

Are college students
adults? i think so, do
you?



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Binge drinking in college is a controversial issue that has impassioned many to write. Henry Wechsler, Froma Harrop, Kathryn Stewart, Corina Sole, and James C. Carter are several writers that have shared their opinions with the public, in hopes to influence society. Although these writers have expressed their concern on this matter, each has a distinct perspective upon the issue. At one end of the spectrum lies Wechsler's article which was inspired by an unfortunate event - the death of an MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) freshman who died of alcohol poisoning.

He claims that colleges are not acknowledging the seriousness of the situation, which should, since college students are ever so "incapable" of controlling their obnoxious behaviors. On the other hand, Carter, Sole and Stewart, righteously accuse the nasty media and ill-pictured society - the sources that promote "negative" means of entertainment - for the common practice of excessive drinking. While these sincere thoughts appear to be reasonable, I beg to differ. Why should college officials or the media be used as scapegoats? Is college not a place for mature adults where they learn to be responsible? Thus I must agree with Froma Harrop, one of the many writers who hold the students themselves accountable for their ignorance on binge drinking.

Colleges should not be liable for the common practice of excessive drinking, nor should it "police" off campus suppliers of alcohol, instead it should be left as a place where inexperienced adults become responsible and knowledgeable on their own. Today most colleges and universities regulate drinking to some extent and provide alcohol awareness programs for students, but even so, many continue to die due to alcohol poisoning.

According to Stewart and Sole, who wrote a letter to the Washington Post, “one out of every four student deaths is related to alcohol use. Research shows that as many as 360, 000 of the nation’s 12 million undergraduates will die as a result of alcohol abuse. ” So it’s not to say that colleges are not acknowledging the seriousness of this case, but colleges simply cannot parent their students.

Carter, a Chancellor of Loyola University, confirms that colleges are providing all the services they can as an institute. Colleges try to provide an atmosphere where students can learn and grow. What more do parents expect colleges to do? Not every student on campus can be regulated or watched, it is impractical. It’s nearly impossible to even check every student’s possession to make sure they don’t carry weapons that can threaten the school.

The Virginia Tech massacre, for instance, could have been avoided on April 16, 2006 if every student on campus was regulated, but then again, that is nearly impossible to accomplish. Hopefully, colleges are saving lives by offering alcohol awareness courses - even if it saves one of every fifty students, one life is valuable and it is better than none. Although colleges provide programs and services on alcohol awareness, colleges cannot prevent all alcohol related deaths, since students can get their hands on alcohol whenever they desire. Wechsler states in his article Binge Drinking Must be Stopped, that “ legally, no alcohol can be sold to people under age 21, but 86 percent of college students drink. That may be true but “ policing” off-campus suppliers of alcohol certainly does not mean that college students won’t be able to get alcohol.

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Also, Carter brings up that, “ courts restricts the ability of colleges to discipline students for off-campus behavior unless the activity in question has a fairly direct relationship with institutional mission. ” So policing off campus suppliers is out of the question. Moreover colleges and universities are places where education takes place, so as Carter would say, let these institutes do their educating. The legal system should be in charge of what the consequences of breaking the laws are. Perhaps colleges do not check to see whether their policies are being enforced but that is part of the whole college experience - adulthood and developing the sense of responsibility - and that is why colleges should not be hassled over this issue. Most students attend college as early as the age of eighteen, the age that America considers an adult.

An adult by definition is a person who has reached the age of maturity and responsibility and therefore college officials cannot continue to treat their students as children, as the high school administrators do. If colleges or universities began to run like high schools, then students would be solely dependent on school thus be robbed from development. Moreover, students learn by their mistakes, so we shouldn't restrict everything that's “ bad. ” Because college students are adults they should suffer the consequences of their own actions since they have the decision to drink or not. Besides colleges are doing everything they can at their disposal to prevent a handful of students from drowning in alcohol, so their lives ultimately depends on what the parents taught them about alcohol and the consequences that may come along.

Parents should be accounted for teaching their ' children' how to drink responsibly and perhaps that will avoid future disturbances in the college environment. In conclusion, the increasing amount of college students that indulge and drench their spirits with alcohol is an issue that colleges should not be held accountable for. In fact, parents should be responsible for the consequences of their children's binge drinking, if not the students themselves. College students are adults after all, and therefore, are responsible to their excessive drinking behavior and if that is not the case then America should rise the " adult age" from eighteen to a wiser age.

Furthermore, colleges and universities have demonstrated their concern to decrease the death rates related to alcohol use by providing special programs and services that their students can join and participate. Do parents really expect instructors to hold their " children's" hand? Regulation throughout the entire campus and watching every student is nearly impossible. Colleges do what they are paid to do, and do what they can do, the best we can do is deal with it because there's only so much that can be done. College students, or rather adults, have their rights, too. Now if they weren't adults, well then, that's a different story, now isn't it?