

KIND

M A G A Z I N E

Sororities:

SCARY OR
SUPPORTIVE?

BRIGITTE'S STORY

AMY'S STORY

A Fresh Outlook

WHAT PEOPLE COULDN'T
SAY TO OUR FACES, THEY
SAID WITH THEIR BALLOTS.

**TAKE A STAND
NOT A SEAT**

GOD SEE NO COLOR.

**THESE
ARE
YOUR
STORIES**

KIND MAGAZINE vol. 3



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SPECIAL THANKS TO
NIRIMI PHOTOGRAPHY
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KIND MAGAZINE is an online publication dedicated to the telling of YOUR stories. Our hope is that by sharing a variety of females' experiences as the "victims" and the "aggressors", we may gain a better understanding of why females have decided to target each other, rather than support each other. Hopefully by submitting your own story and by reading the experiences of others, you will realize that this is a universal issue and that we ALL go through these experiences at some point. Kind Magazine is not designed to point fingers or make accusations that will fuel the cycle we are trying to break, rather, Kind Magazine is an opportunity to recall your experiences and how they have affected you personally. We sincerely hope that this magazine brings awareness, clarity, and hope to millions of females across the nation. Enjoy!



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SORORITIES: SCARY OR SUPPORTIVE

"THE SORORITY I JOINED ALWAYS STRESSED WHY SORORITIES WERE CREATED AND HOW THEY VALUED MUTUAL RESPECT OVER TRYING TO BE BEST FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE."

Like many other young women beginning college, I was weary of sororities and the things associated with them. All too often the media portrays sororities as breeding grounds for competition and cattiness among females, which tend not to improve the quality of life for their members. Additionally, as a result of my own middle school experiences, I was apprehensive of big groups of girls and tended to have just a few close friends that I could depend on.

As soon as I got to college, my view on sororities gradually began to change. In the dorms, all of the girls on my floor who I'd become friends with joined sororities, and they were incredibly kind girls. Also, almost all of my close friends from high school went Greek during their first year of college. During the summer after my freshman year, I decided I would go through the recruitment process in the fall. Because neither of my parents were Greeks, they were suspicious of the process and worried about hazing and other stereotypes linked to Greek life. However, I knew it could be a great opportunity for me to find a close-knit group of friends, and if didn't work out, I could choose not to remain part of the Chapter.

The sorority I joined always stressed why sororities were created and how they valued mutual respect over trying to

be best friends with everyone. Being one of the largest sororities at UC Berkeley, inevitably it was incredibly diverse. To some, that might seem like a challenge to chapter unity. I believe that it had the opposite effect; because we were all so different there was no unrealistic expectation of being best friends with everyone, but there was the reasonable expectation of mutual respect, kindness and common courtesy.

I joined a sorority hoping to find friends; I never thought I would leave with a family. I can say with confidence that I have the amazing support system I do because I joined a sorority. Living in a house with over sixty women, some of them being my very best friends, is an experience I will never forget or cease to value. With very little help from advisors, we ran our entire house, balanced our budget, recruited members and planned social events. To me, that was a testament to the strength and ability of women to accomplish amazing things when we work together. Furthermore, we were like a family in that we took care of each other. If someone was having a hard time, everyone would make a special effort to be nice. When girls were sick, we'd bring soup or medicine to their rooms. We would recognize one another at meetings for doing really well in school or talking about an exciting event in someone's personal life. My sorority gave me a place at school where I truly felt at home being both accepted and appreciated.

Being in a sorority has brought out the best in me as well as my friends. You're forced to live with people that otherwise you wouldn't choose to but in the end it makes you a better person. You have to learn to accept and cooperate with these people in order to survive, skills I know will serve me very well in life. It teaches you to work with people you may not necessarily want to work with, something I know I'll have to face at probably every job I'll ever have.

Most importantly, through my relationships with my sisters, I learned so much about unconditional love among

friends. My second semester in the sorority was when things really began to fall into place. Five girls from my pledge class all moved into one big room in the house, which quickly became our hangout spot. The five that lived in the "Quint" plus three others soon formed "The McGee Family," with each of us getting our own nickname representing something unique or funny about us. Although we were closest with each other, we remained friends with the other women in the house. Although there were in different groups within the sorority, there was never animosity or competition between groups; rather, just an acceptance that we were all very different and as a result couldn't be best friends. There were many people in the house I wouldn't choose to hang out with every day but enjoyed having classes and eating dinner with them.

I am grateful to say that I proved my own preconceived notions wrong about sororities;

my experience was nothing like what I had imagined it to be like before joining. Even my family, who at first was skeptical of my decision, has openly admitted that they were wrong after having seen how much happiness my

sorority has brought to my life. Learning that it is possible for an individual to thrive among a large group of females is an invaluable lesson, as it has restored my faith in the ability of females to band together in order to rise up.

It would be all too easy for females to blame patriarchal society for our shortfalls; however, before we do so I think it is important that we look at ourselves and ensure that we've not been keeping our own selves down by competing amongst ourselves unnecessarily. I think one of the most important lessons I learned during my years in a sorority was that of the necessity for kindness, mutual respect and common courtesy. Those three simple things will allow you to have a positive impact on not just the lives of all those who surround you, but most importantly in your own life.

Brigitte's Story

"The first day of my junior year, I happened to wear Levi 501 straight-leg jeans and a sweater to my new school."

To set the context, my freshman, sophomore and senior years were at the same AAA high school. These three years were a fantastic experience. I was extremely active in extracurricular activities, including being a baton-twirler with the marching band and three years of high school theatre and speech competitions. My junior year was spent at a AAA high school out of state. I was sixteen when we moved and I didn't know a soul in that state other than my little sister and parents.

The first day of my junior year, I happened to wear Levi 501 straight-leg jeans and a sweater to my new school. The kids who'd grown up together lined the school hallways, upstairs and down, and made fun of the new students. They pointed and laughed at my jeans, telling me I must've time-traveled from the 50's or come from another planet. No one spoke kindly to me. At lunch, I sat down at a table

and all the girls got up and moved to another table. By the end of the day, I was still teased as I walked through the halls and no one spoke to me other than to tell me my jeans were stupid looking.

That afternoon, I called around and finally found a store that sold Levi 501 straight-leg jeans. I drove 45 minutes to the 'big city', and bought all five pairs that store carried in my size. I decided I would wear nothing but these jeans. I didn't want mean people 'to win' or feel more powerful.

The second day of school, they were even more cruel. They asked if I was deaf or just stupid for wearing those jeans again. When they realized a few days later I wasn't going to conform, they told me I'd never have a friend, I should move back to the backwards place I came from. Thanks to the self-confidence I'd built during my previous high school's theatre activities, I continued to smile and say "hi" to everyone I passed, vowing not to emulate their rude behavior.

After about two weeks of being ostracized daily, I was sitting alone at a lunch table when a student sat next to me with her lunch tray. She grinned and said, "You know, you're not supposed to wear those jeans". I said, "Yeah, I know." She told me her name was Barb, and she'd moved here from Colorado last year. They'd hounded her for wearing straight-leg jeans and,

since she was just a sophomore, she gave in. Barb said, "Let's both wear them every day and maybe they'll get used to it. Maybe other new kids will join us." Thus began a great friendship. Barb and I not only wore our straight-leg jeans daily, but we organized the first "50s" week this school had ever had, and a majority of students participated. When she ran for senior class vice president at the end of the year, I was her campaign manager. We were told 'outsiders' had no chance, and yet Barb won by a landslide.

What people couldn't say to our faces, they said with their ballots.

What no one could tell me, they wrote in my yearbook. Students I didn't even know were lining up at the end of the year to sign my book. It's full of sentiments like "I'm sorry I was so mean to you, I wanted to fit in with the others and had to do what they did", and "thanks for not giving in", and "you encouraged me to be a little different, too". They couldn't say it to my face, but they wrote it on the last day of school.

Our school yearbook had a memoriam page for the three students who committed suicide that year. Three separate deaths, all linked by the depression of not fitting in, not being with the 'in crowd'. If I'd moved to that school a few years earlier, I most likely would have crumbled, too. If I'd grown up there, would I have been like them? Luckily, this happened after my freshman and sophomore years of good high school experiences, where kindness and empathy were more common.

Brigitte Bavousett

Elizabeth's Poem

*I don't get why I've been put here I just don't understand.
But I've promised to endure, dear; to keep clean my hands.
No blood shall I shed nor drinks shall I pour.
No bad thoughts in my head, or reasons to make you mourn.
I intend to keep my word till the day I leave this earth.
Not by my hand, but Mother Nature's.
The road I walk is tough with many ways to trip.
One is never enough, don't ever let me R.I.P.
I hold you tight and say that I'll never let you move.
Just hold me right and keep in sight, and please endure too.*



Growing up I was raised around animals, they taught me a thing called kindness, and because of them I didn't know what 'enemies' were. I used to watch my two friends fight over who could have me as their "best friend" in nursery school. I remember telling them one day, "Well, why don't we all be best friends?" I would always see other kids getting jealous or fighting, but I was never a target of that treatment until I reached high school. I had gone to the same school for the past 9 years, from kindergarten all the way till 8th grade. In reality, my high school was also the same, but the campuses had been moved farther away. The life at the old campus was simple, easy-going and still filled with old friends that I had known all my life. It seemed the same kind of lifestyle didn't exist at the other campus.

The world was alien to me, everyone seemed to be in cliques, all the girls were concerned about were which boys noticed them. I suppose it helped that I had shed my baby fat as I entered high school or else I would have been teased about something else. However, I think it was me being the 'new girl' to these classmates of mine that set me out as their target. It was partially my fault, falling into the craziness of gossip and boys. I started to learn how to flirt and began dating. I liked a number of boys, but my self-esteem dwindled because I couldn't

seem to gain the interest of the boys I liked. Nevertheless, I felt pressured into a relationship by everyone else. He was the 'popular guy', but I didn't like him. It was my own mistake to let him go after me and to say yes when he asked me to be his girlfriend.

The relationship didn't last long, it took about 4 months before I broke up with him over an email while I was vacationing in Hawaii. I realized I couldn't hold the façade anymore. I emailed a good 'friend', one of the girls in our group, and told her that I had broken up with him. It was summer, and I wouldn't be back in school till about 2 months later. Summer in Hawaii was great. School wasn't.

I came back to find out that everyone at school hated me. It hurt me a lot, and I remember people giving me bad stares and actually telling me straight to my face what a horrible person I was. It was all because I had broken up with this guy, and because this 'friend' of mine proceeded to tell everyone a lie. She was joined by another girl, and another - all of whom spread lies, twisted words, or different meanings behind whatever I had said to them. The entire school was against me, and I was alone.

I remember crying a lot that year, and going back to riding my horse and seeking refuge there. I could ride alone and it was the one place where I didn't have to think about school. I remem-

ber I would race off campus and hop into my car as fast as I could, being so thankful I didn't take the bus because I couldn't stand the way people looked at me and treated me.

However, it was during that time too that I realized who my real friends were. The kids who had grown up with me at the old campus came to my rescue. My very best friend to this day stood up for me; she ate lunch with me when no one would. My other best friends moved themselves away from the 'popular' table we once sat at, and there were the five of us that found a new place outside the bagel shop. I realized who my true friends were, and when I saw a girl being bullied or falling victim to gossip, we would take her into that small table of ours, until it started to grow. We kept adopting all the people who didn't have a spot at the 'popular' table anymore, or who never did in the first place. I think it was a blessing to have those people ostracize me in such a way that made me the better person I am today.

I suppose looking back, people would think I finally learned what 'enemies' were, but I still find myself being kind to them.

I'm in no means close to any of them, but they try to contact me to this day, try to talk to me, those same girls who began all the rumors and hurt me. I don't feel any hate for them, just pity and sincere hope that they've changed.



While I was watching "Count down with Keith Olbermann" which is a news program that I watch religiously, he started a segment of "World's best persons" and brought attention to a case that happened at Keswick High School which is in Canada. A 15-year old Asian boy had been taunted and bullied by a fellow classmate for the entire year due to his Asian background, according to his fellow classmates. The boy – who carries a black belt in martial arts – defended himself following a punch to

the mouth and wound up breaking the bullies nose. As a result, the Asian boy was placed under arrest (he had to appear in youth court May 13th) which caused 300 of his classmates to protest Racism in front of their high school. The bully received suspension from school. The protesters walked out of class to have this protest, which shows support for him.

The exact same thing happened to me my Freshman year in high school. I attended High School in New York and this boy called me a nigger and pushed me where I then proceeded to throw him to the ground. I stomped on him and he got back up, punched me and broke my nose. My mother demanded he be arrested. Instead, we both were arrested. The police said that the fact that I was defending myself meant nothing and I had no evidence that

he had hit me (My nose was broken, my eyes swollen halfway shut and I had blood all over my white t-shirt – could you need more evidence?). I was arrested. It was the worse day of my life and it truly changed the way I looked at people forever.

Then my sister experienced this her junior year in high school when she attended High School in VT. She was called a nigger too except this time it was written all over the bathroom walls and her car tires were slashed. She defended herself too and wound up in court. When this happened, no one but I stood up against it at the High School. I held protest after protest and passed out 250 flyers around school demanding the student body help find out who was responsible. Not only was I discouraged by the Principal but the school's faculty asked me to stop posting flyers and just "deal" with the fact that what had happened, had happened. The student body felt the same way and when the flyers did not help I began designing t-shirts that illustrated how I felt. The picture below is like one of the t-shirts that I designed it states the following, "God sees no color." Christina Aguilera wore it in 2003.

I applaud the students of Keswick High School. It's a shame that a young man got arrested for defending himself from bodily harm. No one gets the mental harm racism and bigotry

causes too and what's even more of a shame is that young 13, 15, 18 year olds have to be the ones who stand up towards this type of behavior. Adults should be the examples and young students should follow.

My sister and I spent the next year in turmoil. The pressure, humiliation and lack of support resulted in both of our grades to suffer. I am now in college and I attend a college with a diverse student body. However, I still hear the word "nigger" constantly. For my peers it's simply slang. I always express how I feel regarding the word but most of these students come from urban areas or see it on TV and/or hear it in music and don't realize the absolutely devastating impact that word has. I hope to influence others not to use any type of racial slur because it can be incredibly damaging.



I think this campaign is excellent and I encourage it. We are all young adults and we sometime forget our morals but things like Kind Magazine lends us tools to remain friendly, kind and decent to one another. Thank you so much for what you are doing.

Kaitlyn Chadbourne



Growing up, I was always the social butterfly. I had my group of friends, yes, but I often branched off and tried to make as many friends from other groups as I could. I loved meeting new people and I loved forming friendships. Every new friend was a whole new world for me and I cherished every inside joke and the laughter that we shared together. Friends always gave me reassurance that I was a pleasant person to be around which made me feel good about myself.

I had one best friend in particular. She was like my sister. I was friends with her starting in the 3rd grade. I will refer to her as "K". K and I grew up together as though we were sisters and shared many memories together. We might of made new friends but we were sure of one thing, we

would never let go of each other. Her mother played a large role in my life. She was like another mother to me. Every new inside joke with us was a new accomplishment. We used to list out every new inside joke we had and I remember the day we got over 100 jokes. . .it was so exciting. We'd talk on the phone and she would say, "What are you looking at?" and I said, "A beanie. What about you?" And then she said, "I'm looking at a fire detector! New inside joke! Beanie detector!!" A lot of the time we would laugh about things that never made sense but to us, it was

the funniest thing in the whole world. We shared the same exact sense of humor.

We went through elementary school and onto middle school where we hit our pre-teens years. This is where we discovered a whole new group of girls. This is where K and I grew out of our silly little girl stage and into our make-up and boys stage. Many people at our school viewed our group as the "popular girls". I never planned to have this title, but I decided to go along with it and have some fun with it. A lot of the girls in the group would make fun of K's laugh. I constantly stuck up for her. What I noticed about my new group of friends was that we were constantly placing attacks on one another. There was an instance where one of the girls was called "Dr. Dre." We gave her that name just so we could talk badly about the girl while she was still around. We would say things like "God I hate Dr. Dre! She thinks she is so hot and its obviously not true!!" One of the girls in the group was very flat cheasted and we would comment on how "embarrassing" that was. One of the memories that has stuck with me was the day one of the girls (who I will refer to as "L") told me about a friend that she had since elementary school and that "we needed to go talk to her". When L and I found her friend,

L said to her, "You try and hang out with us to be cool but guess what,

you'll never be cool!!" and L grabbed my arm and stormed away from her "friend." I remember looking back at this girls face and seeing how crushed and sad she was and I didn't understand why this had to happen to her. K and I did our own thing later on in middle school and didn't stick around these girls.

We then moved onto high school. This is where I found my first love. Discovering love was like living in a dream and I became easily addicted to it. L and I reconnected freshman year and she was around a lot when I was in my relationship with my new love. I formed a new friendship with a girl who I will refer to as "S". She hung out with L and I and S soon found her boyfriend who was a friend of my boyfriend's. K was still very close to me but her parents didn't let her come out with us at much which was upsetting to me. When my boyfriend and I broke up, I was crushed. I was crushed because we were supposed to get back together but it never worked out. L and S, two girls who I called my best friends, did not support me through this time. L had a poem posted on her wall and when I asked her who wrote it, she told me my ex-boyfriend wrote it. I had no idea why she had my ex-boyfriend's poetry on her wall. S was calling up my ex-boyfriend to smoke weed with him behind my back and remained friends with him. I couldn't understand why my friends were doing this to me. It was almost like my ex-boyfriend was more important to them than I was.

I felt unimportant to my own friends

and felt really disrespected. I felt like nobody really cared about me and I sunk into a depression. L always felt that she was in competition with her valedictorian brother and so grades became much more important than our friendship. If I ever needed to talk to her about something, it was

always put on pause. S noticed that I wasn't in the party mode as much anymore so she sought new friends. K had tried to be there for me but she was caught up in her own life dilemmas. I tried to control my sadness and disbelief that I had lost my boyfriend and was now losing my closest friends. I found out my dad was diagnosed with MS during this time also, which was something that was difficult to cope with. I felt like so many things were going wrong at once and I felt my heart crumble. Feeling neglected could have quite possibly been the most painful feeling to ever felt, in my experience. My heart felt empty and I twas a person that fueled my life off of the love I received from people around me.

What broke my heart the most was having K act as though I didn't matter when she had been like a sister to me. Soon I heard a rumor that I was "schizophrenic" which was passed around by my so-called "friends". A painful memory of mine was the day that K and L became friends. We were all sitting at the table together and L said to me "Amy, you are not going to go anywhere in life!" I didn't think that K, who had been there for me my entire life, would let her get away with saying that but I looked over to her and she just giggled to herself. Later that day L walked up to me with a huge smile on her face and said, "Amy you know I was kidding!" I stopped dead in my tracks and looked her straight in the eyes and said, "Do not EVER talk to me again!" That was the end of our friendship. Losing K to L was a very painful experience because I never in a million years thought we would stop being friends. I made many attempts to try and see the old friend I knew and loved but after a while it became useless.

This caused my depression to become worse because K was like family to me. Everything in my life felt as though it was falling apart. I remember the feeling of my all time low. I felt as though I didn't want to live anymore. I ran into my mom's bedroom and took 10 Tylenols and tried to sleep. I rose up before I fell asleep and knew what I was

doing was ridiculous. I ran and told my parents and they immediately took me to the hospital where the fluids were drained from blood. With therapy and time, I was able to get back on my 2 feet again. I broke out of my funk and just started making new friends, which helped me live more light heartedly my senior year of high school. The real change is when I left high school. I moved to L.A. where nobody knew anything about me and I started living a whole new life with new people. I found this refreshing and discovered what it was like to be truly happy again.

I learned a lot from making friends with the wrong girls. I learned that being popular isn't as important as everyone thinks it may be. I think if you can survive your school years with girls who aren't going to worry about what everyone else thinks all the time, they will have time to focus on being a good friend to you. I learned from being in the "popular crowd" that we ALL have the same insecurities. No matter who you are, there is something that eats away at you. What it means to be popular in life after these teen years has completely changed. I realize that it's about being KIND to those around you. With KINDness, comes true friendship, healthy relationships with those around you and a healthy relationship with yourself.

Amy Anton, 19

Step.1

Tell The TRUTH.

Step.2

It is imperative that you leave out the actual names of the people within your story. Again this is not about pointing fingers

Step.3

Do not talk badly about the people in your story. Honestly recall your experience and how it made you feel but do not defame the people within your story (ex. 'I hate her, and she is such a horrible person for doing that.')

Step.4

You may leave yourself "anonymous" or include your name and age at the end of your story



Please submit your story to Kindmag@kindcampaign.com. You can write about a specific experience you've had, how you feel about the issues.. anything! There are only a couple requirements..

Kind Campaign understands that there are many sides to every story. Whether you have been the "victim" or the "aggressor" sharing your experience will offer healing, understanding and awareness to females across the nation. The truth is, we have ALL been mean and we have All been picked on, so Kind Campaign and KindMagazine are encouragement for us All to be more kind.

We would like to thank you in advance for sharing your experience. We know that it is emotionally difficult to recall these experiences. It takes courage. Know that Kind Campaign, along with millions of females appreci-

KIND SCHOLARSHIP

KIND CAMPAIGN recognizes that sharing your stories can be an emotionally difficult task. Whether you are the victim or the aggressor, recalling girl-against-girl "crime" within your own life takes a lot of courage. In light of these facts, Kind Campaign has decided to create a scholarship program to thank you for sharing your experiences!

At the end of each year, Kind Campaign will review all of the stories submitted to Kind Magazine and will select 10 individuals who will be awarded a scholarship. Individuals will be selected based upon the content of their submitted story. Particularly touching stories, or stories that offer fresh insight and exemplify the message behind Kind Campaign, will be considered for selection.

Kind Campaign wants to give you the chance to use the scholarship in a way that will help support your future. Awarded scholarships will go toward schooling or towards an "entrepreneurial endeavor," which includes, but are not limited to:

- Starting a business
- Creating a project in line with your interests or future occupation (writing a book, filming a documentary, starting a non-profit, etc.)

The purpose of the scholarship program is to recognize and honor the capable and beautiful females that you are. Kind Campaign would like to encourage all females to become educated, pro-active and most importantly KIND citizens within your communities and within the world. With the scholarship program, Kind Campaign hopes to help you do just that!

FIVE PERCENT OF KIND CAMPAIGN'S ANNUAL REVENUE WILL BE SET ASIDE FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

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