



Unintended Consequences of Sharing

Directions

Read the following story and be prepared to discuss it in class.

College Sued Over “Drunken Pirate” Sanctions

Woman claims teaching degree denied because of single MySpace photo

(<http://www.thesmokinggun.com/documents/crime/college-sued-over-drunken-pirate-sanctions>)

APRIL 26, 2007 — A Pennsylvania woman claims that her teaching career has been derailed by college administrators who unfairly disciplined her over a MySpace photo that shows her wearing a pirate hat and drinking from a plastic cup. In a federal lawsuit, Stacy Snyder charges that Millersville University brass accused her of promoting underage drinking after they discovered her MySpace photo, which was captioned “Drunken Pirate.” The picture from Snyder’s MySpace page (which she says was snapped at a costume party outside school hours) can be seen below.

In her complaint, Snyder, a 25-year-old single mother of two, says that Millersville officials discovered the image last May, while she was a senior working as a student-teacher at Conestoga Valley High School. A university official told her that the photo was “unprofessional” and could have offended her students if they accessed her MySpace page. At the time the “Drunken Pirate” photo was taken, Snyder was of legal age to drink, though her lawsuit notes that the photo “does not show the cup’s contents. ”...

Despite good grades and solid performance evaluations, Snyder claims that school officials improperly denied her a bachelor of science in education degree and a teaching certificate. The university, Snyder added, instead granted her a bachelor of arts degree last May 13. Because the school refuses to confirm that she satisfactorily completed her student teaching requirements, Snyder claims that she has been unable to secure certification from Pennsylvania’s Department of Education. Snyder’s lawyer, Mark Voigt, told TSG (TheSmokingGun.com) that his client now works as a nanny. He added that school officials should actually be “celebrating” Snyder, a mother of two young children who returned to school to get a teaching degree.

