

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Examining the Divine Nine

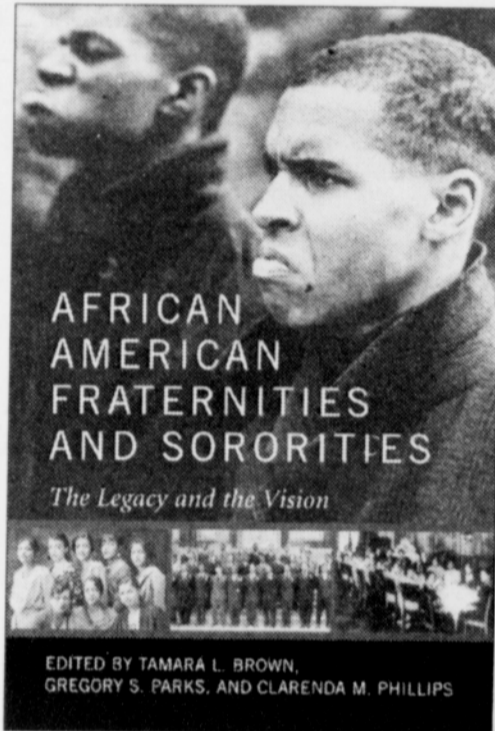
The history of black fraternities

At the turn of the 20th century, black Greek-letter organizations rose out of a need for mutual support and understanding in the African American community.

Standing in a unique position to mobilize college students, the organizations have served as a proving ground for black leaders over the course of their history, with members including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Toni Morrison, Dr. Cornel West, Congresswoman Julia Carson, and former Secretary of Education Rod Paige.

Serving more than just a social function, members are actively involved in civic action, community service, and philanthropy. However, while these historical Greek organizations make many positive contributions to their communities, these roles are generally overlooked in favor of stereotypes and darker practices, such as hazing.

In African American Fraternities and Sororities: The Legacy and the Vision, editors Tamara L. Brown, Gregory S. Parks, and Clarendia M. Phillips have compiled essays on topics ranging from the historical roots of black fraternities and sororities to the contemporary hazing

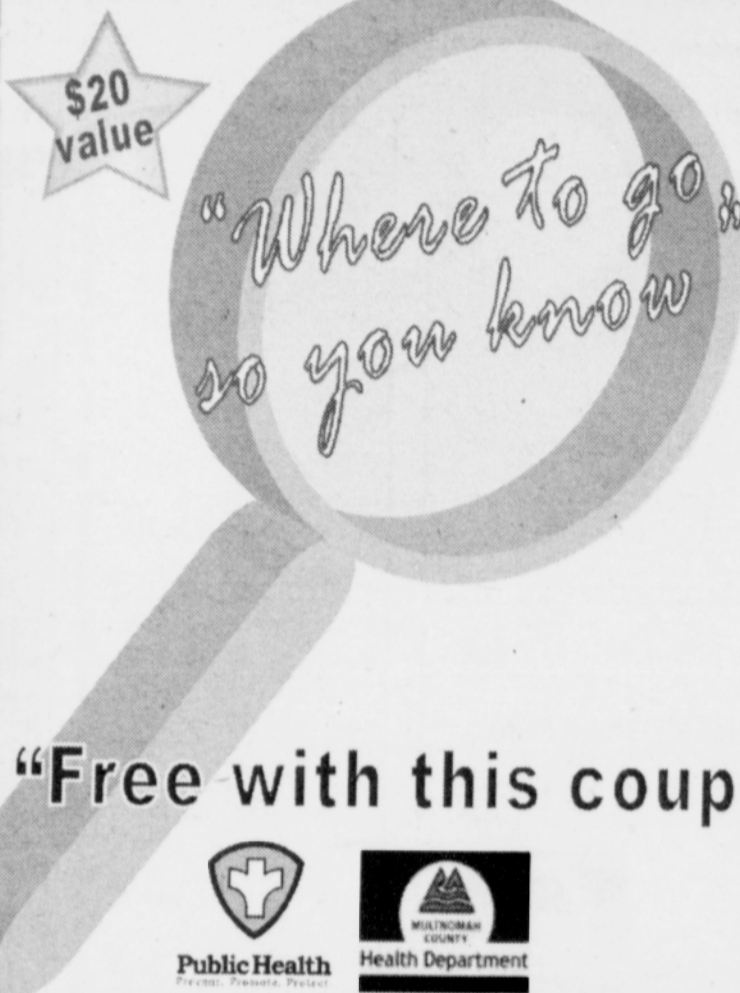


crisis within the organizations, from new policy changes to the lasting influence of stepping in the community.

Contributors discuss the significant role of the nine fraternities and sororities of the National Pan-Hellenic Council, a collaborative organization of African American, international Greek lettered groups.

African American Fraternities and Sororities not only provides a history of these often overlooked organizations and their impact on America, but it serves as an unbiased testament to the remarkable intellect, dignity, commitment, and courage against racial injustice.

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