

Tanked for the first time

"I'll only have two Mike's Lemonades," I promised myself as I left Shirreff Hall on a pub crawl last weekend. Besides, I've never had alcohol in my 19 years so I'll take it easy. Needless to say, I did keep my promise. Well sort of. I added in half a shot or so and was totally gone after that.

Having done my schooling at a private school in Zimbabwe since I was six years old, I was brought up with plenty of discipline and therefore gained a lot of self-control. In high school, I didn't find it necessary to indulge myself in alcohol — at that point in my life, it was unthinkable (and after this experience, I do agree) that I should be found in a bar

drinking.

So I stayed away from the alcohol and didn't think much of the matter until last Saturday, when I decided, at the spur of the moment, that I wanted to find out exactly what was so exciting about having alcohol at a bar.

One might be tempted to ask me why I picked a pub crawl, but the reason is that I wanted a lot of people around me and, besides that, it was just a coincidence.

After moving from the Argyle to Merrill's, I was convinced that I was sober and could probably take another drink. Yes, I took another

drink. I stood up. From that point onwards, I realized I wasn't "myself".

I could still move one leg in front of the other — but somehow everything in the bar seemed more vivid. The lights seemed brighter, the smell of cigarette in my nostrils from people sitting next to me seemed more intense at that moment than at any other moment in my life. Everything anyone did or said seemed humorous, my head felt light. I was drunk. But I was in control — well, I wanted to believe so.

So, as we moved from bar to bar, you can all guess who was singing — or, rather, shouting — the loudest. I must admit that although I was drunk, I could still control myself — in a way. At least now I can still look back and remember every detail of the night. Above all, I do remember where the nicest bars are — of course most of you would agree that little bit of knowledge is most essential.

Before I had experienced drinking myself, I had asked people, especially the girls on my floor in Second Old Eddy, what it was like to get drunk. Often I received answers like, "Oh Mufaro, it's really not that bad. Everybody here drinks and they have a good time."

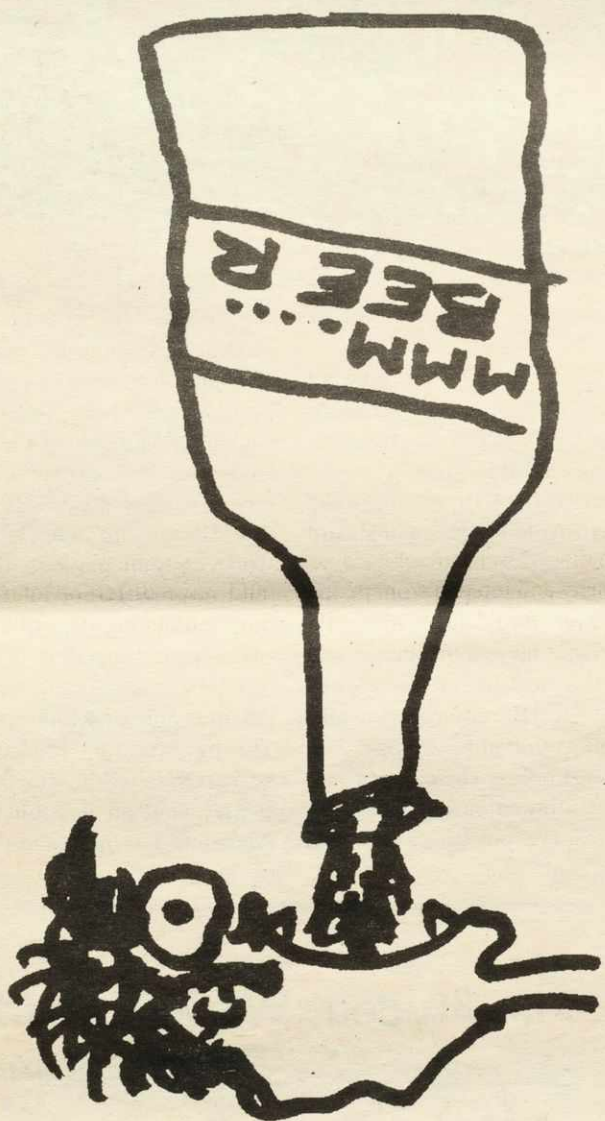
However, what I hadn't heard is how the morning after the 'few' drinks can almost (I certainly believe) kill a person with sickness. It seems as if the people that I had spoken to did not experience the ill-at-ease feeling that is familiar to most of us.

I experienced that feeling the next morning. No, I did not throw up, but I did feel queasy enough to avoid food for the rest of the day. Upon being asked by my friends whether I would ever drink again, the answer is "No, no, never again".

But will I ever go to a bar again? "Hell, yes!" I think now I can safely say I have been initiated as a member of the Halifax community.

MUFARO CHAKABUDA

EDITORIAL



graphic by John Cullen

LETTERS

Apathetically disinterested

To the editor,

I am writing in response to the "Streeter" poll which appeared in the Mar. 4 edition of the Gazette. The question was "Will you vote in the DSU election?" The overwhelming response to that question was "no" and most individuals cited "not knowing anything about it" as their reason.

It is the job of the election committee to advertise the election and to ensure both the campaigns and elections are run smoothly. The responsibility does not end there however — students should also take some initiative and learn what is going on around them on campus.

What I would suggest for the future is this: if a student sees advertising and is unsure what it's for — ask. If a student sees campaign posters, but doesn't "know enough about the candidates", spoil the ballot.

It is disturbing that so few students care about this issue and that the largest university in the Maritimes consistently has one of the lowest voter turnouts. It is high time the students at Dalhousie end the apathy as well as ignorance and show some interest in their Union.

Sean Moreman
DSU Chief Returning Officer

Canada subverts East Timor

To the editor,

I am writing about the Canada Pledges Support for UN Intervention in East Timor article.

While Canada's about face on the issue of East Timor's independence is indeed a welcome change, and brings to a close perhaps the most shameful chapter in the history of Canadian foreign policy, it should not be supposed that there was anything principled behind the March 26 announcement, or that it represents even a slight deviation from business-as-usual in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Recall that Axworthy and Chretien refused to uphold East Timor's right to self-determination for years while Suharto was in power and the genocide was ongoing when such support would have been meaningful but might have jeopardized profits for corporate Canada.

Recall that they tightened Canada's trade relations with Suharto, increased military sales, and ignored all calls for an arms embargo against the dictatorship.

Recall that when Suharto — one of the world's most spectacular mass murderers and torturers, and the architect of the genocide in East Timor — came to Canada for APEC '97, not only was he accorded full state honours, but was even protected from the embarrassment of having to witness Canadian protestors thanks to the government-orchestrated police suppression of their basic democratic rights.

It was only when the US had changed its position on East Timor, when Indonesian President Habibie himself appeared ready to let East Timor go, when international support was at its peak and independence was beginning to look inevitable, did Axworthy

acknowledge Canada's support. It was exactly the same when Suharto was ousted. The Indonesian economy had collapsed, the democratic/student movement inside the country had achieved a momentum that was quickly becoming unstoppable. Madeleine Albright had given the Roman thumbs down, and the hook was already dragging Suharto offstage when Chretien suddenly decided, in his selfless solidarity with suffering Indonesians that, "Suharto should do the right thing and step down."

As these and similar farces demonstrate, international law, justice, compassion, or principle have little impact on Canadian foreign policy, despite the rhetoric.

Nothing could make this clearer than the 23-year sell-out of the East Timorese, whose freedom, when it does come, will owe exactly nothing to the government of this country, which has so long played an active and despicable role in subverting it.

Brooks Kind

Pointed propaganda

To the editor,

We wanted to express our concern about the distasteful photographs on the back of the Gazette. Yeah right! Who the hell cares...

Recently, campus has been polluted with an overdose of women's rights propaganda. There are so many other issues that need attention around this campus rather than wasting time and paper on how men are supposedly always degrading women.

Every time there seems to be a lull in the women's activist community, they go out and pick useless fights. Why? It seems to us that these people have no sense of humour and don't know how to let loose and have a good time.

For example, the pictures on the back of the Gazette are quite comical and should in no way be offensive to any party (in reference to the complaints in *the Daily News*). In fact, we have two close personal friends who sacrificed themselves on the back of the Gazette and don't feel they have succumbed to the urges of males.

And while we are on the topic, what's the deal with *Playboy*? We don't know if you "left wingers" realize this, but every time *Playboy* is mentioned in any way, shape, or form, it promotes the magazine to a huge audience of unsuspecting readers. Hey folks, that's all part of Hef's plan of world domination through the gentlemen's magazine industry.

We realize we are dragging this dead horse through the muck, but everyone with half — no one-tenth — of a brain should realize how this doesn't affect any aspect of our exciting lives, and really, paper wrapped people isn't gonna kill us.

To some, we may seem like the "average male cocksuckers", but sit back and think... did the Gazette use guns to have these people pose maché style?

To women who disagree, we direct your attention to the Department of Women's Studies for a Bachelor of Arts in Useless Complaints.

Mark Rabin and Ryan Campbell

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