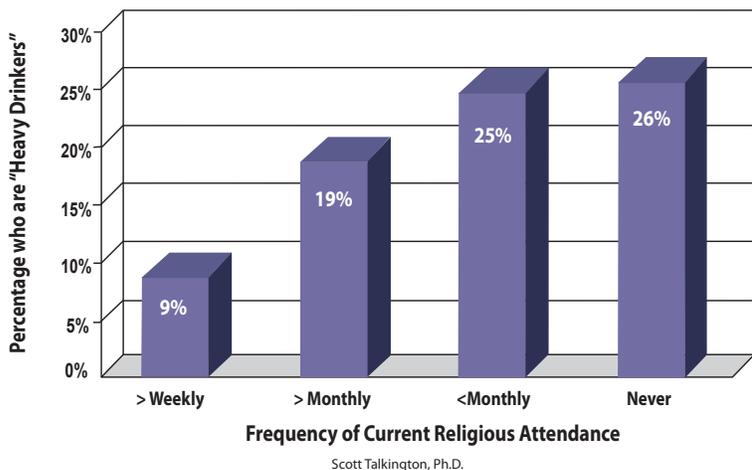


Mapping America – Number 113

“Heavy Drinking” by Current Religious Attendance and Number of Extramarital Sexual Partners

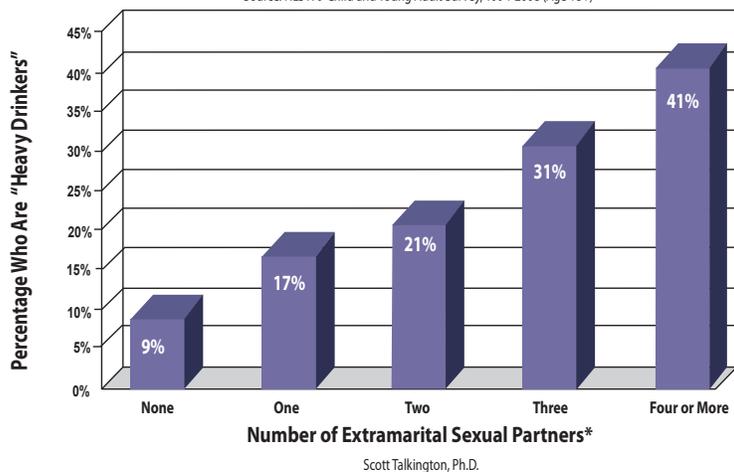
“Heavy Drinkers” by Current Religious Attendance

Source: NLSY79 Child and Young Adult Survey, 2000-2008 (Age 18+)



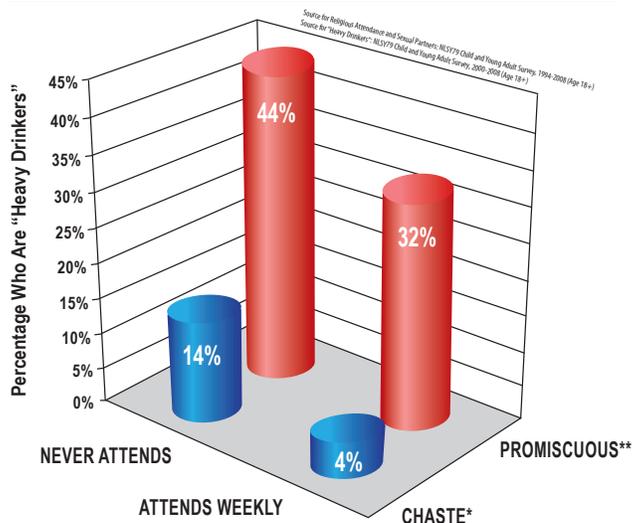
“Heavy Drinkers” by Number of Extramarital Sexual Partners

Source: NLSY79 Child and Young Adult Survey, 1994-2008 (Age 18+)



*Number of non-marital sexual partners during the survey year.

“Heavy Drinkers” by Current Religious Attendance and Number of Extramarital Sexual Partners



Current Religious Attendance and Number of Extramarital Sexual Partners Combined

Scott Talkington, Ph.D.

* No non-marital sexual partners during the survey year

** Four or more non-marital sexual partners during the survey year

This chart looks at likelihood to drink heavily at the extremes of four demographic quadrants.

These four quadrants are derived from combining two sets of sexual habits (chaste* vs. promiscuous**) and two sets of religious attendance (weekly vs. never).

The families occupying the four corners (or four extremes) of these quadrants are:

The chaste* person that worships weekly;

The chaste* person that never worships;

The promiscuous** person that worships weekly;

The promiscuous** person that never worships.

(*No non-marital sexual partners during the survey year.)

(**Four or more non-marital sexual partners during the survey year.)

“Heavy Drinking” by Current Religious Attendance and Number of Extramarital Sexual Partners

Heavy drinking, multiple sexual partners and avoidance of worship tend to go together: the 1979 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth shows that adults who have had no extramarital sexual partners in the previous year and currently worship at least weekly are less likely to be heavy drinkers.

Number of extramarital sexual partners: Only 9 percent of adults who have no extramarital sexual partners (are chaste) were heavy drinkers, compared with 17 percent of adults who have one extramarital sexual partner. These adults are followed by 21 percent of adults who have 2 extramarital sexual partners, 31 percent who have three extramarital sexual partners, and 41 percent of adults who have four or more extramarital sexual partners.

Current religious attendance: Only 9 percent of adults who attend weekly religious services are heavy drinkers, compared with 19 percent of adults who attend church at least monthly. Among adults who attend church less than once a month, 25 percent are heavy drinkers, followed by adults who have no religious attendance (26 percent).

Current religious attendance and number of extramarital sexual partners combined: Only 4 percent of chaste adults who worship weekly were heavy drinkers, followed by 14 percent of individuals who never attend church, but have no extramarital sexual partners. Thirty-two percent of adults who attend church but are promiscuous are heavy drinkers, followed by adults who are not chaste and who never attend church (44 percent).

Related Insight from Other Studies

Other studies show relationships between sexual activity and drinking. A 1990 random digit-dial telephone survey done of 16- to 19-year-olds in Massachusetts found that 64 percent of teenagers who reported having sexual intercourse did so after drinking and 15 percent did so after other drug use. Forty-nine percent of teenagers were more likely to have sex if they and their partner had been drinking.

Additionally, another study found that drinking at an early age was associated with alcohol and sexual risks through mid-adolescence; early drinkers were more likely to report later alcohol problems, as well as multiple sexual partners and being drunk or high during sexual intercourse. Among females, early drinking was also related to sexual initiation and recent sexual intercourse.

Religious practice also affects alcohol use. One study found that among college students those, who were from “Gentile” religious traditions (as opposed to “Jewish” religious traditions), those who were not strongly attached to a particular faith, and those who had parents who were alcohol abusers were more likely to abuse alcohol. This same study found that parental religious affiliation influenced the alcohol choices made by their children, with greater parental religiosity leading to less alcohol abuse by the children. Another study of college students also found that students with no religious affiliation drank significantly more and more frequently, got drunk more, drank more for celebration purposes, and had greater perceived drinking norms.

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