
The Dangers of Drunk Driving and Driving While Texting

Drunk driving and driving while texting are two malevolent acts that are ever present in our society, and will continue to plague individuals until a solution is found. While texting and driving inhibits both the participants attention and coordination, and drinking and driving hinders the way the brain functions and takes away most depth perception and rational thought, it is clear by juxtaposing these two distractions that they both come with a considerable sense of danger that not only interferes with the person who participates in them, but also anyone around that can reap the consequences; any good that can ever be associated with these two acts are lost on all the awful consequences that they cause.

Driving while intoxicated (meaning a blood-alcohol level of or over .08% or between 3-5 drinks for many people) is an offence that will get the participant from anywhere from probation to jail time (Nolo). However, this consequence does not seem to detour many individuals from committing this crime. On average, "31 percent of highway fatalities were caused by drunk driving", with a heavy increase during the holidays (Nolo). Those numbers indicate that almost one out of three accidents is related to driving under the influence. The ages of the individuals who commit this crime the most are, not surprisingly, those within the ages of 20-24 (drinkdriving.org).

Driving under the influence has been broken down into eight key factors that can lead up to the point of actually committing the crime: personal, social, economic, emotional, responsibility, previous plans, normal behavior, and occasion (Cosgrove). The largest factor, personal influences, comes from poor preparation prior to the DWI. Usually, when a group of people go out for drinks, a designated driver is picked, however, when someone is not picked beforehand, one is expected to drive home: intoxicated or not. There is, of course, always the option of calling a friend or taxi to pick them up, and to the rational non-inebriated brain it is an obvious choice. Conversely, when one drinks enough to get legally intoxicated, their decision making capabilities are largely inhibited. It is observed that when one is under the influence that even though aware of the behavior, they are unaware of the consequences of their actions (Cosgrove). These two factors combined make a dangerous cocktail that lead to driving under the influence.

According to the Road Safety Authority (RSA), "over two thirds (67%) of adults support the proposal to lower the drink drive limit to .05." With these estimates, it seems that many would like to solve the problem of drinking and driving, and stop the deaths associated with it. Since 1991, students' reports of drinking and driving has gone down 12 percent, which is most likely associated to the rising awareness that has surfaced in many high-schools and colleges

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

GET HELP

(Reuters). However, not all teenagers think this way. When asking an anonymous patron what they thought about drinking and driving, they replied that “drinking and driving gives me a rush.” The casual attitude towards drinking and driving seems to only lie within a small minority, but as small as this group is, they still instigate a problem.

Texting while driving, however, seems to have a casual attitude among the individuals who partake in it. Leila Noelliste says “I don't think you're really distracted when you're talking, it's when you're texting” (Lowy). Texting and driving get dangerous “when someone becomes disengaged with his/her surroundings because s/he is too mentally occupied with a cell phone” (“New Approaches To End Texting While Driving”). According to Pew Research Center, 34% of texting teens have announced that they have texted while driving. Almost half of teenagers alone have been put in a situation where texting and driving was not only present, but put their lives in danger (Center). In 2008 “there were 5,870 fatalities and an estimated 515,000 people were injured in police reported crashes in which at least one form of driver distraction was reported” (Center).

A study conducted by Michael Austin tested if texting and driving or drinking and driving were more dangerous than the other. The experiment consisted of two people in a car – one to trigger a stoplight and the other who was texting/intoxicated. The driver would then begin texting or reading a message, and try to stop on time for the stoplight. After that test was completed, they made the drivers get intoxicated and restarted the tests. Eventually they concluded that in most of the scenarios, texting and driving actually made their reaction times worse than when they were intoxicated (the worst attempt with 300 feet more while texting than while intoxicated).

Some states are coming up with solutions to texting while driving including having a “designated texter”, altogether banning cell phone use, or judging those more harshly who do get into accidents because of cell phones (Bindley and Lowy). Many people seem to be in favor of banning cell phone use in cars – in fact, up to 80% of adults are (Lavallee). Even though many would be behind this bill, most states are not ready to instigate it yet because of the people who would be against the bill. Some say that banning all cell phone use is not plausible, and it is not even that dangerous anyways (Lowy).

Both of these acts put the driver, anyone in the vehicle, and others around in considerable danger. Is one better than the other? Studies say that it is not safer by much. No one should risk the penalty or possible fatality for a small inconvenience. No matter how much safer one of these acts is than the other, what everyone should keep in mind is that both are still dangerous and should never be attempted.

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

[GET HELP](#)