

To The Columbia Community:

The success of the hunger strike against Low Library has given us hope. We have gone unheard for too long. Now is the time for our own liberation. We can make the administration listen to our demands, or, indeed, any demands, through threats of self-harm.

But the true harm to ourselves comes from this campus's utter inability to understand the complex and underlying causes of our grievances, or the grievances underlying the complex causes of our understanding, or any of the above. We must sacrifice to make progress, speak out strongly to be heard.

Starting at noon tomorrow, six students will go on drunker strike until such time as a commitment is made to providing a more alcohol-friendly and fun-loving environment at Columbia University and its surrounding community. They will subsist on nothing but beer and straight hard liquor (no chasers), with the possibility of pork rinds offered at our 9 PM vigils for those who wish to show solidarity without inducing early cirrhosis.

Our cause is just and long-suffering. For too long we have watched as dour-faced "intellectuals" drink nothing more than an "ironic" PBR or two at an anti-social gathering. The classroom environment is universally hostile to flask-bearing individuals, and clear nalgene bottles are a walking invitation to an open-container citation by a Public Safety officer ignorant of the greater struggles we face. There is a pervasive culture against the liberating ideology of free consumption at this university, and we will not spend one hour of our lives sober until the administration rectifies it.

Our demands are simple, yet multi-faceted; elegant, yet erudite. We issue them not against our sober brothers and sisters, but with them, in the hopes of bringing a mutual understanding to this broken community. They contain the following pillars:

1. Columbia University must provide a greater voice for alcohol in its academic pursuits. The Core must be modified to include information as to the sobriety (or lack thereof) of the authors involved at the time, and a wider variety of liquors must be introduced. We have seen the excesses of wine in the Decameron, surely, but what of Bernard Mandeville's discussion of the merits of gin at the dawn of distillation? Did Foucault pound shots of anise or was he a beer man? Major Cultures classes should include a focus on the alcoholic beverages of choice in other societies in a non-discriminatory fashion. Be it baijiu or sake, vodka or cachaça, alcohol brings all societies together in frequently-embarrassing one-night-stands of equality, and must be given its rightful place in our academic pursuits.

2. Students of alcoholic lifestyles must be given "safe space" on this campus, free from the cultural imperialism that constitutes open container laws. In addition a new "pass/fail/drank" policy must be instituted at the outset of every semester, allowing for an alternate form of learning for students who wish to engage in academic pursuits whilst totally wasted.

3. The response to students of alcoholic lifestyles must be more measured, and bias incidents faithfully reported. We cannot allow the negative implications of a professor stating "young man, you reek of spiced rum" to a tardy student, or a well-heeled cognac-sniffing "Exeter boy" making a derogatory remark a fellow Carman resident's choice of Hypnotiq as a mixer. It harms the entire community, and we will not be silenced or controlled by the misguided perceptions of others that result from a biased education. In addition, the "AlcoholEDU" program for first-year students should be replaced by a more comprehensive educational system, decrying the over-purchase of Brooklyn Lager and advocating a sensible mix of drinks.

4. Columbia's expansion into West Harlem is an opportunity for growth, change, and community impact, and it must therefore take place alongside new initiatives designed to increase the number of bars that do not explicitly ask for identification upon arrival. Bars and liquor stores in Morningside Heights must join the initiative to provide easier access for the community already present on the campus in the present time, and should lower their prices so that students on Financial Aid or other grant programs are not limited only to Georgi in their considerations for non-light beers.

Our brothers and sisters in the hunger strike have given us hope that our demands will be entertained. Until then, we will bid farewell to sobriety. Our livers may wither, our vision may blur but our hearts will stand strong. We are united in our cause with every keg that we tap, convinced of our righteousness with every shot of tequila we knock back in our Jose Cuervo-sponsored tents on South Lawn.

With luck, Columbia will see the intoxication of our bodies as a bellwether of our growing desire to get freely hammered on this campus. It's a shame that Columbia was not more alarmed when we said our hearts, minds, and spirits were drunk, too, even when we threw up on their shoes outside 1020.

The Brothers of Delta Rho Upsilon Nu Kappa

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