



MADISON OP-ED SERIES

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Drug Abuse Has Become Too-Matter-of-Fact Among College Students

by Peter Schorsch

Eighty. That was the percentage a fraternity brother used when estimating the number of students taking some form of illegal drug at the massive "Spring Weekend" party in Panama City held recently. An ad hoc celebration made up of college students from the many eduplexes throughout the South, Spring Weekend is but one more annual party for those who did not party enough during spring break.

I did not want to believe that that many college students - America's best and brightest, and perhaps your sons and daughters - could be using drugs. I began to doubt the veracity of the source imparting the information. Maybe this friend of mine was mixed up with the wrong crowd, or was witness to an isolated segment of population attending Spring Weekend.

But this brother of mine is a clean-cut young man. With mid-western good looks (even a well trimmed flattop) and values straight from the heartland, he is the embodiment of middle class students.

Yet, he swears that "everyone" was either taking hits off a bong, dropping acid, or snorting coke. "And you've got to remember," he said, "this was being done with a beer in hand."

Alcohol use among Florida's college students has long been identified as a problem on university campuses. Unfortunately, alcohol abuse, in all its horrible forms - binge drinking, drunk-driving, underage consumption - has become a cliché. The idea of a drunk college student has taken on stereotypical proportions, and no longer surprises or alarms much of society.

Board of Regents member Steve Ufelder recently called attention to the level of alcohol abuse on campus, warning that "there's more binge drinking on our campuses than there's ever been and there's never been a shortage of alcohol in fraternity houses."

Uhfelder was worried about a series of incidents that have taken place on college campuses stemming from the abuse of alcohol. Subsequently, he wrote Chancellor Adam Herbert, urg-

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