

Alcoholic Films

Take a guess with what kills most teenagers? It's neither murder nor disease. Car accidents were the top killer for teenagers. According to Nathan Aaseng, average 6000 teenagers killed in auto accident each year. If we do the math, a teenager dies in every 42 minutes due to auto accidents. One reason would be drunk driving. According to a SAMHSA national household survey, 7.2 million adolescents age 12-17 drank at least once in the past year. About 2.7 million teens drank alcohol about once a month or more in the past year. Also, girls were as likely as boys their age to drink alcohol. You may ask where the restriction of the law is. How could the teenagers get alcohols? Why do teenagers not recognize the dangers of alcohol? Entertainment industry is contributes to teenage alcoholism by making it a symbol of maturity. The film *Superbad* and other young adult films are a good example showing alcohol is part of high school life.

Alcohol slows down our judgments of our actions. It usually does not cause much problem drinking it at home. But on the road, a drunk driver can take away driver's life and also others life. Alcohol is a depressant while driving is a highly attention skill operation. According to Kann L, 33.1% of all high school students had ridden a driver who had been drinking alcohol during the 30 days preceding the survey. As Nathan Aaseng writes, teen drunk driving is "still a national tragedy" (18). Teenagers do not recognize the consequence of drunk driving. Teenage drunk driving is a nation issue. The government and media have to improve the educations of teenage drunk driving. Teenage drivers' have to learn the responsibility of their life, passengers life and others people's life. For teenagers, drunk driving is an "unbearable consequences" (Aaseng 8). Teenager was not able to afford the outcome: serious injuries, death, jail, suspend driving license, heavy fines and the feeling of guilty. And these are "unbearable" because teens

are not get adults, but they quickly must face adult problems. First time drunk driving can lead to an unrecoverable lifetime tragedy. There were reasons why teenagers did not notice the danger of drunk driving. Entertainment is one of the main source teenagers learned from. Hollywood films provide wrong characteristic of what teenager should be. *Superbad* film and other young adults' films prove the use of alcohol is cool and necessary before turn into adult. In *Superbad*, two teenagers Seth and Evan wanted to lose their virginity and have an alcohol party before they graduate high school. Their job is buying all the alcohols for the party. Teenagers have an image that alcohol is a common beverage for high school. Teens wanted to show they are being mature because they drink alcohol. Hollywood films catch teenagers' interest and satisfy their rebellious thought in movies. Hollywood films proved the success of buying alcohol and the coolness of drinking alcohol for teenagers. In *Superbad*, two unrealistic police officers drove after having beer from the bar. They even play with alcohol breathalyzer as toy. It strengthens teenager's thought that drunk driving is not as terrible as society told. Teenager would easily learn and imitate from film they watch. Accident of drunk driving is always happening among teenagers. According to Mireya Navarro, "Miles reminded him of some of the council's clients. He said Miles's stealing from his mother, drinking while driving and going on binges shows a lack of control that makes him, if not an outright addict, an alcohol abuser" (Par. 14). His client is in similar situation to a character in the movie Miles. In the movie miles steals alcohol from his mother and drives while intoxicated. These actions, in addition to drinking heavily, mean he at least is abusing alcohol. Teenager misunderstands the consequence of drunk driving. They are blind by the entertainment role model that drunk driving is just fine.

Alcohol is widely use among teenagers. The effect of alcohol had served as romanticism to many teenagers. According to Fort Apache Scout, 31.5% reports hazardous drinking (5+

drinks in one setting) during the 30 days preceding the survey. Alcohol was not only a depressant, it also confuses our judgment and thinking responsibility. Alcohol and sex are closely connected. Statistics from M. Awad Mahmoud, nearly ¼ of sexually active teens and young adults age 15 to 24 reports having unprotected sex because of alcohol or drug use. And 43 percent teens report that they might do more sexually than they had planned because they are drinking or using drugs” (Par.6). The statistics show us the number of teens who use alcohol is more likely to have sexual activity they do not consider. This may lead to unprepared and unprotected sex due to accident sex. Teenagers may even regret for sexual relationship happened. In the movie *Superbad*, Seth mentions, “you know when you hear girls say 'Ah man, I was so shit-faced last night, I shouldn't have fucked that guy?' We could be that mistake!” This situation shows the toxic effects of alcohol confuses our mind and decision. Seth recognizes alcohol can confuse girls' judgment and planned to lose his virginity. The movie gives idea and courage for teenager to try use alcohol. Alcohol expresses our animal personality rather than human. Alcohol makes us go out of control of our body. In the movie *Superbad*, Seth, Evan and Fogell finally got alcohols for their party. They planned to have sex with their girlfriends after the party because they knew alcohol will confuse their girlfriends' judgment and they will have sex with them more easily. Entertainment often focused on importance of losing virginity before high school. One of the influences to this problem will be TV and movie teenagers watch. According to New York Daily News, “A new survey shows four out of 10 city kids say they have had intercourse before age 14, and have engaged in oral and even anal sex by 17.” It is scary to imagine almost half teenager have sex before middle school. Due to teenager have sex too early before they learn sex education in high school. They suffer more danger for having baby and even HIV. While

entertainment often spread alcohol and sex is acceptable for teenagers, the age of teenager having sex is constantly dropping while the use of alcohol among teenager is rising.

Teenage characters often show the use of alcohol in Hollywood films. Some films even teach people ways to get alcohols underage. In *Superbad*, Seth and Evan come up with the plan using Fogell's fake ID to buy alcohols. It shows there a good chance that Fogell's ID would work if there wasn't a theft interrupt. In the film, Fogell told Seth, "Every day, hundreds of kids go into the liquor store with fake IDs." The film exaggerated the use fake ID is very common for teens. The film encourage teens to buy alcohol because everybody was doing it. The films give a lesson to the audience to try fake ID if they haven't tries it yet. There is another terrible lesson shown in *Superbad*. After Seth and Evan fail to buy alcohol, Seth come up with the plan to extort Francis the driver who hits his back. Seth asks him to buy them alcohol for compensation of hurting his back. This scene may happen in reality. It is reasonable a driver willing to buy alcohol for compensation instead of report to police. Teenager may imitate from the movie because it seems to work. It is an illegal extort to ask alcohol for compensation. The charge with buying alcohol for teenager may even worse than an accident hit. There is another trick *Superbad* tell us how to get alcohols. Seth and Evan planned to get alcohol from other people's party. Mainly, Seth and Evan is try to steal alcohols. However, the movie is telling they are "getting" it not stealing it. It's not hard to imagine the outcome of stealing alcohol from other parties. It is very unlikely as Seth and Evan who can successfully getting alcohol from other parties. There are many horrible movie out on the market, isn't it the theater will filter teenagers out because it should be rated adult? Most of the alcoholic films are rated R or NC-17, which means restrict people age under 17; however, the law restrict people from buying alcohol under 21. There was a big gap between it. Age 17 to age 21 is the turning point to be adult. Entertainment industry

gives them a wrong idea of drinking alcohol is sign of maturity. As films are teach technique of getting alcohol, teenager might try it to be mature.

Entertainment industry shows alcoholism as their sign for maturity, but they never shown the health damage of alcohol. Alcohol slow down our mind and it also damage our brain cell. According to Bernice Wuethrich, alcohol damages our central nervous system. Heavy alcohol use may cause liver inflammation and progressive liver scarring. Alcohol use also can contribute to heart and cardiovascular disease. People using alcohol as symbol of coolness and mature. In the movie *Superbad*, Seth successfully got alcohol for Jules's party. People show thankful and respect to Seth. Seth becomes a star for the night. The movie gave credit to Seth for buying alcohol. There is unknown among of teenager was fooled by the wrong perception guided by the movie. There is also possibility that one teenager imitate, others would say, "they all doing it, why don't I?" The mechanism was been spread in years and years. After the teens grown up, they are more likely to addict to alcohol or at least they probably will drink with their friend. It already been a practice and culture influenced by the entertainment. It was been economic purpose to blind us with their sense of coolness. In *Superbad*, after Becca was drunk, she pulls Evan to the room and tries to have sex with him. This scene show the toxic effect of alcohol can make girls happy and wild. The movie show alcohol is an easy way to have sex with girls. Movie never show the negatives side of alcohol. In *Superbad*, people are getting happen after drunk. Seth even binge drink beer in the detergent bottle but he still cautious enough to save and carry Evan away from the cops. Seth is the hero who did not effect by the alcohol. It is easily to notice movie are all made up by stories. The movie will not show negative side of alcohol because it is an entertainment to satisfy audience. Teenager could easily learn from films because they never have the experience before. According to Guy Patrick, "a WHIZZKID banker drank himself to

death copying a boozing game from American Pie Film” (par. 1). A clever man found death after playing the alcohol game from American Pie. The news showing us the scene in movie is not necessary work in real life. Movie guides teenagers to learn the wrong values. It is a very tragic story to hear people die from coping from movie. Alcohol was not something that was cool and mature. Drink alcohol is a fact of lack of knowledge and act of destroying our body. It is the time to recognize the health damage of drinking alcohol and things happen in the movie is not necessary to happen in reality.

Nowadays, alcohol and party became a culture in the senior year of high school life. Even though the society and government are restricting teenager to drink alcohol, teenagers found their bosom thoughts in movies. According to the movie *Superbad*, Officer Slater said, “Look, when we in your age, we hated cops. When we saw you in the liquor store today, we saw a bit of ourselves. We just want to show you that cops have a fun time too.” Officer shares the experience that they also had the experience of drinking alcohol and having party underage. Drinking underage is what everybody is doing thought out times. The movie shows drinking alcohol is a positive and acceptable behavior for teenagers. It also shows drinking alcohol and party are equal to having a fun time. Movie characters often become role models for teenager learn from. By watching the movie, there was a good chance teenager would agree with the movie instead of the law of government. The movie gives ideas of having more freedom from the restriction of the law. According to *Superbad*, Officer Michael said to Fogell, “We know you are not twenty-five man, we are not idiot McLovin.” Officers show mercy to teenager to buy alcohols in the movie. Officers will not charge teenager buying alcohol underage. It is never possibly happen in real life. Movie show a fiction while it seems happening in reality. Movie encourage teenager to buy alcohol without fear because the cops might not charge them.

According to Mireya Navarro, "How can you call me an alcoholic? I only drink red wine." (Par. 12) Wines have different taste from beer and whiskey. But wine is still part of alcohol. It do not made any different either drink wine or beer. They both have the same alcohol effect to human body. Drinking wine underage will not made any different to the law. Most young girl likes wine more than beer. In *Superbad*, Evan wanted to a fun night for Becca, so he tries to buy Becca's favor alcohol drink to the party. Teenage boy would more likely fall into alcohol if their girl friends like it. In the high school period, one of the major task for boy are getting girlfriend as superior to another. Teenager would do anything that makes their girlfriend satisfy. Many teenagers addicted to alcohol while they get older because they had experience of alcohol drinks during high school. The phenomenal of drinking alcohol underage is getting worse and worse by the influence of entertainment industry.

Being mature is one of the most wanted achievements in many people's teenage life. Distinguishing good and bad is not an easy task for teenagers. Learning from TV and movie become a common method for teenagers. However, entertainment industries had over focus on alcohol as part success and being mature in high school. Alcohol is closely related to drunk driving, unprotected sex and health damage that it could lead to destruction of teenager's life. Alcohol will only cause problems while entertainment often shown alcohol is relief of stress. It's time to educate teenagers to recognize movies are fiction. The government should better raise the restriction of adult movies for teenager. The mechanism of teenager alcoholism might get worse if we keep let entertainment industry guiding teenager's perception.