



There Was a Goat

NOT since Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicked over the lantern that burned up Chicago has an animal caused so much trouble.

This particular quadruped happened to be Mrs.—shall we say—O'Henry's goat, and it was "borrowed" one night by a freshman who was out "hell weeking" for the Greek social order of his particular misfortune at the University.

"These college boys got my goat," complained Mrs. O'Henry quite naturally, "and I don't like it."

Rose up Dale Clark, editor of the *Oklahoma Daily*, student paper, and condemned goat-snatching, hell-weeking and fraternity horse-play.

Rose up other editorial writers for the *Daily* and took pot-shots at fraternities, in general, and those, in particular, that encouraged monkey-shines, especially on property belonging to other persons.

The interfraternity council, at first, was unimpressed when informed one of its member fraternities was clearly out of line. Goat-borrowing was pretty bad and hell-week certainly wasn't desirable, but, after all—why all the furor?

Everyone questioned everyone else's attitude and feelings concerning the matter—that is—everyone except the goat. No one considered the feelings of the goat—whether it was incensed or amused about the incident.

The *Daily* quoted its editor, University officials, interfraternity council officers and members, student leaders, student followers—everyone, except the goat.

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Editor Clark opened the verbal war with a front page column labelled, "One Person's Opinion." It follows:

President Bizzell is doing the only thing possible in regard to the "hell week" situation existing on the campus, and cry as you will about student-restriction and administrative paternalism, the cries can only be indictments against ourselves.

Whenever any group, purporting to be sponsors of and contributors to the higher types of environment, exhibits practices as base as those exhibited around here in the past few weeks, that exhibition can only be an indictment against the group and its existence.

The sad thing is not that the administration is moving to restrict a group that should be governing itself; the sad thing is that the administration is being forced to restrict a group that apparently cannot govern itself.

No individual or group of individuals can justify the "hell week" practiced by fraternities on the campus. It does not make better members of pledges. It does not deepen their love for, nor loyalty to the orders with which the pledges affiliate themselves. If the "hell week" does not

make better members of pledges it cannot make for stronger fraternities.

Can there be other justification for the practice? The only reason for the existence of such practices is the savage enjoyment one human gets out of the physical torture of another human. That sounds ridiculous, but it hurts because it's true.

Such a reason is a pretty strong indictment against fraternities. If you ask me, it's a pretty strong argument against their tax-exemption claims as "educational institutions." If sponsoring such uncivilized affairs as "hell week" is educational, mark me down as a sucker. If you can convince a tax-grasping government such affairs are educational, mark it down as a sucker, too. It seems to me that this is an angle the Greeks might well ponder.

It is a shame that the administration had to enter the business of restriction in this instance, but the shame is entirely on the fraternities. University officials leaned over backwards in their efforts to maintain a hands-off policy and to get the Greek orders to assume the responsibility of handling the situation.

An official letter, asking mutual cooperation in restraining the property-damaging Greek tactics was read last week in the interfraternity council meeting; it met with snickers and was tossed aside. Fraternity men can do nothing but cry at the threatened restriction.

Their cries will only testify to their collective childishness, for "hell week" is childish. And childishness has no place in "educational institutions."

They call it "hell week" and they have not misnamed it. Surely no hell is more

"Courtesy Week" at the Pi Beta Phi sorority house has taken the place of the annual "Hell Week" for freshmen who are in the throes of initiation. A recent decision of all fraternities and sororities has outlawed "Hell Week" and in its place substituted a "more constructive" program for neophytes.

It appears to me, that if you would devote the time and space in your paper that you devote to "running down the Greeks," to fostering such worth-while projects as a men's swimming pool, or the need for more buildings, or a drinking fountain on the third floor of Administration Hall—that this would be a better university.

(Signed) Robert R. Lockwood, jr.

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In the same issue replied Editor Clark: Interfraternity council members have the opportunity of doing more for the Greek fraternity system by one act tonight than they could do in a whole year's rushing.

That act is the abolishing of hell week.

I have been criticized, very fairly, I think, on the grounds that I am prejudiced in my viewpoint on all Greek subjects because I am not a member of any order. That criticism is only natural and to resent it or tirade against it would be foolish.

In two instances I have put my hand in the Greeks' business. One was to advocate one-year deferred pledging and the other was and is the current hell week question.

Deferred pledging is a very moot question. It could be argued long and hard and probably will be. My opinions for it have been met with some very sound arguments and I admit it. But the virtues and vices of hell week is *not* a moot question and I will contend from now until doomsday that the physical torture to which the fraternities practicing hell week subject their pledges is barbaric and destructive, and on those grounds is unjustifiable.

It is barbaric because it is motivated by the base desire to see a human being suffer physical and mental torture. Honest fraternity men will admit that.

It is destructive because it endangers the health of the individuals suffering it and because it lowers the morales and standards of the organizations with which those individuals are affiliated. That is my brief against hell week.

As to my alleged prejudice against Greek orders I can only say this, in all sincerity: anything and everything that I have said or written regarding fraternities was based on the desire to make the system stronger—because it is going to need plenty of strengthening if it is to survive.

Jewelled pins are losing their glitter, and an increasing number of students in an increasing number of colleges are becoming aware of the fact.

Greek groups here fail by a long shot to hold the position they held when I, with a large number of other unpolished, tuxedo-shy freshmen, hit the campus four years ago.

For substantiation you need only to look around at student offices and the people holding these offices. Fraternity men no longer enjoy a monopoly.

Each year we find more and more "fraternity material" men staying without the

bounds of brotherhood because they question the value of this more expensive environment during their college education. This, perhaps, is because the emphasis during the past few years has shifted from the environment to the education.

And you cannot deny that this growing group of men is a well-mannered, well-bred group, aware of the social graces that mark the Greek, and which it performs with equal suavity. It simply is a group that will not condone the paddlings, the hell weeks, the general horseplay to which the fraternities stubbornly cling, mostly "because when I was a freshman I got mine."

That argument is as childish as hell week itself. And it is childishness that fraternities must rid themselves of if they desire to regain lost ground and if they expect to make headway in the future.

I think my arguments are confirmed by facts, and facts serious enough to deserve the consideration of those affected by them.

A vote tonight for the abolition of hell week by interfraternity council members would be one of the best investments they could make for the future of the system they sponsor and believe in—and a future for which they, as present leaders, are responsible.

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And then, perhaps, finally, the action of the interfraternity council as reported by the *Daily*:

Correction of present hell week tactics by imposing upon all violators loss of one semester's social privileges was ordered Tuesday night by the interfraternity council in a special meeting called to discuss the administration's attitude toward the pre-initiation ceremonies.

The new law, amending the rule passed last year abolishing hell week and substituting courtesy week, will deprive any fraternity which "endangers in any way the health of the participants, or which tends to destroy any form of property" of regular social privileges for one semester.

The vote by houses on the measure was 19 to 2. Lambda Chi Alpha and Phi Kappa Sigma were the two dissenting fraternities.

Motion after motion in the tense meeting was proposed which would create favor in the administration's attitude to fraternities' activities. While representatives of some orders argued that the council should not be forced into accepting such regulation, the majority opinion was to the effect that hell week as defined by Dean James F. Findlay is offensive and should be punishable.

Furor was raised when one member suggested that any member of the council affiliated with any newspaper not be admitted to the council hereafter. After blaming the *Daily* for exaggeration of the council's reaction last week to administration advice, a second was offered to the motion. It never reached a vote in the argument that followed.

tragic that the hell of ignorance which must be attributed to any system prescribing physical torture as a test for membership.

Abolition of "hell week," whether voluntary or enforced, will be a step toward bringing Greek fraternities more into line with the purposes of the institutions which they allegedly—and at present, doubtfully—are serving.

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Back at him in a column marked, "A Reader Writes," came Bobby Lockwood, member of Phi Kappa Psi, admittedly on the other side of the fence.

Mr. Editor:

Time and again you have flayed the fraternity system on this campus. Not being a member of one you perhaps are somewhat prejudiced against them. But to get to my point—in your last outburst in Saturday's paper you stated—"An official letter, asking mutual co-operation in restraining the property-damaging Greek tactics was read last week in the interfraternity council meeting; it met with snickers and was tossed aside."

I happened to be in attendance at that meeting and can say that your flowery description of events was all wrong, and naturally tended to cast unjust reflections on that body. As a matter of fact, the president of the group announced the attitude of the administration toward hell week, and told of one instance where a lady living in or near Norman had lost her pet goat, and had telephoned President Bizzell to bring back the animal. This incident naturally was laughed at, as anyone with any kind of a sense of humor, would do.

Although no definite action was taken by the council on the question, I have talked to leaders in various Greek houses, and they are all very much in favor of the administration's policy.