

Confronting the Challenges of Studentification in Residential Orono Neighborhoods

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Confronting the Challenges of Studentification in the Town of Orono

What immediate and long-term actions the University of Maine and the town of Orono can take to better handle the current, and future, housing situation?

Primary Concerns

- How much do students know about the regulations and expectations of living off campus?
- How much do residents know about who they can contact if they are having an issue with a disruptive student neighbor?
- How amenable are students and residents to “social” options (community get-togethers, good neighbor contracts, etc.)?
- What would town residents and students like to see in the way of regulatory action?
- What, if any, is the “tipping point” where neighborhoods will begin to be negatively affected by student-owned homes?

Stakeholders

- Students (on and off-campus)
- University of Maine officials
- Orono Town officials
- Residents

Key Terms

- Studentification
- Family Flight
- Tipping Point
- “Bad Egg” Hypothesis

Demographic Information

- 447 total respondents
 - 144 residents not affiliated with the University
 - 63 residents affiliated with the University (faculty, staff, etc.)
 - 43 residents who responded other (specified some manner of affiliation in all cases)
 - 197 students of the University
 - Students further differentiated into on-campus (44), off-campus and living in Orono (90), and off-campus in another community (44)
- Only 15 graduate students respondents

Resident Satisfaction with Neighborhood

Student Density

	Very Satisfied/ Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied/ Very Unsatisfied	Not Sure/ Prefer not to Answer
Low Density (0-3)	78	1	5	0
High Density (3-)	83	13	14	1
Unsure/ Prefer not to Answer	20	2	0	0
Total	181	16	19	1

- *“What is your overall satisfaction with the neighborhood in which you live?”*
- *“On the street where you live, approximately how many properties have homes or apartments that are rented by students?”*

Upkeep of Student Rental Properties

Positive Experience with Student Neighbors

	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Not Sure/ Prefer Not to Answer	Total
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	0	8	10	1	29
Neutral/ Prefer not to Answer	3	28	25	24	80
Agree/ Strongly Agree	11	45	32	10	98
Total	14	81	77	35	207

- “To what extent do you agree with the following statement ‘I have had a positive experience with student neighbors?’”
- “In your opinion how well maintained are the student rental properties in your neighborhood?”

Upkeep of Student Rental Properties

Behavior of Students is a Problem

	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Not Sure/ Prefer Not to Answer	Total
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	8	41	24	15	88
Neutral/ Prefer not to Answer	0	19	12	14	45
Agree/ Strongly Agree	6	23	42	6	77
Total	14	83	78	35	210

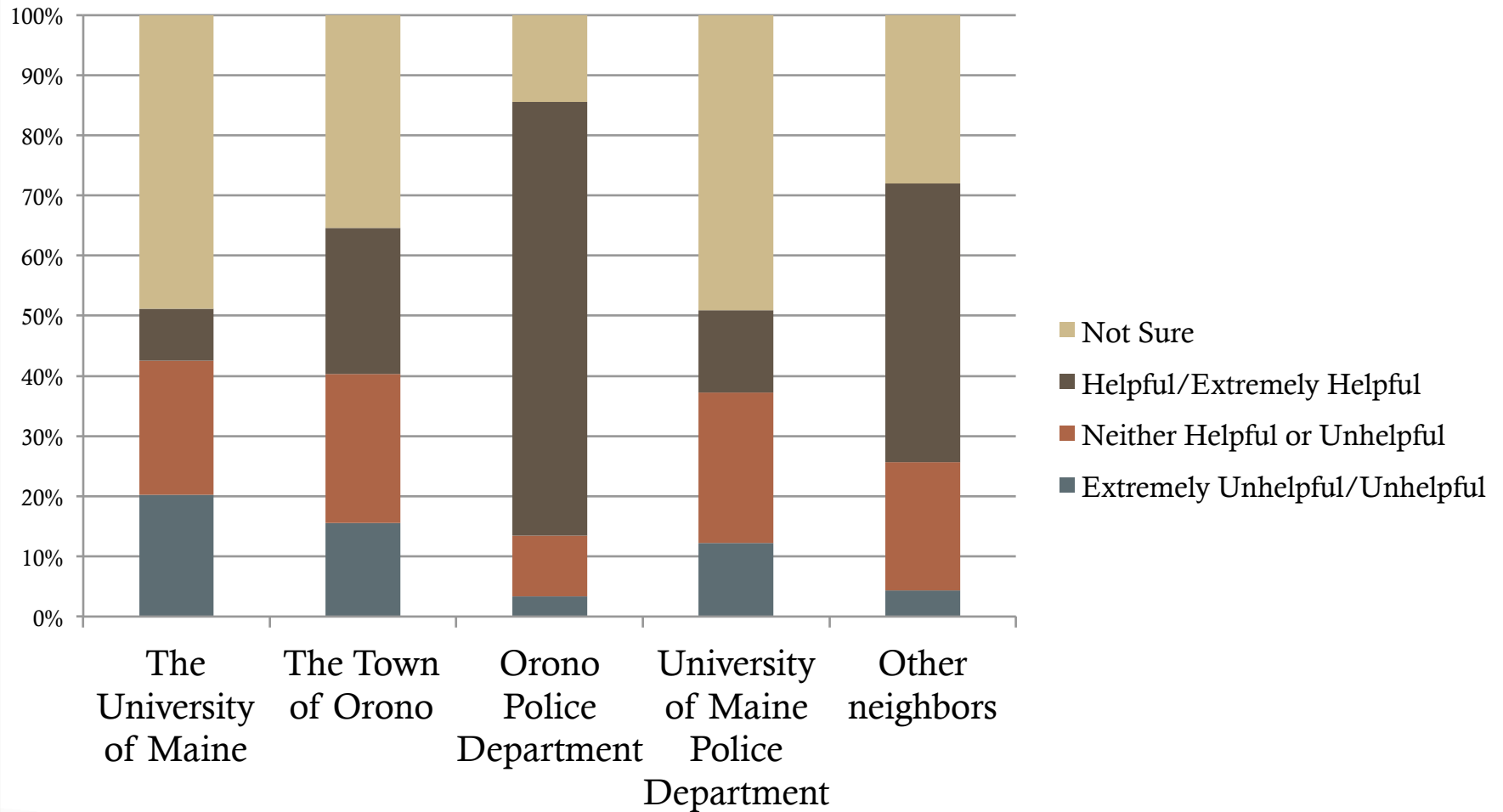
- *“In your opinion how well maintained are the student rental properties in your neighborhood?”*
- *“To what extent do you agree with the following statement ‘the behavior of students in my community is a problem’”*

Management of Student Housing

“We need to work on ensuring that the management of student rental properties is effective. In some instances in town we have great management and we see the benefits of that with lease enforcement and on-site security, and there’s examples in town where there isn’t that level of management and it’s not good for our community. Management of these properties is key.” – **Employee of the town of Orono**

"If a student moves in and believes that if they violate their lease or misbehave in a way that attracts attention and will be held accountable, that’s all you need to have. Proper management leads to a cohesive environment." - **Employee of the town of Orono**

Who Can Help?



To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

“My resident assistant (RA) provided me with valuable information regarding off-campus student housing options.”

	Undergraduate Students Living Off-Campus in Orono
Strongly Disagree/Disagree	66
Neither Agree nor Disagree	16
Strongly Agree/Agree	4
Prefer Not to Answer	5
Total	91

University Official Says...

- *“...A lot of students want to step away from the ‘mother ship’. That's a natural development, and so in order for us to be appealing to people we have to offer something really special. And we should probably step up our efforts in terms of students thinking about moving off-campus and how to do that. We have tried quite a few programs. **Basically it's tenant information and education on how to be a good citizen. We don't do it continuously, but we should.**”*
- 41.9% of students say they are not knowledgeable on the specifics of signing a lease agreement

What this Data Tells us

- Sense of community is not lost in Orono.
- High degree of ambiguity regarding who to contact.
 - Reliance/strain on Orono Police Department.
 - University of Maine is not seen as an entity that residents can contact about student behavior, but they should be.
- Lack of education and information available to Orono residents and first-time student renters
- Lack of evidence supporting the “tipping point” theory

Policy Suggestions:

- Community engagement programs (BBQ's, Block Parties)
- Dissemination of information to student residents about expectations and general behavioral standards
- Holding landlords more accountable
- Neighborhood Ambassador/ Community Ambassador program

Thank you!

Questions?