



Alcohol and Substance Abuse Newsletter

International Issues

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Smoking Habits on the International Level

By Avi Zacherman

Currently, 1.1 billion people in the entire world are classified as cigarette smokers. That's over 1/6th of the world population. 5.5 trillion cigarettes are produced annually every year, that's almost 100 cigarettes per living person.

Smoking habits throughout the world are shifting over time. Currently, an average 41.5% of males and 11% of females are classified as smokers. However, just as in the United States, many other countries are beginning to adopt stricter smoking laws.

In 2005 the European Union banned tobacco advertising and sponsorship at sporting events. In

England, the smoking age is set to increase to 18 in October. All of these laws seem to be getting at the notion that smoking is in fact a deep rooted international problem.

There is

significant evidence to show that smoking bans do indeed improve health. In the town of Pueblo, Colorado, after 18 months, the hospital

admissions for heart attacks dropped a total of 27% since first enacting a smoking ban. The University of Dundee in Scotland found that bar workers had significantly healthier lungs after smoking was banned in their

establishments than before.

Despite all this, not the entirety of the

world has jumped on the anti-smoking bandwagon. In China, cigarette use has been increasing rapidly through the decades. It is projected that in 2025, 2

million people in China will die of Cigarette use.

Tobacco smoke is one of the foremost health issues in the world. We as college students are truly the first line in this conflict, as it is us who are truly being targeted by cigarette companies. It is up to us to set an example and provide steer the proper course, for ourselves and future generations.

Smoking Prevalence by Gender (2000, World Health Organization Survey)		
Region	% of Men	% of Women
Africa	29	4
USA	35	22
Middle East	35	4
Europe	46	26
Southeast Asia	44	4
Western Pacific	60	8

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The Alcohol & Substance Abuse Task Force

Avi Zacherman, Chair
NEACURH Associate Director of Administration and Finance

Richie Kenney
UMass Amherst RLA
Vice President of Administration and Finance

Bri Lewis
Ithaca College RHA NCC



Erin Go Bragh

By Richie Kenny

March 17, a day that is synonymous with drinking. St. Patrick's Day, as most commonly know it, is a day where everyone is Irish, no matter the color, race, or creed. There are plenty of stereotypes with the Irish, and on March 17 people feel the need to act them out. The stumbling drunks, the Guinness in the left hand with Bailey's in the right. We all know them, so I won't harp on them, no pun intended.

This St. Patty's Day was a whole new situation for me. It was something I had never experienced before. All week I was looking forward to spending the day with my father, but then a snow storm had to ruin those plans. With myself stuck in about 15 inches of snow in Amherst, MA, my father was out plowing just north of Boston. March 17th came and I was driving down the Mass Pike, while my dad was still out plowing, for the 20th straight hour, so by the time I arrived home, he was fast asleep in bed. With a quick change of plans I found myself in South Boston for the night. The heart of Irish America or Southie as it's referred to by the locals, is the home of the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Once I arrived in Southie, a mere 15 minute drive, I realized I was in for something different this year. It wouldn't be the same old routine. I pulled into my friends driveway after battling with taxis transporting the "heavily medicated" citizens of Boston and the surrounding

suburbs, and then it hit me, I hadn't even seen my father today, the one person I've spent every St. Patrick's Day with.

Wondering where I'm going with this? Well it's not about the drinking, sure that's the visible piece everyone sees, and yes people do go overboard, but the true fun of St. Patrick's Day is hanging out with friends and family. Waking up that next morning and watching "the Breakfast," hosted by Senator

Jack Hart, I couldn't help but be reminded of the family and friends atmosphere. Later during the parade, the watchers were all families.

After the parade I headed back to my friends house for a turkey dinner. See I didn't know this but St. Patrick's Day in Southie is the Irish Christmas, where all the family comes over and eats. I felt like it was Thanksgiving, there was so much food. After stuffing, turkey, and mashed potatoes, it was time for cake. Yes, cake. The food kept coming. It was an overall amazing day, and one in which I was glad to take part in, although I was it had been spent with my family.

See the point of this article is not to give you reasons why not to drink, but to subtly

make you think about those you care and love. Know when to stop drinking, because the ones that will be missing you are your family and friends. So make sure you live life to the best of your ability and have as much fun as you can, just do it responsibility and think about the ones you love, a cliché commercial closing, but it can't be said enough.

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

"...it's not about the drinking, sure that's the visible piece everyone sees, and yes people do go overboard, but the true fun of St. Patrick's Day is hanging out with friends and family."



Behavior on the Other Side of the Pond

By Bri Lewis

It is not uncommon to come across underage drinking amongst teenagers, especially on college campuses. Most students feel stressed at different times during the year and some turn to alcohol to relieve their tension. Most, if not all, college-age students have been exposed to alcohol on one level or another and are aware of the effects. This is no different at any other campus in the world.

However, one thing that is different is the legality of alcohol, or more specifically, the drinking age. In America, it is commonly known that this is illegal. The drinking age is 21 years old. Mother's Against Destructive Decisions (M.A.D.D.) reported that,

"Back in the late 1960's and early 70's a number of states lowered their drinking age from 21 to 18. In many of these states, research documented a significant increase in highway deaths of the teens affected by these laws. So, in the early 1980's a movement began to raise the drinking age back to 21. After the law changed back to 21, many of the states were monitored to check the difference in highway fatalities. Researchers found that teenage deaths in fatal car crashes dropped considerably - in some cases up to 28% - when the laws were moved back to 21."

Based on these statistics, this law has worked well for the United States; however, many countries overseas have much lower drinking ages.

As reported in the chart on the right, many countries have much lower drinking ages than the United States. The Social Issues Resources Center has reported that "alcohol has played a central

role in almost all human cultures since Neolithic times (about 4000 BC). All societies, without exception, make use of intoxicating substances, alcohol being by far the most common." This quote alone

World Drinking Ages					
No Min.	Age 16	Age 18	Age 19	Age 20	Age 21
Armenia	Antigua	Argentina	South Korea	Japan	United States
Azerbaijan	Austria	Barbados		Iceland	
China	Belgium	Bermuda			
Nigeria	France	Chile			
Poland	Germany	Czech Republic			
Portugal	Greece	Estonia			
Thailand	Italy	Hong Kong			
Vietnam	Norway	Indonesia			

shows why legal drinking ages in Europe are lower than the United States. In Europe, the citizens have grown up with it, making it an everyday, household occurrence.

These variations in ages and laws have not been permanent. They have made many alterations throughout the years. The International Center for Alcohol Policies has conducted case studies with representatives from a variety of countries. The three that were featured in their monthly newsletter were the United States, the Netherlands, and New Zealand. The topics discussed are as follows: "First, the United States, a country where there is no major change in drinking age legislation under consideration; secondly, the Netherlands, which considered raising the minimum purchasing age, but did not end up doing so; and,

thirdly, New Zealand where legislation to lower the minimum purchase age was discussed and passed." There was the possibility that the United States would consider dropping their drinking age

to eighteen once more. However, after extensive research, specifically targeting statistics involving alcohol related traffic fatalities, the United States has decided not to change their drinking age. In the Netherlands, it was argued that sixteen years old would simply have their older friends buy them alcohol because the

drinking age is eighteen. However, the argument was not strong enough to convince the government and therefore the lowering of the drinking age was not passed. New Zealand was looking into raising the minimum purchasing age; however, after conducting many surveys involving different citizens of different ages, a case, which was strong enough to convince and gain support from many government committees, was formulated and ultimately passed by the federal government.

Based on these examples, it is obvious to see the change in laws is possible; however, once research has been conducted, it is obvious that laws have been created for different reasons in different countries and should be respected and followed, no matter where you reside.



NACURH Mission Statement

NACURH is the leading national organization advocating for the interests and welfare of residence hall students, while also providing opportunities for their personal growth and development. It is an organization of students committed to developing leadership, honoring diversity, recognizing achievement, as well as stimulating engagement and involvement among students who reside in college and university residence halls. Through regional and national programs and services, NACURH provides leadership opportunities for students, shares residence hall programming resources and best practices, and coordinates activities with appropriate professional associations and business partners.

About the NACURH Alcohol and Substance Abuse Task Force

The NACURH Alcohol and Substance Abuse Task Force is one of four issue based task forces established by the NACURH National Board of Directors. The mission of the task force is to provide a monthly newsletter (which you are currently reading), write articles for the NACURH Link, create national case studies and implement a half-day program at NACURH 07.

The Alcohol and Substance Abuse Task Force currently consists of three members:

- Avi Zacherman, Task Force Chair - Associate Director of Administration and Finance for the NEACURH Region
- Richie Kenney - Vice President of Administration and Finance for the University of Massachusetts—Amherst Residential Leadership Association, NEACURH RCC-Elect 2007-2008
- Bri Lewis - NCC for the Ithaca College Residence Hall Association and NEACURH 2007 Regional Conference Chair

If you are interested in contributing, e-mail adafneacurh@gmail.com

NACURH 2007 Is Just Two Months AWAY!!! Keep Your Eyes Peeled for More Information Regarding The ASTAF Program! It's going to be a blast!!



One Small Step

University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

June 1st—June 4th, 2007

<http://www.mio.uwosh.edu/nacurh/>