

# Satire — fraternity rush attracts all types of students

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Just one more sign of a semester's start is the flurry of flyers going up on all college campuses. Each has those funny little Greek letters and lists of party dates and times. The names of these parties are each ingeniously designed to suggest mega-doses of alcohol.

These signs have one common denominator. An enigmatic word conceived heaven knows where — RUSH.

"Rush — v. 1. to move, push, drive, etc. swiftly or impetuously 2. to make a sudden attack (on) 3. to pass, go, send, act, do, etc. with unusual haste; hurry." — Webster's New World Dictionary, 2nd College Edition.

**Satire:** noun  
1. a) a literary work in which vices, follies, stupidities, abuses, etc. are held up to ridicule and contempt.  
b) such literary works collectively, or the art of writing them.  
2 the use of ridicule, sarcasm, irony, etc. to expose, attack or deride vices, follies, etc.  
— Webster's Dictionary, 2nd College Edition

Fraternity rush parties are designed for one purpose. To introduce men to the fraternity and screen them for possible membership. But they serve three other purposes as well. One can justify his/her presence with any or all of these.

The first is that parties are an excellent place to pull a good buzz — on the house. Fraternity parties are famous — or notorious depending on one's view — for their constant flow of strong beverages, good music and women.

Since rush parties are open to all comers and the fraternities cannot charge money for drinks or admission, it's a great place to be; that is, if you can stand a constant flow of assorted plaids with ungodly color combinations, alligators and little men on horseback.

The second purpose is to meet people in general. This is normally only for freshmen and transfer students. Rush parties attract an amazing cross-section of campus. Everyone is more relaxed due to the refreshments and tend to talk and be gregarious making it a good place to make friends and influence people.

The third is to meet the opposite sex. Fraternities put flyers on all campuses including local women's schools. The women go to meet "suitable" men and the men ... well, the same thing with a different definition for suitable.

Once you enter the door of one of these parties, you are in for awhile. Besides the crowd making it difficult to reach the door, the fascinating company just makes you want to stay on and on.

Try going and view the rite from a totally objective point of view.

An overhead view would show a crowd of people mingling around. Brothers walk around, looking

jovial, smiling — like the alligators on their shirts — and slapping people on the back.

Potential pledges try to talk intelligently about their accomplishments back home, their desire to become part of the brotherhood, and what their presence and name would do for the fraternity. They are also smiling, but you can tell them from brothers by the sickly smile and anxious look in their eyes.

The ones who have no interest in anything but partying on someone else's money are just as obvious. They are smiling lopsidedly or with a too-broad grin. Their eyes have a vacant look in them. If a brother approaches them about the fraternity, they have a pat reply about looking around first.

The women are an entirely different group all together. They are there for a combined purpose. To party and to meet men. The funny thing is that although they are there to meet men, they won't talk to them.

There are usually more women at the rush parties than potential pledges. The women stand in groups, listening to the music, drinking and giggling. If a man approaches, the group tightens together like a wagon train during an Indian attack. The poor man is met with a deluge of giggles, batting eyes and, if there

are words spoken at all, some sort of withering cut to prevent any further attempt at conversation.

Makes you wonder exactly what kind of man is "suitable".

Sometime during the course of the party, an invisible signal goes off and it is time to cut loose. The brothers get together and sing bawdy songs. The rushees smile sickly and try to join in. The non-rushees smile broadly and join in, on-key, off-key or with words of their own. The women either get haughty and insulted and leave en masse or start giggling and blushing at the appropriate times. Amazing how some know how to blush on cue.

The men begin leering at the women who have stayed behind. All thoughts of rushing or pledging is forgotten in the face of the ancient rite of boy-tries-to-pick-up-girl.

And so the party winds down to a close with alligator meeting alligatoress, plaid pants meeting plaid skirt. Another successful rush comes to a close with the potential pledges panting to get in on this scene.

The brothers are pleased and buzzed. The rushees are ecstatic and buzzed. The non-rushees are just buzzed. The women are giggling and buzzed.



And I thought it was the Romans who started bacchanalia.