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Sasso and Schwitzer: Examining Social Desirability Orientation and Alcohol Use Expecta
**EXAMINING SOCIAL DESIRABILITY ORIENTATION AND ALCOHOL USE
EXPECTATIONS AS FACTORS IN FRATERNITY DRINKING**

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Alcohol misuse by members of collegiate fraternal organizations has been cited as a This study examined two constructs, (a) an orientation toward social desirability, and (b) expectations of alcohol use, as factors in fraternity member alcohol consumption. 324 participants from 13 different fraternity chapters at 12 different institutions completed measures of social desirability orientation (Social Desirability Scale; Marlowe & Crowne, 1964) and expectations of alcohol use (Alcohol Expectancy Questionnaire; Brown, Goldman, Inn & Anderson, 1987) and additional demographic information. We found high social desirability orientations, strong expectations for the outcomes of alcohol use, and relationships between these two constructs. Implications for institutional programming and practice, limitations, and future research directions are discussed.

College and university campuses continue to experience significant concerns associated with student alcohol use (Weitzman, Nelson, Lee, & Wechsler, 2004; Wechsler, Davenport, Dowdall, Moeykens, & Castillo, 1994), and fraternities in particular continue to be cited as a primary contributor to student alcohol misuse (Fabian, Toomey, Lenk, & Erickson, 2008). At the same time, extant research, policy, and programming efforts generally have had only limited success promoting a better understanding of, or addressing behavior change regarding, problematic alcohol consumption among fraternity populations on campuses (Crosse, Ginexi, and Caudill, 2006; Gurie, 2002; Wall, 2006). Correspondingly, this article reports on a study examining two individual factors that might be important to understanding and addressing fraternities and alcohol: (a) a student's orientation toward social desirability, and (b) his expectations of alcohol use. First, alcohol use among college students generally and fraternities in particular is reviewed; and social desirability and alcohol expectation constructs are introduced. Next, our multi-campus research study is described, tentative findings are reported, and implications for practice are suggested. Finally, we describe the study's limitations and directions for future investigation.

College Students, Fraternities, and Alcohol

Although the majority of undergraduate students are under the age of 21, alcohol consistently has been found to be the most popular drug among college populations and its consumption on campuses (NIAA, 2005; Wechsler, Lee, Kuo, Seibring, Nelson, & Lee, 2001). Aggregate data from several major studies suggest collegiate alcohol misuse is common and widespread (Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 2007; Presley, Meilman, & Cashin, 1996, U.S. Department of Education, 2002; Wechsler et al., 2001) and is one of the student health and behavioral concerns senior administrators continue to feel is a significant issue (Gallagher, Harmon, & Lingenfelter, 1994; Weitzman et al., 2004).

In turn, college and university Greek organizations have been cited as one relatively easy source of alcohol for undergraduates and one especially important contributor to student alcohol misuse (Fabian, Toomey, Lenk, & Erickson, 2008). Previous researchers have reported on the basis of various single campus and multi-institutional empirical studies that fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students are notably heavy alcohol users (Caudill et al., 2006; Presley et al., 2002; Wechsler et al., 1996; Workman, 2001 (Faulkner, Alcorn, & Garvin, 1988; Goodwin, 1989, 1990). When compared to other

groups, fraternities have been found to consume more than their “non-Greek” peers (Alva, 1998; Barry, 2007; Sher, Bartholow, and Nanda 2001, Wechsler et al., 1996). For instance, students in Greek organizations tend to consume more than their peers in volunteer service organizations (Pace & McGrath, 2002), residents in Greek housing consume more than their peers in other university housing (Larimer, Anderson, Baer, & Marlatt, 2000; Page & O’Hegarty, 2006), and they tend to be among the highest populations during campus-wide activities such as “game-days” before major athletic event (Glassman, Dodd, Sheu, Rienzo, & Wagenaar, 2010). Further, Wall (2006) that negative incidents with alcohol, such as alcohol-related student deaths, also are commonly reported in the popular media.

Within fraternities in particular, problematically high rates of alcohol consumption (Caudill et al., 2006; Caron, Moskey, and Hovey, 2004; Wechsler, Lee, Kuo, & Lee, 2000) and problematic patterns such as frequent binge drinking (Farlie et al., 2010; Long & Snowden, 2011) have been well-documented. Looking within Greek organizations, Eberhardt, Rice, & Smith (2003) found that Greek men report comparatively more use of, and more negative secondary negative effects from, alcohol than Greek women. This is an important college health and behavioral concern because problematic rates of fraternity alcohol use, and problematic patterns like binge-drinking, appear to be associated with a variety of negative impacts, including: unsafe sex practices (Dinger and Parsons, 1999; Kellogg, 1999; Wechsler et al., 1996), sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence (Foubert, 2000; Foubert, Garner, & Thaxter, 2006; Locke & Mahalik, 2005), hazing and violence (Allan and Madden, 2008; Ellsworth, 2006; Fabian, Toomey, Lenk, & Erickson, 2008; Menning, 2009), poor bystander responses (Cokley et al., 2001; Drout & Corsoro, 2003), and the legal problem of underage drinking (Fabian, Toomey, Lenk, & Erickson, 2008).

Although incidence, patterns, and negative outcomes of fraternity alcohol consumption are well-documented, factors contributing to these dynamics remain less well understood. Baer (1994) reported early on that understanding the social and environmental aspects of fraternity life associated with alcohol is complex (Baer, 1994). Attempts to restrict or reduce fraternity alcohol use or bingeing patterns through bans on common source containers like kegs, mandated dry housing, and other institutional policies generally have been ineffective (Crosse, Ginexi, and Caudill, 2006; Gurie, 2002; Wall, Reis, & Bureau, 2006). In fact, paradoxically, Kilmer, et al. (1999) found that such policies sometimes actually result in increased consumption rates and increased incidence of binge-drinking. Likewise, educational programs have had limited efficacy in addressing fraternity alcohol misuse (Wall, 2006). Therefore, we believe more research still is needed to better understand the psychosocial factors associated with alcohol misuse among individuals in the fraternity culture (Baer, 1994; Larimer, Irvine, Kilmer, & Marlatt, 1997; Danielson, Taylor, & Hartford, 2001). Two such potentially important factors were examined in the current study.

Social Desirability Orientation

Social desirability refers to an individual’s tendency to conform to recognized social norms and to engage in established socially desirable behaviors (Kimmel, 2008; Peralta, 2007). Previous authors have suggested that an orientation toward conforming with and engaging in established social norms might be one potentially useful construct for better understanding and responding to fraternity alcohol use (Peralta, 2007; Trockel, Wall, Williams, & Reis, 2008). College students generally tend to endorse notable levels of social desirability – especially regarding alcohol use. For example, although heavy drinking is seen overall as socially unacceptable at any age and college students report an awareness that frequent alcohol misuse has negative conse-

quences, college students also perceive a cultural norm supporting heavy alcohol consumption – and therefore suppress expressing any concerns about over-drinking due to fears of negative evaluations from peers (Del Boca, Darkes, Greenbaum, & Goldman, 2004; Maquire, 2010). In turn, previous authors have reported that students may engage in heavy drinking, decline to confront peers regarding their alcohol misuse, or both, due to a culture which defines alcohol use as well as silence about its consequences as socially desirable (Maguire, 2010; Weitzman, 2004). Therefore, social desirability is a potential covariate in explaining alcohol-related intentions and expectations (Maguire, 2010).

Further, social desirability may have special salience for fraternities. First, fraternities are male student organizations, and alcohol use has been found to be a socially expected component of male identity formation (Landrine, et al., 1988; Capraro, 2000; Cohen & Lederman, 1995; Schacht, 1996; Spade, 1996). Early on, Landrine et al. (1988) suggested that “drunkenness may be an aspect of the concept of masculinity” (p. 705). For instance, in studies of males outside the campus environment, alcohol use was found to be a component of male identity among certain groups of adult male beer drinkers (Hemmingson et al., 1998; James & Ames, 1989; Kaminer & Dixon, 1995). As follows, fraternities may be especially susceptible to creating social expectations of alcohol use and misuse because these are potential forms of gender expression (West, 2001). Second, fraternities are structured so that socialization of new members through indoctrination is considered an essential function of fraternity membership. The new-member or new member-period activities, ceremonies, and rituals for new members explicitly introduce new members to the group’s social-desirability expectations – including the connection between alcohol consumption and male identity – and reinforce these expectations through alcohol use throughout typical rites-of-passage associated with the new member process (Arnold, 1995;

Pascarella, Flowers, Whitt, 2001). Trockel, Wall, Williams, & Reis (2008) found that chapter expectations of male-oriented drinking are closely predictive of actual consumption behavior, suggesting strong social desirability orientation effects on members. Therefore, better understanding social desirability orientations among fraternity new members and members may provide new insight into their drinking dynamics.

Alcohol Use Expectations

Alcohol expectations (or expectancies) are underlying beliefs that are involved in the commencement, maintenance, and possibly termination of alcohol use (Corcoran, 2001; Borsasi & Carey, 2003; Reich, Goldman, & Noll, 2004; Trockel, Wall, Williams, & Reis, 2008). These student expectations about what effects and outcomes alcohol use will produce appears to be another potentially important factor influencing an individual’s drinking behavior (Corcoran, 2001; Reich, Goldman, & Noll, 2004). Whereas social desirability orientation may influence fraternity member alcohol use due to an individual’s tendency to conform to the organization’s strong efforts to socialize members regarding drinking norms and male identity, on the other hand, alcohol expectancies may also influence fraternity member alcohol use due to expectations about the positive experiences and gains it is believed to produce. For instance, students might have strong expectations regarding alcohol and its ability to produce physical pleasure, relaxation, and tension reduction; social pleasure, social assertiveness, or aggression; global positive changes and arousal; or sexual enhancement (Brown et al., 1987; Cohen & Vinson, 1995; McCarthy, Miller, Smith, & Smith, 2001).

Alcohol use expectations may have special salience for fraternities. Previous researchers have reported alcohol expectancies among fraternity members tend to be distorted and grossly exaggerated when compared to their non-Greek-member student peers (Bosari & Carey, 2003; Goodwin, 1989). For instance, based on alco-

hol expectancy, fraternity members might have unusually high expectations that drinking alcohol will allow them to: have more positive associations from social interactions with others; engage in more gregarious behavior with others; feel more stimulated or aroused; or experience sexual gains (Brown et al., 1987; Cohen & Vinson, 1995; McCarthy, Miller, Smith, & Smith, 2001). Specifically, fraternities tend to actively promote and advertise enhanced positive attitudes and beliefs about the role of alcohol (Rogers, 2006); and more senior members model these for newer members (Gurie, 2002).

Rationale for the Current Study: Social Desirability and Alcohol Expectations

The cultural association between alcohol use and the fraternity experience is so well-established that fraternity membership is predictive of increased alcohol consumption (Sher, Bartholow, & Nanda, 2001) -- with Arnold (1995) referring to fraternities early on as “addictive organizations” (p. 5). Moreover, students tend to arrive on campus with pre-college drinking experiences and predisposing drinking patterns (Grekin & Sher, 2006) – and often self-select into fraternities partly on the basis of their pre-college drinking characteristics (DeSimone, 2009; Juth, Smyth, Thompson, & Nodes, 2010; Park, Sher, Wood, & Krull, 2009). Because the search continues for research to better explain fraternity drinking phenomena and in turn lead to more effective policies, interventions, or programming, we identified social desirability and alcohol use expectations as promising constructs since by examining these two explanatory phenomena in combination, we could bring together in one research model both social influence factors (social desirability) and individual factors (expectations).

Current Study

This study was designed to examine whether fraternity students expressed high levels of so-

cial desirability orientations, whether they expressed high levels of alcohol use expectations, and whether increased levels of social desirability would be associated with increased levels of alcohol expectations. We also asked whether differences existed between new members and active members for social desirability and alcohol use expectations. Based on the existing literature, our rationale for the study’s design was that:

- high levels of social desirability orientations among fraternity students might account for some of the heightened alcohol use seen among fraternities if individuals who select fraternities are students who very heavily endorse college student conformity to group norms, including the norm supporting heavy alcohol consumption, and therefore are heavily responsive to fraternity indoctrination regarding norms including alcohol as an expected component of male identity formation (Arnold, 1995; Del Boca, Darkes, Greenbaum, & Goldman, 2004; Maquire, 2010; Pascarella, Flowers, Whitt, 2001; Trockel, Wall, Williams, & Reis, 2008; Weitzman, 2004);
- high levels of alcohol use expectations among fraternity students might account for some of the heightened alcohol use seen among fraternities if individuals who select fraternities are students who very heavily endorse strong positive expectations for the beneficial effects and salutary outcomes of alcohol, and therefore are heavily responsive to the “addictive cultures” perceived to characterize fraternity environments and to the distorted, exaggerated expectations about the positive role of alcohol (Bosari & Carey, 2003; Goodwin, 1989; Corcoran, 2001; Reich, Goldman, & Noll, 2004; Sher, Bartholow, & Nanda, 2001);
- social desirability and alcohol expectations might be especially valuable in account-

ing for some of the heightened alcohol use seen among fraternities if a positive relationship exists between these two variables such that as social desirability increases, alcohol expectancy also increases – in other words, if as students increasingly conform to socially desirable norms, among these norms to which they adhere increasingly is fraternities' exaggerated, distorted notions about positive alcohol effects (DeSimone, 2009; Juth, Smyth, Thompson, & Nodes, 2010; Park, Sher, Wood, & Krull, 2009); and

- understanding how new members versus more senior, active members compare for social desirability and alcohol expectations might add to the explanatory power of the research model, such that: on one hand, if new members express substantially greater social desirability and alcohol expectations that do more senior active members, then self-selection is especially important but over time fraternity members advance in their psychosocial development, become less reliant on socially desirable norms to set their individual identities, and become less reliant on exaggerated cultural norms regarding alcohol expectations and instead learn to set realistic expectations; on the other hand, if new members and active members express similar social desirability and alcohol expectations, then self-selection into the fraternity culture vis a vis alcohol, and the environment's perpetuation of these two factors, both are important (DeSimone, 2009; Juth, Smyth, Thompson, & Nodes, 2010; Park, Sher, Wood, & Krull, 2009; Sher, Bartholow, & Nanda, 2001).

Correspondingly, we asked the following straightforward research questions: What levels of social desirability orientation are found among fraternity students? What levels of alcohol use expectations are found among fraternity stu-

dents? What relationships exist among fraternity students' social desirability levels and their various alcohol expectations? How do fraternity new members and active members compare on the basis of social desirability and alcohol expectations?

Method

The research design for this project is a between-groups descriptive study evaluating scores on well-established, standardized psychometric assessments of social desirability and alcohol use expectations.

Participants and Procedure

Utilizing exclusionary criteria, a convenience sample was constructed through a chain-referral sampling procedure. A complete frame of available social fraternities available for participation in the study was established through contacting "gatekeepers." These gatekeepers provided access directly to the fraternity chapters. Members of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors were randomly contacted and an electronic mail advertisement was forwarded to the Fraternity Executives Association. Responses were communicated via telephone and electronic mail. An initial frame of 32 fraternities was established and solicited for participation. Through chain-referral methodology, the sample consisted of 13 chapters from 12 postsecondary institutions. Once the sample was established, a researcher visited each institution and distributed and collected the research instruments locally, at each participating fraternity chapter. Participants comprised students enrolled at both private and public institutions in the Northeast, Midwest, and Southern United States. Participants represented Science-Technology-Engineering-Math (STEM), Liberal Arts, Art, Comprehensive, and Land-Grant institutions in rural, suburban, and urban environments. Student populations ranged between 1,000 and 35,000.

Table 1 summarizes data describing partici-

participant characteristics. As can be seen in the table, the sample consisted of 99 new members and 225 active members (n=324). Twenty-three surveys were disregarded and appropriately destroyed due to inaccurate response patterns or

lack of completion. Information about membership status, academic level, undergraduate major, and highest level of leadership or responsibility appear in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of Participant Characteristics.

Characteristic		Total Responses	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Membership Status	New member	99	30.6	30.6
	Active	225	69.4	100.0
Academic Level	Transfer	3	.9	.9
	2 or < semesters	102	31.5	32.4
	3 to 4 semesters	107	33.0	65.4
	5 to 6 semesters	62	19.1	84.6
	7 to 8 semesters	46	14.2	98.8
	9 or more semesters	4	1.2	100.0
Academic Major	No Major	49	15.1	15.1
	Business	68	21.0	36.1
	Science	39	12.0	48.1
	Engineering	54	16.7	64.8
	Technology	16	4.9	69.8
	Arts	20	6.2	75.9
	Humanities	37	11.4	87.3
	Language	5	1.5	88.9
	Education	7	2.2	91.0
	Human Services	11	3.4	94.4
	Health Sciences	12	3.7	98.1
	Hospitality	3	.9	99.1
	Military Science	3	.9	100.0
	Highest Level of Leadership	No Leadership Position	139	42.9
President		27	8.3	51.2
Vice President		15	4.6	55.9
Secretary		16	4.9	60.8
Treasurer		18	5.6	66.4
Recruitment		17	5.2	71.6
New Member Educator		10	3.1	74.7
Risk Management		14	4.3	79.0
Scholarship		6	1.9	80.9
Other Chair		62	19.1	100.0

Note: N = 324 participants from 13 fraternity chapters at 12 institutions.

Measures

This study utilized two standardized measures to address the research questions: the Marlowe and Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSD; Marlowe & Crowne, 1964) (See appendix A) and the Alcohol Expectancy Questionnaire - Adult Version (AEQ-A; Brown, Goldman, Inn, and Anderson, 1987) (See Appendix B). Additionally, a researcher-designed, demographic questionnaire was also distributed (See Appendix E).

The Marlowe and Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSD; Marlowe & Crowne, 1964) is utilized to measure need for social approval. As originally developed, this measure conceptualizes social desirability as “need for social approval.” This need for social approval, as conceptualized by the MCSD, is the tendency to report information that is colored by social desirability concerns which is as a personality trait which can be measured via the MCSD scale.

The MCSD defines a category of personality test items with two principal attributes: (1) a “good-bad” (social desirability) dimension, and (2) relatively likely to be true of most people or untrue of most people. This measure contains 33 true-false items that describe both acceptable but improbable behaviors. For each statement, the participant marks a “true” or “false” answer to indicate whether or not they agree or disagree in relation to their own personality style. The personal endorsement of “good” items means claiming some very improbable features about oneself, and rejection of “bad” items entails denial of common human imperfections. A final score is determined by calculating the participant’s answers with an answer key. Scores range from a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 33.

Based on the findings of previous studies, participants with higher MCSD scores were expected to have a higher need for social approval. The MCSD has been used widely across various contexts and has established a linear relationship between need for social approval and various experimental contexts. Studies have supported the MCSD’s effectiveness and validity (Carstensen

and Cone, 1983; Kozma and Stones (1987). Social validity of the MCSD has been established through research correlating the MCSD to symptoms of poor mental health as well as substance abuse (Bradburn and Sudman, 1979; Gove et al., 1976; Klassen et al., 1975; Welte and Russell, 1993).

The Alcohol Expectancy Questionnaire-Adult (AEQ-A) was developed by Brown et al. (1987) to measure the reinforcing effects of alcohol consumption. The AEQ-A is a 120-item, forced choice (1=Agree or 2 = Disagree), self-report questionnaire assessing whether alcohol, when consumed in moderate quantities, produces specific positive expectancies. The AEQ-A provides a means of quantifying such expectancies. Scores range from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 120 with higher scores on the AEQ-A indicating participants perceive alcohol as having increased positive effects. The AEQ-A has six subscales that emerge as factors: Global Positive Changes, Sexual Enhancement, Physical and Social Pleasure, Social Assertion, Relaxation and Tension Reduction, and Arousal and Aggression.

The Global Positive Changes of the AEQ-A subscale measures positive associations with alcohol use gained from expectations. The Sexual Enhancement subscale measures the expected gains of sexual pleasure gained from alcohol consumption. The Physical and Social Pleasure measures the expected positive associations from social interactions with others. The Social Assertion subscale measures the expectancy level of gregarious behavior from oneself associated with alcohol use. The Relaxation and Tension Reduction subscale measures the expectancy of a reduction in perceived or self-identified stressors associated with alcohol use. The Arousal and Aggression subscale measures the expectations of alcohol use associated with aggressive behaviors or stimulation. The six subscales show both internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Concurrent validity and construct validity were also reported (Christiansen & Goldman, 1983;

Results

The AEQ-A plays an integral part in the clarification of personally perceived outcomes from alcohol use, as related to the initiation and maintenance of alcohol use in college-age adults. Furthermore, this test assists in identifying factors involved in the process of transition to or persistence of problem drinking. It has validity as it has been used in both clinical and non-clinical settings (Cohen & Vinson, 1995).

The AEQ-A has been validated by Christiansen et al. (1989) and by Brown et al (1987). It has been found to guide prevention efforts for addiction risk in adolescents; and may be used to assign clinical resources based on expectancies endorsed (Christiansen et al., 1989). Further, the instrument has been validated for use with traditional undergraduate college students in both African American and White ethnicities (McCarthy, Miller, Smith, & Smith, 2001).

The researcher-designed demographic questionnaire gathered information about participant fraternity membership. The questionnaire simply ascertained their membership status, academic level, major, and leadership positions held. Questions pertained to membership status (e.g., new member vs. active), number of semesters as a traditional full-time student (e.g., 1 year or two or less semesters, 2 years or 3 to 4 semesters, etc.), declared major (e.g., Health, Science, Art, Humanities, etc.), and level of leadership (e.g., President, Vice President, etc.). See Appendix E for additional information.

Data Analysis

The research design for this project was a between-groups descriptive study evaluating the factors related to alcohol misuse and social desirability in members of fraternities. The measures used in this study lent themselves to parametric statistics including Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and bivariate correlation to answer the research questions.

A summary of means and standard deviations for participant scores on the instruments measuring the study's dependent variables appears in Table 2. Table 2 shows total scores for social desirability as measured by the Marlowe and Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSD; Marlowe & Crowne, 1964), as well as total scores and 6 subscale scores for overall and specific alcohol expectancies as measured by the Alcohol Expectancy Questionnaire-Adult (AEQ-A; Brown et al., 1987). Preliminary analyses revealed no statistically significant differences among participants according to fraternity chapter or institution so all data was analyzed in aggregate. Using these scores, statistical analyses were conducted to answer each of the research questions:

What levels of social desirability orientation are found among fraternity students?

Table 3 presents MCSD scores in high, medium, and low groups formed using a triadic split. As can be seen, a majority of the sample demonstrated high levels of social desirability. Although both moderate and high levels of social desirability were revealed among the new members and active members in the study, the large majority of participants reported high levels of social desirable orientation. These data suggest initial high social desirability levels as well as a pattern of continuing endorsement of socially desirable behaviors during the initial period of membership (new member) and persistence into full membership (active).

What levels of alcohol use expectations are found among fraternity students?

Table 3 also presents AEQ-A scores in high, medium, and low groups formed using a triadic split. As can be seen, a majority of the sample demonstrate high levels of social desirability. At least moderate levels are revealed among more than 75% of new members and actives. These data indicate a continued pattern of distorted

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 expectations of alcohol use regardless of mem-
 bership status.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for MCSD and AEQ Scores among New members and Active Fraternity Members.^{1,2}

Variable		<i>n</i>	<u>Normative Range</u>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
MCSD Total Score			0 - 33		
	New member	99		22.12	4.97
	Active	225		21.66	5.24
AEQ-A Sex Enhancement			7 - 14		
	New member	99		11.59	1.75
	Active	225		11.07	1.99
AEQ-A Physical/Social Pleasure			9 - 18		
	New member	99		16.27	1.30
	Active	225		16.23	1.77
AEQ-A Social Assertion			11 - 22		
	New member	99		19.39	1.66
	Active	225		19.14	2.62
AEQ-A Relaxation/Tension Reduction			9 - 18		
	New member	99		15.78	1.63
	Active	225		15.43	1.91
AEQ-A Arousal and Aggression			2 to 10		
	New member	99		8.37	1.17
	Active	225		8.14	1.31
AEQ-A Total Score			66 - 240		
	New member	99		208.33	12.09
	Active	225		200.00	21.51

Notes: ¹ Marlowe and Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSD; Marlowe & Crowne, 1964) and Alcohol Expectancy Questionnaire-Adult (AEQ-A; Brown et al., 1987). Higher scores indicate greater endorsement of social desirability orientation and greater endorsement of alcohol expectancies, respectively. ²Total n = 324 from 13 fraternity chapters at 12 institutions. Preliminary analyses revealed no statistically significant differences among participants according to fraternity chapter or institution so all data was analyzed in aggregate.

What relationships exist among fraternity students' social desirability levels and their various alcohol expectations?

Pearson-product moment correlations between MCSD scores and AEQ-A total scores and subscales scores are found in Table 4. As seen in the table, findings indicate that a statistically significant relation exists between social desir-

ability and expectations of alcohol. Using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient, a weak correlation was found between social desirability as measured by the MCSD and alcohol expectancy as measured by the AEQ-A, $r(322) = .255, p < 0.01$. This suggests that an orientation toward socially desirable behaviors may influence expectations of alcohol use in fraternity

Table 3

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients between MCSD Total Scores and AEQ-A Total and Global Positive Change Subscale Scores.^{1,2}

	<u>MCSD</u> Total Score	<u>AEQ-A</u> Global Positive Change	<u>AEQ-A</u> Sexual Enhancement	<u>AEQ-A</u> Physical/ Social Pleasure	<u>AEQ-A</u> Social Assertion	<u>AEQ-A</u> Relaxation Tension Reduction	<u>AEQ-A</u> Arousal and Aggression
MCSD Total Score		.304**	.305**	.061	.042	-.030	.185**
AEQ-A Total Score							
AEQ-A Global Positive Change	.304**		.586**	.477**	.607**	.468**	.531**

Notes: ¹ Marlowe and Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSD; Marlowe & Crowne, 1964) and Alcohol Expectancy Questionnaire-Adult (AEQ-A; Brown et al., 1987). Higher scores indicate greater endorsement of social desirability orientation and greater endorsement of alcohol expectancies, respectively. ²Total n = 324 from 13 fraternity chapters at 12 institutions. Preliminary analyses revealed no statistically significant differences among participants according to fraternity chapter or institution so all data was analyzed in aggregate. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4

MCSD and AEQ-A Scores by Levels for New members and Active Members.^{1,2}

<u>Variable Level</u> ³	<u>Range</u>	<u>New</u> <u>Member</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Active</u> <u>Member</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Cumulative</u> <u>Percentage</u>
MCSD Total Score						
Low	0-8	1	1.0%	2	0.9%	0.9%
Medium	9-19	29	29.3%	74	32.9%	31.8%
High	20-33	69	69.7%	149	66.2%	67.3%
Total		99	100%	225	100%	100%
AEQ-A Total Score						
Low	0-80	9	10.0%	47	20.8%	17.2%
Medium	81-160	32	32.3%	62	27.5%	29.0%
High	161-240	58	57.7%	116	51.7%	53.7%
Total		99	100%	225	100%	100%

Notes: ¹ Marlowe and Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSD; Marlowe & Crowne, 1964) and Alcohol Expectancy Questionnaire-Adult (AEQ-A; Brown et al., 1987). Higher scores indicate greater endorsement of social desirability orientation and greater endorsement of alcohol expectancies, respectively. ²Total n = 324 from 13 fraternity chapters at 12 institutions. Preliminary analyses revealed no statistically significant differences among participants according to fraternity chapter or institution so all data was analyzed in aggregate. ³ Groups formed using triadic splits.

members.

In calculating the multiple Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients, moderate positive correlation between social desirability and Sexual Enhancement and Arousal and Ag-

gression. Significant relationships were found between the MCSD and the AEQ-A subscales of Sexual Enhancement $r = .305, p < 0.001$ and Arousal and Aggression $r = .185, p < 0.001$.

This research suggests that at least moderate

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levels of conformity are related to increased expectations of alcohol in fraternity men. In particular, statistically significant differences were found between new members and active members in regards to expectations of alcohol use, leading to the next research question.

How do fraternity new members and active members compare on the basis of social desirability and alcohol expectations?

Returning to Table 2 and 3, Returning to Table 2 and 3, new members and active members demonstrated extremely high expectations of positive gains from alcohol use, at levels which indicate that these expectations are outside the expected norm and therefore likely are distorted in-group norms relegated to fraternity men. New members had slightly higher expectations of alcohol than active members. Further, as can be seen from the data, we found that new members are engaging in socially desirable behaviors at a statistically significant higher level than active members. In other words, we found between-group differences in new members and actives which indicated that new members have higher levels of conformity than active members. We found moderate levels of conformity as measured by the MCSD among active members.

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine if there were significant differences between the total AEQ-A score, MCSD, and the 6 subscales of the AEQ-A. Results from the one-way MANOVA revealed a significant main effect for member status, Wilks' $\Lambda = .911$, $F(8, 315) = 3.868$, $p < 0.05$. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances indicated significant violation of homogeneity of variance for the variables of AEQ- Global Change, AEQ – Physical and Social pleasure, AEQ – Social Pleasure, and AEQ - Total. Follow-up analyses for between group differences were calculated using the Mann Whitney U test for the variables that violated Levene's test.

Due to the significant main effect, univariate

ANOVAs and the Mann Whitney U test were calculated as appropriate to determine which group difference(s) contributed to the main effect. A significant ANOVA for membership status was obtained for the AEQ-A subscale of Sexual Enhancement $F(1, 322) = 5.023$, $p = 0.026$, partial $\eta^2 = .015$. No significant differences were found for the AEQ-A subscales of, Relaxation and Tension Reduction, $F(1, 322) = 2.463$, $p = 0.118$, partial $\eta^2 = .008$, Arousal and Aggression, $F(1, 322) = 2.380$, $p = .124$, partial $\eta^2 = .007$ or for the MCSD total score $F(1, 322) = .544$, $p = .461$, partial $\eta^2 = .002$.

A Mann-Whitney U Test was calculated to determine if there were significant differences in the distributions between the new members and active members for the AEQ-A total score and AEQ subscales of Global Positive Change, Physical and Social Pleasure, and Social Assertion. Significant differences were found for AEQ-A Global Positive Change, $p < 0.001$ and AEQ-A Total, $p = 0.016$. No significant differences were found for AEQ-A Social Assertion, $p = .734$, Physical and Social Pleasure, $p = 0.449$, as well as for the MCSD total score, $p = 0.539$.

This indicates that socially desirability behaviors may increase when alcohol expectations are established based on overall positive gains, sexual enhancement, and aggression. Further, this research also suggests expectations of socialization at least moderately influence other expectations regarding sexual enhancement and physical and social pleasure from alcohol use. Therefore, this indicates that alcohol expectancies related to socialization is a key determinant in influencing how fraternity members believe alcohol will enhance their sexual interactions and what physical and social pleasure alcohol will provide for them.

Differences in expectations of alcohol were found between new members and actives in regards to overall affirmative gains and aggrandizement of sexual ability. New members demonstrated higher levels of conformity through social desirable behaviors specifically within these ar-

cas. Thus, our data suggest that fraternity membership encourages conformity based on notions of increased sexual ability and overall positive experiences from on alcohol use. As a cautionary note, however, it should be recognized that these data alone do not confirm a cause-effect relationship between social desirability and expectations of alcohol use among college fraternity new members and actives.

Discussion, Implications, and Limitations

This study examined whether two factors, social desirability orientation, and alcohol use expectations, might be associated with college and university fraternity student alcohol use. We believed examining an explanatory model that combined these two constructs might assist with better understanding some of the important influences on fraternity alcohol use and, in turn, potentially inform more effective approaches to policies, interventions, or programming with this campus population. According to our results, the investigation of social desirability combined with alcohol use expectations showed promise for extending the knowledge-base regarding fraternities and alcohol.

We were interested in social desirability orientation – the tendency to conform to recognized social norms and socially desirable behaviors – because college students generally have been reported to present unusually high social desirability, especially regarding alcohol use, with the result that they often endorse and support problematically high alcohol consumption if they perceive it to be a cultural norm, and suppress counter-views and countervailing behaviors due to fears of being negatively evaluated by their peers (Del Boca, et al., 2004; Marquiere, 2010). In turn, fraternity students might partially endorse and engage in heavy drinking in order to conform to perceived norms (West, 2001). We found essentially uniformly high levels of social desirability among new members as

well as among active members. In other words, students as new members may be attracted to, influenced by, and find it difficult to resist or suppress, fraternity culture norms emphasizing heavy drinking – and potentially nothing mitigates this tendency to conform to the desired norms during active membership. As follows, if social desirability levels remain consistently high, then members continue the tendency to conform to cultural expectations at strong levels, including the cultural expectation to engage in heavy drinking.

We were interested in alcohol use expectations – the tendency to express hopes and beliefs that alcohol consumption will produce salutary, beneficial, or positive outcomes for the individual who is drinking – because previously it has been suggested that fraternity environments support and promote distorted, exaggerated expectations about the positive role of alcohol and therefore might attract student with similar viewpoints and also create or strengthen these viewpoints (Basari & Corey, 2003; Reich, Goldman, & Noll, 2004). We found essentially uniformly high levels of alcohol use expectations among new members as well as among active members. In other words, students as new members may be attracted to and influenced by fraternity culture endorsement and promotion of distortedly positive alcohol use outcomes – and potentially little mitigates or corrects these faulty beliefs during active membership.

We also were interested in the interaction of social desirability and alcohol use expectations. Specifically, we asked whether these factors changed at all across the fraternity experience. As described, levels for both factors were high for both new members and active members. However, we also found that new members expressed slightly (and statistically significant) higher social desirability than active members – and also expressed slightly higher (and statistically significant) endorsement of two aspects of positive alcohol expectations: global positive expectations for alcohol use, and expectations

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that alcohol drinking will enhance sexual experiences. It seems natural that new members might endorse even greater social desirability than their active member peers due to their psychosocial developmental status (Evan, et al., 2010) and their apprenticeship role in the fraternity ecosystem. (Shen-Miller, et al., 2013). In turn, our findings suggest that as social desirability increases (i.e., as conformity increases), and more particularly increases in a fraternity culture which is promoting distorted alcohol use expectations, it will have a progressively greater effect on alcohol expectations. In other words, both social desirability and alcohol expectations are high – and during those moments at which, or for those individuals for whom, social desirability (i.e., conformity to norms) is higher, one result is even greater endorsement of distorted beliefs about the social and personal benefits that heavy drinking will produce. Naturally, this mutual effect would support heavier drinking. Our finding is consistent with previous studies characterizing addictive qualities in fraternity cultures (Bosari & Carey, 2003; Corcoran, 2001; Reich, Goldman, & Noll, 2004; Sher, Bartholow, & Nanda, 2001).

Implications

Identifying and understanding factors closely influencing fraternity alcohol use has implications for student affairs professionals inside fraternity/sorority communities and in student affairs divisions, college health and mental professionals, advisors and mentors, and others providing education, programming, counseling, leadership development, and other psychoeducational experiences with the goal of improving men's health, mental health, adjustment, development, and learning in fraternities. Preventive programming and developmental programming and counseling generally are intended to prevent or forestall the onset of problems or personal-emotional needs; or are implemented when the need for assistance is emerging or clearly present in order to help students add new skills or di-

mensions to their lives or to prevent problematic behaviors from derailing normal development or adjustment (Drum & Lawler, 1988; Schwitzer, Bergholz, Dore, & Salimi, 1998). Students usually feel little to moderate urgency for assistance and low or no motivation for change (Drum & Lawler, 1988; Schwitzer, et al., 1998). Further, engaging college men often is especially challenging given the reluctance and propensity to express negative attitudes about health, mental health, and similar services found among male cultures like fraternities (Groeschel, Wester, & Sedivy, 2010; Shen-Miller, et al., 2013). Therefore, preventive and developmental interventions must aim to engage students and keep resistance low. Strategies emphasize educational formats, media presentations, group discussions and group formats, and student self-assessment. This type of programming primarily aims to provide more accurate information about self and about the psychoeducational topic, increase understanding, enhance attitudes, and promote healthier behavior. Such work with fraternities and alcohol should be specifically designed, in part, to (a) change social desirability orientations (that is, reduce conformity and increase resiliency to social norms and pressures and (b) change alcohol use expectations (that is, reduce distortions and replace them with accurate, balanced expectations). The model has been successful with other entrenched student issues such as college women with eating disorders (Schwitzer, et al., 1998; Schwitzer, 2012). In particular, Shen-Miller, et al. (2013) recently articulated an approach that simultaneously provides: psychoeducational programming (or counseling when indicated) for individuals; works within micro-systems providing interventions and programs for professors, advisors, friends and peers, and romantic partners aimed at male susceptibility to health and mental concerns such as social desirability-driven and expectation-driven heavy drinking; and works within larger campus systems to explicitly help educate and influence active interactions among those affecting tar-

get student populations, such as power-sharing and leadership programs for fraternity leaders, group facilitation among fraternity brothers (such as “Be That Guy” programs), collaborative work between fraternity advisors, conduct offices, and faculty advisors, etc. – all with the aim of addressing student’s health and mental health concerns while attempting to engage the men in need while keeping resistance low (O’Neil, 2008; Shen-Miller, et al., 2013). There are opportunities to focus on improving resiliency to social desirability orientations, and improving alcohol use expectations, at each of levels and through each of these methods.

serve male students on campus, investigations of the needs of men have been very limited over the past decades (Evans, 2013). Additional study next is needed to potentially confirm, revise, or extend our results and conclusions.

Limitations

This was a limited study. Inclusivity was limited to white male fraternity students on American campuses. It was beyond the study’s scope to examine effects of social desirability or expectation on the behaviors of students in historically Black fraternities, sorority women, or unaffiliated college students. For example, Butler et al, (2013) articulated the roles of mentoring, and rites of passage programs, for promoting African American student development and adjustment, but we did not address these among our implications for practice. Further research is needed to confirm and extend these findings with other relevant student populations. The study relied on fraternity agreeability to participate, student self-selection to participate, and self-report measures. Therefore, there may be undetected biases or other confounds which might limit confidence in our findings or generalizability. To mitigate these limitations as much as possible, we utilized psychometrically well-established instruments, covered a wide sample of institutions and chapters, and the direct data collection was conducted by a primary research who is very familiar and experienced with fraternities. Further, our analyses are suggestive rather than conclusive, and indicate probable relationships among the variables examined but did not establish causality. Despite the need to better understand and

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