

Two greeks who dropped out claim qualifications make little difference

By **ALECIA SHERARD**
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Jane Geiger, a sophomore majoring in marketing, came to the University with hopes of getting involved in campus activities. She thought her lengthy list of high school credentials had prepared her well.

But Geiger, who pledged a sorority and then dropped out, has discovered that getting involved at the University isn't always easy.

Geiger blames greek politics.

SHE SAID she wasn't picked for organizations like Freshman Forum and Crimson Girls because the selection process leans more on affiliations than qualifications.

"My interview for the Student Recruitment Team lasted two minutes . . . I did not get it," said Geiger, an attractive and outgoing student who has since become involved in intramural sports and Campus Life.

And she said the self-perpetuating nature of key organizations on campus makes it difficult for a non-greek outsider to get to the inside.

University administrators and students like Geiger blame the selection process on the Machine, a secret group of select fraternities and sororities.

THE MACHINE, or Theta Nu Epsilon, has existed at the University for more than 80 years and has been thought to control the SGA. But the lever of the Machine has also been pulled to cover campus honoraries from Freshman Forum and Mortar Board to Omicron Delta Kappa and the Anderson Society.

For example, of Freshman Forum's 44 members, 28 are greek.

University Vice President of Student Affairs John Baier said he is aware of the Machine's power in campus honoraries and said the Machine is unfair, not because of its existence, but because of its manipulation of rules to perpetuate power.

"A vast majority of students in fraternities and sororities could care less about the Machine," Baier said. "And a vast majority of students on this campus could care less about the SGA."

"BUT CAREER development and graduate studies are why I have to step in and try to ensure fair selection procedures. If we have a closed selection process, then we should look at other activities to identify other worthy student leaders."

Baier said he plans to review the selection of campus honor societies and may change the selection process.

Scott Sims, a sophomore in C&BA who pledged a

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fraternity the summer before his first year, remained greek a little longer than Geiger.

"I had a big resume from high school, and I wanted to carry it over to college," Sims said. "I heard you had to be greek, so I pledged a fraternity."

"I BREEZED through Freshman Forum, was on the Athletic Ticket and Seating Commission, the Student Recruitment Team — everything I went for was easy."

But Sims had to depledge his fraternity and suddenly "all positions were closed."

"Now I wonder if it was me or them," Sims said. "Before, it was so easy. Now all doors are shut."

A member of both Mortar Board and Omicron Delta Kappa, who asked not to be identified, said the selection process "begins when people are freshman."

"There are a certain number of things you get involved in . . . Freshman Forum, Crimson Girls and Capstone Men, SGA senate," the source said. "Certain positions people hold are almost prerequisites to be considered."

"THOSE POSITIONS are usually held by greeks."

Mortar Board President Susan Doss said she thought greek affiliation was not stressed in selecting Mortar Board members.

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