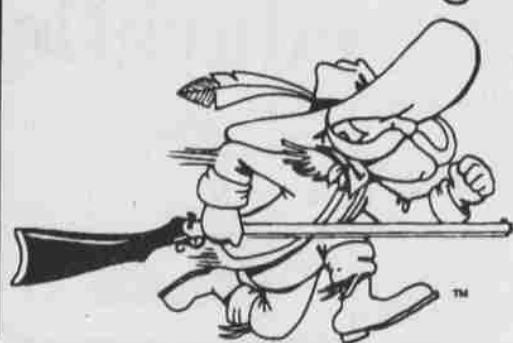


PERSPECTIVE

REBEL
YELL

"Greetings
from the Sap"
It's Greek
Week!

Greek Life: a rush for students



From The Sap

JAY SAPOVITS

Getting laid, drinking beer, and stealing tests.

That's what fraternities are all about, right?

Not according to Rob Fitzpatrick, president of the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity at UNLV.

"The fraternity is about having a family of brothers," Fitzpatrick said.

And he would know.

The Omaha, Neb. native didn't know many people

when he came to UNLV. He credits the Teke's with helping him to adjust to Las Vegas.

"When I came here my freshman year I didn't know a lot of people," he said. "This was a good way to meet a lot of people, and all of a sudden you have 50 guys who are part of your family."

But the Teke's aren't the only fraternity on the UNLV campus. In fact, there are 10 active fraternities this year. They are: Alpha Tau Omega, Delta Sigma Phi, Beta Theta Pi, Kappa Sigma, Lambda Chi Alpha, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Sigma Chi, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Phi Delta Theta, and Tau Kappa Epsilon.

Over the past few years on campus a heated rivalry has developed between the Teke's and Kappa Sig's. Fitzpatrick said that the

competition has been in the classroom and on the athletic field.

"We've been one-two in everything we've done," he said.

The Teke's have the highest grade-point average of all fraternities. The Kappa Sig's, after last semester, are .04 behind them.

The Kappa Sig's won the Rebel Cup (a trophy for the most points in inter-fraternity athletic competition), and the Teke's finished a narrow 20 points behind.

The two fraternities never forget who their famous members are. The Kappa Sig's boasts three in the hierarchy at UNLV. Jim Weaver, athletic director, Rollie Massimino, head basketball coach and Robert Maxson, university president, are all Kappa Sig's.

As for the Teke's, they claim a pair of two-time Super Bowl MVP's. Phil Simms and Terry Bradshaw are both alumni. Famous actor Ronald Reagan was also a Teke.

I think the latter is more impressive.

An anonymous Teke told me he wouldn't hesitate in giving either athlete the secret handshake before interviewing them.

Yes, secret handshakes may sound childish, but the bond fraternities form isn't.

Fraternities can help to make friends during school, and assist in getting a job after graduation.

I know I made a mistake as a freshman. No one told me what I'm telling you. All fraternities aren't about brainwashing their new members as I once thought.

Fitzpatrick says that the Teke's pride themselves in letting every new pledge be himself.

"Everyone is a regular person," he said. "We don't try to change or stereotype anybody."

I had a first hand look at the truthfulness of this comment.

From the Tonopah Hall dormitory's first floor in 1989-90, where I lived, five guys pledged Teke.

I don't think they've been brainwashed or changed.

But after growing up and learning what fraternities are all about I know I should have joined.

Jay Sapovits is the Perspective Editor of the Rebel Yell. His column appears every issue.

Welfare of poor overshadows 'wealthfare' of rich

BY MARYANNE DAWICKI
STAFF COLUMNIST



During the 1980's the incomes of the richest one percent of Americans grew by more than 87 percent, while the incomes of the poorest households dropped by more than five percent. The guiding ideology during those years called for a channeling of money from the middle to the wealthy upper class.

Accusing dissenters of envying the rich, Republicans told those within the middle and lower classes to bite the bullet. The argument was that any advantages diverted to the rich would benefit the entire country.

Tax reforms enacted during the Reagan years resulted in a tax structure that granted more favors to the wealthy. Just a few examples include a mortgage-tax deduction that

applies to second and third homes, tax-exempt bonds filtered through tax-exempt foundations, low-interest loans that never get paid back, and subsidized oil and mineral exploration projects.

In addition, the federal government's history of bailing out failed corporations amounts to another form of welfare. Such a system of deductions, entitlements, and subsidies combines to make up an elaborate welfare for the wealthy.

Using richly rewarded tax accountants and financial advisors, the wealthy are able to find legitimate, and not so legitimate, ways to avoid paying their fair share. Recently, it was reported by the *Associated Press* that 779 couples and individuals who earned more than \$200,000 in 1990 paid no federal income tax. Together, their combined income amounted to \$340 million, an average of \$436,000 apiece.

We should not be surprised; the American tax sys-

tem is characterized by various deductions and loopholes that work to the advantage of the rich.

Despite the manipulation that goes on among the upper class, the poor are constantly under attack with charges of welfare fraud. The truth is, the poor often forego many of the entitlements that are available to them. At least two million eligible low-income families in 1992 didn't claim a special tax credit worth up to \$2,020 a year.

In addition, millions of eligible Americans don't receive food stamps, either because they don't know how to go about getting them, or they don't know they are eligible to receive them.

While the wealthy are quick to claim every obtainable advantage, the poor struggle merely to get by, unaware of much of the assistance that is available to them. Despite this reality, welfare recipients are continually portrayed as greedy.

The gains of the rich are

rarely seen as ill-gotten. Instead, wealth is automatically linked to hard work. In contrast, poor welfare recipients are commonly characterized as lazy, despite the fact that most individuals who are on the welfare roles are seeking temporary assistance while they search for a job that pays more than minimum wage.

In the United States, hard work is not enough. The ever-increasing number of individuals occupying the ranks of the working poor attests to this fact. Individuals are forced to choose between going to work for \$4.50 an hour, or accepting a welfare check that offers a little bit more. In order to maintain a minimum level of existence, some are forced to do both; working off the books so they may continue to receive state assistance along with a paycheck.

We continually hear how welfare recipients are a drain on the system, but no one addresses the issue of "wealthfare." It seems hypocritical to be so concerned

about abuses within a welfare system, while ignoring the generous system set up for the rich. The fact is, welfare payments to the poor are no more burdensome than payments to the rich, and they are much more justified.

The poor represent an easy target when concerns over higher taxes, deficit reduction, and health care generate discussion on welfare reform. While expose after expose continues to condemn the poor for manipulating and scheming, little is said about the welfare system that serves to maintain the rich and their advantages.

For the poor, being on welfare means struggling to get by. It is time to stop justifying a double-standard welfare system wherein the wealthy always benefit, and the poor are kept down.

Marianne Dawicki is a political science major and Rebel Yell columnist. Her column appears every Tuesday.