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Would Lowering the Drinking Age Cost More Women Their Lives?

By **Bailey Mosier** HERWriter November 16, 2011 - 11:23am

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We don't have the specific data to ferret that out."

Grucza and his associates estimate that "upward of 600 suicides and 600 homicides have been

prevented each year simply by having 21 as the nation's drinking age," according to a Health Day article on the study.

A reduction in drunk driving fatalities and studies such as this one showing a decrease in suicides and homicides would seem to be reason enough to keep the legal drinking age no younger than 21. But some proponents exist and have loudly voiced their opposition in recent years.

What's referred to as the Amethyst Initiative is an organization made up of U.S. college presidents and chancellors that launched a movement in July 2008 calling for reconsideration of the minimum age of 21 U.S. drinking age law.

According to Wikipedia's article on Amethyst Initiative, their group's main message is this: "Alcohol education that mandates abstinence as the only legal option has not resulted in significant constructive behavioral change among our students (and therefore lawmakers should) invite new ideas about the best ways to prepare young adults to make responsible decisions about alcohol."

So while both sides raise valid points about the legal drinking age in the United States, Grucza and his team argue that their latest findings are only one of many unintended consequences -- and benefits -- of having the drinking age at 21.

Sources:

Higher Legal Drinking Age May Mean Safer Lives for Women. Health Day. Web. 16 Nov. 2011.
<http://consumer.healthday.com/Article.asp?AID=658968>

Should the drinking age be lowered from 21 to a younger age? ProCon.org. Web. 16 Nov. 2011.
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Bailey Mosier is a freelance journalist living in Orlando, Florida. She received a Masters of Journalism from Arizona State University, played D-I golf, has been editor of a Scottsdale-based golf magazine and currently contributes to GolfChannel.com. She aims to live an active, healthy lifestyle full of sunshine and smiles.

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Growing up, I was as devout an athlete as any one person can be.
Running, jumping, dancing, pivoting, kicking, ...

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This study is typical junk science. Correlation does not equal causation, and the article does not say what other variables (if any) were controlled for. The fact that the supposed effect (whose size was fairly small) occurred only among women while men were completely unaffected is very difficult to explain away if the effect were genuine. Such a study should be taken with a grain of salt, if not a whole pound.

It is really transparent and obvious why a study like this would come out now, at a time when many policymakers are seriously considering lowering the drinking age. After the arguments about drunk driving fatalities have been debunked time and time again (Google "Miron and Tetelbaum"), it was necessary to come up with other "public health" arguments for continuing to violate the civil rights of 18-20 year old young adults. But make no mistake--these arguments are really just a more socially acceptable way of saying that some people's rights are more important than others. That is, the antithesis of what America supposedly stands for.

Let America be America again, and lower the drinking age to 18. If you're old enough to go to war, you're old enough to go to the bar. 'Nuff said.

November 16, 2011 - 4:45pm

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