

Why The Greek System Must Go

A recent article in The Dartmouth quotes CFS advisor Deb Carney as stating that the CFS system has made 'outstanding improvements.' I must agree that changes have been made- houses seem to be more diverse and accepting than in the past. However, I would hardly call the improvements 'outstanding.' Given my role as President of the Student Body, criticizing the Greek system might seem to be out of line, considering that roughly sixty percent of eligible students are members of CFS organizations. But criticism of the system often resonates most poignantly with those who are active participants. I don't know if most of campus would support the opinions I am about to enumerate. More importantly, I don't particularly care.

A lot of time has been wasted on this campus working to 'improve' the Greek system. Make no mistake, there are many campus leaders which have emerged in Greek organizations and the efforts of these individuals have been notable and should be applauded, but in my 4 years here, I have found same-sex Greek organizations to do little more than provide a social setting for men to sexually objectify women and for women to engage in back-stabbing.

Most

If you ask ORL about the Greek system, they will be quick to cite houses like Tabard, Phi Tau, Alpha Theta, and non-residentially based Greek organizations like LUL or the Alphas. Deb Carney says that the Greek organizations are value driven, but these are the only organizations I have witnessed to have any substantial kind of values and actually working to uphold them. Minority Greek organizations, although not immune for criticism on the level of hazing, are responsible for the bulk of the programming that the CFS system completes yearly. Perhaps because they don't have a house and pong tables, these organizations strive to make their presence on campus felt in other ways. But there are co-ed houses like Tabard which provide an environment unlike what one finds in fraternities or sororities. Surely, Tabard is not perfect- no house is, but the relationships between men and women in that house is so markedly different from what one finds in all-male houses.

Close friends tell me that sorority rush is positive because it allows women to experience a variety of houses, but on the flip side it has turned into a popularity game where women have to watch their back, or risk being called a slut or whore and being dinged from a house. Sisterhood and brotherhood have come to mean that when a brother or sister do something bad, your back is covered.