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Against The Odds With A Red Solo Cup, T-Shirt, And A Bible: Motivations And Expectations Of Non-Drinking Fraternity Men

Anna C. Edwards
University of South Carolina

AGAINST THE ODDS WITH A RED SOLO CUP, T-SHIRT,
AND A BIBLE: MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF
NON-DRINKING FRATERNITY MEN

by

Anna C. Edwards

Bachelor of Arts
Clemson University, 2001

Master of Education
University of South Carolina, 2004

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Accepted by:

C. Spencer Platt, Major Professor

Allison Daniel Anders, Committee Member

Dennis A. Pruitt, Committee Member

Jennifer Bloom, Committee Member

Lacy Ford, Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my parents who instilled in me a desire to ask questions and seek answers. To my supportive husband, Josh and to our beautiful children: Hardin, Margaret, and Quin who hold me up with their love and smiles when it just does not seem like I can do it another day; to my committee members who believed in me and were willing to take the risk on me as a Ph.D. student and researcher; to my sisters who keep me grounded and remind me occasionally that I am just a small town girl and a pedicure can make anything better; to the many parents, students, alumni and professionals who have given me the opportunity to learn about you, your students and their experiences.

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ABSTRACT

Extensive research has consistently linked high-risk alcohol use and fraternity membership. However, not all men who join fraternities are high-risk drinkers. This qualitative descriptive case study describes the experiences and motivations of six non-drinking fraternity men to better understand who they were before they arrived on campus, why they joined the organization they did, and how they navigate the fraternity environment. The research conducted for this study indicates that their experiences and motivations for joining and staying in fraternities are identified in three primary ways: (1) their upbringing and the role that parental expectations play, (2) the influence of faith in fraternities and how religious beliefs and spiritual values guide decision making; and (3) the ways in which the individuals socialize and manage the party scene without alcohol. This study informs the body of literature from an anti-deficit approach and tells a story that is currently not available. The findings for this study have implications for students and for campus administrators. Insights can inform more strategic efforts in addressing non-drinking students on campus. In addition, the findings can influence potential change within the fraternity system and current research on the little known experiences of non-drinkers. Future directions for research include the non-drinking sorority women experience and comparisons of groups and relationships with non-drinking members.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Beginning in mid-August, on college campuses across the nation, there are signs that students are back for a new semester: from welcome back banners, to increased traffic around campus, to longer lines at the local Starbucks. In most college towns, the increased activities around bars and entertainment districts are yet another indication that the fall semester has begun.

To frame the purpose of this study, it is important to first introduce you to a student and his story. It is Saturday in mid-August, the first night a college freshman male named "Chris" is away from home and officially a college student. He is invited by high school friends to attend a party at an off-campus apartment. Chris gets a head start on drinking before he leaves his residence hall by taking shots with his roommate. He needs this social lubricant to ease the conversations when he meets girls at the party. He is already buzzed as he grabs his cooler and heads to the party. Once he arrives, he continues taking shots and drinking liquor. He quickly gets "there" and blacks out. He awakens the next morning to find himself naked in the parking lot of the campus wellness and fitness center.

This cycle continues for Chris and he has three more incidents during his first two weeks on campus. Chris leaves campus to move home for support and treatment after being hospitalized twice before September. Chris's behavior and substance use was out

of control and although he knew changes must be made he was not sure how to do it. Once at home, Chris is involved in a car accident after a night of drinking. His car is totally destroyed, but he walks away and a Good Samaritan who stops after the accident takes him home. He shared with me the embarrassment he felt as he met his younger sister in the hallway when he arrived home. He had no recollection of how he got there or what happened to his car. Although Chris was lucky to walk away with bumps and bruises, he believes that he was saved for a purpose. That purpose and new approach to life began with 90 days in a treatment facility to come to terms with his alcohol addiction. He left behind a college experience of which he had dreamed, a fraternity he had just joined, and siblings who looked up to him but no longer knew who he was due to this disease. Chris began a long journey to recovery and was learning how to function as a recovering alcoholic.

This story described the experiences of an alarming number of students as they transition to college as a first-year student. The excitement of being away from home, meeting new people, and having no one to watch over them leads some college students to engage in high-risk behaviors. National data (Johnson et al., 2009; Wechsler, et al, 2002; DeJong, 2011) collected on first-year student drinking shows that more students are coming to campus as high-risk drinkers. High risk drinking and problematic drinking is considered one of the greatest public health issues facing college campuses (Hingson, et al., 2005). According to national data, approximately 80% of college students drink alcohol and half of them drink to intoxication (Johnson et al., 2009; Wechsler, 2001; Iwamoto et al, 2011). However, not all students engage in high-risk drinking behavior. The purpose of this study was to focus on the stories of the non-drinking fraternity

member in perhaps a different way than is articulated in the current literature. There was a story missing in current literature when we explore male students and their college experiences, and that was the story of fraternity members who are not engaging in high-risk behaviors. This missing piece is the story of those fraternity men who identify as non-drinkers and for some reason chose to join these organizations despite the perceptions.

As noted above, college alcohol abuse is considered to be one of the greatest public health issues facing college students (Wechsler, et al., 2002; Nelson, 2003; Neal 2007). In 2007, the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) reported that 1,875 students, enrolled in two or four year institutions, die each year due to alcohol-related crashes; 700,000 students are hit or assaulted by another student who has consumed alcohol; 97,000 students are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape (Hingston et al., 2009). On college campuses across the country, students prepared academically for college, but beyond the classroom faced more pressures associated with alcohol use than ever before (Wechsler, 2005; Huang et al, 2011). To many college students, alcohol use is interconnected with college life and navigating social environments and peer-to-peer interactions. Although current research identified that approximately 80% of students on campus drink alcohol (Iwamoto, et al., 2011; O'Malley & Johnston, 2002), the remaining 20% of the population identify as abstainers or non-drinkers.

The research related to college alcohol abuse identified first-year male students who are affiliated with a fraternity, or are an athlete, as being particularly impacted by the role alcohol plays in college life (DeSimone, 2007; Borsari & Carey, 1999; Adams &

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Nagoshi, 1999; Baer et al. 1995; Kushner et al. 1994; O'Malley & Johnston, 2002). The impact of alcohol on first year male students was related to academic consequences, the pressure to conform to masculine norms and the expectations of what it means to be a man (Iwamoto et al, 2011, Kimmel, 2007). According to a study conducted in 2007, 68% of male college students associated ability to consume and tolerate large amounts of alcohol as a characteristic of masculine behavior (Peralta, 2007). College men who were unable to "hold their liquor" were perceived as weak and feminine.

The literature was particularly critical of males on college campuses, identifying them as an at-risk population due to the rate at which they drank and the academic implications of their drinking (Baer et al. 1995; Kushner et al. 1994; O'Malley & Johnston, 2002). In particular, first-year male students consumed alcohol at levels more than two times the heavy drinking rates (White, et al. 2006). Hevel (2014) explored the presence of college student drinking in novels during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The study reviewed existing literature that depicted the rite of passage of college student drinking and partying both prior to and after Prohibition. The novels and movies about college alcohol use and abuse demonstrated the role that popular culture and modern media have had in exploiting high-risk behaviors (Flanagan, 2014).

As noted, there was significant research regarding the high-risk drinking of college students, particularly first-year male students who joined a fraternity during the first semester on campus. Previous research studies have demonstrated the negative influence student's association with particular organizations on campus can have on student alcohol use. There was very little research that identified the experiences and role of male non-drinkers on campus (Huang et al., 20089). The evidence that was available

on this group of male students pointed to the influence of personal values, religious beliefs, the knowledge of negative consequences, and the desire not to be labeled as a drinker as some of the reasons that students did not drink (Epler et al., 2008; O'Hara et al., 2013).

In 2009, Asel and her colleagues studied the impact of both fraternity and sorority membership on the college experience. They identified the positive impact that membership had on men and women alike in regard to civic engagement, volunteerism and campus involvement in student organizations. The study also pointed out the negative impact that can affect the community, especially as it pertained to health related reasons.

In regard to the methodological review, most studies pertaining to this subject area were quantitative in nature and focused on the negative impact of college drinking through the lens of the drinker. In Capraro's (2010) study on masculinity and male drinking patterns, he inferred that college was a development period for males and the sense of adventure and vulnerability was high, which led to men looking for the next big adventure in high-risk behaviors. Capraro suggested that alcohol was often how men maintained social independence. For example, drinking games often provided an opportunity for a competition and for men to cope with the need for independence.

There was little research related to college male students and their decision-making in regards to non-alcohol use (Epler et al., 2009; Huang et al., 2009; O'Conner and Colder, 2009; Romo et al., 2014). The research neglected to focus on the experiences of males who chose not to drink alcohol, but joined organizations like fraternities where alcohol use was prevalent. I examined the role of masculinity (Harper

and Harris, 2008) and social identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1986) of fraternity men on campus who identified as non-drinkers. The study included information about their pre-college experiences that shaped their sense of self and their views on alcohol. I also examined the reasons these students, who did not fit the traditional stereotype of fraternity members, chose to join these organizations and how they defined their experiences as a member.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the social and leadership experiences and motivations of fraternity members, who identified as non-drinkers, at a southeastern, large, public, predominately white institution. There was a gap in the current literature on fraternity men who identified as non-drinkers. College drinking impacted both the campus community and the surrounding community at large (LaBrie et al. 2007; Wechsler, 2000). This study informed practitioners about the students' experiences within the fraternity environment where alcohol was assumed to be a primary focus. This study also provided a better understanding of the impact that social fraternity membership had on college male students who were non-drinkers.

Fraternity membership is often synonymous with high alcohol use and high-risk behaviors as was evident in previous research studies (Walter et al. 2000; Baer, 2002; Smeaton et al. 1998). The connection between fraternity membership and high alcohol use is related to the connection with like individuals and the norming of behavior that is common within the group. For the purpose of this study, I interviewed a group of fraternity men who rejected the stereotypical identity, while associating as a member of a high-risk group. I sought to understand the reasons these students chose to attend a

college that had an active Greek community and how they balanced their identities within this experience (Hanson, 1974; Cooper et al., 1992; Faulkner et al. 1989; Lichtenfield & Kayson, 1994). For non-drinking fraternity men, they desired the support system that the fraternity organization provided although the behaviors that were associated with this support might not be directly related to their personal decisions or beliefs. There is little research available on the experiences of non-drinking fraternity members on campus, hence the need for this study.

The experiences of non-drinking fraternity members on campus is important because it can give campus professionals insight into the impact of socialization and peer pressure on the college experience for males. It can also allow campuses to better prepare male students for their experiences in a fraternity and to advocate for changes to processes and procedures that surround the fraternity membership experience. The voices of male students who joined fraternities and identified as non-drinkers have been missing in the current research until now. These missing voices could yield psychological, spiritual and religious accounts of how these men define themselves as men without the association of the "masculine" behaviors of heavy alcohol use. The stories are important in providing a different perspective on the benefits of fraternity and sorority membership, while also better preparing university administration to meet the needs of these fraternity members.

As a researcher, I identified what motivated these students not to drink alcohol, as well as evaluated the role of family values and religion in their decision-making. Previous research found that non-drinking men who pledged a fraternity were influenced by a strong sense of family values or religion, which overrode the pressures to conform to peer

influences (Huang et al., 2011; O'Hara et al., 2014). For some students it was the presence of both family values and religious upbringing, but for others it was the presence of one or the other. There was a sense of a higher purpose and even the pressures of college did not reverse these behaviors in these individuals. Additionally, I examined the fraternity cultures and explored why men join and how the behavior of the fraternity chapter shaped individual member's behavior.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided the study were:

1. How do life experiences influence non-drinking fraternity members?

2. Why do non-drinking males join university social fraternities at a predominately white institution?

3. What strategies do non-drinking fraternity men utilize in social situations when alcohol is present at a predominately white institution?

4. How do students use pictures to illustrate their experience as non-drinking fraternity members?

Methodological Approach

The research questions were answered through descriptive case study design. Yin (2014) suggested that case study be used when the desire is to provide an up-close understanding of a "case" within real-world context. This study explored the detailed experiences and motivations of non-drinking fraternity men on a large, public college campus to better understand how they navigate this environment, which is often known for rowdy parties and lots of alcohol. The unit of analysis for this study was the experience of the non-drinking participants. The individual students who participated in

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the study, and captured the images, were the crucial component in learning more about the role of socialization and masculinity in peer pressure and the relationship to social identity within the fraternity context. The collection of the data, and the patterns and themes that emerged, enabled me to better understand the reasons these students maintained their decision not to drink alcohol and to understand how they defined their experience on campus. I followed Seidman's (1998) approach for in-depth interviewing to ensure that the stories were understood and presented from the participants' viewpoints. Semi-structured interviews with non-drinkers served as an opportunity to build rapport with the participants and to get to know them and how they arrived as a non-drinking fraternity member.

This descriptive case study utilized photovoice (Wang and Burris, 1992) through volunteer-employed photography (VEP), a visual method for data collection that enhances self-report measures to better capture context from a cultural and societal position (Prosser, 1998). Photovoice was a method of capturing social and cultural knowledge, related to community-derived problems (Keller et al., 2008) that allowed participants to take pictures of images that were important to them and describe the meaning of the photographs to others (Pink, 2001). For non-drinking fraternity men, the photographs allowed me to better understand the environment of fraternity life on campus and analyze the possibilities of a new area of research. Future research needs to be conducted to apply this same approach on a broader scale to determine if we can, in fact, make campus-based changes to better attract non-drinking students to campus. This type of study was selected to better understand the participants and their life experiences.

There were more "Chrises" on campus and their stories were important for better supporting male students on campus.

The study was a single site study involving an institution in the southeastern United States. The study included recruiting participants through snowball sampling and employed key informant interviews, two semi-structured interviews, and volunteer-employed photography to answer the research questions. The purpose of participant focus groups was to share advice they had for incoming male students and to normalize the identity of the non-drinking fraternity man. The focus groups also allowed for open dialogue to occur on the role and influence of fraternity membership on campus. The students disclosed their drinking behaviors during the initial interview and openly disclosed their drinking behaviors in the focus group. Participants also were asked to write letters to incoming male students sharing advice and recommendations on managing the college social and fraternity scene. These letters are shared as part of recommendations for students in Chapter Five.

Definition of Terms

There are three definitions used throughout the literature to define the rate and frequency at which students drink: problematic drinking, binge drinking and high-risk drinking. For students who identify as non-drinkers and abstainers, there are definitions that will be discussed later in the literature review.

Problematic drinking is 10 or more drinks in one setting for men and nine or more drinks in one setting for women (Baer, 2002; Walter, et al., 2000). The negative consequences in this category of alcohol use are increased sexual assault, academic consequences, and more severe sanctioning on campus.

Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks for men in one two-hour setting and four or more drinks for women in one two-hour setting (Weitzman et al. 2003; Wechsler, 1997). Binge drinking impacts campus directly when students engage in the episodic drinking, but also when non-drinkers are living among drinkers in a residential setting on campus.

Moderate drinking is defined as one to three drinks per day (Wechsler, 2000).

High-risk drinking (White et al. 2005) is the increased use and abuse of alcohol, defined as problematic and binge drinking, coupled with associated consequences that significantly impact an individual's health due to the secondary effects.

Non-drinkers (Epler et al. 2009) have not had a drink in the last 30 days, but have had alcohol at least once.

*Abstainers (*Epler et al. 2009; Wechsler, 2000) are defined as those individuals who have never consumed alcohol at all.

P*eer pressure* is the influence of one's peer group to take certain action or adopt certain values.

Masculinity is the condition of being masculine, pertaining to men or man (Harper and Harris, 2008).

Fraternity (Borsari and Carey, 1999) is defined as a group of individuals (males) sharing a common interests; state of friendship and mutual support within a group.

Nationally affiliated fraternities are those organizations that are associated with the North-American Interfraternity Council (NIC).

Fraternity brothers are individuals who are part of the same fraternity and identify similarly with the organization and its values (Pike and Askew, 1990).

Study Contribution

The research on college alcohol abuse has been primarily focused on students who drink alcohol (Iwamoto, et al., 2011; Hingson et al., 2005). Current research contends that most college students drink alcohol at high-risk and heavy episodic rates (more than 8-10 drinks in one sitting) (Iwamoto et al., 2011). Specifically, men were drinking at higher rates on more days a week than women on campus which led to higher binge drinking and alcohol-related problems (Seo & Li, 2009; Slutske, 2005), although that gap seemed to be narrowing. This study helped fill a gap in the literature in evaluating the motivations and experiences of non-drinking fraternity members within this traditionally high-risk population. These students have an untold story that needs to be shared. The focus of the study was on male non-drinkers, although the results of the study may help inform further research when exploring non-drinking female sorority members.

By examining the interpersonal relationship between individuals and how information and experiences are exchanged, I used social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and male gender role conflict (O'Neil et al., 1990) to inform the study. I incorporated the role of social identity and male gender roles into the study to specifically examine how non-drinking fraternity men made meaning of their experiences, with the goal of shedding light onto how higher education professionals can best predict non-drinking behavior of that group. The study was limited in scope, as the participants were all non-drinking fraternity members at a single, large, public, southeastern, university campus in the United States.

Situated Knowledge and Related Assumptions

My professional experience and involvement as a student affairs professional and fraternity and sorority advisor, coupled with my passion for helping students progress throughout their college career, gave me the background needed to effectively research and evaluate this population and issue.

I brought a sincere interest and passion related to the student behaviors and activities that impacted their experiences on campus. Throughout my professional career, I have worked with student leaders that I have known first as leaders and second as students. I have interacted with students at very low social and personal points in their lives. My professional position often requires that I respond to crisis situations and difficult students, which leaves little time to develop positive interactions with students who are engaged in inappropriate behavior. This study required me to engage at a deeper level with students and inquire on topics that I had not previously addressed. Many of the topics were related to personal decisions or situations they had made. These discussions challenged me as a researcher to recognize my biases and put them aside to listen and understand the stories of these men.

Based on situated knowledge, there were assumptions that I held about my topic. Due to the nature of my job, I recognized that many students arrived on campus as Chris did and quickly got caught up in what students perceive as the typical college experience. The personal bias that I brought to the study was that students who fit the criteria of a fraternity man on campus were identified by others as a high-risk drinker. It was a challenge for me to isolate my assumptions from what I learned from the participants. I

reflected on both personal bias and positionality in analytic memos and reflection throughout data collection. This thoughtful reflection gave me the space to connect what I was hearing and thinking with the literature and the study.

The assumptions I held were particularly related to the reasons these non-drinkers made the decision not to drink and still associate with the fraternity community. My assumptions are that religion and a strong sense of family values were not only priority for these students, but that they were linked and contributed to their decision-making around alcohol use. I also assumed that these students were comfortable with their decision to remain a non-drinker after pledging a social fraternity and had the confidence to go their own way, not being pressured by peers.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Approximately 80% of students on college campuses drink alcohol (Johnson, et al., 1996; Meilman et al., 1998; Pendergrast 1994); almost half of students on campus binge drink (Johnson et al., 1996; Weshceler, 1996); and over one quarter of students on campus engage in high-risk drinking (Barnes et al., 1992; Berkowitz & Perkins, 1986). Gender differences played a role in the impact of alcohol abuse on individuals. There was a higher prevalence of men binge drinking, with men reporting more heavy-drinking days (Seo & Lei, 2009; Iwamoto et al., 2011) and more alcohol-related problems than do women (Slutske, 2005). Excessive drinking is associated with consequences such as damaged property, violence, poor class attendance and academic performance, hangovers, injuries, and fatalities (Iwamoto et al., 2011; LaBrie et al., 2007; Wechsler et al., 2002; Kremer and Levy, 2003).

College fraternities are often synonymous with alcohol use and problem drinking (DeSimone, 2007; Kimmel, 2007; Wechsler et al., 2002). Research conducted by Chaloupka and Wechsler (1996) found that simply having a fraternity on campus increased the binge drinking rates for both members and non-members. Intoxication levels at fraternity parties are found to exceed those at other parties (Glindemann & Geller, 2003). What does this say about college drinking and the impact for males who are members of fraternities on campuses? One might infer that fraternity members are in

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danger. Although fraternities were founded to advocate community service, leadership and learning (Asel, et al., 2009; DeSimone, 2007), and most maintained those ideals as the foundation of the organizations, alcohol abuse was a topic that was discussed too often within campuses and national organizations (Kimmel, 2008).

Summary of literature review

To understand fully the context of male non-drinkers, who join fraternities, it is important to dig into the research literature in five different areas, which will be divided into sections.

1. The first section provides a historical overview of fraternities and sororities, including why they were created and the value of the membership.

2. The second section is important in framing the problem of college alcohol use in fraternities and sororities by addressing its role in these organizations. I included a historical overview of how college student drinking, particularly in fraternities, is portrayed in the media. I examined the impact alcohol has had on fraternity and sorority organizations across the country in relation to high-risk behaviors, negative consequences, and even death. In addition, I explored gender differences, and the differences in alcohol use between college and non-college counterparts. Also included is the scope of college student drinking, the role of peer influence, reasons students drink, environmental factors that encourage these behaviors, and definition of terms that identify individuals by their type of drinking.

3. The third section addresses the role gender played in college student drinking, including a discussion of masculinity theory, and environmental factors related to

gender differences and the role of peer and family influences on decisions about whether or not to drink.

4. The fourth section applies masculinity theory to explain the socialization of young men into adult men.

5. The final section reviews the limited research on abstainers and non-drinkers to provide insight into the factors that led this group to decide not to drink, their motivations for not drinking, and a look into their college experience.

This study examined college men, who were non-drinkers, and members of fraternities at a public college in South Carolina, to determine what about them, their upbringing, their peer group, and their attitude was different from their drinking counterparts and led them to this place of non-drinking within the fraternity environment. Due to discrepancies in services for high-risk students and non-drinkers, these non-drinking male students were often left to find their own way and figure it out for themselves. They were not identified in campus service and support units as students who were at-risk. Instead, they attended class, took their academic coursework very seriously and sought real friendships with other men. There is also very little research about the role of the non-drinking fraternity member on campus, hence the need for this study.

Educators who work on college campuses are reminded daily of the negative impact alcohol has within the community. A quick Google search for college drinking provides list after list of articles, news reports, and calls for action on high-risk alcohol use on campuses, specifically among first-year male students who joined a fraternity (http://www.cnn.com/2015/03/18/us/fraternities-boys-behaving-badly/; http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2015/03/20/260481/bad-behavior-at-fraternities-has.html).

Students who binge drink are more likely to miss class, get in trouble with campus authorities, experience injuries, drive under the influence or ride with someone who has been drinking (Wechsler and Issac, 1992). Binge drinking is most prevalent among men, who are affiliated with a Greek organization, athletes, younger students, and children with a family history of alcohol abuse (Weitzman et al., 2003; Borsari and Carey; 2003; Borsari, et al., 2007). In a residential setting, the community is negatively impacted by alcohol from property damage, violation of community rules, and noise, which is often the result of behavior from a night of heavy drinking. Surprisingly, the acceptable standard of drinking behavior was not consistent throughout the research (Heck and Williams, 1995) leaving unanswered questions on the role of prevention and intervention programs on campus. Current college alcohol use research (Wechsler et al., 2005; Epler, 2009; LaBrie et al., 2008) identified male students who joined a fraternity and participated in heavy alcohol consumption (Harford et al. 2002) as high-risk students. Male students are considered to be at highest risk for falling into peer pressures associated with alcohol use and abuse (Borsari and Carey, 1999). Peer influence and social context of the college environment shaped many 18-year olds when they arrived to campus. In a more recent study, Borsari and Carey (2006) explored the quality of peer relationships on the influence of alcohol use. The researchers used an organizational framework based on social learning theory (SLT) to demonstrate the importance of peer relationships and the how they may influence alcohol use. They discovered that the quality of peer relationships enhanced social reinforcement, modeling of the behavior and cognitive processes of alcohol use. The literature presented the role of peer influence on

adolescent alcohol use and was defined as the strongest predictor of adolescent alcohol use (Buchloz, 1990; Jacob and Leonard, 1994).

Fraternity Men as Non-Drinkers

There was little research available on non-drinkers who choose to join a fraternity. There are gaps in the literature related to predicted behavior of students who are non-drinkers or became non-drinkers based on a situation they experience. Research is needed to determine the factors that led to two distinct decision making tracks for college males. The assumption was that all male students who join fraternities are high-risk drinkers. According to national data collected each fall on all first-year students, using the AlcoholEDU™ online alcohol assessment (Everfi, 2013), 20% of freshmen identified as a non-drinker before arriving to campus, with 16% of those students remaining a non-drinker after six weeks on campus. This statistic was often surprising to administrators on campus because of the time and energy that was spent holding students accountable when they made poor decisions after nights of drinking. This data also presented an opportunity to explore the stories of those students who might be associated with higher risk peer groups, but chose not to engage in drinking behaviors, for an alternative view of the impact of the college experience.

Research conducted by Chaloupka and Wechsler (1996) found that simply having a fraternity on campus increased the binge drinking rates for both members and non-members. Intoxication levels at fraternity parties were found to exceed those at other parties (Glindemann & Geller, 2003). College alcohol use is a scene that is familiar in popular culture in movies such as *Animal House* and *Hangover*, typically glorifying the drunken escapades in which the actors engaged throughout the movies.

The importance of this study focused on identifying non-drinking male students based on criteria specified for this study. In addition to locating these students on campus, it was also important to distinguish what factors influenced the decisions they made around alcohol use and association with peer groups, specifically social fraternities.

Based on Lecompte & Preissle's (1993) three components of literature review, there were three primary themes that can be extrapolated from the current research on fraternity men: 1) college men drink more than they did in high school and more than their non-college counterparts (Capraro, 2010); 2) fraternity membership inhibits student learning and contributes to negative health behaviors (Asel, Siefert, Pascarella, 2009); 3) freshman students typically drink more, and at higher rates, than their upperclassmen counterparts (LaBrie, et al., 2007). The substantive review of the literature painted a dismal picture of college male students on campus in relation to their alcohol consumption (Olmstead et al., 2014; Elkins et al., 2013).

History of Fraternities and Sororities

The association of students, first through literary societies, and then as fraternities and sororities, remain a great example of the impact of student leadership and innovation on campus. The groups represented the influence self-governance and the impact of student subculture on the college experience. Greek letter organizations began on college campuses when Phi Beta Kappa was founded in December, 1776, at the College of William and Mary (Thelin, 2011). Phi Beta Kappa had many of the characteristics of today's fraternities and sororities, but was considered a literary society (Torbenson, 2009). This group started with only five men who wanted to create a student organization that would be considered secret, with a motto, badge, principles and bonds of friendship.

The group met regularly to discuss controversial topics that impacted men in the eighteenth century (Thelin, 2011). Although debates in the organizations occurred, they were conducted in private. Similar debates and meetings occur today as social fraternities and sororities gather on college campuses to create an experience that is rooted in the values, scholarship and purpose that organization founders established centuries ago.

Today, there are over 350 social fraternities and sororities in existence throughout the United States and Canada. The first fraternity focused more on social than literary aspects was Kappa Alpha Society (Thelin, 2011). Faculty members initially opposed the creation of this additional society but students embraced it and it led to the formation of additional organizations. The establishment of the Kappa Alpha Society was significant in the discussion of college student drinking and activism on campus. The founding of the organization signified how students could create change and influence the college community. The primary focus of the literary societies was debating philosophy, whereas the early fraternities introduced a social focus that had not previously existed. In 1839, at Miami University, Beta Theta Pi was the first fraternity founded west of the Alleghany Mountains. The organization was formed as a result of a disagreement with Alpha Delta Phi on the basis that a fraternal organization could be a vehicle for moral and intellectual growth (Torbenson, 2009).

Literary societies began to lose their influence as fraternities developed in New York and New England in the late 1820s-1840s (Thelin, 2011). Students yearned for the social connection more than the academic discussion. Men who were part of literary societies utilized their time outside of class to continue debates that occurred in class. Faculty influenced the discussions of these organizations, although the students began

looking for more. Fraternities were developed to place more emphasis on the social aspect of community.

Around the same time, at coeducational colleges in the Midwest and South, a movement grew among women to establish a distinct social fraternity counterpart to that of men (Thelin, 2011). Women questioned why they could not join the fraternities and, although this had never been discussed, most fraternities did not allow women to join. At times, national fraternity organizations discussed giving limited status to women but the female students insisted on the opportunity for full membership. The first women's organizations were created as fraternities because the word "sorority" did not exist until 1882 (Kimmel, 2008). Fraternities and sororities were part of the growing movement on college campuses to create a meaningful student life experience beyond the classroom (Kimmel, 2008, p.18). The rise of fraternities and sororities on campuses contributed to the decline of literary societies due in part to the greater sense of loyalty that existed among fraternity and sorority members (Thelin, 2011; Kimmel, 2008). With the social emphasis on early fraternities and sororities, college administrators and faculty seemed to focus on the social impact these groups have on campuses today. The historical perspective of how these groups were created provides context for how the groups were formed and how they contributed to the extinction of the literary society. Studies associated higher levels of community service with fraternity and sorority membership (Asel et al., 2009), as well as involvement in college (Astin, 1977, 1993; Baier and Whippe, 1990; Pike and Askew, 1990), but also indicated that members reported limited diverse relationships and higher alcohol use.

Alcohol Use in Fraternities and Sororities

Popular culture and media have influenced the perception that alcohol use on college campuses, particularly in fraternities and sororities, is high. In a recent historical review of student drinking in college novels, Hevel (2014) demonstrated how the use of alcohol has changed as reflected in novels and modern-day blockbusters from the late nineteenth century through the twentieth century. The academic environment of colleges and universities were often presented as beer-soaked bashes to the public, particularly in movies such as *Animal House* and *Old School*. Both movie examples presented university and fraternity life as alcohol-soaked parties where students engaged in sexual acts with individuals they did not know and where not remembering what happened the night before was considered funny. Thus, students arrived on campus with preconceived notions of how college life, particularly fraternity life, would be.

Peer influence and social context of the college environment shaped many 18-year olds when they arrived to campus. The literature discussed the role of peer influence on adolescent alcohol use and was defined, perhaps, as the strongest predictor of adolescent alcohol use (Bucholz, 1990; Jacob and Leonard, 1994). Peer groups and prior drinking experiences influenced students on campus, whether it was in a residence hall or a student organization, as college students have the desire to fit in and be a part of the community. Strayhorn (2012) suggested that sense of belonging, at its most fundamental level, was the perceived support on campus for students and their feelings of importance and mattering by the group. He developed a list of seven core elements of sense of belonging that align with peer influence within the environment. These core elements indicated, in summary, that belonging was a basic human need, it was sufficient to drive

human behavior, it took on heightened importance in new situations or environments and that the intersections of social identities impacted college students' sense of belonging.

Borsari and Carey (2006) named three social learning theory constructs (social reinforcement, modeling, and cognitive processes) in describing how peers influence alcohol use. Individuals are impacted by the social expectations reinforced by those within their group. When behavior is reinforced, regardless of the situation, individuals believe that it is accepted. When the behavior is alcohol use, it becomes normative behavior when everyone in the organization, or in a group, encourages each other. Similarly, Cronin (1997) developed a "reasons for drinking" scale with three primary dimensions: social camaraderie, mood enhancement and tension reduction. Social camaraderie was identified as the predictor for drinking rates while mood enhancement was identified as predictor for alcohol-related problems. Students wanted to be among friends and others like them when drinking, but there was also the desire to feel good and do what felt good in the moment. In a recent review of literature on fraternity drinking from 1999-2009, Borsari and Carey (2009) identified three primary categories that emerged across the literature: selection and socialization into the Greek system, misperception of norms, and the enabling environment of the chapter organization or chapter facility. In addition, the authors outlined three ways fraternity membership increased binge drinking: social pressure and the need to be accepted by peers, elevated perceptions related to drinking norms, and the environment was readily available to accept the behavior. These findings are consistent with Cronin's (1997) research on the influence of peers and social context in social use.

Social context is defined where students drink (Baer, 2002). The focus was on who was involved, where the drinking took place, and whether others associated within the same context exhibited similar habits. For example, students involved in larger campus organizations might be associated with higher rates of alcohol consumption. The behavior was a norm; there was a group of people with which the student identified participating in the same activity. Workman's (2001) study contended that drinking performances were socially learned leading to "drunkenness in the culture." The behaviors were accepted among the group with members self-selecting into high-risk drinking environments (Workman, 1998, Workman 2001, Turrisi et al, 2001). In this study, an area noted for future research would be to explore the role of the non-drinking student and how drunkenness was defined for these students. Student organizations, particularly fraternities and sororities, were identified in this category of social context. There was strong data that suggested that members of Greek organizations drink more heavily and more frequently than non-Greek students (Cashin et al., 1998; Engs et al., 1996; Wechsler et al., 1995). In the Cashin study (1998), of over 25,000 students from 61 institutions, members of Greek organizations viewed alcohol as a vehicle for friendship, social activity, and sexuality in greater numbers than their non-Greek counterparts.

Interestingly, the leadership in the Greek organizations drank as much as the non-leader Greek members, which suggested the chapter leaders were modeling the behavior that was seen as the norm or conforming to the norm expectations. Membership in a fraternity was associated with higher levels of alcohol consumption (Baer, 1994; DiSimone, 2007; Wechsler et al., 1995). The literature on social context alcohol use did not address the non-drinker or abstainer who joined a fraternity or sorority and remained

a non-drinker. If these students who identified as non-drinkers or abstainers are identified

and studied, researchers could evaluate the reasons these individuals chose to associate

with these groups and identified how they assimilate into the culture or how the culture

accommodated for them.

Alcohol and College Campuses

To fully understand the breadth of the issue of alcohol use on campus, it is

important to first note that college and university campuses have struggled since the

beginning of higher education with college alcohol abuse (Kimmel, 2013; Harper &

Harris, 2010). In exploring the role of alcohol on campus, it is important to consider the

current state of affairs in the early colleges. In his book, *The Company He Keeps*,

Nicholas Syrett (2009) associated the influence of the fraternity movement with concerns

related to alcohol use on campus. There were only males on campus, primarily white

males. These male students lived in a society that was ruled by those who looked like

them. The men came to college looking for a better life for their families. Often this

meant leaving communities and families to explore the college environment and

experience. There was an elitist mentality of the students of that time because college was

not accessible to everyone. The early colleges were opened in small, rural towns across

America. The sense of education was good, although the idea of a more social experience

was even better. The men were free from families and responsibilities and believed they

knew better than the faculty who were educating them.

The role of alcohol on campus has evolved throughout the history of higher

education in America (Kimmel, 2013; Wechsler et al., 2008; Hevel, 2010). Alcohol had

been and continues to be viewed as the social lubricant that brought students together.

The abuse of alcohol continues to exist on campuses, just as it did for the early colleges (Syrett, 2009). The mentality of "boys will be boys" continues to perpetuate the rowdy and violent behavior amongst college males today (Kimmel, 2008). Although the problem has persisted for males since the beginning of higher education in America, they were not alone. Sorority women, compared to their non-Greek peers, drink more and experience higher rates of negative consequences than fraternity peers. Negative consequences of drinking behaviors for college women included higher risk of sexual assault and higher blood alcohol content. Women have caught up to the dangerous and risky behaviors that influence the college experience for many campuses (Borsari and Carey, 2003; LaBrie et al., 2008). Fraternities and sororities continue to be the primary way by which many students today are introduced to the party environment on college campuses.

Since the minimum legal drinking age (MLDA) changed from 18 to 21 in 1985, colleges have struggled to address community concerns related to alcohol use (Toomey et al., 2006; Wechsler et al., 2002a). College students under the legal drinking age have been able to continue obtaining alcohol (Dent et al., 2005; Wagenaar and Wolfson, 1995; Wechsler et al., 2002) at bars, restaurants, or parties. The use of alcohol has changed over time and evolved into what is prevalent today on most campuses (Dowdall, 2009). Alcohol use and abuse was seen as a rite of passage (Workman, 2001; DeSimone, 2007) and part of college life (Borsari and Carey, 1999), although the risks associated with the decisions students are making while under the influence of alcohol have life-altering implications.

Social factors related to peer influence, sense of belonging and connection has been linked to increased college student drinking (Simons et al., 2000). This led to conversations by administrators, faculty, staff, students and researchers on the culture of today's college campus. In the literature, college life, socializing and alcohol are synonymous with continued questions related to culture on campus (Smeaton, et al., 1998; Walter, et al., 2000; Baer, 2002). College drinking was considered "friendly fun" by some without a full understanding of the impact alcohol consumption was having on campus (Dowdall, 2009; Baer, 2002).

Some might argue that drinking is how students bond and belong within a group (Griffin, 2004). If students hear from campus professionals that bonding and becoming close with a peer and social group is based on alcohol, and generally high-risk alcohol consumption, institutions and professionals are heading down a slippery slope (LaBrie, et al., 2007; Borsari et al., 2007).

The prevalence of alcohol-related or secondary effects of alcohol use continue to be discussed in the literature. Based on a national quantitative study on college students, Wechsler et al. (1996) found that fraternity and sorority members were more likely to experience secondary effects of binge drinking, such as having studying or sleep interrupted, taking care of a drunk friend, or experiencing unwanted sexual advances. The issues related to alcohol use and sexual assaults have become a national topic of concern for President Obama and the federal government (Campus SaVE, March 2014). Colleges have been put on notice from the federal government to ensure that processes are in place, and students are educated and trained, on how to report a sexual assault and how campus professionals should respond after being informed about a potential sexual

assault. Often substance abuse and sexual violence are deeply connected, which requires that campuses evaluate both the sexual assault prevention message as well as education related to high-risk alcohol use.

Gender and College Student Drinking

Gender differences are correlated to the role of social context on alcohol consumption (Nelson and Wechsler, 2003; Senchak et al. 1998). Men have a higher frequency of drunkenness in large groups, with mixed sex, and small groups of the same sex (Iwamoto et al., 2011; Hummer et al., 2012; Mehta et al., 2010). The presence of women might moderate male consumption when in mixed gender settings, but women drank at the same rate in either setting. In the evaluation of gender roles and social context, it appeared that the influence of women on men was more positive. This meant that when women were present in the social setting, men drank less and were impacted less by alcohol. If alcohol was not present, the impact of gender roles on the social setting was minimized (Akers, 1998; Boyd et al., 2008). Women, however, experienced greater consequences related to blood alcohol content (BAC) and sexual activity. Sorority membership is associated with greater levels of heavy drinking and is considered a more desirable behavior for women than for men.

The literature on alcohol use and misuse finds important differences between the impact of college student drinking on men and women. College men are at greater risk for increased problematic drinking and negative alcohol-related consequences than their female counterparts (Iwamoto, et al., 2011; Toomey et al., 2007). Men reported heavier drinking days (Seo and Li, 2009) and more alcohol-related problems than women (Slutske, 2005). Binge drinking was the most prevalent among men, those affiliated with

a Greek organization, athletes, and younger students (Weitzman, et al., 2003). The highest-risk student population on campus is white males, under the age of 21, who are members of fraternities or athletic teams (Glassman et al., 2010, Wechsler, 2002). What is absent from current literature, are the experiences of non-drinking fraternity members within the fraternity organization context. This gap must be filled to understand the relationship between membership, gender, and drinking behaviors.

Theories related to masculinity, and existing beliefs and expectations for men, explained the problematic drinking patterns observed. According to gender theorists, masculine norms play a significant role in contributing to problematic drinking behaviors among men (Courtenay, 2000; Lemle and Mishkind, 1989). Researchers who studied the role of masculinity defined the paradox of men's power as both powerful and powerless (Pleck, 1989; Kaufman, 1994; Kimmel, 1994). In *Guyland* (2008), Michael Kimmel referred to masculinity and achievement as the pivotal intersection of manhood through a "test it/prove it" initiation. Men were expected to prove their manhood through dangerous and threatening situations. The more dangerous and risky the situation, the greater sense of manhood and masculinity was reached (Courtenay, 2000; Olmstead et al., 2013). This "test it/prove it" mentality is most pronounced within fraternities.

The need to measure up and break away from motherly figures was particularly evident when examining initiation into fraternities and military groups. Hazing is often seen as the ritual associated with proving oneself among or within a group (DeSimone, 2007; Kimmel, 1994). Ironically, this place of being a man and proving ones manhood within a group can lead to a place of incredible solitude and insecurity (Kimmel, 2008). Fraternity membership is associated with higher levels of binge drinking and greater

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negative consequences associated with high-risk activities such as hazing rituals

(DeSimone, 2007; Asel et al. 2009; Sher et al., 2001)

Masculinity

Masculine norms are defined by Mahalik et al., 2003 as the socially constructed

beliefs, values, rules, guidelines and expectations inherent in being a man. For example,

rules for men include winning at all costs, sexual prowess, controlling one's emotions,

being a risk-taker, inclination toward violent, aggressive behavior, asserting influence

over others, aversion to being perceived as gay, regarding work as priority role, and the

desire to be important and reach a particular status in society (Mahalik et al., 2003).

Alcohol is often seen as the vehicle for reaching these pinnacles of manhood. Men drink

to appear more masculine, feel more in charge, and to engage in greater risks. Risks were

also associated with group acceptance (Capraro, 2008). College was about taking risks,

learning about oneself on the journey to adulthood. Students arrived to campuses looking

for the adventure of college; the ability to be challenged academically, but also to be

challenged socially. Adventure was linked to masculinity (Green, 1993) because society

gave men the ability to apply risk and adventure to assert power and identity in the world.

Research on men and alcohol consumption concluded that manhood and

masculinity were often associated with being able to tolerate large amounts of alcohol.

Men often engaged in drinking games with peers that encouraged competition and large

quantities of alcohol. Recent evidence suggested that high-risk college drinking was

associated with specific social and recreational events within the college environment

(Neal and Fromme, 2007). These events are connected to traditional campus events,

fraternity social events or athletic events where alcohol is the focus of the event.

Non-Drinking Fraternity Men

The final section of the literature review explores the research on non-drinking college students. As defined earlier in the definitions section, a non-drinker for the purpose of this study is someone who has not had alcohol in the last 30 days. Huang et al (2011) compared college student drinkers and abstainers to determine why drinkers drink and why abstainers do not. The researchers found that college students drink for social reasons, mood enhancements, and coping (Cooper et al., 1992; Cronin, 1997; Stewart et al. 1996). The decision not to drink by abstainers is primarily driven by lifestyle choices, religion, and a general belief that alcohol makes people lose control (Epler, et al., 2009; O'Hara et al., 2014). Male students in the study had greater odds of abstaining, but reported higher drinking rates (Greenfield et al., 1989).

Students abstained from drinking for a variety of reasons, including religion, family expectations, and health reasons (Epler et al., 2009; O'Hara et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2011). Studies indicated that students who chose not to drink were doing so for lifestyle reasons (Huang, 2009; Wechsler, 1995). Cooper (1992) added a new dimension of social norms when exploring why students abstained or chose not to drink by identifying four rationales for not drinking: self-control, upbringing, self-reform, and performance (Greenfield et al., 1989). Available research used various terminologies when describing why non-drinkers abstain, but the focus on the individual was salient. The non-drinker and abstainer have been studied in the college setting, but not specifically in the fraternity community. This identified gap in the existing literature led to the need for this study to explore who the non-drinkers are amongst fraternity members and why they chose to join fraternities.

Summary

The review of literature surrounding college alcohol use examined the topic through five different lenses to better understand the college fraternity man as a non-drinker. As a recap, the five lenses were a historical overview of fraternities and sororities and their founding; the role of alcohol in social Greek organizations; the influence of gender and its influence on college drinking behaviors; masculinity theory and socialization of young men to adult men; and finally, the role and influence of abstainers and non-drinkers. College alcohol use has plagued campuses since 1736 at Harvard College when men who attended the college looked for alternatives to the strict academic focus (Thelin, 2011). In addition, the literature examined the influence of student organizations, particularly fraternities and sororities, had on college alcohol use and the peer pressure. Throughout the literature, it is evident that the college male has evolved, although it is evident that the role of peer influence and the desire to take risks continues to drive the students.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

Overview

This study was designed as a descriptive case study (Yin, 2014) in order to capture the descriptions of the phenomenon through the lived experiences of the participants. The perception, as outlined in the literature, was that all male students who join fraternities are high-risk drinkers (DeSimone, 2007; Asel 2009). According to national data, collected each fall on all first-year students, using the AlcoholEDU™ online alcohol assessment (Everfi, 2013), 30% of freshman students who binge drink were more likely to miss class, get in trouble with campus authorities, experience injuries, drive under the influence or ride with someone who had been drinking (Wechsler and Issac, 1992). These issues are problematic because they potentially interfere with the academic environment on campus for all students. For example, in an on-campus residential setting, the community was negatively impacted by alcohol from property damage, violation of community rules, and noise, which are behaviors that often result from a night of heavy drinking (Barnes et al., 1992; Adams and Nagoshi, 1999; Harford et al., 2002). Surprisingly, the acceptable standard of drinking behavior was not consistent throughout the research (Heck and Williams, 1995) leaving unanswered questions on the role of prevention and intervention programs on campus.

Researchers identified binge drinking was most prevalent among men, who were affiliated with a Greek organization, athletes, younger students, and students with a family history of alcohol abuse (Weitzman et al., 2003; Borsari and Carey, 1999; Borsari, et al., 2007). For the purpose of this study, fraternities were defined as those who were members of the North American Interfraternity Council (NIC). The NIC monitors values-based social fraternities that operate in accordance with expectations of other social fraternities (Asel et al., 2009; DeSimone, 2007). Current college alcohol use research identified male students, who joined a fraternity and participated in heavy alcohol consumption, as a high-risk student population on campus (Harford et al. 2002). Borsari and Carey (2006) identified male students to be at highest risk for succumbing to peer pressure associated with alcohol use and abuse. This high-risk designation is due to the social reinforcement from peers that is often a top predictor of high alcohol use.

There is little research available, however, on non-drinking men who chose to join a fraternity (Epler et al., 2009; Huang et al., 2009; O'Conner and Colder, 2009; Romo et al., 2014). There are gaps in the literature related to how the experiences of students defined as non-drinkers, or who became non-drinkers after being on campus, were defined. Research is needed to determine the factors that lead to decision-making associated with alcohol use among male fraternity members and to provide recommendations to students and campus administrators on about how to best support these students.

Based on research conducted by Everfi, a leading alcohol prevention company that administered AlcoholEDU to 100,000 college students across the United States each year, 24% of new college students who self-identify as an alcohol abstainer (Everfi,

2014). Over the course of the first six weeks on campus the number of abstainers

remained at 24%, but the number of heavy episodic drinkers increased from 20% prior to

arriving to campus to 26%. Researchers identify this as the "college effect" to highlight

significant changes in students' drinking behaviors after six weeks on campus (Everfi,

2014). The "college effect" named by Everfi researchers, validated the impact of the

campus environment on student behavior in the first six weeks on campus. The

behavioral shift for students was connected to the transition to campus life and the

college culture. This shift demonstrated the influence of the college environment on

individual student behavior. The first six weeks were significant because of the

transitions that occur as a new college student. There are transitions with peer groups,

family relationships, adult expectations and a newfound sense of freedom. In addition,

this time period is often when students were making decisions about whether or not they

would participate in fraternity and sorority recruitment activities. These statistics, related

to the drinking behaviors of incoming students, are often surprising to campus

administrators because of the time and energy spent holding students accountable for

poor decisions after drinking (Boyd et al., 2008). I argue that this data also sheds light on

another subpopulation of students, non-drinking fraternity men also impacted by the

"college effect" but in a different way than is currently available in the literature. There is

little research that explores the stories of the non-drinking students who might be

associated with higher risk peer groups, such as fraternities, but who choose not to be

engaged in the behaviors.

The descriptive case study design is important in answering the research questions

to better understand the case, which are the experiences of the non-drinking fraternity

men. Not only did I seek out answers as to why they joined the organizations they did, but I also sought to understand the life experiences of the participants and how those experiences shaped their views on social pressures in the college environment. There were four research questions that guided this study:

Research Questions

1. How did life experiences influence non-drinking fraternity members?

2. Why did non-drinking males join university social fraternities at a predominately white institution?

3. What strategies did non-drinking fraternity men utilize in social situations when alcohol was present at a predominately white institution?

4. How did students use pictures to illustrate their experience as non-drinking fraternity members?

This study required a qualitative approach to answer the research questions and explore the motivations of the non-drinking fraternity men. Qualitative research allowed for individual stories and experiences to be heard and analyzed. Case study design was key for understanding the lived experiences of the participants and how those experiences impacted their decisions not to drink alcohol. This research method allowed for flexibility and adaptability among the study design participants, and the research questions (Maxwell, 2013). This approach also allowed for interactions and interconnection among all data points, including interviews, focus groups, photovoice, and document analysis throughout the exploration of the phenomenon of non-drinking college males within the fraternity environment on a large, southeastern college campus.

As part of the photovoice project that complemented data collection, each participant shared photographs. The visual representation provided by the study described the experiences of these fraternity men who rejected the stereotypes of college fraternity men on campus.

The study identified and explored the experiences and motivations of students with membership in North America Interfraternity Council (NIC) fraternities at a public institution. The NIC serves as trade association that supports the fraternity movement and leads national discussions on the impact of fraternity membership on student development. The participants in this study were initiated members of fraternities ranging from freshman to senior students. They were identified through both key informant interviews and snowball sampling (Yin, 2014) with chapter and campus student leaders. Initiated members were identified as participants to eliminate any hierarchical or power structure in the organization that might cause members to be less honest throughout the study. Uninitiated members might have been hesitant to participate for fear of initiation criteria being connected to their comments in this study.

This research project was conducted using an emic approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2004) because it did not use formal theory to frame the study. Theories were used to inform the study as part of the conceptual framework that will be discussed later in this chapter. Through this study I wanted to explore and evaluate the experiences of non-drinking fraternity members and contribute a new dimension to college (non) drinking research. The emic approach focuses on cultural distinctions that are meaningful to members of these particular organizations.

The study design was originally proposed as an interview study that utilized photovoice to capture the experiences of the non-drinking fraternity men (Wang, 1999; Wang & Burris, 1997), but shifted to a descriptive case study when it was clear that the number of participants would be less than 8-12. This move was made to allow for deeper connection with current participants. It also meant that an additional data source, a focus group, was needed for triangulation. According to Yin's (2014) definition of case study, it was the most appropriate design for answering the "how" and "why" research questions related to the multiple sources of evidence collected from participants. Yin also spoke to the significance of the unit of analysis in the case study to clearly define the phenomenon to be studied. Once the unit of analysis was defined as the experiences of non-drinking fraternity men, it was important to examine and name the propositions that clarify the boundaries of the case. The case was bound within the context of fraternity organizations on one campus in the southeast.

The constructivist approach (Guba & Lincoln, 2008) allowed for participants to help construct meaning of the story through their experiences, descriptions and observations. As a constructivist, I believe that truth is relative and dependent on one's perspective. Case study is most suitable when the researcher asks "how" and "why" questions and when the behaviors of those involved in the study cannot be manipulated (Yin, 2014). I determined that the case study design, which Yin described as an intervention or phenomenon in the real-life context where it occurred, would be the best approach for answering the stated research questions and contributing to future research.

The study design included a photovoice project from each participant. Photovoice, as defined by Wang (1999), is a process by which people can "identify, represent and

enhance their community through the use of photographs" (p.18). There are three main goals of photovoice: enable participants to reflect concerns of their community; promote critical dialogue of important topics; and influence policy and decision makers (Wang & Burris, 1997). The photovoice approach, and the use of volunteer employed photography (VEP) as a data collection method, was selected to provide a better understanding of the participants through the visual representation of their experiences as non-drinking fraternity men. John Collier introduced VEP in 1957 as a data collection method. He found that the use of photo interviews enabled participants to overcome the fatigue and repetition that was often present in traditional interviews. It also provided a way to better understand participants' lived experiences through their own lens. The use of photos in this study allowed participants to explore their experiences as non-drinkers in a more creative approach.

The approach of capturing the visual representation of non-drinking fraternity members also allowed for categories from participants' own words and experiences to be used to represent meanings and understanding. This allowed for different perspectives and approaches to be utilized to frame what was happening instead of using formal theory to determine what was occurring, which would represent an etic approach (Maxwell, 2013).

Photovoice

Photovoice was used to enhance the individual participant stories of their experiences on campus as a non-drinker. Wang and Burris (1997) suggested a three-step approach to working with photographs that was applied to this study. The three steps for researchers using photovoice include: select the photos, seek meaning about the lived

experiences of participants, and code the photographs by identifying, sorting and coding themes. The use of photographs strengthened the interviews and focus groups by serving as the visual representation of the students' experience on campus.

Participants were asked to take up to 5-10 pictures that described their experiences as non-drinking fraternity members on campus. A photovoice training session was conducted with each participant to outline informed consent and notify them that pictures containing nudity or vulgar images would not be used for the study. The pictures were taken during a two-week period during the fall semester. Participants were encouraged to take pictures of places, objects and events and not people. If faces of people were in the pictures, participants were asked to cover them to protect the identity of those individuals or to ask that they give consent for the use of the photograph. Participants were asked to sign a release stating that they maintained the copyrights to any photos they took and that they understood the conditions of the project (Wang & Burris, 1992). The use of photos as a method of data collection provided the social context of the fraternity environment and how the non-drinkers described their experiences as documented through the participant's lens.

The participants were instructed to capture the images with their own camera during a two-week period and email all photographs to me. After the pictures were submitted, an in-person follow up interview was scheduled with each participant. During the interview, we reviewed the pictures they submitted and discussed how the images they selected described their experiences on campus as a non-drinker. The process would ensure the validity of my findings (Yin, 2014). This triangulation of data sources served

as a way to check against interview evidence, but also to bring to life the experiences that cannot be captured through the repetition of words.

Site Selection

The site designated for this study was a public, Research I, four-year institution that is a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC). The university is a flagship, research institution with a vibrant campus life and student body, including nationally affiliated fraternities and sororities. I chose the pseudonym, "Southern State University" (SSU) for the institution in this study. SSU is a predominately white institution (PWI), where the racial make-up of the undergraduate student body is between 12-17% minority, with 8-10% being African-American. Approximately 50% of the undergraduate population is female. The state-assisted institution admits both males and females as first-year students and promotes a strong campus tradition rooted in academics and athletics.

Twenty-five to 30% of the 25,000 undergraduate students attending SSU are affiliated with one of the 45 national fraternities and sororities on campus. There are approximately 1,500-2,000 fraternity men on campus. According to campus alcohol assessment data from all first-year students, 28% of students identify as heavy episodic drinkers before they arrive on campus (AlcoholEDU, 2014). Additionally, 32% of students indicate that they are abstainers/non-drinkers before they arrive to campus. After six weeks on campus, the percentage of students reported abstainer/non-drinkers dropped to 24%. Heavy episodic drinking increased from 20% before students arrived, to 26% after being on campus for six weeks. The notion of the "college effect" was noted earlier in this chapter and continues to be influential in understanding student alcohol use and

the critical first six weeks of college in shaping individual student behavior (Everfi, 2014).

SSU is situated in an urban community and provides opportunities for entertainment and hospitality for community members and students. Specifically, there are three entertainment districts that surround the campus community with places for students to party, shop and eat. The institution had experienced significant enrollment growth over the last five years, almost doubling the size of the first-year class. Students reported that they selected this institution because of the vibrant campus life, and rich history and traditions, particularly related to athletics (CIRP data 2006, 2008). Increased enrollment trends, vibrant campus life and rich campus history and traditions were also reasons the campus was selected for this study.

Students at this institution arrived to campus drinking at a higher rate than the national average. Based on data from the AlcoholEDU fall, 2014, survey of first-year students under the age of 23, 44% of students arrived to campus as light/moderate or heavy episodic drinkers (Everfi, 2014), compared to the national average of 38% within the same categories.

After six weeks on campus, students reported that drinking (light, moderate or heavy episodic) increased to 52%, compared to the national average of 46%. This site is considered high-risk due to the fact that over half of first-year students drinking alcohol during the first six weeks of school. Although half of first-year students drink alcohol, there are still 48% of students who are not drinking at heavy episodic rates after six weeks. These data suggest a level of student life and activity that contributes to the drinking culture on campus.

Participant Selection

Criteria for participants in this study were undergraduate male students, who were members of fraternities on campus, and self-identified as non-drinkers or abstainers. See Table 3.1 for participant demographic information. Four of the participants identified as non-drinkers (defined as no alcohol in last 30 days) although they did not come to college as non-drinkers. Their transition from a drinker to a non-drinker will be discussed later in this study, although it is important to note that their shift occurred outside of the first six weeks of college that has been discussed in this chapter as the "college effect." Two participants identified as abstainers and had never consumed alcohol. A description of each participant, with pseudonym is provided in chapter four.

Researcher Context

Data for this study were collected throughout the 2015 fall semester from August through November. The fall semester was a particularly busy one with football games, fraternity and sorority formal recruitment and intake processes, and the excitement that comes with new students on campus. In addition to the regular fall activities, this year there was an unprecedented level of student activism on campus and across the country. Student protests occurred both at this site and other campuses calling for better support for minority students and an acknowledgement of racial and gender discrimination. In addition to interview questions, campus climate was a frequent topic of conversation

Table 3.1

Participant Demographic Information

Participant Number	Name	Age	Race	Year	Major	SC Resident	Private School	Public School	Campus Involvement	Current Greek Member	Christian	Parents Together	Drinking Status
1	Paul	20	W	Junior	Mechanical Engineering	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Non-Drinker
2	Clive	20	W	Junior	Political Science/ Russian	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Abstainer
3	Aaron	20	AA	Junior	Engineering	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Non-Drinker
4	John	21	W	Senior	Biochemistry	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Abstainer
5	Michael	19	W	Junior	Management/ Marketing	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Non-Drinker
6	Joe	20	W	Junior	Stats/Econ	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Non-Drinker

during interviews, as participants wanted to discuss what they observed and heard about current campus events. The campus climate discussions were significant because it was the first time that there was an on-campus, student-organized movement to address concerns related to racial and gender discrimination. The campus climate was discussed in student government, student organizations, in classrooms on campus, and around the student union. Although not directly related, but occurring simultaneously, was fraternity conflict that required that the design of this study be re-evaluated.

The study design shifted as the influence of the social and cultural environment at the university became more evident. This context and shift of the design could be attributed to several factors. The first was the conflict on campus among fraternities. In August, campus fraternities were caught recruiting new members with alcohol. According to fraternity recruitment policies, the entire process should be alcohol-free. Fraternity council leaders were made aware of these incidents and held the fraternities, and their leaders, accountable for the behavior and violation of policies. Although fraternity council leaders led the efforts, there was pressure on administrators to intervene. The accused groups questioned the validity of the reports of alcohol being provided during official recruitment events.

The internal conflict led Fraternity Council president, the first African-American man elected to this role, to be impeached by his peers. The terms of the impeachment indicated that he did not follow bylaws and policies in handling the incidents. In addition, a media firestorm ensued based on the institution's response in backing the student leaders. As the director of student services, and the administrator who oversaw fraternity and sorority life, I found myself in the middle of the conflict. I was questioned by

undergraduate fraternity members, and alumni, about the purpose of peer-to-peer accountability and the university's position on the issue. Alumni called for my removal through requests to the University President and fraternities and sororities became more divisive. The issues that divided the groups were related to race, affluence, and power and I witnessed first-hand both the positive and negative impact students have on an institutional issue.

These issues impacted the study because it was very difficult to recruit male students to discuss their experiences on campus as a non-drinker. While recruiting participants for the study, I was also visible on campus discussing the impact of the social and cultural incidents and the administration's call for change within the fraternity community. The call for change was related to the abusive behaviors related to alcohol that continued to infiltrate the fraternity and sorority community. This tension was noted through analytic memos as I grappled with the intersections of my professional work, personal opinions, and the research study. I reflected on my discouragement about the current incidents, as well as the opportunity to tell a story that seemed even more important at this point than when I originally made the proposal.

Positionality

Positionality is described as who the researcher is in relation to the study, the participants and to the site (Milner, 2007). As the researcher conducting qualitative research, it was important to acknowledge the identities and position brought to the research process and to the subject. Some of the identities that constituted my positionality are that I am a 37-year old Christian, southern, white, female, mother, and student affairs professional as the director of student services. In Milner's (2007) work,

he referred to the importance of researcher reflection. He argued that researchers needed to reflect about themselves in relation to others, and to acknowledge the multiple roles, identities, and positions that one brings to a study. In qualitative research, it is necessary for the researcher to share experiences, assumptions and biases with the reader in an effort for transparency (Glense, 2011). Reflecting on insider/outsider status and roles is one way to explore one's positionality.

Throughout data collection, I checked my positionality through analytic memos and personal journaling. The incidents of the fall semester caused me to not only re-evaluate my study design, but it also caused me to re-evaluate my professional journey and goals. During times of conflict and uncertainty, there are moments of clarity and understanding. I sought opportunities to interact with students and find out more about their experiences on campus. I asked hard questions and listened more than I had in a few years. This process of listening and reflection was important as I navigated this environment as a professional and as a graduate student. In addition, I was expecting my third child, a son. As I talked to upset parents who thought their son was being mistreated, or deserved to live it up in college, I was imagining myself in a similar position. These strategies were ways in which I managed the situation as a student and professional.

Epistemic orientation

My epistemic orientation and the community of scholarship that was connected to my work was a constructivist approach (Guba & Lincoln, 2007). This approach allowed participants to help construct the meaning of their story through their experiences, descriptions, and observations, which they shared during interviews, focus groups and

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personal writing and photographs. The role of semi-structured interviews supported this

construct of meaning for the participants. Participants shared details about their

upbringing and how they developed their own understanding of right and wrong. In

addition, the use of photos constructed a level of meaning for the individuals. The

photographs were the action behind the words of the participants as they often described

in greater detail their experiences as a non-drinker on campus or how they navigated the

scene as a fraternity man. The focus group allowed participants to construct meaning

through the discussions of what fraternity life was on campus, their reasons for

participating, and the role of peer pressures.

Insider and Outsider

Throughout this study, I was considered both an insider and an outsider. These

positions could be difficult to navigate if not identified and explore throughout the

research process. According to Merriam (2010) being an insider meant there was a

shared understanding within a group and easy access to a community or related to a

particular topic. The role of an outsider meant that there was a level of objectivity, and a

sense of "being away from home" that required that the researcher develop rapport, ask

meaningful questions, and reach an emphatic understanding.

As a student affairs professional for the last 12 years, I was afforded opportunities

to work closely with student leaders. In my current role as director of student services, I

oversee four functional areas in the Department of Student Life. Those areas include the

Offices of Athletic Student Ticketing, Fraternity and Sorority Life, Off Campus Student

Services, and Substance Abuse Prevention and Education. My role as the director of

these four functional areas requires that I critically evaluate the current environment

around student accountability and the student experience on campus, and make recommendations for future practice. In addition, I work with a team of professional staff to determine how we could help students develop as student leaders and as members of the University community. At times help came to students in crisis, at other times help came during celebration. My professional work affords me the opportunity to supervise and lead a team of 30 staff. Our staff works diligently each day to see that the student experience is engaging, entertaining, and safe. I take pride in the work we do and the expectations set for students across our areas.

Although I do not serve as a direct advisor to fraternity and sorority chapters, I often interact with chapter leaders, fraternity and sorority council officers, and students who have made unhealthy decisions or who have violated SSU's student code of conduct. Also, I serve as a crisis responder when there has been a student death or emergency within the fraternity and sorority community. This role of crisis responder was where my interest in this topic was born. I remember meeting with the parents of a student who took his own life. They could not understand how he could have interacted with student organizations, faculty and staff advisors, and student leaders and no one sensed there were issues with substance abuse. It challenged me to consider ways to seek out students who had not already crossed our desks in a conduct situation, or as a student leader, and look for those students who were going unnoticed.

My professional identity at SSU is one of the most significant ways that I am an outsider in my work. I came to my study in large part through my work in the Department of Student Life. My work responsibilities give me access to students and require that I respond and evaluate student needs and trends. This response identity was a

draw to looking at the topic of fraternities and alcohol from the new perspective; that of a non-drinker. My passion for this study developed through the interactions I have had with students, particularly fraternity members, as they navigated their college experience. Often, my first interactions with students were as new members to the Greek community. They are new to campus and the community and we work tirelessly to see that they understand expectations of the community and organization. There were occasions when students had violated campus policies, or made poor decisions that led them to my office, or they had a concerns that they brought to my attention. Most of my interactions with fraternity members occurred when there had been a concern or an issue that needed to be addressed. For example, a frequent conversation that I had with fraternity men was around new member education. Discussions included why they joined the organization they did and the similarities and differences between what they thought the experience would be like and what had actually occurred. Throughout my professional journey, I have challenged students on their decision-making and behaviors. I began to think that all men were high-risk drinking fraternity men. It was time to look at this topic through a new lens.

My interest in the experiences of non-drinking fraternity members evolved from my interactions and work with fraternities in crisis. I was the staff member who was called, or involved in responding to, a crisis with fraternity and sorority members no matter the time of the day or the issue. If a fraternity closed, or if a student died, I was called to respond. These situations can be emotionally and mentally draining, although I kept finding myself returning to these situations. I read and re-read to learn as much as possible about this group. It became apparent that current research left little space for

non-drinking men to engage in fraternities. Often my day-to-day duties were unpredictable during the academic year due to emergencies and crises. If a participant in my study had been involved in an emergency or crisis, I would have followed university protocol for alerting proper authorities.

My research interests in college males and non-drinking fraternity members often received raised eyebrows when I talked about them. The first question was how, as a woman, I could possibly relate to the male students in my study. As I shared in Chapters 1 and 2, the reason I selected non-drinking fraternity members was because the research on the males who drink on campus dominated the literature. There was a significant void in the current literature about students who identified as non-drinkers. The questions I kept returning to were: 1) what made the experience different for these students, and 2) why did they not drink, yet participate in these organizations? Initially, participants might have perceived me as someone who was focused on addressing the impact of unhealthy behavior rather than someone who was interested in understanding the experiences of non-drinking fraternity members.

Participants in this study were fraternity men who both self-identified, and were identified by their peers, as non-drinkers. All participants were at least 15 years younger than me and believed that I was unable to completely relate to the challenges facing college students today due to the years I had been removed from college. It was important for me to build rapport with participants and to draw upon my personal experiences and understandings of fraternity life. Although my professional role was not discussed in detail during the time with participants, some participants saw me as someone in power and that relationship was negotiated during the research process. As a

constructivist, I believe that knowledge, truth and reality are constructed by individuals and their communities (Merriam, 2010). Often engagement and inquiry creates more questions than answers. As a constructivist, the researcher and participants engage dynamically through the process. The human interaction created the in-depth accounts of this study and its relevance to the literature.

I experienced insider status as a Greek woman. I knew the tenants of the Greek organizations and the purpose behind their founding. Additionally, I knew the nuances of the community and spoke the language as a member of a Greek organization. As a student affairs professional, I knew the culture of alcohol use on campus and the intersection of alcohol use with members of Greek-letter organizations. These insider roles created trust among participants and allowed for discussions to be open and transparent.

My position as an outsider stemmed from to the fact that I was a woman and had not dealt with the pressures that men face related to masculinity, power, and peer pressure (Harper & Harris, 2008; Kimmel, 2007). As a sorority member, my entry into the Greek world was different than those of fraternity men, although there were similar pressures to be accepted. Perhaps the role of an outsider was more pronounced due to the gender differences I faced as a sorority member. Fraternities were created to foster brotherhood and a sense of purpose for the betterment of society (Thelin, 2011; Kimmel, 2008), although today it seems as if some Greek organizations and members have left behind their founding principles. Today, organizations are marred with hazing allegations, deaths contributed to alcohol overdose, and accidents that occurr due to the high-risk nature of alcohol consumption within the groups (DeSimone, 2007; Faulkner, et al.,

1989). Although the sorority experience on campus was not void of those issues, there are different approaches by the organizations.

Although I have not experienced what these male participants experience as a member, my membership in a sorority granted me access to the fraternity and sorority arena. My gendered-outsider perspective allowed the participants to open up and share more information, positioning me as someone who needed knowledge with which I had no personal experience as a woman. This enabled me to explore intersections of decision-making, behavior, and masculinity with my participants.

As a southern woman at a PWI in the south, I expected that my whiteness would enable me access to a shared understanding with participants. PWI's today do not have to be explicitly racist to create a hostile environment. Gusa (2010) suggested that the unexamined White historical ideology created through traditional language, cultural practices, and power at PWIs remains racialized. Whiteness theory, according to Mowatt (2009), allows researchers to understand the intersection of race and power. The intersection of power and race is interconnected with the relationship and benefit of group membership with other's restricted membership. Although I am restricted from membership in a fraternity, as a white sorority woman in an administrative role, I gained access to membership into the fraternity arena.

Subjectivity

My subjectivity involved who I was in relation to what I studied. According to Peshkin (2009), subjectivity is owning who you are as the researcher during the time of the study and allowing yourself to grow and change, bringing in new "I's throughout the study. I brought several collective subjectivities into this study including Motherhood I,

Professional I, and Values I. Each of these lenses were brought to the study as I explored experiences these college men had navigating the fraternity life.

First, I was mother. The "me" was displayed in how I perceived situations, the care and concern I gave to students during crisis, and how I intertwined my work life with home life. The Motherhood I seeks to solve problems, desires peace among the family, and teaches valuable lessons. As a mother studying the use of alcohol, I am concerned about the pressures my children will face as they grew and develop. My husband and I do not hide our casual alcohol use from our children in an effort to model moderation and restraint in consumption. In relation to my study, I wanted to help students feel a part of a community greater than themselves and to be connected and valued. I wanted them to take pride in who they were, stay firm to decisions they had made, and to be confident in who they were as an individual. In my Professional I, I value loyalty, hard work, and tough conversations. These attributes relate to the connection students feel to a campus community and might have attributed to the reasons they wanted to join a Greek organization. Often, tough conversations and confrontation are not a part of logical conversations in this environment.

The Values I that I brought to the study are the foundation of who I am, my beliefs and the guidebook for how I lived my life. I was raised in a Christian home where both of my parents expected that we attend church services and activities regularly. This religious upbringing and foundation shaped how I understood right from wrong and how I made choices about my own life growing up. My upbringing significantly contributed to how I look at situations and how I determined my plan of action or approach to a situation. I arrived at this study with the perception that my participants would have

similar experiences in their upbringing. As a child, I never observed my parents drinking alcohol. As parents, they considered themselves role models and made decisions about their social life based on how they wanted my sisters and me to view alcohol use and socialization with friends. Although I experimented with alcohol, and at times over-consumed, I was grounded in the expectations of my upbringing and the sense of control and responsibility that my parents taught me in regards to alcohol.

My parents afforded me many opportunities during my childhood and early adulthood. My father owned his own business and instilled in me a strong work ethic. I recognized that I was privileged to grow up in a middle-class neighborhood, where my parents supported me emotionally, physically and financially. I attended public school from kindergarten through twelfth grade and participated in many different activities. My parents afforded me the opportunity to explore, grow and develop into the woman I am today. When it came to the choice of college, my parents supported my desire to attend an out-of-state institution and provided the funding. I recognize today, with my own children, what an incredible gift and sacrifice they made for my sisters and me to allow us to develop and explore as college women. The expectations were clear to work hard and remember why you are in college, respect yourself and others, and to find a career that you love and that can support your family. As the oldest of three girls, there was an expectation that I would model certain behaviors for my sisters. This expectation became a pressure that I placed on myself due to my overwhelming sense of responsibility.

Strengths of my subjectivity were the genuine care and concern for the participants and the impact that their decisions had on their experience as a student. I

remained objective to what I learned and how I analyzed data in representing the experiences. A weakness of my subjectivity was my values "me." I am not faultless and my experience as a first-year student was less than impressive, although I possessed a strong sense of values that guided my decision-making. I made poor decisions as a college student on my journey to figure out who I was and how I was going to live my life. I arrived at this study with the perception that these participants who chose not to drink as a fraternity member might share similar values. I was cognizant of this perspective as I listened, analyzed, and made sense of the stories of these individuals. It was also important that I recognized that values might not have anything to do with the decisions that the participants made in regards to alcohol.

I used interviews for understanding how my participants made decisions related to their drinking behaviors, particularly their decision not to drink. Direct questions were asked throughout the interviews to better understand the intended behavior as a student on campus and how fraternity membership had impacted that behavior. During the participant interviews it was important to develop rapport and trust among the participants. This was important so that they could begin to know me, the purpose of my study and the confidentiality of the information that was shared during our time together.

Data Collection

The six participants that were identified for my study were engaged throughout the study and shared intimate details, through interviews, about who they were and how they navigated college life as a non-drinker. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling, key informant interviews, as well as through attendance at student organization meetings and academic classes. I attended meetings and classes and spoke in detail about

the study and the opportunity to tell an unknown story of non-drinking fraternity men on campus. I asked for students to share contact information with students who might fit the study criteria. I contacted students whose names were passed along to me and followed up with each to ensure full participation.

Since I interviewed students from the campus on which I work, it was important that a trusting relationship was established and students were open and willing to share their experiences. I developed trusting relationships by building rapport and taking time to have conversations with the students prior to the interviews. If information had been learned that was against the law, or university policies, I would have recorded the information, but it would not have been shared beyond the interview as a part of my study. Throughout the interactions with the students, no illegal behavior was disclosed. If illegal, or sensitive, behaviors were shared through the interview or through photos, I would have been obligated to report to law enforcement or to proper authorities (McCosker et al, 2001). A focus of the interviews was the experiences the participants had as non-drinking fraternity members. I explored in more detail the students' intentions of not drinking and whether or not it was a decision made prior to arriving to campus or whether there was an event that led to this change after being on campus. A pilot study, conducted several years prior to this one, laid the groundwork for this study and the research questions that I sought to answer.

I used three primary data collection methods: interviews, photographs and document analysis. Two semi-structured interviews (Roulston, 2010) were conducted individually with participants. Roulston described semi-structured interviews as the kind of interview where "interviewers refer to a prepared interview guide that includes a

number of questions…usually open-ended…followed by probing to seek further detail and description about what has been said" (p. 15). This type of interview allows for gathering the rich descriptions that necessary for a descriptive case study. Interview protocol for both interviews are provided in Appendix A. The first interview was conducted to develop rapport and to gain understanding on the participants' drinking behaviors, upbringing and reasons for joining a fraternity on campus. These initial interviews ranged from 40 minutes to over one hour. Questions focused on experiences as a fraternity member on campus and how masculinity and manhood were defined within this space. I was interested in changes that occurred throughout the study based on peer influences and the impact of discussing these decisions and intentions with someone outside of the organization and peer group.

I conducted that second interview two to three weeks later to review photos that described the individual's experience as a non-drinker on campus, taken by the participant. Volunteer employed photography (VEP) was used to evoke deeper meanings of the words used during interviews (Harper, 2002). After taking photographs over a two-week time period, participants met with me for one hour to review each photograph to explain why they selected the photo and the meaning behind it. Each participant signed an individual consent form that provided guidelines for recommendations on images to collect. The photos were sent via email prior to the interview and interview questions were the same for all participants. Each participant was asked to capture up to 10 photos, although some participants took as few as five. This second interview allowed the participants to describe the pictures in relation to his identity as a non-drinking fraternity member and how he viewed his experiences on campus. Participants shared more about

their experiences and the connection to the notion of masculinity (Harper & Harris, 2008) and intention in decision-making. The photographs the participants shared during this process aligned with what they shared during the interviews. The interview to discuss the photographs was a time during which I developed a better understanding of the participant and the influences in his life that contributed to his decision not to drink alcohol.

The third method of data collection used for this study was document analysis. Upon completion of the initial interview and volunteer employed photography each participant was asked to write a letter to an incoming male student. The prompt given to the participants is provided in Appendix B. The prompt served as a guide for participants to write about their experiences and to give advice on navigating the college environment as a male student, and potentially as a non-drinker. This method of data collection was used to capture the voice and experiences directly from the participants. I decided to incorporate these letters into chapter five as part of the recommendations. The participants shared openly about their own experiences in an effort to make the transition, or period of discovery, a little easier for another fraternity man. This triangulation (Denzin, 1978) approach, using interviews, photographs, and participant reflection, strengthened the construct validity of the case, providing multiple measures to the same phenomenon.

Once all participants had shared photographs and the two interviews had been conducted, I hosted a focus group for all participants. The focus group provided participants with an opportunity to discuss the letters that were written to the incoming male student and to share the advice they would give. Four of the six participants

attended the focus group. A second time was identified for the remaining two participants but they did not show up due to academic requirements.

Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed to capture the essence of the data. In addition, analytic memos were written to process and evaluate what was learned during the time with participants. Analytic memos allowed me to consider my positionality after each interview and to capture early possible themes across participation interactions (Saldaña, 2013). This process allowed me to capture what was heard and how interviews were interconnected for triangulation and member checking. I coded all interview transcriptions to ensure that the words and experiences of the participants was understood. I engaged in three cycles of coding to ensure that saturation was reached and that saliency among categories was present. Once all coding was completed, I examined the data for emerging themes.

I analyzed the photographs taken by the participants, and letters written to incoming male students, through a similar process. I conducted Interviews with participants to review the photographs taken during the research period. Throughout the second interview, I asked questions to ascertain the significance of the photograph and to allow for conversation and discussion to occur naturally. I explored the themes between the individual interviews and photographs to accurately depict how participants experience life on campus and in a fraternity as a non-drinker.

Once transcribed, I coded data in two cycles of coding. Cycle one was in vivo coding, which is defined by Saldaña (2013) as preserving participants' meanings of their views while assigning a short word or phrase to the data. This cycle of coding enabled

the participant's voice to be coded and analyzed to better articulate the experiences and stories. This was an important move because of the sensitivity of the subject and the personal experiences the participants shared. I wanted to remain close to the participant's voice through the coding process. After the interviews were transcribed, I listened to them again to ensure that I had captured the emotion shared throughout the interviews. Where appropriate, I used in vivo for emotion coding because much of what was being shared with me could be named by an emotion. I chose emotions such as disappointment, honesty, mistrust, love, and fun to describe the experiences of the participants as fraternity men on campus. The journey as a non-drinking fraternity member was an emotional one for many of the participants and I felt those were important to capture. Participants described experiences of guilt, disappointment, loneliness, and pride through the time we shared together. In addition, I used value coding for both participant interviews and document analysis of the photos and letters. Saldaña (2013) defined value coding as reflecting participants' values, attitudes and beliefs. I first coded the data as value and then analyzed to determine whether the value was an attitude, a belief, or both. For these participants, much of what was coded as value was both an attitude and belief due to the influence of their upbringing, their religious and spiritual foundation, and how their views of what was right and wrong were shaped. This coding method allowed me to look across participants and interviews for early salient themes.

Cycle two coding was pattern coding that enabled themes and patterns across data to emerge from the participants. This move was made to continue condensing data to make sense of it all. Pattern coding is described by Saldaña (2013) as the process of

pulling together material into more meaningful explanations. Cycle two coding helped

pair down the data and begin to make sense of what had been collected and heard.

After the interviews were completed and photographs were collected, a focus

group was conducted for participants. This was added when the study shifted to

descriptive case study and was necessary for the triangulation of the data. Each

participant was contacted individually with an invitation to the focus group to discuss the

letter they wrote and the advice they gave to incoming male students. Four of the six

participants responded that they would be able to attend. The day of the focus group, one

student said that he was unable to attend. I attempted to reschedule with him and the

other participants twice but was unsuccessful. The protocol used for the focus group is

provided in Appendix A. I used focus groups to capitalize on the interactions between

participants as they discussed their experiences on campus as non-drinking fraternity men

and the advice they gave to incoming male students.

Data were analyzed through the lens of thematic analysis (Coffey and Atkinson,

1996) to capture the richness of the individual stories and descriptions that were gained

through interviews (Maxwell, 2013). Without the detail and description that came with

organizing the data through themes, the true experiences and motivations of the

participants in their decision not to drink was not captured. As I organized the data by

themes, I began to see the true experiences and motivations of the participants in terms of

their status as non-drinkers. The designated themes created the story of the participants

are provided in chapter four.

Photographs have the power to elicit emotion and feelings that were sometimes

not captured through words. In data analysis, I used both the participants' words, and the

photographs they selected to tell their story as non-drinking fraternity members. I looked

for themes that would help advocate for change and better support for these students on

campus.

Trustworthiness

To verify information, and ensure that interpretations were explored thoroughly, I

utilized three primary strategies, as outlined by Holloway and Jefferson (2000). The first

strategy was to look for what is not seen. Holloway and Jefferson described this as what

was observed during the study such as non-verbal cues, emotion, environmental

information and pauses in stories. The study included three primary methods for data

collection: interviews, photographs and document analysis that examined what was

present and what was missing. The focus group allowed participants to come together and

share experiences and stories as part of a larger group. The constant searching enabled

me to identify and name those areas that were unidentified when the study began. The

second strategy, or question explored, was why I noticed what I noticed. This involved

critical inquiry and reflection beyond what was on the surface and questioned why issues

or perspectives were brought to light. The third strategy was to allow for enough time

during data collection to let participant perspectives and interpretations to evolve. Time

in the field was important in contributing to trustworthy data. The time was dedicated to

observing, being in the site, interviewing participants and building relationships within

the community.

In addition to these three strategies, I used member checking and triangulation to

verify the information from participants. The use of semi-structured interviews,

volunteer-employed photography, and document analysis allowed for participant stories and experiences to be vetted.

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues I encountered throughout the study were related to asking questions of students, who are under the legal drinking age, about their drinking behaviors. Although the behavior is illegal, approximately 80% of college students today drink alcohol (Johnson, et al., 1996; Meilman et al., 1998; Pendergrast 1994). Students signed informed consent forms at the beginning of the study that noted that any data collected throughout interviews, focus groups, photographs, or letters to incoming students were for the purpose of this study only. There was also the potential for students to share "secret" information during interviews regarding hazing activities that occurred within their chapter, or other activities that are violations of campus policies, state, or federal law. This did not occur during the time I spent with participants. Trust was established with participants for the interviews and focus groups. Both were designed to be at a location and time where participants felt free to share, without the fear of repercussion, their experiences and reasons for participating in organizations. Although it was not necessary, I was prepared to report to the proper authorities, any information gathered that directly endangered a student or students.

Risks and Benefits

The risk of participants participating in this study was their exposure as a non-drinker and the potentially personal and private reasons for that decision. This was addressed individually during interviews with all participants prior to the focus group. If individuals were not comfortable with participating in either the focus groups or

individual interviews, they were allowed to remove themselves. No participants did. Participants were initiated fraternity members, which removes the hierarchical structure that might arise within the organization. The breech of confidentiality in a study is always a risk, particularly when a focus group allows participants to meet each other.

The benefit of this study for the participants was sharing the story of the students whose motivations for joining might be different than most in the organization. In addition, the use of photovoice created an opportunity for dialogue and empowerment. The participants, who were part of the fraternity community on campus, but did not subscribe to the high-risk drinking behaviors that plagued the community, were given a voice. This voice was not heard in the literature and can inform campus administrators and researchers of the experience these students had and how they remained true to themselves within the fraternity culture.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS – PART 1

Overview

There were three major findings, or themes, that were identified and a series of subthemes and categories that explored the theme in more detail. This chapter provides a deep exploration of themes and subthemes of interview transcriptions and photovoice to describe the motivation of the participants and their experience as non-drinkers. In addition, this chapter gives a rich description of the participants as an introduction and context for their upbringing and life experiences.

The first major finding identified in this study was that parental expectations influenced non-drinking fraternity men in shaping their values. Parents and family members shaped established values and expectations that guided these men in their decision-making. Expectations were clear from childhood to college on what behavior was considered right and wrong, which included views on alcohol and over-indulgence. In addition, the six participants were raised in a Christian environment in which attending church activities was central to their daily lives. The subthemes identified were alcohol moderation and faith, family values and faith.

The second major finding, or theme, of this study was that non-drinking fraternity men developed their own views of alcohol through their individual faith journey. Participants described the influence of their faith journey through the lens of fraternity

men and how their values shaped their experiences in the organization to which they belonged.

Participants spoke to the role that religion and faith played in their view of alcohol and how that translated to their involvement and membership in organizations on campus. Although these men had very different views than their peers on alcohol, they shared a desire to be accepted as part of a group. The men found this acceptance in fraternity membership on campus and served as helpers to their intoxicated peers and leaders in chapters that lacked leadership. These men of faith also carried very traditional views of what it meant to be a man and this was evident throughout the study.

The third major finding was that these men found ways to socially engage in the party scene without alcohol. It was clear during the time I spent getting to know them that they wanted to be socially accepted. They did not want to miss out on social events or parties just because they did not drink alcohol, so they managed the social scene with strategies to fly under the radar. For some participants, not drinking was easy, for other participants, it was more difficult and required thoughtful strategies to maintain their cover as a non-drinker within the fraternity party scene. At some level, it was as if the men wanted their non-drinking status to go unrecognized and employed strategies for navigating the social scene as a non-drinker. They attended parties, fraternity mountain weekends and sorority functions under the image of just a regular frat guy. The fact that they were not drinking alcohol went unnoticed until they were asked by a brother or another party-goer.

The men exhibited a level of confidence in themselves and the decisions they made as college men that was beyond what I expected when the study was designed.

Some participants arrived on campus as a drinker and had a taste of college life as an over-indulgent man. Other participants arrived on campus a non-drinker and maintained that position regardless of the pressures they faced from peers.

The purpose of this descriptive case study (Yin, 2014) was to examine the social and leadership experiences, and the motivations, of fraternity men who identify as non-drinkers on a large, predominately white institution in the southeast. Case study is descriptive when the researcher seeks description of the phenomenon and the context in which it occurs (Yin, 2014). As a descriptive case it was important to explore the phenomenon of the non-drinking student's experiences within the campus fraternity environment. The study design allowed for multiple data points, from interview transcriptions, to photovoice, to document review, to aid in understanding the experiences of the six participants.

The findings of this qualitative case study are not generalizable, although they provided six perspectives from these men on their identity as both fraternity men and non-drinkers. In this chapter I will not only represent the major findings of the study, but will work to inform a body of literature on how these men made meaning and purpose.

Participant Descriptions

Participants for the study were identified through snowball sampling and key informant interviews (Roulston, 2010). A series of emails were distributed to fraternity and sorority chapter leaders and council officers beginning in late July, 2015. The email briefly described the study and asked for assistance in identifying individuals who might fit the study criteria. In addition to the emails to students, emails were also sent to university administrators in student life and residence life asking that staff share names of

students who might meet the study criteria of a non-drinking fraternity man. Staff were encouraged to either forward the email to the student or to reply with contact information and I would contact him. I also attended four classes (three criminology courses and one psychology) to discuss the study and ask for assistance in recruiting participants. An introduction to the six participants who took part in this research study are provided below.

Paul, 20, is a third year student who arrived on campus as an in-state student and as a non-drinker. As one of six children in his family, Paul always dreamed of attending SSU. Paul spoke early in our time together of his view of alcohol as a freshman and how that view was altered after life-changing experiences that led him to give up alcohol completely. He shared that he came to college and quickly engaged in the party scene. He chose not to join a fraternity as a freshman because he had access to the party scene already and did not want to "buy his friends." After a life-changing summer mission experience, Paul gave up drinking to align his life more closely with his Christian beliefs and values. He believes that he was led to join a fraternity as a way to minister to his peers and share the Gospel.

Clive, 20, is also a third-year student who arrived to campus as an out-of-state student. Clive identified as an abstainer, which meant that he had not had alcohol. He attended a private Christian school and shared that he had remained close to his faith throughout his entire life. Clive and his younger brother grew up in a Christian home where he was active in church activities. Clive's parents were members of the armed services and his family moved a lot due to his mother's rank and position. Clive did not associate with the "drinking crowd" and believed that he was secluded in a Christian

environment growing up. As a college student, Clive wanted a place to share his faith with other students. He arrived at SSU and joined an all–male singing group to find brotherhood and friendship, but came to terms that this group was not providing him with what he needed. Clive quit the singing group and sought membership in a campus fraternity. Like Paul, Clive's fraternity membership was closely aligned with his commitment to his faith and desire to share his faith with fellow male college students.

Aaron, 20, attended a private, Christian school prior to arriving at SSU. He grew up in-state and was raised by a single mother who he believed was, "the strongest woman I know." He spoke in detail of his faith and relationship with God in guiding his moral and value development. When asked, Aaron identified himself as a non-drinker because, although he does not drink regularly, he has tasted alcohol before. Aaron has an older brother and was very involved in sports growing up. Aaron was the only participant who was a member of a National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) organization. The historically African-American fraternities and sororities do not traditionally take new members who are freshmen. Aaron joined his organization as a second semester sophomore. He did not arrive to campus with the expectation of joining a fraternity. Instead, Aaron sought membership after his freshman year when he wanted more connection with other students and organizations.

John, 21, attended public school in the same town as SSU. He was raised in a two-parent home, although he shared conflict among parents and family members throughout his childhood. The conflict, as he described, was connected to his father's relationships with his own siblings and parents over the family estate and financial discrepancies. This strained relationship within John's father's family took a toll on the

relationship between John's parents. John's father turned to alcohol as a way to manage the frustration and anger he felt from his family situation. John distanced himself from his father and began to question the Christian values he had been taught. John was considered an outlier due to the process he had been through of moving away from his religious upbringing. He was the only participant in this study who identified as a non-believer and abstainer. More of John's story, and his journey away from his religious upbringing, will be shared later in this chapter.

Michael, 20, attended a small private college preparatory school. Although he was raised in the United Methodist church, he did not spend time during his childhood developing his faith. His exploration and understanding of Christian values and beliefs emerged as a college student when he reached a low point in his life with friends and the social scene. He was the only child to his parents, who were older when he was born and according to Michael, "they didn't really want children." His parents divorced when he was young and he lived with his dad and visited mom every other weekend. Michael was also considered an outlier because he was no longer a member of a fraternity on campus. His story was an important story to include because of the reasons he made the decision to disaffiliate from the fraternity and its connection to him being a non-drinker.

Joe, 20, attended both private and public school in a neighboring state. He attended private school until eighth grade and then transitioned to public high school because, according to his parents, "my brother did it and they thought I should do it too." He identified as a non-drinker because he had alcohol before but does not currently drink. Joe grew up Southern Baptist and believed his relationship with God and upbringing played into his identity as a non-drinker. Joe shared that he had a very positive and

"loving" relationship with his parents and brother. He participated in fraternity recruitment and joined the group where he felt the most connection and had meaningful conversations. He was the only participant who indicated that his mind was open during the recruitment process. To him, it was about relationships and finding men with whom he could have conversations and who appeared to be like him.

Five of six participants were members of fraternities on campus. Five of the six participants identified as White and members of NIC fraternities and one participant identified as African-American and as a member of NPHC fraternity. It was important for this study to include experiences of both NIC and NPHC fraternities to demonstrate that non-drinkers existed in both organizations on campus. NPHC fraternities are traditionally smaller than NIC fraternities, although the prevalence of alcohol use and misuse is very similar.

One participant disaffiliated from his fraternity due to the pressures he felt to drink. He joined the fall of his freshman year but throughout the interviews, he described the difficulty he faced being a Christian and a fraternity man. Eventually, shortly after initiation, the difficulty was more than he could handle and he dropped out of the fraternity. I chose to retain his story and participation in this study because of the experiences he had as a fraternity member and as a student on campus.

Overview of Themes

Research questions designed for this descriptive case study are critical in determining the type of case study. The unit of analysis for this study was the experiences of non-drinking fraternity men. The research questions that guided this study were:

1. How do life experiences influence non-drinking fraternity members?

2. Why do non-drinking fraternity males join university social fraternities at PWIs?

3. What strategies do non-drinking fraternity men utilize in social situations when alcohol is present?

4. How do students use pictures to illustrate experiences as non-drinking fraternity members?

Each theme, and subsequent subthemes and categories, are directly related to the research questions for this study. The first research question examined throughout this study was how life experiences influenced non-drinking fraternity members. This question was answered throughout the study by two primary themes, parental expectations, and faith and fraternities. Both themes emerged across participants in understanding how both their upbringing and the influence of faith and religion shaped how they viewed alcohol and their identity as non-drinkers. Parental influence and expectations were noted as reasons the men made decisions not to drink.

Theme 1: "It's How I Was Raised"

The first theme identified through data analysis was parental expectations. Participants spoke to their decisions around alcohol in regards to what they were taught by their parents and how they were raised. Parental expectations were defined in the data as the emphasis on faith, alcohol, and fulfilling expectations from childhood to young adulthood. Participants shared at length the role of life experiences and individual influences in shaping their views of alcohol. Primarily, these influences were parents and family members, defined by participants as siblings and grandparents. Life experiences

were defined not only as challenges the participants faced as they grew up, but also as opportunities provided to them by their parents.

Each participant also spoke to the influence of their parents in setting expectations regarding behavior, alcohol use, and general moral parameters. In general, participants had positive relationships with their parents. Positive relationships were defined by mutual respect and a desire to be obedient. Positive relationships were also connected to faith and the Christian values the participants were taught growing up. There were accounts discussed during interviews and focus groups where participants rebelled against their parents or what they had been taught. In some situations, that rebellion resulted in being grounded or losing privileges because of the disobedience. In other situations, it meant that relationships and families have been changed forever because of the rebellion or desire to explore beyond what they were taught.

The expectations parents had of the men and their use of alcohol was clear throughout the interviews and focus group. Participants spoke to expectations being defined by Christian values and common understandings of what is right and wrong. These men recounted incidents of substance abuse that reframed their view of men, as the head of the family unit, and the role that alcohol plays in relationships. In general, participants did not view alcohol abuse or over indulgence in their parents, although it was noted from grandparents or other family members. Some of the participants noted the impact of alcohol abuse and alcoholism and on family units and relationships. Relationships within families were changed by the cycle of abuse that impacted how the men viewed alcohol and manhood. This section is organized to demonstrate how faith

and alcohol was woven into the parental expectations that were described during data collection.

Alcohol moderation and faith. The use (and non-use) of alcohol was related to the role faith and religious beliefs played into decision-making. It was evidence across participants that faith and religious beliefs were the primary reason these men chose not to drink. Participants noted throughout interviews and focus group that their parents and other family members were influential in their lives and how they viewed alcohol within the context of their faith. Not all influences were positive, as some participants shared the negative influence of alcohol use within their extended family.

Participants observed alcohol use in moderation within their families and developed their own view by modeling what they observed. Alcohol moderation to Clive was shaped by how he viewed alcohol used by his parents. During the first interview, he indicated that alcohol was present in his home "raised around alcohol growing up…very common that my dad would drink beer, although my mom was not a big drinker." Although abuse was not observed or described, Clive discussed the importance of expectations around alcohol and general behavior. His parents established expectations for behavior as he recounted, "…remember conversations about other things when in high school…don't have sex…don't do drugs…it was just so manifest and clear." Clive recalled a list of "do nots" that his parents shared with him and his brother throughout their childhood, however, the message around the use of alcohol was not included. He suggested that, "they just didn't think it would be that easy…maybe they were naïve in that sense." So, they said nothing and, intuitively, Clive understood that the list of "do nots" included alcohol.

Michael spoke to the role of parental expectations in regard to alcohol use in a slightly different way. The way in which his parents viewed alcohol was related to a history of abuse in his family. His mother witnessed alcohol abuse with her father, which shaped how she viewed it and taught him about alcohol. His view of alcohol shifted during his transition from high school to college. He partied his way through high school and, although he attended youth group and church services, he did not understand until college how that lifestyle was inconsistent with his beliefs. In the small town in which he grew up, Michael spoke to very few options for entertainment and fun outside of partying. The only deterrent his mother employed when discussing alcohol was the impact of her father, who abused alcohol. As the only child of divorced parents, Michael recalled his mother sharing stories of her father being drunk, "She would come home from school, and he would be drunk. He wasn't abusive or anything. He just acted foolish or childish." Michael's mother associated alcohol use with an absent father and brought this perspective to how she still viewed alcohol. Michael's father never addressed expectations of alcohol use, leaving Michael confused and questioning what were right and wrong,

> With my family it [drinking] wasn't really a big thing. I grew up in a divorced family. My parents had me when they were 40 and 41 years old. They didn't really want children. Then my mom decided she did, so she had me. She had an alcoholic father. For her, she never drank. My dad would drink a beer or so, or like Crown and Coke ever so often. It wasn't a daily or weekly thing.

Michael did not share a specific encounter in which his parents told him not to drink. They did, however, express concern and disappointment when they discovered that he

had been drinking on several occasions. Michael learned about expectations around

alcohol through experiences and being caught after a night of partying,

> I didn't start drinking until my junior year. I was actually a late bloomer. Most of
>
> my people were actually late freshman year or sophomore year when they started.
>
> Because alcohol wasn't really that big of thing around me, I would steal a sip
>
> from my dad's liquor cabinet.

Michael considered himself a late blooming drinker because he did not start drinking

until his junior year in high school. The term late bloomer implied that it was inevitable

that he would drink, but he started later than his peers. It also implied that his peers began

drinking much earlier than their junior year in high school.

> John's view of alcohol was shaped by the Christian upbringing and Bible

teachings from his church and parents. As the eldest of two children, John indicated that

he attended church and was a believer. He showed up when and where he should,

although he often questioned what he was taught in church,

> Church every Sunday that we could. I would credit my college career with
>
> dramatically changing me. I was a very devout Christian coming into college. I
>
> always had some questions about some of the dynamics, but it was just kind of the
>
> particulars of it. I took an ecology and evolution class, and I really started
>
> thinking about it.

This questioning of God and Biblical teachings started early and continued to college.

The exploration as a science major was important to John's story and will be discussed

later in this chapter. His parents did not explicitly tell him not to drink, instead, he

observed what happened around him. "I don't remember a specific moment or really any

time my parents telling me not to drink…it's just always been me watching." His view of alcohol was also shaped by witnessing his father's abuse of alcohol at home. The alcohol abuse John observed was rooted in the dynamics and conflict within his father's family, which was a result of the way the family inheritance was arranged among John's father and his siblings. John's father turned to alcohol as a way to manage the conflict within his own family. John recalled that his father was often "passed out on the couch" which started "this divide that's really difficult for me to overcome even now." This divide John referenced was related to his father's availability to do the things that other father's did with their sons, such as sports and homework. John's mother worked outside the home and often dealt with the effects of his drinking and lack of involvement with his children. John recalled one situation where he went to his father to assist with homework and he had to "wake him [dad] up from being almost asleep on the couch and he couldn't even read the problem." While he knew alcohol was an addiction he would not be able to help his father break, alcoholism did change his relationship with his father. John knew drinking alcohol while under the age of 21 was illegal and believed breaking the law contradicted his Christian teachings; however, it was the abuse and addiction within his family that altered his view on alcohol. John's observational approach to learning, coupled with his competitive nature, influenced the way he viewed alcohol use. "I'm a successful college student because I learn from other people's mistakes"

Aaron also indicated alcohol abuse and alcoholism, in addition to his faith, as a reason that he made the decisions he did around his non-use of alcohol. His knew at an early age that there was a family history of alcoholism,

my mom's side of the family has high history with alcohol abuse and

alcoholism…I knew that alcohol was something that was a weakness in my

family, so I was always cautious not to want to fall into that trend in my family.

For Aaron, however, the cycle of abuse was broken with his mother, "She was not an

alcoholic and was the one to pretty much break all the bad trends in my family for the

most part" and he was cautious about alcohol for fear of being caught in the cycle again.

In addition to the family history of alcoholism, Aaron made decisions about alcohol

around his belief in God. He declared,

> I draw most of my morals and my values from my relationship with God. I am a
>
> Christian so all my values come from the Bible… Alcohol in and of itself is not
>
> bad, but when you abuse it to the point where you're intoxicated and you're not in
>
> control of your actions, that's when it becomes a problem.

Aaron chose not to drink alcohol in order to follow the values taught in church and his

beliefs. He shared,

> It's my job. It's my responsibility to make myself a reflection of God's character.
>
> Another thing is to be honest with people, to be forgiving, to love people, to truly
>
> love them. Everything that I hold dear, all my values, reflect back to that.

The use (and misuse) of alcohol was closely aligned with the influence of religious

teachings and parental expectations. Participants spoke to the how they observed alcohol

use in their families and how they developed their own view on it. Participants referenced

their Christian upbringing and values in describing how they developed their own views

on alcohol. Each shared very literal interpretations on following the law because it was

aligned with their Christian upbringing.

Family values and faith. The intersection of family values and faith was evident among participants throughout interviews and focus groups. Family values were defined by the participants as doing the right thing and being obedient. Not only were all participants raised attending church, but their parents also instructed them that religion and faith guided decision-making. This instruction from parents did not always lend itself to positive relationships with parents. Some participants spoke to positive and lovingly relationships with parents and family members in shaping how they viewed faith. Other participants described strained relationships of dishonesty and confusion.

To John, family values were about pleasing his parents and being a son who made them proud. This desire to please his parents still impacted John during this process of talking himself out of his faith and upbringing. When John was eight years old, his brother was diagnosed with autism. This diagnosis changed his relationships with his parents and his perspective on life because of the pressure he felt to succeed and be the son that made his parents proud. During the first interview, John shared that he felt pressure to be both a Christian and the son that made his parents proud,

> My brother is autistic. He's not so bad that he has sensory stuff where he's pulling his hair out, but he's not high functioning enough to where he'll ever really do anything functional in society. I'm really the only one who they have who, to them, can really comprehend the concept of God. To think that…I think that if they found out that they tried so hard to make sure that I grew up as a Christian, to impart to all my family, to tell them that I really don't think that anymore, I think that would be rough for them.

Throughout our time together, John emphasized this "pressure" to be the perfect son in faith, in athletics, in academics due to his brother's autism. John saw himself as the one designated to be all his parents had hoped for in their children. As a child and young adult he attended church and studied the Bible, as his parents expected of him. He was active in a youth group and was obedient to his parents. To manage the pressure from his parents, John copes by throwing himself into his academic studies,

> Every day was a reminder that I wasn't good enough. No matter what I did, no matter how hard I worked, I couldn't be better than others in my class. I think when I got to college and kind of sports go away, and I knew I was good at academics but didn't know how good I was, first I wanted to see just how good I could be. I also had this resolve to never let anyone tell me I wasn't good enough again.

As a college student and biology major however, John "thought my way out of Christianity" through what he learned in evolution and ecology courses. John described moving away from the faith and upbringing his parents provided him when he applied the academic knowledge he was learning with the Christian foundation his parents had taught. As a pre-med major, he was introduced to concepts and theories that made him question everything he had been taught. John built up this expectation that his parents had of him and of the type of life he would lead, while not being completely honest with them. This struggle that John faced in being honest with his parents created a divide and secrecy that he has yet to address with them after three years. The truth is that he has left his religion although he still adheres to the values that were instilled in him. This fear of disappointment was more significant than the desire to be honest with his parents. The

fear of disappointment stems from his belief that his brother's autism diagnosis and his father's alcohol use, leave him with the responsibility to be the son that makes his mother proud.

In contrast, Joe had a very positive relationship with his parents, "a great family…love both of them dearly" but he chose to ignore the impact alcohol had on those he knew around him. In high school, he associated with individuals who were like him and made similar decisions around the non-use of alcohol. He knew it happened, although his parents never acknowledged alcohol as a pressure he would face. It was as if his parents ignored the pressures he had, and would have, around the use of alcohol. He shared "growing up I was never around it, never. We didn't really ever talk about it either. I didn't have questions, because I just didn't know about it." He knew very little because it did not come up in conversations with his parents and he associated with peers who shared his view.

Joe believed that his parents reduced complications for him and his brother wherever they could, and alcohol was one of those areas, "I think they just kept that away from us when we were younger, easier environment growing up in." Joe's parents approached the discussions and expectations about alcohol by ignoring them. He is unsure whether this was an intentional decision his parents made or not, but this non-issue approach worked for Joe. Joe was grounded in his faith and relied on the family values instilled in him when it came to alcohol. This approach of pretending that it was not there worked for Joe, although it was not a method that worked for all participants.

Aaron was the only participant that was raised by a single parent. His values and approach to life and education were grounded in the expectations and upbringing outlined

by his mother. During our interviews, Aaron did not explicitly discuss his mother's expectations regarding alcohol for him and his brother, however he was influenced by "my values and beliefs come from the Bible." Aaron knew that his mother expected him to be "accountable not only for myself but also for the people who are important and close to me." This sense of accountability, for Aaron, meant remaining close to family values and faith when faced with pressures related to alcohol use. Although Aaron did not share situations when his mother discussed alcohol with him, he maintained close to his faith and religious teachings in helping him determine right from wrong and how to handle situations he faced.

Sense of obedience. The sense of obedience was developed from parental influences and expectations, as well as Christian teachings. Throughout interviews and focus groups, participants spoke to the influence of their parents in establishing a foundation for right and wrong and the use and misuse of alcohol was included in those conversations. The participants spoke to the ways in which their parents set expectations of appropriate behavior and held them accountable to that standard. Participants articulated a desire to obey their parents in regards to alcohol, while also obeying God and the law. The desire to obey the law because it was what God had asked through the Bible was apparent throughout the interviews.

Clive wanted to please his parents and referred to himself as a rule-follower in high school. Clive described his religiosity as obedient during the first interview, "I was very rule-following in high school and had the opportunity to do a lot of things that I didn't." Following the rules meant not drinking alcohol, since was against the law, and

being obedient to his parents. He indicated that although he became a Christian at 14 years old, he did not truly understand what this meant until he arrived at college.

> I'd say actually probably not until college did I become a Christian. That's just after a greater grasp about what it means to be a Christian, what does the Bible teach about this and that. I actually don't think it was until I was a freshman that I became a Christian. I still had the background, religion, church, spirituality. I came into school and knew that I wanted to be part of a campus ministry…and to find a local church.

College, particularly freshman year, was a time when Clive understood Christianity at a deeper level, "what the Bible teaches about this and that was really when I believed." This desire to explore his Christian faith more intently led to a commitment to be more obedient. Clive described later during the interview how this deeper belief translated to him seeking those opportunities to "make the most of my time around people who wouldn't call themselves Christian." His commitment to obedience also meant association with those who were different than him. This sense of obedience is discussed later in this chapter in terms of his fraternity membership.

> Michael focused on obedience and ensuring that his actions made his parents proud, however, he got "wrapped up in the party scene." There were situations where he followed the crowd and engaged in behaviors that were against what his parents expected of him, which led to disobedience. Michael shared,

> One party I went to I actually was with a guy who really should've probably gone to a hospital, who was my partner in beer pong. He said he drank like four shots of some kind of vodka. He drank two Bud Light Platinums. Then he'd also

smoked weed and done like a bar of Xanax. He was just like done. That wasn't a

good mixture. I was playing with him. That was my partner.

During the initial interview, he recounted a situation where he drove home drunk and his

mother was waiting on him,

I cut myself off, but I could tell that I was really drunk. I got in my car and I drove

back home. I got sick when I got home. I thought I was fine, but what ended up

happening is I got inside and started feeling nauseous. I ran to my bathroom. I had

to go to my bathroom, and I started throwing up. I got done throwing up, flushed

the toilet, and opened my door and she was waiting on me.

 He described his mother's reaction when she discovered him in this drunken state, "you

could have been hurt…you could have been pulled, gotten a DUI…worst of all, you

could have been killed…I couldn't be more disappointed in you." This level of

disappointment impacted Michael and caused him to alter his behavior temporarily in

order to please his mother. Michael looked for assurance and love from his parents and

obedience was a way to gain this love and respect he desired.

John felt enormous pressure to be obedient as well, but not in the same way as

Michael. John shared during the first interview that he was pressured to be the son that

made it because of his brother's autism and "not high-functioning enough to where he'll

ever really do anything functional in society." This pressure to succeed and to please his

parents led him to be untruthful about who he was and how his life had changed since

being in college. He shared,

It's difficult to keep your faith when you go into very science-heavy and really

start applying the things you know. It was tough to go through, but I kind of

thought my way out of Christianity. I haven't told my parents. The only people

who really know are guys in my fraternity and my girlfriend.

This change he described was his journey from questioning Christianity and its teachings

to non-belief. John's parents expected him to be successful because, in their eyes, his

brother could not be due to the effects of autism. In his efforts to please his parents and

demonstrate his worth, he lost a part of himself,

you always want to be true to yourself and to people around you, but that's

something you don't…especially based on my beliefs now. I think that's just

something they can have. I don't want you to think I'm lying to my parents.

He could not tell his parents about this change, although he shared this journey of self-

discovery with his fraternity brothers.

As a Christian, Aaron's values were rooted in his faith, "I'm a Christian, so all my

values come from the Bible." Faith and alcohol were both discussed during the interview

with Aaron in order to understand how he made the decision not to drink alcohol,

"Alcohol specifically is stated in the Bible that it's something that can be abused. Alcohol

in and of itself is not bad, but when you abuse it to the point where you're intoxicated and

you're not in control of your actions, that's when it becomes a problem." Aaron spoke of

his obedience to the literal teachings of God and writings of the Bible when he discussed

how the Bible views alcohol and the impact of alcohol. He chose not to drink alcohol due

to his understanding of the Bible and the message of obedience.

Life experiences influenced the men and their views around alcohol and

association with their peer group. Participants indicated that experiences they

encountered related to faith and values shaped their views of alcohol and the role that

religion played in those views. Each participant also shared different perspectives on parental expectations and the role those expectations had in establishing their own views on alcohol. The prevalence of religious upbringing and experiences in church and school were evident with all participants. However, it was noted that religious upbringing and attending church did not always equal non-use of alcohol. It was also not all about positive and loving relationships with parents. As the only participant who indicated divorce with his parents, Michael navigated between two homes and sought a higher level of acceptance from peers. The acceptance from peers was often misleading and lacked components of real friendships. This searching for real friendships led Michael to make choices in regard to drinking that he might not have made.

Parental expectations were articulated from each participant as they defined their upbringing, their relationships with their parents and how alcohol was viewed within their family. Parents expected the men to attend church and church-related activities. In addition, parents placed significant emphasis on the relationships shared within the family. Whether it was relationships with siblings, grandparents, or parents, participants shared a desire for positive and meaningful relationships. Participants also spoke to parental influence in setting expectations regarding behavior, particularly around views of alcohol. Instead of forcing these men to make certain decisions or view the impact of alcohol in certain ways, some of the parents of these men taught through modeling the behavior they wanted for their son. The behaviors modeled were those of control and restraint, love and hard work. The relationships that participants shared with their parents were significant in developing their own definition of right and wrong where alcohol was

involved. Parents were influential in establishing a faith-based foundation from which the participants established their own views of right and wrong.

There was a desire to please parents and do those things that made them proud. Aaron was the only participant that indicated a single parent household and alcoholism in his family. He maintained a close relationship with his mother and observed the impact that alcoholism had within the extended family. He respected his mother and wanted to make her proud. John, on the other hand, was raised by both a mother and father and attended church activities regularly. Alcohol was present in the home, although John observed his father's abuse of it in a way that defined how he viewed alcohol. As he thought himself out of Christianity in college and became a non-believer, he could not be honest with his parents about this decision for the fear of disappointment. Parents influenced these men both positively and negatively in their views of alcohol and establishing their own value base as a young adult.

Summary of Theme 1

This theme centered on family values and the influence of parental expectations on the ways in which participants developed their views on alcohol. The theme also highlighted life experiences that impacted how alcohol was viewed. Participants shared close and respected relationships with their parents where discussions occurred on what was right and wrong. Parents were also very influential in the role that religion and faith played for these men while they were growing up. All participants grew up being very active in church activities, including small group Bible studies and youth groups. Again, participation and showing up do not equal a life of obedience and respect. The students

journeyed to a place of religious acceptance that was not always seamless based on their childhood.

At different times between high school and college these men questioned and challenged the principles and beliefs that were bestowed on them by their parents. College is a time of questioning and discovery for many students as they build on the foundation established in childhood (Harper & Harris, 2008). For some of these students, the discovery process in college is representative of what their parents taught them. For others, it is quite different because of their unique experiences and exploration.

The discovery process for these six students led to a following and commitment to a life that was consistent with their beliefs, once they figured those out. Even when everything was packaged perfectly from their upbringing, parental support, and peer support, students still questioned and explored what it meant. When pressed on why they did not drink, the men very openly shared that it was against the law to drink alcohol under the legal drinking age of 21. It seemed like a simple response, although as college males in an environment where lawlessness and rebellion are priority, this nonchalant approach is quite remarkable. The sense of obedience was not only evident with their parents, but also to the law. Participants desired a life of obedience and respect not only to their parents but to the God they worship.

Theme 2: "I Knew I'd be Different"

The second theme identified throughout this study was the intersection of faith and fraternities and in understanding why non-drinking men join fraternities. This theme answered research question two that examined why non-drinking men joined social fraternities. Each participant had an established foundation of faith and values from their

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parents that was expanded when the men began making decisions for themselves around alcohol. In general, participants joined fraternities for the sense of belonging and as part of a purpose, or calling. Throughout the interviews, the participants defined this sense of belonging and calling through two primary subthemes of helper and leader. The subthemes were identified to more accurately describe the influence of faith and masculinity in understanding how life experiences impacted their non-drinking status, and the reasons they sought fraternity membership as non-drinkers.

Helper. Helper was defined for this study as the ways in which the men lived out their faith in their fraternity by serving their brothers. The role of helper also explored the role the participants played with peers and their projections of themselves in social settings. Some participants explicitly named the role as helper, others used terms such as "servant" and "service" to identify the role of giving to others. Participants identified with the role of helper throughout the data in why they joined the fraternity they did. As non-drinkers, the men determined specific roles and identities for themselves outside of the social environment. The roles that were identified by the non-drinking fraternity men were: designated driver, a responsible person, and safety net for their brothers.

Designated driver. One of the ways the fraternity man defined their status as helper was by assuming the role of designated driver for their fraternity brothers and other drinking friends. Although participants did not indicate this was why they joined a fraternity, it was a role that naturally emerged because of their identity as a non-drinker.

As fraternity chaplain, John knew his role was to be the responsible one. As Chaplain, John did not,

Want to appear like I'm looking down on people that do drink, but I feel like I

should also be aware and more separate minded in situations like that. Along with

the risk manager people know that I'll be sober and willing to help people. A lot

of nights, if I'm not one of the DDs [designated drivers], I will volunteer to drive

if things get bad or if I need to get someone somewhere.

He was seen more as a reliable brother than a non-drinker to his fraternity brothers and

was known to be "available for that" if needed. It was also as if Joe's role of fraternity

chaplain required a level of responsibility not only for the spiritual needs of the members,

but also was seen as the one that brother's call when they needed assistance, or a ride

home. Joe's contributions to his organization were the way he lives out his faith by

helping his brothers after a night of partying.

Paul joined a fraternity to serve others and sought out an organization that was not

stereotypical. He felt led to join the fraternity he did in order to make an impact,

A lot of open doors especially. I really felt led by the Lord to join, which was

interesting. I remember my freshman year or early sophomore year someone

asked me, "What's the scariest thing you can do?" I was like, "Join a fraternity,

because I know the peer pressure and how guys just don't care about guys

feelings or all of that." I was like, "I just don't want to join."

To Paul, joining a fraternity was where he stepped out of his comfort zone and challenged

his beliefs and stereotypes. He was scared because of the peer pressure and the disrespect

guys have for each other and their feelings. This place of discomfort was also important

for Paul because it identified a weak area and the opportunity he had to address his fears.

He could also be the fraternity man who was different and show care and concern in a

different way. He defined his service to his fraternity brothers as a "helper whenever my brothers need it." In addition to being a brother, Paul helped brothers when they had too much to drink, "if someone needs a ride downtown or from downtown, I'm more than willing to help, God forbid, they drink and drive and something happens to them." Paul noted how exhausting this role could be if he was doing it just for himself,

> I think if I'm doing it a lot for myself and not keeping my mind set on I'm doing this because I'm a Christian and I'm called to serve people. I'm doing it because it pleases the Lord. I'm doing it because I want to serve these guys too. I love these guys. I show that love through service. I think helping them and encouraging them is one of my roles I like to play.

Fraternity membership to Paul means more than alcohol and parties. It means giving of himself to his brothers and helping them in any way he can. This perspective was one that I heard throughout the interviews with the participants, although it represented an opposite perspective than what is typically observed in the fraternity community.

Aaron also spoke to this role as helper and designated driver for brothers who have had too much to drink. When Aaron attended fraternity events, he knew the role he played,

> Not everybody drinks, but the majority of the people do drink. If everybody is drinking, I'll either just drink water or soda. I still interact with people in the beginning because they're still sober. I'll usually just leave the party after everybody starts getting really drunk, or I'll stay around and be DD for most of my brothers. That would usually be on the weekend. On the weekdays its more relaxed.

As someone who recognized that he did not take risks, Aaron found security and respect from his fraternity brothers for his reliability and trustworthiness. Aaron was confident in his decision and shared that his brothers would not pressure him to drink alcohol because they know him and his values. "They won't pressure me to drink…they respect my values. That's my biggest thing. My fraternity brothers…we each respected each other's values…they made sure that they respected my values." Aaron possessed strong values and beliefs and was able to find a fraternity on campus that not only shared those values, but accepted him they way he was. College fraternities often get a negative reputation for the omission of values, but Aaron's account with his organization is a reminder that some do still exist.

Joe saw his role as helper as the manager of risks for his fraternity brothers. They knew he was always willing to help, "people know that I'll be sober and willing to help people." As a helper, Joe volunteered to drive, "if things get bad or if I need to get someone somewhere." Joe was there to assist brothers when things got bad. He referenced social events as the arena where his assistance was most needed, although it is possible that Joe's helping nature also assisted the fraternity in other areas.

Responsible person. Participants spoke of helper as a responsible person within the fraternity. In describing his role as helper, Paul said that he does not "need to be one of them in what they're doing because I am my own person." When asked if this role of helper can be exhausting, Paul quickly responded affirmatively, "it can be…it can be...if I'm doing it a lot for myself and not keeping my mind set on I'm doing this because I'm a Christian, I'm called to serve people." Paul saw his role as helper as a calling or service

to his fellow man based on Christian teachings. This emphasis on helping and encouraging his brothers is a "rewarding role" that he played.

To Joe, being the responsible and sober brother all the time was draining. He showed up to parties and attempted to blend into the party scene, but it got old. The fraternity social scene was a good time, "It's fun to go see everyone, but then it's also draining being sober. That was probably the hardest part about pledging, too, being sober at the parties. Not that it was difficult, but it was not enjoyable." This perspective shed light on the notion that it was not always fun and exciting being the responsible, non-drinking brother. As helpers and givers, these men talked of the ways in which they gave to others but rarely discussed how others gave to them. The help they received came from their faith and the commitment to something greater than themselves. These men lacked the reciprocal relationship with their fraternity brothers. They gave without expecting, or receiving, anything in return.

Safety net. The designation of safety net and catcher for peers was prevalent throughout the interviews and focus groups. During the interview, Aaron noted that he was a "safety net for his brothers…they know that they don't have to do something that might endanger themselves or others around them." He believed that knowing people who make different choices than he did was important, "sometimes it's good for you to at least have people in your life that drink to know that there are other people in the world that don't drink…they have someone to call." Again this role as helper and being someone upon whom brothers can rely emerged in his interview.

Paul viewed the identity as safety net in a slightly different way. As a Christian, Paul used his beliefs and faith as the help he represented to his fraternity brothers. During

the interview, Paul affirmed that his fraternity membership was a calling to serve and help others. He believed, "I'm called to serve people because doing so pleases the Lord. I want to serve these guys too and show love through service." Fraternity membership was seen as a way to "help them…encourage them one of the roles I like to play."

Men as Leaders. A second subtheme of faith and fraternities that was identified across participants and data was leadership. I chose the subtheme leadership instead of masculinity because participants spoke of the intersections of masculinity in terms of how they viewed themselves as leaders or men as leaders. Leadership was closely aligned with what it meant to be a man to these individuals and was a reason they sought membership in fraternities.

Participants spoke of traditional views of masculinity that I felt were important to distinguish. The traditional views of masculinity were related to the role of the man as the head of the household or family unit, and as the leader or head of an organization. In addition, the participants spoke more broadly to how they viewed leadership as a non-drinking fraternity member. There were two additional points that were salient throughout this theme: one was the influence of peer pressure and groups; and the second was the confidence in one's self and decisions made. These points are discussed below as part of the leadership subtheme that explores why these men joined fraternities and the relationship between organization membership and their non-drinking status.

During interviews, each participant spoke at length about his views of religion and alcohol and how those views were shaped by his upbringing in the church, and by his family. In addition, participants spoke to the influence of masculinity and how they

defined being a man through their own views of manhood and the values, and through their fraternity.

Traditional intersections of masculinity. Leader was defined through the lens of masculinity and how participants led their peers and represented themselves differently as men within their fraternity as non-drinkers.

John had a more traditional view of masculinity, "define being a man as the leader of a family unit…the father, the husband, is kind of the one who leads and guides the family…being a male is kind of just being a leader, standing up and being strong." This hypermasculine stereotype suggested that the male was the one who led and guided not only the family, but other organizations.

To Paul, being a man was about serving others. Paul shared this traditional perspective on masculinity, "being a man is to be leaders in every area of respect, honor, care, grace, and all of those things…especially in our relationships with women, we are the leaders." He continued this definition in describing what was acceptable for men, "we [men] should be setting the standard of service, helpfulness, loving people, all of those things." Paul noted that society had created a "manhood of culture" that placed emphasis on "physical capabilities, sexual conquests, and other dumb things." Masculinity and true manhood was based on serving others rather than on superficial ideologies determined by society such as sexual conquest and "being a man." He continued "it's two-faced…if you ask them, it's like 'respect and honor and things like that,' but if I ask them or a super bro asked them, 'what's a man?' you've got to be strong, to be big, sleep around with a bunch of chicks, pick up girls, drink a lot." This term "super bro" was an interesting designation that Paul used for a fraternity brother. Throughout the interview, Paul named these

individuals, or "super bros," several times as a negative identity that was often placed on fraternity men and their views of manhood. Instead of viewing masculinity in terms of sexual partners and over consumption of alcohol, Paul viewed his identity as a man as giving back to others and being a positive example.

To Clive, being a man was about leadership. He stated during the interview that when he thinks of a man, "I think of leadership." He continued, "there's an essential and inherent quality to man that makes him a leader…we're gifted, talented in these areas… we have a lot to offer here and there. Where we do, I think we should be leaders." Clive viewed leadership and masculinity as this idea of self-confidence and being grounded in your convictions and not wavering. He associated this view with his beliefs as a Christian, "as a Christian I think as a man I've been endowed with a purpose." This purpose, as described by Clive, was to give back and immerse himself into an environment that would challenge his convictions.

Although John had a different view of religion and spirituality than the other participants, he shared similar perspectives on leadership and masculinity. To John, being a man was about standing up for your beliefs. He stated during the first interview that being a man was "being able to stand up for what you believe in…able to defend what you believe in without slandering anyone else." John's traditional approach to masculinity was related to a desire for competition and being able to "provide for my family…not just provide but have ample extra." The other participants in this study shared similar views of masculinity and leadership but associated those perspectives to a religious connection.

Peer groups and pressure. Participants noted the challenges associated with finding a peer group in college that represented similar ideals and values. College was a time of self-discovery and exploration and often presented difficulties to the men as they navigated the peer relationships and their faith journey, complicated by fraternity membership. There was emphasis placed on a sense of belonging, in making meaningful friendships in college, and in how free time was used. Participants sought relationships with other male students through single gender organizations such as fraternities and singing groups. These relationships and friendships were seen as an acceptance outside of the social setting.

Within his private school and Christian peer group Clive was not exposed to alcohol, however that exposure changed when he arrived to SSU. In high school, it was easier to associate with peers who did not drink. As Clive shared during the initial interview, he did not know anyone who drank alcohol in high school, "I didn't know anybody my age that drank either…because of where I went to school…I was never in a situation." The private school environment afforded Clive with the protection from the public school environment where it was assumed that influences and temptations such as drugs and alcohol were prevalent. The pressures were different on a college campus and as a fraternity man. There was a desire to attend social events and enjoy the community of fraternity brothers. He was reminded of his firm convictions as a Christian and non-drinker at every social event and every function, "I'm usually offered alcohol…even by people who know I don't want to drink…tell them I'm not going to drink…after lots of practice it hasn't gotten so hard just because I'm used to saying no and they expect me to say no." Saying no and standing up to his peers got easier with practice.

The relationship between alcohol and peer pressure can also be explored through the lens of seeking to be better. During both the interviews and focus group, Aaron affirmed the confidence he had in saying "no" when pressured to drink, "if I don't want to do something, I'm not going to do it." Aaron credited his upbringing with how he was influenced by peer pressure,

> I've always been taught to not be peer-pressured negatively…don't tolerate that. Part of my personality is I'm kind of introverted. If I don't want to do something, I'm not going to do it. I'm not someone who wants to be the center of attention all the time.

Aaron believed that he brought a new perspective and a level of diversity to his fraternity as a non-drinker. He said, "Me being a non-drinker adds an element of different perspective to opportunity and a level of accountability." It was as if he shouldered the accountability and diversity for the organization. Although he did not specifically indicate that he was the only non-drinker in his fraternity, his comments related to being sober at the party and being a safety net for brothers suggested that he might be.

Aaron also recalled that his fraternity membership was closely aligned with his desire to serve a greater purpose. He shared, "God created me with a purpose and I live out my life as a servant of God because he has called me to something bigger than myself." Although Aaron did not say that he was called to mission or witness to his fraternity brothers, I believe that his membership in the fraternity was one of the ways he lived out his purpose. His identity as a non-drinker was confirmed, not only because it is against the law to drink until 21, but that he is "a student first…drinking excessively impairs your mind…and in a state where I'm not in control of my actions." As a

mechanical engineering major, Aaron was focused on his academics and recognized that he could not maintain the party lifestyle that his peers enjoyed and succeed academically.

Similarly, Clive grew up "in a Christian atmosphere and being familiar with that kind of culture made me who I am" but he desired a more inclusive peer group in college and "didn't want to be secluded and be in a Christian environment." He viewed his peer group and work at college as his "mission or evangelistic lifestyle" and associated with those who did not proclaim Christianity. This mission work played out in how he spent his time beyond the classroom at SSU. As a college freshman, he was looking for a new experience. "I really wanted to make the most of my time around people who wouldn't call themselves Christian." The new experience he desired was association with students who did not believe as he did. Clive joined a men's vocal group on campus in search of,

> being around guys and having a solid group of friends, being very social, doing things together, enjoying time together…being around people who would say that they weren't Christians. Really I was pursuing fraternity life and just not actually looking at fraternities.

Clive wanted a place that needed his message and felt that the fraternity environment was just the place.

Peer pressure for Joe was nonexistent on the surface, although the longer we talked during the interviews, the more it appeared to be a cover-up for hurt and discouragement. The distant and, at times, dishonest relationship he shared with parents was the root of how he viewed relationships with peers. Joe did not associate with those who drank alcohol. He noted that he was "never around it, even in high school…my friends were people who were similar to me." The similarities that Joe shared with peers

were that they were non-drinkers. "I feel comfortable in settings where there is alcohol and I'm not drinking, even though it weirds out everyone else around me."

Michael was drawn to the fraternity he joined because of the organization's founding on Christianity. Michael shared that his fraternity was "formed by 13 pastors in a southern state." Based on his perspective, "the values were integrity…focus on sound body and sound mind was really cool to me." Michael was raised in the United Methodist church and found that his upbringing was closely aligned with the values of the fraternity, "the values of the fraternity kind of matched my take on life." The emphasis on sound mind and body "focused not only on just how good you looked but also how intelligent you were, being the best individual as you can." In addition to fraternity membership, John joined a religiously-affiliated student organization on campus and began Bible studies and exploring the Bible in new and different ways. This new look at the Bible, according to Michael, "made me realize that some of my life choices, such as drinking and such as other things like that, just weren't really applied to the Bible…that's when I decided to stop drinking." Michael made a significant realization in college that had not been made in high school. Growing up, attending church and youth group were common although he "came in with the mindset of 'it's ok to drink…cool to drink…people like it...college is known for drinking…fraternities are known for drinking'." When he began high school at his college preparatory private school, the students:

> this thing called chapel on Wednesdays. Wednesday morning we would go and have a preacher or something come in. Did I necessarily read the Bible? Did I pray that often? Not really, because I wasn't really taught that. I was taught to go

to church. I was taught to go to youth. I wasn't taught to read my Bible and apply

it to my life. That's where college changed it.

Michael credited the religious student organization at SSU with helping him grow his

faith, although he realized that he could not be in a fraternity due to the pressure to drink.

According to Michael,

if I was going to be a Christian, then I didn't want people to say, "Oh, well you're

a part of a fraternity. Obviously you drink." That was another thing. I didn't want

to be known as the Christian who drank, because I wasn't.

As Michael shared here, and continued to share throughout our interactions together, he

felt he could not be both a good fraternity man and a Christian.

Confidence in self and decisions. Participants described similar accounts when

exploring the confidence exhibited within themselves and their ability to make decisions

based on their faith. Each participant shared a different, but similar, report that described

their confidence in who they were as men, and how that was translated to their identity as

non-drinking fraternity men.

During our time together, John spoke in great detail about his experiences as a

college student and fraternity man, prior to any questions being asked. He was confident

in his approach to peer pressures. This level of confidence was evident in not only how

he approached alcohol, but the way in which he approached fraternity membership. John

was not interested in impressing anyone for membership into a certain group because he

knew he was better than the other men. John shared, "I didn't like this concept of having

to impress guys…arrogant me when I was a sophomore, that I knew that I was better

academically, morally, just having my head on straight." John believed his purpose on

campus was to exceed the academic expectations that were placed before him "in order for me to be the best I have to do things that will give me the best results…I want to be better than everyone else. That requires the time that no one else is willing to put in." He viewed the fraternity social scene as a waste of time when students were here to get a degree.

Joe presented a different relationship between faith and peer pressure. During the interviews, he indicated that he associated with those who shared his Christian beliefs. He managed peer pressure differently than how he observed his peers manage it. He did not succumb to the pressures and was not influenced by the pressures either in high school or college. Joe noted that he had been "a Christ-follower most of my life which certainly, I think, plays probably a part in this [role as a non-drinker] too." Joe attended private, Christian school until high school and never felt pressure to drink alcohol. Joe shared, "even in high school, the people I hung out with, I was just never around alcohol…probably partly by choice, because my friends were people that were similar to me." Joe made intentional decisions to associate with people in high school who were similar to him and shared his view on alcohol. In college, Joe joined a fraternity although he also sought membership and connection with other Christian, Greek students. He noted that, "getting involved with God for Greeks was very helpful, knowing that there were other people, also, that shared my same views and beliefs and stuff like that…was a big factor in helping me stay the course."

Outlier. Perhaps a different perspective to the influence of faith and fraternity is evident from John Duncan, a fourth-year student who acknowledges that how he was raised and his current view of religion are quite different. John was identified as an

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outlier in this study due to his approach to religion in shaping his views on alcohol. His perspective was quite different than other participants.

John was raised "in a Christian home" and "attended church every Sunday that we could." John noted that he "came to college as a devout Christian" but "always had some questions about the dynamics…the particulars of it." The biochemistry major shared that he had been warned, "…it's difficult to keep your faith when you go into a very science-heavy [major] and really start applying the things you know." Although he does not consider himself an atheist, he believes "there is something, it has to be much more complex…it's not even close to what we could fathom or what any religious base could come up with." As a non-believer, John's view of alcohol is less connected to his religious convictions but more to the sense of competition and his desire to be the best at all he does. He shared that he could not be his best academically if he was drinking alcohol.

Summary of Theme 2

This theme highlighted the influence of faith on the fraternity experience for these participants. I arrived at this study with some idea that religion and spirituality would be part of the reason these fraternity men did not drink alcohol. I did not expect for participants to share such intimate details and connections between their faith and their membership in a fraternity. The participants shared very similar perspectives on how they viewed men as helpers and leaders; often shaped by the influence and roles their own parents played in their lives. Purpose was evident throughout this theme, although not identified specifically as a theme, subtheme or category. The men believed their

membership in the particular organization was purposeful and created an opportunity to serve their peers.

Perhaps most surprising were the ways in which the men spoke to their view of masculinity and "being a man" in terms of their faith. Each man represented a very traditional view of men in organizations, families and within society. At times I found myself struggling with what they were sharing because, as a woman, I believed that men weren't the only ones who could lead families and organizations. Through analytic memos and journaling, I was able to check my own positionality and bias of this hypermasculine view of men and their influence on society. Through this process I was also able to celebrate with these men and the confidence they demonstrated as non-drinkers within their fraternity, while also considering my own bias and stereotypes.

Theme 3: "As Long As I Have a Cup"

The third theme identified throughout this study was the party scene without alcohol. The participants established that their own journey, as non-drinkers within the social scene on campus, was often quite lonely. The loneliness was connected to the isolation these men felt among their peers, within the social environment and on the campus. Each participant filled this isolation and loneliness in some way whether it was joining a religiously affiliated organization, wandering through fraternity parties, video games, or full immersion into academic work. This idea of the participant's individual journey through parties without alcohol emerged as a natural theme after exploring the ways in which parental expectations shaped the decision making of the participants and ways in which the men navigated faith and fraternities as a college student.

To most fraternity men on college campuses, the social scene is filled with beer cans, keg parties, and hangovers. The participants in this study spoke to the ways in which they engaged and managed the fraternity and college social scene as a non-drinker. To John it was holding a cup, "If I were at a party, I'd try and talk to people without a drink in my hand. I feel comfortable in settings where there is alcohol and I'm not drinking, even though it weirds out everyone else around me." For Clive it's always saying no, "I'm usually offered alcohol at every social event, even by people who know I don't want to drink…after lots of practice it hasn't gotten so hard because I'm use to saying no and they expect me to say no." Michael feared being looked down upon because of his decision not to drink, "when people would come up to me with shots or something like that, I would say that I'm ok and would get really strange looks, like 'you're weird.'" He struggled with not wanting to be looked down upon but also wanted to "stick to my values and beliefs above going with others."

Participant in party scene. Throughout the interviews and focus groups, the men spoke to how they engaged in the party scene without actually consuming alcohol. The subtheme was determined because not all participants had navigated the party scene without alcohol. Two participants shared that they came to college as drinkers and had consumed alcohol at parties before changing their behavior.

Four of the six participants identified as non-drinkers, with two participants identifying as abstainers. As a reminder, a non-drinker is someone who has not had alcohol in the past 30 days (Everfi, 2013). An abstainer is someone who has never had alcohol (Everfi, 2013). This distinction was important when exploring how participants navigated the social environment of college and fraternity life as both a non-drinker and

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abstainer. The non-drinkers shared different perspectives of the party scene without alcohol because they had participated in the party scene with alcohol. Although there are distinct differences between these two drinking behaviors, both are uncommon in comparison to the general college population and the fraternity community. Participants spoke in great detail about the strategies they utilized and the steps they took to fit in and participate in the party scene without alcohol.

As an abstainer, Clive shared in interviews that he grew up around alcohol and observed his parents drink responsibly. He "never thought it was a dangerous thing or a bad thing…never saw either of my parents drunk." His view of alcohol was framed through the lens of observing its use responsibly, "it was clear that my parents respected it (alcohol) and they'd probably be upset if they ever found me drinking or treating alcohol inappropriately." Clive attended a private, Christian school and "didn't know anyone my age that drank." He associated with like-minded individuals in high school and really had "little exposure to it in a peer setting." Clive spoke throughout the first interview about his presence at all social events on campus, "I'm at every party, every social event, every beach weekend. The events that take three days and nights, stuff like that, I'm there at all those." Again, Clive joined the other participants in sharing that he attended social events and did not want to miss out on the friendships and events. In order to maintain the friendships and feel connected, attendance at the social events was necessary.

Aaron saw his participation as a non-drinker in the party scene as something that grounded his drinking friends. In his mind, "it's good for you to have people in your life who drink to know that there are other people in the world that don't drink." When he

went to parties, he arrived early to, "interact with people in the beginning because they're still sober." As a strategy, Aaron made decisions about what he drank at parties when alcohol was present, "not always alcohol there…if everyone is drinking, I'll either just drink water or a soda." Aaron attended parties and wanted to be part of the social scene until everyone got drunk. Once fraternity brothers and other students drank to the point of getting drunk, he left the party. Aaron's experience represented a struggle that he had within the fraternity environment. He wanted to be part of the social scene and was comfortable drinking water or soda at the party, but did not desire being around drunks and left when he became uncomfortable.

Michael desired to be included by his peers. He drank alcohol in high school and his freshman year in college but changed his behavior when he saw the impact of alcohol on his relationships with others. "They would talk to me for a little bit, but then just kind of go away." In the interview, he spoke to the importance of mattering and peer inclusion related to his change to a non-drinker, "that's what really made the change…I don't need alcohol anymore because I have these people in my life that I can go to with what matters…it was more important to be yourself." As a non-drinker, Michael attended parties and social functions, but could not be his true Christian self. He struggled to balance with his beliefs with what he observed from others: "I didn't want to be looked down upon at all, but I also wanted to stick to my beliefs and values above going with others". Unable to balance his beliefs and the pressures associated with fraternity membership, Michael dropped out of the organization. The insecurities that Michael presented in high school and freshman year emerged again when he stopped drinking alcohol.

My brother's keeper. Paul came to college as a freshman and quickly jumped into the party scene. Initially he did not want to be in a fraternity because he "wasn't a drinker or any of that…but then I became part of the party scene." He had previously associated fraternity membership with buying friends and partying, and he had already had friends and parties outside of fraternity. When his "life was changed following a summer ministry program," he decided to join and "try to minister to these men." Although joining a fraternity was "the scariest thing you could do," he really felt that he could "make an impact for the Lord on this campus…had a heart for the men, a heart for the organizations, and a bunch of open doors." Paul shared that he was no stranger to the fraternity social events and noted "because guys bond through shared experiences, I do want to go to everything, all the social events and things like that." Even if alcohol was present, he was there and was "really comfortable around it" because this was where he served God.

Joe also spoke to this notion of connections with others in the social environment and how he navigated his role as his brother's keeper. To Joe, joining a fraternity and a brotherhood was about connections and meaningful conversations, "I could hold a conversation with them [fraternity members] for 10 minutes and not even realize that you were talking to them for that long." As a brother, Joe recognized the emphasis his fraternity placed on "helping each other" and Joe contributed his help by being "available for his brothers to help them in any way." Joe's desire to look at the fraternity landscape differently led to him joining a fraternity that traditionally recruited Honors students on campus. As an Honors student himself, he felt this was a safe choice. The safety he felt as a member of this group allowed him to remain true to himself as a non-drinker.

Aaron viewed being his brother's keeper in terms of respect and accountability. As a non-drinker, Aaron's "fraternity brothers respect that I don't drink" and he does not feel pressure to drink. He added, "me being a non-drinker adds an element of different perspective to opportunity and adds a level of accountability." This accountability was related not only to keeping his brothers "in line" but also to holding him accountable to his own decision not to drink. He was in a place to take care of those around him if he was sober.

Navigating expectations from peers. Participants shared during interviews and focus groups that peers often questioned them about not drinking alcohol at social functions and parties. There was a sense from the non-drinking participants that they had to manage the expectations that college fraternity men had of non-drinking fraternity men. For Joe, the first few weeks as a non-drinking, fraternity new member passed and then people starting noticing [he was not drinking] and questioned him," He responded confidently, "oh yeah, I don't." Brothers regularly approached him to say, "If you ever want to, we'll let you…we're not going to keep you from drinking." Joe did not engage. Brothers offered to make him drinks at parties, although they never forced him or pressured him to drink. His reason for not drinking was justified through an experience where a high school friend died of alcohol poisoning as part of a fraternity hazing activity on another campus. When he shared this experience with other brothers, they responded, "that is fine…that is completely OK." It was as if he received permission from brothers not to drink due to the personal connection he had with the incident.

Aaron got a similar response from his fraternity brothers, "When I said I don't drink, they were completely OK with that. They made sure that they respected my

values." He handled expectations and pressure from fraternity brothers by simply saying no. "They won't pressure me to drink…they respect my values…it's really easy to say no." When confronted by his peers, Aaron confidently stood up for what he believed, regardless of how he was viewed among his brothers. To him, it wasn't about fraternity membership but "having the courage to stand up…say yes to opportunities."

Supportive friends. Early on, Clive felt supported by his brothers on his decision not to drink, "no one has ever been upset, angered, or even…I've never felt not respected." Similar to Aaron, Clive noted that people perceived it to be "hard to be sober around a lot of drunk people…I think they respect it, not necessarily because of the values behind it…they think it's really difficult to do that in college." Clive felt a level of respect from his peers for his decision not to drink, while still participating in social events and being around alcohol. One particularly awkward situation that Clive shared was related to the random set-ups with sorority girls for a date function. According to him, "I go, and I'm around people that I don't know and I'm not drinking…I think they expect me to drink." There was security in being around friends who knew he did not drink, although he put himself in situations to meet new people and attend other organization's social functions. He continued, "Like I said, typically I go into situations with people who know me, are around me, and are used to it." At social functions, Clive practiced saying no,

> I'm usually offered alcohol every social event, every function, even by people who know I don't drink. I just tell them I'm not going to drink. After lots of practice it hasn't gotten so hard just because I'm used to saying no and they expect me to say no.

In the interview, Clive shared that he did not need to tell people he did not drink, "I think people knew I was a Christian and I knew people that also knew people that could say that I was a Christian." Who he was as a Christian also spoke to his decision and sense of obedience not to drink alcohol.

Although Joe was not pressured to drink by older brothers, it was almost as if he continued to justify his decision by sharing personal experiences, or politely saying "no thank you." Joe attended some social functions calling them "a good time, fun to see everyone." In contrast, Joe admitted that at times "it's draining being sober… I would much rather be at home sober than at the party around a whole bunch of drunk people while I was sober." Joe was absent from parties not to face his peers and the questions around alcohol use.

From drinker to non-drinker. Michael approached the party scene without alcohol from a slightly different perspective since he arrived to campus as a drinker. He partied his way through high school and came to college and joined a fraternity. He admitted that he came to campus and, "at the beginning I didn't really know what I was getting into." After an experience with high school friends in another college town, Michael decided to stop drinking. He continued by talking about the influence of his spiritual life,

> My life is centered around the Bible now. It's the only reason that I stopped
> drinking in the first place. When I grew up, I had friends that all they did
> were…well, not all they did, but weekends were for partying and things such as
> that. When I got here I found those exact same friends, but then I found
> something that was more important, which is my relationship with God.

Michael continued attending social functions as a non-drinker and met resistance from peers. He admitted, "it sucked during certain points" and it was not always the fun and easy decision to make. At social functions, Michael was constantly having people come up to him forcing alcohol on him: "when people would come up to me with shots or something like that, I told them, 'No, I'm OK,' I would get really strange looks and they would say, 'you're weird.'" As a member of a fraternity, Michael found it was more and more difficult to be a member and say no to alcohol.

Paul also shared during the interviews and focus groups that he arrived to campus as a drinker who enjoyed the freedom of college, "discovered it [alcohol] freshman year and went into it full 100%, not knowing what I was doing…going into freshman year I was free…I had my own car and could do whatever I want." As a freshman, Paul did not see the need to join a fraternity because he had access to the parties,

> A fraternity was never appealing to me, especially as a freshman…I came in and wasn't a drinker or any of that. I was like, "Why would I join a fraternity? I'm basically buying friends." Then I became part of the party scene and didn't need a fraternity to party because I could party outside of a fraternity.

Paul's involvement in the party scene changed during a transformational summer mission program. He returned to campus as a non-drinker, was led to join a fraternity to "make an impact for the Lord on campus."

Paul and Michael both arrived to campus as drinkers, ready to experience college as they thought it would be. Both men were changed by the influence of their faith in how they viewed alcohol and its place in their lives.

Camouflage with a cup. Throughout the interviews, participants described managing the social scene through a red Solo cup. ("Solo" is a brand of disposable, plastic, cup that popular culture has made synonymous with drinking alcohol.) The strategy of holding a red Solo cup was significant for the participants because it was a free pass when at a party. The participants spoke in general about the comfort of holding a cup at a party to avoid questions from peers.

The first social experience Joe had as a fraternity member was a bid day party where he managed his non-use of alcohol when, "someone handed me a beer, and I just held a full beer can the entire night just walking around so no one would hand me something else." He made a decision that night that he was not going to drink and did not face opposition from others because he had something in his hand all night. In fact he shared, "no one asked me anything, either, because I was holding it the entire time…no one thought it was weird…that's how I made it through the first week." Joe realized that just holding a beer can reduced questions and possible ridicule from fraternity brothers and other party-goers. It was a way to be in attendance, while maintaining his role as a non-drinker.

Aaron shared, throughout our time together, how he navigated the social environment on campus as a non-drinker. For Aaron, it was about what he drank and how long he stayed around a party. He spoke to how he managed the party scene as a non-drinker,

Not everyone drinks, but the majority of people do drink. If everybody was drinking, I'll either just drink water or soda. I still interact with people in the

beginning because they're still sober. I'll usually leave the party after everybody

starts getting really drunk.

Not only does Aaron describe what he drinks in these settings but he also referenced his

ability (and eventual inability) to interact with people once they had been drinking.

Michael's strategy involved holding a red Solo cup filled with water. In order to

avoid the questions about his drinking and,

To get away from people, not necessarily looking down on me, I would get a red

Solo cup and just fill it with water. I would fill it up, not necessarily all the way so

that people could not see that it was water.

This provided him access to the social events to meet people and talk to people and

eliminated the question of whether or not he was drinking. Michael shared that the simple

fact of just holding the red Solo cup reduced inquiries, "I was drinking out of the Solo

cup so people asked less if I had it in my hands." Sometimes he would get questions

about what was in the cup and he chose to tell the truth, "if they looked in my cup they

were like, 'oh what are you drinking,' I'd say, water. I'm not going to lie to them." He

would also say that he had other reasons, beyond just not wanting to, for not drinking,

such as driving.

Paul shared that he could be drinking at a social event but not be drinking an

alcoholic beverage. He said that the strategy of holding a cup avoided the question from

some brothers, "I'm holding a cup to almost avoid persecution or avoid the temptation of

people walking up and being like 'Hey, drink this. Hey, drink that'…Oh, I'm good, I

already have a drink." For Paul, the act of holding a drink reduced questions from other

party goers and allowed him to blend into the scene. As a Christian, who declared the

fraternity environment as his "mission field," Paul was quick to find ways to blend into the party.

Clive camouflaged his non-drinking by attending fraternity parties and sorority date social events. He regularly attended beach weekend, where the women decorated coolers for the men and fill the coolers with their favorite alcoholic beverages. Instead of filling the cooler with alcohol, she filled the cooler with root beer. Clive thought it was "hilarious and had bottles that I would walk around with drinking from." He noted that people were surprised because they thought he was drinking. These coolers, and what was put in them, have led to so many issues on campus that they were banned and considered alcohol paraphernalia.

Joe shared an example from his first fraternity party to demonstrate how he protected himself, "someone handed me a beer and I just held a full beer can the entire night just walking around so no one would hand me something else." The act of holding the beer can allowed Joe access to the party scene and shielded his non-drinking for himself.

To these men, the simple act of holding a cup, particularly a red Solo cup, created an excuse for them to go unnoticed. There were no questions about what they were drinking as long as they had the cup in their hand. To these men, the cup symbolized the party and holding it gave them access into the scene without drinking alcohol. The strategies employed by these non-drinking men also reinforced stereotypical male, Greek performances of identity.

Response from women. The participants shared during interviews and focus groups that although fraternity brothers were often intrigued with their decision not to

drink, most of the questions and inquiry came from women at parties. In addition to the looks of surprise from his brothers, Clive also got some "hilarious looks and applause." It was as if some fraternity brothers were relieved that he was finally drinking alcohol. Perhaps, the confusion and somewhat disbelief regarding his decision not to drink alcohol comes from "girls." According to Clive, "they want to know why…very unfamiliar to them to be around guys that don't drink." It was as if the expectation was so prevalent that all college men and women drink alcohol that when a fraternity man acknowledged that he did not drink alcohol that there was confusion and questions. Clive hoped that the way he represented himself, and his social engagement, were testament to the idea that there are fraternity men who enjoy the social environment without the alcohol.

Sobriety's contrast to drunkenness. It was evident throughout the interviews and focus groups of this relationship between sobriety and drunkenness. There were stark contrasts between sobriety and drunkenness in friendships, organizations and at parties.

Michael faced ridicule from fraternity brothers for his decision not to drink. The purpose of his attendance at social functions was to meet people, although when he would turn down a drink, he would get responses such as, "man up, that's weird, that's weak…drink a beer, chug a beer…put some hair on your chest." These comments were degrading and led to him making the decision to drop his fraternity. He preferred not to have the temptation:

> the process of not wanting it to be an option, for drinking. Even though I wasn't being forced to drink, that sense of 'oh, you don't drink' and them seeing me in this negative connotation, I just didn't want to have that on my shoulders.

The temptation to drink was too great for Michael and he chose to remove himself completely from the organization. He discussed the temptation twice, "that was the main thing, the temptation to start again" and "just that idea of drinking become a temptation again." He also felt as if he had to make a choice as a Christian, "if I was going to be a Christian, then I didn't want people to say, 'oh, well you're part of a fraternity… obviously you drink." The choice he made was to no longer be a member of a fraternity and find camaraderie in other outlets on campus. Michael searched for this idea of real relationships and friendship and found that real friendships were not formed from nights out partying,

> When you go out and party, yes, you do meet a lot of people. But I do remember specifically freshman year. I knew a lot of people that I partied with. The next day or a week or so when I would see them again, they wouldn't acknowledge me.

Instead, Michael found friendships and connections through a religious student organization on campus and as a student leader in his residence hall. Although Michael encountered "lows and highs" through his journey as a non-drinker, he acknowledged that he discovered the value of real friends and meaningful friendships. He shared, "I don't need alcohol anymore because I have these people in my life that I can go to with matters that really affect me or that I need to talk about, just different things like that, real things." Michael was focused on himself and being true to who he really was.

Although he did not drink alcohol, Paul shared that he actively engaged in the social activities of his fraternity. This engagement involved not only attending social events hosted by his fraternity, but also attending sorority functions, house parties and tailgates. He faced peer pressure "all the time to drink." Since Paul joined his fraternity as

a sophomore, and acknowledged that he drank alcohol as a freshman, he knew he would be different. He shared that prior to joining a fraternity, the pressure to drink "used to not be so bad", although now he said, "they literally and physically shove it [alcohol] in your face." There were times when Paul faced ridicule from peers who question, "Are you sober right now?" When he responded that he was, "they call you lame or some kind of name…it doesn't really matter…I'm not doing that to fit in or to show them I'm sober." As he responded that it did not matter what others said, he also shared, "being accepted by peers is a very real thing because you're in a fraternity."

As an abstainer, John arrived at the idea of social engagement from a different perspective. John considered himself an active member and served as vice president of member development for his fraternity. His positional leadership role garnered for him a level of confidence that was unique among participants in this study. When John attended social functions, he went to see people,

> If I were at a party, which I've frequented very few, if I were at a social
> event…just try and talk to people without a drink in my hand. I feel comfortable
> in settings where there is alcohol and I'm not drinking, even though it weirds out
> everyone else around me.

John said that he did not feel pressure to drink as a member of a fraternity on campus, "I've always just felt comfortable enough to just say no…I've never really felt pressure to do anything…peer pressure has never really been a thing for me." As I examined the contrast of sobriety to drunkenness, the notion of making friends in states of drunkenness emerges. John wonder if he might be missing out on meeting people because he did not go to parties and drink, "I do, sometimes, think that I won't have lifelong bonds that

some of my fraternity brothers will have…I don't see myself regretting it." When I probed to better understand how his peers or fraternity brothers viewed his decision, John admitted, "they probably poke fun of it behind my back, but I really don't care…I've had a couple brothers ask me about it…we've had conversations about it." John thought he had gained a level of respect because of his decision not to drink as a fraternity man, although he noted that some fraternity brothers or friends might be making fun of him for his decision.

Throughout the interviews, participants shared strategies and approaches they utilized when dealing with alcohol in social settings. Each participant spoke to the role that he played within his fraternity or among his peers as a non-drinker. All participants attended social functions where alcohol was available but did not consume it. The process of navigating the college party scene as a non-drinker was a discussion point for four of the six participants. They attended parties to get to know fraternity brothers, and at times, they hosted house parties where large amounts of alcohol was consumed by their peers.

The students shared that they believed their role to be one of significance in social settings. They were often the ones who took care of their brothers – either serving as a designated driver or just being present and sober. Perhaps one way in which the participants navigated the social scene as non-drinkers was the desire to hold a drink. This action of holding either a soft drink bottle or a red Solo cup filled with water or soda seemed to be the preferred approaches utilized by the men when at a party with alcohol.

Summary of Theme 3

This theme highlighted the ways in which non-drinking fraternity men engage in the social scene on campus. Participants noted that although they did not drink alcohol

they wanted to be a part of social events in their organization and within the Greek community. They attended social events, took care of their brothers and acted the part of other party-goers by holding a red Solo cup. The participants shared their desire to watch out for their brothers and other party goers and provide protection and support where needed. The simple act of holding a cup, regardless of the contents helped, avoid questions about whether or not he was drinking alcohol. This was seen as a way to protect oneself from possible ridicule from peers. Navigating the expectations from peers was difficult for the participants. The men spoke in great detail about their desire to be included and feel part of the organization. Inclusion was based more on their influence in the organization outside of the social events than within them. If participants were leaders in the organization, or determined "cool," it was acceptable that they did not drink alcohol.

Throughout data collection and analysis, I was constantly checking my positionality. As a campus administrator who rarely spoke to students who attended fraternity social events as a non-drinker, I have to remove my bias on fraternity men and to hear what was being shared. As I disconnected and focused on the story of the participants I was reminded of how often we label students and situations from one encounter or situation instead of giving all students an equal chance to share their story.

FINDINGS – PART 2

The photographs that participants took throughout the data collection process complimented the conversations during the initial interviews. Participants shared, through their photographs, the ways in which they experience campus and fraternity life as non-drinkers. Each participant took pictures with their own iPhone camera. As noted in

chapter three, I decided not to use disposable cameras for this part of the project. There was little concern about students editing pictures that were taken on their phones. During the training session for photovoice, participants received information on the protocol and were asked to send the original photograph. In addition, the use of disposable cameras could bring more attention to them if they were around peers at a party or with fraternity members. The purpose of allowing the students to use their iPhones or own cameras was to create the most natural and comfortable environment for the students.

Participants shared very similar experiences when speaking about the photographs as they did during the initial interview. In general, the analysis of the photographs aligned with the themes that were determined through interviews and the focus group. I selected several photographs and included them in this additional findings section for chapter four to emphasize the challenges participants faced on campus and the strategies they utilized as a fraternity man.

Although the students seemed apprehensive when this part of the project was reviewed with them, I was pleased by the participation of the students and their desire to tell their story. The photographs were added to an additional findings section of chapter four to highlight the creative approach by the students, and to align the photographs with the earlier themes.

Photovoice

To describe their experiences as a non-drinking fraternity man, participants generated 5-7 photographs throughout a two-week period. Detailed in chapter three are the parameters established to ensure confidentiality of the participants and their subjects. I recommended that participants exclude individual faces to maintain confidentiality,

although the locations that were photographed could identify the participant. Informed consent forms (Appendix F) were completed by the participants and reviewed to ensure that they understood the expectations of this phase of the project. In addition, I gave participants a copy of Procedures for Taking Pictures (Appendix D), to review during our time together and to take home with them. After they took the photographs, participants sent them to me to be uploaded for review during the second interview session.

I analyzed Photovoice pieces using values and emotion codes and thematic analysis to better understand from the participant how the image described their experiences as a non-drinker. The themes identified for photovoice were the same themes identified in the interviews and focus groups. There was saturation across the data on the influence of parents and their expectations on the students' decision not to drink, the role of faith and fraternity life, and how they navigated the party scene without alcohol. At times, it was as if the photographs provided a more intimate view into the lives of these men and the struggles that they often face as a minority in the fraternity.

This section will highlight some of the pictures taken by participants and the ways in which they used the photographs to describe their experiences on campus and within their lives as non-drinkers.

Theme 1: "It's How I Was Raised"

During the photovoice interview, participants discussed the role their parents played in establishing values and expectations for their behavior. This theme was not only saturated during interviews and focus groups, but also during interviews with each participant to learn why they selected the photographs they did.

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When analyzing the pictures that were submitted by participants, I noted the presence of the theme of parental expectations. Participants shared places and objects that represented the influence their parents had on them. Clive shared Figure 4.1, depicting the dinner table, and described it as "good representation of being at home and family expectations." Sitting around the table was the place where this participant learned right from wrong and the expectations his parents had of him.

Clive continued by sharing the important influence his parents had been in his life. His described his relationship with his parents as one of "immense respect and love for one another." The establishment of values was central to his upbringing. Clive knew his parents "would expect me to be responsible with alcohol…that's just clear to me…I just know that." The conversations that occurred around this table were significant to Clive and shaped the values he possesses.

The relationships between parents and son not only influenced the actions of the men as college fraternity members, but they also influenced the value placed on money and how it was used. Aaron provided the photograph in Figure 4.2, described as an empty wallet. He chose this picture to emphasize the cost that is associated with alcohol, "alcohol can be an expensive habit…I don't have a lot of money to spend and spending it on alcohol seems like a waste." He continued by describing how he used his position as a non-drinker to stand out from his brothers, "I don't conform to the crowd. I'm my own person."

Figure 4.1: Family Dinner

Figure 4.2: Expensive Habit

The pictures below represent the value placed on academic success, which sometimes served as an excuse for participants not to attend a party or social event. The two pictures below were shared by John to describe his focus on academics. As a perfectionist, John believes that he must always give 100%, "anything less than perfection is difficult for me to accept." He continued, "Like I said, I'm very competitive,

and I always thought what I was doing paled in comparison to what everyone else was doing." John described Figure 4.3 as his research notebook, which served as a "physical symbol of my time in lab." As a non-drinker, John wanted to "look back on college and enjoy the fruits of my labor in publications and any grants that I were to get." John's desire for perfection prevented him from engaging in the party scene with his peers. In high school, John did not get in to a desired Honors program and made decisions to change his life to avoid hearing "No, not accepted" again. He said, "I want to be the best I can be…I want to be better than everyone else. What requires that is the amount of time that no one else is willing to put in, I'm putting in that time." John, he sacrificed the typical fraternity scene to get ahead academically.
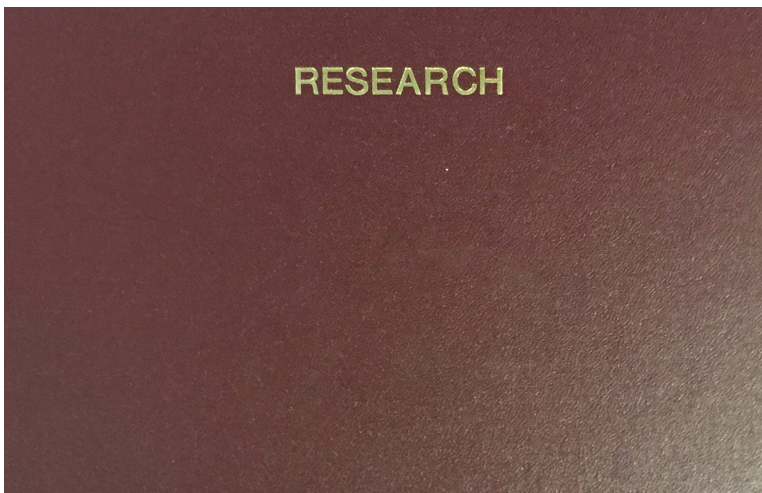

Figure 4.3: Academic Priorities

Figure 4.4 is a place where John "spent a large majority of my time on campus." John spent the majority of our time together drawing parallels between the influence of his upbringing and parental expectations with his academic goals. During the first interview, he shared that he had talked himself out of Christianity due to courses he took in evolution and ecology. John described this photograph as, "the place where I really

grew up through college, where I've learned about not only the stuff in my degree, but just kind of things where I can develop my personality and how I think about the world." To John, not drinking allowed him to be immersed in his academics and challenged who he believed he was, not what his parents wanted him to be.

Figure 4.4: Perspective

Theme 2: "I Knew I'd be Different"

Joe shared the photograph in Figure 4.5 to emphasize the importance of academics and studying instead of going out and drinking with his fraternity brothers. His focus on academics was not new to the college environment, "academics had always been a big part of my life, and obviously through now too." The photograph of the desk represents a place to spread out and be focused on the academic purpose of college. He shared, "I suppose that's led to some of the decision not to drink because I can get up and work the next day or can continue working at the end of the night." Similarly to John, Joe believed he could not be a successful student and go out downtown, "during the week, you just don't have time for it…it boggles my mind when I hear about people going downtown on Monday or Tuesday nights."

Participants visually and verbally described their experiences as non-drinkers in similar ways. Five of the six participants shared photographs that represented their faith in this experience as a non-drinker. To the participants, attending a traditional church service, a college ministry program or a religious student organization were ways to connect with like-minded students and be enriched and supported spiritually. The support and connection was important for participants as they navigated the fraternity and college environment as non-drinkers.

Figure 4.5: The desk

Aaron described the photograph in Figure 4.6 as a place to worship within the entertainment district of the town. He shared that although "some students go to this area to drink" he went to this area "to have a good time with my friends at church." This relationship and close proximity between church and bars seemed contradictory, although I learned from Aaron that this location provided a safe place for students who wanted to worship but maybe felt pressure by peers to go out to this area. Aaron described it as, "a

good social outing that does not have to involve alcohol." For him, the friendships he has, and the spiritual nourishment he receives, is better than any night out at the bar.
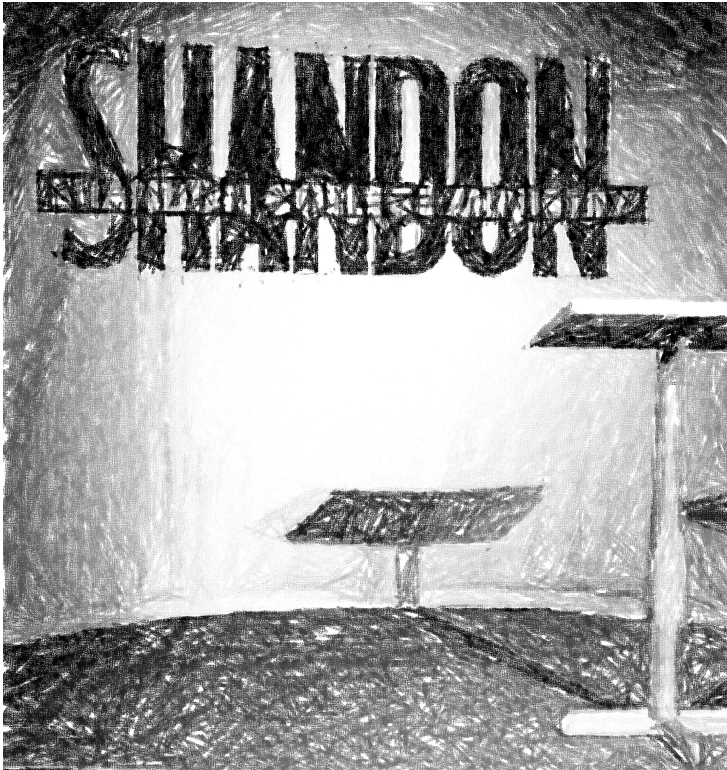

Figure 4.6: Place of Worship (*Edited by Anna Edwards*)

Paul shared a photograph of his Bible and study materials (Figure 4.7) as he prepared for a Bible study with his fraternity brothers. This photo was described by the participant as him being different, "everything that I'm doing is different, everything that I'm doing and including as a non-drinking fraternity male, it just comes down to the foundation of God's word." Being different within the fraternity environment was not easy as Paul explained, "I'd be lying if I said being belligerently drunk sometimes doesn't sound appealing. There is a lot of temptation." Although it appeared to be an easy decision not to drink, this participant acknowledged the pressures that are associated with the decision. He recalled the reason he joined the fraternity, "I joined a fraternity for the

sake of sharing the Gospel with people. Not drinking has created more opportunity for that than any other thing that I've ever done." He desired a life of obedience that was greater than alcohol could provide.
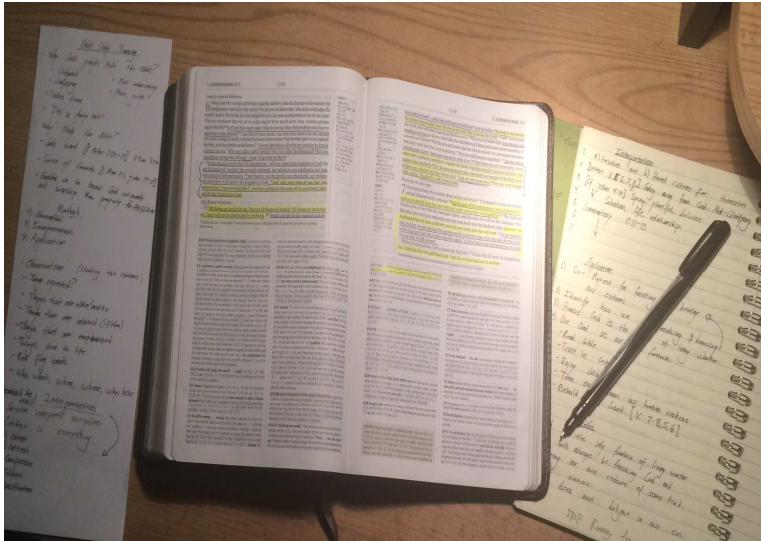

Figure 4.7: Preparation and Study

Michael described Figure 4.8, his Bible, as what centered his life and represented, "the only reason that I stopped drinking in the first place." Before arriving on campus, Michael partied on the weekends and associated with people he thought were his friends. As a college student, Michael found "something that was more important" that allowed him to "focus on the long term rather than the short term." Throughout the conversation, it was clear that Michael was influenced both positively and negatively by people in his life. He connected the impact of his spiritual journey with how he determined what was really important in his life. He shared that, "as people we can focus so much on what pleases us here and now and what we see happening right now…focus on all these other things when we need to stick more to the big picture and see what's really most important in life."
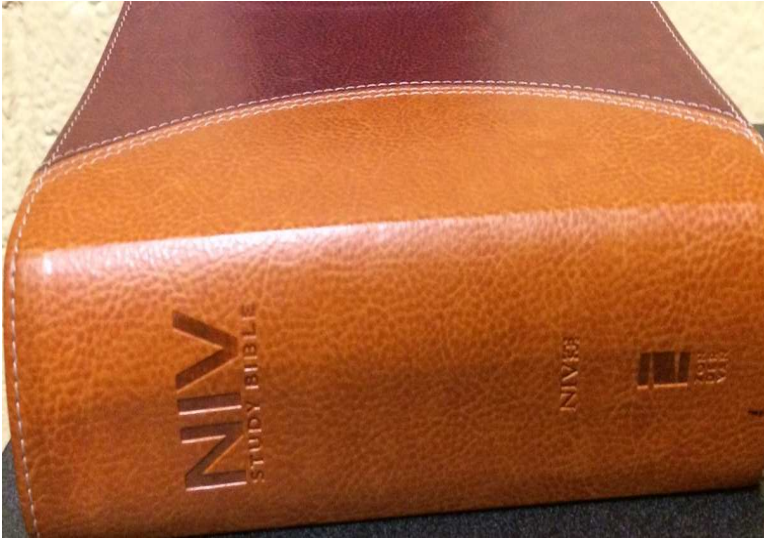
Figure 4.8: The Word

To Joe, the picture he shared (Figure 4.9) of the early morning fog on the mountains represented the fog and clearing that is often representative of the sober versus drunkenness. Joe was adventurous and enjoyed the energy he received from being in the mountains and hiking. This sense of adventure and exploration would not be possible as a drinker because, "you can't see it through the fog."
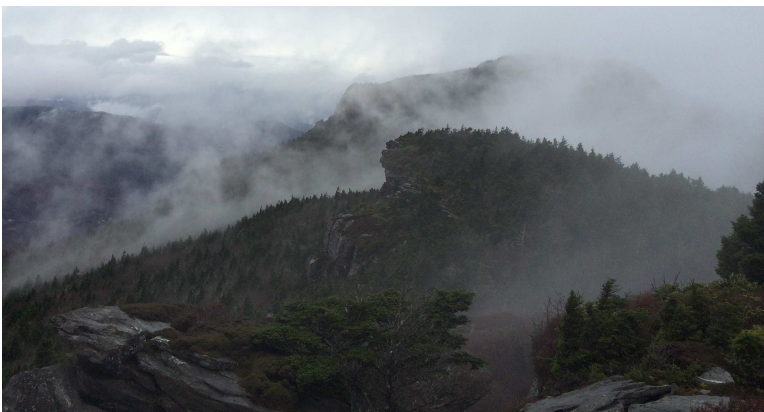

Figure 4.9: Fog on the Mountain

Theme 3: "As Long as I Have a Cup."

Throughout the interviews and focus groups, participants discussed the ways in which they manage the fraternity and social scene on campus as non-drinkers. There were strategies related to when they arrived to a party and what they designated as their role there. Additionally, participants practiced avoidance and just not attending a party due to the questions asked about why they were not drinking. Whatever strategies the participants used, it did not remove the desire to be included as part of the group. The that the participants shared provided a similar perspective into how they navigated an environment that was so different than who they were, but a taste of what they desired in their search for inclusion and connection to the group.

Paul shared the photo in Figure 4.10 and described it as his tee shirt drawer. The tee shirts represented attendance at a fraternity or sorority event, "if you go to an event, you get a tee shirt." The photo demonstrated that although he did not drink alcohol he was still included in social events,

> just because I'm a non-drinking fraternity man does not mean that I'm not going
> to events…I'm going to every event. I'm going to sorority events. I'm doing
> everything. I'm just not drinking. They're not a direct correlation. It's like, "OK,
> I'm going. I don't need to drink."

To Paul, the tee shirts were status symbols that associated him with the party and included him with the group or organization. In addition, Paul spoke to what he did at parties and possibly why he continued getting invited, "I'm a pretty good shag dancer and girls love shag dancers. I'm on backorder." Paul wanted to be included at parties at social functions and to do that his identity was tied into what he had to offer as a dancer. Paul's

tee shirt drawer also represented his identities on campus. In addition to the sorority and

fraternity function tee shirts, there are general college tee shirts mixed in with shirts from

the religious student organizations of which he is a member. The variety of tee shirts

resembled the variety he desired in his life as a non-drinking fraternity man.

Figure 4.10: The T-Shirt Drawer

Michael shared a photograph that represented the social environment of a non-

drinker in a different way. To him, not drinking provided a sense of adventure and

exploration that he had not experienced previously. He spoke during the interviews of

who he was "then" and who he was "now." Figure 4.11, an ENO hammock, symbolized

his renewed sense of adventure and his desire to stand out and be noticed. The hammock

goes with him across campus to represent how his life has changed in some way,

My life has taken a switch from being very sheltered to having to be very

adventurous, outdoorsy, and trying new things. I couldn't do that in high school.

My dad would also tell me I couldn't go places or I couldn't go to things.

As a college student, Michael made decisions for himself and experienced life from a

new perspective, "instead of partying I want to experience life…the hammock represents

the adventure that I've been going through." To Michael, the journey from drinker to

non-drinker was considered an adventure that provided people and experiences unlike he

had known. Michael also noted that the colors of the hammocks were symbolic of

himself, "I'm very seen where I go. If I go somewhere, I like to be seen. I like the

spotlight on me. I got the brightest possible colors that I could when I got this." The

colors of the hammock were reflective of Michael's personality and sense of inclusion

among his peers.

Figure 4.11: A Different Sense of Adventure

Joe navigated his experience as a non-drinker in a different way. Although he

attended parties, he did not seek the attention that Paul and Michael did. Instead, he took

his own drinks to parties. The photo in Figure 4.12 was his "favorite soft drink ever." Joe

was introduced to grape Nehi by the class television show, "M.A.S.H.," where a

character would "always go the bar and get Nehi because he was like this little good 'ol boy or whatever. He would never touch alcohol or whatever. He would always get a grape Nehi." To Joe, this beverage served as a comfort to him at parties, "I'll take one or two of those to parties sometimes to have a bottle in my hand or something." Holding the drink at the party, allowed Joe to feel included and not singled out.
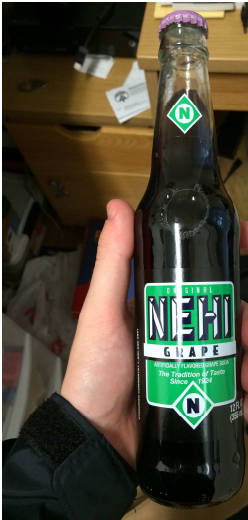
Figure 4.12: Beverage of Choice

Throughout the second interview, as photographs were discussed Clive expressed a continued desire to be included. This inclusion translated to how he spent his time and what images he used to describe his experience as a non-drinker. To Clive, the photograph in Figure 4.13 represented that, although he was a non-drinker, he could still attend parties and blend in with his drinking peers. The photograph he shared was one of a painted cooler that he was given for a beach weekend with his fraternity. To Clive, "it's just ironic because it's a cooler, which is usually filled with alcohol. Mine wasn't. It was ice and she bought me root beer for that function." Similar to Paul and his tee shirt photograph, Clive associated the cooler as a point of pride in attending functions and

parties. As a non-drinker, he showed up and navigated the party scene differently. To him, the painted cooler represented fraternity parties and connectedness.

Figure 4.13: Cooler of Pride

As Paul and I reviewed the photos he shared, the influence of peers and the desire to fit in and be included surfaced again. Figure 4.14 is a picture of a red Solo cup on a beer pong table, which represented how Paul tried to fit in with his drinking peers. To him, the red Solo cup represented his concern for how others viewed him. He said, "people look at you weird if you're not holding some kind of cup…I have water in a cup." The contents of the cup were less important than the cup and provided a way to avoid further questions and comments. He continued,

> In a sense I'm holding a cup to almost avoid persecution or avoid the temptation
> of people walking up and being like, "Hey drink this. Hey drink that." Oh I'm
> good, I already have a drink.

He determined that by holding a cup, he could avoid situations where people asked him if he needed a drink. Paul also indicated a desire to continue participating in the culture, "I

can still participate…I can attempt to fit in if I wanted by putting water in there." Paul shared again the challenges associated with being a non-drinker within a college environment. Although he shared confidence in his decision not to drink, he still had a desire to fit in and participate in the culture.

Figure 4.14: The Red Solo Cup

One of the pictures Paul shared as part of the photovoice project was that of his house after a party that he and his roommate hosted. The photo in Figure 4.15 is of beer cans and bottles sitting around after everyone had left the party. He expressed his astonishment that they "had like several hundred people there…it was ridiculous." He shared the significance of the picture in relation to his "dislike of the thought of over-indulgence." There was an interesting contrast between his dislike of over-indulgence and his hosting several hundred people at a house party. It was as if the party was a point of

pride for Paul, even as a non-drinker. The party represented a connection to peers and his desire to be included.
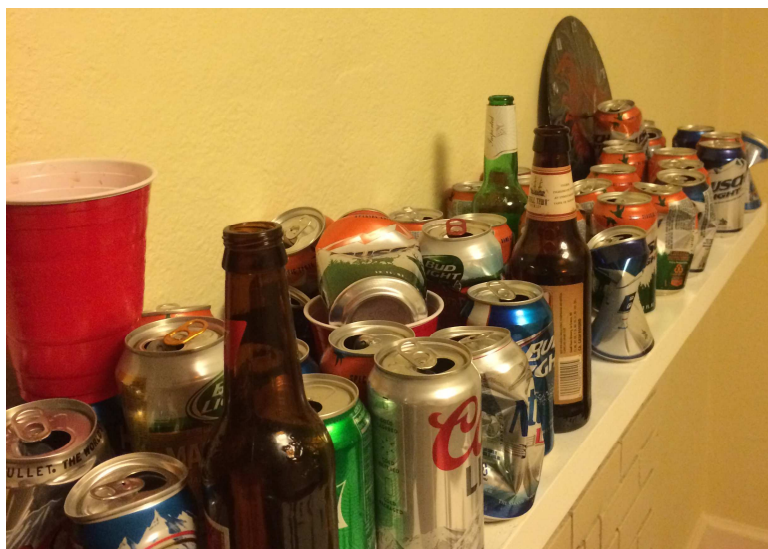

Figure 4.15: Keep the party going

Summary of Theme 3

The photographs shared by participants as part of the photovoice project provided visual representation of their experiences as non-drinkers on campus. The photographs aligned with similar themes that were identified through interviews. The participants spoke to photographs they took as a way to emphasize areas of priorities when thinking about their experiences as non-drinkers. Participants emphasized the role of family and parental expectations through photographs in exploring their non-drinking experiences. Whether it was family meal time that provided the foundation of family values, or expectations that they were taught regarding academics or financial priorities, the men articulated people, places, and things that assisted in their role as non-drinkers on campus. Participants demonstrated their desire to maintain some connection with the campus party scene through their photographs, even as a non-drinker. The cooler of

pride, t-shirt drawer, and remnants of a house party illustrate this struggle between who the individuals are and who they want to be. This is an example of a tension point for participants in performances of masculinity. Although they made decisions about not drinking, they consent to hegemonic forms of masculinity in these moments. As this struggle was discussed during the second round of interviews, participants viewed it more as the ability to be everywhere and participate fully even if they did not drink alcohol.

CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter highlights the importance of the findings of this research study and discusses the implications on future practice and research on non-drinking fraternity men and their experiences on campus. In order to discuss the implications of this research in the realm of college alcohol use and on fraternity experiences on campus, it is first important to summarize the major themes (of findings) of this study. In addition, this chapter will include recommendations from the student participants, through letters they wrote to incoming male students, and future research that is needed on college alcohol use (and non-use) and student groups. The research illuminated the experiences these men were having within the organizations, as well as their motivation not to drink alcohol.

Summary of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the motivations and expectations of non-drinking fraternity men through descriptive case study. Yin (2014) defined the purpose of descriptive case study as describing a phenomenon in its actual context. For this study, the phenomenon was the non-drinking fraternity member. The study was designed to better understand their experiences as both a fraternity man and a non-drinker on a large campus. Six non-drinking fraternity men were recruited to participate in the study. The students participated in two interviews and a photovoice project that enabled them to use pictures to describe their non-use of alcohol on campus. Data from the

interviews, focus groups, and photographs were analyzed through two cycles of coding and thematic analysis. All data was analyzed through InVivo, Emotion and Value coding.

The interviews conducted during the study followed the strategies or series of questions outlined by Seidman (1998) in regards to in-depth interview. He proposed a series of three strategies that ensure that stories are told and that the researcher understands the who, the what, and the how of the participants. The first strategy for in-depth interviewing is exploring life history. This helps the researcher understand who the participant is and how they make meaning. This exploration of life history also allows the participant to articulate family history, upbringing, or value-base that contributes to they way they make meaning.

The second strategy is that of description of experiences. The researcher posed questions that enabled her to better understand, through detailed recollection, how the student observes situations. This description allowed for experiences to come alive for the researcher in understanding how the participants crafts their story. The third strategy utilized was that of reflection. In the series of the three interviews, the final interview session enabled the participant to synthesize the meaning of the experiences and life history in the particular scenario.

Major Findings

This study had three major findings that specifically tied to the research questions. The research questions that framed the study were:

1. How do life experiences influence non-drinking fraternity members?

2. Why do non-drinking fraternity males join social fraternities at PWI's?

3. What strategies do non-drinking fraternity men utilize in social situations when alcohol is present?

4. How do students use pictures to illustrate experiences as non-drinking fraternity members?

The three major findings are identified across the data as parental expectations, faith and fraternities, and the party scene without alcohol. Participants shared that parents were influential in establishing expectations and a values-based foundation from which to make decisions.

Five of the six participants came from two-parent households where respect and love was shared between parents and son. Saturation across the data was also met when the participants described the role that faith played in their fraternity experience. The participants indicated that their reasons for joining a fraternity were connectedness, brotherhood, a place to belong. Also embedded in these reasons was the desire the students had to serve and help others. The major findings in this study answered the research questions. The students shared that life experiences significantly influenced their experiences as non-drinking fraternity men. Their faith and religious upbringing enabled them to search for connection with other students who shared similar interests. In addition, four of the six students felt a calling to join a fraternity as a way to give back and to demonstrate their faith to others. Participants joined fraternities for community and connection. In addition, the students joined their organizations to share their faith and beliefs to others because of the need they saw within the organizations. It was a significant task to undertake, but the participants believed there was purpose in fraternity life beyond the parties. The strategies utilized by the students in social situations were

based on establishing a role for themselves as a helper. If they went to parties, their attendance was purposeful either as a driver, a helper, or to the responsible brother. The strategy of using a Solo cup and non-alcoholic beverages at parties was salient across the participants. There were details and processing that occurred just to maintain their identities as non-drinkers. Students did not want to call attention to their non-drinking at a party. The wearing of particular t-shirts signaled sociability to their peers. By holding a cup and drinking something, they discouraged questions and nagging from both fraternity brothers and women.

The participants represented their experiences as non-drinkers through creative and thoughtful photographs. The photographs represented places that they go on campus, beverages they drink instead of alcohol, and places where they can explore their own creativity and needs.

At times it seemed as if the participants had one foot in the fraternity world and one foot in their faith-based world, implying that those two worlds could not co-exist. The stories and experiences were complicated as participations shared how they navigated what appeared to be oppositional identities. I argue that the participants did not navigate oppositional identities, but rather there were multiple, complex performances of masculinity present. Participants were complicit in dominant views of white, male, middle class masculinity by participating in Greek socials and specifically camouflaging their choice not to drink at these socials with red Solo cups, specific t-shirts and hosting places to "party." They consent to hegemonic forms of masculinity in these moments. The fraternity pledging process is also a form of consent because most of them align themselves with patriarchy and heteronormative positions, thereby reproducing

conservative reflections of masculinity. However, the participants also seek to alter performances of masculinity, through offering a version of themselves oriented toward "stewardship" and in the seeking of "real" friendships of substance.

Strengths of the Study

To ensure trustworthiness in the data collected and the interpretation of the data, I used several methods throughout this study. This study was strengthened by the triangulation of data. Primary data were collected through two face-to-face interviews, photographs, a focus group and document analysis, and a letter each participant wrote to incoming male students on navigating the college environment. In addition to interview transcripts, I also audio recorded each interview and focus group and kept a field journal to document my thoughts and perspectives through the process. Capturing my own reflections enabled me to check my positionality throughout the data collection process.

I used member checking to strengthen the study and ensure that I represented the accounts of the participants. I checked with participants throughout the process to ensure that what I thought I heard was actually what was said. This process was to that ensure I was accurate in my presentation of the participant's experience as a non-drinking fraternity member. Although the motivations of the participants to join a fraternity were different, their experiences as non-drinkers were similar enough for me to ascertain that I had accurately interpreted what they shared.

Limitations of the Study

I discovered a number of limitations throughout this study. One limitation was the small number of individuals who identify as non-drinkers within the fraternity community at the proposed research site. The study design originally proposed an

interview study with 8-12 participants. Because I was unable to recruit enough participants, I changed it to descriptive case with six participants.

Another limitation of the study was the impact of campus issues and incidents that involved Greek organizations that occurred throughout the data collection period. During the semester in which I collected data, there were a series of events that I believe impacted my ability to meet the criteria of an interview study. The events included a number of fraternities being involved in alcohol infused recruitment activities, peer accountability for these activities that led to the impeachment of the first African-American Fraternity Council president, and a call from alumni to "leave the young men alone." Due to my position on campus, I was directly involved in these incidents, which delayed data collection and impacted the willingness of students to volunteer to participate in the study.

The third limitation was that there was very little research on the non-drinker student on campus. Primarily, research is focused on the abstainer or the high-risk drinker. I explored research related to predicting college student drinking behavior and looked critically at how this approach could be applied to the non-drinker. Research also focused on the notion of masculinity and how the idea of being a man is interrelated to intention of behavior. This was a significant limitation because I was interpreting the ways in which the prior studies apply to my study.

The use of photographs created limitations to the study as well. I recommended that participants not include people or faces in the pictures to remove any confidentiality concerns from individuals not engaged in this study. This is considered a limitation because of the influence other people had in the participants' decision not to drink. I was

also unable to get the participants to keep a journal to document their experiences throughout the process of taking pictures. Instead, we met for a follow up interview where they described and discussed the importance of each photograph. The journals would have allowed the participants to document the experience and their thoughts immediately instead of the two-week delay in taking the pictures and meeting to discuss them.

Implications for Future Research

This study and its findings will have implications for higher education administrators and fraternity and sorority advisors in better understanding the needs of male students who are looking for camaraderie, brotherhood and a safe place to explore and develop as college students.

Throughout this study, I was reminded of the need to incorporate the positive interactions and experiences students had as members of fraternities and sororities. I was drawn to this study because of the abundance of research from the deficit perspective of males within the fraternity environment and the desire to approach the experiences of males from an anti-deficit stance. I learned through this study that non-drinking or abstaining fraternity members shared positive experiences as a fraternity member that included leadership opportunities, search for values-based organizations, and involvement and a desire to make the organization better than they found it. Today, many question the relevance of fraternity membership and organizational presence on campus. This study, and the experiences of these students, are good reminders that the system needs to be re-evaluated in order to refocus on founding principles and values that were part of their creation hundreds of years ago. For example, fraternities were created as

literary societies, which connected faculty and students during a tumultuous era on college campuses. The organizations were founded to engage college men in thoughtful dialogue and represent the influence of self-governance on the campus environment.

Future research could also evaluate the experiences of non-drinking fraternity and sorority members at large, public institutions compared to small, private institutions to determine the influence of campus culture on the decision and experience. In addition, a closer examination of two to three campuses would evaluate similarities and differences among organizations and campuses.

In addition to examining the role of non-drinking fraternity men, future research needs to be conducted on non-drinking sorority women to evaluate whether or not the same factors influence their decisions not to drink. Of particular interest would be the influence and expectations of peers to engage in the social environment as non-drinkers.

It is my belief, and hope, that this research will also have implications for the student experience on campuses and a call to campus administrators to pay more attention to the students who are outside the fray. These students are not the ones we get to know through student conduct hearings or because of an altercation between fraternity organizations. Instead, they are students who quietly do what they are supposed to, navigate a complicated and often "wet" and hazy environment of fraternity parties and membership, and are better for it. For some students, they can do it. The strategies they employ, and the support they receive from family, is all they need to make it through. For other students, as shared throughout this study, they simply cannot manage it all and end up leaving the organization.

As researchers and practitioners, it is critical that we continue to evaluate and study the retention of fraternity and sorority membership, while also advocating for all students within an organization. We must all be reminded that not all students fit the stereotypes that we read about or watch in today's movies, e.g., *Animal House* and *Hangover*. It is easy to sometimes paint all members with the same proverbial brush, although we must continue to study the experience of individual members to understand how change can be brought about for the organizations. For the future of fraternities and sororities, we must create a haven for non-drinking students to feel included and supported, while also contributing to the work in making fraternity what it was designed to be.

It will also be important to evaluate and explore the relationship between membership in NIC organizations and NPHC organizations. There are differences in the processes of how the groups recruit members, albeit the organizational values and founding principles are very similar. Future research should explore the prevalence of non-drinking members in NIC organizations compared to NPHC organizations, and explore the experiences to determine if there are differences in support for the member's decision not to drink alcohol.

Recommendations for Students by Students

Participants shared recommendations for future male students as a part of a letter that each one wrote for new students. The prompt for the letter (Appendix B) highlighted components to be included in the letters, while also leaving room for creativity and sharing. The prompt asked them to give advice to incoming male students about fraternity life and navigating the social environment on campus. Although I was unsure how well

the letters would engage the participants and whether or not they would offer additional content, I quickly discovered that they each had more to share.

The recommendation section is separated for students and campus administrators to ensure that the voice of the participants can be heard by their future peers. The participant recommendations were grouped into three main categories: seek connection (with individuals and organizations), know yourself and your beliefs, and be confident in your decisions not to drink. A summary of recommendations directly from participants' letters to incoming male students is below.

Know yourself and your beliefs

- Be yourself. As a freshman, most people are looking for new friends and new experiences.

- Figure out what you value and believe in life and how that is going to help shape the decisions you make in the rest of your life.

- Figure out what you believe is right and not right. This could be religion, values, beliefs – figure it out so that you aren't just living a life without a guide.

- Set goals and make a list of priorities.

- If you chose to be a non-drinker, know that it's acceptable and with the right group of friends, it might even be applauded.

- There is more to fraternities than just getting drunk and partying – seek deeper connection and commitment.

- Don't be afraid to tell someone you don't drink.

Be Confident

- Your identity and life are not bound by the opinions or acceptance of others.

- Say no. People will shove drinks into your hand and tell you to drink. Be consistent.

- Before going head first into parties and drinking, take a sober look the first couple of days and see what people look like when they are stumbling around all over the place, being loud and obnoxious.

- Don't be the wasted drunk at every party – drink in moderation if you chose to drink.

- Recognize that if you choose not to drink, you could be the only non-drinker at a party.

- Know the "why" around why you don't drink.

- Know why you want to join a fraternity and what it means to you.

- If you chose not to drink, be secure and confident in your decision.

- Be confident in yourself and your decisions

- Seek connection

- Meet as many people as you can. Keep your horizons open.

- Look for other ways to have fun without drinking – camping, kayaking, running – do something.

- Every opportunity, low point and circumstance that happened was a learning experience.

- Think before acting in everything you do.

- Live life like it's the only one you have (that means take care of it, not waste it away).

- Join a fraternity and remain principled to honor your conscious.

- Look for ways to connect on campus, whether in a fraternity or not.

- Get involved early!

In summary, the recommendations the participants made for their peers, were focused in three primary areas: know yourself and your beliefs, be confident in your decisions, and seek connection from like individuals. These areas crossed topics such as alcohol use, fraternity life, and representing men on campus.

Recommendations for Campus Administrators

The recommendations for campus administrators are approached from a different perspective than those from students. As we continue to learn more about this minority subset of this larger organization, it is important that we re-evaluate and monitor the campus environment and support provided to male students.

Students join organizations seeking a place to belong. This need to belong can be through engagement and involvement in student organizations, peer groups, or residence halls. The sense of belonging is more prevalent and necessary for men who arrive onto campus seeking connection. The recommendations for campus administrators are aligned with this commitment to provide different resources to male students that support their developmental growth and need to normalize positive attitudes and behavior. In addition, the institutions must make recommendations to parents and family members in supporting these students.

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The first recommendation for campus administrators is to create a structured male mentor program. What was salient throughout this study was the desire of the participants to develop real and meaningful friendships. College men are looking for places where they can connect with men like them, who share similar interests. A mentor program would provide a situation in which men could remove the "mask" that is worn to shield who they are and what they need. For these participants, this desire to find like individuals, who shared similar interests, was the draw to the fraternity organization. The space to develop these friendships derives from open and comfortable environments where men can engage in honest dialogue with other men. These mentor programs must be led by men who exhibit these same attributes. Men have misconceptions of each other that lead to normalizing behaviors that are assumed to be prevalent in other men. The development of a structured male mentor program that pairs male students with like interests could be the first start in creating this open and honest space.

The second recommendation for campus administrators is to develop a consistent campus message about supporting men as bystanders and change agents. This recommendation comes from two places – one, from the experiences with the participants in this study and their desire to make organizations better, but also from the perspective that there is an opportunity to capitalize on the small (known) group of male students who want help and protect others.

There are a variety of programs and services on campuses that address bystander behavior. These programs should be evaluated to ensure that the message is consistent and that it is modified for men and women. I believe that men can lead change that is needed on today's college campuses if we design programs and training programs that

support their stage of development. College men must be adequately trained to address the pressures associated with standing up for making good choices among their peer groups. This training and message development must be created centrally and infused across student affairs programs and services.

The third recommendation is to better evaluate gender differences related to alcohol use and non-use. College men believe that other men are drinking at the same rate. College men have gotten a bad reputation. This research topic emerged from my frustration with always dealing with men who had made bad decisions. As a student affairs administrator, I was beginning to think that all were acting out in the same way. You can pick up a newspaper most days and read about college men behaving badly or about the recent closures of fraternities. Most articles discuss the influence of group behavior or normalizing bad behavior. Not all men are created equal and it is important to inform current student affairs research and practice with that notion. We know that men are engaging positively on campus and having enriching experiences both within the classroom and beyond. To emphasize the positive engagements of college men, these experiences must continue to be researched and documented in the literature, as well as practiced across campuses.

Parents of male students play an important role in shaping the expectations of college prior to enrollment. Messaging must be consistent across units on campus to ensure that the institution is not addressing male students from a deficit perspective by sharing only the negative information. Parents should be informed during prospective student tours and throughout the admission and enrollment process of the support that is offered to male students from academic departments to student services. Communication

is important in keeping parents of male students informed of both opportunities for involvement, but also challenges that can present road blocks. Parents are important partners in their student's college experience and more transparent communication with parents of male students is invaluable.

Campus administrators, particularly in student affairs, spend a significant amount of time dealing with the negative behavior of male students. It is easy to label all male students and assume that they all behave the same way. As student affairs professionals, we need to step back and seek out male students who are not identified currently through intervention programs on campus. This study demonstrates that there are male students within, the fraternity community who do have values, seek to do good, and desire more from the fraternity experience than what is portrayed in the media.

I have been changed by this study and through learning about the life experiences of these six participants who generously shared their stories with me. Thank you to each of these young men. I am inspired by your courage.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Opening:
Good afternoon. Thanks for taking the time today to meet with me for this focus group/interview. My name is Anna Edwards and I am a current PhD student at USC. Please understand that the purpose of this interview is for my dissertation study on non-drinking fraternity men. Although my role as a university official requires that I report behaviors to the proper authorities if issues are related to harm to one self or others. The study will focus on the experiences of non-drinking fraternity members.

Information gathered during this interview will not be used against you, your organization or other students. Just a couple things to get started:
- I'm recording this interview for accuracy. I will transcribe the interview as part of my data collection and will not use your name.
- Content shared during this interview will be coded as part of the data analysis to ensure confidentiality of information shared.
- If information is shared through interviews, pictures or journals that indicate the potential harm to yourself or others, I will be obligated to report to the appropriate authorities.
- You will not use your actual name, but will rather use a pseudonym. Be thinking about yours and you will introduce yourself that way.
- May I have your verbal consent to use this focus group/interview as part of my study? MUST SAY YES.
- This should take 45 minutes to one hour. Many thanks again for your time.
- A little about my study –
  - Looking at experiences and motivations of non-drinking male fraternity members
  - Opportunity to look at the fraternity culture from a different approach
  - Meeting with as many male students as possible to get background information about the fraternity experience and then asking about the non-drinker in the community.

Focus Group Questions (in-depth)
- Tell me about what you knew about fraternity before coming to this campus?
- What factors led to you participating in fraternity recruitment on this campus?
- Tell me what your experience with recruitment was like?

- o What was a typical experience with recruitment you had." (Helps establish things that remain salient in his memory & normative experiences in the process)
- Tell me how you made the decision to join.
- Describe your expectations of membership.
- How would you describe your fraternity membership in terms of acclimating you to campus life?
- Do you self identify as a man (or male)?
- What does being a man mean to you?
  - o What about being a XXX man? (ask participants how fraternities defines manhood)
  - o How would your brothers define being a man?
- What are things you do to express yourself as a man?
- Talk to me about the role that you observe alcohol playing in fraternity life.
- How would you define your drinking? (Self-identify)
  - o Follow up once the student has given some info on this:
    - **Abstainer (never had alcohol)**
    - **Non-drinker (no alcohol in last 30 days)**
    - Moderate drinker
    - Heavy Drinker
- How important is alcohol in socialization of male students
- Tell me about members who you know abstain from drinking alcohol.

Interviews (in-depth)
- Name, year, affiliation, when did you pledge?
- Tell me about yourself and your background – **RQ1**
  - o **Tell me about your upbringing**
  - o **What about how you were raised or your prior experiences influence how you view alcohol? – RQ1**
- Do you self identify as a man (or male)?
- What does being a man mean to you?
  - o What about a XXX man? (how does organization define manhood?)
  - o How would your brothers define being a man?
- What are things you do to express yourself as a man?
- Tell me about what you knew about fraternity life before coming to this campus?
- What factors contributed to you participating in recruitment?
- Talk to me about the role of alcohol in fraternity life.
- How would you define your drinking behaviors?
  - o **Abstainer**
  - o **Non-drinker**
  - o Moderate
  - o Heavy episodic
- Tell me about why you selected the one you did
- Tell me about a typical week/weekend in (name of fraternity).
  - o Formal/semi formal events

- o Mountain weekend?
- o What about during football season?
- o And / or tell me about a typical social? Versus a typical party?
- If you selected abstainer/non-drinker, do you ever feel peer pressure to drink?
- Do you attend parties or events where alcohol is present?
  - o How do your peers approach you/respond to your decision?
  - o If you do not attend parties or events where alcohol is present, what are activities in which you participate?
- How would you describe your interactions with other fraternity men/brothers as a non-drinker?
  - o Are they accepting of your decision?
  - o Do you feel that your experience has been "less than" because of your decision to not drink alcohol?

Using photographs for follow-up interview:
What is the story? What is the message you are trying to convey?
- Tell me about the process taking the pictures.
- What surprised you, if anything?
- How did you go about selecting the pictures?
  - o When did you select the time to take the pictures?
- How did you feel taking pictures?
  - o Did certain pictures/images evoke emotional meaning or response from you?
- Let's now go picture by picture:
  - o Brief description of photo:
  - o Why do you want to share this photo?
  - o What's the real story that this photo tells?
  - o What meaning does this photo evoke for you?
  - o How does this photo speak to your experience as a non-drinking fraternity member?
    - ▪ What message do you hope to convey?

APPENDIX B

LETTER PROMPT FOR INCOMING MALE STUDENTS

Letter Prompt for Incoming Male Students
Participants are asked to write a letter to an incoming freshman male student who wants to pledge a fraternity on campus. You have shared important lessons with me, as the researcher through this process. If you could go back and share this advice and these lessons with students who have yet to arrive on campus, what would you say? Would you suggest a different path for those students based on what you have learned?
I've included some questions below to help you write out your advice:
- What three pieces of advice would you give these students, knowing what you know now about being a man on campus, particularly a fraternity man?
- What perceptions/hopes/fears/uncertainties come with being Greek on campus?
- What perceptions/hopes/fears/uncertainties come with being a male on campus?
- What role does alcohol really play on campus?
- For male students arriving on campus looking for connection and brotherhood, what do you recommend?
- How do you suggest navigating college life and fraternity life as a non-drinker?

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC FORM

DEMOGRAPHIC FORM
(to be completed by all focus group and interview participants)

Thanks for taking a couple minutes to provide demographic information that will used to better understand study participants.

YEAR: _____

AGE: _____

GENDER: _____

RACE: _____

MAJOR: _____

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences and motivations of non-drinking fraternity members. Please list any individuals on campus you know who identify as a non-drinker.

Thank you for your participation. If you have questions please contact Anna Edwards, PhD candidate at annacedwards2003@gmail.com.

APPENDIX D

PROCEDURES FOR TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

PROCEDURES FOR TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

Each participant will use their phone camera to take at least ten photographs of images that they associate with being a non-drinking fraternity member. After they take the pictures, they will email the researcher the twenty photographs. The researcher will print the pictures and place the digital photographs on Snapfish website (www.snapfish.com) where the researcher and participant will be able to view the photographs at the same time. The researcher will conduct a follow-up interview to discuss why they chose to take each individual photograph. The interviews will last between 45 minutes and one hour. During the interviews it is critical that participants understand that the aesthetic and compositional quality is not what is important. Why they choose to take the photographs and the reason behind that choice should be the focus of the interview.

There is no right or wrong reason as to why they choose to take the photograph. Rather it is the participants' personal experiences and memories associated with the photographs that are of primary importance. To ensure that the participants understand what I ask of them, I will allow them the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any misunderstandings. I will also make sure they have my contact information for additional support or questions.

Photographs Taken:
- No nudity or vulgar photographs should be taken
- If faces of individuals are shown in the photograph, the individual photographed must sign a written consent form provided by the researcher. If no consent is given, the individual's face will be blurred to protect their privacy.
- At no time should the participants put themselves in danger in taking the photographs.
- Pictures should not include illegal activities.
- If information is shared through interviews, pictures or journals that indicate the potential harm to self or others, I will be obligated to report to the appropriate authorities.

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT INVITATION LETTER

PARTICIPANT INVITATION LETTER

Dear ___,

My name is Anna Edwards. I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Department at the University of South Carolina. I am conducting a research study as part of the requirements of my degree in Educational Administration and I would like to invite you to participate.

I am studying the experiences and motivations of non-drinking fraternity members on campus. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to explore your experiences on campus as a non-drinker through an interview with me and to take pictures of images around campus or in town that represent your experience as a non-drinker. In particular, you will be asked questions about your identity as a man, what being a man means to you, your perceptions of fraternity life prior to arriving to campus and why you decided to join. We will discuss your typical weekend activities and interactions you have with other members around alcohol and social events. You may feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to.

The meeting will take place at my office in the Russell House University Union, or a mutually agreed upon time and place, and should last about 45 minutes. The interview will be audio taped so that I can accurately reflect on what is discussed. The tapes will only be reviewed by members of the research team who will transcribe and analyze them. They will then be destroyed.

Participation is confidential. Study information will be kept in a secure location at the University of South Carolina. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but your identity will not be revealed. So, please do not write your name or other identifying information on any of the study materials.

(For focus groups) Others in the group will hear what you say, and it is possible that they could tell someone else. Because we will be talking in a group, we cannot promise that what you say will remain completely private, but we will ask that you and all other group members respect the privacy of everyone in the group.

Taking part in the study is your decision. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. You may also quit being in the study at any time or decide not to answer any

question you are not comfortable answering. Participation, non-participation or withdrawal will not affect your grades in any way.

We will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact me at 803-609-4943 or annacedwards2003@gmail.com or my faculty advisor, Dr. Spencer Platt, 803-777-9118, and splatt@mailbox.sc.edu if you have study related questions or problems. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance at the University of South Carolina at 803-777-7095.

Thank you for your consideration. If you would like to participate, please contact me at the number listed below to discuss participating.

With kind regards,

Anna Edwards
803-609-4943
annacedwards2003@gmail.com

APPENDIX F

INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT
You have been asked to participate in a study conducted by Anna Edwards, Ph.D.
candidate at the University of South Carolina. The goal of the study is to better
understand the experiences of non-drinking fraternity members. Please feel empowered
to take photographs of images that describe your experience as a fraternity member and a
non-drinker on campus.

Please note that all responses will remain anonymous. If any time you do not feel
comfortable with this project please feel free to stop.

Thank you for your participation. If you have questions or concerns please email me at
annacedwards2003@gmail.com.

Since photographs are being used for this project, please check the following boxes
agreeing to the following:

_____ Permission to public and/or publicly display the pictures

_____ Types of photographs taken should not contain any nudity or improper/vulgar
images or illegal activities

_____ Photo release must be given to those photographed

_____ If any minors are photographed (under the age of 18), parental consent must be
obtained for child protection.

_____ If information is shared through interviews, pictures or journals that indicate the
potential harm to self or others, the researcher will be obligated to report to the
appropriate authorities.

With my signature I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent form.

_____
Signature of Research Participant   Date
_____

Printed Name of Research Participant

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent   Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent