out three characteristics inherent in stage theory. First, stages are “structured wholes,” or organized

systems of thought, and individuals are consistent in their level of moral judgment. Second, Kohlberg pointed out that stages form an invariant sequence, that under all conditions except for extreme trauma, movement is always forward, and that individuals never skip stages. Rather, movement is always to the next stage up. Finally, Kohlberg thought of his stages as “hierarchical integrations,” meaning that higher-level thinking comprehends within it lower stage thinking, but that the tendency is to function at the highest stage available (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977).

The lowest stages fall within the pre-conventional level, in which decisions are made based on individual self interest, either fear of consequences or anticipation of reward. Stage 1 is referred to as the punishment-and-obedience orientation. In this stage, the physical consequences of an action determine its goodness or badness, and the avoidance of punishment and unquestioning deference to power are valued in their own right, not in terms of respect for an underlying moral or principle. The second stage, the instrumental relativist orientation, involves the determination of right action in a way that satisfies one’s own need. In this stage, reciprocity is a matter of “you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours,” and not of any universal notions of justice or fairness (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977).

The next stages, referred to as the conventional level, represent decision-making aimed at maintaining social norms, either in gaining acceptance among a peer group or upholding laws and social order. Stage 3, the good boy-nice girl orientation, suggests that good behavior is that which pleases others and is approved by them. This level involves a great deal of conformity to stereotypical images of what constitutes “normal” behavior, and adolescents in this stage often look to their peers for these cues. In the fourth stage, the law and order orientation, moral decision making becomes oriented towards authority, fixed rules and the maintenance of social

order. Moral behavior at this stage consists of following rules and showing respect for established authorities (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977).

The most advanced levels in Kohlberg's theory, referred to as post-conventional, represent judgment motivated by perceptions of fairness, equality and universal ethical principles (Kohlberg, 1984). Stage 5, the social-contract orientation, involves moral decisions being defined in terms of general individual rights and standards that have been examined and agreed upon by society at large. This stage also involves an awareness of the relativism of personal values and opinions and emphasizes a need for procedural rules for reaching consensus. Finally, stage 6, the universal ethical principle orientation, involves decision-making among self-chosen universal principles of justice, the reciprocity and equality of individual rights, and the respect and dignity of all persons (Kohlberg, 1984).

Kohlberg's theory of moral judgment has been met with pockets of criticism. One of the earliest and most vocal opponents of Kohlberg's theory was Carol Gilligan, who asserted that Kohlberg's interviews were gender-biased and did not properly account for the ethic of care that she theorized was a significant factor in the moral decision making of women (Gilligan, 1982). Other arguments against the theory have included claims that the theory is culturally biased (Shweder, 1982; Vine, 1986), is really a measurement of political conservatism/liberalism (Shweder, 1982; Lind, 1995), and is out of touch with everyday experienced micromorality (Killen & Hart, 1995). Critics have also challenged the philosophical foundations of Kohlberg's theory, especially in the post-conventional stages, in arguing against an uncritical acceptance of principlism as an adequate test of moral judgment (Beauchamp & Childress, 1994) and instead for a more individualistic and communitarian moral philosophy (Sandel, 1982). Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau and Thoma (1999) suggested that, in light of the general trend in moral philosophy, a

model developed today would include a broader range of criteria to define the post-conventional stages and would avoid being identified singularly with the perspective of John Rawls, which emphasizes the imaginative construction of a moral point of view described in terms of “justice operations” (Rawls, 1971).

To that end, Rest and his colleagues (1999) suggested a revised way of viewing moral judgment, which they coined a “neo-Kohlbergian” approach. Their neo-Kohlbergian approach maintains many of the basic premises of the original theory, as they suggest that their approach has many more similarities than differences. The major differences between the two approaches fall along three lines.

First, Rest and his colleagues differ from Kohlberg in their approach to assessment. Instead of Kohlberg’s interviews, which required that participants be able to verbally explain the workings of their own minds, Rest and his colleagues developed the Defining Issues Test, a multiple-choice recognition task asking participants to rate and rank a set of criteria for a decision in set of moral dilemmas. Rest et al. (1999) have pointed to a number of challenges inherent in Kohlberg’s interview process. The interview method presumes that a person is both aware of his or her own cognitive processes and has the verbal capacity to explain them, an assumption that cognitive scientists have contended has severe limitations (Uleman & Bargh, 1989). In addition, explaining one’s judgments in an interview requires that a person produce an original line of reasoning and then defend that line. The DIT, and subsequently the DIT-2 provide a recognition task that is more consistent with cognitive science. Rest et al. (1999) point out that one advantage to the recognition task of the DIT is that post-conventional thinking is scored less rarely than in the Kohlberg interview.

Secondly, the neo-Kohlbergian approach differs from the traditional approach in that it makes use of moral schemas as opposed to Kohlberg's stages. Schemas are understood to be general knowledge structures residing in long-term memory, and are formed as people notice similarities and recurring themes in experiences. These moral schema differ from Kohlberg's stages in five ways. First, the schema approach differs with the developmental concept of stages. Wherein Kohlberg used a metaphor of a step-by-step staircase in moral judgment, schemas signify development along the lines of shifting distributions. Secondly, the schemas of the neo-Kohlbergian approach are more specific and concrete than Kohlberg's stages. They represent a conception of the moral basis of social institutions in society, whereas Kohlberg regards those institutions as "content" (Rest et al., 1999). Third, the neo-Kohlbergian approach assesses the concepts of social institutions and role systems at the macromoral level, as opposed to Kohlberg's interview, which he claimed were measurements of cognitive operations. Fourth, Kohlberg postulated that moral judgment was a universal theory, conceding that cultural differences should only influence the point of developmental termination. The neo-Kohlbergian approaches morality as a social construction, evolving from one's community experiences, and regards cross-cultural similarity as an empirical question. Finally, the stage approach emphasized verbal articulation, whereas the schema approach emphasizes tacit recognition. In regards to the DIT and the schema approach, as the participant encounters an item that both makes sense and activates a preferred schema, that item is given a high rating and is ranked as an important justification for the decision. Alternatively, when a participant encounters an item that does not make sense or seems overly simplistic, that item receives a low rating (Rest et al., 1999).



Finally, the neo-Kohlbergian approach reconceptualizes the post-conventional levels of moral judgment. Kohlberg, who was heavily influenced by the philosophy of John Rawls (1971) in the development of stage 6, emphasized imaginative construction of a moral point of view described in terms of “justice operations.” His conceptions of stage 6, and the five stages leading up to it became at the same time both a developmental stage theory and a normative theory of ethics (Rest et al., 1999). In the neo-Kohlbergian approach, post-conventional moral thinking is not linked to any particular moral philosophy. Rather, post-conventional morality is defined as deriving its rights and responsibilities through an appeal to shared ideals for organization cooperation, reciprocity, and the attitude of holding authorities accountable (Rest et al., 1999).

A number of studies have suggested that Greek membership has a negative impact on moral judgment. Sanders (1990) administered the DIT to 195 male freshmen at the beginning of the academic year and then again nine weeks later. Non-affiliated men had higher principled moral judgment (P Scores) than the Greek members at the second administration. Marlowe and Auvenshine (1982) found no differences between Greek and non-Greek students during the initial administration of the DIT during their freshman year, but witnessed significant differences between the students when retested at the end of the sophomore year. Cohen (1982) surveyed fraternity and sorority members in various leadership positions and found no differences in membership category, noting that students in positions of leadership did not appear to be having transformational experiences necessary to make a transition from conventional to post-conventional reasoning. Carroll (2009) found significant differences in DIT-2 scores between fraternity and non-fraternity men. Pike (2006) concluded that the lower moral judgment resulted in part from the value fraternity members place on conformity and dependability, suggesting that this emphasis on conformity slowed students’ progression through the conventional level of

moral judgment relative to their non-Greek peers. Derryberry and Thoma (2000) found that students with close friendships who had multiple independent friendship groups had higher DIT scores than students with more homogenous friendship groups, such as those found in fraternities and sororities.

Of particular importance to the present study is the consistent finding that individuals are amenable to educational experiences intentionally designed to promote increased moral judgment development among college students. King and Mayhew (2002) cite a number of studies which consistently show that a variety of approaches appear to be effective in promoting higher levels of moral judgment, particularly one-term courses related to social justice and programs that emphasized service-learning. They suggest future research in this area to follow a true experimental design, incorporating experimental and control groups, the design of conceptually grounded interventions, controlling for selection effects and testing for stability in change scores after post-tests (King & Mayhew, 2002).

This study predicts that, similar to other studies, fraternity members will score lower on the DIT-2 than non-fraternity members. This study also predicts that, consistent with the findings of Carroll (2009), moral judgment will serve as a predictor of moral disengagement and hazing attitudes.

### **Moral Disengagement**

In line with the Four Component Model, research has suggested that environmental factors can influence the link between moral judgment and moral action (Bandura, 1991). These environmental factors are at the core of Bandura's theory of moral disengagement. Simply put, Bandura's theory suggests that moral standards are developed over time through socialization and exposure to different concepts and ideas regarding right and wrong. These standards do not,

however, function as fixed internal controls. Rather, Bandura suggests, the process of taking a moral action involves what he refers to as “self-censure,” a means by which individuals consider the ramifications of their actions based on their internalized moral standards (Bandura et al., 1996). In differentiating moral disengagement from moral judgment, Bandura and his colleagues noted that conventional measures of moral judgment neglect to account for the manner in which people come to live in accordance with moral standards, and suggests that moral reasoning is translated into action through self-regulatory mechanisms through which moral agency is exercised (Bandura et al., 1996). Bandura has identified eight mechanisms by which individuals will disengage from these moral self-sanctions and engage in behaviors that would otherwise violate these moral standards. The environment and social climate surrounding an individual can trigger one, or all, of these mechanisms in a way that allows one to disengage from their moral self and more easily commit a transgression (Bandura, 2002). As noted by Bandura (2002), “it requires conducive social conditions rather than monstrous people to produce atrocious deeds. Given appropriate social conditions, decent, ordinary people can do extraordinarily cruel things” (p. 109). Each of the eight mechanisms are discussed below, with particular attention paid to the relationships between the theoretical mechanisms and the findings of the National Survey of Student Hazing (NSSH) and other hazing studies.

### **Moral Justification**

Individuals generally do not engage in harmful conduct unless they have convinced themselves that their actions are morally justified. By using moral justification, individuals are able to convince themselves of the morality of their actions by convincing themselves that their actions serve some noble purpose (Bandura, 1990). In a study of bullying and aggressive behavior among adolescents, moral justification was found to have the strongest relationship of

all of the mechanisms to bullying and injurious behaviors (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Carpara & Pastorellie, 1996). In discussing this phenomenon, the authors point out that “it is easy to hurt others when such conduct is viewed as doing worthy things to unworthy people” (p. 369). This mechanism is consistent with findings of the NSSH, which found that students engaging in hazing activities perceive a number of positive outcomes associated with hazing but only minimal negative consequences. Students frequently cite a number of positive outcomes of hazing in justifying the behavior, including the building of group unity and cohesiveness, fostering a sense of accomplishment and feeling stronger (Allan & Madden, 2008). In addition, students often used rationalization as a means by which to avoid reporting hazing activities to the proper authorities. Such responses as “it made me a better man,” and “the sense of accomplishment afterwards outweighed the pain or stress felt during the activities” were commonly given as rationalizations for not reporting hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008).

### **Euphemistic Labeling**

Individuals often use linguistic conversions to mask their reprehensible behavior or even make it seem respectable (Bandura, 1991). Bandura specifically notes the sanitizing language employed by the military and how camouflaging the pernicious nature of activities through this sanitizing language reduces their repugnancy. Soldiers “waste” people as opposed to “killing” them. Bombing missions are described as “servicing a target,” and the accidental death of innocent civilians is described as “collateral damage” (Bandura, 1999). This mechanism seems to be consistent with the findings of Ellsworth (2006), who noted that only the most extreme hazing activities, such as forced consumption of alcohol, being physically struck, or being forced to eat substances not intended for human consumption, were consistently identified by students as “hazing.” Ellsworth study suggests that there is a hesitancy to label less severe forms of abuse

as “hazing.” The NSSH found a tremendous gap between students experiences with hazing and their willingness to label it as such (Allan and Madden, 2008). This is also consistent with the phenomenon that more and more national fraternal organizations have introduced modernized language to their new member programs without fundamentally changing the nature of these programs. “Pledges” are now referred to as “associate members,” “new members,” or “candidates,” but their position of power in the organizations remains unchanged. Traditional hazing practices are now often referred to as “new member education” or “brotherhood development.”

### **Advantageous Comparison**

Reprehensible behavior can be made to appear righteous, depending on the other behaviors to which it is compared (Bandura, 1990). Advantageous comparison is a means by which to make harmful conduct look good by exploiting a contrast in which behavior is compared to other, more harmful behavior (Bandura, 1999). In explaining advantageous comparison, Bandura uses the actions of terrorists, many of whom see their behavior as acts of selfless martyrdom by comparing them with the perceived widespread cruelties inflicted on the people with whom they identify. The more flagrant the contrasting inhumanities, the more likely that one’s own immoral action will appear to be justified (Bandura, 1999). The mechanism of advantageous comparison can be seen in at least one study related to hazing. Owen et al. (2008) found that students perceive hazing to be worse in other organizations than in their own. This finding is consistent with the professional experience of the researcher. Students frequently use advantageous comparison as a means by which to justify hazing behavior. This justification falls along two fronts, one within the organization and another external to the organization. Internally, students note that the hazing currently perpetrated within their organizations “is not as

bad as it used to be” or “is not as bad as what was done to me.” Externally, students frequently compare their behaviors to the perceived behavior of other organizations. An attitude of “we haze, but not as much as other fraternities” is prevalent among fraternities attempting to justify their hazing behaviors.

### **Displacement of Responsibility**

Under displacement of responsibility, individuals view their actions as stemming from the dictates of others in authority, or from social pressures over which they have no control (Bandura, 1990). This mechanism operates by obscuring or minimizing the personal role in the harm that an individual causes (Bandura, 2002). This mechanism is perhaps best illuminated by the groundbreaking studies on obedience to authority conducted by Milgram (1974). In his experimental setting, Milgram was able to convince research subjects to escalate their level of aggression in the form of delivering dangerous levels of electric shock to others simply by commanding them to do so and telling them that he took full responsibility for the consequences of their actions. In trial after trial, Milgram’s participants justified their actions by stating that they were only doing what they were told or what the research project demanded of them, attempting to absolve themselves of any responsibility (Milgram, 1974). Zimbardo (2007), in explaining the behavior of the guards involved in his Stanford Prison Experiment, points to the displacement of responsibility that fell along two lines. Guards not only justified their behaviors in noting that they felt they were following the orders of the warden (Zimbardo), but also conformed to the social pressures of the situation, blaming their behavior on a number of environmental factors associated with the study. In explaining this behavior, Zimbardo cites the Asch (1951) studies of conformity, in which participants were placed in a room of confederates and asked to identify the longest vertical line in groups of lines. In the original study, the

confederates all gave the same incorrect answer, and in over 70% of the trials, the research participants conformed to the group and gave incorrect answers as well (Asch, 1951). In a follow-up study, Asch (1955) found that the presence of one confederate who agreed with the subject in giving the correct answer reduced the errors committed by the participant to less than 25% of what there had been without a partner. The limited amount of research on hazing is consistent with this theory. The NSSH found that one of the most common reasons that students did not report hazing was that it had been normalized as part of the culture. Responses that normalized the behavior as part of the social fabric of the chapter, such as “it was tradition, so I didn’t mind,” which implies that perpetrators were only doing what was done to them, were among the most common explanations for why students chose not to report hazing activities to the appropriate authorities. This is also consistent with the finding of Owen et al. (2008) that hazing victimization increases the likelihood of becoming a hazing perpetrator.

### **Diffusion of Responsibility**

Group decision-making is a process by which otherwise moral individuals behave immorally by diffusing responsibility for their actions or behaviors to the entire group. This diffusion of responsibility weakens personal agency and allows individuals to engage in conduct in which they would not otherwise participate if left to their own devices (Bandura et al., 1996). This mechanism allows individuals to rationalize inhumane behavior by obscuring their individual responsibility. Any harm done by a group can be largely attributed to the behavior of others (Bandura, Underwood & Fromson, 1975). Bandura et al. (1975) best demonstrated this phenomenon with a study similar to the Milgram experiments, where subjects were placed either alone or in groups and were able to determine the amount of shock to deliver to subjects for incorrect answers in a memory test. Those in the group responsibility condition consistently

delivered larger doses of voltage when compared to those in the individual responsibility condition. There is a great deal of research (discussed later in this chapter) that has consistently found, over several decades, that group size inhibits intervention in emergency situations. Zimbardo (2007) noted the presence of groupthink and a general diffusion of responsibility among the guards involved in the Stanford Prison Experiment. In regards to fraternity hazing, Owen et al. (2008), based on their research, hypothesized a model in which hazing occurs and is then rationalized through a process of cognitive dissonance, leading to groupthink and a situation in which hazing becomes an accepted cultural norm within the organization.

### **Disregard or Distortion of Consequences**

When individuals engage in harmful activities, they may avoid facing the consequences of their actions by minimizing the harm that they cause (Bandura, 2002). As long as the harmful results of one's own conduct are ignored, minimized or distorted, then self-censure can be easily deactivated (Bandura, 2002). This mechanism is best explained by the experiments conducted by Milgram. In variations of his original study, he brought participants increasingly closer, in terms of physical proximity, to their victims. When the infliction of pain was done remotely, a majority of subjects inflicted the maximum amount of voltage. This decreased when participants could hear the learner, and decreased again when they could both see and hear the learner, and finally bottomed out at 30% when the participants were in immediate physical proximity to the learner. It became more difficult for the subjects to inflict pain when the results of their actions became more and more obvious (Milgram, 1974). In regards to fraternity hazing, this mechanism is confirmed by the findings of the NSSH. Minimization was found to be one of the primary reasons offered by students for not reporting hazing activities to the proper authorities.



A number of students reported that hazing was “no big deal” or that hazing was justified because “no one was harmed” (Allan & Madden, 2008).

### **Dehumanization and Deindividuation of Victims**

The mechanism of dehumanization occurs when populations of individuals are referred to in slang terms in order to cast them as having no feelings, hopes, or concerns (Bandura, 1990). The perpetrator’s strength of moral self-censure depends in part on the perception of those being mistreated. Self-censure for cruel conduct can be disengaged by stripping the victims of cruelty of their human qualities (Bandura, 1999). In describing this mechanism, Bandura (1999) points to the common practice of nations, during wartime, casting their enemies into the most dehumanized, evil and animalistic images in order to make it easier to generate public support in killing them. He points to the fact that America’s enemies in the past have been referred to as mindless “savages”, “gooks,” and other despicable names. The mechanism of dehumanization was perhaps best demonstrated clinically by Bandura, Underwood & Fromson (1975) in their revision of the Milgram studies. In their experiment, groups of college students were asked to quiz other groups of college students in a memory exercise. Before the exercise began, the subjects overheard the researchers describing the other team as either “animals” or “really nice guys.” There was also a control group for which no association was made. In this experiment, the participants were able to choose the amount of shock to deliver for wrong answers. In the experiment, the dehumanized condition delivered, on average, more than triple the amount of voltage than was delivered in the humanized condition (Bandura et al., 1975). Zimbardo (2007) observed that the guards in the Stanford Prison Experiment quickly came to treat the prisoners in tyrannical, degrading ways. He attributes much of this to the manner in which the prisoners were stripped of their humanity and individuality. They were forced to wear uniforms and stocking

caps, and were referred to only by their prisoner numbers and were forbidden to address one another by name. Zimbardo brings this mechanism to light in quoting one of the guards after the study - “I made them call each other names and clean toilets with their bare hands. I practically considered the prisoners cattle, and I kept thinking I have to watch out for them in case they try something” (p. 223).

### **Attribution of Blame**

Bandura describes this mechanism as one in which the perpetrator casts blame onto the victim by making the victim responsible for the objectionable behavior (1990). Punitive conduct is subsequently seen as a justifiable response to belligerent provocations. By fixing the blame onto victims or on circumstances, one can excuse their injurious actions and, in fact, feel self-righteous in the process (Bandura, 1999). Hallie (1971) noted that when victims are convincingly blamed for their condition, they may eventually come to believe the degrading characteristics of themselves. This mechanism is consistent with some the rationales given by students as part of the NSSH in accepting hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008). Justifying hazing through a rationalization such as “it made me a better person,” inherently includes the acknowledgement that the student needed to be improved and, in making that acknowledgement, the student accepts some of the blame for the conditions that led to his being hazed.

### **Moral Disengagement and Bullying**

While there are no studies linking moral disengagement to hazing in fraternities, there are a number of studies linking moral disengagement to bullying among adolescents. Bandura et al. (1996) found that students prone to moral disengagement tend to be more irascible, ruminate about perceived grievances, exhibit low feelings of guilt or need for reparation, and engage in higher levels of interpersonal aggression and delinquent behavior. Their study also found that

moral disengagement is negatively correlated with pro-social orientation and peer popularity. As noted earlier, the strongest predictors of injurious behaviors in their study were moral justification and dehumanization of the victim (Bandura et al., 1996). Their finding of moral disengagement being strongly correlated with bullying and aggressive behavior among adolescents has been confirmed in a number of other studies (Menesini, Sanchez, Fonzi, Ortega, Costabile & Lo Fuedo, 2003; Gini, 2006; Hymel, Rocke-Henderson & Bonnano, 2005).

In the first longitudinal study of bullying behaviors among adolescents, Pasciello, Fida, Tramontano, Lupinetti and Carpara (2008) traced a group of Italian adolescents beginning at the age of 12 through the age of 20. While they found that, at the population level, moral disengagement tends to decrease over time, their research determined four distinct groups in regards to changes in moral disengagement over time – a “nondisengaged” group whose moral disengagement started and remained low, a “chronic” group whose moral disengagement started and remained high, a “late desister” whose moral disengagement started high but decreased over time, and a “normative” group which displayed initially moderate levels of moral disengagement that decreased over time. Moral disengagement measured at age 14 significantly predicted physical and verbal aggression and violent behavior six years later. In addition, their results suggested that the more moral disengagement decreased from age 14-16, the lower the expected levels of physical and verbal aggression were at age 20 for both males and females. Moral disengagement grouping also predicted trajectories for physical aggression, verbal aggression, violence and guilt over time, with the “chronic” disengagers showing steady increases in aggression and violence, and a drastic drop in feelings of guilt over time. This finding indicates that as moral disengagement becomes more routine and internalized over time it reflects the development of a strategy of adaptation that is embedded into a system of beliefs about

interpersonal interactions that leads them to perceive aggression and violence as a natural way to pursue their goals (Pasciello et al., 2008).

Gini (2006) evaluated the competing theories of Crick and Dodge (1994), who postulated that bullies were unintelligent oafs who bullied to make up for their lack of cognitive abilities, and Sutton and Smith (1999), who suggested that bullies are skilled individuals who take advantage of their social cognitive competence to attain certain social goals, such as interpersonal dominance. The findings of her research appear support Sutton's theory that bullies are emotionally intelligent and use this intelligence to gain advantage over their victims. In her research, students identified their peers as either bullies, victims, reinforcers or defenders. The study found no differences between bullies, victims or defenders in the ability to comprehend a social cognition story. Bullies demonstrated no social deficits in terms of social or moral cognition, but did display the highest levels of moral disengagement. The role of defender – one identified as defending the victims of bullies - was positively correlated with all cognition scores. Defenders exhibited the lowest levels of moral disengagement, suggesting that low levels of moral disengagement may predict early intervention in the vignettes used in the current study. These children showed the highest level of cognitive performance in all stories. The defender's adoption of this kind of pro-social and helpful behavior requires a high level of social ability and a well-developed understanding of the cognitive and emotional states of others (Gini, 2006). These findings suggest that training aimed at increasing moral development may be an effective means by which to reduce bullying or, in the case of the current research, hazing.

Taken together, the literature available regarding moral disengagement and bullying suggests that moral disengagement should be a useful lens through which to view hazing in fraternities. Students that are either identified by their peers as bullies or who self-identify as

bullies have consistently higher moral disengagement scores than other adolescents. Students identified as defenders, those who attempt to provide assistance to victims, have the lowest moral disengagement scores. Furthermore, many of the mechanisms described in Bandura's theory of moral disengagement appear to align with findings of the National Survey of Student Hazing and other research on hazing.

### **Bystander Behavior**

As two of the instruments used in this research (Vignette 1 and Vignette 2) involved scenarios in which the participant was asked at what point they would intervene in a violent situation, it is important to understand the research related to bystander behavior. Research related to bystander behavior received much of its inspiration from the brutal rape and murder of Kitty Genovese in New York City in 1964. In an attempt to explain why 38 witnesses failed to come to her aid, social psychologists have devoted a great deal of time and attention to the question of why people fail to intervene in situations (Levine, Cassidy, Brazier & Reicher, 2002). Latane and Darley (1970) have theorized a decision tree that bystanders must climb in order to intervene. First, the bystander must notice the event. Then, the bystander must correctly interpret the event as an emergency. Third, the bystander must feel personally responsible for addressing the emergency. Finally, the bystander must possess the necessary skills and resources to act. With this theoretical framework, and as numerous studies (Latane & Darley, 1968; Staub, 1970; Latane & Darley, 1970) have shown, there are three psychological processes that must occur when individuals are in the presence of others, and all three appear to be necessary in order to be able to fully account for social inhibition. The first process is described as audience inhibition and suggests that the presence of others can inhibit intervention when individuals are concerned that their behavior can be seen by others and may be viewed negatively. The second

process is referred to as social influence, which suggests that the presence of others can inhibit helping when individuals see the inaction of others and thus fail to interpret the situation as an emergency or determine that inaction is an expected pattern of behavior. Finally, as discussed in the section related to moral disengagement, helping can be inhibited by diffusion of responsibility. Diffusion of responsibility suggests that when others are present, there is an assumption that they are available to respond to the situation, and this assumption allows individuals to shift some of the responsibility of helping to the others present (Latane & Nida, 1981).

Multiple factors have been shown to have an influence on group inhibition of bystander intervention. A number of studies have found that, in general, as the number of bystanders increases, less helping occurs (Latane & Darley, 1968; Latane & Darley, 1970; Ross & Braband, 1973). Latane and Nida (1981) published a meta-analysis of 56 studies that examined the bystander effect, and found that, overall, 75% of people in the alone condition helped in an emergency, compared to less than 53% tested in various group conditions. Further research, however, has discovered a number of mediating variables that influence helping behaviors and reduce the bystander effect. Gottlieb and Carver (1980) found that the negative effects of being placed in the group condition were insignificant when group members expected future interaction with one another or with the victim. Rutkowski, Gruder and Romer (1983) found that group cohesiveness reversed the bystander effect. In their study, in groups with high cohesiveness, as group size increased, helping behaviors increased. In groups with low cohesiveness, as group size increased, helping behaviors decreased. High cohesiveness not only prevented diffusion of responsibility, but increased individual responsibility for helping as the group size increased (Rutkowski, Gruder & Romer, 1983). Levine and Crowther (2008) found

that group-level psychological relationships encouraged helping and reversed the bystander effect. Participants in their study were significantly more likely to intervene when they imagined they were with one stranger than with five strangers, but were significantly more likely to intervene when they imagined they were with five friends than they were with only one friend.

Of particular importance to the present research is a study conducted by Levine, Cassidy, Brazier and Reicher (2002). In their study, respondents were placed into groups with other bystanders under one of four conditions. The other bystanders in their study were confederates alleged to be students either from the same university as the respondents (in-group) or from a neighboring university (out-group). The confederates responded that they either would (intent) or would not (non-intent) intervene in the ambiguous emergency situation. The results of their research indicated that the stated intention of helping in an ambiguous, but potentially emergency, situation by other bystanders had a significant influence on respondents' decisions to intervene only when those bystanders shared a common social membership. In discussing their results, the authors note that the bystander-perpetrator relationship has been virtually ignored in the entire bystander behavior literature. They theorize one of two possibilities – that bystanders who witness in-group members exhibiting aggressive behaviors might be likely to consider those actions justified and result in a decreased likelihood of intervention; or, that the response to aggressive behavior might depend on group norms regarding violence as well as the intergroup context, and that individuals may be more likely to intervene when perpetrators are in-group members whose actions are seen as damaging to the standing of the group as a whole (Levine, Cassidy, Brazier & Reicher, 2002).

The present research contains one instrument (Vignette 1) that measures helping in a context-specific hazing incident in a fraternity house, and another (Vignette 2) that depicts

bullying in a setting that is not context specific. Both in-group (fraternity members) and out-group (non-fraternity members) responded to the instruments and indicated the point at which they would respond. In order to avoid any unintended effects related to group size and helping, both of the vignettes used in this study placed respondents in the alone condition, as studies have consistently shown (Latane & Darley, 1981) that the alone condition maximizes the likelihood that bystanders will respond in a helpful way. This also allowed the researcher to isolate the in-group/out-group effect on points of intervention between fraternity members and non-members. The researcher hypothesized that, since hazing appears to be an accepted social norm among fraternity members (Allan and Madden, 2008), that fraternity members would be less likely to intervene than non-fraternity members in the fraternity hazing vignette. Furthermore, the researcher hypothesized that these differences would be non-significant or would disappear altogether in the non-context specific vignette.

### **Integrated Moral Model**

The proposed integrated moral model suggests that there is a relationship between moral disengagement and bystander intervention in a hazing scenario. This model also suggests a relationship between moral judgment and bystander intervention in a hazing scenario. Finally, the proposed model suggests that moral judgment will serve as a mediating variable between moral disengagement and hazing intervention, having an indirect effect on hazing intervention through its effect on moral disengagement. Only one other study (Carroll, 2009) has proposed or empirically tested a full model using moral judgment, moral disengagement and aggressive behavior. Carroll (2009) theorized and tested a model in which moral judgment and moral disengagement impacted rape-supportive attitudes in college males. Her findings were consistent with the theorized model. Moral disengagement was positively correlated with rape-



supportive attitudes, as was moral judgment. Moral judgment also had an indirect effect on rape-supportive attitudes through its relationship with moral disengagement (Carroll, 2009). A limitation of Carroll's study was that one of the instruments, the sexual assault vignette, was context-specific to the fraternity climate on the campus at which the study was conducted. The differences she found between fraternity members and non-members in rape-supportive attitudes may be attributed to the context and environment of her vignette. Fraternity members may have responded much more similarly to non-members in a setting that was less novel or context-specific. The current research helps disentangle that limitation of her findings.

This study builds upon Carroll's work by examining how the social norms of the fraternity climate impact the relationships between moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing intervention. As noted by Zimbardo (2007), the social norms and situational pressures of a novel setting can elicit intense and often pathological reactions from the individuals who find themselves in that novel setting. As in the Stanford Prison Experiment, the current study will "disentangle person from place, disposition from situation, 'good apples' from 'bad barrels'" (p. 206) by evaluating the differences in bystander response time in a fraternity-specific hazing scenario and a more general bullying scenario. The violent behaviors in these two scenarios are identical. The only differences are the setting and the participants. This study adds to the body of knowledge regarding moral development by examining how the context of the fraternity culture, a culture with strongly established social norms (DeSantis, 2007), impacts the interplay of moral judgment and moral disengagement in an integrated moral model.

For years, researchers have suggested a study of this nature. Zimbardo (2007) specifically mentioned fraternities as an environment worthy of further study in examining how situational power in a novel setting impacts behavior. Detert et al. (2008) specifically suggested

that future research should investigate the possibility that contextual factors such as climate, culture, and environment have independent and interactive influences on moral disengagement. Pasciello et al. (2008) suggested studying moral disengagement considering internal mechanisms and environmental variables that operate at stimulus, social, structural and contextual levels to influence individual and group behaviors. The proposed study follows these recommendations and suggests that moral disengagement leading to tolerance for violent behavior is influenced by contextual and environmental factors and the moderating effect of moral judgment.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

This chapter fully evaluated the empirical and theoretical research related to the setting variable (fraternities), the two variables of moral theory (moral judgment and moral disengagement) and the action variable (bystander behavior) in order to develop a theoretical framework for the proposed model in this study. The proposed model maintains that the setting variables will interact with the variables of moral theory to predict the action variable.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This study increases understanding of moral behavior in college males by using a model that incorporates moral judgment and moral disengagement as predictors of hazing attitudes and bystander behavior. This study gives researchers, university administrators and fraternity headquarters staff a new perspective through which to view hazing bystander behavior and will illuminate new strategies for addressing and combating hazing. This chapter highlights the methodology used in the study. The study was conducted using the detailed data collection procedure outlined in this chapter. The chapter consists of the following sections: context, participants, measures, data collection procedures and data analysis.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions included the following:

1. RQ1 – Are there differences between fraternity members and non-members in measures of moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing-supportive attitudes;
2. RQ2 – Are fraternity members less likely to intervene in a fraternity hazing situation when compared to non-fraternity men? Are fraternity members less likely to intervene in an adolescent bullying situation when compared to non-fraternity men;
3. RQ3 – Is the difference in response time between the fraternity hazing vignette and the adolescent bullying vignette different between the two groups;

4. RQ4 – Are there differences in intervention response time for the fraternity hazing vignette and the adolescent bullying vignette between students in different classes (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior);
5. RQ5 – Do the data fit the theoretical path model? Are moral judgment and moral disengagement predictive of the difference in intervention response time between the two vignettes; and
6. RQ6 – Are the paths between the observed variables different between the two groups?

### **Context**

The study was administered to male undergraduate students at four large, public, research universities in the southeastern United States. The size of the institutions range from 17,000 to 30,000. All four are classified as either Carnegie Research Universities (high research activity) or as Carnegie Doctoral/Research Universities. The percentage of Caucasian students at the four institutions ranges from 70 – 80%, with the remaining 20-30% consisting primarily of African-American students, with small percentages (less than 3%) of Hispanic, Native American, or Asian/Pacific Islander students. These institutions were selected because of similar institutional demographics and the presence of large, traditional and thriving fraternity communities with on-campus communal housing. The percentage of undergraduate students that are members of fraternities or sororities on the four campuses ranges from 14 to 28%.

### **Participants**

At each of the four institutions, a random sample of 1,200 students, stratified to include 600 undergraduate fraternity members and 600 non-members, were selected to participate in the study. Expecting a low response rate due to the length of the survey, this represented an

oversampling of the population. A total of 200 students submitted fully completed surveys that were useable in the study. Participants ranged in age from 19 – 23. This age range was selected to minimize the number of freshmen participating in the study, as the study sought to evaluate the perceptions of fraternity members that would have completed their new member experience with the fraternity and would be considered “active” members. The sample included four freshmen, 26 sophomores, 65 juniors and 105 seniors. The sample was 87.5% Caucasian (N = 175), 6.5% African American (N = 13) with less than 5% identifying as either American Indian/Native American, Latino/Hispanic, or other, reflecting the overall demographic breakdown of the institutions and fraternity communities studied. The sample included 37.5% fraternity members (N = 75) and 62.5% (N = 125) non-members.

## **Measures**

### **Demographics**

Participants were asked to report gender, age, ethnicity, year in school, family income, and college major. They were also asked whether or not they were a member of a fraternity or sorority. For a list of all questions, please see Appendix 1.

### **Moral Disengagement**

The Moral Disengagement Scale is a 32-item survey developed by Bandura and his colleagues and measures the degree to which individuals fail to self-censure their actions and engage in transgressive behavior (Bandura et al., 1996). The scale assesses proneness to moral disengagement as demonstrated in different forms of detrimental conduct in a variety of contexts (Bandura et al., 1996). The items in the scale are designed to measure individuals’ readiness to resort to moral justification, euphemistic labeling, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, disregard or distortion of consequences,

dehumanization of victims and attribution of blame. Respondents are presented with statements involving justifications for a variety of acts and rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statements on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The original instrument designed by Bandura and Elliott (1992) contained 53 items, but in piloting their ground-breaking 1996 bullying study, Bandura and his colleagues conducted extensive psychometric analysis and items were rewritten and removed and the instrument was reduced to the 32 item instrument used today. The current study employed a modified version of the scale, similar to that used by Carroll (2009), involving simple language modifications such as changing “kid” to “student” or “person,” in order to make the instrument more age-appropriate to the college-aged population. Both Carroll (2009) and Pasciello et al. (2008), using a version with language modified for adolescents or college-aged students, found that the language modifications resulted in no changes to the validity or reliability compared to the original measure.

Items on the instrument are grouped into subscales to represent the eight disengagement mechanisms, and higher scores represent higher levels of moral disengagement. While the instrument provides scores for each of the eight subscales, the reliability of the instrument in reporting a composite moral disengagement score is higher than the reliability of the subscale scores (Bandura et al., 1996). The Bandura et al. (1996) study revealed an alpha reliability coefficient of .82 for the instrument. A follow up to that study revealed an alpha reliability coefficient of .86 (Bandura et al., 2001). In the current study, the researcher will only examine the composite moral disengagement score in testing the hypothesized moral model.

The moral disengagement scale has been validated in a wide variety of studies to examine a wide variety of populations. It has been used to study bullying among adolescents (Bandura, et al. 1996), bullying among prisoners (South & Wood, 2006), cyber-bullying and online

aggression (Pornari & Wood, 2010), and ethical decision making among business students (Detert, Trevino & Schweitzer, 2008).

### **Moral Judgment**

In measuring the construct of moral judgment, this study employed the Defining Issues Test – 2 (DIT-2). The original version of the Defining Issues Test (DIT) was developed in 1974 as a measurement of moral judgment and has been widely used and accepted because of its ease of use and established validity (Walker, 2004). The DIT is derived from Kohlberg's theory of moral judgment development, but instead of Kohlberg's production-oriented interview, the DIT presents a recognition task in which participants read a moral dilemma and then chooses between a set of statements the ones that best justify a course of moral action (Rest, Thoma & Edwards, 1997). Over 400 published studies have been conducted using the DIT, and its validity has been demonstrated in a number of ways, including differentiations of naturally occurring groups in terms of expected performance in moral judgment, correlations of moral judgment with moral comprehension, longitudinal change as a function of age and education, sensitivity to moral education interventions and relationships between moral judgment with attitudes, behaviors and political preferences (Rest et al., 1997). The DIT contains six dilemmas. After reading each dilemma, participants rate twelve items representing the different stages of moral development in terms of importance, and are then asked to rank the four most important in making their decision. The P-Score, which is the raw general score derived from the ranking of the items, is generated for every participant, and indicates the frequency with which individuals use post-conventional reasoning in making moral judgments.

The DIT-2 was developed in response to criticism that the stories in the moral dilemmas from the original DIT were becoming outdated. The DIT-2 contains five moral dilemmas with

streamlined instructions and more validity tests that attempt to purge fewer responses. The DIT-2 also reports new measurement indices. In addition to the traditional P-Score, it also reports an N2 score, which measures the degree to which participants can distinguish between stage 4 and stage 5 and 6 items. The PI score measures the frequency with which individuals use personal interest, or selfish, pre-conventional reasoning, in making moral judgments. The MN (maintaining norms) score measures the individual's frequency of using social norms and societal rules as a means by which to make moral judgments. The PI (personal interest) score measures the frequency with which an individual makes moral decisions based on personal self interest (Kohlberg Stages 1 and 2). Finally, the DIT-2 was designed to include developmental phase indicators that would differentiate between consolidated and transitional levels of development (Thoma, 2006). The DIT-2 has been used extensively to measure moral judgment, and the internal reliability of the instrument is consistently above .80 (Rest et al., 1999). The researcher will use the N-2 score as the primary measure of moral judgment in testing the proposed moral model, and the PI score as a secondary measure of moral judgment. Instead of the traditional self-administered pencil and paper method, the current study will employ an electronically distributed web-based version of the DIT-2.

### **Vignettes 1 and 2**

Although technically separate instruments, the two vignettes used in this study are designed to compliment and interact with one another, and are therefore discussed together in this section. The use of vignettes in social science research is well established, having been used in psychological research as early as 1951 (Hughes & Huby, 2002). Researchers have suggested that the rise in popularity of vignette research stems from the increased awareness of the limitations of self-reported behaviors, particularly in studies of attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and



norms (Gould, 1996). Vignettes tend to be effective research tools because they are able to selectively simulate elements of the research topics being studied (Gould, 1996) and they often more closely approximate real-life decision making (Alexander & Becker, 1978). As noted by Alexander and Becker (1978), most people are not particularly insightful regarding the factors that enter into their own judgment and thought processes. Vignette research is valuable in detecting subtleties and nuances that, often, measures of self-reported attitudes or behaviors are unable to detect (Sumrall & West, 1998). While vignette research is not a direct measurement of behavior, vignettes allow for the creation of meaning and the capturing of attitudes and beliefs, which brings us one step closer to understanding behavior (Schoenberg & Ravdal, 2000). Vignettes provide researchers with access to a cognitive and attitudinal base from which a person's behavior is derived, and are therefore capable of illuminating that behavior (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995).

Vignette research is particularly useful in improving the quality of data by reducing the influence of socially desirable responses (Hughes & Huby, 2002). Vignettes accomplish this reduction in socially desirable patterns of response by asking participants to assume the role of a vignette character rather than answering questions directly based on their own experiences or viewpoints (Hughes & Huby, 2002). The vignette allows participants to respond within the context of the specific situations presented, and the socially desirable responses are reduced by a distancing effect created by the vignettes between the participant's real lives and the scenarios presented in the vignettes (Bendelow, 1993). This aspect of vignette research is particularly valuable in the study of potentially difficult or sensitive topics, as they can help desensitize the negative aspects of these topics for participants (Bendelow, 1993) and, by removing personal disclosure, may ease the participants' fear of embarrassment (Schoenberg & Ravdal, 2000).

Vignette research has been used extensively to study such sensitive topics as sexual assault and aggression (Carroll, 2009; Muehlenhard & MacNaughton, 1988), behavior of youthful offenders (Peterson-Badali, Abramovitch & Duda, 1997), and the attitudes of adult children related to providing care to elderly parents (Wolfson, Handfield-Jones, Glass, McClaran & Keyserling, 1993). This aspect of vignette research confirms its usefulness as a measurement tool in studying hazing behaviors among fraternity members, a population that has proven difficult to study (Carroll 2009) and a topic that students are hesitant to discuss and researchers find difficult to study (Schnur, 2007).

Carroll (2009) used vignette research in her study of the impact of moral judgment and moral disengagement on sexual assault attitudes in college males. Drawing from previous vignettes used to study sexual assault, her own expertise on the topic, and the context and environment on the campus at which the study was administered, she developed a sexual assault vignette that was context-specific to the fraternity climate on the campus used in her study. As noted by Schoenberg and Ravdal (2000), the creation of narrative vignettes requires extensive researcher experience and attention and detailed questions for each scenario. The closer the vignette comes to accurately depicting a real-life situation to which the participant can relate, the more sensitively and accurately the instrument will perform (Rahman, 1996). Similar to Carroll's study, the current research will use a fraternity hazing vignette that is context-specific to the fraternity climate on the four campuses used in this study. Drawing on his own expertise and the expertise of colleagues at the four campuses in the study, the researcher developed the hazing vignette to mirror a typical hazing incident that might take place on one of these campuses. Both the fraternity hazing vignette and the adolescent bullying vignette are designed to depict a hazing or bullying scenario with progressively violent and intolerable behavior, and

ask the participants to indicate the point at which they would intervene either directly or indirectly.

### **Steps to Creating Vignettes**

The steps in creating the vignettes were as follows.

#### **Step 1**

The researcher first conducted a thorough evaluation and synthesis of the literature on fraternity hazing. As the hazing vignette was designed to contain a scenario in which hazing began with only mild hazing activities and became progressively more violent and intolerable, studies that assessed students' beliefs about what actually constituted hazing were of tremendous benefit in designing the vignette. A study by Ellsworth (2006) was particularly useful in designing the hazing vignette. Ellsworth studied how students in various organizations, including fraternities, define hazing. He listed a variety of hazing behaviors and asked students whether or not they felt that the behavior constituted hazing. Items that most fraternity members agreed were hazing included being struck by an object, such as a paddle, and being forced to eat substances not intended for normal consumption. Items that only a modest amount of fraternity members identified as hazing included being subject to verbal abuse or harassment and being made to do calisthenics for excessive amounts of time or to excessive levels (Ellsworth, 2006). Using Ellsworth's findings, the researcher was able to construct a hazing scenario that began with activities that only a modest amount of fraternity members agreed were hazing, and escalating into activities that most fraternity members agreed were hazing. Two items that were strongly identified as hazing activities in the Ellsworth (2006) study were intentionally not included in the hazing vignette, as the researcher felt they would be impractical to replicate in the

adolescent bullying vignette. These items included “forced sexual acts” and “forced consumption of excessive amounts of alcohol.”

## **Step 2**

Once the fraternity hazing vignette was constructed, the researcher conducted a pilot study with a randomly selected sample of fraternity members on one of the campuses at which the study was conducted. The pilot study was a one item survey that listed all of the hazing behaviors listed in the vignette and required participants to force rank the items in order from mildest form of hazing to most severe form of hazing. With only one exception, the results of the pilot survey were consistent with the findings of Ellsworth (2006). Fraternity members in the pilot study ranked “Paddling with intention to inflict physical trauma” higher than “forced to eat substances not normally intended for human consumption.” Based on this result, the placement of those two items on the vignette was changed to reflect the pilot study.

## **Step 3**

While no formal focus groups were conducted, the researcher shared the instrument individually with a number of undergraduate students at one of the campuses involved in the study, and shared the instrument with his colleagues, particularly those involved in advising fraternities, at the four campuses used in the study. Both undergraduate students and staff members confirmed that the story contained in the vignette was a typical hazing scenario that might play out with a fraternity on their campus. One student even commented “I went through a few nights very similar to that when I was a pledge.”

## **Step 4**

Once the fraternity hazing vignette was completed and confirmed as a realistic depiction of fraternity hazing on the campuses involved in the study, the researcher developed the

complimentary vignette, the adolescent hazing vignette. The researcher's goal was to develop a scenario involving an exact replication of the behaviors involved in the fraternity hazing vignette, but in a completely neutral context removed from the fraternity or even the college environment. The scenario was designed to be one in which fraternity membership would have no bearing on an individual's response to the vignette. Consulting literature related to bullying among adolescents, and using the violent behaviors depicted in the fraternity hazing vignette, the researcher developed the story for the adolescent bullying vignette.

### **Step 5**

The researcher shared the two vignettes with students and colleagues and asked for their thoughts regarding the similarities between the two vignettes and how they would respond. These conversations confirmed, with one exception, the similarities between the two vignettes. In the original version of the vignettes, a number of individuals mentioned that they intervened earlier in the adolescent bullying vignette because the victim in that scenario had limited ability to remove himself from the situation. Whereas "Tubby" in the fraternity hazing vignette could have chosen at any time to walk away from the situation, "Josh" in the adolescent bullying vignette was, to some extent, physically held there against his will by the other boys bullying him. With this feedback, the fraternity hazing vignette was slightly modified to include the section in which "Tubby" decides to leave but is threatened that if he leaves the other pledges will be punished for his actions, and the other pledges plead with him to stay there with them. This change created a situation in which "Tubby" was also held there, albeit psychologically, against his will. Upon sharing these changes with those who had voiced this concern, all agreed that this addition changed their perception of "Tubby's" ability to leave the situation and would change the point at which they would intervene on his behalf.

## Step 6

The researcher piloted both vignettes to fraternity members at a regional leadership conference, and to undergraduate students enrolled in a leadership course at one of the institutions in the study. The piloting of the instruments confirmed the researcher's hypotheses. Fraternity members were slower to intervene in the hazing vignette than their non-affiliated counterparts, but those differences disappeared on the adolescent bullying vignette. The responses were normally distributed with an acceptable amount of variance, indicating that the vignettes were reliable measures of attitudes regarding intervention in a hazing or bullying scenario.

The final versions of the stories for the two vignettes follow:

### **Vignette 1 – Fraternity Hazing**

Charles attends an evening study session with a group of friends in the library. As he finishes the study session, one of his friends mentions that his fraternity is having a party that night and asks Charles if he wants to attend. Charles doesn't have any plans, so he eagerly accepts the invitation. Charles decides to go straight to the fraternity house to "pre-game" for the party. The party passes without incident and Charles has an incredible time. After the party, Charles leaves to go home. Halfway home, he realizes that he left his backpack with his laptop in his friend's room, so he turns around and goes back to the fraternity house. He parks in the back of the house and walks toward an open door leading into the band-room where the party had taken place. Inside, Charles can see a group of eight or nine sophomore members of the fraternity with a group of five fraternity pledges. As he approaches the door, he can see that the pledges are lined up against the back wall of the room with their heads down. He can overhear one of the sophomore members yelling loudly and angrily at the pledges.

"The rest of your pledge brothers studied and passed their pledge test this week, but you dumbasses didn't study hard enough! Now, you're going to learn what happens to new boys who don't pass their fucking pledge tests! It's time for after-party cleanup duty!" A few of the sophomore members come into the middle of the room with several push-brooms, mops and buckets, and the pledges are instructed to begin cleaning the band-room, which is littered with cups, beer cans and cigarette butts. They begin working fast,

but one of the pledges is not working fast enough to please the group. He is slightly overweight and is sweating profusely.

“Hey Tubby! What the fuck is your problem,” yells one of the members. “You better get your fat ass in gear and start mopping faster, or there will be Hell to pay.”

The other sophomores in the room begin hurling insults at the overweight pledge.

“You fat piece of shit! If you don’t start cleaning and stop wheezing, you won’t eat tomorrow.”

“Tubby, you fat motherfucker! I’m going to beat your fat ass if you don’t get this place cleaned up.”

Despite the taunting, the pledge falls further and further behind in getting his section of the party room cleaned up. After a few more minutes, one of the sophomores comes over and kicks over his bucket of water.

“Alright, Tubby! You’re no good at using a mop, so I want you to get your fat ass down in the floor and roll around in this water until the puddle is dry and the floor is clean!” The pledge complies with the request. He gets down on the floor and begins rolling around to soak up the water that was spilled from his bucket. The guys really get a huge laugh out of this, including the other pledges in the room.

After a few minutes of taunting and laughing, one of the members declares that he thinks the reason Tubby can’t keep up is because he hasn’t had his midnight snack. The sophomore disappears into the door that you know leads into the kitchen. After a minute, he comes back in with a full trash bag and a bottle of Tabasco Sauce. He begins pulling food scraps out of the trash bag and piles the food onto the floor. After he’s pulled about three pounds of food out of the garbage, he covers the pile of food in Tabasco Sauce. Finally, several of the sophomores come over and spit on the pile of food.

“Alright Tubby! Down on all fours like a piggy! It’s time for your midnight feeding!” “No,” the pledge says. “I’m not going through another night like this. I can’t take this anymore. Fuck this – I’m leaving”

“Tubby, you fat motherfucker, if you walk out that door, the rest of these guys are going to get their asses beaten. Get your fat ass on the ground and eat your slop, or these guys are going to get it.”

“Please don’t leave us here, Chris,” one of the other pledges pleads. “We’re going to catch Hell if you leave. We’re all in this together, and we’ve come too far to walk away now. There’s only a few weeks of this left. Please don’t go.”

The pledge stops for a few seconds, as if he is trying to decide what he should do. After a few seconds, he reluctantly moves back to the center of the room towards the pile of food, but there is terror in his face. He comes over to the pile of food and looks at it for a few minutes without eating. He begins to cry.

“Tubby, you fucking crybaby! What’s the matter? You not hungry? Maybe you need some help.”

With that said, one of the members comes over and pushes the pledge’s face down into the pile of food as the other members gather around and start yelling and telling him to finish the food. After about two minutes, the pledge begins to vomit.

“Now you’ve just made a big fucking mess, Tubby! The rest of your pledge brothers are going to pay the price because you’re such a sloppy fat-ass.”

The other pledges are instructed to get down on “bows and toes” next to Tubby. They all comply. One of the members walks over and begins going down the line striking the pledges on the buttocks with a paddle. At the beginning, the paddling isn’t all that hard, but it gets harder with each stroke. The pledges are obviously in pain.

After the first round of paddling, the pledges are instructed to begin doing pushups. They do pushups until they can’t go any further. When each pledge stops doing pushups, another member comes around with a paddle and begins hitting them again, but this time much harder and more violent than before.

## **Vignette 2 – Adolescent Bullying**

Frank decides to take his dog for a walk in the local park. As he passes an open field in the park, he can see and overhear a group of children playing football and decides to stop and watch the action for a minute. The children all appear to be in the 12-15 age range and are divided up into two teams of five. On one of the teams, Frank can see four of the children gathered around one of the others, who is a bit smaller than the others and is wearing glasses.

“Josh, you little four-eyed faggot. When are you going to learn to catch the ball” says one of the children as they huddle up to get ready for another play. “We’re only going to give you one more chance to stop sucking it up,” he says, as he shoves Josh in the chest.



The team runs a few more plays without the ball going in Josh's direction. They get a first down, and huddle back up to run the next play. Frank can't hear what they are saying, but it looks to him like they are coming up with a "trick play."

As they line up for the play, Josh is lined up as a slot receiver. As the ball is snapped, Josh comes into motion and they pitch the ball to him on an end-around play. As he comes around the edge, he slips and on the way to the ground he drops the ball. The other team picks up the fumble and returns it across the field for a touchdown.

"Dammit, Josh! You just lost us the game! I can't believe you fumbled on the last drive! What is your problem?"

The other kids join on the team join in on the action.

"We should have known better that to give that four-eyed faggot another chance!"  
"Josh – you're the biggest pussy on the planet."

After a few minutes of taunting, one of the team members has an idea.

"Hey! I know how we can teach Josh to hang onto the ball! How about a game of 'smear the queer'?"

The other kids seem to really like that idea – they hand the ball to Josh and he tries to run away from them, but they catch him and tackle him. The children from the other team gather around and begin chanting "smear the queer." Every time Josh gets up to try and get away, someone catches him and tackles him again. At first, the tackles seem pretty harmless, and everyone, including Josh, seems to be enjoying themselves. But as the game goes on, the tackles become more and more forceful, and Frank can tell that Josh isn't having fun with the game anymore.

While this is going on, one of the other boys walks over to a nearby trashcan and pulls out what appears to be a half-eaten sandwich. He walks back over and declares "Maybe Josh needs to eat more so he can grow up bigger and stronger and stop being such a pussy."

The boy puts the sandwich on the ground and the other boys spit on it. Then they hold Josh down on the ground on his back and cram the sandwich into his mouth, forcing him to chew. After a few seconds, Josh spits up the sandwich and begins to cry.

"Aww, what's the matter Joshy Baby? Are you gonna cry now," the children taunt.

“Here you go Joshy Baby! Let me dry your eyes for you,” says one of the children, who walks up and grab’s Josh’s glasses off his face and then pushes Josh back down on the ground and begins rubbing his face in the grass, “drying his tears.” Throughout this ordeal, Josh is screaming and trying to get up, but the boy on top of Josh is about 20 pounds heavier than Josh and is able to hold him down and continue rubbing his face on the ground. The other children are laughing and chanting “crybaby.”

After a struggle of a few minutes, Josh is able to get to his feet and in a fit of rage swings his arm and punches the boy who was holding him down directly in the face. The boy’s nose begins to bleed.

“Josh, you little faggot! You busted my nose! Now I’m going to beat your ass.”

The boy bends down and picks up a large stick, and runs at Josh. When he catches him, he begins hitting Josh in the legs and buttocks with the stick.

The two vignettes were designed mirror one another as closely as possible. In addition to the similar hazing/bullying behaviors, the two vignettes were also designed with a number of other similarities. Both vignettes have imbedded within them similar moral disengagement mechanisms. In both scenarios, the victims are in the de-individuized condition – the victim of hazing is only referred to by his nickname, “Tubby,” and Josh is frequently referred to as “faggot.” Attribution of blame is also present in both vignettes. Both victims are being “punished” for some wrong-doing – Josh for fumbling the football and allowing the other team to win, and “Tubby” for failing his pledge test and mopping the floor too slowly. The bystander situation is the same in both vignettes as well, allowing for a similar level of diffusion of responsibility. In both scenarios, the observer is in the alone condition, but in both cases, other strangers are present and observing the activities and do not take action.

For the purposes of data analysis, the nine-point response scale for the vignettes was compressed to a five-point scale to allow for more variance among the sample. In both vignettes students were classified as immediate interveners (item 1), early interveners (items 2 and 3),

intermediate interveners (items 4 and 5), late interveners (items 6 - 8) or non-interveners (item 9). Immediate interveners are defined as those that would have intervened as soon as they were aware of a potentially violent situation. Early interveners are defined as those that intervened as soon as the individual was singled out for ridicule. Intermediate interveners are those who intervened once mild physical violence was present. Late interveners are those who intervened only once extreme physical violence had taken place. Non-interveners are defined as those who indicated that they would not have intervened at all.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

All surveys were distributed electronically using the web-based SurveyMonkey© software program. Working with the offices of institutional research at each of the four campuses involved in the study, a random sample of 1,200 male students were selected from each campus. The samples were stratified to contain equal numbers of fraternity members and non-affiliated students to provide for consistency in data analysis. The researcher used two versions of the survey instrument, which included different placement of survey items to prevent any priming effects based on the ordering of the measures. Version one had the ordering: DIT-2, Vignette 1, Moral Disengagement Scale, and Vignette 2. Version two had the ordering: Moral Disengagement Scale, Vignette 2, DIT-2, Vignette 1. Students selected to participate were sent an email from the researcher explaining the purpose of the study and containing a link to the survey. Participants were reminded that their responses were confidential and would not be linked to them or to their organization. Participants were asked to honestly respond to each question based on what they thought they would actually do if they found themselves in that situation.

## Data Analysis

The research questions and hypotheses for this study are divided into two main areas of data analysis. First, the researcher hypothesized that fraternity members would score higher on moral disengagement, lower on moral judgment, and would intervene later in a fraternity hazing vignette when compared to their non-affiliated counterparts. These hypotheses were tested using SPSS v. 16.0 to perform the t-test to examine mean differences between the groups on the various measures. SPSS v. 16.0 will also be used to determine whether correlations exist between the variables that will be used in the path analysis. Secondly, the researcher hypothesized an integrated moral model in which moral judgment and moral disengagement influence the differences in bystander behavior between the hazing scenario and the adolescent bullying scenario. This hypothesis was tested using LISREL 8.8 to conduct path analysis to confirm whether the data support the proposed integrated moral model. The model specification process was used to determine whether there are significant paths (both direct and indirect) between the variables in the hypothesized model.

*RQ1* – Mean scores for PI-Score, N-2 score, MD Score and Pursue/Dismiss item on Vignette 1 will be calculated for both groups (fraternity and non-fraternity) and the t-test will be used to test for significant differences between groups.

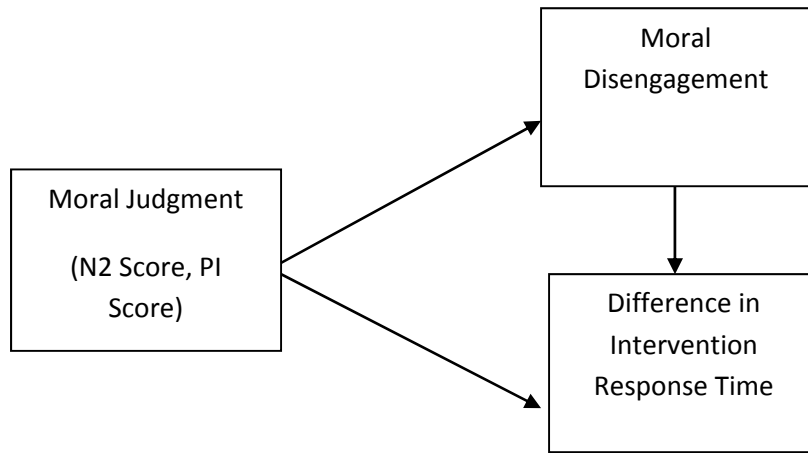
*RQ2* – Mean scores for intervention time on Vignette 1 and Vignette 2 will be calculated for both groups (fraternity and non-fraternity) and the t-test will be used to test for significant differences between groups.

*RQ3* – The mean difference in response time (RD-Score) between Vignette 1 and Vignette 2 will be calculated for both groups (fraternity and non-fraternity) and the t-test will be used to test for significant differences between groups.

*RQ4* – The mean difference in response time (RD-Score) between Vignette 1 and Vignette 2 will be calculated for both groups (fraternity and non-fraternity) and from all classes (sophomore, junior, senior) and a two-way ANOVA will be conducted to test for significant differences between groups.

*RQ5* – Correlation matrix of mean scores for PI-Score, N2-Score, MD-Score and RD-Score will be entered into LISREL 8.8 and the proposed hypothetical model will be specified to determine whether the data fit the theoretical path model.

*RQ6* – Correlation matrices of mean scores for P-Score, N-2 Score MD-Score and RD-Score will be entered separately for both groups (fraternity and non-fraternity) into LISREL 8.8 and the proposed hypothetical model will be specified to determine whether the data for all groups and classes fit the theoretical path model, and whether differences in the relationships exist between the groups. The test for differences between independent  $R^2$  (Olkin & Finn, 1995) will be conducted on the  $R^2$  values for each of the paths to determine if differences between the groups exist.



*Figure 1.* Proposed Path Model of Moral Judgment, Moral Disengagement and Difference in Intervention Response Time

### **Delimitations**

The present study reflected the following delimitations:

1. The study will be confined to fraternity members and non-members at four public, four-year colleges and universities in the southeastern United States. This may limit the ability to generalize these findings to private educational settings or to settings outside the southeastern region.
  
2. The fraternity sample will be predominately white, upper-middle class males. Fraternities in the Interfraternity Council (IFC) at the four institutions being studied are comprised mostly of white males (over 99%). With membership dues ranging between \$1,500 and \$3,500 per semester, with limited scholarship options, it can be assumed that members come from at least a middle-class background. This may limit the ability to generalize these findings to student populations from more diverse or lower socio-economic backgrounds. This will also limit the ability to generalize these findings to fraternity members affiliated with NPHC or NALFO member organizations.

3. The surveys will be administered using an online survey program. Therefore, the setting in which the surveys will be taken cannot be controlled.
4. One of the measurements (Vignette 1) is context-specific to the fraternity culture at the four institutions in the study. This may limit the ability to generalize the findings to other campuses with different cultural norms regarding fraternity hazing.

### **Assumptions**

Assumptions of the dissertation are as follows:

1. Participants were honest in their responses on the survey instruments;
2. All participants took the surveys in similar settings; and
3. The study's sample is representative of the target population.

### **Summary of Methodology**

Data was collected from four large, public universities in the southeastern United States using the data collection procedures outlined in this chapter. The measurements of moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing and bullying intervention response were used to test the proposed integrated moral model. SPSS v. 16.0 and LISREL 8.8 were used to conduct the t-test, correlation analysis and path analysis to test the proposed integrated moral model. Multiple group path analysis and the  $R^2$  difference test were used to cross-validate the proposed integrated moral model and determine differences in the paths between groups (fraternity/non-fraternity).

## CHAPTER IV:

### RESULTS

Chapter IV presents the results of the study. The results are presented in three sections. The first section presents the primary descriptive analysis and group means for the major variables for the entire dataset, as well as the two groups (fraternity/non-fraternity). The first section also contains correlations of the major variables for the entire dataset and the two groups. The second section includes the path model analysis for the entire dataset and the two groups. The third section contains the results of the multiple group comparisons of the path model by group and class, and the test of the differences in the paths between the two groups.

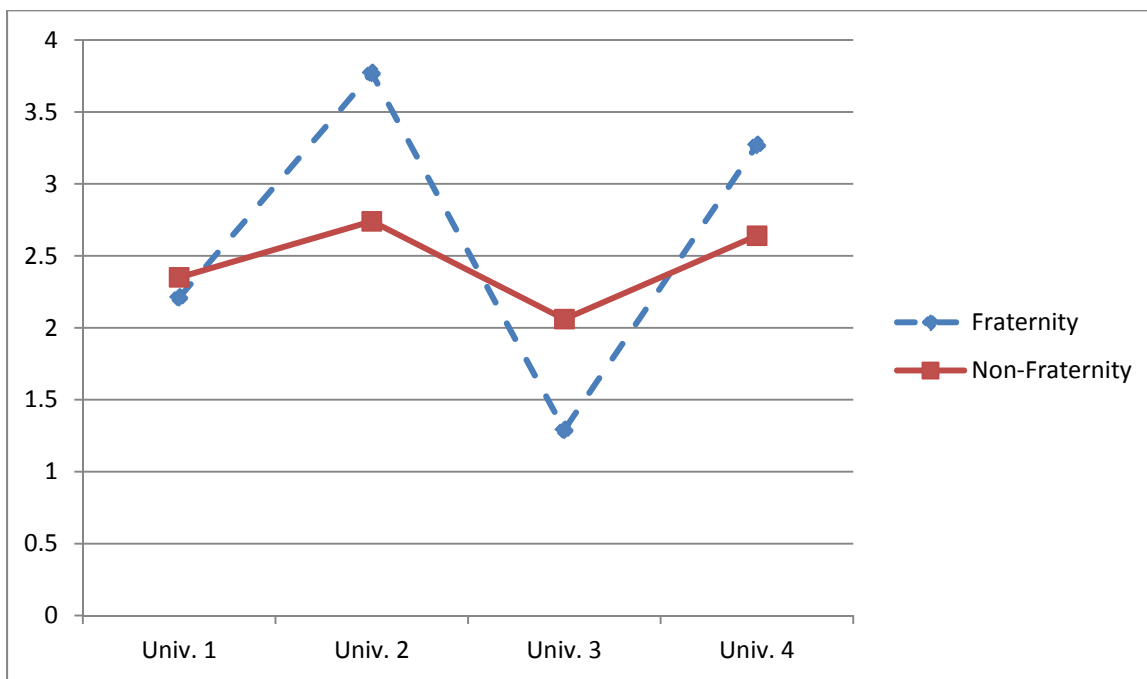
In the sections that follow, the research questions are listed as section headings, and the analysis and methodology used in answering that question is presented.

#### **Differences between Institutions**

While the study does not pose a direct research question related to differences among the observed variables between the four institutions used in the study, there were significant differences between the institutions on several of the variables. There were significant differences between the institutions on the hazing response variable,  $F(3, 196) = 3.02, p = .031$ , the hazing intervention variable,  $F(3, 196) = 12.09, p = .000$ , the bullying intervention variable,  $F(3, 196) = 3.12, p = .027$ , the intervention difference variable,  $F(3, 196) = 4.60, p = .004$ , and the personal interest (PI) score of moral judgment,  $F(3, 196) = 4.32, p = .006$ . Furthermore, a two-way ANOVA revealed a main effect on institution on the hazing intervention variable,  $F(3, 192) = 15.85, p < .001$ , indicating significant differences between institutions on the hazing



intervention variable. The two-way ANOVA also showed an interaction between fraternity membership and institution for the hazing intervention variable,  $F(3, 192) = 5.18, p < .01$ . For fraternity members, there were significant differences in intervention response in the hazing scenario between the four institutions in the study, but no significant differences among non-members. Figure 2 demonstrates the interaction between institution and fraternity membership on the hazing response variable. These findings indicate that institutional culture may play a significant role in determining how fraternity members perceive and respond to hazing. The significance of this is discussed further in Chapter V.



*Figure 2.* Line Graph of Two-way ANOVA Showing Mean Hazing Intervention Response between Fraternity Membership Status and Institution

## Research Question 1 – Mean Differences between Groups

*Are there differences between fraternity members and non-members in measures of moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing-supportive attitudes?*

Table 1 presents the mean, standard deviations and t-test for the full dataset and each group (fraternity/non-fraternity) for the variables used in the study. The table also presents effect sizes for each test. As defined by Cohen (1988), effect sizes are defined as small,  $d = .2$ , medium,  $d = .5$ , or large,  $d = .8$ . The data show that fraternity men significantly differed from non-fraternity members in measures of moral disengagement, moral judgment as indicated by the N-2 score, and in the two measures of hazing-supportive attitude.

Table 1

### *Independent t-test of Fraternity and Non-Fraternity Males*

Groups	Both		Fraternity		Non-Fraternity		t-test			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	df	t	p	<i>d</i>
MD	64.92	15.18	67.97	14.14	63.09	15.55	198	2.22	.014	.32
N2 Score	32.56	14.82	29.73	13.61	34.25	15.30	198	-2.10	.019	-.31
PI Score	29.01	12.07	30.21	11.24	28.29	12.54	198	1.09	.139	.17
HazeInt	2.55	1.13	2.76	1.37	2.42	.94	198	2.06	.02	.30
HazeResp	1.92	.27	1.85	.36	1.96	.20	198	-2.73	.004	-.37
BullyInt	2.32	.94	2.55	.92	2.19	.93	198	2.62	.005	.39
IntDiff	.63	2.22	.63	2.60	.63	1.97	198	-.016	.494	0

*Note.* N = 200, N (fraternity) = 75, N (non-fraternity) = 125

As indicated in Table 1, moral disengagement (MD) was significantly higher for fraternity members than non-members,  $t(198) = 2.22, p < .05$  (one-tailed),  $d = .32$ . Fraternity members were also significantly lower on measured moral judgment as indicated by the N-2 score,  $t(198) = -2.10, p < .05$  (one-tailed),  $d = -.31$ . The N-2 score is the developmental index computed by the DIT-2, and is used to adjust the P-score indicating a participant's ability to differentiate between post-conventional survey items and items representing lower stages (Thoma, 2006). The PI score, another measure of moral judgment measured by the DIT-2, represents the degree to which individuals use personal interest, similar to Kohlberg's pre-conventional stages, in making moral decisions. Fraternity members were higher than non-members on the PI score, but the difference was not significant,  $t(198) = 1.09, p > .05$  (one-tailed),  $d = .17$ .

### **Hazing Supportive Attitude**

Participants' attitudes towards hazing were measured by two variables. The first, HAZEINT, represents the point during a hazing scenario at which the participant indicated that a bystander should have intervened in the situation by alerting an authority or calling the campus hazing hotline. A score of 1 on this item indicates that the intervention should have taken place immediately. A score of 5 indicates that the bystander should not have intervened at all. There was a significant difference between fraternity members and non-members on this item, with fraternity members indicating a later point of intervention than non-members,  $t(198) = 2.06, p < .05$  (one-tailed),  $d = .30$ . The second variable, HAZERESP, is a dichotomous variable representing whether or not the student would pursue hazing charges against the fraternity depicted in the scenario if they served on a university judicial board. A response to dismiss the charges indicates an attitude of approving of the behavior depicted in the vignette. A response to

pursue charges against the fraternity indicated an attitude of not approving the behavior. Decisions to dismiss the charges were coded as a 1, and decisions to pursue charges were coded as a 2, so a lower score indicates a more hazing-supportive attitude. Fraternity members were significantly less likely to indicate that they would pursue hazing charges against the fraternity based on the actions depicted in the vignette,  $t(198) = -2.73, p < .05, d = .37$ . Collectively, these two variables indicate that fraternity members held attitudes that were significantly more supportive of hazing than non-members.

The information gathered from the initial analysis of descriptive statistics and independent t-tests comparing fraternity members and non-members indicates that there were significant mean differences between all but one of the measured variables. Fraternity members exhibited significantly higher moral disengagement, significantly lower moral judgment as measured by the N-2 Score, and displayed a more hazing-supportive attitude, as indicated by their responses to the HAZEINT and HAZERESP items. This analysis answered the researcher's first research question related to the differences between fraternity members and non-members on measurements of moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing-supportive attitudes.

### **Research Question 2 – Intervention in Hazing and Bullying Scenarios**

*Are fraternity members less likely to intervene in a fraternity hazing situation when compared to non-fraternity men? Are fraternity members less likely to intervene in an adolescent bullying situation when compared to non-fraternity men?*

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics, means and standard deviations, as well as t-test statistics for the entire dataset and the two groups (fraternity/non-fraternity). As discussed above, fraternity members were less likely to intervene in a hazing scenario when compared to

non-fraternity members, as measured by the HAZEINT variable,  $t(198) = 2.07$ ,  $p < .05$  (one-tailed),  $d = .30$ . Contrary to the researcher's hypothesis, fraternity members were also significantly slower to intervene in a bullying scenario,  $t(198) = 2.62$ ,  $p < .05$  (one-tailed),  $d = .39$ , as measured by the variable BULLYINT. The significance of this finding will be discussed in Chapter V.

### **Research Question 3 – Difference in Intervention Response Times**

*Is the difference in response time between the fraternity hazing vignette and the adolescent bullying vignette different between the two groups (fraternity/non-fraternity)?*

The interaction between the bullying vignette and the hazing vignette were of particular importance to the researcher, as a primary purpose of this study was to investigate whether moral disengagement has unique and interactive influences on individuals based on their group affiliation and the context of the behavior in question. As discussed in Chapter 4, each of the scenarios depicted in the two vignettes are designed to mirror one another, with the violence in each progressing from mild violence to extreme physical violence. Participants were asked at which of nine distinct points a bystander should intervene in each of the situations. A score of 1 would indicate that the individual would respond immediately, and a score of nine indicates that the individual would not respond at all. The variable INTDIFF measures the difference in those intervention response times, specifically with the response in the bullying vignette subtracted from the response in the hazing vignette. As shown in Table 1, there was virtually no difference in the INTDIFF variable between the two groups,  $t(198) = 198$ ,  $p > .05$  (one-tailed),  $d = 0$ .

**Research Question 4 – Differences between classes (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior)**

*Are there differences in intervention response time for the fraternity hazing vignette and the adolescent bullying vignette between students in different classes (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior)?*

Two-way ANOVA testing was conducted, using fraternity membership (fraternity/non-fraternity) as one factor and class status (sophomore, junior, senior) as the other, on the hazing intervention response (HAZEINT) and bullying intervention response (BULLYINT). Table 2 contains a summary of the ANOVA results for the hazing intervention variable. Table 3 contains a summary of the ANOVA results for the bullying intervention variable.

Table 2

*Two-way ANOVA showing interactions of class and membership category on hazing response*

Variable	<i>df</i>	M Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Class	2	2.12	1.73	.18
Membership	1	1.14	.93	.34
Class*Membership	2	3.43	2.80	.06
Error	194	1.23		

As indicated in Table 2, there were no main effects based on class status (sophomore, junior, senior) or on membership status, and no significant interaction between class status and membership on the hazing response variable. As indicated in Table 3, there was a main effect of fraternity membership on bullying response  $F(1, 194) = 4.18, p < .05$ , indicating that fraternity members intervened significantly later than non-members on the bullying response variable.

There was no main effect of class status on the bullying response variable. There was no interaction between class and membership for the bullying response variable.

Table 3

Two-way ANOVA showing interactions of class and membership on the bullying response

Variable	<i>df</i>	M Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Class	2	.52	.60	.55
Membership	1	3.63	4.18	.042
Class*Membership	2	.245	.28	.76
Error	194	.87		

### Research Question 5 – Path Modeling

*Do the data fit the theoretical path model? Are moral judgment and moral disengagement predictive of the difference in intervention response time between the two vignettes?*

Pearson’s test for correlations was used to determine the relationships between the variables in the full data set (n=200), the fraternity sample (n=75) and the non-fraternity sample (n=125) (see Tables 4, 5 and 6). As demonstrated in Table 4, in the full data set, there were no significant correlations among the variables in the hypothetical model. However, there are other significant correlations between moral disengagement and the bystander intervention responses. Moral disengagement is positively correlated with hazing intervention ( $r=.302, p<.01$ ), indicating that the higher the level of moral disengagement, the less likely one is to intervene in a pro-social manner in a hazing scenario. Hazing response was negatively correlated with moral disengagement ( $r= -.266, p<.01$ ), indicating that the higher the level of moral disengagement, the less likely the student was to pursue hazing charges against the fraternity. Moral disengagement was also positively correlated with bullying intervention ( $r=.339, p<.001$ ), indicating that the higher the level of moral disengagement, the less likely the student was to intervene in a bullying

scenario in a pro-social manner. Bully intervention response was also positively correlated with hazing intervention response ( $r = .407, p < .01$ ). Students that intervened later in the hazing scenario also intervened late in the bullying scenario. Hazing response – the decision of whether or not to pursue judicial charges against the fraternity depicted in the vignette – was negatively correlated ( $r = -.331, p < .01$ ) with hazing intervention. That is, the later one indicated that intervention should take place in the hazing scenario, the less likely they were to pursue hazing charges against the fraternity. It is worth noting that, in the overall sample, there were no significant correlations between the measures of moral judgment and any other variables, nor were their correlations between difference in intervention response and any other variables. This is likely due to the differences between campuses, as the moral judgment measures were relatively flat across the four campuses, but there were significant differences between campuses on the intervention variables.

Table 4

*Correlations of Moral Judgment, Moral Disengagement, and Bystander Intervention Responses*

	1 N=200	2 N=200	3 N=200	4 N=200	5 N=200	6 N=200
PI Score (Moral Judgment)						
N2 Score (Moral Judgment)	-.624**					
MD Score (Moral Disengagement)	.087	-.009				
HazeInt (Hazing Intervention)	-.092	.057	.309**			
HazeResp (Hazing Response)	-.055	.047	-.266**	-.331**		
BullyInt (Bullying Intervention)	-.090	-.008	.348**	.399**	-.212**	
IntDiff (Difference in Intervention)	-.003	.051	.035	.661**	-.174*	-.373**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)



When the researcher split the file into the two groups (fraternity/non-fraternity), different relationships between the variables emerged, as indicated in Tables 5 and 6. For the fraternity sample, there was a significant correlation between moral disengagement and PI score ( $r = .246$ ,  $p < .05$ ), indicating that higher levels of moral disengagement correlated with an increased tendency to use personal interest in making moral judgments. Additionally, moral disengagement positively correlated with difference in intervention response time ( $r = .238$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Higher levels of moral disengagement for fraternity members were related to larger differences between their intervention time in the hazing and bullying scenarios. These relationships were not significant for the overall sample or non-fraternity sample. For the non-fraternity sample, intervention in the bullying scenario was positively correlated with moral disengagement ( $r = .438$ ,  $p < .01$ ) indicating that higher levels of moral disengagement led to later interventions in the bullying scenario for non-fraternity members. The relationship between these variables was not significant among fraternity members. It is also worth noting that, although the relationship is non-significant ( $r = -.108$ ,  $p > .05$ ), there was a weak negative correlation between difference in intervention time and moral disengagement for non-fraternity members. The difference between fraternity members and non-members regarding the relationship between difference in intervention time and moral disengagement will be discussed further in Chapter V.

Table 5

*Correlations between Moral Judgment, Moral Disengagement and Bystander Intervention Responses for Fraternity Members*

	1 N=75	2 N=75	3 N=75	4 N=75	5 N=75	6 N=75
PI Score (Moral Judgment)						
N2 Score (Moral Judgment)	-.466**					
MD Score (Moral Disengagement)	.246*	-.063				
HazeInt (Hazing Intervention)	-.124	.052	.309**			
HazeResp (Hazing Response)	-.128	.048	-.213	-.349**		
BullyInt (Bullying Intervention)	-.196	.078	.119	.415**	-.164	
IntDiff (Difference in Intervention)	.034	.034	.238*	.754**	-.279*	-.241*

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)

Table 6

*Correlations between Moral Judgment, Moral Disengagement and Bystander Intervention Responses for Non-Fraternity Members*

	1 N=125	2 N=125	3 N=125	4 N=125	5 N=125	6 N=125
PI Score (Moral Judgment)						
N2 Score (Moral Judgment)	-.696**					
MD Score (Moral Disengagement)	-.006	.052				
HazeInt (Hazing Intervention)	-.096	.095	.296**			
HazeResp (Hazing Response)	.037	-.005	-.302**	-.258**		
BullyInt (Bullying Intervention)	-.059	.014	.437**	.369**	-.222*	
IntDiff (Difference in Intervention)	-.030	.066	-.108	.576**	-.038	-.493**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)

\* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)

## **Path Analysis**

Path modeling was developed as a method by which direct and indirect effects of different variables could be studied. Path modeling tests the theoretical relationships between variables, and can assert causal relationships under certain conditions. Causation can be asserted when there is temporal ordering of the variables, co-variation or correlation are present among the variables, when other causes are controlled for, and when changes in one variable over time lead to changes in other variables (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). The benefit of this statistical procedure over others is that it allows for the simultaneous testing of mediating variables in a model, while still allowing for the testing of moderation effects (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010).

In this study, the researcher sought to construct a path model testing the direct effects of moral judgment and moral disengagement on bystander behavior (specifically, the difference in intervention response time between the hazing vignette and the bullying vignette), as well as the indirect effects of moral judgment on bystander behavior, as mediated by moral disengagement. The researcher used the computer program LISREL version 8.8 to test the hypothetical model. This was done to ascertain whether the relationships between the variables tested were significant and in the same direction as those proposed in the hypothetical moral model. In all, six different models were tested. The first three models tested used the PI (personal interest) score from the DIT-2 as a measure of moral judgment and are listed in Table 7. The second three models used the N2 score from the DIT-2 as a measure of moral judgment and are listed in Table 8. As the path analysis was only used to determine the significance and direction of observed variables in the hypothesized model, the researcher did not determine model fit until the comparison analysis of the two groups (fraternity, non-fraternity).

Table 7

*Path Model 1*

Effects	PI → MD		MD → INTDIFF		PI →INT DIFF		PI → MD→ INTDIFF		Total Effects
Formula	1		2		3		(1x2)**		(1x2)+3
	B	error	B	error	B	error	B		B
Both	.087	(.07)	.036	(.07)	-.006	(.07)	.003		.002
Frat	.25*	(.11)	.24*	(.12)	-.03	(.12)	.06		.034
Non-Frat	-.006	(.09)	-.11	(.09)	-.03	(.09)	-.0006		-.030

\*Indicates a Significant Path

\*\*Indicates the indirect effect of Personal Interest on Intervention Difference

In the model using Personal Interest (PI) as the moral judgment variable, two of the three path coefficients are in the direction of the hypothesized model for the overall sample and for fraternity members. As shown in Table 7, for the fraternity sample, the parameter estimates (B) for the path between moral judgment (as measured by the PI score) and moral disengagement is positive, indicating that moral judgment has a direct effect on moral disengagement. In the fraternity sample, this path is particularly strong (B = .25,  $p < .05$ ). The parameter estimate for the path between moral disengagement and intervention difference for fraternity members is also positive and significant for fraternity members (B = .24,  $p < .05$ ), indicating that moral disengagement has a strong direct effect on the difference with which fraternity members viewed the hazing and bullying scenarios. Interestingly, the parameter estimate for the path between moral judgment and intervention difference is a weak negative correlation, for both the fraternity and non-fraternity samples, indicating that higher personal interest scores had a negative influence on intervention response. For the non-fraternity sample, the direction of each of the paths as measured by the parameter estimates are incongruous with the hypothesized model. The

negative path between moral disengagement and intervention difference indicates that moral disengagement influenced non-members intervention in the bullying scenario to a greater extent than their intervention in the hazing scenario. That is, the path analysis indicates that moral disengagement influenced bystander behavior in the bullying scenario for non-members, but influenced bystander behavior in the hazing scenario for fraternity members. The significance of this finding will be discussed further in Chapter V.

Table 8

*Path Model 2*

Effects	N2 → MD		MD → INTDIFF		N2 → INT DIFF		N2 → MD → INTDIFF		Total Effects
Formula	1		2		3		(1x2)**		(1x2)+3
	B	error	B	error	B	error	B		B
Both	-.009	(.07)	.035	(.07)	.051	(.07)	-.0003		.051
Frat	-.063	(.12)	.24*	(.11)	.049	(.11)	-.015		.034
Non-Frat	.052	(.09)	-.11	(.09)	.072	(.09)	-.006		.066

\*Indicates a Significant Path

\*\*Indicates the indirect effect of Personal Interest on Intervention Difference

As indicated in Table 8, two of the three parameter estimates tested are in the direction of the paths in the hypothetical model (moral development, as measured by the N2 score, negatively correlated with moral disengagement, and moral disengagement positively correlated with difference in intervention response between the hazing and bullying scenarios) when using the N2 score as the measure of moral judgment for the fraternity sample and the overall sample, but are in different directions for the non-fraternity sample. For fraternity members, the parameter estimate of the path between N2 score and moral disengagement is negative, indicating that higher levels of moral judgment have a negative direct effect on moral disengagement. This

same path with non-members indicates a weak, positive direct effect. For both the fraternity and non-fraternity sample, there is a weak, positive path between N2 and intervention difference. None of the paths involving the N2 score were significant for either the fraternity or non-fraternity sample.

### **Research Question 6**

*Are the paths between the observed variables different between the two groups (Fraternity/Non-fraternity)?*

Using the test of difference between independent  $R^2$  as developed by Olkin and Finn (1995), the researcher calculated the standard error of the  $R^2$  values for the paths in the two models (using PI and N2 scores) for both groups (fraternity and non-fraternity), as well as the differences between the  $R^2$  values for fraternity members and non-members in both models. The researcher then used those standard errors to find the confidence interval for the differences between the paths in the two models by taking the square root of the sum of the standard errors of the two  $R^2$ . Using this method, any confidence interval that does not bracket 0 indicates a significant difference between the paths for fraternity members on non-members on the model at the  $\alpha = .05$  level. Two of the paths demonstrated significant differences between the two groups. For the model using Personal Interest (PI)Score, the difference in  $R^2$  for the path between moral judgment and intervention time passing through moral disengagement was .044 with a confidence interval of  $\pm .034$ , indicating a significant difference in the path between the two groups (fraternity/non-fraternity) at the  $\alpha = .05$  level. For the model using N2 score, the difference in  $R^2$  for the path between moral judgment and intervention time passing through moral disengagement was .042 with a confidence interval of  $\pm .04$ , indicating a significant difference in the path between the two groups at the  $\alpha = .05$  level. In both models, the paths for

fraternity members were stronger than those for non-members, indicating that moral judgment and moral disengagement are more influential in the difference in intervention response time for fraternity members than for non-members.

### **Summary of Results**

Chapter IV presented the results of the study. Significant differences were found between fraternity members and non-members on a majority of the variables investigated in the study. There were correlations between moral judgment, moral disengagement, hazing intervention, and intervention difference for fraternity members. There were correlations between moral disengagement and bullying intervention for non-members. The hypothesized moral model was confirmed for fraternity members, with the exception of the direct path from moral judgment to the difference in intervention response. The hypothesized moral model was not confirmed for non-members. The significance of these findings, and the conclusions that can be drawn from them, are discussed in Chapter V.

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to better understand the relationship between moral judgment, moral disengagement, pro-social bystander behavior, and attitudes regarding fraternity hazing among college males. Specifically, this study tested a hypothetical model in which moral judgment and moral disengagement influenced the difference in intervention response time between an adolescent bullying and a fraternity hazing scenario. The researcher hypothesized a model in which moral judgment and moral disengagement had direct effects on bystander behavior, and in which moral judgment had an indirect effect on bystander behavior through an effect on moral disengagement, thereby mediating the relationship between moral disengagement and bystander behavior. The data analysis indicated that all of the hypothesized relationships were present and significant for fraternity members, with the exception of the direct path from moral judgment to bystander behavior. The analysis also indicated that the relationships between the variables were not significant for college students not in fraternities. This discussion of results will interpret the theoretical significance of these findings, discuss practical implications for practitioners, discuss the limitations of the study, and will provide recommendations for further research.

### **Differences between Institutions**

Two-way ANOVA testing demonstrated a significant interaction between fraternity membership status and institution for the hazing intervention variable. Between institutions, there were significant differences for the time at which fraternity members indicated intervention should take place, but no significant differences for non-members. This finding, taken along



with the finding that a vast majority of the fraternity members in this study showed the highest responses in the Maintaining Norms score on the DIT-2, seems to indicate that institutional culture regarding hazing is particularly important in determining how fraternity members view and respond to hazing. As noted by Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau and Thoma (1999), individuals in the Maintaining Norms schema define morality through adherence to the established social order. They further suggest a duty orientation, in which an individual in the Maintaining Norms schema clings to a perceived “chain of command.” Decisions are made not out of respect for authority, but out of respect for the established social system (Rest et al., 1999). In an organization or on a campus where hazing in fraternities is part of the accepted system, students in a Maintaining Norms schema are likely to be quite beholden to that system and have little inclination to intervene in a way that runs contrary to the widely held views within that system. Thus, the overall hazing culture at a particular college or university is of particular importance as it relates to the practicalities of preventing hazing on the college campus, as campus climate and culture in this study appeared to be more important than the moral judgment of students in predicting pro-social bystander behavior. This finding supports the research done by Brumlik (1998) in evaluating the moral development of juvenile delinquents within the framework established by Kohlberg’s later work on Just Communities (Kohlberg, 1985). Brumlik found no differences in levels of moral judgment between delinquent and non-delinquent youth, and that only a small percentage of delinquent youth exhibited pre-conventional levels of moral judgment (similar to the Personal Interest schema of the neo-Kohlbergian approach used in this study). Rather, what Brumlik suggested distinguished delinquents from non-delinquents was related to moral motivation – the willingness, based on a variety of environmental factors, to bridge moral thought into pro-social moral behavior (Brumlik, 1998). As suggested by Kohlberg (1985), just

and caring communities and schools are the ideal habitat for promoting this kind of pro-social behavior. The implications of this are discussed later in this chapter in the section devoted to recommendations for practice.

### **Relationships among Variables**

There were mean differences between fraternity members and non-members on a majority of the measured variables in this study. Fraternity members measured lower on measures of moral judgment and higher on measures of moral disengagement. These differences confirmed previous studies showing that fraternity members measured higher than non-members on moral disengagement (Carroll, 2009) and lower on measures of moral judgment (Sanders, 1990; Kilgannon & Erwin, 1992; Derryberry & Thoma, 2000; Carroll, 2009). Fraternity members were slower to intervene in a pro-social manner in both the bullying and fraternity hazing scenarios, as measured by the hazing and bullying vignettes. Fraternity members were more likely to dismiss hazing charges against the fraternity depicted in the hazing scenario, indicating a more hazing-supportive attitude than non-members.

In this study, moral judgment was measured by the DIT-2. Fraternity members showed significantly lower levels of moral judgment, as indicated by the N2 score, which is a composite measure of moral judgment, with a moderate effect size ( $d = -.31$ ). This finding confirms previous research showing that fraternity members demonstrate lower levels of post-conventional moral judgment when compared to non-affiliated students (Sanders, 1990; Kilgannon & Erwin, 1992; Derryberry & Thoma, 2000; Carroll, 2009). However, in this study, there was no significant difference between members and non-members on the PI score, which measures the degree to which individuals use personal interest in making moral decisions. This finding is inconsistent with a study by Carroll (2009), which found that fraternity members were

significantly more likely than non-members to use personal interest when making moral decisions. This difference can likely be attributed to the fact that Carroll studied students at only one institution, while the present study examined students at four different institutions. It may also be attributed to the fact that Carroll's participants were primarily freshmen and sophomores, while the present study had a larger representation of upper-classmen.

Of particular interest to the researcher were participants' responses to the hazing and bullying vignettes created for this study. In particular, the researcher was interested in the manner in which these instruments would interact with one another. The researcher hypothesized that fraternity members would be less likely to intervene in a fraternity hazing scenario than non-members. This hypothesis was confirmed by the study, as fraternity members intervened significantly later in the hazing vignette, with a moderate effect size ( $d = .30$ ). Fraternity members were also less likely ( $d = -.37$ ) to pursue hazing charges against the fraternity, as measured by the HAZERESP variable, wherein participants were asked to imagine themselves on a university judicial board with the power to pursue or dismiss hazing charges against the fraternity.

The researcher further hypothesized that there would be no differences in intervention time in the adolescent bullying scenario between fraternity members and non-members. This hypothesis was not confirmed by the study. Fraternity members were slower to intervene in the bullying scenario, and this difference was marked by a moderate effect size ( $d = .39$ ). The cause of this finding is unclear and warrants further research. It is possible that fraternity members may be more likely to have been the perpetrators of bullying as adolescents, and are thus less likely to see the problems associated with such behavior than their non-affiliated counterparts. It is possible that students with hyper-masculine attitudes are naturally more pre-disposed towards

fraternity membership, thus their later intervention in the bullying scenario. It is also possible that their experiences with hazing have resulted in cognitive dissonance, creating an attitude among fraternity members that is generally more supportive of aggression and violence in general. Regardless, the finding of fraternity members being slower to intervene in the bullying scenario was unexpected in this study and warrants further research. Finally, there was no difference between fraternity members and non-members in the difference in response time between the two vignettes. It is worth noting, however, that there was a significantly greater amount variance within the fraternity sample than among non-members on this variable. The significance of this will be discussed below in the sections related to correlational analysis and path analysis.

### **Correlational and Path Analysis**

Analysis of correlations among the variables observed in this study revealed a number of expected relationships. In the full dataset, moral disengagement was positively correlated with intervention response in both the hazing ( $r = .309, p < .01$ ) and bullying ( $r = .348, p < .01$ ) vignettes. Moral disengagement was negatively correlated ( $r = -.266, p < .01$ ) with HAZERESP, the decision whether or not to pursue hazing charges against the fraternity. This finding is consistent with that of Carroll (2009), who found that moral disengagement correlated with the decision of whether or not to pursue charges against a perpetrator of sexual assault. However, moral judgment, as measured by both the N2 score and the PI score, were not significantly correlated to any of the variables in the full dataset. This finding is inconsistent with those of Carroll (2009), who found significant relationships between moral judgment, moral disengagement, and rape-supportive attitudes in a sample of college males. That moral judgment was not directly linked to any of the intervention variables may be attributed to any

number of factors, but the most likely culprit is the varying campus climates towards hazing. As discussed earlier, the campus climate exerted a strong influence on the hazing response scores. In fact, the campus with the largest N-2 score was also the campus with the highest hazing-supportive attitude. As most of the participants in the study were consolidated in the Maintaining Norms schema, small increases in moral judgment were not powerful enough to override the campus climate towards hazing, thus the non-significant relationships between moral judgment and the intervention response variables.

In separating the fraternity and non-fraternity member samples and conducting separate correlational analysis, a number of interesting relationships emerged. In the fraternity sample, there was a significant relationship between moral judgment, as measured by the PI score, and moral disengagement ( $r=.246, p<.05$ ). This relationship is not present in the non-fraternity sample or in the overall sample. This finding is consistent with those of Carroll (2009), who found a significant relationship between moral judgment and rape-supportive attitudes among fraternity members, but no significant relationship among those variables for non-members. There was also a positive correlation ( $r = .238, p<.05$ ) between moral disengagement and the difference in intervention response time between the two vignettes. Again, this relationship was not present in the non-fraternity sample or in the overall sample. In fact, there is a weak negative correlation between moral disengagement and intervention difference within the non-fraternity sample. This finding is of particular interest to the researcher, as it implies that the novel setting of the college fraternity has a unique influence on the relationship between moral judgment, moral disengagement and bystander behavior. In the fraternity setting, a novel setting with unique cultural norms (DeSantis, 2007), moral judgment and moral disengagement significantly influenced the difference in how fraternity members responded to bullying and hazing scenarios.

As noted in the literature review section of this study, a number of researchers (Detert et al., 2008; Zimbardo, 2007; Pasciello et al., 2008) have suggested investigating the possibility that contextual factors such as climate, culture, and environment have independent and interactive influences on moral disengagement, in addition to studying moral disengagement considering internal mechanisms and environmental variables that operate at social, structural and contextual levels to influence individual and group behaviors. This particular finding in the present study indicates that fraternity membership has a unique and interactive influence on moral disengagement, and that this influence has an impact on behavior – in this case, pro-social bystander behavior.

There are other differences between the fraternity and non-fraternity samples. While in the fraternity sample there was a significant correlation between moral disengagement and intervention in the hazing scenario ( $r = .303$ ,  $p < .01$ ), the relationship is weak and not significant for non-members. However, the relationship between moral disengagement and intervention in the adolescent bullying scenario is significantly correlated ( $r = .438$ ,  $p < .01$ ) for non-members. This relationship is weak and not significant in the fraternity sample. Moral disengagement has a unique interaction with the two bystander behavior variables, based on group membership. It influences hazing intervention in the fraternity sample, and it influences bullying intervention in the non-fraternity sample. This finding provides additional evidence that environment and context have individual and interactive influences on moral disengagement, and that those influences impact individual and group behavior. This finding confirms those of Carroll (2009), who noted significant relationships between moral disengagement and rape-supportive attitudes among fraternity members, but not among non-members. The present study goes beyond Carroll's findings, however, in evaluating how the setting variable (fraternity vs. non-fraternity)

interacts with moral disengagement in a setting that is context-specific (fraternity hazing) and one that is not (adolescent bullying). Carroll (2009) suggested in her findings that there may be factors in the fraternity environment that increase the likelihood of moral disengagement. While this may be true, the present study, particularly the finding of a significant relationship between moral disengagement and bystander response in the bullying scenario for the non-fraternity sample, indicates that moral disengagement influences behavior in different ways among different groups, depending on the context and the particular behavior in question.

Levine et al. (2002) noted a void in the bystander behavior literature related to the relationship between the bystander and the perpetrator of harm. As noted in chapter two, they suggested two possible outcomes in a situation where the bystander had a relationship with or was in the same “group” as the perpetrator of violence – that bystanders who witness in-group members exhibiting aggressive behaviors might be likely to consider those actions justified, thus resulting in a decreased likelihood of intervention; or, that the response to aggressive behavior might depend on group norms regarding violence, and that individuals may be more likely to intervene when perpetrators are in-group members whose actions are seen as damaging to the standing of the group as a whole. The present study helps to fill that void in the literature, and suggests that fraternity members are more likely to view hazing favorably and are less likely than non-members to intervene in a pro-social way, despite the well-established possibilities that hazing could be harmful to the standing of the group. Furthermore, the present study suggests that moral judgment and moral disengagement mitigate the bystander effect in fraternity members, significantly impacting the likelihood that a fraternity member will intervene in a pro-social way to stop a hazing situation. These findings are of particular importance to practitioners

working to prevent hazing in fraternities, and to researchers studying hazing, moral development and the bystander effect.

### **Limitations**

There are a number of limitations to this study. Although the effect sizes in the study were moderate, the low response rate limits the ability to generalize the results to the overall population. Due to the length of time required to complete the surveys (participants took between 45 and 60 minutes to complete the entire survey), future studies of this nature should provide incentives to participants in an effort to increase the response rate. The sample was primarily white and upper-middle class. Future studies should specifically target fraternities from the NPHC, NALFO and other culturally-based organizations to determine if the relationships among the variables in this study are evident among those groups as well. The institutions in this study were all large, public institutions in the Southeastern United States, further limiting the generalizability of these findings to various institutional types and other geographical regions.

The researcher used a web-based electronic survey format to gather this data. While research has shown that the use of an online format does not alter the quality or reliability of data gathered (Bates & Cox, 2008), the online method does not allow the researcher to control for the environment in which participants complete the survey. The researcher was also unable to control for the presence of socially desirable responses among participants. While the vignettes were specifically designed to reduce the likelihood of socially desirable responses, it is possible that the desire to provide socially desirable responses in an attempt to look “less bad” or to make fraternities look “less bad” impacted the participants’ responses.



## **Implications for Future Research**

The present study opens a wide door for further research into the areas of moral development and the fraternity experience. The study confirmed a hypothetical model in which moral disengagement had unique interactions with the hazing-supportive attitudes and bystander behavior of fraternity members. As noted by Carroll (2009), it is possible that a number of factors influence moral disengagement in the fraternity setting, including alcohol consumption, traditional gender views, hyper-masculinity. Future research should investigate the relationship between these variables and moral disengagement and hazing attitudes. Studies of bullying among adolescents (Bandura et al., 1999) and among prisoners (South & Wood, 2006) have found that bullying behaviors and moral disengagement have a strong, positive correlation with the perceived importance of social status. Future research should investigate the relationships between the perceived importance of social status among fraternity members, hazing attitudes and moral disengagement. It is likely that the importance of social status in one's decision to join and remain in a fraternity, and the importance that a fraternity places on its social status on the campus, would influence fraternity members' attitudes towards hazing, and may also serve as a trigger for moral disengagement.

Future research should also consider the role that hyper-masculinity plays in hazing attitudes and support. Previous studies have suggested that hazing victims report feelings of strength as a positive outcome of hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008; Owen et al., 2008) and that toughness, in and of itself, is a rationale for hazing in fraternities (DeSantis, 2007). Carroll (2009) found relationships between moral judgment, moral disengagement and hyper-masculine attitudes towards sexual assault. The present study found relationships between moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing. Investigating the relationship between hyper-masculinity,

moral development and hazing may yield a deeper understanding of the interactions of these variables and may provide practitioners with additional tools to combat hazing on the college campus.

Owen, Burke and Vichesky (2008) suggested that hazing leads to cognitive dissonance among fraternity members, which allows hazing victims to later become hazing perpetrators. The present study found relationships between moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing attitudes. Future research should investigate the extent to which moral development and hazing attitudes influence one another, specifically whether the experience of being hazed influences the moral disengagement of fraternity members, and whether that moral disengagement influences the process of cognitive dissonance that allows hazing victims to later become perpetrators. Researchers should consider a longitudinal study that tracks moral disengagement and hazing attitudes over time; before students join a fraternity, while they are going through the pledging process, and at several points after the new member experience is complete. A study of this nature would further detangle the relationship between hazing and moral disengagement – specifically whether moral disengagement leads to tolerance of and support for hazing, or whether hazing victimization and the process of cognitive dissonance that subsequently takes place leads to higher moral disengagement.

This study found significant differences between the four institutions used in the study on a majority of the variables in question, including the hazing intervention and intervention difference variables, as well as moral judgment as measured by the N2 score. Future research should examine the different campus climates and cultures, as well as the demographic variables among the student body that may influence students' support of hazing. The present study should be replicated a broader variety of institutions with a broader array of demographic and

cultural variables that can be measured and compared. One of the campus-specific cultural differences worthy of further exploration is the different times at which students are able to join a fraternity. Derryberry and Thoma (2000) have suggested that the lower level of moral development exhibited by fraternity members is related to their low-density friendship networks. They suggested that fraternity members tend to be more isolated, surround themselves with a homogeneous peer group, and tend to have an “us versus them” mentality towards outsiders, all of which are contributing factors to their lower levels of moral reasoning. Pike (2006) noted the pressure to conform to group norms as an additional culprit for lower moral judgment. With many college campuses moving towards a delayed or deferred fraternity recruitment period, more students are joining fraternities at some time after their freshman year. It is probable that students on those campuses are exposed to broader and more diverse friendship networks during their first year or first semester on campus, before joining a fraternity. Future research, including future replications of the present study, should examine the differences between campuses with deferred/delayed recruitment and those that allow first-semester freshmen to join fraternities. To date, studies have only examined the impact of deferred/delayed recruitment on GPA and retention (Nelson, Halperin, Wasserman, Smith & Graham, 2006; DeBard and Sacks; 2010). No published studies have examined the link between deferred/delayed recruitment on hazing attitudes or moral development.

The present study also found a high degree of variance among fraternity members on the hazing vignette intervention response. The standard deviation for fraternity members (1.37) was nearly twice that of non-members (.94), proportionately the largest difference in standard deviation between the two groups on any of the measured variables. Some fraternity members supported immediate or early intervention, while a number of fraternity members indicated that

they would not intervene at all. While there are a number of possible explanations for this finding, it seems likely that a potential explanation could be that a variety of different fraternity experiences influence fraternity members' attitudes towards hazing. While this study found significant differences between the four campuses studied on the hazing intervention variable,  $F(3, 196) = 12.09, p = .000$ , the variance among fraternity members on this item cannot be completely explained by the different campus climates towards hazing. In addition to studying how various institutional types and cultures influence hazing attitudes, future research should also investigate how different fraternal experiences, membership structures and national fraternity cultures and initiatives influence hazing attitudes. For example, in 1989, Zeta Beta Tau national fraternity eliminated its traditional pledging program and instituted a four-year membership model. Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity implemented a similar program of its own (Dodge, 1989). In 1991, Sigma Phi Epsilon unveiled the Balanced Man Initiative, which altered the traditional pledging program and instead focused membership education on scholarship, leadership and life skills (Sigma Phi Epsilon, 2012). Researchers should examine the hazing attitudes and perceptions of members of these organizations compared to organizations with traditional pledging models in an effort to determine if the elimination or restructuring of a traditional "pledging" model has any relationship with students' moral development or attitudes towards hazing. Furthermore, additional scholarly attention should be devoted specifically to those individual fraternity members noted as "early interveners." As noted in chapter two, Gini (2006) found a group of students described as "defenders" – those students identified by their peers as individuals that actively defend bullying victims. Gini noted that defenders exhibited the lowest levels of moral disengagement of all of the observed groups (bullies, victims and bystanders). The "defenders" in the Gini (2006) study may be akin to the "early interveners" in

the present study. An in-depth observation of these “early interveners” may produce additional evidence of the link between moral development and hazing, and may provide practitioners with additional tools for preventing hazing.

Recent, high-profile non-fraternity hazing deaths, such as that of Florida A&M University drum major Robert Champion (Schwartz, 2011), have highlighted the need to study hazing beyond the context of the college fraternity. The present study should be replicated to examine the relationship between moral development and hazing attitudes across a variety of different contexts, including marching bands, varsity and club athletic teams, ROTC units and other organizations defined in the National Study of Student Hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008) as likely hazing participants.

### **Recommendations for Practitioners**

To borrow the “bad apples/bad barrel” analogy used by Zimbardo (2007) in explaining the behavior of the guards in his simulated prison, the present study seems to indicate that university administrators and national fraternity headquarters staff interested in hazing prevention should address both the bad apples and the barrels in which those apples exist as it relates to fraternity hazing. The present study, taken in combination with previous studies that have examined the moral development of college students, further highlights the importance of focusing attention and resources on promoting the moral development of college students. The present study is the first to specifically examine the relationships between moral development, hazing attitudes and bystander behavior. The findings of this study indicate that student affairs administrators and national fraternity headquarters staff should devote additional time and resources towards promoting the moral development of fraternity members. In this study, fraternity members scored significantly lower on measures of moral judgment and higher on

levels of moral disengagement compared to their non-affiliated counterparts. The study also found significant relationships between moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing attitudes. These findings indicate that those involved in hazing prevention efforts with fraternities may be successful at reducing occurrences of hazing by improving the moral development of fraternity members. By increasing moral development of these students, practitioners may be able to make the apples more resistant to the bad barrels in which they may exist. In a meta-analysis of moral judgment research done with college students, King and Mayhew (2002) found that students are amenable to moral interventions as a means by which to increase their levels of moral judgment. Their study found that the most effective means of increasing moral judgment appeared to be semester-long classroom experiences with an emphasis on social-justice and out-of-class experiences with service learning. Those involved with hazing prevention at the campus and national headquarters level should consider the development of similar programs for fraternity members. The development of a common learning experience shared by fraternity members that is ongoing and emphasizes social justice and service learning could significantly boost the moral development of fraternity members and thereby serve as a means by which to reduce hazing activities and other anti-social behaviors within those organizations.

Derryberry and Thoma (2000), suggested that the low-density friendship networks of fraternity members was a likely cause of the lower levels of moral judgment displayed by fraternity members. Fraternity members are likely to identify closely with those in their group, limit their interactions with “outsiders,” and have an “us versus them” attitude. Pike (2006) has suggested that these attitudes lead to a pressure for fraternity members to conform to group norms, leading to a lag in moral development. Practitioners should intentionally design

programs and interventions related to assisting fraternity members broaden their friendship networks and to engage in more depth with those outside of their organizations. This may be accomplished through delaying the time in which freshman students are able to join fraternities, thereby allowing them to develop broader friendship networks before they join fraternities, by creating programs specifically designed to increase the moral development of students that indicate an interest in joining fraternities before they are able to do so, or by creating programs specifically designed to engage fraternity members with a broader cross-section of students, thus allowing broader friendship networks to be developed outside of the fraternity.

The present study also demonstrates that, beyond focusing on bad apples, practitioners must also focus attention to the barrel in which those apples exist. This study found that fraternity membership has a unique interaction with moral disengagement, influencing the manner in which students respond to hazing. While further research is necessary to determine exactly what specific elements of the fraternity experience contribute to moral disengagement, some conclusions can be made through an analysis of existing literature in light of the findings of the present study. In discussing the savagery of the guards in his simulated prison, Zimbardo (2007) suggested moral disengagement as one of several explanations for their behavior. Zimbardo specifically suggested that the absolute authority that the guards had over their prisoners, a novel situation for both prisoner and guard, was a likely trigger for the moral disengagement which allowed the behavior to occur. The experience of fraternity active members and pledges in a majority of college fraternities is not too dissimilar from the experience of the prisoners and guards in Zimbardo's simulated prison. Antiquated membership models give fraternity active members complete control and authority over the lives and actions of their newest members. They determine who gets a bid, carry out the hazing activities, and at

the end of the process determine who is allowed to be initiated and who is not. Some fraternity membership models allow for a single individual to determine whether or not a pledge is allowed to be initiated. The authority that the active members have over their pledges is absolute. The pledges have no recourse within the chapter through which to address their grievances if they find themselves subjected to hazing, other than to leave the fraternity or report the behavior to authorities. This rarely happens, as the fear of social isolation and retribution is enough to scare an 18 year-old college freshman into submission. Hazing, after all, is expected to be part of the experience (Allan and Madden, 2008). It is difficult for the researcher to imagine a scenario in which hazing, in some form or fashion, would not exist in an organization with such a membership model. The present study appears to indicate that serious consideration should be given to altering the power structure within college fraternities by eliminating the traditional “pledging” model altogether, or by implementing new membership models that either increase the relative power of the new members, reduce the power of active members, or introduce the mediating influence of an adult presence in membership decisions. An environment in which 19 and 20 year-old college students have absolute authority over their 18 year-old new members is not likely to be an environment free of hazing.

Finally, this study made clear the importance of the overall institutional culture on an individual’s perceptions of and willingness to intervene in a hazing situation. It is the researcher’s experience that, on many college campuses, hazing is addressed in an isolated, chapter-by-chapter approach. If an organization is found to be responsible for hazing, disciplinary action is taken against that organization. This study seems to indicate that seemingly “isolated” incidents of hazing may be more indicative of an overall, campus-wide pro-hazing culture. To that end, campus professionals and inter/national fraternity headquarter staff



would be wise to abandon the isolated chapter-by-chapter approach and adopt a more comprehensive campus-wide approach to hazing response and prevention. Certainly, no single fraternity on any given campus operates in a vacuum. Each is affected, in one way or another, by the accepted norms and cultural traditions on that campus. If a pro-hazing culture exists, it is unlikely that any fraternity will be completely immune to that culture, however well-intended the interventions aimed at that particular chapter may be. Campuses that suspect they may have a hazing problem should work collaboratively with all stakeholders, especially the inter/national headquarters staff of the organizations represented on their campus, to develop a comprehensive approach to changing the hazing culture on campus. As noted earlier, the ‘Just Communities’ approach offered by Kohlberg (1985) may serve as a valuable framework in shaping institutional culture. Oser, Althof and Higgins-D’Allesandro (2008), in explaining the role of educators in the ‘Just Communities’ described by Kohlberg (1985), noted two key differences between these and other communities. The differences lie not in the presence of behavioral problems, but in how those problems are addressed. First, they note how inclusive forms of deliberation and conflict resolution are institutionalized within the school culture. Secondly, they note that educators in ‘Just Communities’ transform their role from authoritarian to authoritative, into an authority that is based on being fair and supportive as a first among equals as members of the same community (Oser et al., 2008). While the hidden nature of many forms of hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008) makes implementation of the ‘Just Communities’ approach a bit more challenging, the approach has proven effective at the secondary school level and offers a potential framework for culture change at the collegiate level. As this study demonstrates, focusing on increasing the moral development of fraternity members would be an ideal place to start in bringing about that cultural transformation.

## **Conclusions**

In summary, this study was intended to determine the relationships between moral judgment, moral disengagement, hazing attitudes and pro-social bystander behavior. The study tested a hypothesized moral model in which hazing bystander behavior was influenced by moral judgment and moral disengagement, with a mediating influence of moral judgment on moral disengagement. The hypothesized model was tested and comparisons were made between fraternity members and non-members. The model was accurate in explaining the relationships between the variables among fraternity members. The study also found significant differences between fraternity members and non-members on measures of moral judgment, moral disengagement, hazing attitudes, and pro-social bystander behavior in bullying and hazing scenarios. The study significantly contributed to the hazing literature, as it is the first study to determine a relationship between moral judgment, moral disengagement and hazing among fraternity members. The study also contributed to the field of moral theory, as it helped further understand how environmental and contextual factors, such as fraternity membership, influence the relationship between moral judgment, moral disengagement and behavior. The study also contributed to the literature related to bystander behavior by examining the differences between in-group and out-group bystander behavior. The study concluded with recommendations with further research and suggestions for practitioners.

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## APPENDIX A

### Student recruitment emails, Moral Disengagement Scale, Defining Issues Test – 2, Fraternity Hazing Vignette, Adolescent Bullying Vignette

#### *Email Message 1*

Dear Student:

You have been randomly selected to participate in a research study of moral beliefs and attitudes of college students. Yours is one of four schools in the United States selected to participate in this study.

In order to participate in this study, you must be a male college student between the ages of 19-23. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You will receive no benefits for your participation.

The study will require you to complete four survey instruments. Each of these instruments will require you to read and respond to a variety of situations. The entire survey should take between 30-45 minutes to complete.

If you are a male college student between the ages of 19-23, you may click the link below to begin the survey.

Here is the link to the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx>

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

Thanks for your participation!

Sincerely,

Gentry McCreary  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Alabama

#### *Email Message 2*

Dear Student:

On Thursday, you received an email from me with a link to an online survey. This survey is part of a research project studying the moral beliefs and attitudes of male college students. Yours is one of four institutions in the country selected to participate in this study.

If you have not already taken the survey, please take a few minutes out of your day to provide us with your responses. Please note that the survey takes around 30 minutes to complete, so please do not begin the survey until you have time to complete it entirely. We are unable to use partially completed surveys.

You may take the survey by clicking this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx>

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

Thanks for your participation!

Gentry McCreary  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Alabama

*Email Message 3*

Dear Student:

Last week, you received an email indicating that you had been randomly selected to receive a survey that is part of a national study on the moral beliefs and decision-making of college students. Yours is one of four institutions in the United States selected to participate in this study.

We have yet to receive your response to the survey - please take a few minutes to complete it. Keep in mind that the survey will take around 30 minutes to complete. Please try to complete the entire survey in one sitting.

You can take the survey by clicking here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx>

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

Thanks for your participation!

Gentry McCreary  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Alabama

*Moral Disengagement Scale*

5-point Likert scale – disagree to agree continuum.

1. It is alright to fight to protect your friends.
2. Hitting or shoving someone is just a way of joking.
3. Damaging property is no big deal when you consider that others are beating people up.
4. A person in a gang should not be blamed for the trouble that the gang causes.
5. If people are living under bad conditions, they cannot be blamed for behaving aggressively.
6. It is okay to tell small lies because they don't really do any harm.
7. Some people deserve to be treated like animals.
8. If students fight and misbehave on campus, it is usually the school's fault.
9. It is alright to beat up someone that bad mouths one of your friends.
10. To hit an obnoxious friend is okay because you're just teaching them a lesson.
11. Stealing some money is not too serious compared to those who steal a lot of money.
12. A student who only suggests breaking the rules should not be blamed if others go ahead and do it.
13. If students are not disciplined for their behavior then they should not be blamed for their behavior.
14. Students do not mind being made fun of because at least someone is showing interest in them.
15. It is okay to treat someone badly if they behave like an animal.
16. If students are careless about where they leave their things, then it is their own fault if those things get stolen.
17. It is alright to fight when your group's honor is threatened.
18. Taking someone's car without their permission is just borrowing it.
19. It is okay to insult another student because beating them up would be much worse.
20. If a group decides together to do something harmful it is unfair to blame any individual student in the group for it.
21. Students should not be blamed for using bad language when all of their friends do it.
22. Teasing or messing with someone does not really hurt them.
23. Someone who is obnoxious does not deserve to be treated like a human being.
24. People who get mistreated usually do things to deserve it.
25. It is okay to lie to keep your friends out of trouble.
26. It is not a bad thing to "get high" once in a while

27. Compared to some of the illegal things that people do, taking some things from a store without paying for them is not very serious.
28. It is unfair to blame a student who only played a small part in the harm caused by a group.
29. Students cannot be blamed for breaking the rules if their friends pressured them to do it.
30. Insults among friends do not hurt anyone.
31. Some people deserve to be treated roughly because they lack feelings that can be hurt.
32. Students are not at fault for getting into trouble if their parents put too much pressure on them.

### *Defining Issues Test – 2*

#### Famine – Story 1

The small village in northern India has experienced shortages of food before, but this year's famine is worse than ever. Some families are even trying to feed themselves by making soup from tree bark. Mustaq Singh's family is near starvation. He has heard that a rich man in his village has supplies of food stored away and is hoarding food while its price goes higher so that he can sell the food later at a huge profit. Mustaq is desperate and thinks about stealing some of the food from the rich man's warehouse. The small amount of food that he needs for his family probably wouldn't be missed.

What should Mustaq Singh do? Do you favor the action of taking the food?

1. Should take the food
2. Can't decide
3. Should not take the food

Rate the following 12 items in terms of importance (1-5)

1. Is Mustaq Singh courageous enough to risk getting caught for stealing?
2. Isn't it only natural for a loving father to care so much for his family that he would steal?
3. Shouldn't the community's laws be upheld?
4. Does Mustaq Singh know a good recipe for preparing soup from tree bark?
5. Does the rich man have any legal right to store food when other people are starving?
6. Is the motive of Mustaq Singh to steal for himself or steal for his family?
7. What values are going to be the basis for social cooperation?
8. Is the epitome of eating reconcilable with the culpability of stealing?
9. Does the rich man deserve to be robbed for being so greedy?
10. Isn't private property an institution to enable the rich to exploit the poor?
11. Would stealing bring about more total good for everybody concerned or wouldn't it?
12. Are laws getting in the way of the most basic claim of any member of a society?

Rank which issue is the most important (item number):



Most important item: \_\_\_\_

Second most important item: \_\_\_\_

Third most important item: \_\_\_\_

Fourth most important item: \_\_\_\_

## Reporter – Story 2

Molly Dayton has been a news reporter for the Gazette newspaper for over a decade. Almost by accident, she learned that one of the candidates for Lieutenant Governor for her state, Grover Thompson, had been arrested for shop-lifting 20 years earlier. She found out that early in his life, Candidate Thompson had undergone a confused period and done things he later regretted, actions which would be very out-of-character now. His shop-lifting had been a minor offense and charges had been dropped by the department store. Thompson has not only straightened himself out since then, but built a distinguished record in helping many people and in leading constructive community projects. Now, Reporter Dayton regards Thompson as the best candidate in the field and likely to go on to important leadership positions within the state. She wonders whether or not she should write the story about Thompson's earlier troubles because in the upcoming close and heated election, she fears that such a news story could wreck Thompson's chance to win.

Do you favor the action of reporting the story?

1. Should report the story
2. Can't decide
3. Should not report the story

Rate the following 12 items in terms of importance (1-5)

1. Doesn't the public have a right to know all the facts about all the candidates for office?
2. Would publishing the story help Reporter Dayton's reputation for investigative reporting?
3. If Dayton doesn't publish the story wouldn't another reporter get the story anyway and take credit for her investigative reporting?
4. Since voting is such a joke anyway, does it make a difference what Reporter Dayton does?
5. Hasn't Thompson shown in the past 20 years that he is a better person than in his earlier days as a shop-lifter?
6. What would best serve society?
7. If the story is true, how can it be wrong to report it?
8. How could reporter Dayton be so cruel and heartless as to report the damaging story about Candidate Thompson?
9. Does the right of "habeus corpus" apply in this case?
10. Would the election process be more fair with or without reporting the story?

11. Should reporter Dayton treat all candidates for office in the same way by reporting everything she learns about them, good or bad?
12. Isn't it a reporter's duty to report all the news regardless of the circumstances?

Rank which issue is the most important (item number):

1. Most important item: \_\_\_\_
2. Second most important item: \_\_\_\_
3. Third most important item: \_\_\_\_
4. Fourth most important item: \_\_\_\_

### School Board – Story 3

Mr. Grant has been elected to the School Board District 190 and was chosen to be chairman. The district is bitterly divided over the closing of one of the high schools. One of the high schools has to be closed for financial reasons, but there is no agreement over which school to close. During his election to the school board, Mr. Grant had proposed a series of "open meetings" in which members of the community could voice their opinions. He hoped that dialogue would make the community realize the necessity of closing one high school. Also he hoped that through open discussion, the difficulty of the decision would be appreciated, and that the community would ultimately support the school board decision. The first open meeting was a disaster. Passionate speeches dominated the microphones and threatened violence. The meeting barely closed without fist-fights. Later in the week, school board members received threatening phone calls. Mr. Grant wonders if he ought to call off the next open meeting.

Do you favor calling off the next open meeting?

1. Should call off the next open meeting
2. Can't decide
3. Should have the next open meeting

Rate the following 12 items in terms of importance (1-5)

1. Is Mr. Grant required by law to have open meetings on major school board decisions?
2. Would Mr. Grant be breaking his election campaign promises to the community by discontinuing the open meetings?
3. Would the community be even angrier if Mr. Grant stopped the open meetings?
4. Would the change in plans prevent scientific assessment?
5. If the school board is threatened, does the chairman have the legal authority to protect the board by making decisions in closed meetings?
6. Would the community regard Mr. Grant as a coward if he stopped the open meetings?
7. Does Mr. Grant have another procedure in mind for ensuring that divergent views are heard?
8. Does Mr. Grant have the authority to expel troublemakers from the meetings or prevent them from making long speeches?
9. Are some people deliberately undermining the school board process by playing some sort of power game?
10. What effect would stopping the discussion have on the community's ability to handle controversial issues in the future?

11. Is the trouble coming from only a few hotheads, and is the community in general really fair-minded and democratic?
12. What is the likelihood that a good decision could be made without open discussion from the community?

Rank which issue is the most important (item number):

1. Most important item: \_\_\_\_
2. Second most important item: \_\_\_\_
3. Third most important item: \_\_\_\_
4. Fourth most important item: \_\_\_\_

#### Cancer – Story 4

Mrs. Bennett is 62 years old, and in the last phases of colon cancer. She is in terrible pain and asks the doctor to give her more pain-killer medicine. The doctor has given her the maximum safe dose already and is reluctant to increase the dosage because it would probably hasten her death. In a clear and rational medical state, Mrs. Bennett says that she realizes this: but she wants to end her suffering even if it means ending her life. Should the doctor give the increased dosage?

Do you favor the action of giving more medicine?

1. Should give Mrs. Bennett an increased dosage to make her die
2. Can't decide
3. Should not give her an increased dosage

Rate the following 12 issues in terms of importance (1-5)

1. Isn't the doctor obligated by the same laws as everybody else if giving an overdose would be the same as killing her?
2. Wouldn't society be better off without so many laws about what doctors can and cannot do?
3. If Mrs. Bennett dies, would the doctor be legally responsible for malpractice?
4. Does the family of Mrs. Bennett agree that she should get more painkiller medicine?
5. Is the painkiller medicine an active heliotropic drug?
6. Does the state have the right to force the continued existence on those who don't want to live?
7. Is helping to end another's life ever a responsible act of cooperation?
8. Would the doctor show more sympathy for Mrs. Bennett by giving the medicine or not?
9. Wouldn't the doctor feel guilty from giving Mrs. Bennett so much drug that she died?
10. Should only God decide when a person's life should end?
11. Shouldn't society protect everyone against being killed?
12. Where should society draw the line between protecting life and allowing someone to die if the person wants to?

Rank which issue is the most important (item number):

1. Most important item: \_\_\_\_
2. Second most important item: \_\_\_\_
3. Third most important item: \_\_\_\_
4. Fourth most important item: \_\_\_\_

### Demonstration – Story 5

Political and economic instability in a South American country prompted the President of the United States to send troops to “police” the area. Students at many campuses in the U.S.A. have protested that the United States is using its military might for economic advantage. There is a widespread suspicion that big oil multinational companies are pressuring the President to safeguard a cheap oil supply even if it means loss of life. Students at one campus took to the streets, in demonstrations, tying up traffic and stopping regular business in the town. The president of the university demanded that the students stop their illegal demonstrations. Students then took over the college’s administration building , completely paralyzing the college. Are the students right to demonstrate in these ways?

Do you favor the action of demonstrating in this way?

1. Should continue demonstrating in these ways
2. Can’t decide
3. Should not continue demonstrating in these ways

Rate the following items in terms of importance (1-5)

1. Do the students have any right to take over property that doesn’t belong to them?
2. Do the students realize that they might be arrested and fined, and even expelled from school?
3. Are the students serious about their cause or are they just doing it for fun?
4. If the university president is soft on students this time, will it lead to more disorder?
5. Will the public blame all students for the actions of a few student demonstrators?
6. Are the authorities to blame by giving in to the greed of multinational oil companies?
7. Why should a few people like presidents and business leaders have more power than ordinary people?
8. Does the student demonstration bring about more or less good in the long run to all people?
9. Can the students justify their civil disobedience?
10. Shouldn’t the authorities be respected by students?
11. Is taking over a building consistent with principles of justice?
12. Isn’t everyone’s duty to obey the law, whether one likes it or not?

Rank which issue is the most important (item number):

1. Most important item: \_\_\_\_
2. Second most important item: \_\_\_\_
3. Third most important item: \_\_\_\_
4. Fourth most important item: \_\_\_\_

## *Vignette 1 – Fraternity Hazing*

Charles attends an evening study session with a group of friends in the library. As he finishes the study session, one of his friends mentions that his fraternity is having a party that night and asks Charles if he wants to attend. Charles doesn't have any plans, so he eagerly accepts the invitation. Charles decides to go straight to the fraternity house to "pre-game" for the party. The party passes without incident and Charles has an incredible time. After the party, Charles leaves to go home. Halfway home, he realizes that he left his backpack with his laptop in his friend's room, so he turns around and goes back to the fraternity house. He parks in the back of the house and walks toward an open door leading into the band-room where the party had taken place. Inside, Charles can see a group of eight or nine sophomore members of the fraternity with a group of five fraternity pledges. As he approaches the door, he can see that the pledges are lined up against the back wall of the room with their heads down. He can overhear one of the sophomore members yelling loudly and angrily at the pledges.

"The rest of your pledge brothers studied and passed their pledge test this week, but you dumbasses didn't study hard enough! Now, you're going to learn what happens to new boys who don't pass their fucking pledge tests! It's time for after-party cleanup duty!"

A few of the sophomore members come into the middle of the room with several push-brooms, mops and buckets, and the pledges are instructed to begin cleaning the band-room, which is littered with cups, beer cans and cigarette butts. They begin working fast, but one of the pledges is not working fast enough to please the group. He is slightly overweight and is sweating profusely.

"Hey Tubby! What the fuck is your problem," yells one of the members. "You better get your fat ass in gear and start mopping faster, or there will be Hell to pay."

The other sophomores in the room begin hurling insults at the overweight pledge.

"You fat piece of shit! If you don't start cleaning and stop wheezing, you won't eat tomorrow."

"Tubby, you fat motherfucker! I'm going to beat your fat ass if you don't get this place cleaned up."

Despite the taunting, the pledge falls further and further behind in getting his section of the party room cleaned up. After a few more minutes, one of the sophomores comes over and kicks over his bucket of water.

"Alright, Tubby! You're no good at using a mop, so I want you to get your fat ass down in the floor and roll around in this water until the puddle is dry and the floor is clean!"

The pledge complies with the request. He gets down on the floor and begins rolling around to soak up the water that was spilled from his bucket. The guys really get a huge laugh out of this, including the other pledges in the room.

After a few minutes of taunting and laughing, one of the members declares that he thinks the reason Tubby can't keep up is because he hasn't had his midnight snack. The sophomore disappears into the door that leads into the kitchen. After a minute, he comes back in with a full trash bag and a bottle of Tobasco Sauce. He begins pulling food scraps out of the trash bag and piles the food onto the floor. After he's pulled about three pounds of food out of the garbage, he covers the pile of food in Tobasco Sauce. Finally, several of the sophomores come over and spit on the pile of food.

"Alright Tubby! Down on all fours like a piggy! It's time for your midnight feeding!"

"No," the pledge says. "I'm not going through another night like this. I can't take this anymore. Fuck this – I'm leaving"

"Tubby, you fat motherfucker, if you walk out that door, the rest of these guys are going to get their asses beaten. Get your fat ass on the ground and eat your slop, or these guys are going to get it."

"Please don't leave us here, Chris," one of the other pledges pleads. "We're going to catch Hell if you leave. We're all in this together, and we've come too far to walk away now. There's only a few weeks of this left. Please don't go."

The pledge stops for a few seconds, as if he is trying to decide what he should do. After a few seconds, he reluctantly moves back to the center of the room towards the pile of food, but there is terror in his face. He comes over to the pile of food and looks at it for a few minutes without eating. He begins to cry.

"Tubby, you fucking crybaby! What's the matter? You not hungry? Maybe you need some help."

With that said, one of the members comes over and pushes the pledge's face down into the pile of food as the other members gather around and start yelling and telling him to finish the food. After about two minutes, the pledge begins to vomit.

"Now you've just made a big fucking mess, Tubby! The rest of your pledge brothers are going to pay the price because you're such a sloppy fat-ass."

The other pledges are instructed to get down on "bows and toes" next to Tubby. They all comply. One of the members walks over and begins going down the line striking the pledges on the buttocks with a paddle. At the beginning, the paddling isn't all that hard, but it gets harder with each stroke. The pledges are obviously in pain.

After the first round of paddling, the pledges are instructed to begin doing pushups. They do pushups until they can't go any further. When each pledge stops doing pushups, another member comes around with a paddle and begins hitting them again, but this time much harder and more violent than before.

***At what point in the scenario should Charles have walked away and found someone in a position of authority or called the campus hazing hotline to report what was going on?***

As soon as he saw the pledges lined up on the wall and heard the yelling

When the pledges were instructed to begin cleaning

When the members singled out "Tubby" and began yelling insults at him and threatening him

When "Tubby" was made to roll around on the ground and soak up the spilled mop-water

When the member pushed Tubby's face into the pile of food and made him eat

When you saw Tubby vomit

When the pledges were put on "bows and toes" and the first round of paddling began

When the second round of paddling began

Charles should not have intervened by talking to an authority or calling the campus hazing hotline.

***Imagine you are on the university judicial board, and this case is presented to you and you were asked to decide whether to pursue hazing charges against this fraternity. Would you pursue or dismiss the hazing charges?***

I would dismiss hazing charges against the fraternity

I would pursue hazing charges against the fraternity

### *Vignette 2 – Adolescent Bullying*

Frank decides to take his dog for a walk in the local park. As he passes an open field in the park, he can see and overhear a group of children playing football and decides to stop and watch the action for a minute. The children all appear to be in the 12-15 age range and are divided up into two teams of five. On one of the teams, Frank can see four of the children gathered around one of the others, who is a bit smaller than the others and is wearing glasses.

“Josh, you little four-eyed faggot. When are you going to learn to catch the ball” says one of the children as they huddle up to get ready for another play. “We’re only going to give you one more chance to stop sucking it up,” he says, as he shoves Josh in the chest.

The team runs a few more plays without the ball going in Josh’s direction. They get a first down, and huddle back up to run the next play. Frank can’t hear what they are saying, but it looks to him like they are coming up with a “trick play.”

As they line up for the play, Josh is lined up as a slot receiver. As the ball is snapped, Josh comes into motion and they pitch the ball to him on an end-around play. As he comes around the edge, he slips and on the way to the ground he drops the ball. The other team picks up the fumble and returns it across the field for a touchdown.

“Damnit, Josh! You just lost us the game! I can’t believe you fumbled on the last drive! What is your problem?”

The other kids join on the team join in on the action.

“We should have known better that to give that four-eyed faggot another chance!”

“Josh – you’re the biggest pussy on the planet.”

After a few minutes of taunting, one of the team members has an idea.

“Hey! I know how we can teach Josh to hang onto the ball! How about a game of ‘smear the queer?’”

The other kids seem to really like that idea – they hand the ball to Josh and he tries to run away from them, but they catch him and tackle him. The children from the other team gather around and begin chanting “smear the queer.” Every time Josh gets up to try and get away, someone catches him and tackles him again. At first, the tackles seem pretty harmless, and everyone, including Josh, seems to be enjoying themselves. But as the game goes on, the tackles become more and more forceful, and Frank can tell that Josh isn’t having fun with the game anymore.

While this is going on, one of the other boys walks over to a nearby trashcan and pulls out what appears to be a half-eaten sandwich. He walks back over and declares “Maybe Josh needs to eat more so he can grow up bigger and stronger and stop being such a pussy.”

The boy puts the sandwich on the ground and the other boys spit on it. Then they hold Josh down on the ground on his back and cram the sandwich into his mouth, forcing him to chew. After a few seconds, Josh spits up the sandwich and begins to cry.

“Aww, what’s the matter Joshy Baby? Are you gonna cry now,” the children taunt.



“Here you go Joshy Baby! Let me dry your eyes for you,” says one of the children, who walks up and grab’s Josh’s glasses off his face and then pushes Josh back down on the ground and begins rubbing his face in the grass, “drying his tears.” Throughout this ordeal, Josh is screaming and trying to get up, but the boy on top of Josh is about 20 pounds heavier than Josh and is able to hold him down and continue rubbing his face on the ground. The other children are laughing and chanting “crybaby.”

After a struggle of a few minutes, Josh is able to get to his feet and in a fit of rage swings his arm and punches the boy who was holding him down directly in the face. The boy’s nose begins to bleed.

“Josh, you little faggot! You busted my nose! Now I’m going to beat your ass.”

The boy bends down and picks up a large stick, and runs at Josh. When he catches him, he begins hitting Josh in the legs and buttocks with the stick.

***At what point in this scenario should Frank have intervened by personally stepping in or finding a park authority to address the situation?***

When one of the children called Josh a “faggot” and shoved him in the chest

When the other children began taunting Josh after he fumbled the ball

As soon as they started playing “smear the queer”

When the tackling in “smear the queer” became more forceful

When the boys tried to force-feed the sandwich to Josh

When Josh spit up the sandwich and began to cry

When the larger boy held Josh down and began rubbing his face in the grass to “dry his tears”

When the larger boy began hitting Josh with a stick

Frank should not have intervened in this situation.