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**Title:** Study on ethnic minority fraternities/sororities

**About the Author:** Joy Hope is a freshman and is currently in the Division of General Studies. She was born in Chicago, Illinois but grew up in Naperville, Illinois. She deactivated from a PHC sorority her 2nd semester and is currently exploring other things.

Christy Chang is a freshmen in the College of Business majoring in Finance and Accounting. She was born into a Chinese family and has been around Asians all her life. She was first interested in researching this topic because she wanted to know more about the reasoning behind why Asians choose to join ethnic sororities/fraternities.

Saeklyn King is a freshman at U of I. Currently she is undecided but looking into advertising. She is also in an Asian interest sorority called alpha Kappa Delta Phi. She absolutely has loved her college experience so far and can't wait for sophomore year.

Luis Micheals is a freshman in the College of Business majoring in accounting and finance. He was born in China and came to the United States at the age of 5. He has been living in New Jersey ever since. On Campus, Michael is a member of an IFC fraternity and actively participates in campus activities.

Bradd Scott is a freshman. He was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. He is the youngest out of three boys. His major is psychology pre-med. He wants to someday travel to the Middle East and volunteer and help out the poor. His favorite T.V. show is Grey's Anatomy.

**Keywords:** Minorities, Ethnic Identity, Sororities, Asian, Greeks, Fraternities, comfort, race, Culture

**Abstract:** Our question "Why do certain Asian Americans choose to join ethnic fraternities and sororities as opposed to traditional fraternities and sororities?" was based on our group's interest of the university's Greek system. For

research, we observed fraternity and sorority social events, meetings and members. We also individually interviewed Greeks of both traditional and ethnic houses. In terms of findings, it really depended on the individuals, how they perceived themselves as Asians, and how comfortable they felt around the members of the houses. Feeling comfortable among members was often more important than race as reasons for joining.

**Question:** Why do some minorities choose to be in fraternities and sororities with majority Caucasians compared to the “Asian” fraternities and sororities?

4/13/09:

Why do ethnic minorities choose to join cultural fraternities/sororities as opposed to the traditional fraternities/sororities or vice versa.

**Plan:** We plan on interviewing certain members of sororities/fraternities and asking them their personal or cultural reasons for joining their sororities/fraternities.

**Data (observation):** Joy Hope: This past Saturday, April 4, 2009, I went to a few bars on the campus of University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. I personally know a few Asian-Americans in the “Asian” fraternities and sororities and in the majority white fraternities and sororities. I went to Station 211 in Champaign, Illinois where I know a lot of the Greek community goes. I noticed there were very few Asian-Americans there. They were all scattered throughout the bar. I only saw two Asians together, while the other Asians were with Caucasian students. I did not see any racism going on between these races. The Asians looked very comfortable with who they were with. They weren’t treated any differently. I also noticed one Asian bartender that night. The Asians dressed and acted the same as everybody else. For a second, I barely noticed that they were Asian at all. They seemed to blend in well with the crowd, but they were easy to find in the crowd if you purposely were looking for them. They were interacting and socializing very well with other students in the bar. I also saw one dancing on the stage with their friends. After this bar, I went to Fubar Lounge in Champaign, Illinois where I

know many Asian-Americans in the “Asian” fraternities and sororities go. As I walked in, I did notice a lot more Asians compared to Station 211. Not all were in fraternities and sororities, but a good number of them were. This was opposite of Station 211 because the minority were the Caucasian students. Most of the Asian-Americans stuck to their own race and interacted with one another the whole night. You would find a cluster of friends in the booths and seat area. Unlike Station 211 where most of the students are walking around and dancing, most students at the Fubar Lounge were just hanging out and talking with one another while only a smaller proportion were dancing on the floor. There were minor differences in how students acted in these two bars. No matter who they are with, they interact with them comfortably and they seemed to blend in with their crowd.

Christy Chang: 04/07/09

Right now I'm sitting in front of the Union observing some Asian sorority girls trying to fundraise. They are all wearing the same thing to display unity. They are all wearing the same sorority jacket. It is a black jacket with the name of the sorority in white proudly displayed on the front of the jacket. For pants, they are wearing the same dark washed denim jeans. They are all also wearing white tennis shoes. They are trying to sell hot dogs for a dollar to raise money for their sorority. It is kind of unclear of what they are going to do with the money, but it seems like they want to raise more money so that they can hold more social events. They seem very friendly. There are a group of them sitting behind the table serving people, while there a few of them following people around asking if they would like to buy hot dogs. They all seem really bubbly and cheery. The sorority girls do not approach “potential customers” alone. They do it only in pairs. When they approach people, they tend to usually giggle for a few seconds before they ask if people want to buy hot dogs. They alternate people who ask to buy hot dogs. If girl A just asked a person if they wanted to buy a hot dog, then girl B would ask the next person. These sorority girls approached all types of people. They asked Asians, black, white, boys, girls, etc. They did not discriminate. This is unlike any other sororities that I've witnessed in the past. Most of the time, the white sororities

who are in the quad trying to sell stuff only approach white girls or boys. They do not approach that many Asians. It is as if they are trying to sell only to white people. This is not good for their sorority because it is kind of discriminative. The Asian sorority girls however, are very social. They will ask any group of people. This however, could be a false assumption because whenever I see the white sorority girls trying to sell stuff, I've only seen them while I walk to class. That means I've only spend a few seconds watching them in passing. I haven't actually sat down and watched them for long periods of time. I've come up with a conclusion of why Asian girls might want to join ethnic sororities as opposed to white sororities. I think it's because the Asian girls are able to feel accepted in these types of sororities. They seem more comfortable when they were around other Asian girls. When they approached other white girls, they seemed comfortable, but at the same time kind of uncomfortable. They seemed like they wanted to get out of that situation as soon as possible. If the people said that they didn't want to buy any hot dogs, they would move on to another customer. It was a different story however, when they approached other Asians. They would try to strike up a conversation with them and try to do whatever to convince them that they should buy hot dogs. Overall, I thought that this observation was really interesting.

Saeklyh King: As a member of an Asian sorority, I thought it would be most convenient to observe my own sorority during chapter. Chapter is a weekly meeting that my sorority holds every Monday at around 8 pm to discuss important issues and future events. Today's chapter was scheduled at the union at 9 pm. I looked at my phone and started getting anxious when no one else had arrived. I checked the time. It was 8:57. No one had arrived yet. I guess it was okay because people had a five minute lee way before being fined. For every 5 minutes late, people were charged \$1. Everyone in the room was wearing clothing with letters on it. It was a rule for chapter. On Mondays, wear letters. Everything that happened thereafter seemed very routine. The week's agenda was passed out. The president began talking. People didn't seem too interested in what was said. There seemed to be lots of

scribbling and side conversations going on. After the president spoke, another person that was head of Internal Committee began talking. The conversation moved on to going to Wisconsin. Rides were being organized and people were being split into cars. As names were being read a girl at the end said, "Wait say that again? Whose going in Kathy's car?" The girl asking the question was the secretary. She was in charge of writing everything down. She seemed kind of stressed trying to type down everything that was being said. Another girl said something funny and everyone began laughing. There was more joking and then it was back to business. People seemed restless and eager to leave. The girls sat by who they seemed most comfortable with. Girls sat next to their bigs or their moms. At one point during chapter there was a really tense moment. The pledge mom for that semester brought up something about her kids. Her kids were the pledges for this semester. People began arguing. There was a lot of yelling and nothing seemed to be getting solved. It was only after the president said something that appeased both sides. After that, the environment was very quiet. Tension was clearly in the air. After chapter was over, people rushed out of the room. They seemed excited to leave.

Luis Michael: 4/7/2009

As I went to my fraternity's chapter meeting on Monday 4/6, I observed that including me, there were 5 asian members and 2 half asian members. My fraternity has approximately 70 active members and is in the InterFraternity Council therefore making one of the traditional fraternities on campus. During chapter, I noticed that the asians in my fraternity usually sat together. It was not because of race but because we were simply better friends with one another. We joke around with each other sometimes making crude and racist comments about each other's asian heritage. However it was all for jokes and no one took it seriously.

I also observed members of the Chi Sigma Tau and Lambda Phi Epsilon asian fraternities. The members of Chi Sigma Tau at the PAR/FAR residence halls usually hang out with one another and wear a lot of clothing representing their letters. They have a certain hand signals and on their

jackets and clothing, they have nicknames for themselves. I have noticed that the asian fraternities and sororities are extremely proud of their letters and rep them in almost every possible way. I have also observed that traditional fraternities and sororities do not show off their letters as much and do not have nicknames given to each member. The members of traditional fraternities and sororities are almost all white with very very little asians in them. The asian fraternities and sororities are almost all asian. I also noticed that the asian fraternities and sororities on campus are relatively new and do not have traditional houses. The Alpha Kappa Delta Phi and Kappa Phi Lambda sororities on campus are also mostly all asian. They tend to stick to themselves and also rep their colors a lot. I rarely noticed asian girls wearing traditional sorority letters. I also noticed that the asian sororities do heavy recruiting as I saw recruitment geared towards asian girls. Like other traditional sorority girls, these asian sorority girls also tended to stick with themselves.

Bradd Scott: 4-08-09 This past weekend I observed a probate from one of the Latino oriented fraternities on campus. This was an event in which the fraternity announces their new members to the rest of the campus. I was surprised to see so many different cultures involved in this event. There were blacks and even white. I noticed that there was emotional atmospheric feeling around in the air. In the crowd there were people cheering on the new members of the fraternity to a point that it was ecstatic. The members of the fraternity shared this bond with each other that you can tell that they are now no longer just friends that they are now fraternity brothers. Before announcing the new members to the public, the neos as called by some of the people in the audience (neo is one of the newest member to a fraternity), greeted all the fraternities and sororities. This must have been an honor for the sororities and fraternities in the crowd because they were so proud of the organization and after they were greeted they chanted a song. Each frat and sorority chant was different. The Neo's were very serious they had this face of seriousness a face where one knew that this was an event that was looked forward to and traditional the Greek life on campus. When observing to see if there were

any Asians in the crowd or the fraternity that was throwing the event I seen about two or three Asians in the crowd. They looked comfortable and one can tell that they felt at home. They were mixed in the crowd and if I weren't looking specifically at the scenery and observing them I wouldn't have noticed them, but when I did notice them I could tell that they were proud of themselves and the new neos. As one observes the scenery one can notice a lot when one doesn't. These are my observations of a Latino oriented probate.

**Data (interview):** Joy Hope

I interviewed a friend I have known for four years now. For the purpose of keeping him anonymous, I will refer to him as Jake and not mention his fraternity. He moved to America when he was in 8th grade, which makes him a first generation. He joined a "main-stream, white" fraternity here on campus instead of an "Asian" fraternity because he found some differences between them. He said that he did not really know anything about the "Asian" fraternities but that they "seemed lame." He referred to them as being isolated and not having a lot of social events with sororities except for the "Asian" sororities. Jake thought that the "white" fraternities were a bigger part of campus and that he could meet a lot more people this way. He also said that the "white" fraternities seemed like they had more activities and fun events than the "Asian" fraternities. In general he thought about the future and how it has "more to offer" and how it is easier to network with others. After talking more with Jake, he went into the issue about ethnicity and about being Asian. He recalled that when he moved here to America, he wanted to make friends with Caucasians to learn more English. He said, "I look down upon the Asian kids who only hang out with other Asians. I understand it's more comfortable for them, but they should hang out with other crowds too." Jake does care a lot about how people perceive him. I asked him what it is that he cares about and he said, "I don't like the concept of all Asians being together and I don't want to be 'that guy' who hangs around with only Asians." He felt that the Asian stereotypes are more emphasized on people in the Asian crowds because the Asians in the "white crowds" are "white-washed." There was more Jake said but I found it

to inappropriate. Concluding this interview, I kind of sensed why he did not want to join the “Asian” fraternities. A lot of the reasons were along the lines of race and ethnicity and how others might perceive him as. Also, that the “white” fraternities and sororities do offer a little bit more in the future career-wise. I know that some of his reasons do hold true for some other Asians I know who are in “white” fraternities and sororities.

Christina Chen

Today I interviewed a friend that is part of an Asian sorority. It was more of a casual interview in a dinner setting. After asking her a number of questions, it was evident why she wanted to join a sorority. My friend, who wanted to remain anonymous, but for the purpose of this interview, I will name Joyce Wang. She is an international student from Southeast Asia. She came to U of I not knowing anyone. Everything was different. She wasn't used to the culture, the food, etc. She said that when she was walking through the union one day, an Asian girl approached her asking her if she wanted to join an Asian sorority. She said that she didn't know what it was at the time, but she still went to the meeting to find out more about it because the girl was so friendly. When she went, she said that for the first time she felt like she fit in. Every girl there was Asian. For the first time while on the campus, she didn't feel like an outsider. She met lots of nice girls that night. After that meeting, she made up her mind to join. Joyce recalls, “It was one of the best decisions I made in my life. It was through my sorority where I was able to finally come out of my shell and meet other people of MY ethnicity. I didn't have to worry about trying to learn about American culture because the girls knew where I was coming from. They knew how Asian parents were and the type of household I grew up in.” She said that the reason she had decided to join the sorority was because she wanted to make friends. She had learned English at her boarding school but she was afraid to speak in front of other “Americans” because she was scared that they would make fun of her accent. She said that for some reason she felt more comfortable in front of other Asians. She said, “ I think it's probably because I feel like they won't make fun of my English because many of them are around their parents a lot. A majority of their parents are

like me. They've come over from another country and had to struggle with the language barrier. They're used to 'funny' accents and won't make fun of mine." Overall, it was a very interesting interview and I found out some overlying reasons why people would want to join Asian sororities. Asian sororities provide a safe place for girls who want to meet people who have similar backgrounds. People who are seeking friends, are able to join a sisterhood of friendly girls who are constantly seeking to recruit new members for their chapter.

Saeklyn King

4/14/09

Being in an ethnic sorority I decided to interview one of my sorority sisters. To make it most convenient for her I decided to meet her at her dorm. We decided to meet at Allen at 2:00. I waited for about five minutes until I saw her coming down the stairs. She was wearing sweats and a racer back tank with our sorority letters across the top. She seemed excited to see me and she ran towards me and gave me a hug. We found room in a lounge. Jennifer was my line sister, meaning she had pledged with me and we were initiated into the sorority at the same time. Although we had pledged together, I wasn't quite sure of her reasons for joining an ethnic sorority rather than one that was main-stream.

Our interview started and Jennifer seemed a little nervous. She told me as I was about to begin, "I'm not really good with words, so hopefully I can get across what I'm trying to say." I reassured her everything would be fine and we began. We talked about her high school days and how different college was. When she talked about high school something in her face changed. Her face showed some kind of regret but as she talked about college, her face lit up again. "Coming into college one of my goals was to get to know my culture because my high school was predominantly white so I didn't get the opportunity. I joined PSA (Philippine Student Association) to get in touch with my Filipino side and I chose to join an Asian sorority because not only could I relate to the girls but because I could get into touch with my culture." She seemed to really concentrate when she talked about this. It seemed as if she was trying to figure out the right words to say. Our

discussion moved to the mainstream, Pan-Hellenic, white sororities. I always wondered why she chose not to go mainstream. "People look for different things. Some girls just want that. It wouldn't fit me. I just don't think I could be part of an organization with hundreds of girls and not be able to have some kind of relationship with all of them. You know... that's one of the big differences about ethnic sororities and the mainstream ones. We have a smaller number of girls and I like it. I can actually say I'm close to all the sisters in our house." As she talked about our sorority she spoke with conviction and pride. It was obvious she was happy she made the right choice. She unconsciously touched the letters on her shirt as she talked about our sorority. "Joining this sorority isn't what I expected..." she gave me a look and we both laughed because I knew what she meant "but I love it all the same. Not only did I get to meet and get to know a bunch of awesome girls, I got to know a little bit more about Asian culture. I'm more aware of it. We have so many girls in our house that our different Asian backgrounds like Filipino, Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese, and you know a lot more. It's not like we have talks about our cultures but hearing them talk in their own languages and seeing what they like to eat is all an eye opener for me. I get so fascinated." She seemed really happy then and I couldn't help but smile. I guess I could relate to what she was saying. Somehow our discussion shifted and we ended up talking about how busy we were lately. It felt good to catch up. About twenty minutes passed and Jennifer said she had to go. We hugged and said goodbye.

I was really surprised at how smoothly the interview went. We were literally just having a conversation. I could tell Jennifer was nervous in the beginning but she talked more about the sorority she became more at ease. I tried my best to make it un-interview like as possible and it seemed to work. Talking with Jennifer was really insightful. I could really relate to what she was saying about getting in touch with her culture more because growing up I never really knew my own Korean culture or heritage. Deciding to join an Asian sorority became more of an identity search. The interview went really well so I was really happy. Go me!

Luis Micheals

4/11/2009

Here is my interview with a member of an asian in a traditional white fraternity. The interview was held in a closed lounge and recorded by pen and paper.

Why did you choose to join this fraternity and not an asian one?

- high school was mostly surrounded by asians
- wanted a different experience
- knew that the white fraternities were more "worth it"

What is your opinion on the asian sororities and fraternities?

- tend to stick together a lot and have rep their letters a lot along with hand signals
- personally not a fan of overt display of anything and hand signals
- college is about experiencing new things and exploration
- if you are constantly around people like yourself, you won't grow personally as much

Are you friends with members of asian fraternities and sororities?

- yes, has a few friends in them
- more like acquaintances
- doesn't really hang out with them

Why do you think asians join asian fraternities and sororities?

- maybe they're into asian girls
- "not acquainted" with white people
- maybe they feel more comfortable with asians

Besides race, what do you think are difference between asian fraternities and sororities compared to traditional ones?

- traditional ones have a traditional house
- exchanges with traditional sororities
- traditional ones have been around for a lot longer
- "not sure but thinks that asian ones have step" and traditional ones don't

Did you ever consider joining an asian fraternity?

- might have because was "recruited" and targeted
- but did not consider it seriously

Have you ever had an exchange with an asian sorority?

- not really
- they came to our house to hang out once

Are you more comfortable with asians or white people?

- doesn't really matter
- being with all asians would be kind of weird

Would you consider yourself as first generation, 1.5 (I explained to him), 2nd, or older?

- first generation

What do you think of your fraternity in relation with the asian ones?

- we're more mainstream
- doesn't know if the other fraternities are part of the InterFraternity Council or Panhellenic for sororities?

Have you been to any asian fraternity parties?

- yes, a couple, was a decent experience
- was surprised to see their house was a private house, not a frat house

Any other thoughts?

- they all have nick names and it seems like at one point, all the good nicknames will be gone (laugh)

Bradd Scott

4-15-09 As my research project progressed I started to interview members of fraternities on campus especially ethnic students. For my first interview I conducted an interview on an Asian student who is 2nd generation (someone who was born here or migrated to the U.S. before they were five) here on the U of I campus. 10012 the student I interviewed was very open during the interview. I asked him five questions which were open-ended questions. As I started the interview I asked the student what type of fraternity he was in, a traditional fraternity (white oriented) or an ethnic fraternity. The student responded by saying that he was in an Asian

Fraternity but as he stated this he had a smile on his face that showed a sign of being proud of the fraternity he was in. After getting his response to the first question I obliviously asked the next question that would come to mind, why? He stated, "one I'm Asian [I feel comfortable there], then he said because his friends did it." He tried to imply throughout the interview that his decision in choosing an Asian Fraternity wasn't only because he was Asian but because he knew and felt comfortable there. He stated that comfort is the key point in being happy in the fraternity you pledge. He stated the reason he joined this frat was specifically because of brotherhood, social and the motto they stand behind. As I started to end my interview I asked him did he regret his decision in pledging an ethnic frat other than a traditional frat. He stated, "The only thing I regret is not that I joined an Asian frat, but the financial part". Fraternities are costly and at times when choosing fraternities people choose based on their financial situation. 10012 told me that traditional fraternities prices are skyrocket while ethnic fraternities are cheaper a lot cheaper but still costly. As I closed my interview with 10012 he just said make sure you feel comfortable. So as I walked away I thought is that the same for everybody?

**Analysis:** The interest of our research topic involved finding why minorities joined ethnic fraternities/ sororities rather than mainstream ones. Four out of the five of our group interviewed Asians that were either in an Asian sorority or fraternity. Their main reasons for joining all seemed to be the same. They all decided to join not because they were Asian but because they felt more comfortable around people of their race or their need to get in touch with their culture. Similar to Sunaina Maira's article, "Nostalgia", many of the southeast Indians she interviewed had the same experience. A girl named Purnima said, "'Now my best friends are all Indian because I think when you come to college... you just kind of bond with people that you have the most in common with... because you don't have to go that extra step you know. You already share this common background, common values, common rules, almost'" (Maira 108). The person that Jeramie interviewed also felt that same way. In the interview 10012, the

interviewee, stated that his reason for joining an Asian fraternity was not because he was Asian but because he was most comfortable with the people of his own race. It seems almost natural that people of the same race would gravitate towards each other because there is already a level of understanding. If 10012 were to join a white fraternity he would struggle with connecting with his white brothers because they would fail to understand his cultural background.

Maira also touched base in her article that students that were especially in college had a need of finding their ethnic identity. It seemed that as these kids grew up their need to know more about their culture became more pertinent. Jennifer, a girl Jaimie interviewed, also had this sense of ethnic identity. Jennifer went to a predominantly white high school but when she came to college she felt a need to get in touch with her Chinese Filipino heritage. She joined an Asian organization called PSA (Philippine Student Association) and she joined an Asian sorority to get in touch with her culture. She said, "Not only did I get to meet and get to know a bunch of awesome girls, I got to know a little bit more about Asian culture. I'm more aware of it. We have so many girls in our house that our different Asian backgrounds. It's not like we have talks about our cultures but hearing them talk in their own languages and seeing what they like to eat is all an eye opener for me." Another reading, *Made in the USA: Second-generation Korean American Campus Evangelicals* by Rebecca Kim, relates to the student, "Jake," whom Jessica interviewed. She states "Even with the first generation, they have their heritage and history...but for second-generation Koreans...we have to create on our own...figure out everything on our own." Jake is a first generation Korean American who came to America in middle school. According to what Kim said, Jake has his heritage and history and doesn't need to create or search for his identity. He chose to join a "main-stream, white" fraternity to experience new things because he already knows who he is. Even though most of the students in the Asian fraternity are second generation and Jake would relate to them more, he decided to go the other way. We found it ironic that the only first generation interviewee chose to join a "main-stream, white" fraternity, and most of the

second generation interviewees chose to join an Asian fraternity. Most people would think it would be the opposite, but we found that maybe the second generation students find it hard to relate to Caucasians because the ethnicity similarity they share with other Asian American students. The second generation needs to create their own identity and therefore relate more with other second generation students who are searching for the same thing. The four Asian students we interviewed also had one more similarity among them besides second generation. In their interviews, they said that they hung out with mostly white people in middle and high school. When they came to the University of Illinois, they had an epiphany and started to reconnect with their Asian heritage. They simply found it more comfortable to be with people they had common values with. It was the same in Nazli Kibria's "College and Notions of "Asian American": Second Generation Chinese and Korean American Negotiate Race and Identity". Bill, who was mentioned in Kibria's piece, was a Chinese student in a private university in California in the 1980's. He was a Chinese student that did not like the Asian cliques but eventually started hanging out with more Chinese students, as it was "only natural". We thought that John, the first generation Korean in the traditional white fraternity might realize his heritage just like the Asians in the Asian Fraternities did.

Based on our findings, we found from our numerous interviews that many minorities choose to join ethnic sororities/fraternities because they want to fit in. These ethnic sororities/fraternities provide a safe place in which they can find other people who have the same background. However, this is not the case for all minorities. It is only relevant to the people we interviewed. Hopefully, with more research we can make a better generalization of why these minorities choose to join the type of sororities/fraternities that they do.

**Research Proposal:** Question: Why do ethnic minorities choose to join cultural fraternities/sororities as opposed to the traditional fraternities/sororities or vice versa.

Plan

1. Interview many Asian sororities/fraternities.
2. Attend a social event at their sorority/fraternity.
3. Look up scholarly journals on Asian sororities/fraternities.

After observing a fraternity event and conducting interviews with Asian fraternity and sorority members of the university of Illinois campus, we learned more about the Greek community. Throughout our findings we came to a conclusion that there were various reasons for why people chose to join ethnic sororities/fraternities. They all decided to join not because they were Asian but because they felt more comfortable around people of their race or their need to get in touch with their culture. Similar to Sunaina Maira's article, "Nostalgia", many of the South Asian Indians she interviewed had the same experience. A girl named Purnima said, "Now my best friends are all Indian because I think when you come to college... you just kind of bond with people that you have the most in common with... because you don't have to go that extra step you know. You already share this common background, common values, common rules, almost" (Maira 108). The person that Jeramie interviewed also felt that same way. In the interview 10012, the interviewee, stated that his reason for joining an Asian fraternity was not because he was Asian but because he was most comfortable with the people of his own race. It seems almost natural that people of the same race would gravitate towards each other because there is already a level of understanding. If 10012 were to join a white fraternity he would struggle with connecting with his white brothers because they would fail to understand his cultural background.

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According to what Kim said, Jake has his heritage and history and doesn’t need to create or search for his identity. He chose to join a “main-stream, white” fraternity to experience new things because he already knows who he is. Even though most of the students in the Asian fraternity are second generation and Jake would relate to them more, he decided to go the other way. We found it ironic that the only first generation interviewee chose to join a “main-stream, white” fraternity, and most of the second generation interviewees chose to join an Asian fraternity. Most people would think it would be the opposite, but we found that maybe the second generation students find it hard to relate to Caucasians because the ethnicity similarity they share with other Asian American students. The second generation needs to create their own identity and therefore relate more with other second generation students who are searching for the same thing.

The four Asian students we interviewed also had one more similarity among them besides second generation. In their interviews, they said that they hung out with mostly white people in middle and high school. When they came to the University of Illinois, they had an epiphany and started to reconnect with their Asian heritage. They simply found it more comfortable to be with people they had common values with. It was the same in Nazli Kibria’s “College and Notions of “Asian American”: Second Generation Chinese and Korean American Negotiate Race and Identity”. Bill, who was mentioned in Kibria’s piece, was a Chinese

student in a private university in California in the 1980's. He was a Chinese student that did not like the Asian cliques but eventually started hanging out with more Chinese students, as it was "only natural". We thought that John, the first generation Korean in the traditional white fraternity might realize his heritage just like the Asians in the Asian Fraternities did.

Based on our findings, we found from our numerous interviews that many minorities choose to join ethnic sororities/fraternities because they want to fit in. These ethnic sororities/fraternities provide a safe place in which they can find other people who have the same background. However, this is not the case for all minorities. It is only relevant to the people we interviewed. Hopefully, with more research we can make a better generalization of why these minorities choose to join the type of sororities/fraternities that they do.

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**Recommendations:** After conducting our research project there are some recommendations that we came to find that will be useful to the University of Illinois to further conduct this research. In order to abstract more information we think that the university should interview the new ethnic members in fraternities/ sororities to gather more data on why they chose the fraternity they are in. Also the University should get numbers of the ethnic students in fraternities and sororities, by doing this the university will give people

access to statistic that isn't available at the moment. By doing this the university will shine light on a way of life that isn't noticed at the moment.