

Windows into the Dark: Trends in Media Reports of U.S. Hazing Deaths at Institutions of Higher Education (1994-2019)

Nicholas M. Perez & Aldo Cimino

To cite this article: Nicholas M. Perez & Aldo Cimino (22 Apr 2024): Windows into the Dark: Trends in Media Reports of U.S. Hazing Deaths at Institutions of Higher Education (1994-2019), Journal of School Violence, DOI: [10.1080/15388220.2024.2344502](https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2024.2344502)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2024.2344502>



Published online: 22 Apr 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Windows into the Dark: Trends in Media Reports of U.S. Hazing Deaths at Institutions of Higher Education (1994-2019)

Nicholas M. Perez^a and Aldo Cimino^b

^aSchool of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management, College of Health & Human Services, California State University, Long Beach, California, USA; ^bAnthropology Department, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, USA

ABSTRACT

Student hazing activities on American college campuses have resulted in numerous deaths reported in the news media. Despite regular reports on hazing-related fatalities, no research has examined how these deaths are reported. The current study aims to bridge this research gap by analyzing articles covering hazing deaths in the U.S. between 1994 and 2019. The analysis reveals consistent patterns highlighting the influence of alcohol, different classifications of deaths, punitive responses, and the emotional reactions of the campus community. While these reports provide records of important and tragic events, their recurrent publication may bias understandings of the relative risk of student hazing, particularly fraternity hazing. Based on these findings, we make several recommendations for reporting on hazing deaths and future research directions.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 9 November 2023
Accepted 12 April 2024

KEYWORDS

Hazing; fraternities;
universities; news; framing;
students; victimization

In the last few decades, countless articles have examined the dangers of hazing, with frequent reports of students killed during an initiation “gone wrong” (Korry, 2005; Winerip, 2012). Until 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a nationwide shift to virtual activities, there had been at least one hazing death reported at an institution of higher education (IHE) in the U.S. every year for the past fifty years (Nuwer, 2023). Still, research examining incidents where a student is killed during a hazing incident is scarce (Perez, 2023). Given the media’s role in influencing perceptions of hazing activities (D. A. Joseph, 2022), this lack of research is surprising. As such, the present study aims to fill this gap by analyzing themes found in articles reporting on hazing deaths in the U.S. from 1994 to 2019. Doing so will allow us to not only identify patterns, but to consider how the framing of these events (or the exclusion of contextual information) might implicitly misinform the public as to collegiate hazing’s danger, frequency, and probable solutions.

Literature review

The induction process for student groups can involve a variety of different activities, a subset of which may meet academic, organizational, institutional, or legal definitions of hazing. These definitions vary in their coherence and applicability to different groups (see discussions in Cimino, 2017; Crow & Macintosh, 2009; Ellsworth, 2004). For the purposes of this article and our literature review, the most relevant definitions are generalizable academic definitions of hazing. That is, definitions used in the research literature that are not specific to a single group type, such as athletic teams.

The most commonly used academic definition of hazing is given by Allan and Madden (2008), who define hazing as “any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person’s willingness to participate” (14). While

this definition (adapted from Hoover, 1999) has been widely used, it is not universally employed (e.g., Thomas et al., 2021). Cimino's (2017) "strict" definition of hazing is more specific about the context for hazing:

Hazing is non-accidental, costly aspects of group induction activities that: a) do not appear to be group-relevant assessments/preparations, or b) appear excessive in their application. Group induction activities are those tasks formally or informally required to obtain membership or participatory legitimacy for new or prospective members. (Cimino, 2017, p. 144)

The scope of our analysis is best described by Allan and Madden's definition, but we welcome alternative analyzes and recognize the different conclusions they may reach.

Research has examined hazing in various environments, including among secondary educational institutions, IHE campuses, amateur and professional sports teams, marching bands, military groups, student organizations, and religious groups (Allan et al., 2012, 2019; Cimino, 2016, 2017; Crow & Macintosh, 2009; Hoover & Pollard, 2000; Silveira & Hudson, 2015; Stiller & Harris, 2016; Waldron & Kowalski, 2009). Still, no empirical research had examined large-scale trends in hazing deaths until a recent study by Perez (2023), which examined the characteristics of IHE hazing deaths from 1994 to 2019. Results suggested nearly 100 deaths in total, with victims that were predominantly male, and (on average) 19 years old (Perez, 2023). The most common cause of death was alcohol poisoning, and many cases resulted in a variety of individual and organizational consequences (Perez, 2023). These deaths were overrepresented in social fraternities at large, predominantly residential universities (Perez, 2023). Consequently, much of this article will be focused on fraternities, both directly and indirectly.

It should be noted that while IHE hazing deaths have an unfortunate, near-annual regularity, they are very rare relative to the prevalence of IHE hazing. The largest and most comprehensive survey of IHE hazing reported that 55% of students involved in teams, clubs, or other organizations were exposed to hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008). Hazing deaths are also ostensibly rare even when only considering fraternities, who have approximately 250,000 active undergraduate members (Foran, 2023, personal communication), and belong to a type of organization (Greek letter society) with some of the most consistently reported hazing in Allan and Madden's survey (73%).

While the rarity of hazing deaths does not mean that they should be trivialized, it does suggest that these events are outliers and serve as poor representations of typical hazing activities or outcomes. This is important to consider, as aspects of popular media may inadvertently suggest otherwise. In addition to regular news articles on hazing deaths, documentaries on hazing focus on lethal outcomes (Catullo, 2019; Hurt, 2022; Sharma, 2004), and popular books on the phenomenon (Nuwer, 1990, 2018) have used titles that play up hazing's danger and lethality (e.g., "Broken Pledges: The Deadly Rite of Hazing" and "Hazing: Destroying Young Lives").

The culture of social fraternities

Fraternities are student organizations typically found on U.S. IHE campuses and are composed of male members who share a common set of values, interests, and goals. Fraternity culture has been characterized by attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that may be distinct from the broader IHE communities in which they are found (e.g., Kalof & Cargill, 1991). Reinforced through a variety of rituals and traditions, fraternity culture is typically built around masculinity (e.g., Jones, 2004; Syrett, 2009) and hierarchical authority (Drout & Corsoro, 2003), which may also contribute to a culture of conformity, discouraging members from challenging group norms (Cimino, 2016; Seabrook et al., 2018). This culture has been associated with an array of problematic behaviors (J. P. Biddix, 2016; McCabe et al., 2018; Parks & Parisi, 2019).

The culture of fraternities can also contribute to a sense of exclusivity and elitism among members (Barber et al., 2015). Fraternities often have strict membership requirements, where members are expected to conform to a particular set of norms and behaviors. Since their

establishment in the late 1700s, fraternities have become more organized, adopting formalized membership structures, initiation rituals, secret symbols and codes, and a set of shared values and beliefs unique to each fraternity (Baird et al., 1991). As fraternities became more established and widespread, these groups also became more exclusive, with membership becoming increasingly difficult to obtain (Syrett, 2009). This culture of exclusivity has contributed to fraternities being criticized for perpetuating racial/ethnic, class, and gender biases (Barber et al., 2015; Gillon et al., 2019; Syrett, 2009). Furthermore, due to this culture of exclusivity and the perceived benefits of membership (Cimino, 2011, 2013; Cimino et al., 2019), newcomers may be subjected to more demanding and severe hazing practices to obtain full membership.

While this summary suffices as a brief overview, our descriptions of fraternity culture will vary in their applicability to individual chapters and may further vary across council (e.g., the North American Interfraternity Conference vs. the National Pan-Hellenic Council). Moreover, it should not be assumed that all notable elements of fraternity culture have empirically strong or theoretically unambiguous links to hazing. For example, while an emphasis on internal conformity (or even “groupthink”) has been perceived to perpetuate hazing (e.g., Nuwer, 2004), such conformity should also be effective at perpetuating the exclusion of hazing where it is initially absent. However, despite many hazing chapters being dissolved or restarted over the years, chapters appear to frequently reinvent hazing, given enough time. This inference is based on both the high prevalence of hazing among fraternities and the seeming lack of cumulative progress at removing hazing that would otherwise be evident after decades of prohibition (Cimino, 2020).

Additionally, we note that academics and media reports have often focused on describing, critiquing, or diagnosing the problems with fraternities, and our study is a part of that same tradition (see discussion in Wilkie, 2010, p. 4–28). While this focus is not illegitimate, repeated exposure to these materials may lead readers to view fraternities as simply the sum of their documented problems, rather than the complex and varied organizations that they are. We encourage interested readers to seek out detailed texts on the history of these organizations and the experiences of members (e.g., Baird et al., 1991; Leemon, 1972; Mathews, 2022; Parks & Hughey, 2020; Wilkie, 2010).

News reporting on hazing

The news media plays a critical role in the social construction of reality, influencing our understanding of crime and violence in society. Research suggests that news reporting on violence and criminal activity is a constant in newspapers, on television, and online. However, crimes that are surfaced to the public are not randomly selected; criminal reporting appears to be related to predictability or perceived risk, the status of the offender/victim, the level of violence, and the proximity of the event to the audience (Jewkes, 2004). Studies have also shown that news reports of crime are often racialized, depicting a disproportionate proportion of offenders as racial and ethnic minorities (Reiner et al., 2003). While the effects may vary depending on the type of media consumed, the viewing of news reports covering more severe acts of violence is associated with greater fear of victimization, especially among vulnerable populations (Callanan, 2012; Surette, 2015).

Relatedly, the way the media frames hazing can shape public perceptions of hazing and fraternity culture. A recent qualitative study suggested that perceptions of hazing among students and educators are influenced by the media (D. A. Joseph, 2022); however, there has been little research in how hazing is framed in the media, with only one empirical analysis. In 2018, Mathers and Chavez conducted a study of media portrayals of hazing in thirty-five news articles published from 2016 to 2017. Based on this research, Mathers and Chavez (2018) developed the “TAIR Model,” which stands for “Tradition,” “Acceptance,” “Initiation,” and “Ritual.” Each category corresponds to a way in which the media explicitly or implicitly provides explanations for hazing, often via quotes from involved individuals or community members (see Table 1).

Table 1. Conceptualization of the TAIR Model (Mathers & Chavez, 2018).

Code/Theme	Definition
Tradition	"... an article that focuses on tradition will not say that the community accepts hazing as 'basically okay or desirable' but has merely tolerated it because it has always been a part of the program" (Mathers & Chavez, 2018, p. 5).
Acceptance	"... a hazing event that is explained by acceptance discusses the rationalizations and ideas that support hazing as okay or desirable ... This form of acceptance cast hazing is desirable by the community and subsequently encouraged. Another aspect of the explanation 'acceptance' focuses on all the ways the community might minimize hazing as not harmful and, therefore, prior hazing events have never been challenged" (Mathers & Chavez, 2018, p. 5).
Initiation	"... explicitly states and/or mainly discusses situations in which a team or program uses a specific event as a form of formal or informal membership. These sources discuss the idea that hazing is how 'people really join the team' or 'become part of the program' ... With initiation, the hazing event is a one-time event for new members and can vary widely by practice" (Mathers & Chavez, 2018, p. 5).
Ritual	"... explicitly states and/or mainly discusses situations in which a team or program has regular hazing events as part of its basic functions ... These hazing rituals reinforce certain things deemed important by the team" (Mathers & Chavez, 2018, p. 5).

While Mathers and Chavez examined articles reporting various criminal and even violent hazing acts, their study did not explicitly focus on the most severe and dangerous forms of hazing. As a result, it is not clear whether the TAIR model is used to frame hazing acts where the consequences are more severe or if other themes emerge in the reporting of more severe hazing incidents. Given the likelihood of a local or national news report when a student has died during a hazing activity, this area of research is fundamental to our understanding of the way hazing is discussed and contextualized in the media. Accordingly, the current study seeks to answer two primary research questions:

- (1) Does the TAIR model emerge in articles reporting on hazing deaths?
- (2) How do these articles report on the context of the hazing death and the responses that follow?

Methods

Our analysis concerns articles reporting on U.S. hazing deaths and their aftermath from 1994 to 2019. This timeframe was utilized to align with prior research examining hazing deaths at IHEs in the U.S (Perez, 2023). To compile a comprehensive list of hazing deaths in the U.S., we used Hank Nuwer's "Hazing Deaths Database" (Nuwer, 2023). Hank Nuwer is a journalist and author; his work has been cited in numerous academic articles on hazing practices, and he is the author of multiple books and columns on hazing (Allan & Madden, 2012; Allan et al., 2019; Waldron & Kowalski, 2009). Nuwer's efforts to compile his "Hazing Deaths Database" have spanned over 40 years. At present, it is the only current database of its kind. To develop a comprehensive list of cases for the current study, a search through Nuwer's "Hazing Deaths Database" and subsequent internet searches of news reports and IHE press releases on hazing deaths were conducted. We used the following inclusion criteria:

- (I) The article must report on a hazing death occurring between January 1st, 1994 to December 31st, 2019;
- (II) The death must be associated with an IHE in the U.S.;
- (III) The death must have occurred in the context of an affiliated or unaffiliated student organization;
- (IV) The death must have been framed in the article through the context of a student organization initiation process, cultural tradition expected of membership, or specific hazing activities (including alleged/suspected hazing activities);

- (V) The death must have a national news report (or local news report if no national article was found) available online.

In total, 84 articles met the inclusion criteria, with approximately 86% of articles reporting on deaths occurring in social fraternities. The remaining 14% occurred in other student groups (performing arts organizations, service organizations, academic/recreational clubs, etc.). While not every case listed on Nuwer's "Hazing Death Database" met the study's inclusion criteria, all cases in the current study were found in the database (Nuwer, 2023). If a national news source covered the incident (or its aftermath), these articles were prioritized for the analysis. If multiple national news sources were available, more reliable sources were prioritized over less reliable sources using a Media Bias Chart (Ad Fontes Media, Inc, 2023). If no national news source was found, local news sources were included. Once an article was deemed eligible for inclusion, the full text of the article was entered as a case into NVivo qualitative analysis software.

Analysis

Using these articles, we performed a thematic analysis (TA), which is a qualitative technique to identify and analyze themes in data (for a description of TA, see: Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2022). Themes can be identified through deductive methods, driven by predetermined codes based on theoretical or analytical concepts, or inductive methods, driven by the information included within the data. Due to the limited research on hazing news reports, the current study utilized both methods, in particular the preexisting TAIR Model (deductive), and a search for other unique themes (inductive). An initial coding of the articles was conducted to explore the TAIR model and identify other emerging codes in the articles. Following an initial coding process, the resulting codes were revised and clustered, and the articles were coded a second time. The articles were coded a third and final time to verify accuracy, and the codes were collapsed into five distinct themes. Each of these themes, and their associated subthemes, will be explored in greater detail in the results section. Since the focus of this study is on examining recurring themes found throughout multiple articles, specific names, organizations, IHEs, and other identifiers have been removed from the quotes to avoid singling out any cases.

Results

The 84 articles included in the current study came from a variety of news sources. Table 2 illustrates the various sources used in this analysis. While every article featured reporting on the aftermath of the hazing death, the focus of each article varied widely. Following TA and classification, seven unique article emphases were found in the sample. While 38% of articles focused on the hazing victim and their cause of death, the remaining 62% had an alternate motivation. A breakdown of the other article focuses is also found in Table 2.

Thematic analysis (TA) results

The current section will report the five major themes discerned from the data obtained from the 84 articles. These themes and subthemes are illustrated in Figure 1.

Theme 1: portrayal of hazing activities

The four aspects of the TAIR Model were found throughout the sample of articles as ways the articles portrayed hazing activities. While other themes were more prevalent in the current TA, some articles did provide explanations for the hazing deaths through one (or more) of these four typologies (described below).

Table 2. Article Source and Focus.

	%
Article Source	
Associated Press	12%
The New York Times	11%
USA Today	10%
The Washington Post	8%
CBS News	7%
CNN	6%
Chronicle of Higher Education	6%
NBC News	4%
ABC News	4%
Other	5%
Local News (No national news article found)	27%
Article Focus	
	%
Victim's Death	38%
Student Consequences	13%
Organizational Consequences	6%
Police or IHE Investigation	11%
Effects on Campus	11%
Lawsuit or Settlement	19%
Larger Issue of Hazing/Alcohol	2%

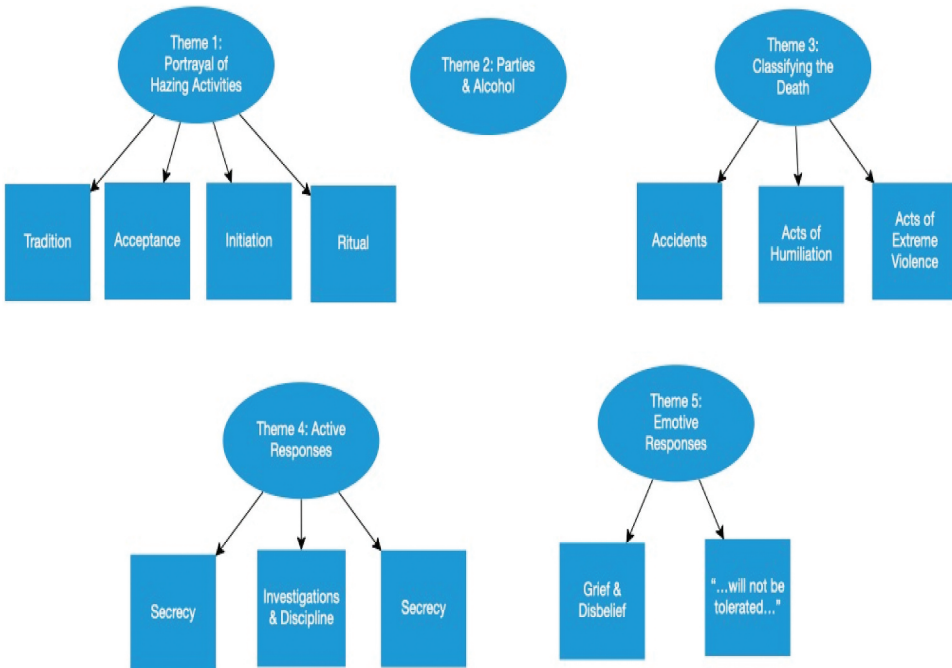


Figure 1. Themes and Subthemes Organization.

Tradition

Throughout the TA, approximately 27% of articles referred to influence of tradition in perpetuating hazing activities. In these discussions, the article authors quoted individuals who described the history of hazing activities within the student organization or at the particular IHE. For example, one article concerning a student’s death from alcohol poisoning quoted a Dean of Students as stating, “People celebrate here.” The article’s author surmised that “drinking, especially among young Southern men, might be etched into the regional ethos” (Cooper, 1997).

Acceptance

While no articles included attempts to justify or “accept” the hazing activities that ultimately resulted in a student death, some included comments indicating or implying moderate acceptance of hazing as a practice (4%). For example, an article reported on the death of a fraternity initiate who was kicked and beaten until he collapsed and died. The author stated, “I understand the importance of ‘paying dues’ – some way of making clear that a pledge values our association enough to pay a price for admission. And if that price is service, or grades – even if it is merely a bit of good-natured humiliation – I don’t have much of a problem with it” (Raspberry, 1994). Another student involved in a hazing death (but found not liable) commented that “Fraternity members did some ‘dumb stuff but nothing ever to hurt anybody” (O’Sullivan, 2013).

Initiation

Approximately 20% of articles described student deaths that occurred during hazing activities used to initiate new members. An article described one such activity as, “an initiation [...] that required seven male [...] students to walk through the rushing rapids of the [...] [r]iver (Associated Press, 2013). Ultimately, the current was too strong, and this initiation resulted in the death of two students. In another incident from 2018, a student died from alcohol poisoning after being abducted, bound with duct tape, and fed vodka during an initiation; the article suggested that “previous pledges underwent similar initiation ceremonies” in the past. After a student died of severe head trauma, it was reported to be the result of an “initiation ritual ‘the G,’ short for the Gauntlet” where students were blindfolded, forced to wear backpacks full of sand and had to cross a yard without being tackled by the fraternity’s current members (Schweber & Kaminer, 2013).

Ritual

Beyond the effects of dangerous, humiliating, and potentially violent initiation activities, a variety of hazing rituals were described in the articles, including bid nights, big-brother/little-brother nights, among others. While the notion of ritual was not used to *justify* these acts, approximately 23% of articles used this typology to describe hazing rituals in the context of the organization and their contribution to the individual’s death. For example, one article described various rituals that one fraternity required of prospective members, including “. . . directing pledges to eat raw onions covered in hot sauce, requiring them to drink large quantities of milk, and having them drink ‘gross’ concoctions designed to cause the young men to vomit, according to trial testimony” (O’Sullivan, 2013).

Theme 2: parties and alcohol

One of the most common themes in this sample of articles was the pervasiveness of “party culture” and its effects on these deaths. Previous research has suggested an overwhelming majority of hazing deaths are associated with alcohol intoxication (Perez, 2023). Unsurprisingly, over three-quarters of the articles referenced the influence of parties and alcohol in the context of the death (79%). A 2019 article described “. . . an alcohol-fueled fraternity party where some students say they got black-out drunk, blurring memories of the last night he was seen alive” (Robinson, 2019). These alcohol-induced deaths were often associated with initiation ceremonies, parties, or celebrations. For example, an article from 2013 described an 18-year-old who attended a fraternity initiation party, noting that he “. . . died at some point during the party. . . but partygoers did not notice his lifeless body in the house until the next day” (Examiner Staff, 2013). Many articles also highlighted the blood alcohol level of the victim at the time of their death. Another article described how a young man died after being forced to drink alcohol: “at the time of his death, [the victim]’s blood alcohol level was 0.495%” (Kaufman & Burnside, 2017).

Theme 3: classifying the death

In the articles analyzed by Mathers and Chavez (2018), hazing injuries were classified in three distinct ways: (1) Physical; (2) Psychological/Humiliation; and (3) Sexual. Since these incidents all resulted in a death, these classifications did not consistently align with the current study. Instead, throughout the articles, authors appeared to frame or contextualize the hazing death in three ways:

Accidents

Approximately 69% of articles discussed the hazing death as the result of some accidental circumstance. In these incidents, the students who initiated the hazing did not intend to harm the victim, but something went awry that resulted in the student's death. This is especially shown in deaths involving alcohol (intoxication, automobile accidents, falls, etc.). Following an incident where a student died after taking part in a drinking tradition at a fraternity "Big Brother" party, the lawyer for the chapter president stated in an article, "This was an unfortunate accident and no one's fault" (O'Sullivan, 2013). Another way this subtheme was presented was through the negligent behavior of those surrounding the victim prior to their death. Many articles reported that members of the organization or fraternity took care of the victim or checked on them prior to their death. For example, an article describing the investigation into the death of a student following a fraternity initiation event discussed how "[m]embers laid [the victim] down on a couch in the fraternity house. They checked on [the victim] throughout the night until around 3:00 a.m" (Kaufman & Burnside, 2017).

Acts of humiliation

Another 20% of articles focused on specific acts of humiliation in the context of the hazing death. For example, an article describing the alcohol poisoning of a junior explained, "[w]hen [the victim] was too drunk to resist, his parents say, fraternity members stripped him to his underwear, strapped him to a chair, and left him outside for some time" (2000). Another article, over twenty years later, described how fraternity members forced one victim "to binge drink until he passed out, poured hot sauce on him and made him strip down to his underwear and play tackle football in a small room" (Sullivan et al., 2019). Other descriptions emphasized the callousness of those surrounding the victims at the time of their death. After an 18-year-old student died of acute alcohol poisoning, one article highlighted that the "medical examiner's office reported that partygoers used green and black markers to write [homophobic words and phrases] and 'I AM FAT' on [the victim's] head, face, torso, legs, and feet. Someone also added drawings depicting naked men and women and blackened his toenails" (Associated Press, 2007).

Acts of extreme violence

The final and least common classification of these hazing deaths surrounded acts of extreme violence (approximately 10%). These deaths were largely categorized by acts of physical abuse by students or perilous situations that resulted in the death of a student. After one student fell down a flight of stairs during a hazing event, a news article detailed how "four fraternity brothers carried him, unconscious, to a couch. He was in obvious need of medical attention, yet the fraternity brothers treated him with a callousness bordering on the sadistic. They slapped and punched him, threw his shoes at him, poured beer on him, sat two abreast on his twitching legs. Precious minutes and hours passed by, the difference between ... life and death" (Flanagan, 2017). Describing a student who collapsed on a bus after being hazed, another article wrote a "medical examiner's report describe[d] a horrific night, involving 'multiple blunt trauma blows to his body' and 'extensive contusions,' or bruising, to the chest, arms, shoulder and back and within interior body tissues" (Schwartz, 2011). These

more violent hazing incidents, while rare, often received heightened media attention due to the extreme brutality of the acts.

Theme 4: active responses

The articles highlighted a variety of different active responses that followed in the aftermath of the hazing death, largely focusing on the punitive outcomes for the students, organizations, and IHEs where the deaths occurred. Relatedly, one subtheme was the secrecy in the aftermath of a hazing death. A secondary subtheme related to the ongoing investigations and student/organizational discipline. The third and final subtheme related to the lawsuits and legal settlements brought against students, organizations, and IHEs.

Secrecy

One of the major issues with news reports following hazing deaths is the lack of transparency among many involved parties. As a result of privacy concerns, protections from self-incrimination or legal liability, a lack of reliable information, or agency policies regarding the release of information, many of those involved declined to comment throughout the articles. Over three dozen articles (44%) referred to various parties who declined to comment or could not be reached to comment about the incident. For example, “representatives of the fraternity either did not return calls from the newspaper or could not be reached for comment” (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008), and “because of privacy concerns, the university has declined to discuss punishments for students” (Allen, 2019). This lack of transparency further shrouded the incident in secrecy and ambiguity, preventing comprehensive and reliable reporting.

Investigations & student and organizational discipline

Given the lack of reliable accounts of what exactly led to the hazing death, approximately 70% of the articles focused attention on the aftermath of the death and the specific actions being taken by those tasked with investigating the death. This largely focused on campus, organizational, and criminal investigations and the specific disciplinary actions levied against the students and organizations believed to be responsible. For example, one article described that “[t]he [Police Department], [State Police], and university police are investigating the incident and looking into whether or not drugs and or alcohol played a role. The university and fraternity are also each initiating an internal investigation” (E. Joseph, 2019).

Various sanctions were reported for the students who participated in hazing and the organizations within which hazing deaths occurred. After a student “consumed 27 shots of liquor” during a drinking “game,” six “fraternity brothers were arrested and charged with crimes, including involuntary manslaughter” (Riojas, 2002). Beyond the filing of criminal charges, some articles reported on the sanctions for those deemed responsible. In one case, “four fraternity leaders pleaded no contest this year to charges in connection with the case and were sentenced to either four days in jail or deferred adjudication,” after a student died from a five-story fall in 2006 (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008). The sanctions were not only levied against individual students; in 2008, one IHE “ordered [the fraternity] disbanded and took over the lease on its house” after a student died from alcohol poisoning (Johnson, 2008).

Lawsuits or legal settlements

Beyond the punitive and criminal outcomes for students and organizations, many individuals also faced legal liability. Dozens of articles mentioned or reported extensively on the size of lawsuits filed

against the individuals, organizations, and IHEs (31%). One article described how “the family of a young woman who died in an alleged hazing incident filed a \$100 million wrongful death lawsuit . . .” after two students drowned during a hazing ritual (CNN, 2002). In 2000, one “. . . chapter reached a \$2-million settlement on Tuesday with the parents of a student who died of alcohol poisoning. . .” (Read, 2000). Following another death in 2008, “a state judge [. . .] ordered a [. . .] fraternity chapter and its national parent organization to pay \$16.2-million to the parents of a freshman pledge who died after falling, drunk, from his fifth-floor balcony two years ago” (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008).

Theme 5: emotive responses

Many articles focused on the emotional aftermath of these hazing deaths. These responses were largely focused on two areas: the emotional impact on students and formal condemnations by IHE administrators, organizational leaders, and local officials.

Grief and disbelief

Approximately 17% of articles focused on the emotional toll of a hazing death by interviewing those who knew the victim or who were impacted by their loss. After two students were killed in a car accident driving from an unsanctioned fraternity event in 2002, “friends of [the victim] remembered him as being the most sincere, happy, funny, smart and trustful guy that one could ever meet. [One student remarked,] “I can’t believe my best friend in the whole world is gone forever” (Rottigni, 2002). Another author described how “. . . students are still grappling with grief and disbelief over the death of a sophomore who allegedly had too much to drink at a college party” (Calhoun, 2009). Addressing the trauma experienced by the campus community, IHE administrators often issued statements “mourning [the victim’s] death” (Gose, 2000). In other cases, the national organization issued a statement “that the group is heartbroken by [the victim’s] death” (Associated Press, 2019).

“ . . . will not be tolerated . . . ”

Approximately a dozen articles (13%) specifically quoted IHE administrators as describing how hazing behavior does not align with the goals of student life and these actions or behaviors “. . . will not be tolerated” (Hines, 2004). One university’s Dean of Students stated, “The university has made it very clear on numerous occasions that it will not tolerate hazing” (Holmes, 1995). Almost 24 years later in 2019, this statement was echoed by another university president, who stated “as the investigation into this very serious matter continues, let me reiterate that our university has zero tolerance for hazing. Not only are hazing incidents a violation of our university policies, but they are also crimes” (Osborne, 2019). In many of these statements, presidents, administrators, and spokespersons highlighted the IHE’s zero-tolerance policies for those who engage in hazing and how hazing runs contrary to the IHE’s values.

Discussion

The present study empirically examined themes in how hazing deaths were reported in the American media from 1994 to 2019. Through 84 unique articles, the current analysis suggests the TAIR model was evident in news articles reporting on hazing deaths, but to a smaller degree than found by Mathers and Chavez (2018). While articles contextualized hazing behaviors through the lenses of tradition, initiations, and rituals, these themes were less common than other themes discussed in this analysis. Unsurprisingly, “acceptance” was especially rare in articles reporting on a student hazing death. Generally, authors appeared much more focused on the cultural context of the hazing death (including what was known about the victims, perpetrators, and organization) and the ensuing responses to the hazing death (organizational, campus, legal, etc.). As such, the TAIR model may not be as applicable for reporting of hazing deaths.

One common theme was the influence of parties and alcohol when these deaths occurred. While many deaths were the direct result of alcohol intoxication, others were also associated with a party, social event featuring alcohol, or drinking game/ritual. The presence of alcohol largely informed the accidental classification of many other deaths. Still, other acts were discussed through their association with acts of humiliation or occasional acts of extreme violence. The articles often acknowledged the secretive culture of fraternities and other selective organizations. Many hazing deaths resulted in investigations into students and organizations, with some disciplined by their universities and others charged with criminal acts or named in lawsuits or legal settlements. Given the tragic nature of a young life lost, many articles also focused on the emotive responses of students and the campus community in the immediate aftermath, while others discussed the public statements offered by organizational and IHE administrators.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the current TA exposed a remarkable level of consistency in the way hazing deaths have been reported throughout the two and a half decades of articles included in this analysis. In the often brief and largely surface-level reporting on how each student lost their lives, these hazing deaths felt almost inevitable within the context of campus life (and more specifically, elements of fraternity life). Given the regularity with which these hazing deaths are reported, the media must be better equipped to discuss hazing incidents in a more informative manner.

Implications for reporters and media outlets

The media clearly plays a crucial and necessary role in reporting on hazing deaths. Further, we acknowledge that coverage of these incidents can raise public awareness, encourage accountability, and indirectly or directly promote change. However, we are concerned that current patterns of media reporting on hazing deaths may contribute to inflated perceptions of danger among the public, as well as a somewhat simplified understanding of the groups involved. There are several ways in which the media can more thoughtfully report on these incidents and engage with the phenomenon of hazing more broadly.

We suggest that reporters consider briefly addressing IHE hazing in general, and in so doing make clear distinctions between hazing as a *phenomenon* and hazing-related *deaths*. This distinction is relevant for both establishing accurate perceptions of risk and for discussing actual or prospective solutions. Specifically, death is the least likely outcome of hazing, it is very rare relative to hazing's prevalence at IHEs, and as shown through the prevalence of the "accident" theme, it is not the intended goal of those perpetrating hazing. Further, as shown in our analysis, most hazing deaths are concentrated in social fraternities and are commonly the result of alcohol or other intoxicants. As such, the question of how to reduce hazing deaths is far more tractable than the question of how to reduce hazing as a phenomenon.

We also note that many articles focused on punitive administrative and legal responses aimed at deterrence (i.e., suspensions, expulsions, arrests). However, from our perspective, efforts to prevent hazing deaths will likely need to take place at the level of harm reduction, such as persuading social fraternities to reduce or replace alcohol-based hazing and equipping them with thorough first-aid training (Cimino, 2020). The separate question of how to reduce hazing as a *phenomenon* is much more fraught, has bedeviled advocates and administrators for decades (e.g., Nuwer, 2001), and may have no generalizable answer (Cimino, 2020). Most importantly, we suggest that trying to prevent hazing deaths by "preventing hazing" is like trying to prevent drug overdose deaths by "preventing recreational drug use." In both cases, it is a hopelessly broad goal that has proven illusive and may lead to detrimental laws and policies (e.g., Cimino, 2023b; Parks, 2021). Further, we emphasize that there is little evidence that anti-hazing programs have any efficacy at reducing the occurrence of real-world hazing (P. J. Biddix et al., 2022).

The vast majority of news articles on hazing deaths did not include comments from experts, which should be considered for future articles, as they may help contextualize hazing for readers. This may include providing a formal definition of hazing, summarizing relevant research, and supplying more

information about its specific manifestations and history for the group type in question (e.g., fraternities, athletic teams). However, if reporters add expert comment, they should also disclose whether a given expert is a member of an anti-hazing advocacy organization as well as whether they provide anti-hazing training or consulting services. Individuals and organizations who sell these services (or who are paid to give anti-hazing lectures to students) may have a direct interest in emphasizing uncommon harms of hazing or the efficacy of specific solutions (see related concerns in Cimino, 2023a). To be clear, such interests do not invalidate their contributions, but they do merit disclosure.

We write at a time in which the academic literature on hazing as a phenomenon is theoretically rich but empirically impoverished (see reviews in P. J. Biddix et al., 2022; Cimino, 2011). Thus, while there are many theories about what motivates hazing and what effects hazing has on hazingees, most of these theories have minimal scientific evidence specifically derived from hazing populations or contexts (e.g., Cimino & Thomas, 2022). Further, these theories are sometimes stated in a way that makes them difficult to test. This difficulty can be due to issues of theoretical clarity or the practical and ethical challenges that would be entailed by formal testing (e.g., exposure to hazing). As such, our ability to winnow down alternative theories is presently limited. Because of the current state of the research literature, we suggest that reporters include caveats if they choose to discuss research findings relevant to hazing's motivations or effects on hazingees (e.g. "Scientific understandings of the motivations and effects of hazing are currently in their early stages."). Alternately, mentions of the psychology of hazing can be reserved for long-form articles where these issues can be better contextualized, and the complexity of the phenomenon can be properly conveyed.

Limitations and future research

The current study does have some limitations. Primarily, we only analyzed hazing incidents where the victim was deceased. Incidents of non-fatal hazing may be covered quite differently than incidents where a death occurs. For example, due to the serious nature and legal liability following a hazing death, individuals, organizational representatives, and IHE administrators may be less likely to speak with reporters following a hazing death. Furthermore, relying on the Nuwer's (2023) Hazing Death Database may have biased the incidents explored in this analysis. While additional internet searches were conducted to identify other hazing death incidents in the media, articles that met the inclusion criteria for this research may have been missed. In addition, the TA coding process and resulting themes are influenced by the positionality of the authors. While the research team thoughtfully considered and ultimately agreed upon the themes, subthemes, and examples included in this manuscript, our results and interpretations are certainly not value-free.

Our analysis is also impacted by its use of Allan and Madden's (2008) more permissive definition of hazing, which allows for hazing to encompass events outside the induction period (i.e., "any activity expected of someone joining *or participating* in a group. . . [emphasis added]). This is in contrast to Cimino's (2017) "strict" definition of hazing, which excludes such events, and would tend to make finer distinctions among induction activities. Allan and Madden's definition more closely corresponds to entries in Nuwer's "Hazing Deaths Database" and (we believe) matches the somewhat loose manner in which hazing has been used in the broader media and among anti-hazing activists. This means that while the scope of our analysis is relevant to popular understandings of hazing, it is open to further refinement based on differing scholarly perspectives for what constitutes hazing. Notably, an application of Cimino's strict definition would reduce the total number of IHE "hazing deaths" but might increase the proportion of such deaths that are particularly severe in their surrounding context (e.g., by excluding post-induction parties).

Another limitation was that a national news article was not able to be found for all hazing deaths between 1994 and 2019. Although nearly three-quarters of these incidents resulted in national news coverage, 27% only prompted local news coverage. While no victim, organization, or IHE

characteristics were unique for these incidents that did not make national news, reporting in national and local news stories may differ in tone, focus, and intended audience, which may have affected the results. In addition, it is also possible that some articles (or follow-up reports) were simply not published online. Unfortunately, this would mean that some articles that would have been added to the analysis are missing. Still, the current study includes over 80 unique articles over a span of twenty-five years, which provides important insight into news reports on hazing deaths in the U.S. from 1994 to 2019. Future research should examine the role of the themes described in the current analysis in other samples of articles related to hazing and its effects.

Finally, given the typical characteristics of these incidents (predominantly white, male victims in social fraternities), valuable comparative analyzes were not able to be conducted to assess the effect of victim race, ethnicity, class, gender, and other contextual factors on the way these deaths were reported (but see Parks et al., 2015). As Flanagan (2017) of *The Atlantic* described after the hazing death of a sophomore at Penn State University, these hazing deaths often give the media “an excuse to pay an unwarranted amount of attention to something viewers are always interested in: the death of a relatively affluent white suburban kid. Because the culprits are also relatively affluent white suburban kids, there is no need to fear pandering to the racial bias that favors stories about this type of victim.” Future research should consider the role of these factors on the coverage incidents receive.

Conclusion

Overall, the current study suggests that hazing deaths have been reported in a relatively consistent pattern over time. These articles have reached a large regional or national audience and have provided the public brief but recurrent windows into some of the most extreme hazing events in the U.S. Outside of works of fiction, these articles may be a key source of public understanding of hazing as a phenomenon. As a result, it is important that any future articles provide greater context, include expert perspectives, and address the phenomenon at different levels of analysis when discussing possible solutions.

Disclosure statement

In accordance with Taylor & Francis policy, Dr. Aldo Cimino reports that he has received travel funding to present research to the Hazing Prevention Network, an anti-hazing advocacy organization.

Notes on contributors

Dr. Nicholas M. Perez is an Associate Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice in the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management at California State University, Long Beach. Dr. Perez’s research focuses on policing, youth violence, and the opioid epidemic. His research has been recognized through multiple state and federal grant awards, and he has published peer-reviewed journal articles in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *Crime & Delinquency*, *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, *Deviant Behavior*, *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, the *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, among others.

Dr. Aldo Cimino is one of the foremost experts on hazing. He studies both the causes and consequences of the phenomenon, integrating experimental and ethnographic methodologies. Dr. Cimino is also broadly interested in using science to better inform hazing-related policy prescriptions.

References

- Ad Fontes Media, Inc. (2023). *Interactive media bias chart*. <https://adfontesmedia.com/interactive-media-bias-chart/>
- Allan, E. J., & Madden, M. (2008). *Hazing in view: College students at risk. Initial findings from the national study of student hazing*. National Study of Student Hazing. https://stophazing.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/hazing_in_view_study.pdf

- Allan, E. J., & Madden, M. (2012). The nature and extent of college student hazing. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 24(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijamh.2012.012>
- Allan, E. J., Payne, J. M., & Kerschner, D. (2019). Transforming the culture of hazing: A research-based hazing prevention framework. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 55(4), 412–425. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2018.1474759>
- Allen, R. (2019, November 3). *Did the University of Texas go easy on the Texas cowboys after a night of hazing and a student's death?* Dallas Morning News. <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/education/2019/11/03/did-the-university-of-texas-go-easy-on-the-texas-cowboys-after-a-night-of-hazing-and-a-students-death/>
- Associated Press. (2007, January 10). *Dead frat pledge's body defaced*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/dead-frat-pledges-body-defaced/>
- Associated Press. (2013, April 23). *4 charged after Va. freshmen swept into river*. USA Today. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/04/23/virginia-students-die-hazing/2107683/>
- Associated Press. (2019, January 15). *California fraternity suspended after student, 18, found dead near Irvine campus*. USA Today. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/01/15/university-california-irvine-suspends-frat-after-student-death/2578500002/>
- Baird, W. R., Anson, J.L., & Marchesani, R.F. (1991). *Baird's manual of American college fraternities*. Baird's Manual Foundation, Incorporated.
- Barber, J., Espino, M., & Bureau, D. (2015). Fraternities and sororities: Developing a compelling case for relevance in higher education. In P. A. Sasso & J. L. DeVitis (Eds.), *Today's college students: A reader* (pp. 241–256). Peter Lang. <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/educationpub/4>
- Biddix, J. P. (2016). Moving beyond alcohol: A review of other issues associated with fraternity membership with implications for practice and research. *Journal of College Student Development*, 57(7), 793–809. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2016.0079>
- Biddix, J. P., Sasso, P. A., Perlow, E., Joyce, B., & Veldkamp, S. (2022). *Evaluating hazing and related behaviors, intervention, & prevention efforts: A solutions-based approach*. University of Tennessee Knoxville, Penn State University Piazza Center, North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC). <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/piazza-center/findings-results>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Conceptual and design thinking for thematic analysis. *Qualitative Psychology*, 9(1), 3–26. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qp0000196>
- Calhoun, R. (2009, March 5). *'Sadness and loss' grip SUNY Geneseo*. ABC News. <https://abcnews.go.com/OnCampus/story?id=7008013&page=1>
- Callanan, V. J. (2012). Media consumption, perceptions of crime risk and fear of crime: Examining race/ethnic differences. *Sociological Perspectives*, 55(1), 93–115. <https://doi.org/10.1525/sop.2012.55.1.93>
- Catullo, D., III. (2019). *Breathe, Nolan, breathe*. City Drive Studios.
- The Chronicle of Higher Education. (2008, October 8). *Texas fraternity ordered to pay \$16.2-million to parents of pledge who died*. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/texas-fraternity-ordered-to-pay-16-2-million-to-parents-of-pledge-who-died/>
- Cimino, A. (2011). The evolution of hazing: Motivational mechanisms and the abuse of newcomers. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, 11(3–4), 241–267. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853711X591242>
- Cimino, A. (2013). Predictors of hazing motivation in a representative sample of the United States. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 34(1), 446–452. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2013.08.007>
- Cimino, A. (2016). Fraternity hazing and the process of planned failure. *Journal of American Studies*, 52(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021875816001924>
- Cimino, A. (2017). Defining hazing: Why popular definitions are misleading and counterproductive. *Journal of Higher Education Management*, 32(1), 135–148. http://www.aldocimino.com/cimino_2017.pdf
- Cimino, A. (2020). *Embrace & reform: Ending hazing's prohibition era*. http://www.aldocimino.com/cimino_2020.pdf
- Cimino, A. (2023a). On the use of questionable anti-hazing messaging. *Journal of College and Character*, 24(3), 293–299. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2194587X.2023.2231100>
- Cimino, A. (2023b). Studying hazing as an anthropologist: The impact of mandatory reporting. *American Anthropologist*, 125(4), 900–901. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aman.13896>
- Cimino, A., & Thomas, B. J. (2022). Does hazing actually increase group solidarity? Re-examining a classic theory with a modern fraternity. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 43(5), 408–417. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2022.07.001>
- Cimino, A., Toyokawa, W., Komatsu, M., Thomson, R., & Gaulin, S. J. (2019). Cross-cultural and cross-organizational evidence for an evolved hazing motivation. *Evolutionary Psychology*, 17(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474704919887943>
- Cooper, C. (1997, August 28). *Students help bury a fraternity pledge, and a tale of heavy drinking emerges*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/1997/08/28/us/students-help-bury-a-fraternity-pledge-and-a-tale-of-heavy-drinking-emerges.html>

- Crow, R. B., & Macintosh, E. W. (2009). Conceptualizing a meaningful definition of hazing in sport. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 9(4), 433–451. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16184740903331937>
- Drout, C. E., & Corsoro, C. L. (2003). Attitudes toward fraternity hazing among fraternity members, sorority members, and non-Greek students. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 31(6), 535–544. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2003.31.6.535>
- Ellsworth, C. W. (2004). Definitions of hazing: Differences among selected student organizations. *Journal of Sorority and Fraternity Life Research and Practice*, 2(1), 46–60. <https://doi.org/10.25774/pvdsd-8m03>
- Examiner Staff. (2013, July 14). *Fraternity booted from S.F. State after party death as school looks into hazing allegations*. San Francisco Examiner. https://www.sfexaminer.com/news/fraternity-booted-from-s-f-state-after-party-death-as-school-looks-into-hazing-allegations/article_97614958-7565-5b40-b279-63fb59db9ab8.html
- Flanagan, C. (2017, November). *Death at a Penn State fraternity*. The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/11/a-death-at-penn-state/540657/>
- Gillon, K. E., Beatty, C. C., & Salinas, C., Jr. (2019). Race and racism in fraternity and sorority life: A historical overview. *New Directions for Student Services*, 2019(165), 9–16. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20289>
- Gose, B. (2000, April 14). *Crash during hazing incident killed U. of Georgia student, authorities say*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/crash-during-hazing-incident-killed-u-of-georgia-student-authorities-say/>
- Hines, R. (2004, October 1). *Alcohol poisoning kills Okla. student*. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/f56f9c8e80f2ba9b95614d252209a24a>
- Holmes, M. (1995, June 13). *U of Texas student group banned after student drowning*. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/96c93b4c5731cbb1f9656c3e714f5990>
- Hoover, N. C. (1999). *National survey: Initiation rites and athletics for NCAA sports teams*. https://www.alfred.edu/about/news/studies/_docs/hazing.pdf
- Hoover, N. C., & Pollard, N. J. (2000). *Initiation rites in American high schools: A national survey*. <https://files.eric.edu/gov/fulltext/ED445809.pdf>
- Hurt, B. (2022). *Hazing*. PBS.
- Jewkes, Y. (2004). *Media and crime*. Sage.
- Johnson, D. (2008, November 28). *Rift on Indiana campus after student dies*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/28/us/28wabash.html>
- Jones, R. L. (2004). *Black haze: Violence, sacrifice, and manhood in black Greek-letter fraternities*. State University of New York Press.
- Joseph, D. A. (2022). *Teacher perceptions of hazing among middle and high school students: A phenomenological study* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Liberty University.
- Joseph, E. (2019, April 18). *18-year-old college freshman dies six days after a suspected hazing incident*. Cnn. <https://www.cnn.com/2019/04/17/us/ub-hazing-death/index.html>
- Kalof, L., & Cargill, T. (1991). Fraternity and sorority membership and gender dominance attitudes. *Sex Roles*, 25(7/8), 417–423. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00292531>
- Kaufman, E., & Burnside, T. (2017, October 11). *Police issue warrants for 10 frat members after LSU student's death*. Cnn. <https://www.cnn.com/2017/10/11/health/lsu-student-hazing-death/index.html>
- Korry, E. (2005, November 14). *A fraternity hazing gone wrong*. Npr. <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5012154>
- Leemon, T. A. (1972). *The rites of passage in a student culture: A study of the dynamics of transition*. Teachers College Press.
- Mathers, S. A., & Chavez, J. (2018). When hazing is not hazing: Media portrayal of hazing: Developing a typology. Introducing the TAIR model. *Social science*, 7(9), 158. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci7090158>
- Mathews, J. (2022). *The benefits of friends: Inside the complicated world of today's sororities and fraternities*. University of North Carolina Press.
- McCabe, S. E., Veliz, P., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2018). How collegiate fraternity and sorority involvement relates to substance use during young adulthood and substance use disorders in early midlife: A national longitudinal study. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 62(3), S35–S43. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2017.09.029>
- Nuwer, H. (1990). *Broken Pledges: The deadly rite of hazing*. Longstreet Press.
- Nuwer, H. (2001). *Wrongs of passage: Fraternities, sororities, hazing, and binge drinking*. Indiana University Press.
- Nuwer, H. (Ed.). (2004). *The hazing reader*. Indiana University Press.
- Nuwer, H. (2018). *Hazing: Destroying young lives*. Indiana University Press.
- Nuwer, H. (2023). *Hazing deaths database: Unofficial clearinghouse and watchdog site*. <http://www.hanknuwer.com/hazing-deaths/>
- Osborne, M. (2019, April 14). *University at Buffalo student critically injured in 'potential' hazing incident; school suspends all Greek life*. ABC News. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/university-buffalo-student-critically-injured-potential-hazing-incident/story?id=62373841>
- O'Sullivan, C. (2013, November 15). *Ex-frat members not liable for hazing death, jury says*. USA Today. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/11/15/fraternity-pledge-hazing-death/3584501/>

- Parks, G. S. (2021). The failure of zero-tolerance policies in addressing hazing. *Penn State Law Review*, 126(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3843227>
- Parks, G. S., & Hughey, M. W. (2020). *A pledge with purpose: Black sororities and fraternities and the fight for equality*. NYU Press.
- Parks, G. S., Jones, S. E., Ray, R., & Hughey, M. W. (2015). White boys drink, Black girls yell: A racialized and gendered analysis of violent hazing and the law. *Journal of Gender, Race & Justice*, 18, 97–168. https://heinonline.org/hol-cgi-bin/get_pdf.cgi?handle=hein.journals/jgrj18§ion=7
- Parks, G. S., & Parisi, S. (2019). White boy wasted: Race, sex, and alcohol use in fraternity hazing. *Wisconsin Journal of Law, Gender, & Society*, 34, 1–38. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3238962>
- Perez, N. M. (2023). Deadly initiations: Characteristics of hazing deaths in the United States (1994–2019). *Violence & Victims*, 38(4), 536–555. <https://doi.org/10.1891/VV-2021-0068>
- Raspberry, C. (1994, February 23). *Death on the Kappa line*. The Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1994/02/23/death-on-the-kappa-line/62b55a5c-517e-4b39-90bc-8e779647135e/>
- Read, B. (2000, August 2). *Fraternity reaches \$2-million settlement in student's death at U. of Texas*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/12-charged-in-death-of-fraternity-pledge-at-clarkson-u/>
- Reiner, R., Livingstone, S., & Allen, J. (2003). From law and order to lynch mobs: Crime news since the second world war. In P. Mason (Ed.), *Criminal visions: Media representations of crime and justice* (pp. 13–32). Willan Publishing.
- Riojas, A. (2002, January 31). *Campus insecurity: A deadly haze*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/campus-insecurity-a-deadly-haze/>
- Robinson, D. (2019, November 28). *Private investigators focused on frat party in Cornell University freshman's death*. USA Today. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2019/11/28/antonio-tsialas-death-investigation-focused-cornell-frat-party/4324482002/>
- Rottigni, E. (2002, February 14). *Friends honor lives of two freshmen*. The Daily Aztec. <https://thedailyaztec.com/19825/daily-aztec-stories/friends-honor-lives-of-two-freshmen/>
- Schwartz, J. (2011, December 17). *Drum major's death ruled hazing homicide*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/17/us/drum-major-robert-champions-death-ruled-hazing-homicide.html>
- Schweber, N., & Kaminer, A. (2013, December 12). *Details, but few answers, emerge in hazing death of Baruch student*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/13/nyregion/details-but-few-answers-emerge-in-hazing-death-of-baruch-student.html>
- Seabrook, R. C., Ward, L. M., & Giaccardi, S. (2018). Why is fraternity membership associated with sexual assault? Exploring the roles of conformity to masculine norms, pressure to uphold masculinity, and objectification of women. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 19(1), 3–13. <https://doi.org/10.1037/men0000076>
- Sharma, A. (2004). *Unless a death occurs: Hazing examined*. Mountain Lake PBS.
- Silveira, J. M., & Hudson, M. W. (2015). Hazing in the college marching band. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 63(1), 5–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429415569064>
- Stiller, K. R., & Harris, E. (2016). *The shift from acceptance to prevention: Hazing behaviors in the U.S. military*. Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/1021673.pdf>
- Sullivan, L., Wagner, M., & Hendrix, S. (2019, November 4). *Broken pledge: As Collin Wiant is buried, his family has yet to learn of his hazing*. The Columbus Dispatch. <https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/education/campus/2019/11/04/broken-pledge-chapter-1-as/2368864007/>
- Surette, R. (2015). *Media, crime, and criminal justice: Images, realities, and policies*. Cengage Learning.
- Syrett, N. L. (2009). *The company he keeps: A history of white college fraternities*. University of North Carolina Press.
- Thomas, B. J., Cimino, A., & Meglich, P. (2021). Workplace hazing: Toward an organizational science of a cryptic group practice. *Group & Organization Management*, 46(2), 286–326. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601121992893>
- Waldron, J. J., & Kowalski, C. L. (2009). Crossing the line: Rites of passage, team aspects and ambiguity of hazing. *Research Quarterly for Exercise & Sport*, 80(2), 291–302. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.2009.10599564>
- Wilkie, L. A. (2010). *The lost boys of Zeta Psi: A historical archaeology of masculinity in a university fraternity*. University of California Press.
- Winerip, M. (2012, April 12). *When a hazing goes very wrong*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/15/education/edlife/a-hazing-at-cornell.html>