

alpha phi alpha secret handshake

Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake is a defining element of the brotherhood that embodies the principles of unity, respect, and commitment among members of this esteemed fraternity. Founded on December 4, 1906, at Cornell University, Alpha Phi Alpha is the first intercollegiate Greek-letter organization established for Black men in the United States. As a fraternal organization, it places great emphasis on the bonds formed among its members, and the secret handshake serves as a symbolic gesture of recognition and loyalty. In this article, we will explore the history, significance, and mechanics of the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake, as well as its broader implications in the context of fraternity culture and brotherhood.

History of Alpha Phi Alpha

The Founding and Early Years

The inception of Alpha Phi Alpha can be traced back to a group of seven young men who sought to create an organization that would provide support and foster academic excellence among African American students at Cornell University. The founders, known as the "Seven Jewels," are:

1. Henry Arthur Callis
2. Charles Henry Chapman
3. Eugene Kinckle Jones
4. George Biddle Kelley
5. Nathaniel Allison Murray
6. Robert Harold Ogle
7. Vertner Woodson Tandy

These men recognized the need for a community that would empower Black students and help them navigate the challenges of higher education during a time of systemic racism and social injustice.

Development of Rituals and Traditions

As Alpha Phi Alpha grew, so did the importance of its rituals and traditions. The fraternity established various secret practices that would strengthen the bond among its members. Among these practices, the secret handshake emerged as a crucial symbol of fraternity identity. This handshake not only serves as a means of identification among brothers but also represents the shared values and experiences that unite them.

Significance of the Secret Handshake

A Symbol of Brotherhood

The Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake is more than just a physical gesture; it is an emblem of the fraternity's commitment to brotherhood. The act of exchanging the handshake fosters a sense of belonging and solidarity among members, reinforcing the idea that they are part of a larger community.

- Recognition: The handshake allows brothers to identify each other, particularly in settings where they may not know one another personally. It serves as a reminder of their shared values and experiences.
- Trust and Loyalty: Engaging in the handshake signifies a level of trust and loyalty among brothers. It is a way of affirming their commitment to one another and to the fraternity's ideals.

Ritualistic Importance

In the context of fraternity rituals, the secret handshake is often introduced during the initiation process. This is a significant moment for new members, as it marks their official entry into the brotherhood. The handshake is typically taught in a ceremonial setting, emphasizing its importance within the organization.

- Initiation Ceremony: The handshake is often a part of the initiation ceremony, where new members learn the fraternity's history, values, and secrets.
- Ongoing Tradition: Even after initiation, the handshake remains an integral part of fraternity life, used in meetings, gatherings, and events.

The Mechanics of the Secret Handshake

How the Handshake is Executed

The Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake consists of a specific sequence of movements that brothers must learn and practice. While the exact details of the handshake are not publicly disclosed to maintain its secrecy, it generally involves a combination of hand movements and gestures that symbolize unity and respect.

1. Initial Greeting: The handshake typically begins with a firm grip, symbolizing strength and solidarity.

2. Distinctive Movements: Following the initial grip, there may be unique movements or sequences that differentiate the Alpha Phi Alpha handshake from those of other organizations.
3. Completion: The handshake concludes with a gesture that reinforces the bond of brotherhood, such as a clasping of hands or a pat on the back.

Learning the Handshake

For new members, learning the secret handshake is an essential rite of passage. Here are some ways through which brothers learn and practice this important aspect of fraternity life:

- Mentorship: Established members often mentor new initiates, guiding them through the handshake and its significance.
- Rehearsals: Fraternity gatherings may include rehearsals where members practice the handshake to ensure that everyone is proficient.
- Ceremonial Events: The handshake is prominently featured in ceremonial events, reinforcing its importance and allowing members to showcase their understanding of the ritual.

Broader Implications of the Secret Handshake

Fraternal Identity and Culture

The Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake plays a crucial role in shaping the identity and culture of the fraternity. It serves as a reminder of the values that the organization upholds, including scholarship, leadership, and community service.

- Shared Experiences: The handshake reflects the collective experiences of members, creating a sense of camaraderie that extends beyond individual chapters.
- Cultural Heritage: As the first intercollegiate fraternity for Black men, Alpha Phi Alpha has a rich cultural heritage that the handshake symbolizes and preserves.

Community Engagement and Support

The significance of the secret handshake extends beyond the fraternity itself. Alpha Phi Alpha members are often involved in community service and outreach programs, and the unity fostered by the handshake reinforces their collective commitment to making a positive impact.

- Mentoring Programs: Many chapters engage in mentoring programs for young Black men, using the principles of brotherhood learned through the handshake to guide and inspire the next generation.
- Advocacy: The fraternity is involved in advocating for social justice and equality, and the bonds formed through the handshake enhance their collective efforts in these areas.

Conclusion

The Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake is more than just a simple greeting; it is a profound expression of brotherhood, loyalty, and shared values. Rooted in a rich history and tradition, the handshake serves as a powerful symbol of the fraternity's commitment to fostering a supportive community for Black men in higher education. Through the handshake, members reaffirm their connection to one another and to the ideals of scholarship, leadership, and service that define Alpha Phi Alpha.

As the fraternity continues to evolve, the secret handshake remains a vital aspect of its culture, preserving the legacy of the Seven Jewels and their vision for a united, empowered brotherhood. Through this unique gesture, Alpha Phi Alpha members not only recognize one another but also honor the enduring principles that bind them together as brothers in the ongoing pursuit of excellence and social justice.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the significance of the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake?

The secret handshake symbolizes brotherhood and unity among members, serving as a means of identification and a demonstration of solidarity.

How is the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake taught to new members?

New members learn the secret handshake during the initiation process, often through mentorship and guidance from active brothers.

Are there different variations of the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake?

While the core elements of the handshake remain consistent, some variations may exist based on regional or chapter traditions.

What are the steps involved in performing the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake?

The handshake typically involves a series of grips, movements, and distinctive gestures that are unique to the fraternity.

Is the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake documented anywhere publicly?

No, the details of the handshake are kept confidential to maintain the fraternity's traditions and secrecy.

Can non-members learn about the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake?

No, the handshake is exclusive to initiated members and is considered a sacred aspect of the fraternity's culture.

What does the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake represent beyond brotherhood?

It also represents a commitment to the fraternity's principles, values, and the lifelong bond among its members.

Why is the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake important in fraternity culture?

It fosters a sense of belonging and reinforces the ties among brothers, acting as a rite of passage and a mark of loyalty.

Are there any notable ceremonies involving the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake?

Yes, the handshake is often included in formal fraternity events, ceremonies, and meetings to reinforce brotherhood.

How does the Alpha Phi Alpha secret handshake differ from other fraternity handshakes?

Each fraternity has its own unique handshake that reflects its specific values and traditions; Alpha Phi Alpha's handshake has distinct elements that embody its historical significance and mission.

Alpha Phi Alpha Secret Handshake

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: Fraternity Alexandra Robbins, 2020-02-11 * A Real Simple Best Book of 2019: An essential read for parents and students. * The New York Times bestselling author of *Pledged* is back with an unprecedented fly-on-the-wall look inside fraternity houses from current brothers' perspectives—and a fresh, riveting must-read about what it's like to be a college guy today. Two real-life stories. One stunning twist. Meet Jake, a studious freshman weighing how far to go to find a brotherhood that will introduce him to lifelong friends and help conquer his social awkwardness; and Oliver, a hardworking chapter president trying to keep his misunderstood fraternity out of trouble despite multiple run-ins with the police. Their year-in-the-life stories help explain why students are joining fraternities in record numbers despite scandalous headlines. To find out what it's like to be a fraternity brother in the twenty-first century, Robbins contacted hundreds of brothers whose chapters don't make headlines—and who suggested that many fraternities can be healthy safe spaces for men. *Fraternity* is more than just a page-turning, character-driven read. It's a vital book about the transition from boyhood to manhood; it brilliantly weaves psychology, current events, neuroscience, and interviews to explore the state of masculinity today, and what that means for students and their parents. It's a different kind of story about college boys, a story in which they candidly discuss sex, friendship, social media, drinking, peer pressure, gender roles, and even porn. And it's a book about boys at a vulnerable age, living on their own for perhaps the first time. Boys who, in a climate that can stigmatize them merely for being male, don't necessarily want to navigate the complicated, coming-of-age journey to manhood alone.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: A Place Near the Front William G. Herbert, 2016-03-10 It is an exciting novel, and it both entertains and prompts introspection and reflection upon what it means to be an American. ~ Forward Reviews - May, 2016 A thoughtful reflection on race and ambition in America. ~ Kirkus Reviews - May, 2016 It is eminently readable...a compelling tale that rings disturbingly true. ~ Blueink Review - April, 2016 William Herbert, known to everyone by his middle name, Gordon, grows up in Trinidad dreaming of bigger things, and takes a job aboard the SS *Mariposa* in January, 1915. He spends grueling nights shoveling coal in the boiler room, but takes pleasure in the work. The ship has electric lights, modern plumbing, radio, navigation devices, and comfortable passenger staterooms; it is a floating symbol of all that is modern in the twentieth century. Craving this newness and the opportunity to make his mark on the world, he jumps ship in New York City even though he could be deported. He slips into the streets of Harlem and ultimately makes his way to the trenches of World War I, where he becomes a second lieutenant with the Buffalo Soldiers as he seeks his rightful place in America. Whether it's dealing with the mob that's chasing him through the dangerous streets of New York's Hell's Kitchen, battling German soldiers, or facing his most insidious enemy, his own military commanders who resent black officers, Gordon never stops reaching for his dreams in *A Place near the Front*.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: The Golden Football David L. Hayward, 2023-03-21 The Golden Football How Greed and Athletics Changed a College Town After a hard day at work, Dr. James Conway, president of Western Montana College (WMC), settled into his favorite arm chair and opened the morning edition of the *Missoulian*. As he stared at the headlines, a shock wave of anger flowed through his body. It read: "WESTERN MONTANA TO JOIN THE SOUTH ALABAMA CONFERENCE." His athletic department, primarily the football program, had unilaterally accepted a massive television deal worth millions to bolt from the Western Conference and join one two time zones away. He was the last to know. The writing was on the wall—he had lost control of his beloved college to big money interests and booster organizations. In a war of good versus evil (i.e., spiritual warfare), meet the main characters in this fast-pace saga: Bo Jensen: fantastic running back for the Western Montana College Bears with a promising future in the NFL. Changes in NCAA regulations allowed him to prosper from the sale of a variety of items including ladies thongs. Milton (Milty) Douglas, Esq.: senior partner at The Douglas Law Firm and former Bears football star. His practice

was limited to defending “student-athletes” and fraternity/sorority members in their encounters with the law. Almost all the students on campus were familiar with the expression: “If you’re guilty, call Milt.” Bob (“Rooster”) Jones: ill-mannered, corrupt, and abrasive billionaire; and financial supporter of Bears football and former player. Queen Esther: Sigma Phi Beta sorority president, Madam of the sorority’s prostitution ring, and occasional student at WMC after her daily beauty treatments. Jimbo (“The Bear”) Collins: unscrupulous head football coach for the Bears. Mark and Hannah Anderson: pastors at Calvary Chapel, Missoula. They served as counter-weights to an immoral culture that was quickly sliding Missoula and the country into the sewer. Jill Hansen: 20 year-old sophomore at WMC. Raised in a small farming community of Darby, Montana, she was the woman nearly every parent hoped their son would someday marry.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: Pledged Alexandra Robbins, 2011-05-24 Alexandra Robbins wanted to find out if the stereotypes about sorority girls were actually true, so she spent a year with a group of girls in a typical sorority. The sordid behavior of sorority girls exceeded her worst expectations -- drugs, psychological abuse, extreme promiscuity, racism, violence, and rampant eating disorders are just a few of the problems. But even more surprising was the fact that these abuses were inflicted and endured by intelligent, successful, and attractive women. Why is the desire to belong to a sorority so powerful that women are willing to engage in this type of behavior -- especially when the women involved are supposed to be considered 'sisters'? What definition of sisterhood do many women embrace? Pledged combines a sharp-eyed narrative with extensive reporting and the fly-on-the-wall voyeurism of reality shows to provide the answer.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: African American Fraternities and Sororities Tamara L. Brown, Gregory S. Parks, Clarendia M. Phillips, 2012-02-29 The rich history and social significance of the “Divine Nine” African American Greek-letter organizations is explored in this comprehensive anthology. In the long tradition of African American benevolent and secret societies, intercollegiate African American fraternities and sororities have strong traditions of fostering brotherhood and sisterhood among their members, exerting considerable influence in the African American community and being in the forefront of civic action, community service, and philanthropy. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Toni Morrison, Arthur Ashe, and Sarah Vaughn are just a few of the trailblazing members of these organizations. African American Fraternities and Sororities places the history of these organizations in context, linking them to other movements and organizations that predated them and tying their history to the Civil Rights movement. It explores various cultural aspects of the organizations, such as auxiliary groups, branding, calls, and stepping, and highlights the unique role of African American sororities.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: Married Men Carl Weber, 2015-01-01 Full of flavor, wit, and drama. --QBR Step into the world of four married men whose vows didn't guarantee them a happily ever after. . . Kyle runs a booming business, but his main job is hiding his wife from the sistahs who would skin him alive for marrying a woman like her. . . Easy-going Allen can please his bossy Mama and his gold-digging fiancée--just not at the same time. . . Big-hearted Wil's got a wife with a mouth so big she should consider a career in broadcasting. . .And smooth and sexy Jay's the man--not only for his wife, but for all the other ladies he can't resist. But these lifelong friends find their lives turned upside-down when each one is shown the door by his furious woman. The result is a rowdy romp through no-tell motels, divorce court, and jail. And as they fend off strippers, trippers, psycho ex-football players, and worse, they know there's one thing they can always count on. . each other. Praise For The Novels Of Carl Weber A fast-paced mix of scandal, jealousy and wickedness. --Publishers Weekly on Player Haters Compelling.--Booklist on Baby Momma Drama

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: Corks and Curls , 1989

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: Certain People Stephen Birmingham, 2024-05-14 The #1 New York Times–bestselling author of *Our Crowd* shares an intimate social history of America's elite Black society in the 1970s. From New York to Chicago, Atlanta, and Washington, DC, Stephen Birmingham met with members of Black America's upper crust—those old families of money and lineage who send their children to boarding schools and make business alliances over charity

dinners. Invited into their homes, he became acquainted with their private world: their traditions and customs, their networks and conflicts, and, of course, their many stories. In *Certain People*, Birmingham presents a panoramic social history of upper-class Black society, one full of anecdotes and telling observations. From the Palmer Memorial Institute of North Carolina, where the best families sent their children, to the halls of the Johnson Publishing Company, creator of *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines, Birmingham provides an intimate glimpse of this exclusive crowd.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: *Analitikul Cogitationz* M'Bwebe Ishangi, 2007-05-11 For nearly fifteen yearz I've attempted 'shock therapy' on the mindz of Afrikan people by challenging us to dispute everything from history to politics, diet to religion, on down to historic African-American organizationz. My quest was and always will be to challenge you; to dare you to face who taught you; to reveal that not everything you may believe now, you had the opportunity to thoroughly investigate. *Analitikul Cogitationz* is a two-part book. So that you can know the person behind *Da Ghetto Tymz* magazine, Part 1 (*Deja Vu*), coverz the first few yearz of my re-awakening to Pan-Afrikan consciousness. In this mini-autobiography, I speak of thingz I went through I once was afraid to speak about. Part 2 is a collection of some of my best perspective articles that appeared in *Da Ghetto Tymz* magazine from 1993-2006. You may or may not agree with the message I convey, but I hope you will use my arguments as inspiration to further confirm your own beliefs whatever they may be.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: *Bound by a Mighty Vow* Diana B. Turk, 2004-06-21 Explores the meaning of sisterhood for those who belonged to women's fraternities between 1870 and 1920.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: *Flunking Out* William Edmund Butterworth, 1981 Two friends learn a great deal about themselves and their goals in life during their freshman year in college.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: *Everything You Need to Know About Going Greek* Bob Kerr, 2018-10-18 Bob shares with students, parents and educators his insights gained from a lifetime involved in Greek life serving four college campuses, leadership in the professional Fraternity/Sorority Advisors associations and volunteer leadership in his fraternity. The book opens up resources and tools that can help students make an informed decision regarding "Going Greek". Among the insights revealed include: • The historical timeline of the founding of fraternities and sororities. • A time management tool to help entering students understand their time demands as college students. • Specific life skills Greek life offers. • Tips for parents with students joining Greek life. This is what some educators are saying about the value of this book. In my 32 years as a campus advisor, I wish this resource had been around specifically to provide to parents and students. — Scott Reikofski, Director of Student Affairs, University of Arizona College of MedicinePhoenix

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: *The Company He Keeps* Nicholas L. Syrett, 2009-03-01 Tracing the full history of traditionally white college fraternities in America from their days in antebellum all-male schools to the sprawling modern-day college campus, Nicholas Syrett reveals how fraternity brothers have defined masculinity over the course of their 180-year history. Based on extensive research at twelve different schools and analyzing at least twenty national fraternities, *The Company He Keeps* explores many factors — such as class, religiosity, race, sexuality, athleticism, intelligence, and recklessness — that have contributed to particular versions of fraternal masculinity at different times. Syrett demonstrates the ways that fraternity brothers' masculinity has had consequences for other students on campus as well, emphasizing the exclusion of different groups of classmates and the sexual exploitation of female college students.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: *Group Therapy* Ryan M. Johnson, 2002-12 *Group Therapy* is the story of being on our own for the first time. The friends that are made, and the mistakes that are learned from. This first novel in the Springfield Series follows several students through their freshman year of college. Price, a recovering drug-user; Kyle, a womanizing athlete; Troy, a confused football player; Karen, a young girl in over her head; Hayley, a devout Christian; David, a

pleasant, though oft rejected, comedian; Shelley, a girl searching for her place at school; Blake, a broken-hearted young woman; and Jamie, their Resident Advisor. This realistic and gripping story delves into the relationships created when we are thrust into a new and independent world, trying to find our place. Group Therapy is a touching story of love, growth, and friendship.

alpha phi alpha secret handshake: What Winners Won't Tell You Malcolm Jenkins, 2024-10-08 As a two-time Super Bowl champion, three-time Pro-Bowler, first-round draft pick, and former Jim Thorpe Award recipient, Malcolm Jenkins knows a thing or two about winning. Over the course of his thirteen-year NFL career, the now retired defensive back's triumphs extend beyond that on the football field. As a successful entrepreneur, he has seen the blossoming of his business ventures with an eponymous company, Malcolm Inc., and a media conglomerate called Listen Up Media. As a philanthropist, he strives to make a positive difference in the lives of young people in underserved communities through The Malcolm Jenkins Foundation. And as the father of two daughters, he understands the challenges of loving his children, and preparing them for an often unkind and hostile world. But for every triumph, there is a tragedy, for every loss, a lesson. In *What Winners Won't Tell You*, Jenkins shares the insight he's gained from winning and losing alike. One moment, Jenkins is riding high from being the only NFL player to have Super Bowl victories against Hall of Fame quarterbacks, Peyton Manning and Tom Brady and then he's navigating the harrowing low of a divorce from the mother of his children. In another moment he's advocating for the advances of Black people in America, and then feuding publicly about the direction of this advocacy. Providing fans and readers alike with an intimate portrayal of life on and off the field, detailed breakdowns of his great moments against the games premiere players, and poignant reflections about what it means to straddle the narrow line between victory and defeat, this "thoughtful memoir" (Kirkus Reviews) is the best kept secret for those who want to know what it takes to be a champion.

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