

Without Alcohol, The World Would Be a Better Place. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

It was 8:54 p.m. on a warm Sunday evening in mid-July. Westlake Middle Schooler Abigail Parnas was walking home from her Nana's house alongside her mother. Engrossed in her new iPad, they didn't hear the speeding car. Both she and her mother were mowed down by a 2018 Mercedes-Benz G-Class SUV. They died instantly.

A 32-year-old woman who was upset over an argument she had with her husband proceeded to drink two bottles of wine and then get behind the wheel to buy a third. She took their lives in less time than it takes to say, "Cheers." If alcohol was banned, there would be a reduction in violent crimes and a diminished number of vehicular manslaughter cases. More to the point, the ever-popular Abigail would still be alive.

Every day, nearly 30 people die, thanks to drunk-driving crashes (Wilson, 2019, p. 45). That equals one person every 48 minutes. In less time than it takes someone to watch the latest episode of Game of Thrones, someone will be killed due to drunk driving.

If a high school student begins drinking alcohol during these formative years, they become five times more likely to drop out of school (Perry, 2018, p. 13). Worse, since alcohol lowers one's inhibitions, it is likely to lead to even greater disasters, including drug abuse and unsafe sexual encounters.

People all over the world drink to celebrate happy occasions. They also drink with friends after a difficult day. Social drinkers ingest wine or beer while preparing dinner, watching a movie, sitting out on the back patio, enjoying a picnic, dining downtown, and more. Why is alcohol so pervasive if it is a choice? Why do so many people choose to drink it? Are more people dependent than they realize?

Over 17 million Americans have alcohol use disorders (Legg, 2019, p. 78). Not every heavy drinker will become a full-fledged alcoholic, but alcoholism is a progressive disease. So, the more people rely on it "in good times and in bad," the more likely they are to develop a dependency.

It's easy to argue that the entire population does not have to be restricted from alcohol simply because certain people cannot control their intake. However, what if the gateway to bad decisions was removed? After all, alcohol is an addictive substance. Why should it be

placed in anyone's hands as a tempting invitation to death's door? Even if someone is a moderate drinker, alcohol serves no health purposes. With every sip, partakers are ingesting ethanol, the same thing that is pumped into the gas tanks of cars.

That 32-year old woman went from a life of luxury to life in prison with only one hour of sunlight. She eats slosh for breakfast, unidentifiable meat for lunch, and soggy potatoes for dinner. No one comes to visit her. She hasn't laid eyes on her husband or children in over a decade. Prison psychologists can't break her of her self-imposed silence.

Her father died of cirrhosis of the liver. Her father's father fell off the back of a pickup truck in a drunken stupor, cracked open his skull, and died before his legs hit the ground. Every day, she lies in bed wondering when she'll die, too. In a world without alcohol, she still would have made plenty of bad decisions, but she never would have landed in a prison cell because she took the lives of sweet Abigail and her loving mother.