

# Rodent droppings close frat house

College Press Service

HOBOKEN, N.J. — No one expects a fraternity house to be featured in a pictorial in House Beautiful magazine, but residents of the Pi Lambda Phi house on the Stevens Institute of Technology campus obviously set their sights much lower.

While on a routine safety inspection, two Hoboken firefighters noticed an overwhelming odor coming from the basement of the fraternity house. Fearing unlivable conditions, the firemen placed a quick call to the Hoboken Health Department.

After an immediate inspection, the city's health inspector said that living conditions in the house were a threat to those who lived there. He ordered the house vacated, leaving the 10 Pi Lambda Phi residents in search of a new, albeit temporary, home.

The Health Department's tour of the kitchen, which is located in the basement, revealed numerous rodent droppings on counters, shelves and the floor, as well as inside the kitchen's cabinets and refrigerators.

"The entire building smelled like a mixture of urine and spoiled food products," said health inspector Frank Sasso, adding that the search revealed a week-old chicken on the kitchen counter. "The odor was overwhelming."

The other two levels of the house were in similar condition, with garbage and food products strewn on the floor. The bathrooms were filthy, Sasso said, and there were rodent droppings throughout the building.

Although fraternity members weren't

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allowed to sleep in the house, they were allowed to enter the building to clean it. They began scrubbing right away and were able to move back in two days later after promising to hire an exterminator.

Richard Everson, dean of student affairs at Stevens, said both the school and the city will inspect the building regularly. Fraternity members face a fine if they fail the city inspections.

Pi Lambda Phi members acknowledged that they are living in the house once again but said they have been told by their fraternity's executive director not to talk to the press about the matter.

### Students live in luxury after NYU overbooks

NEW YORK — New York University students who were placed in an off-campus hotel were none too thrilled when their permanent housing assignments finally arrived.

This fall, NYU officials overbooked the freshman class, expecting a significant amount of students to decline the university's acceptance. But when more freshmen than usual decided to attend NYU and live in the dorms, school officials scrambled to come up with residential options. Initially, the students weren't pleased.

"Our phones were ringing quite a bit," said Virgil Renzulli, NYU's director of public affairs. "Students and their parents were concerned about where they would be staying."

That concern, however, turned into contentment after some 200 freshmen were temporarily placed in the South Gate, an off-campus hotel.

"The students there ended up living a life of luxury, especially for college students," said Renzulli, adding that the freshmen enjoyed all of the comforts of hotel living and more, including their own kitchens, TVs, an in-house fitness center and a trolley that took them back and forth to campus.

"I think they especially loved the maid service. These students go away to school, and they still have someone make their bed. A lot of them didn't even get that treatment at home."

So it was understandable that the South Gate students weren't exactly elated when they found out that dormitory housing had become available.

"If they had a choice of where they would stay, I'm sure they would have stayed at the South Gate," Renzulli said. "But as rooms opened up, we filled them."

He said the hotel was cleared of NYU students by December.

"Everyone is adjusting to their new way of life," he said. "They're getting along just fine."

Even without the maid service.

# False credentials no laughing matter

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On television, trumped-up resumes are fertile material for sitcom humor. To nab a job as a perfume clerk, the lead character on the show "All-American Girl" claims she has worked for the rock group Aerosmith. Fox's blue-haired housewife Marge Simpson re-enters the work place with a list of accomplishments so dazzling, she'd be a serious contender for the Nobel Prize.

In the real world, credentials fraud is just as common, but university registrars aren't laughing. More and more people are listing fake degrees on resumes, and it's worth being alarmed about, said Joe Orndorff, who is one of the nation's few experts on transcript security. His Cincinnati-based company produces copy-resistant documents for universities, and he gives seminars on how to foil "wannabe" graduates and phony professionals.

He just did a survey in cooperation with 47 universities to count the number of questionable inquiries received by their records offices in September. A review of calls checking on people claiming to have either attended the schools or graduated from them found 615 of the individuals couldn't be verified. Among the institutions surveyed were University of Colorado-Boulder, Indiana's Ball State and Miami University of Ohio.

Registrars say a portion of unverifiable inquiries result from a caller's mistake about a former student's name or school. In the maze of letters that are acronyms for southern California's university system, there's bound to be some errors, said Karen Peltz of the records office at University of California at Los Angeles.

Someone may think a job applicant reported attending UCLA, when it was actually UCSD, USC, UCSC, UCSB or another on a brain-fogging list. But registrars say most errant calls represent people who have lied to potential employers about where they've attended school or received degrees. Some impostors even shoot for the Ivy League.

"We get inquiries of that type," said Thurston Smith, associate registrar at Harvard University. "We say we've never heard of this person."

"Schools like Harvard are fairly well-known and are particularly susceptible to this type of falsehood. We do take it seriously. If there is someone out there claiming to have a degree who doesn't, it diminishes the value of real Harvard degrees. That's a problem for the university and the students."

One woman who works in Yale's transcript department, who asked not to be

named, said she also gets calls about phantom former students.

"They pretend they've graduated when they've attended the school without graduating or they've never been to Yale," she said.

No one is sure how many false statements about degrees are never checked or how many resume frauds function in the workforce undetected. Occasionally a fake draws media exposure because of the politics or sensitivity of the circumstances. In Denver, Joy Ching was forced to resign from Mayor Wellington

forged letters of recommendation from members of the Concerned Citizens of Queens and had another from the dean of Morse College at Yale University, which was meant for Seu.

To make himself eligible for increased financial aid, the ambitious applicant lied about his birthdate. He also submitted a tax return on which he had written "Seu Dae" next to his own name.

Chambergro has been charged with seven counts of mail fraud and one count of using a false Social Security number in a scheme to obtain scholarship and

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Harvard University's Associate Registrar Thurston Smith

Webb's office because she failed to produce a bachelor of science degree from Boston's Northeastern University that she'd listed on her resume.

"The irony," said Briggs Gamblin, spokesman for the mayor, "is a degree wasn't a pre-requisite for the job."

Ching had been hired as a purchasing director when Northeastern was contacted and wouldn't verify her claim of a degree, only that she'd taken courses. She was given three days to produce evidence and chose to resign.

"She had the right experience," Gamblin said. "She could have had the job without the degree. It was an issue of falsification."

Another fakery case left Denverites feeling a little less secure, because it centered on a phony "engineer," who was involved in the construction of the foundation for the embattled Denver International Airport.

At times, applicants to secondary or professional schools falsify their records to gain admission. In late November, a federal grand jury issued an eight-count indictment against 32-year-old Jorge Chambergro for applying to the University of Pennsylvania Law School using false identification.

When providing application documents to the school, Chambergro, a resident of Jackson Heights, N.Y., allegedly combined his own name with that of Dae Kyung Seu.

Chambergro applied to Penn's law school as Dae Jorge Seu Chambergro, using Seu's social security number as his own. He then used Seu's identification to get a copy of Seu's LSAT score sent to the school.

Chambergro also submitted three

loan money. If found guilty, he faces up to 40 years in prison, up to three years of supervised release and as much as \$2 million in fines, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Colin Diver, dean of Penn's law school, said the department occasionally receives false applications, which are usually discovered pretty easily.

"Most of these people think that they have all their bases covered, but they usually don't," said Diver, adding that once department officials find a discrepancy, they forward the information to the university's general counsel. "Unfortunately, there are a lot of people who choose to misrepresent themselves to gain access to something they have not earned outright."

Orndorff said falsifying documents is easy and that employees often don't check.

"If you want, you can sit down at a computer, crank out a transcript with above average grades, prepare a resume which is obviously inflated and create fake letters of reference," he said.

Catching cheats is the object of Orndorff's business. He clicked off a horror-house gallery of tales, including people posing as doctors and nurses and treating unsuspecting patients.

A high-tech world makes it all easier, Orndorff said. Computers can scan and copy official university emblems and signatures. Laser printers can create more realistic-looking documents.

Most of the time, all this high-tech hoop-jumping can be grounded by simple calls to the named schools and agencies.

# Suspect in 1992 murder caught, returned Friday to Charleston

CHARLESTON (AP) — Joseph Gardner, the man accused of killing the trigger in the 1992 death of a Charleston woman, as been brought back to South Carolina and jailed without bond.

Gardner, 24, of Detroit was brought Friday from Philadelphia to Charleston. Wearing leg irons and handcuffs, he said only "yes, sir" during a magistrate's hearing when he was denied bond.

Police say Gardner and five others made a New Year's resolution to rape and kill a white woman as retribution for 400 years of oppression of black people. Gardner is black.

Melissa Ann McLaughlin, who is white, was shot in the face five times Dec. 30, 1992, and left to die alongside a road

near Summerville. Police say the 25-year-old woman had been raped and tortured.

Six other defendants have been convicted or pleaded guilty to related charges. Two men were convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison.

But Gardner, who the other defendants all said pulled the trigger, had fled the area. He was on the FBI's Most Wanted List since May.

He was found working at a grocery store in Philadelphia and arrested Oct. 19.

Gardner, a Charleston-based Navy sailor, is absent without leave from the Navy.

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