

Professor Marits

English 112

Position Essay

July 11th 2017

Drinking Age Dilemma

In America, eighteen-year-olds can vote, drive a car, pay taxes, marry, own a gun, and even die and fight for this country so why is it that they cannot have a drink? If eighteen is the “so called” age of adulthood in the United States, then adults should have the right to make their own choices about alcohol use. By lowering the drinking age, young adults will be able to drink in more places such as bars or an open area rather than a private area like dorm rooms were drinking can get out of control. The drinking age should be lowered to eighteen because teens always find a way to drink regardless of the law, eighteen is the “magic” age for much more important things other than alcohol, and other countries have a lower age limit to drink.

Dwyer suggested, “with responsible supervision teens are less likely to binge drink or do other unsafe activities”. But because the drinking age is so high teens end up drinking in parties away from the law and often many drugs are included in the parties such as marijuana and other harmful substances (Willyard). Making alcohol legal for a younger crowd as something done responsibly in moderation will make drinking alcohol less of a thrill for young adults starting college and the workforce. Due to people drinking without being old enough they do not get medical help when they are hurt because of the risk of getting in trouble with parents or the law (Drinking Age ProCon.org).

In the United States at age eighteen, a person can buy tobacco, vote, get married, enlist in the military, and work in a bar, and other things. Turning eighteen entails receiving the rights and responsibilities of adulthood, which involves making decisions and understanding the

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consequences of your own actions. It should not be up to the government to tell legal adults what they can or cannot put in their bodies, especially when alcohol itself is not dangerous unless you are drinking extreme amounts. High schools and colleges cannot talk about alcohol advice because it will seem as if they approve of it. Which is completely wrong because without proper education on the matter teens will test alcohol and may end up overdosing on it.

Most people who are for a lower minimum age to drink immediately lead to Europe as an example, where the age to drink is lower than 21 almost everywhere. Europeans have been drinking almost the entirety of their lives and drink an alcoholic beverage for dinner even at a young age (Dwyer). Alcohol to an American under age 21 is a “new world” and forces kids into risky behaviors. Ironically Americans are involved in more car crashes despite the higher age able to drink (Dwyer).

One counter argument that leads with lowering the age to drink is alcohol can change the needed development of young adult’s brains (Bourzac). When alcohol effects the brain, many problems can arise such as being addicted, depression, and increased chance to be risky. Binge drinking can be very damaging on the brain. With too much alcohol it can cause permanent damage to the brain such as memory problems. All this drinking has a huge impact on a person's development and mental health. It also means that young people have lapses in judgment during this time as they try to figure out how to be adults. Studies show that teens who are exposed to alcohol early tend to suffer with a long life of alcohol problems and may become an alcoholic

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(Bourzac). Lowering the drinking age may increase the chance for the population to have some sort of alcohol problem in their live time.

Another counter argument from reducing the drinking age to eighteen is it leads to an increased high school dropout rate specifically. Many fear that it will happen if we decide to reduce the legal drinking age. Whether the legal drinking age is eighteen or twenty-one, we must realize that many young adults and teens will drink alcohol and even engage in binge drinking. And even more importantly, we must realize that a good education is important for young adults to make safe, smart decisions regarding their own behaviors. Lowering the age to drink could cause even more problems in younger teens lives and the lives around them including siblings, parents, and teachers. While the drinking age issue continues, we must continue to work hard to monitor and educate young adults about the dangers of alcohol abuse.

The last counter argument to discuss is in the 1980's there was a huge rise in car accidents and deaths, that changed when the age to drink was increased to twenty-one. However, the reason for so many deaths were because during that time wearing a seatbelt was not a major rule to follow when driving, but the deaths only happened because people were drinking and driving. Tucker said, "Lowering the age to drink could have other issues arise such as more unprotected sex, suicide, and alcohol poisoning".

In conclusion, college drinking and underage drinking overall, is a serious problem, that will be difficult and take significant time to address and change. But the strategy of reducing the

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legal age of drinking is not moving fast enough. First, law enforcement does not really care about underage drinking usual just a slap on the wrist, making it useless. Second, if your able to be in the military, drive, and buy tobacco, why can we not drink alcohol? Third if teens are taught to drink safe and not take it out of control, then they would understand the risks of overdoing it. The younger they start drinking the more training they will have to know that they have reached their max without overdoing alcohol. Lastly, many people use alcohol as a social tool to help with many fears such as rejection and shyness (Wpadmin). Why is it that if one is twenty-one years old, he or she can consume alcohol when no matter how old one is?



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