



Why Hazing Happens

Speaker Script · "Understand It. Recognize It. End It."

PRESENTER Dr. Thomas L. Jones, Jr.

SLIDES 23

THE HAMPTON UNIVERSITY MARCHING FORCE · PRE-DRILL CAMP 2026

Presenter notes for every slide, in order. Bracketed cues are stage directions; quoted lines are suggested wording — say them in your own voice.

01 Why Hazing Happens

SLIDE 1 — TITLE: Why Hazing Happens

THE MOST IMPORTANT SESSION OF THE WEEKEND. Your tone here sets whether they take it seriously or wait it out.

OPEN PLAINLY: "We're not going to lecture you about rules for an hour. We're going to explain why this happens — because you can't stop something you don't understand."

NOTE: this is built on your dissertation and Beyond the Bruises. Say that.

02 Icebreaker

SLIDE 2 — ICEBREAKER: School Daze, "One Reason Why Not" (2:19)

SET UP: "Spike Lee, looking at the pledge process at a Black college. As you watch, ask yourself two things: why do people endure it, and who had the power to stop it?"

Play it.

AFTER: hold the two questions. Take answers on the second one especially — "who had the power?" That's them.

03 The Premise

SLIDE 3 — THE PREMISE (statement slide)

Read it.

Takeaway: "Understand it to end it."

04 Hazing Is a Culture Problem

SLIDE 4 — HAZING IS A CULTURE PROBLEM

"And a culture problem is, at its root, a leadership problem."

THE KEY MOVE: "Rules alone have never stopped hazing. Every program that lost a student had a policy against it."

"Culture is set by the people members actually watch and follow — their peer leaders. That's you. What you permit, you promote."

05 What Hazing Actually Is

SLIDE 5 — WHAT HAZING ACTUALLY IS

Strip the euphemisms out loud: tradition, initiation, paying dues.

Give the working definition and make sure they hear that CONSENT DOESN'T MATTER — willingness doesn't make it not hazing.

06 The Hidden Scale

SLIDE 6 — THE HIDDEN SCALE

The numbers. Let them be uncomfortable.

THE POINT: most students who are hazed don't label it hazing, and almost none report it. "That's why it stays invisible."

07 It Starts With a Real Need

SLIDE 7 — IT STARTS WITH A REAL NEED

The pivot that makes this session work. "To understand hazing, start with something GOOD — the human need to belong."

"Nobody joins a band wanting to be humiliated. They join wanting to be part of something."

08 Belonging, Turned Cruel

SLIDE 8 — BELONGING, TURNED CRUEL

How the good need gets weaponized into a rite of suffering.

The promise is real — the method is the corruption.

09 “I Suffered, So You Will”

SLIDE 9 — "I SUFFERED, SO YOU WILL"

The engine. Effort justification and cognitive dissonance in plain words:

"If I went through something painful to get here, my mind has to decide it was worth it. So I defend it. And then I do it to the next person to prove it meant something."

THE LINE: "That's not tradition. That's a mind protecting itself from admitting it was hurt for nothing."

10 The Bonding Myth

SLIDE 10 — THE BONDING MYTH

Head-on: "'It brings us closer.' The evidence says the opposite."

Hazing produces compliance and resentment, not cohesion. Shared hard WORK bonds people. Shared humiliation does not.

11 The Power of the Group

SLIDE 11 — THE POWER OF THE GROUP

Why smart, kind people go along.

Conformity, obedience to authority, and the fear of being the one who breaks ranks.

"Nobody in that room individually wanted it. Collectively they allowed it."

12 When No One Steps In

SLIDE 12 — WHEN NO ONE STEPS IN

The bystander effect. "The more people watching, the less likely any one of them acts. Everyone assumes somebody else will."

THE ANTIDOTE: "Diffusion of responsibility dies the moment one person is specifically responsible. Tonight, that's each of you."

13 Losing Yourself in the Crowd

SLIDE 13 — LOSING YOURSELF IN THE CROWD

Deindividuation — anonymity in a group lowers personal accountability.

"Groups do things no single member would ever do alone."

14 The Cycle That Feeds Itself

SLIDE 14 — THE CYCLE THAT FEEDS ITSELF

Put the pieces together: need to belong, suffering, justification, silence, repetition.

"It's a machine. It runs on its own once it starts — which is exactly why it has to be stopped before it starts."

15 A Hard Lesson: Robert Champion

SLIDE 15 — A HARD LESSON: ROBERT CHAMPION

STOP. Change your tone completely. This slide has his photograph on it.

Tell it accurately and without sensationalism: a drum major, beaten to death on a band bus in 2011. Criminal convictions. A program shut down.

SAY IT CLEARLY: "That was a marching band like ours. It was a leadership failure — not a freak accident."

Do not rush. Let the room sit with it. Silence is appropriate here.

16 The Real Cost

SLIDE 16 — THE REAL COST

"Hazing is not a prank that went too far. It is a crime with a body count."

Deaths, felony charges, expulsions, lawsuits, programs shut down.

MAKE IT PERSONAL AND LEGAL: they are adults and will be charged as adults. So will bystanders.

17 The Antidote Is Proven

SLIDE 17 — THE ANTIDOTE IS PROVEN

Turn the corner from fear to hope — this is the point of the whole session.

"This isn't theory. It was studied in a band like ours, and it worked."

Servant-leadership as a documented approach to preventing hazing — your own research.

18 The “Is This Hazing?” Test

SLIDE 18 — THE "IS THIS HAZING?" TEST

The practical tool. Walk the four questions.

TELL THEM TO SCREENSHOT IT: "When you're unsure at eleven at night in a dorm hallway, run the activity through these four."

19 The Non-Negotiables

SLIDE 19 — THE NON-NEGOTIABLES

Slow and flat. No discussion on this slide.

"Most of this seminar helps you think. These four don't require thought. They're bright lines."

Read each one and pause after it.

20 Build Belonging the Right Way

SLIDE 20 — BUILD BELONGING THE RIGHT WAY

Give them the alternative — you can't just take something away.

Every rite of passage we keep has to pass four tests.

"Real belonging never requires cruelty. That's the whole promise of The Marching Force."

21 Recognize. Refuse. Report.

SLIDE 21 — RECOGNIZE. REFUSE. REPORT.

The action slide.

"When the machine starts up, one leader can stop it. That leader is you."

BE SPECIFIC ABOUT REPORTING: who to tell, how fast. Say your own name and how to reach you.

"Silence is complicity. There is no neutral."

22 Our Covenant

SLIDE 22 — OUR COVENANT (statement slide)

Read it as an oath, not information.

Takeaway: "Not on my watch."

Consider having the room say it together. It's the one moment in the weekend where that's warranted.

23 Break the Cycle. Guard the Family.

SLIDE 23 — CLOSE: Break the Cycle. Guard the Family.

Deliver standing.

End on the sign-off — and then be available. Some members will want to talk to you privately after this session. Build in the time and do not leave immediately.