



A STUDENT'S ARGUMENT ESSAY

Melinda Jackson, the student writer of the following essay, titled “A Call for Policies on Drinking,” argues that drinking on college campuses is a serious problem. See if you can identify her main point and supporting evidence as you read this draft of her essay.

A Call for Policies on Drinking

College and drinking, drinking and college—most students believe the two go hand in hand. If asked, they would say that drinking in college is just a part of life, and it is not a major concern. However, when we examine drinking in college more closely, we see it is a serious problem that people on all levels are not facing. Drinking on college campuses is a bigger problem than parents and administrators realize, and something needs to be done about it—now.

No one would ever realistically believe that college students will never drink. In fact, most students, parents, and administrators are in favour of students taking a break and having fun. Studying during every available minute, parents and administrators realize the strain students are under. And they know that students will probably drink. What they don't understand is the trap students can fall into.

Jerry, a college student, explained how he got involved with alcohol and how it soon took over his life. Jerry went to a different fraternity party every weekend night, where his main goal was to get as drunk as possible. What he didn't know was that he was confrontational when he drank and that people didn't want to be around him. He didn't know his limit, so he often exceeded it. He usually passed out on someone's couch after drinking. In the morning he would wake up and find the next party. Jerry is just one of many students on every college campus.

Whereas most people think drinking occurs just during parties, it actually occurs for many students on a daily basis. Students like Jerry begin by drinking on weekends then they all too easily start drinking every day. They begin to need alcohol in order to feel normal. Once they fall into this pattern, several other serious problems can occur. Not only are they missing classes and falling behind in their courses, but they are also endangering their lives. Drinking becomes the most important aspect in their lives. But it's not just the drinker who's life is effected. Drinkers disrupt their roommates, who are either distracted from their studying or awakened from their sleep. When the roommate complains about being disturbed. The drinker gets angry. And so the pattern repeats itself again and again.

According to our dean of students, students who drink often take risks that endanger their lives and the lives of others. The most obvious risk involves a drinker who gets behind the wheel of a car. Drinkers also tend to get into more fights, because they mistakenly believe they are invincible. In this case, they risk harming the people they fight with and themselves, because they are in no condition to defend themselves. Everyone on the road is a potential victim of the drinker. Drinkers are also likely to have unprotected sex. This could lead to unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, or even AIDS. With the widespread drinking that occurs on college campuses, these consequences are very likely to occur to a student who drinks.

Drinking is a major problem on college campuses, but like every other controversial issue, some people say it has been given too much publicity by overzealous worriers. They believe that the college knows light drinking occurs and that the administration has control of the students who drink. They believe that kids will be kids, students will drink no matter what. These people say that letting students have fun is what's important. But to adopt this attitude is possibly placing someone's life in danger. If even one person is in danger from a drunken student. Then the college must take action.

Drinking in college is definitely going to happen, but there are measures that can be taken to prevent serious harm to students who do decide to drink. Campuses could have alcohol awareness programs and give students easy access to condoms. Campuses could set up a response team that would pick up any student who was incapable of driving. They could require all student union pubs to confiscate keys before anyone is given a drink to ensure that a person who has been drinking won't drive. They can offer literature on organizations that can help students who become addicted to alcohol. Its time for students, parents, and administrators to see the problem before them and take steps to fix it before it's too late.