



Editorial:

One bourbon...

Alcohol, to many, is the substance that embodies the very spirit of college, aside from all that learning and stuff. For others, usually those who are more busy, coffee seems to be a more effective substitute. Regardless, this is Alcohol Awareness Week, a time when Rider attempts to advocate responsible drinking for students who choose to drink and are of legal age and increase awareness of the dangers of alcohol abuse and drunk driving.

This program includes a bunch of supposedly fun activities that are supposed to educate students about alcohol such as "Root-Beer Pong" and a "Mocktail" party. Although these activities are well intentioned and they might be very effective educational tools, one has to wonder how many people who are actually candidates for potential dangerous over-consumption of alcohol will attend faux beer-pong tournaments or gatherings with virgin cocktails.

Also, this program is aimed at those who are of legal age to consume alcohol which is only about 25 percent of the student body.

It is an unavoidable reality that college students will drink, legally or not. To aim programs like this, which could be very valuable, only toward those who are 21-years of age is a bit naïve. It's the same mistake that the D.A.R.E. program has been making since its advent. They preach abstinence rather than compromising by educating people who are very likely to come in contact with illegal substances.

Likewise, Alcohol Awareness Week should be aimed at all students, since all college students could potentially be in a position to consume alcohol at some point in their college career.

Some might say that extending the program to underage students would be a blatant contradiction of University policy since Rider does not condone underage drinking, and neither does the state of New Jersey for that matter.

It's true that this school's rules don't allow for underage students to drink, yet somehow, it happens. It has always happened, and it will always happen, unless something very drastic occurs that will prevent it. So why not acknowledge that fact rather than ignore it?

Alcohol Awareness Week should be aimed at all students so that the negative affects of excessive alcohol consumption can be taught to all those who might potentially come in contact with it.

This is basically a matter of embracing problems, like underage drinking, that can never really be solved or abolished. By embracing them, we can understand the problem more fully and avoid many of the negative consequences by taking preventative measures like Alcohol Awareness Week that could really help people deal with their encounters with college drinking.

This weekly editorial expresses the majority opinion of The Rider News editorial board and is written by the Opinion section editor.

Letters to the Editor: *The Rider News* welcomes letters on all subjects of interest to the campus community. Letters must be typed and include the name, address, phone number and signature of the author for verification. Send to *The Rider News* via e-mail (ridernews@rider.edu), campus mail, or hand deliver to Centennial House. All letters must be received by midnight Monday preceding publication. *The Rider News* reserves the right to edit all letters for space and clarity.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds."

— Albert Einstein

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY ...

Oct. 19, 1781

Lord Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, Virginia on this date. This event marked the end of the American Revolutionary War.

Oct. 20, 1973

On this date the "Saturday night massacre" took place at the White House. President Richard Nixon fired the special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox, Attorney General Elliot Richardson, and Deputy Attorney General William D. Ruckelshaus.



The Way It Is:

Punch and Judy relationships

If you have been in a relationship you've probably had your share of ups and downs. For most, the occasional difference of opinion or argument will help make the relationship healthier and stronger.

Unfortunately, there are those couples whose fights escalate to abuse. Abusive relationships can consist of physical, emotional, verbal or sexual mistreatment. Typical behavior patterns include threats of intimidation, a partner who criticizes your every move, or physical violence.

Women are believed to be victims of mistreatment more than men, but it would be foolish to say such treatment is limited to just one sex.

According to the University of Cincinnati Psychological Services Center, it is estimated that one out of three college students will suffer abuse at some point in a relationship. This abuse can range from a single episode to chronic abuse.

More alarming is that the second leading cause of death among women ages 20 to 45 is battery. This rate is much higher than injuries suffered from muggings, rape and car accidents combined.

Usually, we assume that violent crimes are committed by strangers we've never met. In truth, romantic partners are responsible for 50 percent of these acts while only 20 percent actually involve strangers.

The severity of this abuse can and

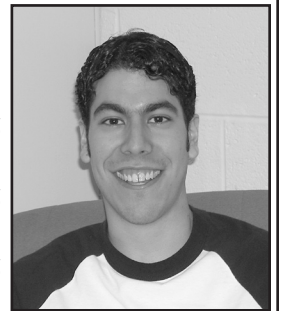
often does increase over time.

Victims often begin "identifying with the abuser" and start seeing themselves as inferior and deserving of criticism and abuse.

Chronic abusers often times apologize for their actions using phrases like "it will never happen again," when too often, it does. Sadly, insecurity leads many, hoping that maybe this time their partner has turned the corner to stay. The reality is that no change will occur without professional help.

Honestly, no matter how much you love this person, it simply is not worth all the suffering you face every day. Nobody deserves to be the victim in any type of relationship.

If you are in an abusive relationship or know someone that is, please try and get either yourself or your friend some help. Rider has an underused counseling center where any student can go and receive confidential support. I would urge any member of the community to take advantage of its services.



Roger Alvarado

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Not What I Expected:

The hidden truth behind being an RA

So you think you want to become a Resident Advisor (RA) at Rider? THINK HARDER. Students, faculty and administration alike on this campus need to be made aware of the hostile environment that surrounds the Residence Life Office (RLO) on this campus. As a former RA, I am familiar with RLO's staff, mantra, and expectations of their RAs. Of course there are some great aspects of Residence Life. For example, they attract a diverse group of responsible, involved, and caring students every year to be RAs. RLO also has a well-organized, comprehensive training program that covers everything and anything an RA may encounter.

At first, RLO comes across as an enthusiastic and supportive staff that is truly willing to help their student RAs develop and reach their full potential. However, I was surprised when I was met with problems ranging from discrepancies in time to something as simple as not saying "hello" to my fellow RAs as I passed them in the building. I understand that being an RA is a demanding position that requires balancing a variety of responsibilities, but I find it hard to believe that restricting an RA's involvement in campus or social activities makes for a well-balanced and effective RA. Instead of being praised for all of the beneficial things I did for my residents and the hall, I was unnecessarily criticized for aspects of my personality and habits that were clearly not harming anyone. Because I felt confident socializing with my residents, I continuously felt pressure from my Resident Director (RD) and other RA's that I could not possibly be doing my job well. However, based

on experience, it is obvious that students respect RAs who treat them as equals and take the time to get to know them.

RDs and RLO staff pride themselves so much on helping their RAs adjust to the new environment and being flexible in terms of meeting student needs. After all, they did hire us believing that we were capable of being good RAs, but throughout my term as an RA, I saw very little of this. I quickly realized that the other RAs in my building were not as supportive as I had expected them to be or as they made themselves out to be. If we are supposed to be there for each other and work as one "team," then why were they not making an effort to include me? Time and time again, I went to returning RAs to ask for assistance when I was unsure of what to do or how to handle a situation and the only thing another RA came to me with was help turning off an alarm clock! I put myself out there and was dissatisfied with the reaction of the rest of my "team."

After being penalized for being less than five minutes late for a staff meeting, I feared for my life of ever being late to any RA responsibility again. Basically, I lived my life as an RA in fear: fear of not doing something right, fear of being late, and fear of saying the wrong thing. Believe me, I am as outgoing and responsible as any RA, and constantly feeling this way did in no way make my life easy.

In all honesty, I expected to put my job ahead of my social life and ahead of my involvement in other activities, but what I did not expect was to work with a group of people that were constantly questioning

why I wanted to be an RA, and questioning my friends and my other priorities. To be perfectly blunt, in the eyes of RLO, it doesn't matter how qualified you are or how much good you do for your hall. What matters is that you are willing to become best friends with the other RAs in your building and inform them and the RD of your whereabouts at every moment that you are not in class. To any rational person, this should seem just a bit extreme.

If you don't mind being criticized for your involvement in other campus organizations or taking night classes, and acting happy to miss a meeting or another activity, then being an RA may be for you. Don't expect your talents and witty personality to be welcomed with open arms. Instead, you must abide by RLO's every demand (as if attending two semesters worth of RA classes and week long training sessions weren't enough) in a manner that they see fit.

Unfortunately, wanting to help residential students adapt to college life isn't a good enough reason to be an RA anymore. I am not just writing this column to show the unfairness in my own situation, but I intended to enlighten other students who may be thinking of becoming RAs as to just how stressful the position can be.



Brooke
Olster

Political Perspective:

Bloody unrest in Ireland

With the recent suspension of the power sharing government in Northern Ireland (Ulster), one is left asking themselves, can there ever be a lasting peace in Ireland? The answer is yes; however, there are several steps which must first be taken.

Just days after a Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) raid on Sinn Fein's office's in Belfast in which a supposed Irish Republican Army (IRA) spy scandal was uncovered, Unionist leaders announced that unless Sinn Fein, Ireland's largest nationalist party, was barred from the power sharing government, they would resign leading to the collapse of the coalition. In an effort to prevent this, British Prime Minister Tony Blair suspended the government, giving complete control of Ulster back to Britain.

Although Republicans still have a lot of work to do, to blame the current troubles on Sinn Fein and the IRA would simply be unfair. If anything, the Provisional IRA has done its part

since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement to prove that it is dedicated to the peace process. This past summer, in a historic move, the IRA released a statement apologizing for the deaths of non-combatants in the current phase of the struggle. Top IRA leaders also played a key role in suppressing violence during this past summer's "orange parades," and finally the IRA has been on cease-fire since 1998, despite continued loyalist attacks.

Perhaps one of the key elements to insure peace in Ulster is as the Good Friday Agreement promised the foundation of a police service who is representative of the community it polices, democratically accountable for its actions, and free from partisan political control. When the long hated Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) was disbanded, the new PSNI promised change; however, Catholics in Ulster see little difference between the two. The PSNI has done little or nothing to stop the continued murders and sectar-

ian attacks against Catholic families and neighborhoods, and have allowed loyalist pipe bombings to continue. If there is going to be peace, their must first be a new policing service.

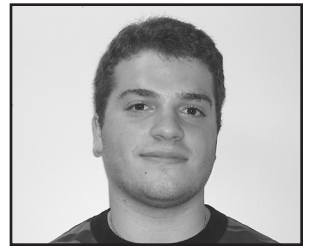
Next, we come to the issue of weapons decommissioning, another key step in the peace process. The IRA has already begun to decommission some of its weapons; however, we must understand that this is going to be a long process, and for Britain to say this must happen immediately is simply unreasonable. The IRA cannot begin to fully decommission its weapons until loyalist attacks cease, and Unionists begin to cooperate with Sinn Fein.

In a recent statement to *The New York Times* Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams said "there is no dual strategy to mix politics and paramilitary activity by Sinn Fein. Our commitment is to exclusively peaceful means of securing a democratic peace settlement that will see the end of all armed groups, including the Irish Republican Army."

In order for there to be peace in Ulster, both sides must cooperate with each other.

It is clear that no one wants any more violence, and the Good Friday Agreement may be the best hope for peace. Finally in order to ensure peace, Britain must withdraw all of its troops from Ulster. Peace will come, but it will not happen overnight.

In the words of the late Republican activist, Bobby Sands, "Everyone, Republican or otherwise, has their own particular part to play. No part is too great or too small. No one is too old or too young to do something."



Joe
Rotkowitz

Letter to the Editor:

Sports column didn't fumble after all

I'm writing in response to Keith Kelley's Letter to the Editor titled "Sports column dropped the ball." Keith mentioned that he's been disappointed in watching Rider athletics for the past four years. I have reason to very highly doubt that he has been to a game or match for every single sport at Rider U. Either that, or Keith isn't the "big supporter" that he claims he is.

Keith said, "These two sports [field hockey and baseball] are the only Rider sports that have reached their conference championship game the past two years."

Well, Keith, you obviously don't know your facts and statistics. The Rider men's swimming and diving team placed third overall at MAAC championships last year. Many of the men's individual events and relays placed so high, that they went on to

NCAA championships. The women's swimming and diving team gave an outstanding performance and won their MAAC championship two years ago, the first team in Rider's history to win a MAAC championship title.

Now how can you say that no other sports have reached their conference championship in the past two years? Keith, maybe before YOU make an argument and claim to be such a great supporter, you should get your statistics straight.

Katie Bateman
Junior
Marine Biology