

# Editorial Comment "...Under The Influence..."

In light of the recent emotional tangent much of this campus was involved in last week as the result of the suspension of two women students, there seem to be several reflections worth noting.

The students themselves are to be congratulated for finally rallying *en masse* and voicing their feelings, opinions, and questions concerning the situation. We, as students, have the right to question any aspect of the rules and regulations in the handbook and their interpretation. Also, the right of the students to question the actions of the S.G.A. officers, being as they are the elected representatives of the student body, is undeniable. This is precisely what was done. The long awaited and overdue unification of the student body for a cause is very encouraging. It shows how working together can possibly result in action.

It's unfortunate that it took such unhappy circumstances to arouse the students from their often apathetic slumberings. Yet, aroused, they went about the questioning of the case and the rule upon which the conviction was based through the proper channels open to them—the S.G.A. It was done in a responsible and orderly manner, except for one regrettable and uncondoned rock throwing incident. It is rash actions like this that could ruin any future possibility of having the wishes of the students realized. It is hoped this type of irrational action will not reoccur.

This brings up the question of the rule on alcohol. It states "...use of alcoholic beverages, containers, or being under the influence of alcohol in any of the buildings or grounds of Louisburg College is grounds for expulsion." The women's Judicial Board based their decision concerning the two coeds on this rule. They should not be criticized for this. These women have a job to do, and the office they hold demands that they do it. Apparently, the Board acted in a way they believed was just.

The question is, what does this clearly ambiguous statement "under the influence" mean? For the women, according to Sam Perry, it means "roudiness, being unladylike, or having the smell of alcohol on one's breath." Thus, it appears that a person can consume a teaspoon of alcohol and be considered "under the influence" and expelled or suspended from school, as can a person who is undoubtedly intoxicated. This is ridiculous, as are the "Gestapo" type tactics used to determine whether a coed has alcoholic odors on her breath. This clause is unclear and can be used to fit any argument concerning any case.

It is understood that the rule is passed down to the governing bodies from year to year. It is about time this rule was looked at and reinterpreted. It should be reinterpreted objectively, realistically, and in light of the feelings and way of life prevalent today, not those of five years ago or ten years ago or longer. This desire for reinterpretation should continue to be channeled by the students through the ways open to them in the S.G.A. This should be done now, before some other student is caught in the ambiguous web of this rule and its questionable interpretation.

# Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

A word of thanks to the Students of Louisburg College.

I would like to thank all of the students of this college who were beside me in my time of trouble. I hope you will always stand up for your rights and fight for what you think is right.

I love Louisburg College and all of you kids. Please be good and I'll see you all next year. I am coming back to prove that I'm not all bad.

Sincerely,  
Barbara C. Nelson

Editor, COLUMNS:

That mockery of student self-government, the Woman's Council, has done it again. They've given Diane Hudson and Barbara Nelson the ax.

To quote Jean Perry: "The ruling that has been handed down to us is that if a girl is acting rowdy, unladylike, or has the smell of alcohol on her breath, she is considered under the influence of alcohol."

I daresay that we will all agree that rowdiness and unladylike behavior can be the result of many influences other than that of alcohol: happiness, anger, love, hatred; and that these are invalid criteria for determining whether or not a person is "under the influence of alcohol."

Smelling alcohol on the breath? Well. The SGA's definition makes one swallow of beer as incriminating as a fifth of liquor. Fair? Then consider. This interpretation was made to please the North Carolina Methodist Conference, which supports our school. They give us cash, we follow Christian doctrines. But remember: wine was the only safe thing to drink two thousand years ago. According to Louisburg's definition, then, Jesus spent the vast majority of his life under the influence of alcohol.

Do we all agree that the present interpretation is unjust, invalid, and superannuated? Let me offer an alternate, referring specifically to a recent Board decision.

It is not my intention to even attempt to criticize the kangaroo-court proceedings which have resulted in this injustice. Everybody knows what is wrong with the holler-than-thou Woman's council; and there are very few students outside these groups who concur with the "regulations" which govern student behavior and give these organizations their power.

I am, rather, writing to present a few facts which should be brought to the attention of the Woman's Council, which should be helpful in determining what "under the influence" means. I am not acquainted with the details of Diane Hudson's case, but the facts about Barbara Nelson are so clear as to be undeniable:

- (1) The Acorn states that "being under the influence of alcohol in any of the buildings or grounds of Louisburg College is grounds for expulsion."
- (2) Barbara Nelson, by her



Milk Today and Everyday!

own admission, drank either one or two 12-oz. cans of beer on the night of April 8.

(3) Collier's Encyclopedia, under an article on "Alcoholism," states that "two bottles of beer (24 oz.) produce a percentage of 0.03% alcohol in the blood of a 150 lb. person."

(4) Barbara Nelson weighs 125 lbs. This means that she had 0.036% alcohol in her blood.

(5) Patrolman Byrd of the North Carolina State Police, to whom I spoke Tuesday morning, told me that "the North Carolina State Legislature has ruled that a person is legally under the influence of alcohol when he has 0.10% alcohol in his blood."

Barbara Nelson was not under the influence of alcohol on the night of April 8. She had been drinking; but there are no rules against coming on campus after you have been drinking; only against coming on campus "under the influence of alcohol."

The State Police are surely a more valid source of information than the clearly self-contradictory interpretation of the Woman's council. It is, therefore, logical that Barbara has not violated one single Louisburg College regulation. Thus, I feel, her expulsion is totally unjust.

It is, therefore, my advice to the Woman's Council that they immediately draft a letter of apology to Barbara Nelson, and, more importantly, that they withdraw their invalid decision to expell her.

Any member of the Faculty, Administration, or Woman's Council is invited to attempt to justify this decision in the light of the above facts; in this paper, or to me, at box 976.

We, the students, have signed a contract agreeing to obey the regulations of Louisburg College, no matter how "Mickey Mouse" they may be. Most of us do. Those that don't, get punished. All right. But please, don't kick out any innocent students. Please?

Daniel C. W. Freeman

Editor:

Any student may drink off campus--no matter what his (or her) drinking habits are. If he comes back on campus, he then may be judged "under the influence of alcohol"--no matter the quantity of consumption.

Girls who have consumed any alcoholic beverage are caught

in a dilemma. (1) They may indulge off campus, but (2) must return to campus that same day to honor their check-in time. According to the handbook, she will be found guilty for consumption of alcohol.

How can a college that prohibits drinking only "on campus" rectify itself in prosecuting those students who conform to the alcohol rule--indulging off campus--expect them to invite persecution by honoring the check-in time rule. This applies to men also. A man who drinks beer may not return to campus.

The interpretation of the alcoholic rule that was presented to the students last Tuesday night has not been precedented. Instead, the clause "under the influence of alcohol in any of the building or grounds" has been left solely to the interpretation of the respective councils for each individual case presented to them. With this discrimination left to the council members, the councils decisions may (and have) impinged upon personal bias.

This last clause is definitely obscure with no definite interpretation; but something may be done--and by the students themselves.

This rule is under the General Rules and Regulations for Men and Women and not an article of the Constitution of the Louisburg College Student Government Association. Therefore, I propose that a motion be passed at one or both council meetings concerning the changing of the rule and carried to the cabinet (which should be open to the student public). Here the motion should be submitted to a committee composed of a member of the S. G. A. Cabinet, the Dean of Students, and members of the S. G. A. public nominated from the floor. When the motion is ready to be presented as a bill, before the end of the semester, it should be presented to an open meeting of the cabinet and voted on.

The bill, not being an amendment to the Constitution, need not follow the procedure of Article XII of the school constitution, as was stated at the emergency cabinet meeting.

I see no other way, within the framework of democratic procedure, that the changing of this rule or any other one under the General Rules and Regulations for Men and Women may be altered.

William C. Barrett III

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