

COLUMBIA SPECTATOR ARCHIVE

Columbia Daily Spectator, Volume CXII, Number 180, 21 November 1988 — SFARFS claims beer bath courtesy of frat
[ARTICLE+ILLUSTRATION]

SFARFS claims beer bath courtesy of frat

By Evan Schultz
and Peter Meier

At a silent candlelight protest Saturday night, 30 members of Students for a Reformed Fraternity System (SFARFS) had beer thrown on them, were spat upon and were verbally harassed while demonstrating in front of the Sigma Chi fraternity house, according to SFARFS representative Peter Sheehy, CC '90.

However, Sigma Chi Vice President Michael Morse, CC '89, said that as far as he knows, no harassment of the protesters took place Saturday night, when the fraternity was holding a party. He said fraternity members called the police, who dispersed the group.

Sheehy said the silent protest, which is the second such SFARFS action in the past two weeks, was meant to increase awareness of sexism in Columbia's single-sex fraternities.

According to Sheehy, people attending the Sigma Chi party threw three cups of beer on the protesters, spat on them, threw crumpled-up statements distributed by SFARFS

out the fraternity's windows, and verbally harassed the group. The partygoers called the protesters "homos," and told them to "join a sorority, bitches," Sheehy said.

Sheehy added that a Sigma Chi alumnus, Charles Challas, pushed him while trying to grab the tape recorder Sheehy was holding, calling Sheehy "worthless to humanity." Sheehy said Callas, an office assistant at the University Central Mailroom and Sigma Chi House corporation president, told him: "I fought in World War II; if you were the enemy, we would have killed you because you're nothing."

SFARFS member Patti Gulbis, BC '89, said the group is considering filing a complaint with the Columbia College Deans Office over the incident.

It was not clear if the harassers were members of the fraternity, according to Sheehy.

Morse said he was tending the bar on the second floor of the fraternity when the protesters arrived. He said members of the fraternity heard the protesters were coming, and decided not to be confrontational.

"They [SFARFS] have a right to do what they want to do. If they want to protest they can protest," Morse said.

The social chair for the fraternity, Bob

Ozello, CC '89, said he was present when the protesters gathered outside the fraternity.

Ozello said the protesters were asked to either join the party or disperse because, he said, the fraternity is responsible for the grounds in front of its building during parties.

Ozello said the SFARFS members were "unreasonable" and did not respond to the requests.

Ozello called Sheehy's allegations of harassment "untrue," saying the partyers merely ignored the protesters.

"They'll have a hard time proving that," Gulbis said, claiming SFARFS has 35 witnesses who saw beer thrown out of fraternity windows onto the administrators.

Ozello said the protesters left when the police arrived, but returned shortly afterward, only to be dispersed again by the police.

"If they had come back again, something probably would have happened to them," Ozello said.

Sheehy said a police officer told the protesters a permit was needed for the wood-frame signs which some carried.

Sheehy said he considered the protest a success despite the incident.

"I consider it a success because I saw a lot of people turning away from the party. It made everyone think about the issue."



COMBATTING AIDS: Experts on AIDS met here Saturday to discuss methods of fighting the deadly disease. Story on page five. SPECTATOR/ERIN McCONAHA



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WANNA BUY AN UMBRELLA?: Students weather the downpour after Sunday's Soviet Jewry Freedom run.