Is our drinking out of control?

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Penneing three consecutive columns that were more fluff than stuff (though I was really serious about the Giants), the time has come to address an issue that has caused problem—plus, I didn't have to have two columns that overlap here. Yet alcohol being a college that has a heavy beer drinking population, and the matter has worried the administration mightily, as efforts to curb alcohol abuse on and off campus has been a top priority in its agenda.

The process is a rather simplistic one. Students purchase alcohol under suspicious circumstances, then consume it under still more suspicious circumstances, then charge it into the night, their inhibitions eliminated and brains inebriated. Of course, should they run into a friendly RA or grouchy Public Safety officer, their evening comes to a crashing halt, ended by the writing down of names and promises of punishment to come.

The majority of students are put through a series of meetings with Residence Life to determine culpability and suitable penance for violations committed. Having known a large amount of students who have felt the heavy hand of the Holy Cross judicial system, I feel there is a need to discuss not the punishment for drinking violations, but rather the reasons that students are drinking alcohol in the first place.

One of the most common requirements of a student in violation is to attend a few alcohol seminars run by Ann-Mariette Matteucci. Two versions of the class exist, one simply being an alcohol awareness class for first time offenders, while second-timers attend the "Prime For Life" seminar, which is more extensive. Having just completed the Prime For Life class with Ann-Mariette, the basic premise of the courses is to discuss the reasons for drinking and possible alternatives. Having spoken to a variety of students who have attended the seminar, it seems to have little impact rather than embarrass the students in question.

This requires further analysis. A traditional definition of a binge (the word binge is poorly used) has been defined as drinking five or more beers in one night and any male that drinks five or more - these levels being when impairment sets in. Being a rather avid partygoer myself, I have seen guys and girls reach that level in an hour. People I have known have admitted to consuming up to nearly twenty beers in a day, which I think is the beginning of an alcohol problem. But that's me, I am a "passionate" type.

The problem, according to the current Holy Cross standards, is that there exists a minority of students who quite honestly cannot handle their boozes. You've seen them - wide-eyed cretins stumbling around campus in their boxers, howling at the moon while trying to shake off the effects of that bottle of rum they funneled to impress their peers. It is their crimes that damn the rest of us, the responsible drinkers who continue to confound the system by drinking to binge levels and still get to class on time, albeit a little under the weather. We epitomize everything that is right about a college atmosphere that focuses on a very difficult curriculum - work hard, play hard.

But there's clearly a problem. Dorm damage is becoming completely ridiculous. I went to shower and as I stepped in, I threw my t-shirt on its traditional resting-place, the sink. I turned around as I heard my shirt hit the floor, and came to the shocking realization that the sink had been torn off the wall. That caused me to think for a moment - what kind of person would do such a thing? I have seen drunken regulations if you will, but this has taken me aback. This requires further analysis. A traditional definition of a binge (the word binge is poorly used) has been defined as drinking five or more beers in one night and any male that drinks five or more - these levels being when impairment sets in. Being a rather avid partygoer myself, I have seen guys and girls reach that level in an hour. People I have known have admitted to consuming up to nearly twenty beers in a day, which I think is the beginning of an alcohol problem. But that's me, I am a "passionate" type.

There are two reasons for the damage. The first is that the major reason for the damage is that the students are trying to get drunk, and the second is that the students are not emptying their beer bottles before going to sleep. These are the main reasons for the damage in the residence halls.

As far as for those seniors that can’t turn back now — look forward to the next 100 days instead. Try to appreciate the next 40 plus class days (although senior slide may mask this ability to appreciate), because they may be your last. Save every moment, and realize how far you have come.