

# Monologue

## Legislation banning alcohol ads won't eliminate abuse

By D. Dietrich  
Arts Editor

The mothers of the world have apparently been falling down on their jobs. The lack of maternal guidance is at the root of some overbearing proposals made to Congress by a few people who would like to be America's conscience-at-large.

I'm referring to the suprisingly widely supported group of lobbyists and statesmen who would like to ban the use of alcohol commercials on the television medium. This age-old problem lies in citing the difference between use and abuse.

The people representing Project SMART (Stop Marketing Alcohol on Radio and Television) propose a strict prohibition of all beer and wine commercials. They have determined that such advertising has propelled product consumption to an all-time high. Their underlying motive is to stop the widespread use of alcohol, especially by minors, and the fatal habit of drinking and driving. These are definitely noble aspirations.

On the other side we have the defenders of a legal product who have as much right to advertise as any other producer, as long as the ad content is neither abusive nor

vulgar. Quite frankly, more of the tolerable commercials on television today are for various intoxicants.

The experts say alcohol is harmless in moderation. In fact, some doctors even recommend a small glass of wine on occasion. Even though the problem lies not in the drug itself but in the user of it, there appears to be a trend toward placing blame on everyone and everything but the user of alcohol.

For instance, restaurant and tavern owners have to somehow determine their patron's blood-alcohol level, and the party host must assume the role of guardian for irresponsible guests. Now

the fault of alcohol abuse extends to the effectiveness of advertisements which supposedly corrupt the weak human mind.

The important question here is to what extent should the federal government be involved in shaping the morality of society without infringing on basic human rights.

There's no doubt that alcohol is a carelessly abused drug. Representatives of SMART say they would at the very least like to see an educational campaign touting the dangers of over-consumption. The addition of a few public service messages is certainly a positive move, but it is not the responsibility of the liquor companies to account for every unstable character.

The ban on beer and wine commercials is being likened

to the ban on cigarette advertisements. The hazards of both substances can be well-supported, but for some reason alcohol abuse is still considered a part of white-collar crime to which there is no easily attained panacea.

Alcohol is such an integrated part of society, the very idea of 'out of sight, out of mind' in regards to advertising is absurd. When it comes to a final vote, I don't think the alcohol industry will have to give up their airwave time as the tobacco industry did, nor should they. There are more non-smokers than non-drinkers in the world. If the ban does by some quirk manage to become legislation, I'm going to start looking for warning labels on potato chip bags.

### Community Corner

By Fritz Wenzel

**ALL IN YOUR MIND:** An English instructor here at Clackamas Community College was describing the library in a rather unique way the other day in class. Alan Widerburg said that the library can be an intimidating place. "You walk through those library doors and all of a sudden you are confronted with all your ignorance. It surrounds you. There are shelves and shelves of it," he said.

In fact, the storage of information on microfiche and microfilm is increasing, and this compression process multiplies the student's inadequacy.

Widerburg encourages the student to dive right into the mental fray, though, by explaining that as the student reads small amounts, like a book at a time, he gains a tiny friend here and there scattered around the room. After a little while, he has a pocket of allies developed, from which the student can leap into new areas and new stack rooms, dancing up and down the Dewey Decimal System with utter confidence.

**AD-VICES:** Outside the Community Center you can, if you are so driven, pick up a copy of *USA Today*, which I did on Monday. I noticed the paper is trying to meet a need that doesn't really need meeting, and which seems to be a specialty of the paper's, as is witnessed by its mere existence.

I am talking about their new "classified ad" section that began Monday.

Here you can find that computer cover you have been searching high and low for. Not just any computer cover, mind you, but designer covers with styles ranging from the Wall Street design (made of ticker tape?) to the tropic design (that might come with a free autographed photo of Don Ho?)

Another great buy might be the Amish Cookbook, which you can pick up for just under eight dollars. The big savings here is

realized when you buy six copies, which would cost you only \$24. I may do that. I could put one on the living room table right next to my Oregon Coast book, and one in the bedroom. One would go well in the garage next to my Toyota Repair Manual, and I wouldn't feel comfortable without one in the trunk of the car. I would, of course, leave one in the kitchen, and maybe give the last one to my mother-in-law. Either that or I would line the birdcage with it so that everyone could get in on the joy of Amish cooking.

Only in *USA Today*.

**ON A ROLL:** If you think you have had an off day, consider the problems of the killer taxi of Bermuda as documented in *The Book of Lists 2*. Two brothers were killed by the same taxi driven by the same man carrying the same passenger while they were riding the same moped on the same street exactly a year apart. Erskine Ebbin and his brother Neville were both 17 when they died.

I feel sorry for the two boys, of course, but that passenger has got to take another look at how he gets around town, don't you think?

Another stunning coincidence centers around a four-year-old boy who was saved from drowning off a Salem, Mass. beach by a woman named Alice Blaise. Nine years later on the same beach the youngster paddled his canoe out into the water and pulled a drowning man from the water. The man was Alice Blaise's husband. Now that puts real meaning into the phrase "If I can ever do anything to repay you..."

**TAKING A BIG BITE:** Monday a New York jury awarded a high school cook \$10,000 in a libel case that arose out of something that was printed in the school newspaper. The cook sued because the paper said her food was not fit for dogs. No comment on this one.

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