



Aranda 1

Evelyn Aranda

Mr. John Sparks

ESOL 262: Level 8 Academic Writing

11 March 2010

### Going Dancing... Is it dangerous?

Do you like dancing? Be careful! If you are in Paraguay, South America, a pub could not be a healthy place to have fun! In Paraguay, the most common diversion is to go dancing with friends and also have the possibility to have a great meal. Almost the whole city of Asuncion goes out to dance and eat on weekends even though pubs in Paraguay don't have non-smoking areas. Smoking is allowed in all pubs. However, one of the responsibilities of government is to take care of their citizen's health. Nowadays, governments in many cities around the world are taking this responsibility. For example, as of February 2010, twenty five states of the United States like Arizona, California, Colorado, New York, New Jersey, and others have adopted a ban on smoking in public places like bars, pubs, and restaurants. Countries like Australia, Canada, Cuba, France, New Zealand, Uruguay, and others have already banned smoking in public places too. Smoking in bars in Paraguay should be banned because it harms non-smokers who attend the site, including pub workers.

Smoking in pubs in Paraguay is allowed although everybody knows that smoking in an enclosed place harms non-smokers who attend this place. In Paraguay there is no ban on smoking in bars, and smokers who agree with this

argue that banning smoking would be discrimination because of their choice to smoke and have fun at the same time. It is very common to hear smokers say that pubs should be open for everybody. The decision to smoke in pubs should depend on each person because otherwise smokers would feel discriminated against by non-smokers. Then smokers would defend their attitude based on the freedom to smoke. Although smokers feel discriminated against, they don't think about non-smokers who attend pubs. Non-smokers who attend smoking places are forced to breathe tobacco smoke, also called second-hand tobacco smoke, which has a lot of carcinogenic cells, and also they are in danger of getting serious respiratory problems because of the constant breathing of smoke that is in the whole air inside the bar. Non-smokers who are constantly breathing smoke either at home or at some other places, have a risk of developing lung cancer without ever having smoked. The United States Environmental Protection Agency estimates, "...SHS [Second-hand Smoke] is responsible for approximately 3,000 lung cancer deaths annually among non-smokers in the USA..." (Pan American Health Organization). Breathing smoke can also increase the risk of getting other illnesses like asthma, bronchitis, emphysema or heart attack. The constant breathing of smoke can also irritate the eyes: "These toxic chemicals [smoke compounds] irritate the nerve endings in the conjunctiva [eye]... non-smokers have had to deal with the irritation of second hand smoke at a party or club..." (Sherman). As smokers talk about their rights and the discrimination they feel, non-smokers have good reasons to enjoy the same

place by breathing fresh air and not being exposed to getting any of these respiratory problems.

Smokers who attend bars in Paraguay argue that people who don't want to breathe tobacco smoke don't have to go to those pubs. Even though non-smokers could avoid this problem by not going to pubs if they wanted to, smokers don't think about pub workers like waitresses, barmen, and security guards. The risk for bar workers would be greater than for those who are less exposed. These non-smokers who work in pubs complain about their rights to a smoke-free environment at work because they are also exposed to the aforementioned diseases. According to the International Labour Organization, "...200,000 workers die every year due to exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke at work" (World Health Organization). I have a girlfriend who was working as a waitress in a pub in Paraguay, and she had to quit her job because she was pregnant and she really cared about her baby's health. Finally, my friend had to look for another job and job opportunities weren't good at all. If pub owners think they can solve their problem to have a healthy workplace by installing ventilation equipment, they are wrong. Neither ventilation equipment nor filtration devices are enough to draw out all the smoke from inside. Moreover, that equipment has a maintenance cost. It is not just about non-smokers who want to attend pubs. It is also about the poor non-smoking workers who have rights to a healthy and safe work environment protected by law.

Another argument in favor of smoking in pubs comes from pub owners who think that banning smoking in bars will affect the economy of their businesses because many people will stop attending. The reduction of people attending pubs and restaurants did occur in some countries: "Following the introduction of the smoking ban in Ireland, there was a year-on-year drop of 8% in the number of adults going to the pub..." ("What next for smoke-free pubs?"). At first, a lot of pubs had a drop in Ireland, but after a while the opposite happened. Owners don't need to panic about it because all non-smokers who weren't attending before because of the smoke now are going to attend pubs to have fun and have a great meal without the smoke that bothered them when eating. After the smoking ban has been in effect for a while, a lot of people will consider the bars as an option again, so they will frequent bars because they will find a healthy place to go and they will offset the amount of smokers who previously have stopped attending. They could also surpass that amount. Finally, pubs in Paraguay could have no economic loss. Ireland for example increased the amount of people who attend pubs: "...2.1 million adults had eaten a meal in a pub in the last 12 months – an increase from 62% of adults in 2002 to 66% now." ("What next for smoke-free pubs?").

In conclusion, smoking in pubs in Paraguay should be banned because it harms people who don't choose smoking and don't want to put their health at risk. Paraguay really needs to pay attention to this controversial issue because it is also violating workers rights. One can see the importance of banning smoke in

pubs and in enclosed places because a lot of governments are taking care of this situation elsewhere in the world by protecting people's rights. It will not be easy to get a smoking ban in pubs in Paraguay because in this country the ban would be more of a cultural challenge. I say this because in Paraguay most people smoke, "In Paraguay, a high percentage of adolescent smokers is estimated, but there is no published data about it" (Nunez & Nunez). Many of them would not agree to a smoking ban in pubs, so it would be a little more difficult to go against the majority of smokers.

Works Cited

- Nunez Alma, and Nunez Sonia. "Prevalencia del Habito de Fumar en Adolescentes Escolares en Asuncion, Paraguay". *CIMEL Ciencia e Investigacion Medica Estudiantil Latinoamericana*. Red de Revistas Cientificas de America Latina y el Caribe, Espana y Portugal. 2007. 3 Mar. 2010 <<http://redalyc.uaemex.mx/redalyc/pdf/717/71712104.pdf>>
- Pan American Health Organization. "Smoke-free Inside". *World No Tobacco Day*. 23 May 2007. 21 Feb. 2010 <<http://www.paho.org/english/ad/sde/ra/Engbrochure.pdf>>.
- Sherman, Robert. "Unhealthy Smoke Gets in Your Eyes". *Quit Smoking Today*. 2007. 21 Feb. 2010 <[http://www.quit-today.info/Unhealthy\\_Smoke\\_Gets\\_in\\_Your\\_Eyes.php](http://www.quit-today.info/Unhealthy_Smoke_Gets_in_Your_Eyes.php)>.
- "What next for smoke-free pubs?". *Marketing Week*. 23 Feb. 2006: 34 – 34. MasterFile Premier. EBSCOhost. Portland Community College Library, Portland, OR. 21 Feb. 2010 <<http://search.ebscohost.com>>.
- World Health Organization. "Why is smoking an issue for non-smokers?". *Online Q & A*. 31 May 2007. 21 Feb. 2010 <<http://www.who.int/features/qa/60/en/>>.