

Quarterly newsletter posted at
www.MarinInstitute.org.

Amon Rappaport
Executive Editor

Laurie Leiber
Contributing Editor

Tiffany Steeves
Design & Production

Contributors: **Lindsay Leon-Atkins, Magdalena Hurwitz and Tiffany Steeves.**

Printed on Recycled Paper.

Copyright© Marin Institute
2004. Permission granted to
reproduce for educational
purposes.

MARIN INSTITUTE STAFF

Mark Pertschuk, J.D.
Executive Director

Amon Rappaport, M.P.P.
Communications Director

Jessica Wolin, M.P.H., M.C.P.
*Associate Director
Community Support*

Jian Lu, M.B.A.
Controller

Laurie Leiber, M.P.H.
Media Advocacy Director

Shailushi Baxi-Ritchie, M.P.H.
Manager, Technical Assistance

Lynn Tsumoto Dix, M.L.I.S.
Resource Center Manager

Gail Greene
Fiscal & HR Manager

Leigh Steffy
Assistant Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Linda M. Bosma, M.A.
(Vice President)
Minneapolis, MN

Rosario Casanova, Ph.D.
Novato, CA

Michael S. Cunningham
Sacramento, CA

Rev. Robert James Current
(Treasurer)
Novato, CA

James Loyce, Jr.
San Francisco, CA

Larry Meredith, Ph.D.
San Rafael, CA

Mark Montobbio, J.D.
Novato, CA

Poorva Pandey
Novato, CA

Carlos E. Peña
Tiburon, CA

Linda A. Pratt, M.A.
(Secretary)
Oakland, CA

Julio Rodriguez
Chicago, IL

Maureen Sedonaen
(President)
San Francisco, CA

Joseph H. Therrien
Fairfax, CA

New Fact Sheets on the Web



Need to get your facts straight? The Marin Institute recently released a new series of Fact Sheets for advocates and others seeking information about today's most pressing alcohol issues:

- ◆ Adult Accountability
- ◆ Alcohol Industry "Responsibility" Programs
- ◆ Marketing to Youth
- ◆ Second-Hand Effects of Alcohol Use

Use these Fact Sheets to expose the alcohol industry's worst practices and help make the case for other environmental change. Check them out on the Web at www.MarinInstitute.org/alcohol_industry/facts.htm



24 Belvedere Street
San Rafael, CA 94901

p: 415-456-5692
f: 415-456-0491
www.MarinInstitute.org

Solutions to Community Alcohol Problems



MISSION STATEMENT

We are an alcohol industry watchdog and a resource for solutions to community alcohol problems.

Alcohol Industry Loses Alcopop Battle in CA	1
Fans Fight Back for Alcohol-Safe Sports	1
Quick Stats	3
Drinking-Driving Problems: a Community Responsibility	4
Thumbs Up/Down	5
Rappers Pass More Hard Stuff	6
Communities Tell Big Alcohol, "Stop Using Kids As Billboards!"	7

Alcohol Industry Loses Alcopop Tax Battle in California



Several states are facing the issue of whether alcopops, which include Mike's Hard Lemonade, Smirnoff Ice, and Skyy Blue, should be taxed or otherwise treated as beer or hard liquor. Maine recently became the first state to tax these beverages at a higher rate than beer, and Utah Attorney General Mark Shurtleff has urged his state's Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission to consider a similar measure. In Oregon, however, lobbyists for the alcohol industry won the passage of legislation to preserve the state's lower tax rates for these sweet, fruity, alcoholic drinks popular with underage girls.

The battle hit California when the alcohol industry tried to sneak an alcopop tax bill through the legislature in the final days of the 2005

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Fans Fight Back for Alcohol-Safe Sports



Alcohol-fueled violence at professional sporting events is ruining America's favorite pastimes. Beer brawls erupt in basketball stands and intoxicated fans riot at games. Last year, rioting erupted in Boston during the "celebration" following the Red Sox's World Series win. A 21-year-old college student was killed when she was struck in the eye by a pepper-spray bullet fired by police to quell the violence.¹

After drunken fans attacked Jeff Black and his eight-year-old son during a Colorado Rockies game at Coors Field, he decided to do something about the conditions that led to the alcohol-fueled assault. Black is suing the Rockies and beer vendor Aramark to change their unsafe serving and security practices that contributed to the alcohol-fueled attack. Aramark is the same

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

session. Assemblyman Greg Aghazarian (R-Stockton) employed the “gut and amend” tactic to change an unrelated bill into a gift for Big Alcohol. Not surprisingly, Aghazarian is the leading recipient of alcohol industry campaign contributions in the State Assembly.

Under California’s Alcohol Beverage Control Act, these beverages are classified as distilled spirits, but for years the industry has marketed them as beer, taking advantage of the lower tax rate and the 35,000 additional retail outlets that are licensed to sell beer but not liquor. When California’s Attorney General Bill Lockyer suggested that he might investigate the issue, Aghazarian hijacked a bill and attempted to codify the industry’s tax break.

Although Aghazarian portrayed his bill as a minor technical change in the State’s alcoholic beverage classification, organizations including the Marin Institute pointed out the bill’s serious public health consequences and the need for an open public debate.

Governor Schwarzenegger agreed and vetoed the bill in October.

It is no surprise that the industry wants to avoid public scrutiny of the issue.

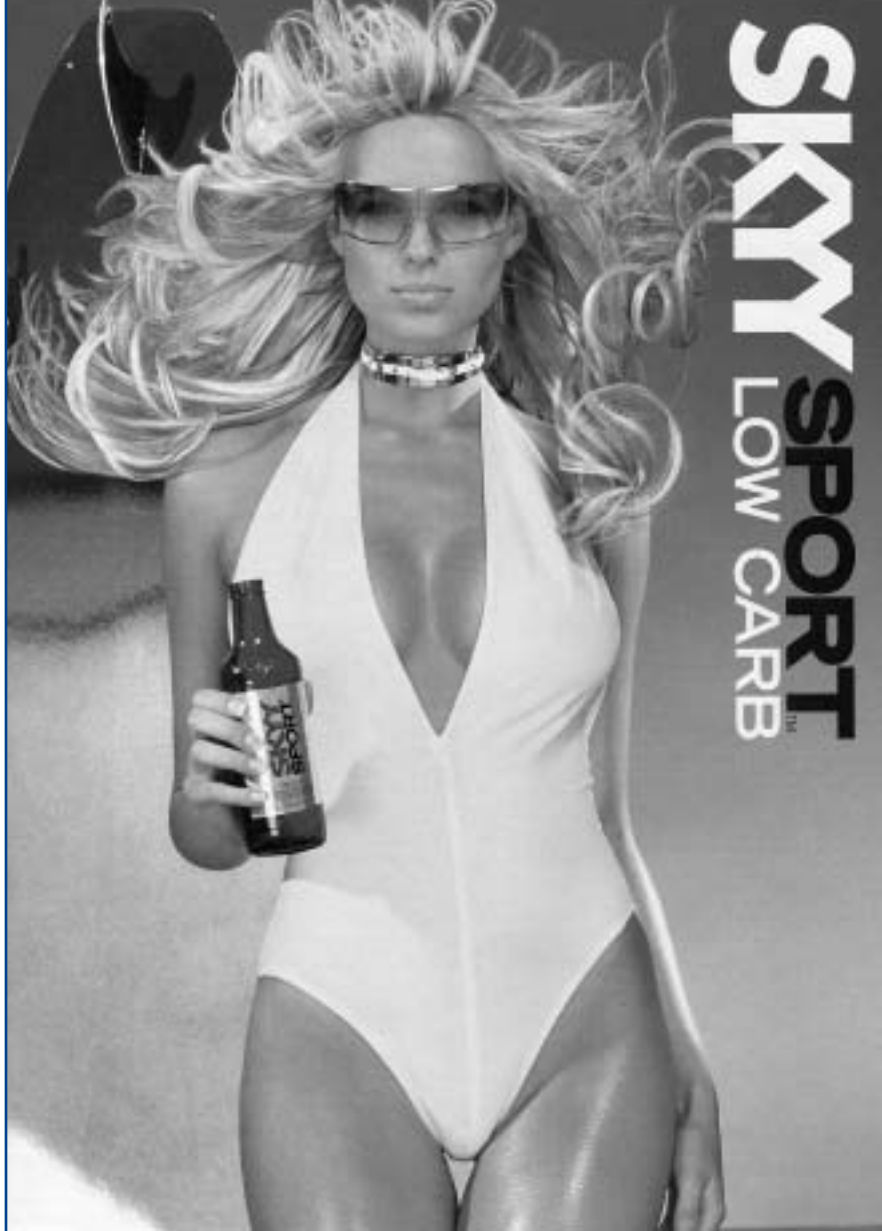
According to the American Medical Association, alcopops are marketed to underage drinkers and are quickly becoming the drink of choice among teenagers—especially teen girls. These products help perpetuate the nation’s underage drinking epidemic, a serious public health problem that costs the United States nearly \$62 billion each year.

Because underage drinkers are responsive to price changes in alcoholic beverages, they consume less when prices rise. Taxing alcopops as spirits would increase prices and reduce youth access by limiting the retail outlets selling these products—both strategies for reducing underage drinking recommended to Congress by the National Academy of Sciences. Furthermore, the higher tax rate for distilled spirits would generate millions of dollars in revenue for cash-strapped state coffers. The annual revenue gain in California alone is estimated at \$40.5 million.

California Governor Schwarzenegger’s veto of the industry’s bill is a temporary victory—the issue will arise again in the next legislative session. In California and other states, the issue of alcopop classification pits public health advocates against Big Alcohol, forcing policy makers to choose between protecting youth health and safety or industry profits.

“Alcopops should be made harder for underage drinkers to buy—not easier”

-- Jim Mosher, Director, Center for the Study of Law and Enforcement Policy, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation.



Grouping alcopops with beer—instead of liquor—allows the alcohol industry to have the same advertising rights and low tax rates as beer.

vendor that lost a \$110 million judgment for repeatedly serving an intoxicated NY Giants football fan who then crashed his car into a family, paralyzing a young girl. Despite this judgement, *Inside Edition* caught Aramark employees serving fans more drinks than allowed by stadium policy at ballparks this summer.

When Black reached out to the Marin Institute for support, he inspired a campaign to “Eject Aramark From the Game” for failing to ensure alcohol-safe sports stadiums. We heard from many people like Jeff who shared similar stories. “I am a life-long baseball fan who simply stopped going to games because of the drunkenness of the fans,” said Jenna Rosen of Montclair, New Jersey. Jeff, Jenna and others helped generate several hundred letters to the commissioners of professional baseball, football, basketball and hockey asking them to fire Aramark.

The Commissioner of Major League Baseball, Bud Selig, responded saying that, “...all of the concessionaires have been very responsible and sensitive to the concerns you have raised.” Likewise, Commissioner Dennis Robinson of the National Basketball Association responded with, “...the NBA and our teams have taken a number of steps to help address the responsible consumption of alcohol at NBA games so as to ensure our games remain family friendly.” Apparently they didn't see *Inside Edition's* footage of Aramark vendors serving four beers at a time despite the limit of two.

Black is now mobilizing a grassroots effort to take back professional sporting events as safe, fun and family-oriented activities. To get involved, contact him at rockiesbeerandchildren@comcast.net.

To share your story, and join the many other fans who've come forward to help “Eject Aramark From the Game” and stop alcohol-fueled sports violence visit www.MarinInstitute.org/aramark

¹ Gainesville.com, November 2, 2005; www.gainesville.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051102/LOCAL/51101046/1078/news



QUICK STATS: SPORTS & ALCOHOL

One study found that alcohol was involved in 20 percent of skiing accidents, yet Amstel Light is a sponsor of ski resorts and of the US Freeskiing Tour.

-- Source: Barnas C, 1992 and IEG, 2005

Alcohol producers spent \$991 million on television advertising in 2002—60 percent of it on sports programming. Ninety-three percent of youth ages eight to 17 followed sports, mainly on television.

-- Source: Statistical Research, Inc., 2001 and Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, 2005

Seventy-two percent of Americans say that showing beer ads on sporting events is inconsistent with the positive role of sports for children.

-- Source: Global Strategy Group, 2003

College students who were sports fans were more likely to engage in binge drinking than their non-fan peers.

-- Source: Nelson, Toben F, and Henry Wechsler, 2002

Seventy-one percent of adults support a ban on alcohol ads during televised college sports. Former University of North Carolina head basketball coach Dean Smith and former University of Nebraska head football coach (and current U.S. Representative) Tom Osborne (R-NE) support such a ban.

-- Source: Center for Science in the Public Interest, 2003

Drinking-Driving Problems: a Community Responsibility



Deaths from alcohol-impaired driving have decreased in the past 20 years¹ thanks in part to the work of organizations like Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) who promote the “Don’t Drink and Drive” message. Likewise, programs like “Teen Night”, which provides fun, alcohol-safe destinations for teens, and “Every Fifteen Minutes,” which features live drinking-driving crash simulations may also have contributed to the decrease. The wide appeal of these educational prevention programs focus on individual behavior and have paved the way for colleges and universities to implement mandatory alcohol awareness courses for incoming freshmen.²

Communities and campuses work hard to teach students how to make healthy choices in the hope of reducing drinking-driving crashes and other alcohol-related incidents. But while educational and other prevention programs offer important lessons, their effect is limited as beer and liquor companies constantly target the same youth as well as the many others not reached by alcohol education efforts.

Individuals need more than education to defend themselves against an alcohol-saturated environment. Just last year, a young man who helped simulate a drinking-driving crash at his high school in Scappoose, Oregon, was injured in an actual drinking-driving crash two weeks later—as the passenger of a friend who had been drinking. And what about college towns? Just outside campus walls alcohol companies bombard students with alcohol promotions and advertisements. Likewise, fans and their families attending games at sports stadiums have been attacked and injured by other fans who are drunk before, during, or after the games.³

To effect long-term change many communities have adopted policies that include environmental strategies. For instance, in Folsom Lake, California, public safety officials and vacationers tired of frequent public drunkenness and drinking-driving incidents instituted a two-year ban on alcohol consumption in day-use areas and on water rafts. The ban led to a decrease in reports of alcohol-related incidents, and rangers say that families are returning and visitors are more respectful of the park.⁴

When communities fail to address the everyday conditions that contribute to drinking and driving—factors such as easy access and availability from commercial and social sources, outlet density, and promotion and sponsorship—fundamental aspects of the drinking environment are left wide open to Big Alcohol’s manipulation. Is it any wonder that the alcohol industry prefers prevention approaches that focus on personal behavior change rather than environmental change?⁵

Environmental prevention benefits the entire community. Its positive impacts give a critical advantage in reducing alcohol problems now and into the future.⁶ To get your community on the road to effective prevention, order the Marin Institute’s action guide, *Solutions to Community Alcohol Problems: A Roadmap for Environmental Prevention* at www.MarinInstitute.org/roadmap.

1. Newsday.com, July 13, 2005; www.newsday.com/mynews/ny-liroads134341458jul13,0,5545088.column

2. WQOW, June 20, 2005; www.wqow.com/news/articles/article_4037.shtml; San Jose Mercury News, August 9, 2005, www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/news/local/states/california/northern_california/12334750.htm.

3. Washington Post, November 21, 2005; www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/20/AR2005112001497.html

4. The Sacramento Bee, July 12, 2005; www.sacbee.com/content/opinion/story/13219095p-1406203oc.html

5. Yahoo News, September 13, 2005; <http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/050913/latuo04.html?v=17>

6. Rocky Mountain News, November 15, 2005; www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/other_business/article/0,2777,DRMN_23916_4239090,00.html/content/article/2005/11/20/AR2005112001497.html



Harvard Square is saturated in Bass Ale ads



Thumbs Up...

to the **University of Southern California** for banning alcohol sales at its football games at the

Los Angeles Coliseum. The move came after the USC President called for the ban, citing fighting and public drunkenness. Nevertheless, vendor **Aramark** will be allowed to sell beer outside the stadium in a facility that can hold up to 1,000 patrons.



Thumbs Down...

to retail giant **Wal-Mart** for teaming up with spirit maker **Diageo** to take a “big box” approach to liquor sales.

Wal-Mart helps Diageo develop new products like caramel flavored Dulceda, while Diageo helps Wal-Mart remodel its stores to include 5,000-square-foot liquor departments that feature big displays and cheaper-than-normal prices on oversized bottles. The only thing this deal offers is more alcohol-related problems in already over-saturated communities.



Thumbs Up...

to *Inside Edition* for publicizing the failure of stadium beer vendor **Aramark** to follow its own safe-

servicing policies. Reporters from the award-winning TV newsmagazine showed undercover footage of **Aramark** vendors serving fans four drinks at one time—although the limit is two—and continuing to serve fans who are obviously intoxicated. They also interviewed Jeff Black, a concerned father who wants to make baseball games safe again for families.



Rappers Pass More Hard Stuff

Rap music is one of the fastest-growing music genres of the past twenty years. Its quick trip from the streets to the charts was spurred by rapid commercialization of both the music and its artists.

Although many consumer goods would eventually use rap music to promote sales, alcohol producers took an early interest in exploiting the marketing potential of the hip-hop aesthetic.

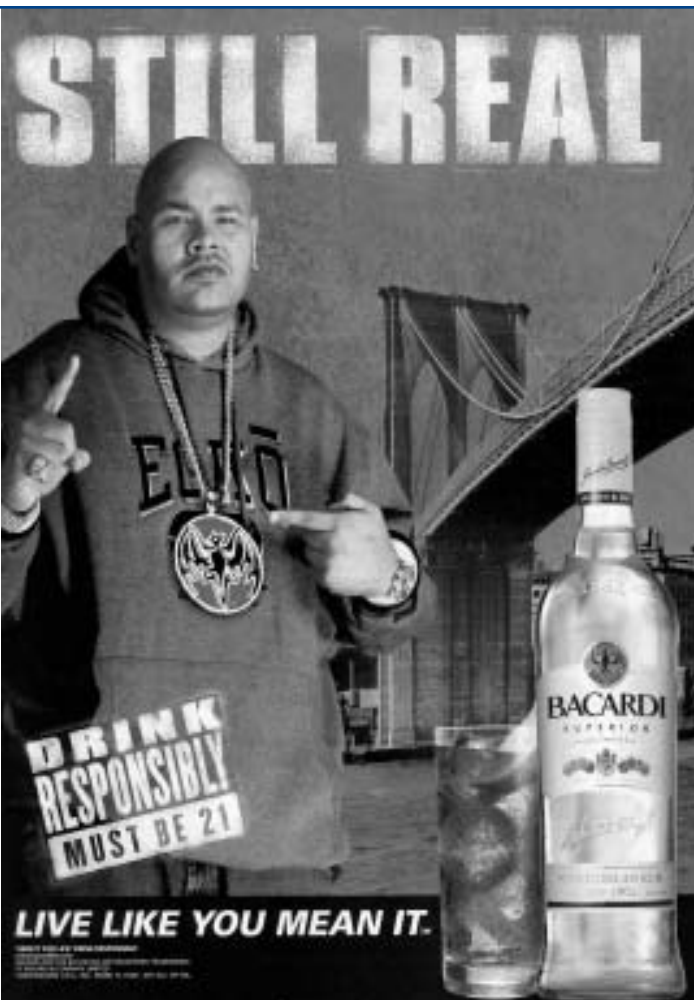
In the 1980's, a controversial campaign for Saint Ides, a malt liquor boasting the highest alcohol content of any mass-produced beer, featured original raps by well-known groups and individual performers including EPMD, Geto Boys, Ice Cube and YoYo. These radio and TV advertisements—essentially one-minute songs—associated Saint Ides with explicitly sexual and violent themes. One example, a rap commercial by Ice Cube aired on MTV, claims that Saint Ides, “Gets your girl in the mood quicker.”

While broadcast ads for malt liquor and beer continue to use rap music, by the late 90's references to spirits and expensive champagne greatly outnumbered mentions of malt liquor and beer in rap lyrics. This change reflects a shift in marketing for high-end alcoholic beverages. Advertisers

currently showcase products like Courvoisier and Cristal Champagne in trendy nightclubs and parties frequented by rappers and other celebrities. One example, a Busta Rhymes' hit titled “Pass the Courvoisier,” followed a whirlwind of celebrity studded Club CV (Courvoisier) parties in New York and Chicago. This type of highly targeted point-of-sale marketing helps to develop a popular following for the brand names that rap music artists promote in their lyrics but avoids the limited monitoring that tracks broadcast ads and other measured media.

Denise Herd, a professor of public health at the University of California, Berkeley, discovered these and other changes in the role of alcohol in rap music when she analyzed the most popular rap music between 1979 and 1997. Among Herd's findings are a dramatic increase in the prevalence of alcohol references in rap music songs between 1979 and 1997, a stronger focus on the use of hard liquor and champagne and a steep rise in the mention of brand names. Herd concludes that efforts to reduce the prevalence of alcohol in rap music should be developed.

Herd, Denise. "Changes in the prevalence of alcohol use in rap song lyrics, 1979 - 1997." *Addiction* 100 (2005) 1258-1269.



Popular rap artist, Fat Joe, poses for a Bacardi Rum advertisement featured in *Vibe* magazine, 2005

Communities Tell Big Alcohol

“Stop Using Kids as Billboards!”



Last Fall, many readers were surprised to find ads for alcohol-branded T-shirts in the J.C. Penney back-to-school catalog inserted into their Sunday newspaper. Most of the low priced (\$9.99) shirts were described as “men's novelty tees,” but appeared on the same pages with models wearing casual fashions who appeared high school age at most. One catalog advertised Budweiser, Corona and Guinness logo T-shirts along with other “screen tees for juniors and men.”

Kids have no business wearing this stuff.

- *The Syracuse (NY)*

Post Standard, 2005

Marin Institute community partners found similar brand-labeled clothing at Target, Sears and other stores. One mother with four children ranging in age from eight to 14 told the *Post-Standard* in Syracuse, New York that a sign above the local J.C. Penney display of alcohol-labeled items used slang

popular among teens. “It's a very powerful way of saying...we drink to have fun,” said Emily Frank. A *Post-Standard* editorial the next day declared, “Kids have no business wearing this stuff.”

Direct requests to local store managers to remove this merchandise were ignored. Moving the T-shirts from the boy's or junior department to the men's department failed to address community concerns because underage youth often wear men's sizes.

Dads and Daughters, an education and advocacy organization, joined the Marin Institute in sending a joint letter of protest to a J.C. Penney Board Member who is also on the Advisory Board of Mothers Against Drunk Driving and whose daughter was previously injured in a drinking-driving crash.¹ The Institute also send complaints to Anheuser-Busch, SAB Miller, Diageo, and Brown-Forman, owners of the alcohol brand logos that appeared on the T-shirts.

In response, the alcohol companies pointed fingers at their licensees (for failing to follow provisions of their licensing agreements) and retailers, including J.C. Penney (for marketing the shirts inappropriately). By blaming others, alcohol companies deny responsibility for the careless marketing of their brands—yet another example of “hit and run” alcohol advertising that often targets youth.

In addition to local coverage in Syracuse, New York, Anchorage, Alaska and elsewhere, the controversy drew national attention from *The New York Times*.² To get your own complaints about alcohol advertising heard, use **Talk Back** at www.MarinInstitute.org/talkback.



Marin Institute staff visit Bay Area J.C. Penney store where alcohol-labeled T-shirts are sold to young shoppers.



1. www.madd.org/news/0,1056,7108,00.html

2. www.marininstitute.org/about_us/coverage_092605.htm