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# The Health Reformer

## Some US Colleges Educate Students for the Drunkard's Career

...Colby College's decision to serve wine and beer to seniors in the cafeteria is controversial.

Administrators say the new program can give seniors skills they need for the real world, by teaching them to drink in a more moderate, grown-up way. But critics say the events could send a troubling message, that drinking is essential to successful adult life.

"Any program that gives that message -- that alcohol is a necessary part of getting along in the world -- is problematic," said Bill DeJong, a Boston University professor and director of the Newton-based Center for College Health and Safety. "It's certainly something they should think through."

Debate has heightened nationwide about the best way to manage drinking on campuses. Two schools of thought have collided in recent years, as traditionalists continue to argue for tough discipline and dry campuses, while leaders of the rising "social norms" movement say student alcohol problems are better combated by pushing moderation over abstinence.

The experiment at Colby began in November and attracts 30 to 40 students on most Friday nights. Seniors collect trays of food, pay \$2 each for a maximum of two drink tickets, and are admitted to the Fairchild Room by a food service worker who checks their identification at the door. No one under 21 is allowed in the room. Inside, select wines and beers are available, along with talks on food pairings and the brewing process from visiting specialists, including brewery owners and beverage sales representatives. The offerings last Friday included a 2002 sauvignon blanc from California's Kenwood Vineyards and an English ale from Magic Hat, a small specialty brewery in Vermont.

...Colby is not the only school to sponsor social drinking on campus, although it may be the first to serve beer and wine in the cafeteria. A year-old program at Bates College draws college seniors as well as faculty and other staff to the campus snack bar on Friday afternoons for food, beer, live music, and conversation, a spokesman said. Many rural schools, including Colby, Bowdoin, and Dartmouth have on-campus pubs where students of legal age can drink. At Colby, Bates, and Bowdoin, 21-year-olds can host parties in dorm lounges with a permit and training to be sure they follow school rules and state law.

Some colleges have also tried to rein in underage drinking. Bowdoin phased out fraternities five years ago, and Dartmouth in the '90s increased penalties for alcohol offenses. But Henry Wechsler, the director of Harvard's College Alcohol Study, said a softer approach, favoring education over discipline, has prevailed recently. A Harvard study published last year found that 34 percent of colleges prohibited alcohol on campus for every student, regardless of age, while 84 percent had first-year alcohol education and 90 percent offered counseling.

...Nationwide, 20 to 25 percent of college students do not drink at all and 15 percent drink too much, while "the vast majority fall in the middle and get ignored," said Michael Haines, director of the National Social Norms Resource Center at Northern Illinois University. Like other proponents of the social norms approach, Haines said the attention given to binge drinking has skewed students' perceptions, and if they realize their peers drink less than they think, they will drink less, too. He called Colby's decision "the right thing to do" and predicted that it will change attitudes on campus.

"By allowing the students who act appropriately to be visible, it should influence other students," he said.

Adelin Cai, a Colby senior from Singapore who helped plan the program, thinks it will remind some students that moderate drinking "is what my parents do, and it's something I could do, too." ...

*By Jenna Russell, Globe Staff*

Note: "Moderate drinking is the school in which men [and women] are educated for the drunkard's career. Yet so insidious is the work of these milder stimulants (i.e., beer, wine, etc.) that the highway to drunkenness is entered before the victim suspects his danger." *The Ministry of Healing, p. 332*

"No drunkard ever intended to be a drunkard. Every drunkard intended to be a moderate drinker."

*—Billy Sunday*

## Study: Exercise, Not Milk Best for Children's Bones

A leading medical journal ran an article that found little evidence that children need a milk-heavy diet to build strong bones. Now, the dairy industry is on the defensive, trying to poke holes in the research and claiming the article authors are biased.

At stake are the diets of millions of American children. Should they get their calcium by consuming as many as three servings of dairy products a day, as the federal government now suggests? Or would a

(Over, please)

glass-and-a-half of milk -- perhaps replaced by tofu or fortified orange juice -- be all right instead?

The milk skeptics are still a minority view among nutritionists. But the new article, in the March issue of Pediatrics, gave them a powerful platform.

The authors analyzed findings from 27 studies focused on diet and bone health in children and young adults. According to the authors, only nine of those studies found a relationship between calcium intake and bone health, and the effects were small.

"We didn't see any difference between kids who are consuming around 500 milligrams (of calcium) and those consuming 800 or 1200," said study co-author Amy Lanou, nutrition director for the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine.

About a glass-and-a-half of milk would provide 500 milligrams of calcium, Lanou said, but she recommends non-animal sources of calcium instead, such as dark greens, tofu, nuts and seeds, and calcium-fortified products such as rice milk, soy milk and orange juice.

Getting more calcium from dairy products simply isn't necessary, she said. "The bottom line for parents is that if your child is lactose-intolerant, or if your child doesn't like milk or is allergic to milk, you really don't have to worry," she said.

Instead, she suggests that parents look at other ways to promote the growth of strong bones. "The best option is to get your kids outside playing, getting some exercise and some sunshine, and make sure they have an overall healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes."

Lanou is a vegetarian herself, as is one of the study's other two authors. The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, based in Washington, D.C., promotes vegetarianism... *By Randy Dottinga, HealthDay Reporter*

### **Exemplary Fund Company Stops Investing in the Now Liquor-Friendly Starbucks Corp.**

A mutual fund company that invests only in businesses it deems socially responsible has dropped Starbucks Corp., citing the coffee giant's launch of a java liqueur with whiskey maker Jim Beam.

Pax World Funds, a Portsmouth, N.H.-based fund family, steers clear of companies involved in defense or weapons, tobacco, liquor or gambling. It sold 375,000 shares of Starbucks worth an estimated \$23.4 million, about 1.6 percent of its Pax World Balanced Fund portfolio, the fund said in a statement released Wednesday.

"While we continue to admire and respect many aspects of Starbucks' business and corporate citizenship activities, the company essentially forced our hand in this matter," said Anita Green, Pax World Funds' vice president of social research.

In a written response to the fund's announcement, Starbucks said it was disappointed but understood Pax World Fund's strict policy on not investing in companies that make money from the manufacture of liquor.

...Pax World Funds said it sent Starbucks CEO Orin Smith a letter in mid-February urging the company to end its deal with Jim Beam, which was announced last year.

"We have divested ourselves of these shares reluctantly and only after trying to get the company to reconsider its course of action," Green said. "Investors in Pax World Funds expect us to do what we say we will do about avoiding companies that produce liquor."

Starbucks Coffee Liqueur is sold in restaurants, bars and stores licensed to sell liquor. It is not sold in any of the coffee chain's stores.

...Jim Beam Brands Co. and the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States did not return calls for comment Wednesday.

Founded in 1971, the Pax World Funds family includes holdings in companies that sell goods and services which fund managers feel improve the quality of health care, technology, housing, food, education, pollution control, utilities and leisure activities. The funds have about \$1.6 billion in assets under management.

Shares of Starbucks fell 22 cents, or 0.4 percent, Wednesday, to close at \$51.44 on the Nasdaq Stock Market.

*By ELIZABETH M. GILLESPIE, Associated Press Writer*

Note: 'Investing' is synonym of 'supporting' and 'financing.'

And those who sustain the liquor seller in his work are sharers in his GUILT.

### **How Big Tobacco Mislead Many About the Link Between Secondhand Smoke and SIDS**

Researchers at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) reviewing once-secret industry documents have detailed an elaborate effort by a leading tobacco company to raise doubts among doctors and public health officials about the well-established link between secondhand smoke and sudden infant death syndrome [SIDS].

The UCSF analysis shows how, in one case, executives at Philip Morris International hired a consultant to write a scientific article on the causes of SIDS, and persuaded him to change his original conclusions so the article called into question the connection to secondhand smoke.

The article, published in 2001 in a respected medical journal, has been cited at least 19 times by other scientific papers, which meant it was taken seriously by medical researchers and, ultimately, the UCSF researchers say, was used to mislead doctors and public health officials about the risks of secondhand smoke.

The tobacco companies "have this strategy to exert a subtle but very important influence over the research. It is designed to get the whole medical literature off in the wrong direction," said Stanton Glantz, a UCSF professor of medicine and senior author of the analysis.

The analysis is based on once-confidential tobacco industry documents that were made public as a result of a landmark 1998 settlement of lawsuits brought by 46 states to pay for the costs of smoking-related health care. The settlement also makes public industry documents that are disclosed as part of ongoing litigation.

The new analysis by researchers at UCSF and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is...published...in the journal Pediatrics.

Glantz said it is the latest to contradict tobacco company claims that they have become better corporate citizens. As part of the 1998 federal court settlement, the companies agreed to stop inciting confusion about the evidence linking smoking and disease. "What this shows is that it's just the same old, same old," Glantz said.

A spokeswoman for Philip Morris USA said she couldn't comment on the UCSF report because company officials had not had a chance to review it. She said consumers "should be guided by the conclusions of public health officials on the effects of secondhand smoke."

Studies have shown that repeatedly exposing infants and children to secondhand smoke can cause a variety of ills, including asthma, respiratory infections and sudden infant death syndrome, or SIDS. Although most of the public health efforts to reduce SIDS have focused on getting parents to position sleeping infants on their backs, instead of their stomachs, Glantz said that secondhand smoke exposure is comparable to stomach-sleeping as a risk factor for SIDS.

A number of government agencies have noted the link with secondhand smoke, including the federal Environmental Protection Agency, the California EPA and the National Cancer Institute. Last year the U.S. surgeon general concluded that there is "a causal relationship between SIDS and maternal smoking during and after pregnancy."

Meanwhile, the UCSF report says, the tobacco industry has waged a long campaign to undermine research linking secondhand smoke with a variety of diseases, starting in the 1980s when the industry was fighting a proposal to ban smoking on commercial airlines.

The first industry effort to undermine the link between smoking and SIDS failed. In the early 1990s, a longtime tobacco industry consultant, Peter Lee, was hired by Philip Morris to write a review of the scientific literature. His article concluded that "a causal relationship for parental smoking in SIDS remains unproven."

But the article was rejected by a public health journal as biased. It was later published in a journal, *Indoor and Built Environment*, which has been shown to be a front for the tobacco industry, created by tobacco industry lawyers and consultants, according to the UCSF report.

Then, in 1997, Philip Morris hired Frank Sullivan to write a review of all known risk factors for SIDS. Sullivan, who had no previous experience in SIDS research, had participated in tobacco industry efforts to downplay the health effects of secondhand smoke, the UCSF researchers show.

The company budgeted \$50,000 to \$100,000 for completion of the article.

The UCSF report says the article was part of an overall scientific assault on evidence linking secondhand smoke and childhood health problems. A 1998 "impact assessment" written by Philip Morris' worldwide scientific affairs department describes how efforts like Sullivan's would "provide the necessary scientific background for a policy on the acceptability of smoking around children."

Sullivan's first draft concluded that both prenatal and postnatal exposure were risk factors for sudden infant death. In other words, an infant had a higher risk of dying from SIDS if the mother smoked during pregnancy or if the infant was exposed to secondhand smoke after birth.

But after sharing his draft with Philip Morris science executives and receiving their comments, Sullivan accommodated their suggestions and changed his original conclusion to focus more on the role of smoking during pregnancy as a risk for SIDS, and downplaying the risks of secondhand smoke.

To support this conclusion, Sullivan cited Lee's literature review.

In 2001, the Sullivan article was published in the British journal *"Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology,"* which is published by Blackwell Publishing Inc. and is associated with the Society for Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiological Research, a professional group.

Accompanying the article was a statement disclosing that Sullivan had received funding from Philip Morris, but the UCSF report points out that the disclosure failed to mention how the company had initiated the study or the extent to which company executives had shaped its conclusions.

A U.S. spokeswoman for Blackwell Publishing said she could not comment on the editorial policies of individual journals. She referred questions to the journal's editor in London, who could not be reached.

The Sullivan article illustrates how disclosure guidelines adopted by medical journals have repeatedly failed to reveal the motivations and involvement of the tobacco industry, the UCSF report argues, and how simply accepting tobacco industry funding can compromise scientific integrity.

*By Alex Barnum, Chronicle Staff Writer*

## **Diet, Exercise can Decrease Disease Risk Quickly**

A U.S. study indicates changes in diet and exercise can lead to a dramatic drop in a person's risk for illnesses such as diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

In as little as six weeks, study participants experienced significant reductions in body fat, cholesterol levels and blood pressure as they adopted a diet emphasizing unrefined food-as-grown, such as grains, legumes and fresh fruits and vegetables, along with implementing a 30-minute-a-day cardiovascular exercise program.

Although the notion that proper nutrition and exercise is good for you is not revolutionary, it's important that people know that major health benefits can come quickly, said Steven Aldana of Brigham Young University and author of *The Culprit and the Cure*.

The findings appear in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. *Source: United Press International*





