There are only two ways a balloon will pop.

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Our Founder

When I first got to Denison I thought Phi Beta Kappa was a sorority for really smart women: I knew nothing about the Greek system.

Greek to Me

Our Aquatic Staff

Animal House. Needless to say, I had conflicting messages.

I quickly learned that the commitment to academics, intellectualism, maturity and leadership about which my father beamed in his stories of his fraternity wasn’t the focus of the frats anymore. The chandeliers, mahogany banisters and national songs still exist (albeit neglected, abused and forgotten), but the importance of these traditions has diminished—pushed aside in many houses for beer, violence, beer, sheep, drugs, beer, and vomit.

Fraternities aren’t the same as they were 50 years ago. Frats used to sponsor mandatory study sessions for their pledges; now covert road trips cause missed classes, and pledges average a 2.36 GPA. They used to work hard to beautify the houses and the grounds; now Greek alumni visitors are disheartened by the beer-soaked houses and the glass which is littered with broken glass.

The Greek system perpetuates an old-world xenophobia, remaining largely WASP despite Denison’s valiant recruiting efforts. The admissions office works hard to attract diverse students from around the country and the world. Many have different skin colors; many are from foreign countries; many vary in their social and economic backgrounds; many have different sexual orientations; many have different religions or no religion at all; many have unique and extraordinary talents; and many have drastically different stances on important issues.

These students are the new "Cream of the Crop." Yet the Greeks remain largely white, upper-class and homogeneous in their applicants and members. Greek students, many of whom dream of being leaders in government, finance or law, deny themselves exposure to the real-world realities of poverty and bigotry. To those who participate...