

Rape: Should women avoid getting drunk?

"In one awful high-profile case after another," said Emily Yoffe in *Slate.com*, a young woman goes to a party, gets drunk, and ends up being raped. It happened at the U.S. Naval Academy in 2012; months later at a gathering of high school football players in Steubenville, Ohio; and now in Maryville, Mo., where a special prosecutor will investigate the alleged rape of a 14-year-old. Well, young women, here's one simple way to prevent rape: Stop getting "wasted." About 80 percent of college sexual assaults involve alcohol, and the rise of female binge drinking has made campuses a rich environment for sexual predators, who lurk like lions "at a watering hole." Let's be totally clear: Young men are the ones committing the crimes, and they should be prosecuted. But we also need to warn young women and girls that when they get blind drunk, "terrible things can be done to them."

"Is telling women to stop being so drunk really the *best* advice you can give?" said Alexander Abad-Santos in *TheAtlantic.com*. Yes, alcohol often plays its part in rape. But every single rape involves a rapist. We should be loudly telling young men not to force sex on women *ever*, whether they're drunk or sober, rather than lec-

turing women on how to behave so as to reduce their chance of being sexually assaulted. In our society's "rape culture," blaming the victim is nothing new, said Katie McDonough in *Salon.com*. For years, women have been threatened with "punishment" if they make certain "bad choices," such as wearing a short skirt, staying out late—and now, drinking too much. "The list of reasons that Americans believe women deserve rape is long."

Look—"we shouldn't live in a world where getting drunk is an invitation to rape," said Megan McArdle in *Bloomberg.com*. But we do. In the longer term, we can fight this epidemic through education, by stigmatizing the perpetrators, and by looking after friends or strangers who've had too much to drink. But in the meantime, "women are at the risk of rape right now." Moreover, even if we succeed in convincing the vast majority of young men that rape is unacceptable, there will always be bad people out there—and a drunk woman will always be more vulnerable than a sober one. "In this age of beer pong and Jäger bombs," said Emily Matchar in *TheAtlantic.com*, that kind of practical advice isn't "rape apology." It's "empowering."