

Special Edition

The Trinity Tripod

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DR. HEATH PROPOSES MAJOR CHANGE IN FRATERNITY SELECTION METHOD

Heath's Proposal to Senate

Open letter to the Trinity College Senate:

As with many of you, I have been thinking lately about the rising sophomores and their lives at Trinity next year. Many are seriously hoping to find a place in one of the fraternities. They know what I know. There are only one hundred and fifty places, one-eighty at the very most. Somebody is going to be left out. I have seen this happen to the Class of 1968 and to the Class of 1969 and it will happen again to the Class of 1970. To borrow a phrase from our Quaker brethren, I don't rest easy with this kind of outcome.

Well known too is the fact that this yearly outcome for the immediate past years is not the fault of the individual fraternities. Some in fact have endangered, in my opinion, their internal coherence by taking too many members. We should be doing something constructive to solve this problem at Trinity.

As a start let's try something new next year. In the interest of fair play let's not repeat the fate of '68, '69, and '70. Let's do something reasonable and worthwhile for the Class of 1971. I hope you will give early and serious consideration to the following proposal:

Rather than fraternities selecting men from the Class of 1971, let the members of that class pick the fraternity of their choice. Try it for one year and see how it works. Obviously I am assuming that not everyone who wishes to join a fraternity will find a place. Priority will be determined by lot, just as we do for room drawings. Those who choose to enter the fraternity drawings may do so singly or in a group up to five. The priority of each person or group will be determined subsequently by lottery. Each person or group lists with the assistant Dean their order of preference from one to eleven. Each fraternity lists the number of men they wish to take from the Class of

1971. Those left out will have to carve out their own place in the sun. They may not be happy about the outcome, but at least they will have no reason to be defensive.

So much for the nub of the idea. What are the advantages? I see several:

1. The upperclassmen in fraternities will not be bothered by endless meetings and Freshman Handbook markings. Each member can spend the time on his own self-fulfillment. As the fraternity drawings approach (probably in May) the houses can prepare to receive their new members.

2. Most freshmen will be sorting themselves out in small groups. At least such groupings will be made on their own without the intrusion of extrinsic factors. The whole process of socialization during freshman year should assume a more natural tone. People will be more inclined to be known for what they are than for what they might be worth in the upperclass market place. Pressures on both upperclassmen and freshmen to pose will hopefully lessen. They can now afford to be honest.

3. There will be a greater likelihood of diversity in the make up of each house. Some will say this is bad. I think it is good. College students thrive more on close contact with others of differing backgrounds and contrasting sets of values. Few Trinity students are so different that they are out of reach. The outcome will be personal growth for all.

4. The whole campus community will learn something from this experience. We should all be the wiser. The Class of 1971, in particular, should be grateful for this chance to determine its own fate.

Should the Senate respond favorably to this proposal, I trust you will attempt to determine the sentiments of the Faculty before final action is taken.

Sincerely,
Roy Heath
Professor of Psychology
Dean of Students

All-College Meeting Called Tonight

The Senate Committee on Social Change today called for an all-college open Senate meeting to immediately consider an alternative to the present method of fraternity selection through bidding.

The proposal, conceived by Dean of Students Roy Heath, asks that members of the Class of 1971 be allowed to select the fraternity of their choice by a lottery system much like the present room selection process. Heath's proposal was provoked by a growing concern over the fraternity selection method in face of the disparity between the places available in fraternities and the number of freshman aspirants.

The Committee on Social Change, which has been investigating possible improvements in the selection system for several weeks, formally received Heath's proposal Monday. Lloyd J. Kramer '69, chairman of the Social Change Committee, called a meeting Monday night with Heath and the TRIPOD. Kramer felt that the proposal should have immediate consideration by the college community to determine its acceptability before the summer vacation.

Heath will present his proposal tonight in an open Senate meeting at eight o'clock in the Washington Room. The Social Change Committee urges the college community to hear the presentation and pose questions tonight at the all-college meeting. Tuesday the Committee plans a student referendum of the proposal and a poll of faculty sentiment before presentation to the Senate.

The Committee's concern with the fraternity selection method and its effects on the student body was predicated on the implications of the forthcoming Social Evaluation. The Committee on Social Change is one of the two committees formed to study the social structure of the College in light of the Evaluation. Dean Heath chairs the second committee, the Student Life Committee, which also has scrutinized advance copies of the Social Evaluation.

Results of the student referendum and further action on the proposal will be announced at a special Senate meeting Tuesday night.



Dr. Roy Heath

EDITORIAL Bidding Adieu

The fraternity selection system of bidding is an anachronism which perpetuates an unjustified spirit of elitism. The bidding method at the College is particularly anachronistic in face of the inadequate social facilities. Bidding for limited places in a fraternity engenders superficial and false standards of elitism and unjustifiably relegates the unsuccessful fraternity aspirant to the position of a second-class social being. The result of selection by bidding, for both the fraternity member and the independent, is an unhealthy atmosphere which promotes a social sanction or stigma for three years based on invalid criteria.

While Dr. Heath's proposal is not a panacea which will correct the physical inadequacy of the College social facilities, it will eliminate the superficial and false value judgments as the arbiters of Darwinist social survival or failure. With "natural" groupings and random priority selection determining social units, the fraternity would become a more viable and integral part of the social (and hopefully academic) structure of the College. The present fraternity selection system, instead, perpetuates primarily negative and false values—it provokes isolation and separatism rather than integration. By its very nature, the Heath plan, with "natural" groupings and priority selection, will promote an "openness" in each house and greater mobility and fluidity in the fraternity system.

Additionally, students who cannot participate in the fraternity system will not be excluded because of superficial selection, but only because of limited physical facilities. Exclusion on the basis of the physical inadequacies of the social facilities would precipitate the formation of additional social units among the low priority students. These additional social groupings, a natural outgrowth of exclusion based SOLELY on inadequate facilities, could take the form of new fraternities or of non-affiliated societies. Both the leadership and the provocation for additional social units would be forthcoming from the low priority groupings. Supported by the implications of the Social Evaluation, a more vocal, non-affiliated group could effectively call for administrative aid in improving the College social facilities.

The Heath plan would not signal the end of rush, but would shift the emphasis from attraction to fraternities based on elitism to attraction based on the positive worth of each fraternity and its individual members.

The Heath plan presents an exciting positive alternative to the perpetuation of anachronistic elitism and separatism, qualities which spawn an unhealthy and unbalanced social system. The Heath plan, through reform of an obsolete and unjust system of selection, will make the fraternity social structure more viable and more responsive to the present social needs of the college community.

We strongly endorse Dr. Heath's proposal. We hope that the college community will respond to the urgency of the matter, giving the issue fullest consideration with a view of the welfare of the entire college community.

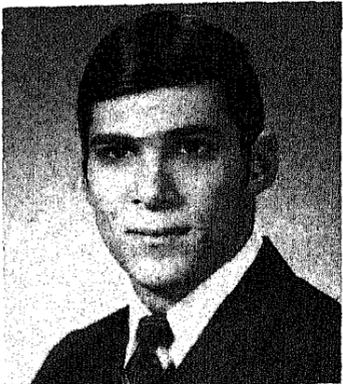
Senate Committee Presents Views

Statement to the Student Body:
The Senate Committee on Social Change was created to consider pregnant ideas and viable alternatives. We discard labels and deal in substance. We have watched exciting media grow. We have seen naysant subcultures die. We too have participated in what we think is an adolescent experience. But we are committed to fair play and have accepted the burdens of responsibility.

We share Dean Heath's sentiments, for freedom of choice is so essential to the discovery of inner form. Intrinsic to an environment nurturing personal growth is a freedom of movement, a characteristic which is clouded by the present exclusiveness of fraternal selection. In the lottery system heretofore proposed, the stigma of the Independent will be removed.

We believe that learning, becoming

aware, becoming involved, actively participating should all be filtering from the framework of an education into our individual selves. The well-developed senior should have become acquainted with more than one sub-cul-



Lloyd J. Kramer

ture so that his task of adapting to another society will become easy, if not invigorating. He will have challenged the cool disinterest characteristic of apathetic, uninteresting people with his own versatility, enabling him to integrate naturally with others. Rather than becoming emasculated by the social pressures, he will have found shelter in his own interests.

If this plan is adopted we feel confident that a non-discriminating atmosphere will have been weathered. We have thrown out the confrontation only for what we think is in the best interest of Trinity students.

The Senate Committee on Social Change
Lloyd J. Kramer '69, Chairman
Kevin B. Anderson '70
Peter H. Ehrenberg '69
Robert B. Pippin '70
Robert A. Washington '69

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