

# In defence of AEPi

Dear Editor:

Regarding your biased reporting of Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity to which I am a brother of, in the November 30 issue, your so-called newspaper seems to have somehow forgot to report on the current state of the chapter and more specifically on the current and future state of the pledge programme of which you are so concerned.

In your article and editorial you have reported on alleged incidents that took place previous to all except one of the current members joining the fraternity. Had your staff shown any journalistic aptitude, perhaps they would have contacted myself, the pledgemaster for the winter term, or, more importantly, Allan Madonik who served as pledgemaster for the fall term. Upon contacting one of us you would have discovered to your regret that the current pledge programme of AEPi con-

tains absolutely no task which even your warped editorial staff could constrew (sic) as hazing.

In fact, our pledge programme for the fall term was based on, integrating pledges into the fraternity, helping to educate pledges both academically and practically, helping the community as a whole through participation in community service events, most of all socially interacting with other York students and having fun in a way which could not be thought of as demeaning by anyone. This will continue to be the basis of the pledge programme in the winter term and in the future. Perhaps some accurate and unbiased reporting would have uncovered these very relevant facts.

Fraternally and very proud of it,  
*Brian Bossin*  
 Pledgemaster,  
 Alpha Epsilon Pi

by Stephen Offenheim

One of the most dangerous things people can do is to make assumptions about something they know nothing about, then act as if they are an authority on the subject. This is especially dangerous when these opinions are directed to an audience that is generally uninformed about the topic in question.

In their relatively short history at York University, fraternities and sororities have been the victims of such treatment. It seems as if sensationalizing story-hungry reporters and editors have played upon the general lack of knowledge concerning fraternities and sororities to attempt to drag down the Greek system at the university. Incidents have been taken out of context, blown out of proportion. The result has been that a completely false image of what fraternities and sororities are all about has been presented to the York student body.

Never before has the newspaper made an attempt to actually understand what fraternities and sororities are all about. Instead, it has used traditional stereotypes and unsubstantiated hearsay to draw conclusions which make no sense to those involved. If my vision of what fraternities and sororities are all about were only guided by past *Excalibur* articles, I would have been crazy to join such an organization. However, I and many other York students have made the decision to join a Greek organization. Did we all make a mistake? The answer is unequivocally no.

York University is a large, impersonal institution. Coming into this school can prove to be quite an overwhelming experience. Most York students would agree that the social experience at York can be quite dismal. It is therefore necessary for students to get involved. Some people choose to join the football team, others write for the school newspaper. All of these things are no different than joining a fraternity or sorority. Being in a Greek organization gives the student a group of friends, and incredible opportunities to make the most of the university experience.

When one joins a Greek organization, he or she gets many benefits, both tangible and intangible. Of course there are parties,

athletic events, the ability to participate in community service projects, the opportunity to visit other chapters on other campuses, and so on. There is much more however. The experiences one gets when joining a fraternity are invaluable. One really gets to learn a lot about people, how they work, and how to cooperate with each other for mutual benefit. The friendship one develops within the fraternity or sorority structure is incredibly strong.

The media has helped to perpetuate the "animal house" stereotypes of fraternities. Greeks have been characterized as irresponsible, careless and dangerous. Nothing could be further from the truth. The existing fraternities and sororities at York consist of quality people. While it is true that individual, isolated problems have occurred in the past, they have been blown way out of proportion. Every organization of people has problems. It is unjust to hold an organization, or an entire system, responsible for actions taken by individuals long ago in the past by past members. Fraternities and sororities are dynamic institutions. They do not remain static. They are incredibly responsive to problems that do arise. They must be, otherwise they do not survive. Being in a fraternity is a learning experience. Part of the excitement of being in a Greek organization is recognizing problems, and coming up with workable solutions. York fraternities and sororities have been responsive to past problems. Apparently *Excalibur* has deemed this as unimportant.

York will benefit from the Greek system. Greek life promotes involvement in school activities, increases school spirit, creates well rounded alumni and helps to eradicate the apparent student apathy. The Greek system can be integrated into the existing structure at York quite well. It does not conflict with the college system, or any other student organizations. In fact the Greek organizations are anxious to work together with all other existing campus groups to help make York more than just going to school.

The Greeks at York have worked extremely hard to make their respective organizations positive entities. I urge you that before you make hasty judgement that you gather all the information. Don't allow yourself to be influenced by the uninformed.

by Allen Madonik

I am a member of the Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity. I held the position of pledge master during the fall term. A pledge-master is the person who is responsible for educating the pledges (new members) about the fraternity. It was my responsibility to make up a programme that taught the pledges about AE Pi.

With the help of the National office and my fellow brothers, I drew up a programme that included the following:

1) Brother Interviews  
 Responsibility:  
 pledge must ask each brother a series of standard questions (i.e. name, age, major)  
 Purpose:  
 it helps new member get to know brothers

2) Study Session  
 Responsibility:  
 pledge group met in library three

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to your article, editorial and pictorial display in the November 30 issue of *Excalibur*. I believe that *Excalibur* has taken an extremely biased view against fraternities and AEPi in general, without considering any other arguments but those of a black balled member.

I write these comments from an objective angle, since I do not belong to this organization. However, since I have a few close friends within the chapter, it falls to this outsider to recant your views. I believe your readership would be interested in realizing that the individual in your article, Jeff Liebovici, was an extremely unpopular brother in the fraternity. This was so, not due to his abilities to be a pledge master, or due to any alleged hazing, but due to his abrasive personality which led to his abuse as pledge master

Dear Editor,

I am an Osgoode Hall student and also the Regional Governor of Alpha Epsilon Pi. I have been in this position since September and I can categorically assure you that the York chapter has adhered to the strict guidelines laid out by the national fraternity with regard to pledging. All of the members are aware of their obligation and are aware of the guidelines that the chapter operates by. The men in the chapter are mature responsible intelligent York students who ask no more of the York community but the right to exist as an entity, to associate and interact with other York students and to cooperate with the York community and student body to make the university a warmer and more personal experience.

Fraternal organization (sic) have been in widespread existence in both Canada and the United States for many decades. The (sic) have made substantial contribution to their schools and its alumni, (sic) and in improving the general image of the University within the broader community (sic). In short, these organization (sic) can, if given the proper support and cooperation make a great contribution.

Instead of going out of your way to undermine the legitimate efforts

times a week to do school work; attendance optional  
 Purpose:  
 made sure pledges had paid attention to school; education is a high priority in AE Pi

3) Jacket & Tie  
 Responsibility:  
 pledge required to dress in jacket & tie every Tuesday; pledge master also dressed this way  
 Purpose:  
 presents fraternity in positive manner

4) Pledge Meetings  
 Responsibility:  
 pledge must attend weekly meeting (2 hours)  
 Purpose:  
 pledge learns history of organization

5) Halloween Party  
 Responsibility:  
 pledges put together a house party

Purpose:  
 it teaches organization skills  
 6) Mural Painting  
 Responsibility:  
 paint 'AE Pi' symbol in underground tunnel  
 Purpose:  
 pledges learn co-operation skills

7) Philanthropy Project  
 Responsibility:  
 pledges volunteered at Baycrest old age home on Bingo night  
 Purpose:  
 good community service

The pledge programme lasted five weeks. On November 2, 13 members were initiated. I am confident that each new brother has the potential to contribute a great deal to our chapter.

I am very proud of my fraternity. It has taught me to work hard for the things I believe in. I am in my last year at school and I know that I will miss being an active brother in AE Pi.

would an estimated 40-50 girls join the frat as 'little sisters'?

Your minor mention of AEPi's positive aspects was totally overshadowed by your intention to slander this group of York students. Your article gave the strong impression that fraternities at York are obsessed with demeaning and abusive acts towards its pledges. Due to this stance, you have probably encouraged students not to consider joining any of the York frats.

Your most important neglect in this issue is that you fail to mention that fraternities enhance the York experience by creating many lasting, lifelong friendships. If I had the chance, knowing everything I do now, about AEPi, its members and this entire ugly incident, I would most certainly rethink my decision to pledge Alpha Epsilon Pi.

Sincerely,  
*Anthony Morris*

Dear Editor:

I am truly shocked by the editorial and article in the November 30 issue of *Excalibur* regarding fraternities. I was pledged in this year's Alpha Epsilon Pi pledge programme, and you can assure you readers that I was not abused in any fashion. I find your petty attempts to mark the name of a group of York students a perfect example of "yellow" journalism. I do not find your articles about alleged hazing newsworthy. If these events ever occurred, they occurred in the past.

The quality of material used by *Excalibur* can only be found elsewhere in the *National Enquirer*. The only people harmed by your article are a group of York students trying to make the best of a terrible social situation. Now that you know that hazing does not exist this year, you can try stirring up controversy in other ways. Here is a tip. John F. Kennedy is alleged to have slept with Marilyn Monroe.

Unhazed  
*Aaron Tornberg*  
 Alpha Epsilon Pi

of York students, it strikes me that the University and the press should be doing all it can to encourage as much student activity as possible. In the age of freedom of speech and association these students have a right to organize as they see fit and in the same regard those who are opposed to their beliefs have a right to speak out against them.

However, as a campus organ (sic) who serves the best interests of the students, it amazes me that this paper would go out of its way (sic) (approaching witchhunt proportions) to destroy the small kindling flame within the student body that could be a shining force in importing (sic) the campus life for all York students.

In closing all I ask is that you open your eyes and ears to the winds of change. Give fraternal organizations a chance. If you take a look at their true functions and effects I am sure you will realize the positive aspects of such organizations. If you cannot at least let them exercise their rights as York students and allow them to enrich their university experience in a safe, healthy and meaningful way.

Scott Hyman  
 Regional Governor,  
 Alpha Epsilon Pi