

Alcohol: past, present, and future

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Alcohol: Past, Present, and Future Karl Ballenger Mrs. Hines Communication Arts 200 period 7 February 20, 2007 The beginning of Alcohol While no one knows when alcohol was first used as a beverage (or even created) we do know that it has been used for over ten thousand years. Archeologists to this day are discovering old beer mug containers from the B. C period. Some other archeologist and a few scientists believe it was created in an experimental accident. Like most failed experiments alcohol was soon to be one of the most popular drinks in America. Not only was it going to impact America it impacted the whole world. Everyone would you alcohol in many different ways medicinal purposes, in South America and in the Middle East. They would use it for celebrations any type of celebration and it would be used in sacrifices or offering rituals too. As alcohol caught on people realized what a problem it could be. Everyday people would use alcohol as an everyday beverage not knowing what the affect could be or do; it wasn't long until everyone was catching on to the harmful effects of the alcohol. Soon after Americans and people all over the world soon were able to control alcohol not before alcohol had gone through prohibition and much other banishment in countries and cultures. Alcohol is considered a drug though some people may not agree we all that once you had too much alcohol you're not yourself. Although Americans were no always getting to the point where they were unconscious and becoming " drunk", there was a lot tolerance for the type of people who would drink alcohol everyday they just knew how to control their selves. Alcohol in Early America Alcohol in early America was highly accepted, everyone would have their fair share of drinks. Alcohol can be easily found in the old days because it was so easy to make,

before bars there were pubs and before that people would just drink in their own homes instead of going out to drink. It was so easy to make because alcohol back then would mostly be wine, wine was the typical form of alcohol to be found because it is made up fruits, any kind of fruits but if you wanted stronger tastier wine you would use specific types of fruits. The most commonly type of fruit that people would use are grapes, after you pick them you would press them then add in some sugar and water basically and then some yeast. Then allow for fermentation to proceed. As time goes by you would have yourself some tasty drinkable wine. And from there you would end up having your many liquors and eventually beer. It wasn't long until alcohol played a big role in American history which began in the 1920s, which was when alcohol became prohibited for a time. Americans have always drunk alcohol especially beer liquor in the 1900s, they would drink daily " since the availability and purity of water supplies and other drinkable liquids were uncertain" (Clayton Rivers 94). Drinking was used as a social activity everyone would feel a little more comfortable than usually with a little wine or beer in their system; it would be breaking the social barrier at gathering for the shy people so that they can interact more. At the same time there has always been a passionate opposition towards alcohol many people would think it is evil and created by the " devil" because of the nasty effects and the illness's that it caused. It would even ruin people financially in some cases because of the addiction people would have with it, " it was typical to see people in saloons night and day"(Karen F Balken04) for weeks just drinking or trying to get the bartender to give them a free drink. So there would be a huge conflict between the alcoholic supporters " wets" and the

non supporters "dry's" (Adam Wong03) has existed throughout American history, since the 20th century. It wasn't until 1919 when the "dry movement" (Adam Wong03) achieved its greatest victory by banding alcohol nationwide. In 1919 a majority of states ratified the eighteen amendment to the constitution, which states: "After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the U. S and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is here by prohibited" (Adam Wong03). This banishment, called Prohibition, went into effect in 1920: it was accompanied by the "Volstead Act" (Clayton rivers94), congressional legislation that provided specific rules for enforcing the ban. So for the next 13 years prohibition remained in place, President Calvin Coolidge called it "the greatest social experiment of modern times" (President Calvin Coolidge). Prohibition in the 1920s Although Prohibition continued until 1933 it remains most closely associated with the 1920. in the 1920s "it was a colorful period in history" (Adam Wong03) bracketed on both ends by tragedy and misfortune. At the start of the twenties, America was just recovering from the devastation and deprivation of World War 1. At the decade's end the stock market crashed of 1929 which then fell into the great depression and years of hardship. Then in between the 1920s it was a time of unusual prosperity, the economy seemed to be on an endless climb. That no one can believe, it was a type of miracle people had enough money to buy amazing new devices like radios, refrigerators and washing machines. Even the poorest family of the towns and states were able to afford a car, it was also an era of significant social change and great fun, "it was so fun

that it was nicknamed the roaring twenties" and the " Jazz Age" (Adam Wong03). Everyone was relived and could relax after all the harsh full events that America had went through that now they were able to kick back and relax. People would listen to the radio dance in the nightclubs and saw " talkies" (which are present day movies) everyone was just happy to have their freedom back. Although the 1920s was a fun-loving atmosphere the people would still have to sustain the ban of liquor. But finally the anti alcohol forces succeeded and they were able to get across the eighteenth amendment and the Volstead act. The advocates who wrote and backed these new laws assumed that a majority of Americans would go along with it. They thought that even though you didn't like the new law you would have to follow it because it was law of the land. But nonetheless law abiding citizens were still able to secretly drink liquor and beer by home brewing it. These illegal drinking parlors were called " speakeasies" (Adam Wong03). Criminal gangs and known thieves would smuggle the liquor and beer and they made a fortune each one of these " speakeasies" had their own little illegal organization by selling the illegal liquor. The law enforcement like nowadays would be corrupted by these small organizations with either money or liquor as a bribe and so there wasn't really a stop to these guys. Prohibition Gone the Right to Drink Prohibition affected millions of Americans but it even went into deeper meaning than just not being able to drink, it touched onto a fundamental issue in American life. The role of government in regulating private lives. " Many Americans felt that a degree of federal control is justified for the good of the majority" (Adam Wong03). However others argued that the rights of each individual American citizen and states

should not be limited by the federal government. This particular group argued that the federal government had no right to mandate something as personal and as trivial compared with serious crimes as drinking habits. " it was incredible to many people that the federal government, which had thoughtfully left their murders, lynching's, adulteries, discriminations, frauds, and other transgressions to the disciplines of their state legislatures, would ever take a primary and oppressive interest in what American citizens might want to drink" (Historian Norman H. Clark). The conflict over liquor was a long hard-fought battle. But in the end everyone had their right to drink. Alcohol in modern days and future Present day alcohol is still considered somewhat of a menace to society, because alcohol by itself does no harm or damage to anyone, it is our actions and alcohol combined that make it a threat to anyone. In today's society there have been over millions of alcohol related accidents involving car accidents and suicides and homicides. Every time someone gets into a problem with the police they blame the alcohol they had that it was to strong or they didn't know what it had in it either way they blame it on the alcohol. Although alcohol does have a affects on you and your body it disrupts your nervous system and disrupts your brain waves so that you don't have full control of your body. But you should already know that, you learn about alcohol your whole life on television school your parents. Alcohol does not change people; the people change their selves by drinking the alcohol, alcohol is a gateway drug which means that it leads to more drugs and more suffering to you and to the people who care about you. Alcohol should be thought up of in moderation like everything, everything and anything is bad for you in moderation so you must be able to control

yourself when comes to things like alcohol and drugs alcohol is not as nearly serious as drug but it can lead up to either doing drugs or addiction. Alcohol addiction or an alcoholic is a person who must have some type of alcohol in their system their body won't function well without the alcohol so they must drink every day. But there is special rehabilitation centers to help those kind of people who want to change their life and stop drinking. These places change people's lives into a good path redirect them to a healthier long lasting life. One of the most important things that alcohol affects could be ones family, alcohol affects about 95 percent families in the United States. And especially affects the kids alcoholics lead to divorces in their family and can ruin sometimes child's lives and lead them down that same path. There has always so many domestic violence around in America because of alcoholics and what they do to their wives and their children. After they realize what they have done its almost always too late they lose their job their belongings and their families so they basically ruin their lives. Now in the future who knows how bad alcohol and peoples actions will be with all of these new types of drinks they are creating everyday people will just continue drinking without getting any help and lives will be ruined the percentage of alcohol related deaths will probably increase , there is no telling on how bad alcohol will go. Bibliography <http://www.drugrehab.net/the-history-of-alcohol-in-america/> <http://www2.potsdam.edu/hansondj/Controversies/1114796842.html> Alcohol Abuse: Clayton Rivers Prohibition Banning Alcohol: Adam Wong