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## Miami incident needs investigation

Two days ago we used this space to criticize a local university for not immediately calling the Cincinnati Police in to investigate the allegation of a crime against a student. Today we do it again - different school, different students, different offense - same problem.

<http://news.cincinnati.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Dato=20090223&Kategori=NEWS01&Lopenr=302230052&Ref=AR> target="\_new">**An Enquirer story posted online Monday** reported several pledges to the Tri Delta sorority at Miami University required emergency medical attention after they were forced to drink alcohol during an off-campus hazing incident Jan. 29. The university has suspended the sorority and may take disciplinary action against students, but that's it. Although the incident occurred at an off-campus house, it was handled as a university matter, the Oxford police told reporter Cliff Peale.

Once again, it seems that a double standard is being imposed on an alleged crime because it involved college kids. The story we editorialized about Sunday involved a female student at Xavier University, who said she was raped off-campus by another student following a party involving underage drinking. She reported the incident to the university police and went to the hospital, but the Cincinnati police were not brought in until days later. There were never any criminal charges, although Xavier did conduct a disciplinary review against the accused student, who eventually left the school.

For those who think the Miami story is relatively harmless - college kids doing a little college kid drinking - think again. Underage students - we don't know how many because Miami isn't releasing the details - were forced to drink enough alcohol that they needed medical attention. That's not a harmless prank. Providing alcohol to minors is a crime with potentially lethal consequences. Miami should have called in the Oxford police as soon as it learned what happened to the girls. The pledges, the older Tri Deltas who staged the hazing and the university were lucky things didn't turn out more seriously.

This story bears striking similarities to the tale of Gordie Bailey, which coincidentally was featured on the nationally broadcast CBS 60 Minutes Sunday night. Bailey was an 18-year-old freshman at the University of Colorado at Boulder in 2004. He was a fraternity pledge who underwent a hazing initiation with 26 other freshmen who tried to drink as much as they could in half an hour. He drank so much he stopped breathing. His death was attributed to alcohol poisoning.

Colleges have the right to enforce codes of conduct. But such enforcement is no substitute for proper police investigation of criminal behavior and it is unfathomable that crimes alleged to have happened off-campus would not be handled directly by the police. When crimes are alleged on or off campus, call the police. There is plenty of time to consider the university's position after a police investigation.

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