

# PARTIES GONE WRONG



This is the time of year when many fraternities and sororities plan theme parties. Whether Halloween parties, or mixers, the themes that are chosen say a great deal about the sponsoring organizations. Choose poorly, and your chapter's bad judgment could show up on YouTube or Facebook.

These organizations faced a loss of recognition as a result of these parties.

By avoiding racially and culturally sensitive words and themes, fraternity and sorority members can prove respect for and acceptance of the communities in which they live.

Adapted with permission from the Party Themes Resource Guide developed by the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors [http://www.fraternityadvisors.org/tmpFiles/65e98216-b443-4388-96e7-c0a3568effaf/MS\\_Misc\\_Party\\_Themes.doc](http://www.fraternityadvisors.org/tmpFiles/65e98216-b443-4388-96e7-c0a3568effaf/MS_Misc_Party_Themes.doc)

The following are not policies, rules, or punishable restrictions. They are simply suggestive measures and guidelines to help you and your chapters think about the way you represent yourselves to the larger campus community.

## Before your party, ask yourself:

- DOES THIS EVENT RELY ON STEREOTYPES OF CERTAIN GROUPS OR ENCOURAGE OFFENSIVE DRESS?
- IF BOTH MEN AND WOMEN ARE INVITED, OR EVENT IF THEY ARE NOT, DOES THE EVENT/TITLE STEREOTYPE ONE OF THOSE GENDERS?
- NOT SURE IF A THEME IS SEXIST? TRY INTERCHANGING THE WORD/THEME WITH A RACIAL WORD/THEME.
- IS YOUR THEME CENTERED ON "MAKING FUN" OF A PARTICULAR PEOPLE/CULTURE/CAMPUS GROUP? EVEN IF IT IS NOT, WILL PEOPLE "GO THERE?"
- WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO SEND PHOTOS OF YOUR EVENT TO YOUR PARENTS, YOUR INTER/NATIONAL OFFICE, THE CAMPUS NEWSPAPER, OR YOUR COLLEGE PRESIDENT?



### Themes to avoid:

- Blackface
- Men dressing like women
- Using the word "Ho" in the title of your event
- Themes with a binge drinking connotation
- Wearing letters that are not your own

### ALL FUN, NO FOUL: CREATIVE YET IN-OFFENSIVE PARTY THEMES

*Taken straight from the party planning archives of actual colleges and universities, these are some of the best themes we've seen:*

Heroes and Villains  
 Disco Party (decade themes)  
 Pajama Jammy Jam  
 Mardi Gras  
 Toga! Toga!  
 Famous Couples  
 Winter Wonderland (snow party)  
 Safari  
 Rodeo  
 Movie themes  
 Mad Men or other television show themes  
 Viva Las Vegas  
 Castaway/Shipwrecked  
 Sports Bar (sporting event themes)  
 Pirates of the Caribbean  
 "P" is for Party (alphabet themes)  
 Party like a Rock Star (celebrity themes)  
 Once Upon a Time (fairy tale themes)  
 Casino Night  
 April Fool's Day Party  
 Fire and Ice  
 Superheroes  
 My Tie (mystery match-up themes)  
 Kat in the Hat  
 Outer Space/Aliens  
 Premiere (Hollywood theme)  
 New Year's Eve Again  
 Roller Derby/Boogie Nights  
 Night Out on the Town (city or downtown theme)  
 Under the Sea (ocean theme)