

Opinion

Sorority rush in desperate need of change

The week before the fall semester began 651 women participated in sorority rush as "rushees" at Texas A&M. Of those, about 500 were accepted into a sorority, while more than 100 — including rush dropouts — were rejected and will not be a member of any of the 11 sororities at A&M.



Anthony Wilson

The majority of these young women were freshmen who were looking to find their niche at a large university and establish a group of friends with which they could identify. That they would be prohibited from joining any social organization on campus is a testament to the serious flaws from which rush is suffering.

The most disturbing aspect of rush, which could eventually be the downfall of sororities, is the criteria for which members are chosen.

For years, women have complained about being treated as sex objects and being judged on their looks rather than their abilities. Many women hate men for this and, especially in the work force, proclaim, "Do not think of us as women. Judge and evaluate us as people — the equal of men — considering our abilities first and foremost." And that's fine. That's the way it should be.

But five years from now, the women who will be saying those things will be the very ones who just last week were saying, "We only want the cutest girls in our sorority" or "I want to be in Beta Omega Moo because they have the prettiest girls."

Although most members of sororities would deny it, the rushees are judged primarily on their looks, hairstyle, makeup, clothing and weight. Why else would rushees spend literally hundreds of dollars on dresses for rush week?

Now I ask you: Is a fashion show really the best way to choose your friends?

Personally, I like my friends for what

they are on the inside, not the outside. In fact, as long as they don't smell bad, I could care less about what they look like. Some of my best friends haven't necessarily been the most handsome people I've known. But I wouldn't trade any of them for Tom Cruise or Paulina Porizkova.

In a strange way, the petite, frail young women who go through rush are similar to the hulking, brutish young men which A&M's athletic department recruits. Both come to this large institution and are wooed by organizations trying to impress them. They visit fancy facilities, meet successful alumni and are pumped up about becoming a part of that organization's hoopla.

But there is one cruel difference. An athletic recruit knows for sure when a university wants him. However, a rushee can be rushed hard by a sorority which can later decide that it doesn't want her.

That's extremely tough for some 18-year-old women to handle mentally. Of course, if she isn't accepted, she takes it personally. How else can she take it?

For so many of these women, becoming a part of a sorority is extremely important to them. They don't know how to get involved extracurricularly at a large, state university.

So naturally they look to join a social organization. That they would be refused acceptance into a social organization is a great injustice.

Although most sororities do participate in service events such as Big Event, they are not service organizations. They are social organizations which are more concerned with meeting people and having mixers, parties and a good time. And that's fine.

However, just as other social organizations such as the Waterski Club, the Katy Hometown Club and the Sports Car Club don't reject members, neither should sororities. Anyone who wants to be in a sorority ought to be able to be in one.

Of course someone would then argue, "Why can't anyone who wants to be an Orientation Leader, Muster committee member or Ross Volunteer be one?"



For those organizations, an application and interview process is necessary to be accepted. And not everyone who applies is accepted, but with good reason. Those organizations are dedicated to service. Their members are chosen based on unique abilities which will help that organization achieve its goals, or in the case of the RVs on past performance.

Unlike being in a sorority, these positions are an honor to hold. They require a dedication to hard work, commitment, and possession of talents, which many of us lack, to perform specialized functions.

The purpose of sororities seems to have become skewed. In the beginning I'm sure the founders of sororities

meant for the organizations to be a common ground from which friendships could grow and leadership qualities developed. And if that's why you're in one or trying to get in one, that's great.

But, most people seem to rush a sorority or join one so that they can walk around campus with the Greek alphabet on their chest or be a part of the "in" crowd at Zephyr's three nights a week. And that's just assinine. (Then again maybe those people should stick together. They deserve each other.)

The solution is simple. Let all women who want to join a sorority do so.

Rush week could be continued, but at the end of it, instead of all the sororities competing for the same group of girls, a draft could be held. Each sorority would

choose one rushee per round were selected.

Or, divide the number of rushees by the number of sororities and each organization to choose a number of women.

The current rush system has become a disaster. Rushees lie on their backs and spend an entire week kissing and being kissed, trying to be someone. Actives publicly criticize and hate rushees for unimportant reasons which are usually out of the control. Unless the system changes, the pettiness could bring about the downfall of the female Greek system at Texas A&M.

Anthony Wilson is a senior journalism major and opinion page editor at The Battalion.

Mail Call

Future frat rats beware

EDITOR:

Are fraternities really the salt of Texas A&M? Yes, fraternities are quite like the salt on your table. If you have a little bit, it's great! Your life has been seasoned. But, if you get too much, your life could be ruined, or seriously injured.

I would like to present a complaint, a compliment, and a warning. First, my complaint is against a fraternity here in Aggieland. I became involved with a fraternity in the Fall 1987. In the Spring 1988, I went through the whole rush scene to become one of that fraternity's little sisters. By mid-February, I was saying my good-byes to the fraternity life. I was battered by a member of that fraternity. I was assaulted inside the fraternity house with many of the members present. Some of them watched while others looked the other way. I think that it's disgraceful that a fraternity would put brotherhood ahead of the health and well-being of a human being. I was humiliated, not to mention physically hurt. My next day was spent at Beutel Health Center.

Here's the compliment. Because of the assault, I encountered many A&M employees. They treated me with respect, sympathy, and the utmost professionalism. I give them my thanks. Dr. Brent Paterson in Student Judicial Affairs was instrumental in my assistance. He helped me find justice.

My assailant has been blocked from registration pending further litigation. He could be suspended or expelled.

My warning is addressed to anyone contemplating involvement with a fraternity. I found out the hard way. Fall 1988 rush is quickly approaching. Be very careful in choosing, or buying, your friends. Make your own decision. PLEASE!

Eva Nichols '90

Holy Cow! It's a Brian Frederick fan

EDITOR:

The Battalion's heyday was not the times of Sullivan or Pallmeyer. They wanted to overthrow the restraints of established ideas.

The times when I really thrived at opening my Battalion were to read the scathing attacks on the Godless by Brian Frederick. He tore down ideas with something better to put in their place.

Frederick gave thought to the consequences and aftermath that unthought ideas can have. Sullivan and Pallmeyer wrote for kicks. Frederick had vision.

Richard Hill '89

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

Tire tooling could soon be back in vogue

Bobby Humphrey of the University of Alabama is one of the top collegiate football running backs in the country.



Lewis Grizzard

More importantly than that — in my mind, at least — is the fact he's the first person I've heard about in years who's been tire-tooled.

Bobby Humphrey was in some sort of late-night bistro in Tuscaloosa and fell at odds with another gentleman, who settled the argument by taking a tire tool and breaking Mr. Humphrey's jaw.

I have no idea what the disagreement was about, but I do know one of the quickest ways to settle a dispute is to break the other guy's jaw with a tire tool. Not another peep will be heard from

him. Before going any further, however, it occurs to me there may be those out there who do not know exactly what a tire tool is.

A tire tool is that thing in your trunk you use when you have to change tires on your car. It's long and made of steel and you pull hubcaps off with it.

Not long after the horseless carriage came upon the scene, somebody invented the tire tool, and it became an instant hit as something with which one could do enormous damage to others.

My late father told me of a rather large young woman in his boyhood days who wore overalls and carried a tire tool strapped to one leg.

"One night at the dance," my father said, "this ol' girl asked a boy to dance with her and he made fun of her abundant personage.

"She bent over and reached up her pants leg and pulled out that tire tool

and beat the young man unmercifully and ended the dance."

I'm not certain what happened fighting with tire tools over the past several years.

I guess all that kung fu and karate came popular and it is a lot easier to pull out the pistol you bought at pawnshop and shoot somebody than have to go all the way back parking lot and get your tire tool.

Maybe, however, the fact a peep like Bobby Humphrey fell to a tire-tooling, it will make comeback.

It's less expensive than shoe somebody. You've got to buy the and then the ammunition. Tire come free with cars.

Plus, it's the right of every American to bear a tire tool. That's not in the situation, I don't think, but it's in all Ford truck drivers' manuals.

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BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed



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The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.
Mail subscriptions are \$17.44 per semester, \$34.62 per school year and \$36.44 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.
Our address: The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-4111.