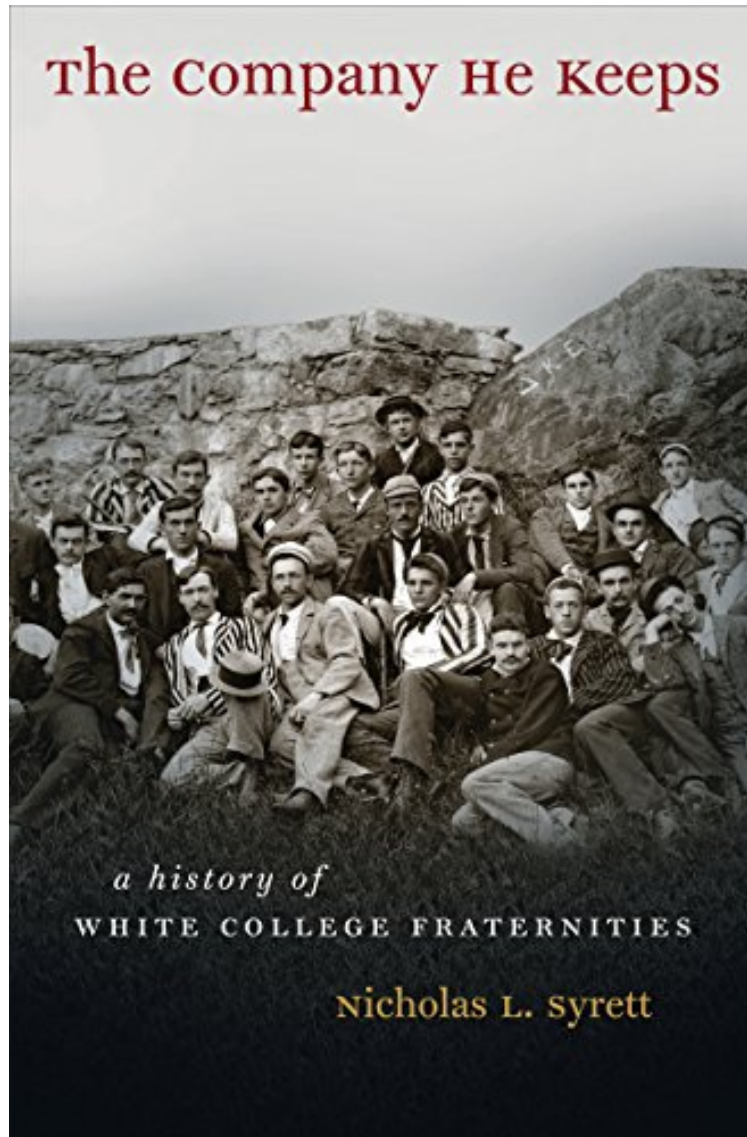


The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities (Gender and American Culture)

Nicholas L. Syrett

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Nicholas L. Syrett : The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities (Gender and American Culture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities (Gender and American Culture):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy fischerExcellent read and documentry of Greek

system7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Enlightening Treatment of a Little-Known HistoryBy P. KranzThe author has done a superb job of dealing with the little-known history of American fraternities, especially the less-edifying aspects of that history. The book is exceedingly well-researched and well-written. Especially interesting is the author's description of the all-white Protestant fraternity and the nature of the masculinity it promoted.8 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Excellent scholarshipBy Patrick Dilley, Ph.D.Great historical and cultural analysis. I assign this book in my Gender in Higher Education course, and use it as a supplementary reading in my Masculinity in the United States course.

Tracing the full history of traditionally white college fraternities in America from their days in antebellum all-male schools to the sprawling modern-day college campus, Nicholas Syrett reveals how fraternity brothers have defined masculinity over the course of their 180-year history. Based on extensive research at twelve different schools and analyzing at least twenty national fraternities, *The Company He Keeps* explores many factors--such as class, religiosity, race, sexuality, athleticism, intelligence, and recklessness--that have contributed to particular versions of fraternal masculinity at different times. Syrett demonstrates the ways that fraternity brothers' masculinity has had consequences for other students on campus as well, emphasizing the exclusion of different groups of classmates and the sexual exploitation of female college students.

Six crisp, deeply researched chapters trace changes from the ideals of brotherhood and genteel manliness that gave birth to fraternities to those of masculinity linked to athleticism, sexual prowess, and the like that appeared by 2000. . . . Highly recommended.--ChoiceVibrantly written. . . . To a remarkable degree, Syrett connects developments within both American society generally and American higher education specifically to explain the behavior of white fraternity men. . . . One of the best histories of college student life in recent years.--History of Education QuarterlyCareful, convincing, and well grounded in many primary sources. . . . Highly readable.--History News NetworkSyrett's portrayal of how fraternities have evolved before World War II is as sound and vivid an evocation of college student life as we have. *The Company He Keeps* is careful, convincing, and well grounded in primary sources.--History News NetworkA welcome addition to gender history and the history of education. . . . Masculinity specialists, historians of the nineteenth century, and historians of education will value Syrett's extensive research, impressive contextualization, and convincing argument that fraternities participated in the changing ideals of manhood.--Journal of American History[An] engaging, readable, and ultimately disturbing history of white college fraternities.--Journal of Southern HistoryThe first [history of white fraternities in America] of its kind.--Greeley TribuneThere is a lot to learn from its pages; what is so rewarding about the text is its speculations about the advance--and possibly the decline--of American culture that it provokes. The more deeply Syrett probes, the more one wonders: what is our world coming to?--American Historical Provides the first historical study that charts the growth of fraternities in the United States. He uses this dazzling assortment of evidence in order to evaluate how white men's ideas and enactment of, what he calls, 'fraternal masculinity,' changed over time. . . . Brilliantly articulates how this notion of masculinity changed and when it changed.--Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender HistoryStunning. . . one of the finest 'masculinity histories.' . . . This well written, carefully argued, and (in the conclusion) deftly polemical book is an excellent example of what modern historiography can achieve. It should be required reading for campus administrators, if not the parents of prospective fraternity members, and will in addition be of use to any American Studies scholar interested in gender, masculinity studies, social history, institutional history, literary and cultural studies.--American StudiesBy researching fraternities found throughout the country and over two centuries, Syrett is able to make a comprehensive and important contribution to the history of sexuality, social life, and gender on college campuses. . . . He has helped to open the door for scholars to research fraternities and parts of extracurricular life as worthy historical topics.--H-EducationWhat makes this work stand out among studies of fraternity culture is the evolving definition of masculinity that serves as the conceptual lens for this book. . . . This is a fascinating perspective and offers college educators an insight into how the fraternity men on our campuses today may see themselves.--Journal of College Student Development *The Company He Keeps* is a study about broad themes and trends over time in American culture, seen through the lens of fraternity life and through the desires and drives of a particular (important) segment of the American population. I became engrossed in its pages and found myself both thinking and talking about Syrett's arguments. His attention to social anxiety, to competition, to the values of capitalism and business, and to masculinity is particularly intriguing. A thoroughly engaging book.--Diana Turk, author of *Bound by a Mighty Vow: Sisterhood and Women's Fraternities, 1870-1920* Long shrouded in baroque mystery, the collegiate fraternity has never before been the subject of such a clear, sensible, and grounded historical study. Nicholas Syrett's meticulous research draws back the curtain on these bastions of white male privilege, without solely celebrating their camaraderie nor condemning the cold cruelties on which it has historically rested.--Michael Kimmel, author of *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* This is a well-researched and often provocative look at the changing role that fraternities have played on American campuses during two centuries of college life.--Paula Fass, author of *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s*From the Inside FlapTracing the history of

white college fraternities in America from their days in antebellum all-male schools to modern-day college campus, Syrett reveals how fraternity brothers have defined masculinity over the course of their 180-year history. Based on extensive research at 12 different schools and analyzing 20 national fraternities, this book explores many factors--such as class, religiosity, race, sexuality, athleticism, intelligence, and recklessness--that have contributed to versions of fraternal masculinity at different times.