

DRINKING

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Both say the main goal behind the series is to inform viewers about how widespread binge drinking is at the University, why students become involved and how University officials are working to reduce overall binge drinking on campus.

"We wanted to compare UO to the national scene and see what the administrators are doing about it," Thomas said. "What we found is that binge drinking at the University seems to be lower, but not significantly, and it's still a problem here as well."

Monday night's report indicated that two out of three students drink to get drunk, although most students interviewed said they were aware of the risks involved. Many said binge drinking was "just part of the college tradition." The report went on to state that 70 percent of the students had sexual encounters while drunk that would not have occurred had they been sober.

Edel Davenport, a counselor who works with students on alcoholism issues at the University's Counseling Center, says one of the biggest reasons that binge drinking is a problem has to do with students' misperceptions about it.

According to Davenport, many students see drinking as acceptable because they perceive it to be "what everyone else is doing." She also said students have a strong misperception as to the amount people around them drink, which leads to students drinking more in an attempt to meet perceived amounts.

"The biggest problem isn't nec-

essarily peer pressure per se as much as this perceived notion that drinking is what everyone is doing, which goes along with fitting in and wanting to have a good time," Davenport said. "It is these misperceptions that need working on."

A study conducted at Northern Illinois University in 1988 and 1989 showed that students perceived binge drinking to occur among 69-70 percent of their peers. In actuality, binge drinking among students at Northern Illinois University during those years was only 43-45 percent.

Comparatively, the study found that binge drinking at other surveyed colleges equaled 42-43 percent of the student body participating in binge drinking activities.

Analysis of this study supports Davenport's belief that changing misperceptions about binge drinking will help in turning the problem around.

The study found that changing the misperceptions of college students as a strategy to prevent binge drinking is an effective, low cost strategy that provides quick results. The cost of this effort conducted during the 1989-90 academic year at Northern Illinois University was less than \$3,000.

The study also found that any individual or agency that focuses student attention on overuse of alcohol or exaggerates the prevalence of binge drinking, may actually increase the likelihood of student misperception of normative drinking — which leads to a promotion of binge drinking.

Another perception that Davenport has noticed is the belief that binge drinking mainly occurs among athletes or fraternities or

TV SERIES

KEZI Channel 9 is airing a three-part series on campus consumption titled "Books and Booze." The series began Monday and airs at 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. each day. Series reporter is David Reese and producer is April Thomas.

- **MONDAY:** How widespread is binge drinking on campus?
- **TODAY:** Why do students drink so much?
- **WEDNESDAY:** How is the University working to change the trend by cutting binge drinking on campus?

sororities. In reality, she says, the problem is quite widespread.

"I think it's all over the place," Davenport said. "A lot of freshmen come into the University with a problem already, but on the other end of the spectrum a lot of seniors drink as the problem grows more chronic over the years. It's on-campus, off-campus ... it's going on everywhere."

Davenport says the best way for students to alter misperceptions is to become informed about binge drinking and to examine why they are choosing to participate in it.

"New Directions," a one-credit class that starts tonight, will provide students with an opportunity to explore options for maintaining one's health and well-being, plus investigate creative alternatives for coping with stress. For registration, contact the Office of the Registrar.

International Student Health Conference



"Health Challenges of the 1990's: International and Student Perspective"

This conference will address a host of issues on friendship, intimacy and health such as, among others, healthy intimacy and sexuality, the importance of cross-cultural communication, health risks, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, leadership and volunteering opportunities.

The conference takes place on May 12-13, 1995 at the Erb Memorial Union, University of Oregon.

The format will include plenary sessions, breakout sessions, student panel and a mini health fair. The Conference will feature two keynote speakers, **Milton Tam** - from Program for Appropriate Technology in Health, Seattle, and **Donna Reed** - from People of Color Against AIDS Network, Seattle.

For further information contact Naghmeh Moshtael, Health Education Program, Student Health Center, at 346-2728



UO Student Health Center
Health Education Program

ET ALS

MEETINGS

Student Senate will meet tonight at 7:30 in the EMU Board Room. For more information, call 346-3749.

PIOT Club will sponsor a health sciences meeting tonight at 6:30 in EMU Cedar Rooms C and D. For more information, call 687-7226.

MISCELLANEOUS

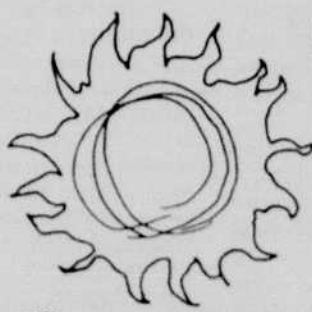
Outdoor Program will sponsor a presentation about outdoor resources on the Internet tonight at 7:30 in Room 112 Willamette. For more information, call 346-4365.

Pre-Health Sciences Center will sponsor a workshop on applying to medical school

today at 5 p.m. in Room 100 Willamette. For more information, call 346-3211.

RELIGION

Newman Center will sponsor a Catholic Bible study today in EMU Century Room A at 3 p.m. For more information, call 346-4468.



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