Reading Note #1

1. Author’s name: Jasmine Bittar
2. Author’s Credentials:
3. Publisher: Alcohol Rehab Guide
4. Heading of Section: Why Is the Legal Drinking Age 21?
5. Year Written: 2018
6. Pages: 1
7. <https://www.alcoholrehabguide.org/blog/why-is-legal-drinking-age-21>
* Main Idea: To provide some quick information on why the legal drinking age.
* Important Quotations:
1. “However, back before the 18th Amendment was passed, this unregulated consumption led to drunken outbursts, neglect of work and family, and uncleanliness, souring the name America had been trying to build for itself.”
2. “Prohibition banned the production and sale of alcohol, but it did not ban the consumption of alcohol,”
3. “The government could not set a national blackmail the states into regulating a minimum drinking age to 21 within 2 years or lose a portion of their federal-aid funds.”
* Supporting Details:
1. The 18th Amendment prohibited the manufacturing, transportation and resale of intoxicating liquors which made a thousand people lose their jobs, lowering the economy.
2. By the end of the 1920s, Americans were completely fed-up with prohibition.
3. All states finally set the minimum age to twenty-one that the rate of drunk driving accidents has declined.
* Relevance to Your Assignment:

It is relevant to my topic because I wanted to find out why the age of 21 is important for the legal drinking age. By finding out the background of it, I have some understanding of the age twenty-one.

Reading Note #2

1. Author’s name: Jen Christensen
2. Author’s Credentials: CNN Reporter
3. Publisher: CNN Health
4. Heading of Section: 21: Science’s limit when it comes to the drinking age
5. Year Written: 2014
6. Pages: 1
7. <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/07/15/health/science-drinking-age/index.html?no-st=1572522570>
* Main Idea: What Researchers think of the age 21 for drinking Alcohol
* Important Quotations:
1. “All this brain development has a huge impact on a person’s development and mental well-being.”
2. “Adolescents learn based on experience.”
3. “Before the minimum drinking age law, 16 to 20 year old were the most common drunken drivers.”
* Supporting Details:
1. The limbic system, the part of your brain that is involved in processing social and emotional information, develops early in adolescents.
2. By the end of the 1920s, Americans were completely fed-up with prohibition. Baird believes that society could use the way young people learn, to help them learn how to drink responsibly at an earlier age.
3. But while the law did have a significant impact on drinking and driving, it did not stop kids from drinking.
* Relevance to Your Assignment:

It is relevant to my topic because it had opposing views on the age 21. Yes, drinking below the age can cause disruption to the development of their health but how else will young adolescents learn by first hand experience.

Reading Note #3

1. Author’s name: Pacific Care Center
2. Author’s Credentials: A clinic
3. Publisher: Orange County Register
4. Heading of Section: Surprise Health Benefits of Drinking Red Wine
5. Year Written: 2018
6. Pages: 1
7. <https://pacificcarecenter.com/surprise-health-benefits-of-drinking-red-wine/>
* Main Idea: To give information about health benefits of red wine.
* Important Quotations:
1. “A study published by the journal of Cardiovascular Disease Research found that red wine contains active antioxidants like resveratrol, proanthocyanin, and quercetin, which fight free radicals and decrease the rate of cell oxidation that contributes to inflammation and cardiovascular disease.”
2. “Resveratrol might be a key ingredient in red wine that helps prevent damage to blood vessels, reduces low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol (the “bad” cholesterol) prevents blood clots.”
3. “The key to maximum health benefits is moderation”
* Supporting Details:
1. From these findings, it has been concluded that red wine as a diet supplement might be beneficial for cardiovascular risk factors.
2. Additionally, it has been linked to increased appetite, which can support increased food consumption among vulnerable populations like older adults.
3. Although there are supplements available, eating a rich diet in antioxidants such as fruits, (especially berries), nuts, beans, green tea, cinnamon, and tomatoes, among other foods, promote heart health, boosts the immune system and reduces the risk of some forms of cancer.
* Relevance to Your Assignment:

It is relevant to my topic because knowing what rich ingredient there is in red wine specifically can make one think of what benefits it has and would maintain it moderately.

Reading Note #4

1. Author’s name: Adam E Barry, Emily Johnson, Alexander Rabre, Gabrielle Darville, Kristin M. Donovan, Orisatalabi Efunbumi
2. Author’s Credentials:
3. Publisher: Oxford Academic
4. Heading of Section: Underage Access to Online Alcohol Marketing Content: A YouTube Case Study
5. Year Written: 2014
6. Pages:
7. <https://academic.oup.com/alcalc/article/50/1/89/2888173>

Main Idea: If alcohol advertising in the Media can be one factor to why young adults choose to drink

Important Quotations:

1. “Alcohol is the most commonly used and abused substance in the USA, and is attributed to more than 4,300 deaths among underage youth.”
2. Exposure to alcohol marketing and advertising is identifies as a contributing factor leading some young people to consume alcoholic beverages.”
3. “Due to the ubiquity of emerging technologies and mediums, new recommendations have been made by the Federal Trade Commission concerning the self-regulation of digital marketing strategies, including content management on social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, by alcohol companies.”
* Supporting Details:
1. In fact, youth who drink report more injuries, drinking and driving, and an increased rate of other risk behaviors, including risky sexual behaviors, violence and drug use.
2. With the proliferation of the Internet and online social media use, alcohol advertisers have augmented their marketing strategies to include online promotions.
3. Three alcohol industry trade associations have adopted regular advertising and marketing practices. Two of these associations have also developed advertising and marketing guidelines specifically for digital media.
* Relevance to Your Assignment:

It is relevant to my topic because it shows one factor of why alcohol is a popular forbidden fruit among young adults. It is because of the online media showing myths that alcohol consumption is considered “cool.”

Reading Note #5

1. Author’s name: Johannes Thrul, Sharon Lipperman-Kreda, Joel W. Grube
2. Author’s Credentials: all have Ph.D. degrees
3. Publisher: Center of Alcohol Studies
4. Heading of Section: Do Associations Between Drinking Event Characteristics and Underage Drinking Differ by Drinking Location?
5. Year Written: 2018
6. Pages: 1
7. <https://www.jsad.com/doi/abs/10.15288/jsad.2018.79.417>
* Main Idea: It is a case study that focuses on the theory of if time and location matters when it comes to alcohol.
* Important Quotations:
1. “Investigated how associations between social and situational characteristics and underage drinking are moderated by the specific locations in which drinking occurs.”
2. “Using a case-crossover design and retrospective surveys, a sample of 385 adolescents from 24 mid-size California cities reported the last time they drank alcohol in a specific location and the last time they were at the same type of location without drinking, as well as characteristics of each drinking and nondrinking event.”
3. “Locations do moderate the social and situational characteristics of events and are important for underage drinking.”
* Supporting Details:
1. Such characteristics include number of people, adult supervision, ease of alcohol access, and weekend moments.
2. Results of multilevel regression model indicated that perceived ease of alcohol access was associated with drinking across all locations.
3. Results can inform targeted prevention efforts.
* Relevance to Your Assignment:

It is relevant to my topic because it is important to know what certain types of locations and characteristics causes people to drink with or without adult supervision.

Reading Note #6

1. Author’s name: Michael Adams, Tobias Effertz
2. Author’s Credentials: Expert in Alcohol and Alcoholism
3. Publisher: Oxford Academic
4. Heading of Section: Effective Prevention against Risky Underage Drinking – The Need for Higher Excise Taxes on Alcoholic Beverages in Germany
5. Year Written: 2010
6. Pages: 1
7. <https://academic.oup.com/alcalc/article/45/4/387/155588?searchresult=1>

Main Idea: If putting higher taxes on alcoholic products can be one effective prevention

Important Quotations:

1. “Alcohol consumption is among the highest risk factors for decreases in health quality and longevity in high-income countries for minors.”
2. “In standard economic theory, non-lump-sum taxes lead to excess burdens by interfering in the market mechanism and thus decrease welfare.”
3. “Besides internalizing costs to society and making costs to individuals more salient, the main fact about taxes is their fiscal purpose, to raise funds for public services.”
* Supporting Details:
1. Although German per capita alcohol consumption seems to have declined during the last 30 years.
2. Another recent strand in the economic literature additionally suggests that individuals bear internal costs from consuming dangerous goods like alcohol, which they might not foresee.
3. To estimate and discuss this trade-off and to derive an optimal excise duty for prevention purposes, we will fist take a look at the tax landscape in Germany, and within the European Union.
* Relevance to Your Assignment:

It is relevant to my topic because it shows one way that can be an effective prevention to alcoholism. Providing higher taxes on alcohol will do the drink. Nowadays, a single pack of soda is equivalent to a back of beer.

Lowering the Drinking Legal Age to Eighteen

Joan Marie B. Alvarico

Northern Marianas College

Dr. Kimberly Bunts-Anderson

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PRIMARY QUESTION:

Should the Drinking Age be Lowered to Eighteen?

SECONDARY QUESTION:

Why was the Legal Drinking Age Set at Twenty-one?

**Abstract**

Underage drinking as always been an issue with adolescents. And it becomes an even more issue when these young adolescents turn into young adults and then proceed to do all sorts of ways to get alcohol and drink their existence away. This progresses into bad habits that unfortunately destroys a person’s future someday. Here in the CNMI, alcohol substance abuse is pretty common.

The student researcher then started the research by asking questions and began reading literature that relates to the topic. What was discovered is that alcohol does have some great benefits but also more side-effects for one’s health. For example, drinking too much alcohol can make digestive enzymes activate pancreatitis. Which is basically the inflammation of one’s pancreas. And that is not healthy. Although alcohol brings bad health effects, it also has benefits. Alcohol has some sort of chemical that allows to reduce the body’s risk of heart disease. But it still does not change anything that an adolescent’s body is developing at the moment, which makes it bad to drink alcohol at a young age. The student researcher also found out that in order to prevent America from spoiling is to set a minimum age for people to follow through. In conclusion, moderate use of alcohol is very important in one’s health, and that the government had to set an age that will be considered as adulthood enough.

**Introduction**

Drinking had become a thing for parties ever since someone decided to crush grapes and makes some juice that can make you sleepy. As shown in movies, or mentions in literature, we have known that alcohol has come to knock down our insecurities in social norms. In another way, it is also a key to the door of limitless disasters. Hearing from officials, or even just someone older in general; we hear the same thing. Alcohol is bad for young people. Our brains are underdeveloped in some ways or another reason is that we might have a highly possibility of addiction. But what the researcher wants to know about is if there is a possibility about lowering the legal drinking age just a few years. Will this be relevant to the CNMI? Yes, it can be since we have a lot of issues here due to unsafe drinking from those who are twenty-one and above. The three aspects on why the drinking legal age is an issue here in the CNMI; at eighteen, a person basically can do many other stuff on their own, at eighteen, it is the time for people to practice caution with drinking, and lastly, the current legal drinking age doesn’t do any justice to decrease unsafety drinking habits.

One day, a person will wake up one day as an adult. Simple as that. Year by year there are groups of people turning eighteen. This is where most people start living as young adults. The issue is to discussed about is why does those adults can do anything but drink? At eighteen, a person can go onto the streets and make decisions on their own. It is unreasonable to tell someone; they are not responsible enough to drink when they can do other adult things in life already. Either it is by buying packs of tobacco, marrying the person they met a month ago or even just leave their families to serve their country in the military that is somehow going to risk one’s life. There is more other stuff that eighteen-year-olds can do. Besides, even if the law exists there are still young adults that choose to drink in secret behind the law. At eighteen, young adults are ambushed by responsibilities all around them, it does not seem to be wrong to enjoy a moment of temporary happiness when you are at parties with your friends or even with your family members.

Alcohol itself is known to have many bad side effects to those who consume it. Since most young adults find themselves learning more about everything, maybe alcohol can be one of them. We all do not even know what side effects we each can have since we have different ages, gender, and even DNA. But of course, having a heavy alcohol use will affect you. There just needs to be some discipline class that people can go to learn. It’s just like how people go to firearms class to be safe. There are also health benefits to drinking alcohol moderately at times. The most famous one is that there is a possibility that drinking can reduce risks of diabetes and heart disease. There are also certain situations that alcohol should be avoided is when you have really bad health problems with your body or you are pregnant with a child. At eighteen, you instantly get to know all this and experience what is right for you.

**Literature Review**

We had heard from news from different articles that alcohol is dangerous and it scares most of the public, or basically every parent that has an underage child. But we also heard some benefits of what alcohol has to bring to the table. In this research, the student has found literature that will resolve the case of whether the legal drinking age should or should not be lowered to eighteen. Another factor is that some of these literatures have is some effective ways that can be followed to prevent underage drinking by young adults.

One national literature that the student researcher has found was article which had a title called, “Why Is the Legal Drinking Age 21?” It talks about the history America was before the congress has set the law, and how the government found a way to convinced every state in America to regulate the minimum drinking age. This fits into the research because it answers the student researcher’s secondary question of why is the legal drinking age at twenty-one? It gives the student researcher more in dept understanding of what the country was before the law. With this article, we found out what cause the government to get involved. Another set of national literature that the student found was “21: Science’s limit when it comes to the drinking age.” Experts like the scientists basically says that at a young age, the brain is still developing. While on the other hand, a psychology professor says that alcohol is going to offered anywhere a person goes, how a person deals with it depends on themselves. This is will help with the student’s research because this is one of the questions the student has. And other relative facts that leads to what is going to be affected in a young adult’s brain. There is always an unknown truth when it comes to the age of twenty-one. It makes anyone realize that the age is not all that magical. At twenty-one, it is seemly a great age to set a person thinking that they have already reached adulthood. An international article that the student researcher found was an article from Germany, “Effective Prevention against Risky Underage Drinking,” By using a tax rate on every alcohol in Germany, young adults had gained a self-control to not drink alcohol until their legal age. This will help the student researcher find out what tax rates Germany set in their country to keep underage drinking under control. Somehow maybe, here in CNMI, we can do the same with the alcohol sold in stores. Since, most alcohol drinks cost almost the same as a soda.

There is a pacific literature called “Surprise Health Benefits of Drinking Red Wine.” This article was published under the company called Pacific Care and Rehabilitation Center. The article gives out reasons why specifically red wine has good health benefits. One example is the ingredient in red wine called, resveratrol that is an antioxidant that helps a person’s have good security against having damaged blood vessels. But it does indicate that it’s healthier to drink red wine while eating vegetables or fish. Here in the CNMI, a news article in Saipan Tribune states that the Senate was voting about a bill supporting the underage serving alcohol. The first literature will help the student researcher find out more about that certain alcohol and the second literature will allow the student researcher find out why it seems logical to make a minor handle alcohol in their hands.

The first case study is called the “Underage Access to Online Alcohol Marketing Content: A YouTube Case Study.” Six people had conducted n experiment to see if the underage population would still subscribe to the sixteen different alcohol brands’ YouTube channels. They wanted to find out if the channels’ online marketing would have underage-prevention measures. This is a great source for the student researcher to see what types of videos that are online that doesn’t spread awareness to stop underage drinking. Since, online marketing and advertising can be one of the factors to why some underage young adults consume any alcoholic beverages.

The second case study the student researcher has found is an article; “Do Association Between Drinking Event Characteristics and Underage Drinking Differ by Drinking Location? Surveys were passed out to find out if people drank at the same place at different times. And the other thing is if they do drink only when there is an event. The average age was sixteen years old. The results then come to say that at certain weekends, people do drink especially when not at their house. And especially when there is a lack supervision from an older person such as one’s parents. With this, it gives the student researcher more information to know when is the best time or the preferred time do young adults would want to consume alcohol.

With these different literatures, the student researcher will get to analyze both situations. On why the drinking age should be lowered or why not. The student researcher would finally know why the law is set at twenty-one. And how alcohol consumption with young adults can be decreased.

**Methodology**

Alcohol substance abuse has been one of the problems that communities are facing. Those problems are not only present here in the CNMI, but also in other countries. The question that the student researcher has on their mind is if the legal alcohol drinking age can be lowered to eighteen. The reason why this is important is because it would be more beneficial if the reason behind the age of twenty-one can be reveal. The secondary question is if the age can’t be changed, is there a more possible method to prevent underage young adults from having bad habits of drinking by not siding with the law. The way the student researcher looked for answers to the questions is by providing surveys to students who are enrolled in Northern Marianas College to gain insights on what their thoughts are, the student researcher interviewed experts to know the reasons behind the person’s biological effects of drinking at eighteen and then the student researcher created an international survey that is spread globally to understand the different issues people faced with alcohol substance abuse.

 The student researcher distributed a survey to NMC students and will give about three weeks for the students to complete the survey. Doing a survey with college students can be more helpful since they are the age group that the student researcher would want to target. How it was accomplished, is by using an online survey tool. To distribute, the student researcher approached students or simply go to class the researcher has to have students answer the questions. The main purpose for this survey is to know what they think about the legal drinking age to be lowered to eighteen. With this information, the student researcher analyzed if the public here in CNMI agree to be legally drinking at eighteen. The type questions that are going to ask if they agree or disagree with the question, and ask if they know the consequences of drinking underage.

 The student researcher sent out ten email letters to experts that were chosen. The experts the student researcher selected is various doctors internationally, and a few people who lives in their communities here in the CNMI that experienced alcohol substance abuse with underage young adults. With doctors, the student researcher asked questions about negative effects that alcohol has on a young adult’s body. Other questions will be like why the age of twenty-one is perfectly the best legal age and if the different ways to prevent young adults from drinking against the law. Department of Health and the hospital here in the CNMI has different issues of underage drinking. The main question that was asked is how they are trying to prevent underage drinking. For people with experience, questions that will be asked is how they feel about the issue in their perspective since accidents here in the CNMI happens because of drinking alcohol. All this information will be useful to the student researcher to understand more about why the drinking law is set at twenty-one. At the end of the wait, the student researcher has only interviewed three people in the CNMI and one expert from off-island has decided to answer the questions given.

 The third method that the student researcher has chosen is another set of survey. This time, the survey is targeted at adults and young adults nationwide. To distribute this survey, the student researcher will reach out to acquaintances online through twitter to ask for their time to answer questions momentarily. The student researcher did this survey because it will be important on what opinions that people have about the drinking age to be set at eighteen. The student will also ask what experiences that people encounter with the issue. The questions that will be asked will not be that different from the first survey that was done. Only different questions like where they live, and if they know a great method to prevent underage drinking.

**Analysis**

The first survey was conducted by twenty NMC students dealing with what were their opinions on the issue of underage drinking (see Appendix Section A). The goals were to find out if they agreed with the legal drinking age to be lowered to eighteen or if it should not. More than half of those twenty people, had to agree that drinking at eighteen was not a very delightful idea. They all knew the consequences that came with drinking alcohol. The most common answer to why alcohol was popular among students was due to peer pressure. In today’s society, peer pressure is what breaks us down to change ourselves to what is considered “cool.”

The student researcher has interviewed four experts recently (see Appendix Section B). From here on CNMI, the student researcher has interviewed three experts. All these experts were an expertise on the subject due to the fact that they had experiences with the issues in their families and surroundings. Two of the on-island experts had agreed that alcohol consumed by an eighteen-year-olds will not be a very wise decision. Since at eighteen, people’s mindset is still set at developing. But the last expert had said that alcohol is tolerated at a young age, will benefit the person to have a higher tolerance to alcohol. Dr. Robert Cook from the University of Florida has answered that alcohol has very limited benefits. Putting the body in a bad condition can be alarming. Between all four, the common answer they had was that Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings do help those that are in need of getting rid of the bad habit.

The survey conducted by ten students nationally to address the issue of underage drinking (see Appendix Section C). There are different answers to what is the primary source of underage young adults to get alcohol but the most common one is through friends. Peer pressure again has been mentioned and it got the student researcher thinking that drinking alcohol is mainly because the person is somewhat forced to do something. But those who get into accidents can be a pure tragedy. Like for example in parties when one must be drinking alcohol to get attention from another.

**Conclusion**

The government has made everyone become an adult at eighteen. We are allowed to do all sorts of other adult stuff but is still not capable of handling alcohol. What the student researcher had in mind is if drinking at a slightly younger age might prevent anything bad happening. Should the legal drinking age be lowered to eighteen? Since most adolescents learn from experience, it might be better if they get to drink at eighteen to learn the side effects, instead of just rolling at age twenty-one binge drinking. Another question the student researcher also had in mind was if there was truly an effective way to prevent underage drinking especially for young adults. We see different slogans, videos, and even counselors trying to convince young adults that drinking alcohol at all is not a great idea.? Alcohol can be safe if we choose to do it moderately. Maybe drinking once, a day or even once a week would not kill anyone instantly. With this research, the student researcher has come to a perspective that the legal alcohol drinking age should not be lowered to eighteen.

**APPENDIX**

Section A: NMC STUDENTS SURVEY

**SECTION B: INTERVIEWED EXPERTS**

Questions:

1. Based on your knowledge of alcohol substance addiction, what do you think of the idea of lowering the drinking age to 18? Why or why not?
2. What would be some advice you would give to those who struggle to get out of bad drinking habits?
3. What do you think is the reason why young adults choose to drink when they are below the age?
4. For a small place like the Northern Marianas Islands, do you think alcohol consumed here by underage adults is a minor issue, or a major issue?

The Experts:

1. Dr. Robert Cook
2. This is a tension between the “rights” of an individual person and what is best for a society. Overall, there is probably more harm to a society if one lowers the drinking age. It would likely lead to increased drinking in teenagers and more car crashes and violent events. There is relatively limited health benefit overall. But there would be many persons who are responsible and who be allowed to drink, and they may enjoy it.
3. For many people, I like the idea of trying to stop drinking for thirty days to see if you can do it, and to see if you feel better. If you cannot stop, then you probably need help. In the US, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) does work for many people. There are some medications that can help – they are not great – but they also work for some people.
4. The main reasons for drinking are in general, to be more “social” or to try to ‘self-medicate” things like anger, stress, mood and sleep.
5. Any young person killed from a drinking accident is a tragedy. A college student who dies from alcohol poisoning because they were being initiated into a social club is a tragedy. I think we need policies and laws to help minimize these tragedies.
6. Maria Alvarez
7. It really depends on what perspective you are looking for. In some cases, it is fine to lower the legal age of alcohol to 18. So, if alcohol was moderately introducing to a child from a younger age to present it would not be a problem. A child can be taught to have a strong self-control. Those adolescents that have better alcohol tolerance tend to know when is their limit, and not overdose the use of alcohol.
8. But with strong believes, morality, and a great support group, it is easy o not get addicted to alcohol. It is a way cheaper to access. Look for health outlets to let out stress: go exercise, pray, talk to close friends.
9. Parents has low tolerance of alcohol use. It is a parent’s responsibility to educate their children properly.
10. It will be a major issue due to the fact that the younger generation role models after the older generation.
11. Corena Tenorio
12. I think the drinking age is good for now. In my opinion, I don’t think they should lower it down to 18 because that’s still young.
13. Go to AA meetings. It helps. My dad actually had a drinking problem and that kind of helped him.
14. I guess peer pressure and to give it a try. That’s how I got my first drink. My friends convinced me to “try” some. I act like it was all good but honestly, I just wanted to throw up.
15. It’s a minor issue. I don’t see much news on any incidents where minors are drunk and get into accidents. As long as you control yourself, you’ll be fine.
16. Helen Balbuena
17. With a lot of articles, I have read, it is clear to me that I don’t think it is responsible for the government to allow eighteen-year old drink alcohol.
18. Best way is to avoid, but if it can’t be help, please seek any physician that will be able to help you.
19. Students drink due to the fact of having this fear of parent confrontation. Parents usually pressure their children to the point where the child turns to the bottle to seek reassurance.
20. Here on Saipan, it is a minor issue. I hardly see any breaking news about this type of situations. Alcohol is alright but just remember to keep it moderate.

SECTION C: NATIONAL SURVEY

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