

“There’s No Benefit To Lowering The Drinking Age” By Robert Voas

Posted on August 27, 2021

The article, “[Lowering the Drinking Age](#),” was written By Robert Voas in January 2006 and published in Christian Science Monitor (Voas). In his published article, Voas mentioned that he is in favour of 21 as the permissible drinking age. He further mentioned in his editorial that states like Wisconsin, Vermont, and New Hampshire should consider keeping the permissible drinking age to 21 (Voas). The majority of the legal bodies in different states mention that 21 is assigned as the permissible drinking age as before 21 youth of an individual is still in the development phase, both mentally and physically, with the lack of experience to handle risks. Voas supports this argument as he mentioned that even the arguments about 18-year-olds being good enough to fight for their country are not valid as individuals are still in the phase of development. He further presented quantitative evidence of how the 21 law has saved around 23,733 lives (Voas 7). Throughout the article, Voas establishes his credibility by mentioning his 40-year-old detailed study about drinking and driving. Although Voas uses various studies and quantitative analysis to support 21 laws for legal drinking, however, Voas finds his attempt frustrating as the use of ethos requires credible sources to establish his integrity among the target readers.

Voas, in the article, “There’s No Benefit to Lowering the Drinking Age,” finds his attempt to write this article frustrating as many different states like Wisconsin, New Hampshire, and Vermont are considering lessening the legal drinking age since they consider that an 18-year individual is brave enough to fight for their own country. His attempt to grab the attention of the public to keep the 21 law alive is overshadowed by the attempt of researchers to use patriotism as a supporting argument to support a lesser legal age for drinking. He further persuades that the 21st law is beneficial for the greater good of society. However, his tone towards the opposing arguments weakens his overall argument. To address the opposing arguments, which support 18 as the legal drinking age, Voas has an agitating tone as he believes that “think-tank writers, various advocates, and even academics” are trying to manipulate the law so that the legal drinking age can be lowered for the ease of military as well as residents (Voas). Even though his argument about the commonality between war and drinking is justified, yet, his agitating tone overshadows the actual essence of the argument. Other than this, his emotional tone affects the choice of words in the article, eventually affecting the message portrayed by the writer.

Voas has a strong argument and emotional connection with the issue. Even though other researchers have presented counter-arguments about the legal drinking age with tweak arguments, however, the tone maintained by them is steady. For instance, “Amethyst Initiative’s Debate on Drinking a Welcome Alternative to Fanaticism from Radley Balko, printed online by Fox News on August 25, 2008”, presents the argument the idea that an equitable drinking age is good for all (Balko). However,

he supports his perspectives with weaker arguments but the tone is kept neutral as well as persuasive (Balko). Voas' frustrating tone in explaining his years' worth of research somehow weakens the overall argument of the article.

Voas characterizes the supporters for lessening the drinking age with the help of three elements, including logos, pathos, and ethos (Hingson et al.). The overall argument has been supported with a strong argument and supports these arguments with the help of credible facts, a strong emotional connection with the issues and authority towards the issue. Most of his counter-arguments are characterized by the element logos so that the characteristics of lessening the permissible drinking age are supported with the proper logic (Hingson et al.). Even though his logos-based arguments are stated in a frustrating tone, however, his supporting arguments for 21 law are persuasive and fully credible. Whenever Voas stated an assertion in the article, he supported it with evidence as well as relevant statistics. For example, he stated that in most cases, underage drinking is associated with the prevalence of teen pregnancy (Voas). He supports his argument with statistical figures as he highlights that 600,000 physical assault cases are found among college students (Voas). He further mentioned that, on average, eleven people in the US die every day, as their cases are associated with alcohol-consumption car crashes (Voas). Voas's idea of alcohol consumption-related accidents is highlighted by the "National Highway Traffic Safety" Administration stats, which mention how 23,733 lives are saved with 21 laws (Voas).

Regarding the "National Highway Traffic Safety Administration", Voas has supported his argument with a reliable source with a persuasive tone and a credible fact. Voas refers to his article found by New Zealand's specialists on the effect of bringing down the drinking age (Voas). From the examination, Voas found that the pace of alcohol-related accidents among youngsters rose fundamentally contrasted with more established drivers. Having proof and insights encourages the article to turn out to be increasingly dependable and reliable for readers. The proof and insights given by Voas show this is his principal quality when attempting to convince readers to concur with his contention.

Other than this, Voas characterizes the advocates for lessening the drinking age with the help of the use of the element of ethos. Towards the end of the essay, Voas uses ethos with a persuasive tone as he explains his effort and time spent on research for the benefit of the lives of young individuals. The use of ethos is effective at the end as the readers are persuaded towards the perspective of reading his article with greater interest. The establishment of his credibility as a research scientist highlights the use of elements of ethos and helps to advocate his main thesis in the argument. In the first sentence of the article, Voas mentioned that he researched the legal drinking age for almost four decades. Other than this, Voas was one of the respected members of the "U.S. Air Force" and "National Aeronautics and Space Administration" before his retirement. His arguments about military drinking are drawn from his personal experience.

From 1970 to 2002, his study about Highway safety helped him establish his secure beliefs as well as his ability to formulate credible ideas with a proper narrative. Since Voas was a part of the U.S. Air

Force, hence, he highlights that there is nothing common between the military and the perspective of drinking. His personal experiences led him to support the idea that the present drinking age of 21 is beneficial for society and the individual as well. The credibility of Voas' supporting argument can be assessed through the journal in which the article was published. Christian Science Monitor is a well-known publication with surprising backgrounds and a well-targeted audience. With the support of the Christian Science Monitor, Voas was hopeful that his argument and the overall idea would reach the necessary individuals, such as young individuals as well as teenagers eager to start their fun drinking. Moreover, his persuasive tone had hints of hope as well so that a good difference could be made in the world. Voas articles are written for the type of people who have attained a worldwide reputation in terms of good reporting.

Even though Voas found five different slogans that are against the 21 law, however, the slogan "If you're old enough to go to war, you should be old enough to drink" felt of great importance to Voas. His personal experience with the U.S. Air Force makes him credible to refute this slogan. Further, he refutes this slogan by mentioning that military and drinking have nothing in common unless the legal bodies are persuaded to manipulate the law. Another slogan that has been refuted by Voas is the slogan of "the drinking-age law just increases the desire for the forbidden fruit" as he believes that younger individuals have more temptation especially when they are forbidden from something for their health. In the case of the forbidden fruit argument, Voas mentioned that the opposite is true as he supports it with the help of a well-researched argument. He refuted the argument by mentioning that even in the states where 18 is the legal drinking age, individuals continued to drink further at the start of the 20th century. With this perspective, he mentioned that addiction is worse than the idea of temptation.

Voas raised his concern about crash rates as well. One of the slogan, "lower crash rates are due to tougher enforcement, not the 21 law" is refuted by Voas by highlighting statistics related to crash rates in different areas. The fact is that, on average, 11 American teens die each because of their addiction and consumption of alcohol. He further mentioned that the aspect of underage drinking is getting worse as it relates to teen pregnancy and different forms of assault, most commonly physical assault. Voas uses a sympathetic tone as he highlights the worst things and huge costs society has to pay due to underage drinking. Voas mentioned that "Among college students, it leads to 1,700 deaths, 500,000 injuries, 600,000 physical assaults, and 70,000 sexual assaults each year." When New Zealand lessened the drinking age, scientists identified this as a great prospect to investigate the effect of lower-age drinking. Predictable results were obtained from lower age drinking. Based on this perspective, the rate of alcohol consumption crashes lowered among young people. Hence, with the case of New Zealand, Voas was able to refute the slogan "lower crash rates are due to tougher enforcement, not the 21 law".

To conclude, the article "There's No Benefit to Lowering the Drinking Age," written By Robert Voas in January 2006, supports the idea of 21 laws and refutes different arguments presented in favour of lower the legal drinking age. Voas mentioned that his forty years' worth of research highlighted that the 21 law is good for the benefit of society as individuals are more developed and mature at this age.

While stating his refuting arguments, his tone was a bit frustrating and agitating as he used an informal approach. However, with the use of the element of ethos, Voas was able to develop himself as a credible researcher on this topic. He further utilized pathos and logos as a part of the research article. With the help of the pathos element, the writer approached the sentimental and good side of the people to save the lives of their young children while all his arguments are legally supported with statistical evidence that highlights the use of the element of logos. Three of the slogans were assessed in this essay, including “If you’re old enough to go to war, you should be old enough to drink”, “the drinking-age law just increases the desire for the forbidden fruit,” and “lower crash rates are due to tougher enforcement, not the 21 law.” All these slogans were refuted with logical and statistical evidence.

Work Cited

Balko, Radley. “Amethyst Initiative’s Debate On Drinking A Welcome Alternative To Fanaticism”. *Fox News*, 2015.

Hingson, Ralph et al. “Age Of Drinking Onset, Driving After Drinking, And Involvement In Alcohol Related Motor-Vehicle Crashes”. *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, vol 34, no. 1, 2002, pp. 85-92. *Elsevier BV*, doi:10.1016/s0001-4575(01)00002-1.

Voas, Robert. “There’s No Benefit To Lowering The Drinking Age”. *The Christian Science Monitor*, 2006.

Voas, Robert B. “Commentary on Callaghan et Al. (2013): Minimum Legal Drinking Age Laws Protect High School Students From Both Crashes And Alcohol Abuse”. *Addiction*, vol 108, no. 9, 2013, pp. 1601-1602. *Wiley*, doi:10.1111/add.12258.