FALLING OVER IN PHILADELPHIA: EARLY AMERICAN PSYCHOTROPY AND TRANSATLANTIC INTOXICATION

by

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DEDICATION

To my loving parents,

Susan and James Taylor.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the relationship among early Americans, taverns, and alcohol. It analyzes the extent to which alcohol and the drunkenness that frequently accompanied and shaped early American history. It argues that the Transatlantic marketplace functioned as a drug that early Americans associated with consumerism, including rum, wine, beer, and other beverages. It also examines the role of centralized colonial authority, questioning the effectiveness of tavern legislation in regards to public intoxication. Furthermore, it scrutinizes taverns as not only social and political institutions but also as biological institutions, a social necessity that exploits our evolutionary past. The research is interdisciplinary, using an eclectic mix of social and biological sciences, including neurology and social psychology, chemical toxicology and anthropology. Alcohol is a powerful chemical and it shares a long and storied relationship with our species. Taverns are vital, but neuro-consciousness and intoxication are the stars of this thesis. Alcohol is the great Silent American Actor and it will be treated as such throughout this work.

INTRODUCTION:

The Early American Tavern

When William Penn first visited Philadelphia in 1682, legend has it that he initially stopped at the Blue Anchor Tavern to indulge in a pint of beer before exploring the rest of the new city. Located near the mouth of Dock Creek on the Delaware River, the Blue Anchor Tavern often served as the first stop for thirsty travelers immigrating to Philadelphia.[1] Serving as a beerhouse, monetary exchange, market place, and post office, the Blue Anchor's functional significance to colonial Philadelphia is indicative of the role taverns played throughout the American colonies and new states, both before and after the revolution. Taverns symbolized hope, comfort, and civilization. To colonial travelers, few sights would be more welcome on the horizon than the calming glow of a tavern's lantern swaying slowly in the breeze. Taverns nursed the young nation into maturity, in both rural and urban settings. In addition, these taverns served as centers in which new Americans created unique identities, all while under the influence of various psychotropic mechanisms. Chief amongst these mechanisms, and one focus of this work, is alcohol. In addition to alcohol are other mood altering substances, such as tobacco, caffeine, and the tavern itself.

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[1] Harry Kyriakodis, *Philadelphia's Lost Waterfront* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2011), 101.

Displaying the efficiency of an excellent colonial establishment, taverns simultaneously laid the infrastructural foundation of British building while giving those who lived there a voice from which to be heard. While the attractiveness of tavern going would be easily understood by an early Philadelphian, attempting to define tavern going and the role of alcohol within early Philadelphian society becomes more problematic in our own times. According to Peter Thompson, both colonial and Republican Philadelphians "identified tavern going as a powerful form of sociability, within whose ambit lay changing attitudes, assumptions, and behaviors that constituted the very marrow of the culture".[2] Some Philadelphians simply enjoyed drinking amongst friends and family within a public setting. A good many others frequented taverns primarily because they liked to drink; the intoxicating properties of alcohol granted them a temporary reprieve from the harsh realities of colonial life.

How, then, do we negotiate the meaning behind these smoke-filled parlors? Can our drunken past shed light on what it truly meant to be an early American? Moreover, can our ancestral pre-disposition towards frequent intoxication illuminate a shadier part of our deep evolutionary past? Early Philadelphians—like most eighteenth-century Americans and Europeans—commonly consumed copious amounts of alcohol, often imbibing to the point of extreme intoxication. The social

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[2] Peter Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution: Tavern Going and Public Life in Eighteenth Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 4.

climate of these taverns often was as significant as what was happening biologically within the brains of these Philadelphian drinkers—another topic that will be addressed in this thesis.

Literature Review

The American colonial tavern has garnered a sizeable amount of popularity in literature, academia, and popular history over the past 15 years. Hoping to further our own understanding of what it means to be an American, scholars have turned their gaze on this legendary institution to shed light on our past. With such a renewed focus, however, arise new issues. Whereas colonial taverns have sometimes been relegated to popular culture or "light history," more recent, serious academic scrutiny has focused on early American drinking habits and how they shaped society. Despite this renewed interest and newfound respect for the American tavern, however, only a handful of historians have offered substantive analysis of the role early American taverns played during our early years of development.

Currently, research on early American drinking patterns usually centers on religious reactionary measures taken to curb drunkenness, the taverns relationship to republicanism and colonialism, and the process of licensing, but not the actual alcohol itself. They are primarily social histories, which use supplemental evidence from material and political histories to boost their claims. Fortunately, several historians have argued why colonial Americans drank so much and for what purposes.

Christine Sismondo has offered a relatively recent explanation about the role of early American alcohol. In *America Walks into a Bar*, she traces the origins of

American tavern culture through the 19th century. Sismondo argues that alcohol has not received its due recognition throughout American history. Although primarily a "popular history," it nonetheless notes the importance and significance of early American tavern culture. Providing a thoroughly researched historiography, Sismondo's book includes a wealth of colonial anecdotes, which effectively demonstrate why and how these institutions helped shape the development of early America. Taking the broader social implications of tavern culture into consideration, the book is light reading, with witty and humorous sections added for effect. Unfortunately, little analysis is included. Sismondo's book fails to make much meaningful contribution to academic debates towards tavern culture. Moreover, while the book is rife with source material and contains an impressive bibliography, each section tells a story. Sismondo claims that taverns (and colonial drinking patterns) reflected a rapidly changing society of Americans, but this thesis is repeated for almost the entirety of the book, covering three centuries of alcohol history. Gender history as well as an analysis of race and class is notably absent as well.

Sismondo's strengths lie in her ability to take tavern history seriously by choosing not to glorify the place of the tavern within American history. *America Walks into a Bar* may not offer new historical frameworks from which to view the tavern, but the text is accessible. While it is a great piece of introductory literature to the genre, Sismondo understand the limits of writing such a broad historiography and the silences that it produces. While she may not offer a solid explanation as to what alcohols role in American development is, *America Walks into a Bar* truthfully

asserts that drunkenness and tavern culture play a significant role in the development of an American identity.

An outstanding study of alcohol history in America is David Conroy's *In Public Houses: Drink and Revolution of Authority in Colonial Massachusetts.* Conroy tries to place the "shadowy institution [taverns] into focus" and to "reveal its place in the evolving public life" of early Massachusetts. Early Americans, Conroy asserts, viewed the tavern as a stage in which colonials and early republicans could act out a range of activities, from politics to various social issues. The institution itself allowed a variety of issues of the day to be acknowledged and reaffirmed.[3] Possessing a "social stage" which was theoretically free of imperial authority, early American men and women were able to challenge or endorse colonial hierarchies in taverns. *In Public Houses* also suggests that tavern culture indirectly shaped parts of American culture.

Despite Conroy's ground-breaking work, his extensive examination of magisterial and administrative source materials have led to questions about the legitimacy of his findings. For example, Conroy argues that colonial taverns in Massachusetts offered a refuge from oppressive Puritan oligarchies. Puritan predestination ideology drove some settlers to "…embrace…a less complicated and judgmental pattern of fellowship" that "offered immediate gratification and allowed for some measure of self-assertion for men in so arbitrary a world".[4] Although this

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[3] David Conroy, *In Public Houses: Drink and the Revolution of Authority in Colonial Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill.: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 31.
[4] Ibid., 49.

idea is enticing, the notion of a universal, oppressive group of Puritan overlords is an historical overgeneralization. Conroy also fails to define or give voice to those who he labels as "problem drinkers." This is not to suggest that Conroy should have devoted an entire chapter to the concept of colonial alcoholism, or the "climate of crisis" that chronic drunkards posed to society.[5] However, some discussion of the topic of biological drunkenness would have furthered his argument.

Problem drinkers are not the only voices silenced in Conroy's text. Apart from the numerous examples of attempts to regulate drinking patterns in Massachusetts, slaves, servants, and Native Americans are virtually absent from Conroy's narrative. In other words, *In Public Houses* remains centered around an egalitarian alternative to what was supposedly an oppressive oligarchy. Moreover, Conroy does not analyze change over time, neglecting entirely the split that would later define early republican tavern culture as being both inclusive and exclusive.

If colonial tavern going correlates with oppression and hierarchy, according to Conroy, surely this principle applies to more than just middle-class Europeans and white elites? Would groups of men not get together simply because the idea of frivolity amongst a primarily male-dominated setting was both a fun and exciting way to spend an evening? Conroy does not address this issue but instead advances dubious political explanations. His book is also steeped in overly complicated rhetoric. Would a "bars are fun" theory not be as legitimate as Conroy's "public stage" theory? Regardless of the voices absent from Conroy's lack of analysis, *In Public Houses*

[5] Ibid., 145.

remains one of the most influential pieces of early American colonial literature produced to date.

Still, extensively researched and thorough in its methods, *In Public Houses* has encouraged historians to look more closely at the colonial tavern as a critical colonial institution. Like Sismondo, Conroy knew that there was more to the tavern than simple "revolutionary politics." The alcohol culture was hard at work, helping build early American identities. Conroy understood that there was more to alcohol and public life than simply a stage from which to launch revolution and discuss politics—as important as those functions were. Both Sismondo and Conroy acknowledged the role alcohol has played over the past three centuries of American development.

Sharon Salinger, another contributor to the story of American alcohol, builds upon this notion in *Taverns and Drinking in Early America.* Salinger takes a different approach when questioning the role of alcohol in American history. She views taverns and alcohol as separate entities, both of which were separate but entirely dependent on the other. Salinger also discusses the social stratification that enveloped early American tavern culture. This concept, which Conroy only mentioned, is the foundation upon which Salinger builds her argument. Focusing on the social stratification that developed within a wide range of American taverns, the geographic range of taverns that Salinger chooses to investigate is quite large. Each chapter treats a particular colonial region, along with a short discourse on why a particular colony displayed unique drinking patterns. Differing from Conroy, Salinger utilizes a social

approach while simultaneously staying away from overly complicated political analyses that involve alcohol and tavern culture. While Conroy and Sismondo argue that taverns reflected change in society, Salinger argues that they were paragons of consistency, a rock amidst the sea of social turbulence that plagued the eighteenth century. Towards the end of her book, Salinger argued that taverns successfully created a new brand of class-consciousness, "ultimately sustaining the privilege of well-born white males."[6]

Taverns and Drinking in Early America demonstrates how early American taverns, dispersed over a wide geographic area, were an expression of male white power by the end of the eighteenth century. Salinger accomplishes what Conroy and Sismondo did not by considering gender, race, and class. Salinger draws heavily on primary source materials, consistently checking legal documents and public records from the eighteenth century. She successfully demonstrates how market trends and social networking successfully challenged and often determined who could and could not obtain a license to sell alcohol throughout colonial America. *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* has left room for future historians to pick up where Salinger has left off.

Like Conroy, Salinger also displays a few logical flaws. The book frequently used examples of colonial elites, demonstrating their "disgust" towards drinking in the presence of the poor or lower classes. This, Salinger argues, is evidence that

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[6] Sharon Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 244.

lower-class Americans did not enjoy imbibing with upper-class whites. However, scant evidence supports this contention. While Salinger's class-based analysis is historically legitimate, it ignores several major themes, most notably the issue of socially destructive drinking. Specifically, chronic drunkenness does not fit into Salinger's social framework that is built on class-consciousness. Acknowledging that chronic drunkenness was rampant in various taverns across early America, she chose not to pursue a discussion of lower class drinking practices, alcoholism, or the implications of each from a wider social standpoint. However, it would seem as if she too understands that alcohol itself played a significant role, perhaps larger even than the tavern itself.

Taverns and Drinking in Early America is a solid piece of work. Although its focus lacks a narrow geographic range, the book never fails to demonstrate the numerous consistencies displayed in taverns throughout the colonies. In conjunction with Conroy and Sismondo, Salinger has contributed to dismantling the assumption that taverns are little more than historical superficialities. The book itself succeeds in its goals, in that it establishes a solid historical framework. Despite admitting that more research needs to be conducted on the lower classes and alcohol, Salinger has provided a unique, all encompassing examination of the nature of early American tavern culture.

Carl Rorabaugh's *Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* adds weight to the theory that American identities were changed more by alcohol than they were by the tavern. First, Rorabaugh confronts what most scholars will not: social alcoholism.

Moreover, he is one of the only scholars to suggest the historical possibility of an early American alcoholism epidemic. Rife with statistics on consumption rates, the study contends that to colonial Americans, drunkenness was an acceptable way to celebrate, among other things, personal independence and the lack of British imperial authority.[7] As an expression of rights, Rorabaugh also argues that this over-inebriation lead to an inevitable gap in colonial wealth. The text contends "men who chased dollars naturally disapproved of liquor, because a drinking man poured his money down his own throat, dissipating and destroying wealth for selfish, nonproductive ends. He was unable to accumulate capital, to invest for profits, or to save money for protection against misfortune."[8] Thus, according to Rorabaugh, the final decade of the eighteenth century was a key period of cultural transition within American society, one that was determined and dictated by a society that was intoxicated in one way or another almost all the time.

However, the emphasis on actual ways of life, the physical effects of alcohol, and a consequential explanation of social alcoholism raises several questions. If drinking was a choice that increased a man's autonomy, and to be drunk was to be free, what did it mean to be American? Was excessive drinking among the first inherently American characteristics? Could our own cultural expression of American identity have begun with a low level of cultural alcoholism? Questions such as these are raised in abundance throughout Rorabaugh's text. For example, Rorabaugh asserts

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[7] Carl Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1979), 151.
[8] Ibid., 204.

that "Records for the period show that only a small percentage of eligible voters cast ballots, and we should not be surprised that many of those who did go to the polls chose to turn elections into farces by selling their votes for liquor."[9] Could the assertion that many of our time-honored traditions are rooted in alcohol actually be true?

There are a number of problems and inconsistencies with *Alcoholic Republic*. For example, Rorabaugh fails to address whether or not colonial Americans were consuming large amounts of alcohol to assert their national liberty, or out of economic necessity, or to assert their own personal freedom. For example, "…corn sold for 25¢ a bushel in Kentucky, whiskey brought, after trip expenses, four times that amount in Philadelphia."[10] Ignoring the fact that an early form of American capitalism was already in existence, goods and services were already being sold with the intention of maximizing profits. Rorabaugh makes another point, which is also a bit hard to accept. Claiming that workers in early America began drinking heavily during the turn of the nineteenth-century due to structural changes in American society, Rorabaugh also asserts that working class men and women "met these new conditions by turning to heavy drinking."[11] This does not account for the socially destructive drinking that began to appear during early colonization.

Another issue is the way in which Rorabaugh presents his theories. For example, Rorabaugh writes that tradesmen who could no longer find work as skilled

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[9] Ibid., 155.
[10] Ibid., 79.
[11] Ibid., 113.

laborers drank increasingly larger amounts to deal with a rapidly changing culture of American work. However, many records suggest that almost all professions, not just displaced skilled laborers, were drinking increased amounts of alcohol. A similar theory in the *Alcoholic Republic* has gained some attention: Children who came of age between the 1790s and 1820s, argues Rorabaugh, consumed alcohol because the hopes, dreams, and ideals of their parents' generation were no longer social realities in the new Republic. As this generation turned away from the revolution, deeming past ideals as "impractical abstractions," industrial growth increased the rate at which cheap alcohol was produced. These types of theories fall into the category of historical speculation, not historical fact.

Rorabaugh's findings represent a unique framework, one that values the socio-psychological composition of early American society. Whether or not his theories are valid, Rorabaugh's *Alcoholic Republic* offers plausible, believable explanations for the rising rates of alcohol consumption throughout the colonies during the closing years of the eighteenth century. Part of the book's strength is the way in which it chooses not to deal with social or political theories. Instead, it focuses on alcohol directly, in a way that offers answers to questions posed by Conroy and Salinger.

Finally, *Rum Punch and Revolution* by Peter Thompson offers an in-depth look at tavern going in early Philadelphia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Unlike Salinger, who argued that taverns helped enact and define race and class, Thompson asserts that Philadelphian taverns transcended both race and class

altogether. Thus, by establishing a political framework from which to assert his ideas, he is able to examine "the most enduring, most easily identifiable, and most contested body of public space in eighteenth-century America."[12] Although he does not explicitly state that political leaders created or promoted inclusive political environments, he asserts that tavern politics led to the development of various legitimized cultural norms.

Thompson perhaps overemphasizes the desire of an average Philadelphian to engage in political discourse. Similarly, he assumes that visiting a tavern to engage in political discourse was a Philadelphian's primary reason for visiting such an institution. What he deemphasizes is that average Americans enjoyed drinking simply out of a desire to meet friends and be social. Thompson also fails to address ethnicity or religion in Philadelphia's tavern politics. Did either factor affect tavern life? More importantly, did these early Quakers, as Conroy asserts, really use the tavern to escape religious oligarchies? Where are the voices of the minorities? Did any of these groups have influence of any sort in Philadelphia? Despite these lingering questions, Thompson successfully argues that taverns were spaces in which public and private lives intersected, and acted as areas where colonists could interpret and create their own environments.

Several common themes link these studies together. For example, each book attempted to explain why tavern history has been relegated to a zone outside of the traditional American historical narrative. Similarly, Sismondo, Conroy, Salinger,

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[12] Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 155.

Thompson and Rorabaugh addressed a similar question: What function did the tavern serve in early American society? In addition, while each of these authors may be asking similar questions, they all neglect to ask other important ones: What role did alcohol consumption play from a neuro-stimulant viewpoint? How did alcohol, as a mind-altering substance, effect the growth and development of a large American population center?

Most of the tavern literature published within the past twenty years contains silences and gaps. Conroy, Salinger, and Thompson possess little information about Native American consumption patterns. Similarly, both Rorabaugh and Sismondo excluded women from their narratives. All five of these monographs neglected servants, slaves, and Native Americans. While the records are scant, this should not encourage historians to leave disclaimers at the beginning of each text, justifying the silence of these voices. Aside from Rorabaugh, all of these authors fail to explore the biological or social importance of alcohol. Finally, none of these authors explored the possibility that alcohol could have largely determined the course of early American history.

Viewing The Tavern Through Biology

One area where academic studies fall short is by failing to analyze the physical and biological explanation of alcohol's chemical intoxication qualities. This thesis will examine the importance of alcohol in tavern culture and everyday life, with a particular focus on post-revolutionary Philadelphia. It will take preexisting tavern theories and use neuro-historical methodologies to understand tavern culture in

evolutionary terms. This study explores how alcohol, viewed as a drug and a chemical neuro-toxin, influenced society, politics, and the way in which early Americans viewed and negotiated the world around them. It will also view the TransAtlantic marketplace as a psychotropic mechanism, and suggest that early American consumerism and alcohol share a close relationship within social settings. Various neuro-historical approaches will be utilized, in which the chemical properties of alcohol directly influence the development of early American history. Other psychotropic mechanisms, such as coffee, sugar, and tobacco, also will be considered. This thesis is a biological examination of early American intoxication within the context of Philadelphian taverns.

PSYCHOTROPIC MARKETPLACES

TransAtlantic NeuroHistory

The following section offers a new approach to a period within Philadelphia characterized by economic expansion and consumer marketplaces. It illuminates the relationship between Philadelphian society and a drug-centered marketplace, a relationship characterized by consumerism and driven by psychotropy. It also examines the tavern as an institution in which early Americans used a variety of different mood-altering drugs. A complicated pattern of social and neuro-chemical processes drove Philadelphia's marketplace during the 18th century, a process that ultimately and somewhat surprisingly influenced the course of early American history.

Psychotropy is a process or physical act that changes the chemical composition of the human nervous system. Accordingly, Philadelphia during the 18th century was a city defined not only by its people, but also by its mood-altering substances, which dominated its taverns. Common substances, such as coffee, tea, cocoa, rum, or tobacco all lay within the category of psychotropic mechanisms. These commodities, while changing the mood of those who consumed them, helped build an early American marketplace.

The concept of historical psychotropy illuminates a complicated socio-cultural process that repeatedly crossed the Atlantic Ocean in the 18th century. People, ideas,

and commodities boarded ships bound for the new world, traveling to a continent that possessed a marketplace unlike traditional European places of exchange. Traditional medieval or renaissance marketplaces differed greatly from those of the 18th century colonial Atlantic. European hamlets or villages usually contained some sort of local psychoactive substance used for religious purposes. Playing sports, singing, and dancing allowed European peasants to release a cocktail of pleasure-inducing neurotransmitters (chemicals in the brain that determine how one feels).[13] After the Columbian Exchange, many Europeans no longer needed only religious ceremonies or traditional means of entertainment to make themselves happier. New substances such as tobacco, cocoa, and chocolate flowed across the Atlantic Ocean and into European ports, allowing individuals to consume a variety of mood-altering substances that made their lives less miserable. By the mid-1600s, large portions of Europeans migrated to the New World not just in search of freedom or riches, but also for the ability to purchase, grow, and consume psychotropic mechanisms more cheaply. The Columbian Exchange, then, represented not only an exchange of goods and people, but also the transfer of various mood-altering substances.

Citizens living in traditional European societies had existed on "teletropic mechanisms manipulated by ruling elites" for centuries.[14] With the introduction of American goods into European marketplaces, "a new order in which the teletropies of

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[13] Daniel Lord Smail, *On Deep History and the Brain* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2008), 186.
[14] Smail, *On Deep History*, 185. Smail notes that those living during the era "turned increasingly to items of consumption, giving up God in favor of mammon".

dominance were replaced by the growing range of autotropic mechanisms" grew out of a rapidly expanding Atlantic marketplace."[15] The drive to continue consuming mildly addictive substances helped break down traditional Old World values and re-forge new ones in the Americas. As the Old World experienced the pleasures of the New, a growing demand for American commodities nursed the Trans-Atlantic economy. As a result, the pursuit of wealth also involved a new form of psychotropy, damaging physical and mental health in the process.

A new relationship developed between brain chemistry and consumerism as the Trans-Atlantic marketplace increased in size and profitability. For many European traders, financial ruin caused more stress than traditional physical survivability. As new goods and services flooded European ports, the upper classes continually needed new ways to project their wealth and status. Status anxiety arose; wealthy and poor citizens in both Europe and the New World chained themselves to an unending cycle of physical and emotional stress.[16] For the laboring classes, both American and European, substances such as tobacco and rum helped to alleviate the drudgery of rural life. Regardless of social standing, citizens on both sides of the financial spectrum existed within a permanent state of 'stress and release', in which various drugs alleviated symptoms of neuro-chemical duress. Heightened levels of stress hormones often drove individuals to seek new and exciting ways to change their mental chemistry.[17] In humans, "the daily dialogue between the dopamine reward

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[15] Ibid., 186.
[16] Ibid., 185.
[17] Ibid.

system and the stress-response system can also be seen as a kind of historical dialogue."[18]

Neuroscientist Robert Sapolsky supports this notion. Stating that stress is "distributed unequally across the social spectrum," Sapolsky contends that historically, the lower classes have suffered more from chronic stress than did the wealthy.[19] The physical dependence on mood-altering substances intensified the hierarchy of wealth, helping to create a new form of "institutionalized stress"[20] Chronic stress is debilitating. In addition, while it may not wield the cultural or military strength in the way an armada or army does, this neuro-chemical process helped drive the process of colonialism. Debilitating in nature, status anxiety in the colonial transatlantic marketplace had a small but monumental side effect: class division and social hierarchies were now intertwined with neuro-chemistry.[21] As the demand for psychotropic substances increased, European investors continued to fund exploratory expeditions while governments granted charters for new colonial settlements. Traditionally, neuro chemistry has not played a large role in colonial narratives. However, the processes and social patterns that took place in early American brains represented a radical departure from the sleepy, sober populations of medieval European peasantry. The 18th century world had become one filled with

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[18] Andrew Shryock and Daniel Lord Smail, *Deep History: The Architecture of Past and Present* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 65.
[19] Ibid., 65.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.

drugs and commodities, its empires and peoples hooked on an array of substances that made them feel "better."

As demand for these substances grew in both the Old World and the New World, the transatlantic marketplace permanently altered the neuro-chemical makeup of those who consumed psychotropic substances.[22] Aside from status anxiety and stress, health-related issues grew in unison with port towns. Excessive alcohol and caffeine consumption caused "permanent neurological modifications" to a variety of population centers.[23] In addition, while historians cannot prove that brain chemistry changed substantially before and after the discovery of the New World, neuroscientists postulate that our physiology changed substantially after the Columbian Exchange.[24] Status anxiety, chronic stress, and an array of health issues plagued those who consumed various substances *en masse*. Unfortunately, the early American marketplace and process of wealth accumulation would also become a new kind of mood-altering drug.

America, much like the rest of the Atlantic community, began its infatuation with alcohol from an early age. In fact, the majority of the ships carrying settlers to the new English colonies possessed more beer and alcohol than water in storage. In Philadelphia, America's first urban metropolis, alcohol quickly became a valuable commodity. In 1683, William Frampton opened Philadelphia's first brewery at the

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[22] For more on this time period, see Eugene McParland, *The Socio-Economic Importance of the Colonial Tavern during the British Period:1664- 1776* (NYC, NY: Queens College, 1970).
[23] Shryock and Smail, *Deep History: The Architecture,* 75.
[24] Ibid.

corner of Front Street and Walnut.[25] William Penn himself commended Frampton's work.[26] Between 1685 and 1775, Philadelphia boasted over thirty breweries.[27] Similarly, between 1776 and 1800, fifteen more added to the cities budding publican culture.[28] Occupying a special place within early American society, Philadelphia's brewers commanded a large amount of respect. For example, in 1787, in celebration of Constitution Day, a brewer by the name of Reuben Haines lead a parade of ten brewers down Front Street, with stalks of barley in his hair and a mashing oar strapped to his hips.[29]

In 1793, the US commissioner of Internal Revenue announced that that Philadelphia was producing and exporting more beer than every other American port combined.[30] Often serving as a type of currency, Philadelphian alcohol found its way into ports around the Atlantic world. Amazingly, during the entirety of the 18th century, twenty percent of all goods imported into the colonies consisted of rum or molasses.[31] In 1770, four million gallons of rum traveled into American ports; Five million gallons had been distilled.[32] That same year, over 140 operational rum

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[25] Rich Wagner, *Phildelphian Beer: A Heady History of Brewing in the Cradle of Liberty* (Charleston, SC: This History Press, 2012), 18.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 25.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Kym Rice, *Early American Taverns: For the Entertainment of Friends and Strangers* (Chicago, IL: Regnery Gateway, 1983), 95.
[32] Ibid.

distilleries existed within the American colonies.[33] A single gallon of Caribbean rum was valued at two shillings and five pence during the 1770s.[34] Rum produced in America, however, was valued at one shilling and eight pence.[35] Thus, international buyers often purchased Philadelphian rum, as it was cheaper than its Caribbean counterpart. During the American Revolution, when Caribbean rum/molasses/sugar became scarce, rebellious Americans began distilling whiskey instead. American whiskey was not merely a product of economic convenience. It was now a means from which Americans could reject Imperial authority and obtain their mind-altering chemicals. Due to an abundance of retail distributors and a large commercial port, Philadelphians enjoyed consuming an excessive amount of chemical mood-enhancers.[36]

Purchasing power, newly acquired by the middle and laboring classes, slowly changed the neuro-chemical makeup of early Philadelphians. Recent studies regarding brain-chemistry suggest that the process of purchasing a commodity cleanses the body of undesirable neuro-transmitters, such as epinephrine or norepinephrine.[37] It is important to note that the consumer economy of the 18th century was in no way near the 20th in terms of volume. However, this early brand of consumerism still represented a radical departure from older ways of life. After a

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[33] Edward Crews, "Drinking in Colonial America," *Colonial Williamsburg Journal*, Winter 2007. Accessed from www.History.Org/Index.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] For an extensive list of these substances, see Harry D. Berg, "The Organization of Business in Colonial Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania History*, 10, no. 3 (July 1943).
[37] Smail, *Deep History and the Brain*, 185.

purchase, pleasure-based neuro-transmitters, such as dopamine, flood the brain and trigger a feeling of happiness within the consumer. After the purchasing process is complete, the brain returns to its equilibrium state. This process is generally unpleasant, and the item is consumed in order to re-obtain the original feeling of happiness. Accordingly, the consumer believes that the alcohol or tobacco is responsible for happiness, failing to realize that the ritual of purchasing accounts for half the pleasure. The process itself is hardly noticeable. However, when performed on a daily basis, the brain becomes accustomed to it. It is not hard to imagine early Americans becoming frustrated when their caffeine, tobacco and alcohol were not available to consume. The transatlantic marketplace, then, while not usually viewed as a psychotropic mechanism, deserves to be re-examined as a stimulant. Hooked on an early form of consumerism, Philadelphians addicted a psychoactive processes engaged in shopping and consuming to ease their stress.[38]

As more goods and services entered Philadelphia to feed the growing population, large amounts of capital entered the burgeoning city.[39] Various services became an essential part of colonial life. One of these services was the banking industry. In the early 1780's, wealthy Philadelphians established the Bank of North America, which became the first legitimate American corporation. Corporations like the Bank of North America invested in public projects, and built roads into rural and

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[38] Psychotropy would become associated with class identity, not geography or culture.

[39] For more on this topic, see Marc Engal, "The Economic Development of the Thirteen Continental Colonies, 1720-1775," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (April 1975).

previously unreachable communities. Providing rural Pennsylvanians with roads, canals, and bridges helped spread a growing cultural drug dependency. Banking, similar to many other American industries, shared an intimate relationship with the consumption of mood-altering substances. For example, the growing demand for corporate securities in the late 18th century lead to the creation of the American Stock Exchange, who met at the Merchants Coffee House (City Tavern) for the first time in 1791.[40] Unsurprisingly, the first American investment bankers surrounded themselves with an unlimited supply of caffeine, sugar, and alcohol; the aggressive consumption of psychotropic substances helped fuel early American investment banking. One can imagine the late nights spent up by bankers, cradling their hot cups of coffee. Alternatively, alcohol helped calm tensions between nervous investors. At the very least, the alcohol served in the City Tavern provided easier formalities between potential business partners. Psychotropic substances consumed within those walls helped grow the American economy, even if its role was to fight fatigue or calm the nerves of a young investor.[41]

One third of all British shipping ventures in the Atlantic Ocean belonged to American companies or investors during the 18th century.[42] The contribution of rum to the American people has always been its value as a stimulant and intoxicant.

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[40] Thomas C. Cochran, "Philadelphia: The American Industrial Center: 1750-1850," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 106, no. 3 (July 1982), 327.
[41] For more on this topic, read Mariana Adler and Susanna Barrows, "From Symbolic Exchange to Commodity Consumption: Anthropological Notes on Drinking as a Symbolic Practice," in *Drinking: Behavior and Belief in Modern History* (Berkeley, CA: n.p., 1991), 376-398.
[42]Ibid., 147.

Americans consumed 90% of all rum distilled in New England![43] Out of the 1.5 million tons that left American shores, Americans owned 500,000 tons. One fifth of that freight belonged to Philadelphian merchants and investors.[44] Proportionally, Philadelphians wielded a large portion of transatlantic wealth. Between 1750 and 1754, an average of 444 ships left the Philadelphian harbor, exporting an estimated 25,000 tons of freight.[45] Between 1770 and 1774, nearly 760 ships left port, exporting an average of 45,000 tons.[46] Investors throughout the city particularly enjoyed investing in Southern tobacco enterprises. From 1726 to 1729, 5790 sterling went to southern colonial tobacco enterprises.[47] From 1750 to 1775, that number had increased to 61,653 sterling.[48] Between 1776 and 1782, the young United States exported 87 million pounds of tobacco.[49] While the prevalence of tobacco consumption was growing within the Philadelphian marketplace, the city's population was also steadily increasing. Between 1730 and 1750, the population in Philadelphia more than doubled.[50] Despite the prevalence of tobacco investment, rum was the most important consumer commodity that existed in Early America. Before, during, and after the American Revolution, New England rum represented 80% of all colonial

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[43] John T. McCusker, "Sources of Investment Capital in the Colonial Philadelphia Shipping Industry," *Journal of Economic History* 32, no. 1 (March 1972), 147.
[44] Ibid., 147.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid., 154.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Lain Gately, Tobacco: "A Cultural History of how an Exotic Plant Seduced Civilization" (n.p.: Grove Press, 2001), 141.
[50] Marc Engal, "The Economic Development of the Thirteen Continental Colonies, 1720-1775.," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (April 1975), 198.

exports for the entire decade. In 1768, 246,806 gallons of North American molasses left the Philadelphian harbor.[51] That same year, 905,303 gallons of American rum sailed across the Atlantic.[52] These numbers have lead historians in the past to believe that rum was more of an economic asset than a consumer good. However, this is simply not true.

Many early Americans thus stumbled home each night, drunk on rum-punch. Consumer goods, such as alcohol, caffeine, and tobacco, poured out of the Philadelphian docks and into the marketplace, ready for consumption. Inside every tavern was some sort of mood-altering substance, which helped expedite the process of altering an individual's brain chemistry. As merchants became wealthier and the upper classes of Philadelphia grew, the consumption of psychotropic substances would come to define the very concept of early American class division. With time, substances such as alcohol and coffee would physically control certain social groups within particular environments.

As the marketplace transformed early American brains, an abundance of cheap commodities offered various classes a means from which to project their status and identity in a variety of public venues, usually taverns. While the marketplace continued to act as "a moment of excitement and entertainment, a gathering of humble neighbors in their capacity as consumers of British manufactured goods,"[53]

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[51] John T. McCusker, "The Rum Trade and the Balance of Payments of the Thirteen Continental Colonies, 1650-1775", 3.
[52] Ibid.
[53] T.H. Breen, "The Marketplace of Revolution" (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 147.

taverns began to establish themselves as settings from which Philadelphians could improve their moods. By investigating the ways in which Philadelphians consumed psychotropic substances, a unique distinction between the classes emerges, one directly determined by psychotropy, not wealth. Similarly, taverns slowly evolved into centers from which citizens could reliably alter their brain chemistry, or 'feel better'. Philadelphians unconsciously believed that "status and prestige can be displayed by means of material objects."[54] Accordingly, competitive prestige helped shape early Philadelphian society and social customs.

[54] Shryock and Smail, *Deep History: The Architecture*, Pg. 221.

PSYCHOTROPY AND CLASS WITHIN EARLY PHILADELPHIA

Alcohol within a Class-Based Framework

Interpreting social intoxication patterns by means of historical records reveals some interesting patterns. For example, a man by the name of Martin Kreyder owned and operated a medium-sized tavern in Philadelphia, just north of Market Street in the 1770s. An appraisal of the sundries available in Kreyder's tavern reveals that liquor, tobacco, and caffeine were far from the only goods served at Fraunces tavern. From peddling construction materials to expensive clothing, Kreyder was equipped to handle a diverse set of clientele. More importantly, however, Kreyder sold goods at very low prices. By selling various types of linen, tableware, or clothing traditionally worn by European nobility, tavern keepers such as Kreyder allowed laboring Philadelphians to display small amounts of wealth.

Tim Breen, scholar of early American consumerism, believes that by "introducing vibrant colors into the poorly illuminated rooms of colonial houses, imported manufactures made the world of ordinary men and women come alive.... imported goods transformed monochrome spaces into Technicolor"[55] These goods provided laboring classes with color, comfort, beauty, confidence, and a new form of self worth.[56] Alternatively, this process allowed individuals to appear more successful. These goods defined a new sense of American identity, through

[55] Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, Introduction .
[56] Ibid.

purchasing power. Taverns played a direct role in that process. In other words, Kreyder's liquor was not the only commodity that helped improve the mood of his clientele.

Samuel Fraunces owned a different tavern in Philadelphia, one similar to Kreyder's. Most tavern owners, Kreyder and Fraunces included, stocked sundries for customers to purchase. Kreyder and Fraunces possessed large quantities of alcohol upon their deaths. When Fraunces died, his tavern contained the following materials:

1 Silver tea pot
1 Japan Tea Urn,
a large 46 pound china tea set,
ten gallons of port,
twenty gallons of brandy,
five gallons of spirits,
forty gallons of medeira,
five gallons of Lisbon wine,
131 bottles of amber porter,
114 bottles of cider
twenty gallons of ale[57]

By today's standards, this is an extraordinary amount of alcohol. In the 1770s, however, the amount of alcohol in Fraunces possession accounted to a meager 128 pounds. The act of shopping for an item, as previously argued, represents a small but complicated chemical process in the brain, and elicits a range of social and behavioral responses. However, the most plentiful and expensive items at the time of Fraunces' death reveals that his tavern also functioned as a social intoxicant, a means from

[57] Rice, *Early American Taverns,* 157.

which early Americans could obtain a quick drunk. Fraunces, in other words, was in the business selling of intoxication.

Kreyder's' tavern followed the same pattern. At the time of his passing in 1773, his tavern contained the following inventory:

> Seventy gallons of rum
> forty gallons of generx
> several pounds of tobacco
> ten pairs of playing cards
> a large box of tobacco
> twelve snuff boxes
> a large coffee grinder
> five large barrels of tobacco

The inventory above makes relevant two points. First, taverns peddled a wide variety of mood altering substances to its clientele. Second, the quantity of alcohol, readily available on hand, is astounding. Aside from sociality or politicking, taverns served the people by serving alcohol to its patrons. Had they not, it is likely that Philadelphians would have frequented other venues that did. The allure of a tavern, as demonstrated by these inventories, was not limited to survivability or necessity. In urban centers, especially Philadelphia, they existed to distribute drugs by means of engaging in the market, consumption of alcohol, or gaming.[58]

In order to stay in business, each individual tavern owner needed to possess a substantial amount of mood-altering substances, ready to sell each ware. Tavern inventories disclose much about the social patterns of a particular group of people. In

[58] For more on this topic, see University of Pennsylvania's *Index of American Cultures*, in which Plimns 1773 inventory can be viewed.

the case of Martin Kreyder, a detailed list of his customers reveals a substantial amount on the drinking patterns of a particular class. For example, Kreyder's clientele lived primarily in nearby Germantown, sharing last names such as Kurtz, Sitzreaves, and Shubart.[59] Many of Kreyder's patrons attended the tavern regularly, and owed a fair amount of credit after Kreyder's death. In terms of wealth, this particular tavern catered to laborers, with less than five patrons owning slaves.[60] Similarly, less than five of Kreyder's patrons possessed slaves in 1773.[61] Five men regularly received institutional aid, and remarkably, held the most amount of unpaid credit![62] Seven patrons of Kreyder's who made regular trips to the tavern qualified as wealthy, sitting in the top 95% of wealth within the city.[63] Overall, twelve of Kreyder's clients from 1773 who appear in the 1774 tax records fell under the 50th percentile in terms of wealth.

Down the street, records left behind from Shubart's tavern demonstrate how often a Philadelphian tavern catered to a particular individual. Samuel Carpenter visited Shubart's Tavern 117 times over the course of several months. Philip Van Horne made 283 visits to the same tavern over his three-year stay in the city. Richard Hudson, another big drinker, made 386 visits between 1736 and 1741. Almost all of the individuals drinking at Shubart's Tavern lived within the Dock Ward, and rarely purchased sundries or non-psychotropic goods. Records such as these demonstrate

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[59] Sharon Salinger, *Inventory of Martin Kreyder*.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

not only the centrality of alcohol in early America; they are also useful in determining class composition in various wards.

Taverns, apart from having a variety of mood altering substances readily in stock, also catered to particular ethnic groups. Dutch, French, Swedish, German, Scottish and a multitude of people from other ethnicities drank at Philadelphia taverns. In 1744, Alexander Hamilton wrote, “I dined at a tavern with very mixed company of different nations and religions. There were Scots, English, Dutch, Germans, and Irish; there were Roman Catholics, churchmen, Presbyterians, Quakers, Newlightmen, Methodists, Seventhday men, Moravians, Anabaptists, and one Jew. The whole company consisted of 25 planted round an oblong table in a great hall stoked with fire.”[64]

By law, newly established towns in Pennsylvania required at least one tavern along with its charter.[65] As such, taverns generally reflected the cultural and political values of the residents who lived there. Each community passed its own set of rules that served to "circumscribe economic, social, and moral aspects of tavern life, direct business practices of tavern keepers, their behavior, and that of their clientele.”[66]

Many traditional American political and cultural traditions hail from a time in which rallies and musters happened outside of a tavern. Political loyalties, patriotic sentiments, and cultural affiliations found their way into Philadelphian taverns as

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[64] Walter Staib, *The City Tavern Cookbook: Two Hundred Years of Recipes from Americas First Gourmet Restaurant* (Philadelphia, PA: Running Press Book Publishers, 1999), 34.
[65] Rice, *Early American Taverns*, 23.
[66] Ibid., 25.

well.[67] Names like the *King George, King of Prussia, Prince of Wales* or *American Soldier* dotted the Philadelphian shoreline during the city's infancy.[68] American Tories frequented the *Three Crowns* or *Rose Crown tavern*.[69] On the other side of the city, Whigs and sympathizers drank at the *Washington Tavern*.[70] In 1787, *The Federal Convention of 1787 Inn* opened its doors to customers.[71] Some taverns were so overtly political, that John Adams ended up blaming them for the creation of warring political factions. Adams remarked that taverns served as the "nurseries of our legislators."[72]

Tavern culture in Philadelphia fostered a complex form of social symbolism which both reflected and intensified class identify. While the working classes were mostly illiterate, an elaborate form of social sign language developed outside of each drinking establishment.[73] Similarly, each tavern displayed a variety of social markers outside the venue to attract particular kinds of people. For example, a tippling house in Philadelphia may depict "…a tree, a bird, a ship, and a noggin of beer".[74] The *Fox Hunt* depicted a man on a horse, chasing a fox.[75] Signs posted on windows hinted towards their clientele. For example, one tavern warned that it did not hand out credit

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[67] *Taverns of Yesteryear* (n.p.: Schmidt's Beer, 1960), 9.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Rorabaugh, *Alcoholic Republic*, 35.
[73] Schmits, *Taverns of Yesteryear*, 12.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid.

easily: “Old Trust is dead, bad pay killed him”.[76] Other slogans proclaimed, “I’ve trusted many, to my sorrow, Pay today, I’ll trust tomorrow”, and “My liquors good, my measures just. But honest sirs, I will not trust”. Another stated “If trust, I must, My Ale, will pale”.[77] Although the study of American tavern signage may seem whimsical, it provides a valuable marker towards determining ethnic or social composition in various urban settings.

Tavern names also reflect race and class. *The Bag O’nails* was a loose translation of the Bacchanalians, the Cat and Wheel was slang for St. Catherine’s Wheel, the *Goat and Compass* was vernacular of God Encompasseth Us, and the *Pig and Carrot* was roughly the Pique et Carreu (spade and diamond).[78] Some names were entirely meaningless, at least to us today, and were “as fanciful and bizarre as those we bestow today on race horses”.[79] Often, during construction of a particular drinking establishment, birds would become trapped inside newly erected buildings, earning them names such as *The Eagle*, *Spread Eagle*, *Swan*, *White Goose*, or *Bird-in-Hand*.[80] Wealthier taverns named their establishments after popular pastimes, such as *Fox Chase* or *Death of the Fox*.[81] Along the waterfront and Dock Ward, working-class taverns frequented by sailors were given names that accurately reflected their clientele. Names in these areas included *Golden Fleece*, Mermaid, *Bunyons Pilgrim*,

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[76] Ibid., 14.
[77] Ibid,. 14.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid., 7.
[80] Ibid., 8.
[81] Ibid.

Adam and Eves Garden, Compass, Ship, Blue Anchor, Two Sloops, Three Mariners, Top Gallant, Brig and Snow, Boatswain and Call, Jolly Tar, Jolly Sailors, and *Wounded Tar*.[82]

Wealthy drinkers often took pride in their positions or social standing, taking "comfort in knowing," as historian Sharon Salinger argues, "that they were protected from those excluded and that their mutual experiences served to reinforce their positions within society".[83] Salinger asserts that taverns "…challenged the traditional ordering of society by providing a place where various disenfranchised elements of society could mingle".[84] Helping to create a distinctly American class-consciousness, early forms of consumerism served as "marking services" when "shared across a group".[85] Tobacco and alcohol, when purchased in taverns, unified various groups of people. To the patrons of Kreyder's Tavern, German ale may have built ethnic unity or brotherhood. At Shubart's, the quantity of alcohol consumed may have fostered kinship bonds between seamen.

The wealthy men and women of Philadelphia responded unfavorably to this social pattern by the end of the 18th century; privileged Americans who still wanted to pursue drunkenness actively segregated themselves from environments in where they might be around lower classes. For example, if an Englishman in a tavern were to drink fine Madeira wine next to a German sailor drinking out of a wooden tankard,

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[82] Schmidt., *Taverns of Yesteryear*, 9.
[83] Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America*, 67.
[84] Ibid., 222.
[85] Shryock and Smail, *Deep History: The Architecture*, 224.

one of the two men are going to be isolated from the rest of the group, depending on the taverns clientele.

Tensions existed among classes when it came to drinking rituals. For example, purchasing an item such as a fine crystal decanter could "…pull apart and trigger emotions like envy, fear, and tension."[86] Each good purchased within a tavern elicited a specific social response, and carried a vast amount of social consequences. Each commodity, ranging from tobacco to a sack of sugar, represented a complicated system of rules, social customs, and laws.[87] Just as the classes used psychotropy to define their identity within a specific environment, so too did they use consumer goods to promote and define class boundaries. Men like Kreyder and Fraunces offered luxury goods to their customers, regardless of their background. Any individual with the right amount of money was able to purchase a luxury good. However, at the end of the 18th century, many wealthy Philadelphians decided that drinking among the 'rabble' no longer suited their interests. Instead, they gathered in elaborate ballrooms and held private meetings in fancy clubs. Alexander Hamilton's famed Tuesday Club is one such club. Hamilton writes,

> The Clubs that prevailed at this time [1716] in Annapolis were all boozing or toaping Clubs. There were wine Clubs, punch Clubs, Rumbo Clubs (for Grog was not yet invented), Flup [beer] Clubs . . . the main Intent and purpose of the meeting of these Clubs was to drink and be merry, and among them all it was hail fellow, well met, there being little or no distinction [among members] . . . (Tuesday Club)

[86] Ibid., 224.
[87] Ibid.

Membership to these types of clubs did not mean that the wealthy drank less. As one Philadelphian complained, the elite drinking clubs were "an emulation most dangerous to the Community when every one beholding the Finery of his Neighbours pines to see himself outdone — burns with Envy — Or perhaps ruins his own Fortune and Credit to keep with him in those things that excite his Envy."[88] Due to this phenomenon, alcohol served as a valuable social marker of race and class, as most social groups engaged in frequent intoxication. Similar to the laboring classes, the wealthy used these bouts of communal drunkenness to "make choices and fashion identities" while getting drunk.[89] Some Philadelphians took it upon themselves to consume tea and coffee, in which these substances represented a "social marker of wealth and refinement" as well as an "important part of their visits with family, friends, and acquaintances".[90] Despite the status or privilege these substances represented, they were still mind-altering stimulants. Almost every beverage consumed, by the wealthy or poor, contained mind-altering properties. Thus, early American identity was born not only out of complicated market processes or social patterns, but also by the traditions and associations around beverage consumption.[91]

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[88] Breen, *The Market Place of Revolution*, 147.
[89] Lisa Petrovich, "More than the Boston Tea Party: Tea in American Culture, 1760's-1840's" (master's thesis, University of Colorado, 2009), 15.
[90] Ibid., 15.
[91] For more on this topic, see Peter Thompson, "The Friendly Glass: Drinking and Gentility in Colonial Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 113, no. 4 (October 1989).

When the abundant Atlantic economy "…threatened to overturn time-honored sumptuary distinctions,"[92] elites chose to segregate their drinking rituals even further. For example, after the repeal of the Stamp Act, large bowls of rum-punch lined the streets outside of the London Coffee House. An elaborate gathering took place inside the tavern, while the working class citizens drank in the streets.[93] These discriminatory practices were not un-intentional, nor were they furtive. These actions were pre-meditated, overtly taken to separate undesirables in the easiest, most visible way possible. One effective way in which the privileged used alcohol to enforce class distinction manifested itself in the practice of toasting. Each toast, which could last for over an hour, was "…scrutinized by his peers and the multitudinous attributes of gentility (refinement, polish, breeding, grace, civility, and urbanity) accordingly assessed".[94] The lower classes generally did not have the time to toast, nor the patience for it. In addition, even if the lower classes were interested in emulating this practice, they often failed at replicating the environments in which the privileged chose to get drunk. In other words, the alcoholic practices adopted by Philadelphian gentility (getting drunk with class) helped define wealth in public or private settings. To those who could afford it, Madeira and wine punch was often served to wealthy colonial elites. The lower classes, on the other hand, drank cider, beer, and cheap

[92] Peter J. Thompson, "A Social History of Philadelphias Taverns, 1863-1800" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1989), 535.
[93] Ibid., 535.
[94] Ibid., 538.

American rum. For the upper classes, to share a bowl of punch or 'toddy' became a culturally accepted symbol of male congeniality and friendship.[95]

In 1791, almost all of the taverns within the Philadelphian Middle Ward rented their properties.[96] Tavern keepers often moved locations, in hopes of attracting a new, more prestigious clientele.[97] Outside of Philadelphia, a wealth of new Americans continually supplied the urban center and outskirts with cheap, illegally produced spirits. Large amounts of Scotch-Irish immigrants, who were settling in droves around Pennsylvania, began experimenting with corn whiskey, and were soon exporting alcohol *en masse* out of Philadelphia by the late 1780's.[98]

Alcohol was an important commodity available on the market. However, alcohol, at its core, is a potent chemical neuro- intoxicant. The psychosocial and physical effects of intoxication are not specific to neurology. Many laws and side effects of mass rum-consumption took hold of early American society. As communities experienced their own issues with drunkenness, a kind of stewardship evolved in which genteel Americans dictating new laws around alcohol. [99] The sale and consumption of psychotropic goods in early Philadelphia helped dictate class division, and provided an unbiased tool in helping historians interpret the past. As genteel social circles isolated themselves from those who did not adhere to the way in which they consumed their mind-altering substances, problems began to arise with

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[95] Rice, *Early American Taverns*, 98.
[96] Ibid., 131.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Crews, *Drinking in Colonial America*.
[99] Thompson, *A Social History of Philadelphia*, 535.

drunkenness within the burgeoning city of Philadelphia. Philadelphian peddled a variety of goods and services at remarkable speeds, flooding the city with unprecedented amounts of neuro-chemical stimulants. As traditional barriers distinguishing wealthy from poor broke down, psychotropy became a method to distance one class from another. Taverns functioned as more than just centers of commerce; they acted as early American drug dens, instead as colonial ‘drug dens’, regional and local distribution centers from which population centers could chase their next high.

SOCIAL ALCOHOLISM , CRIME, AND COMPETING WORLDVIEWS

Drunkenness, Crime, and Vagrancy

The following section explores a number of issues Philadelphians confronted during the eighteenth century, at a time in which binge drinking dominated most methods of socialization. It will examine the records and primary sources left behind by those who embodied the physical and cultural legacy of an intoxicated urban society. The second half of this section will focus on brain chemistry and the neuro-physical properties of alcohol. As early Euro-Americans slowly pushed west during the eighteenth century, scientific and medical perspectives expanded along with the young nation's borders. Consequently, older European traditions and beliefs regarding alcohol consumption changed considerably. As these new beliefs took root, physicians and other educated Americans redefined alcohol's role within an urban community. The section will close with an examination of measures taken in reaction to binge drinking.

Before rum had become a staple in Philadelphian diets, colonial Americans eagerly consumed vast amounts of cheaply imported West Indian sugar. Fueling this early American addiction, the importation of forced labor of millions of Africans and the development of an efficient system of Atlantic plantation-based economies drove down the price of imported sugar during the eighteenth century. Excessive amounts of imported sugar provided the basis for large quantities of molasses. In American cities, the production of molasses and its distillation into rum established the basis for an American cultural addiction: sugar. As a trade commodity, sugar was vital to the growth and development of early America and the larger Atlantic World. Philadelphians purchased sugar from the West Indies, shipped it to West Africa in the form of molasses or rum with which to buy slaves, and used the funds from slave auctions to procure more sugar and start the process anew. By the 1760's, the American economic and physical addiction to West Indian sugar had reached a point where New England alone was distilled six million gallons of rum annually. Early Americans thus incorporated highly addictive sugar products into their diets. Sugar (like tobacco) reflects the early American susceptibility towards cultural addiction.

Like the explosion of gin in Britain, the rum wave of the late eighteenth century took Americans somewhat by surprise, and its effect on society were often deleterious. The growth of the population of almshouses reflected the expanding presence of rum. In New England (the capital of rum production), poorhouses quickly overcrowded, often with applicants who over imbibed. In Philadelphia, almshouse inmates often displayed little willingness to change their drinking habits.

For example, men and women furtively sold alcohol to residents of various institutions. Although strictly forbidden, this practice was quite both common and lucrative. Philadelphia, in particular, struggled to keep rum away from their almshouse residents. As the poor exchanged bed sheets, linen, and kitchen utensils for alcohol, a frustrated official remarked at the ease by which residents of the almshouse secretly obtained rum: “This could be accomplished without difficulty, as the grounds surrounding the institution were not inclosed. It was a very serious matter,” frequently leading to “drunken disorder” and “insubordination,” on the part of inmates.[100] Those who landed in the institution because of alcohol abuse often found the substance even more prevalent in the sheltered environment.[101] For residents who wished to remain sober, “much anxiety was caused before some of those engaged in the nefarious business were detected and punished.”[102] Tavern keepers on nearby Spruce Street created even more problems by refusing to stop selling alcohol to the inmates. As one contemporary commentator noted,

> Inmates purchased the rum and took it in the House, and drunkenness and disorder was the result. The friends of in-mates smuggled it in to them, and the officials did not seem to know what to do about it. The keepers of the taverns were prosecuted, the drunken paupers were punished, but still it continued.[103]

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[100]"History of the Philadelphia Almshouses and Hospitals," in Internet Archive, comp. Charles Lawrence (Gaylord USA: n.p., 1905), http://www.archive.org/details/historyofphilade00lawr.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.

Officials, as demonstrated by this passage, did not quite know how to react to the rise of drunken antics.

Almshouse authorities reprimanded Harry Musgrove for "going over the fence for Rum in the night, with which he got intoxicated & behaved very riotous & disorderly, greatly to the disturbance of the other People; and then he would lay in bed all the next day indulging himself, with reading and Sleeping and then out & Drunk again at Night."[104] This kind of behavior was not isolated incidents, nor was it uncommon. A man named Richard Crosby "introduced spirituous liquor among some of the women," resulting in "disorderly and quarrelsome behavior."[105]

Liquor was likewise easily available in the jail. In 1787, the central corridor lining the Walnut Street Jail resembled more of a tavern than a jailhouse, because alcohol was sold "at the door, by small measure, by the gaoler, or by his permission, contrary…to the law of this commonwealth."[106] Between 1787 and 1789, 78 out of 290 convicts escaped from the Walnut Street Prison, many of them in a quest for a drink.[107] Some prisoners returned to the jail after visiting a tavern, returning to their cells quite drunk. The social repercussions of cheap rum flooding the streets of Philadelphia did not remain limited to the jails or workhouses. Alcohol also

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[104] Ibid.
[105] Simon Newman and Billy G. Smith, "Incarcerated Innocents: Inmates, Conditions, & Survival Strategies in Philadelphia's Almshouse and Workhouse," in Richard Bell and Michele Tartar, eds., *Buried Lives* (University of Georgia, 2012).
[106] Thorsten Sellin, "Philadelphia Prisons of the 18th Century," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society 43, no. 1 (1953).
[107] Ibid.

sometimes acted as an enabler, intensifying crime and encouraging escape among the incarcerated.

The correlation between cultural alcoholism and domestic abuse—not uncommon in our own times—is also apparent in early America. Those who applied for institutional aid within the city served as living testimony to the dangers of early American alcohol misuse. Mary Peel, an elderly woman, applied for admission to the almshouse, appearing to be "much beat and Bruised in a drunken fight with her Husband."[108] Elizabeth Page ran away from her home to escape "the abuse of a Worthless Drunken Husband."[109] So desperate was Page's situation that she sold one of her children into hard labor to finance her liquor habit.[110] Elizabeth Evans, a three-year-old toddler, entered the poorhouse with her "poor drunken wretch" of a father in July of 1792.[111] He apparently drank himself to death five days after admittance. Elizabeth died two weeks later, most likely from malnutrition or perhaps even physical abuse[112]. Unfortunately, almshouses could not keep the population of Philadelphia sober, nor could it protect its inhabitants from the drunken antics of its residents.

Methods of rehabilitation during the eighteenth century did little to resolve the disorders that arose out of a drunken populace. For example, George Washington sent

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[108] Newman and Smith, I*ncarcerated Innocent*s.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Daily Occurrence Docket: Peel, July 8, 1794; Philips, August 7, 1792.
[111] Newman and Smith, *Incarcerated Innocents.*
[112] Daily Occurrence Docket, 1792: Thomas and Elizabeth Evans, July 24, 26, and 29, and Aug. 13.

two servants to the workhouse in an effort to change their behavior. Wilhelmina Tyser was incarcerated for "being a disorderly Servant," while Martin Cline landed in jail for "being frequently drunk, neglecting his duty, and otherwise misbehaving."[113] Drunkenness among slaves happened frequently as well. Harry, a slave residing in Philadelphia, escaped to the nearby town of Chester, where authorities apprehended him. He escaped once again, but was quickly captured and returned to his owner. Six months later, Harry landed back in jail yet again for "disorderly behavior, getting drunk, and absenting himself day and Night from the service of his master."[114] Table 1 suggests the variety of social problems that characterized the city and nation at the end of the eighteenth century. Even though official identified only 3% of the admitted as suffering from alcoholism, liquor most likely played a significantly larger role in many of the reasons for poverty.

[113] Newman and Smith, *Incarcerated Innocents.*
[114] Ibid.

Table 1- Admissions to Philadelphia's Almshouse, 1800-1801[115]

Reasons for Admittance	Adult Men %	Adult Women %	Children %	All People %
Old	6	8	---	6
Sick	66	38	---	43
Venereal disease	9	16	---	10
Alcoholic	4	4	---	3
Deranged	9	3	---	5
Poor, destitute	3	9	---	5
Miscellaneous	3	3	9	4
Pregnant	---	14	---	5
Physically abused	---	1	2	1
Deserted by husband	---	5	---	2
Deserted by parents	---	---	13	2
Orphaned	---	---	10	
To be bound out	---	---	2	1

[115] Daily Occurrence Docket, June 20, 1800 to June 20, 1801, Guardians of the Poor, Philadelphia City Archives. Includes 895 people (380 adult men, 352 adult women, and 163 children) also admitted at the time. Later sections of this work will demonstrate that most crimes were committed under the influence of alcohol, but were rarely recorded when the crime was drunkenness alone. The table presented is graciously provided by Dr. Billy Smith.

Parents could not support	---	---	15	3
Committed with parents	---	---	33	6
Parents in jail	---	---	17	3
Total	100	101	101	99

Many “sick” individuals likely experienced acute liver failure. The “deranged” may have suffered myopic encephalopathy or have “wet brain” from years of alcohol abuse. The “physically abused” often cited alcohol as the cause of spousal abuse. “Venereal disease” could be the result of a drunken encounter after a night of heavy drinking. Redefining this information is critical to understanding the concept of cultural alcoholism within early Philadelphia. Alcohol undoubtedly led to a wide range of crimes, physical ailments, and mental illnesses. A new emphasis on alcohol as the primary instigator behind criminality may lead to new narratives and a deeper understanding of early American society.

This principle works well for the incarceration rates displayed in Table 2. During the 1780’s, citywide fears about public drunkenness reached a peak. Chain gangs of prisoners labored in the streets, prompting one concerned citizen to complain bitterly about “the drunkenness, profanity and indecencies of the prisoners in the streets.”[116] If alcohol and public intoxication was common among the prisoners, the same substance may well have been involved in their crime or felony. The ease in which inmates could obtain alcohol prompted jailors to arm themselves

[116] William Winterbotham, "An Historical, Geographical, Commercial, and Philosophical View of the United States of America, and of the European settlements in America and the West-Indies".

with "…swords, blunderbusses, and other weapons of destruction."[117] Apparently, drunken antics amongst inmates was common, as "the prisoners, secured by cumberous iron collars and chains fixed to bomb-shells," represented a very real threat to law-abiding citizens.[118] The following table shows the amount of Philadelphian citizens who landed in jail between the 1780's and 90's.

Table 2- Prisoners for Trial Docket in Walnut Street Jail, 1787-1803[119]

Year	Prisoners
1787	108
1788	98
1789	131
1790	112
1791	78
1792	65
1793	45
1794	92
1795	116
1796	145
1797	114
1798	122
1799	145
1800	106
1801	151
1802	106
1803	121

Table 3- Vagrancy Docket for Philadelphia County[120]

[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Table and numbers provided by Dr. Billy Smith.
[120] Source: Vagrancy Docket, 1790-1932, 35 volumes, Philadelphia City Archives. Note: This table is based on a sample of 533 people registered in the Vagrancy Docket for 1791, 1791, and 1804. When a person was accused of multiple crimes,

Crime	People in Vagrancy Docket %
Assault	2
Begging	1
Runaway slaves, servants, apprentices, or mariners	16
Misbehaved slaves, servants, apprentices, or mariners	8
Disorderly or drunken conduct	27
Miscellaneous	3
Prostitution	4
Vagrancy	40
Total	101

At least one-quarter of "vagrants" had engaged in "disorderly or drunken conduct," as indicated in Table 3. Assault, misbehavior, prostitution and vagrancy are often strongly correlated with the use of liquor. However, it is important to take care in interpreting Table 3, especially in understanding vagrancy's relationship to alcohol abuse. While these kinds of statistics provide clues about society, using these records to discover "what a community values most or least" can be problematic.[121] For example, in the Prisoners for Trial Docket 1790-1800, 9.7% of convictions were alcohol related.[122] In the Vagrancy docket, that number was 27%.[123] The Pennsylvania Court of Quarter Sessions, on the other hand, convicted 300 people of drunkenness and disorderly conduct between 1750 and 1775.[124] Alcohol-induced crime is worthy of attention, even if it is difficult to measure precisely. Fortunately,

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only the initial one noted by the clerk was counted in the tabulations. The proportion who were prostitutes is a minimum since they often were charged with other crimes.

[121] Newman and Smith, *Incarcerated Innocents*.

[122] Prisoners for trial Docket, 1790-1948. Contains 164 volumes.

[123] Vagrancy Docket, 1790-1932. Contains 36 volumes.

[124] Sellin, *Philadelphian Prisons of the 18th*.

felons and the poor are not the only citizens who left behind records of drunken antics.

Social Alcoholism

Attitudes toward intoxication changed dramatically during the eighteenth century. Philadelphians, according to one scholar, did not believe alcohol caused people to fight, brawl, attack, mug, rob, or beat each other up; they did not think it caused men to rape women, or parents to beat their children."[125] Choosing not to believe that alcohol created violent behavior, these early Americans also chose not to believe that alcohol was an enabler of criminality.[126] Until the late eighteenth century, drunkenness supposedly was merely only a sign of criminality; it did not cause or create it. It might make someone more willing to commit a crime, but it could not control them. Thus, while Philadelphians struggled to define crime and its relationship to alcoholism, the trend of social intoxication continued to spread.

Concerns regarding socially accepted drunkenness within the growing city penetrated deeply into the moral sensibility of Philadelphians. These peculiar phenomena manifested itself within the institution of marriage. Table 4 measures the reasons why individuals applying for marriage at Gloria Dei Church were declined. Between 1793 and 1818, many people attempted to get married while intoxicated.

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[125] Robin Room, "Alcohol and Disinhibition: Nature and Meaning of the Link. Proceedings of Conference," US Department of Public Health and Services, 121.
[126] Ibid.

Table 4- Marriage Applications from Gloria Dei Church[127]

Reason for Refusal	Percent of Refusals
No evidence	
Of Independence, both parties	24.1
Of Independence, both women	16.8
Of Independence, man	11.3
Improper Behavior	-
Drunk, Levity	6.6
Late hour	8.4

Intoxication was quite a pervasive issue in Philadelphia during this era. Six percent of men attempting to get married attempted to do so while drunk. While this number is not necessarily high, it displays the pervasiveness of alcohol within Philadelphian society. In some instances, prostitutes convinced unsuspecting men to engage in matrimony, which was a common method of extortion used by prostitutes. Their vows could be forgotten for a price.[128] Young men often turned to alcohol to calm their nerves. For example, according to the pastor at Gloria Dei,

> A company of 4 or 5 brought a man so drunk that he could not stand. He nevertheless expressed great unwillingness to be married. The company endeavored to persuade me that he had given full consent and was not much in liquor, etc. The intended bride was also very desirous, giving for one important reason that putting off the nuptials was an unlucky omen, as she had experienced in her first marriage (she being or pretending to be a widow). I gave to all proper reproaches and dismissed them. Two of the men were so angry at the bridegroom as to give him several thumps.[129]

[127] Table graciously provided by Dr. Billy Smith.
[128] Susan Klepp and Billy G. Smith, "Marriage and Death: The Records of Gloria Dei Church".
[129] Klepp and Smith, *Marriage and Death: The Records.*

Clergy members as well as churchgoers struggled to understand the role of chronic drunkenness. The theological underpinnings behind this relationship were quite complicated. From the beginning of Philadelphia in 1783, Quakers warned that "drunkenness opened one to the devil."[130] As the scholar Tim Levine explains, "getting drunk was interpreted by both participant and observer as an indication that the drinker was willing to take 'time out.'"[131] Willful drunkenness identified a citizen as someone who chose not to conform to certain rules of morality or decency. When codes of conduct were broke, ministers implied that alcohol consumption lead to the criminality. However, these men could not support this relationship, not entirely. Eighteenth century Quakers believed that humans possessed accountability for their own morality and choices throughout their lives.[132]

Alcohol as Social Crisis

Religious and spiritual leaders constantly struggled to develop a language to address the issue of chronic drunkenness, without contradicting or challenging existing spiritual doctrine. Philadelphia ministers understood that "people who regularly consume intoxicating amounts of alcohol were more likely to commit crimes," but they refused to believe that something other a divine being could dictate human behavior.[133] God or the Devil could influence earthly events, but the

[130] Room, *Alcohol and Disinhibition*, 122.
[131] Ibid., 122.
[132] Ibid., 122.
[133] Room, *Alcohol and Disinhibition: Nature*, 125.

consumption of alcohol could not. Thus, Puritan and Quaker values allowed humans to be addicted to intemperance, but not to the alcohol itself. As Danforth once wrote, "God sends many sore judgments to… people that addict themselves to intemperance in Drinking."[134] By preaching that alcohol was incapable of causing sin, ministers taught a problematic form of reasoning to Philadelphians, one that was theologically contradictory. The means whereby Philadelphians understood the relationship between criminality and alcoholism serves as a social marker, one that both acknowledges and verifies the level of social intoxication prevalent during the eighteenth century. This type of social marker is a clue, one that reveals insight towards how early Philadelphians viewed excessive alcohol consumption.

A double standard, which involved self-perception, materialized through this type of theological reasoning. For example, in 1693, an English traveler, en route to New York City, wrote an interesting piece about Native Americans. He asserted that, "The brandy that they drink without moderation, carries them to obscenities and extremities of fury and cruelty which are unimaginable. They slaughter one another, they murder one another like ferocious beasts; being drunk they disfigure their faces."[135] One particular traveler complained in 1705 "Everyone knows the passion of the savages for this liquor, and the fatal effects that it produces on them...The village or cabin in which the savages drink brandy is an image of hell."[136] Another traveled

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[134] Harry Gene Levine, "Discovery of Addiction: Changing Conceptions of Habitual Drunkenness in America," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 39, no. 1 (1978). 147.
[135] Room, "Alcohol and Disinhibition: Nature," 123.
[136] Ibid.

boasted of the Illinois in 1750, calling them “the gentlest and most tractable of men” when sober.[137] However, the same traveler observed that tribe became “madmen and wild beasts” while intoxicated.[138]

These types of descriptions are absent in stories about European drinking habits. During the 1630s, for instance, after a Native American murdered a member of his tribe, a missionary recorded that "It was brandy and not the Savage who had committed this murder....'Put thy wine and thy brandy in prison…It is thy drinks that do all the evil, and not we'.”[139] Benjamin Franklin also agreed. In 1750, during a treaty signing at Carlisle, Franklin refused to let the natives drink during the negotiations. After the delegation ended, Franklin provided the natives with a large amount of liquor. He explained how the natives became "extremely apt to get drunk” and acted “very quarrelsome and disorderly.”[140] Shortly after the celebration began, the "men and women” started “quarrelling and fighting and running after and beating one another with firebrands.”[141] The next day, a small delegation apologized for their behavior, blaming their antics on the rum, a practice almost non-existent amongst European social groups in Philadelphia.

Scholars, such as Peter Mancall suggest that Native Americans engaged in “normal” behavior when drunk. Others suggest that “amassing a range of examples of different types of drunken comportment” is to “utterly discredit the contemporary

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[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid., 123.
[141] Ibid.

idea that alcohol as a drug or chemical affects the brain or body so as to produce deviant social behavior."[142] If Native American behavior was "learned and normatively regulated behavior," then that would imply that Native Americans learned how to be disorderly by watching Europeans do the same thing.[143] Thus, while understanding that alcohol affected their own behavior and prompted them towards deviancy, the Natives understood and accepted that "liquor made them violent and in the absence of other explanations for the behavior."[144] Native American behavior, when drunk, was both a mirror and reflection of white Europeans; their behavior while drunk was borrowed, not created.

[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid,. 135.

ALCOHOL AND DISEASE

"Love of the Excess'd"

Philadelphians understood the dangers of alcoholism by the end of the 18th century, yet they could not explain the science or physiology behind the compulsion to drink. Similarly, their views on the matter were largely indifferent until physicians began examining alcoholism from a medical point of view. Physicians led debates surrounding alcoholic compulsion, and they eventually brought the concept of chronic drunkenness into public consciousness. William Buchan, a noted British physician of the eighteenth century, wrote a text titled *Domestic Medicine*. Devoting a chapter to heavy drinking, Buchan argued that alcohol abuse inflamed the liver, eroded the brain, weakened bowel function, deteriorated the nervous system, and in

some cases, caused paralysis.[145] Buchan explained how and why laboring people used alcohol to self medicate:

> The miserable fly to it for relief. It affords them a temporary ease. But alas, this solace is short lived, and when it is over, the spirits sink…Hence a repetition of the dose becomes necessary, and every dose makes way for another, till the unhappy wretch becomes a slave to the bottle, and at length falls a sacrifice to what at first perhaps was taken only as medicine.[146]

The concept of alcohol addiction must have been a scary, if not ludicrous concept for the eighteenth century. The concept of a chemical addiction, one that developed from a socially acceptable practice, contradicted an influential religious framework, one which was still widely accepted throughout New England. Still, for Buchan to formulate the idea of social intoxication on such a large scale helped a larger group of Americans explore the dangers of excessive alcohol consumption.[147]

Anthony Benezet, a prominent Philadelphia abolitionist, advanced similar ideas. He wrote prolifically on the dangers of widespread social intoxication. In 1774, he published *The Mighty Destroyer Displayed, In Some Account of the Dreadful Havoc made by the Mistaken Use of as well as Abuse of Distilled Liquors*. The following year, he published the *Remarks on the Nature and Bad Effects of Spirituous Liquors*. Benezet was not a doctor and had no formal medical background

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[145] Matthew Warner Osborn, "The Anatomy of Intemperance: Alcohol and the Diseased Imagination in Philadelphia 1784-1860." (PhD diss., University of California Davis, 2007), 22.
[146] Ibid., 25.
[147] In Harry Levines *Discovery of Addiction*, he cites Rush's label of alcoholism as a disease. Chronic drunkenness at the time was not a major topic or concern in medical practices.

or training. However, he was one of the first non-specialists to utilize medical terminology and a scientific approach to raise awareness about the dangers of alcohol addiction. Benezet believed that "Physicians of note, have given it as their sentiments, that those distilled spirits when taken inwardly…destroy the human frame; that they parch up and contract the stomach to half its normal size, like burnt leather, and rot the entrails, as is evident…by opening the bodies of those persons who are killed by drinking them."[148]

Incorporating anti-slavery and abolitionist rhetoric into his ideas regarding heavy drinking, Benezet wrote, "The unhappy dram-drinkers are so absolutely bound in slavery to these infernal spirits, that they seem to have lost the power to of delivering themselves from this worst of bondage."[149] The question of alcoholism suggests several issues of the era. First, a language in which individuals could express the concept of addiction entered public arena. Second, a greater number Americans and Europeans began to consider alcohol to be a powerful social intoxicant, capable of cultural enslavement.

The most famous of the eighteenth century alcohol crusaders was Dr. Benjamin Rush. In 1784, Rush published *Inquiry into the effect of Ardent Spirits*. Borrowing ideas from Buchan, less than two pages of the text addressed the negative consequences of heavy alcohol consumption. However, Rush addressed the social and communal consequences of a group who consumed abnormal amounts of alcohol.

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[148] Osborn, *The Anatomy of Intemperance*, 25.
[149] Ibid.,

Similar to Buchan, Rush understood that rampant drinking had visible side effects on the overall health of a community.[150] Although he could not explain the physical cause of compulsive drinking, Rush questioned the motivation to continue consuming alcohol, despite even when the physical consequences outweighed the emotional benefits.

Rush asked another question, one that logically followed the issue of compulsion: why would decent, hard-drinking Americans continue to engage in a behavior that threatened to undermine republican values? Obsessed with defending republicanism and believing that alcohol was a potential challenger to personal liberty, Rush argued, "A people corrupted by strong drink cannot long be a free people. The rulers of such a community will soon partake of the vices that mass from which they are secreted, and all our laws and governments will sooner or later bear the same marks of the effects of spirituous liquors, which were described formerly upon individuals."[151] To Rush, one of the most respected intellectuals of the eighteenth century, social alcoholism and rampant drunkenness threatened the Republic the most. It was not the British, or immigration, but alcohol.

Despite Rush's political agenda, he contributed strict observation and empirical analysis towards the study of alcoholism. He also noted the nature of the compulsion amongst heavy drinkers, although he could not explain it. Although Rush

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[150] Warning against other substances as well, Rush understood (without the medical or chemical knowledge to back his findings) to some degree the nature of addictive substances. Warnings about caffeine, opium, tobacco, snuff and sugar abounded throughout Rush's writings.

[151] Ibid.

could not explain the cause of compulsive drinking, he was able to bring the topic of cultural intoxication to the forefront of political debate. Because of Rush's findings, the philosophy behind the concept of compulsion permeated medical and social debates of the era. Americans who lived during the turn of the eighteenth century reported that they experienced "overwhelming and irresistible desires for liquor."[152] Making matters more frustrating, from a medical standpoint, was the existence of hard drinking individuals, who remained productive members of society. Before adopting temperance rhetoric, Rush questioned in the 1770's "Why all this noise about wine and strong drink…Have we not seen hundreds who have made it a constant practice to get drunk almost every day for thirty or forty years, who, not withstanding, arrived to a great age, and enjoyed the same good health as those who have followed the strictest rules of temperance?"[153] Answering Rush's question, a notable Philadelphian drunk lamented "Were a keg of rum in one corner of a room, and were a cannon constantly discharging balls between me and it, I could not refrain from passing before that cannon, in order to get at the rum."[154] Defining the difference between those who could not control their drinking and those who could represented a very serious philosophical and spiritual debate.

There is little difference between the contemporary alcoholic from the traditional colonial drunkard. In addition, despite the ease from which historians label such individuals, Tim Levine contends that the men and women of the eighteenth

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[152] Levine, *Discovery of Addiction*, 144.
[153] Levine, *Discovery of Addiction*, Pg. 146.
[154] Levine, *Discovery of Addiction*, Pg. 147

century understood the concept of habitual drunkenness differently than modern physicians. These differences, medically speaking, lie “not so much in the external form,” but in “the assumptions made about the inner experiences and condition of the drunkard.”[155] For example, until the latter part of the 1700’s, language describing alcoholic compulsion did not exist. Similarly, modern physicians believe that alcoholics drink not because they want to, but because they have to, the compulsion and addiction driving their need for more alcohol.[156] In Rush’s time, the way an individual drank involved not an addiction to alcohol, but in a love of the “excess’d.”[157] Mather wrote that “He that abhors the sin of Drunkennessy, be may be overtaken with it, and so drunken; but that one Act is not enough to denominate him a Drunkard: and he that loveth to drink Wine to excess, though he should seldom be over come thereby, is one of those Drunkards.”[158] Despite Mather’s distinction, it would also seem as if he understood the dangers of alcoholism, warning of "an incurable Habit.”[159] Regardless, by 1800, Americans, thanks in part to Philadelphian intellectuals like Dr. Rush, understood that excessive drinking could be disastrous. The concept of alcohol addiction developed in response to a series of complex social processes, issues that slowly permeated every part of early American life. As time went on, however, the need to define alcoholism from a legal point of view began to dominate local American politics.

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[155] Ibid,. 148.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Cotton Mather, *Woe to the Drunkard.*
[159] Levine, *Discovery of Addiction*, Pg. 150.

The ways in which early Americans understood the physicality behind intoxication are apparent in eighteenth century law. In Connecticut, authorities defined drunkenness as anyone who was "bereaved or disabled in his use of his understanding, appearing in his speech or gesture."[160] In Plymouth, government officials defined drunkenness as anyone who "lisps or falters in his speech by reason of drink, or that staggers in his going or that vomits or cannot follow his calling."[161] In other places, a common rhyme described the physical symptoms: "Not drunk is he who from the floor, Can rise again and still drink more, But drunk is he who prostrate lies, Without the power to drink or rise."[162] Other examples involving the characteristics of drunkenness appeared in newspapers. In 1764, Margaret Jones "drank too freely of spirituous liquor" and "fell from the Main Deck into the hold of the Coventry man of war and was killed."[163] A man by the last name of Moore was "being in drink and going into a little house he fell down from ye seat and broke his neck."[164] In 1741, a Philadelphian girl "about 4 or 5 years of age, died by drinking a large quantity of Rum."[165] Stories like these appeared frequently in colonial newspapers. Typically used as cautionary tales, authorities often used the examples of others to warn against the dangers of over-consumption. Poems from the era conveyed the same purpose:

How many fall down by the way,

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[160]Room, *Alcohol and Disinhibition*, 121
[161] Ibid., 123.
[162] Ibid., 121.
[163] Ibid., 118.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid.

Are killed in the dark.
And so their lives are swept away,
This often we may remark.
Liable to fall into the fire,
And there to burn to death.
Then suddenly they must expire,
To flame must yield their breath,
Seamen their spirits to inflame,
Scarce able for to steer.
So thousands perish in the main,
Large numbers every year.
Some almost perish with the cold,
And others freeze to death.
So many die before they're old,
So they lose their breath.

Drunkards sometimes froze to death, drowned in puddles, and went to jail for disorderly conduct.[166] Accordingly, the fear of a drunkard accidentally knocking over a lantern or forgetting to douse a candle was a serious threat to society. Yet, early Americans continued to believe that the compulsion to drink was conquerable by willpower alone. Unfortunately, poems like the one above perpetuated stereotypes involving habitual drinking.

Early Americans viewed excessive drinking and habitual drunkenness as diseases conquerable by the will alone. Levine contends, “For most people frequent drunkenness was not troublesome or sinful behavior. On the other hand, some individuals did see drunkenness as troublesome and sinful, but they did not regard it as therefore problematic. Neither viewed colonials to seek elaborate explanations for

[166] Levine, *Discovery of Addiction: Changing*, 119. Although in MA they did not allow smoking "out of doors" because "fires have been often occasioned by taking tobacco". In Pennsylvania, officials forbid people from smoking in the streets and fined anyone who "shall presume to smoke tobacco in the streets of Philadelphia either by day or night".

the drunkard's behavior. Whether seen as sin or blessing, habitual drunkenness was regarded as natural and normal -as a choice made for pleasure."[167] The sheer prevalence and social acceptance of excessive consumption patterns reaffirms this works initial thesis- that early Americans drank to excess, and developed problems because of it. Beginning as a disease of the will and evolving into a loss of control, the struggle to define intoxication must remain a relevant topic within historical debate. The brain, physiologically speaking, allows modern science to apply alcoholism to an early American context. Because Philadelphians did not believe that alcohol lead individuals "to fight, brawl, attack, mug, rob, or beat each other up" or engage in criminal activity, they also did not believe that alcohol was responsible for criminal behavior.[168] However, as men like Rush and Buchan pointed out, they did understand the physical side effects of excessive consumption (except addiction).

[167] Levine, *Discovery of Addiction: Changing*, 151.
[168] Room, "Alcohol and Disinhibition: Nature," 122.

NEURO-HISTORY AND ALCOHOL: THE UNDOCILE BODY

Biological Processes

The following section examines the biological process of alcohol consumption, and the physical characteristics of drunkenness. Alcohol, at its core, is a form of ethanol. To many, consuming ethanol has a pleasurable effect, one that alters brain function. Ethanol enters the blood stream within five minutes of consumption, and quickly spreads to all areas of the human body.[169] When an individual consumes an

[169] Ivan Diamond and Robert Messing, "Neurological Effects of Alcoholism," West J Med 161, no. 3 (September 1994), 279.

alcoholic beverage, it travels first to the liver, where it is chemically broken down.[170] Within minutes of consumption, alcohol crosses the blood brain barrier, and begins to affect an individual's level of consciousness. At this stage of intoxication, humans most commonly experience altered states of mental capacity.[171] Once an individual is moderately intoxicated, they often experience sensations of euphoria, aggressive behavior, or they lose their ability to act appropriately in public settings.[172] Other side effects of alcohol consumption include shortened attention spans, lack of problem solving abilities, and poor spatial-awareness. A high level of chemical intoxication can be quite dangerous. To the chronic drunkard, this stage of intoxication includes "lethargy and stupor."[173] Blackouts are common at this stage as well.[174] Social history, viewed through a biological lens, reveals insight previously unavailable through traditional tavern narratives. In other words, alcoholic intoxication directly effects the neuro-social patterns of behavior in all living organisms. Traditional social histories obtain their conclusions from the systematic analysis of human behavior and social organization. Within a social history framework, humans (in this case, early Philadelphians) are typically viewed as bodies under some form of subjugation. However, neurological intoxication and the chemical changes it causes within the

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[170] From there, alcohol dehydrogenase converts the ethanol into acetaldehyde. Metabolizing the acetaldehyde, aldehyde dehydrogenase transforms into acetate.
[171] Excessive amounts of acetaldehyde in ones body is responsible for the 'flush' commonly seen in a drinkers face. This flush is seen on almost every portrait/painting depicting early American recreation prominent individuals.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid.

brain complicates this framework. By studying bodies as porous, living organism (under the influence of a powerful neurotoxin), new insights into social history can emerge.

This work has advocated a new approach to early American tavern narratives, one in which a vital social institution is placed within a neuro-historical framework. Tobacco, caffeine, sugar, tea, and food all stimulate the production of dopamine within the brain. As a chemical, dopamine regulates the cravings one feels in regards to particular psychoactive substances. It also plays a very important role in determining the strength of a particular craving. Consuming psychoactive substances (alcohol or tobacco) allows the brain to increase dopamine production.[175] Thus, by ingesting a particular substance, individuals are able to change the way they feel. Dopamine and serotonin also facilitate the behavior behind drunkenness, and the process of craving more alcohol.[176] Taverns, as an institution, more or less regulated the means from which Philadelphians could purchase drugs that increased the production of dopamine and serotonin, transforming their behavior in ways that altered the trajectory of early American history.

Daniel Lord Smail popularized the term *Deep History* in his text *On Deep History and the Brain.* Deep History and its advocates campaign for a new historical

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[175] Ibid., 283. "The chemical known now as 5-Hydroxytryptamine3 (5-HT3) controls the dopamine release when ethanol is consumed. In the limbic regions of the brain, dopamine induced by ethanol is then blocked by 5-HT3. Alcohol then "potentiates 5-HT,-receptor activation,74 and 5-HT3-receptor antagonists reduce ethanol intake75".
[176] Ibid., 281. For more information on the relationship between neurology and Dopamine, see Polans *Botany of Desire.*

narrative, one that incorporates evolutionary science and human biology into traditional historical narratives. As a discipline, Deep History connects neuro science to patterns of human behavior, and illuminates the relationship between alcohol and biology. Similarly, Deep History connects patterns of human behavior to the biochemical mechanics of shared human neurology.

Neuro-history treats alcohol as a social behavior and, hence, social history altering drug, and thereby allows the historians to reinterpret an array of early American social and medical issues, recasting them as chemical dependencies. For example, malnutrition is a common side effect of alcoholism. In Philadelphia, an estimated fifty percent of an individual's daily caloric intake came from alcohol.[177] Without knowing the average caloric intake of an average Philadelphia, it is not hard to imagine a widow, who is only able to feed her children beer, believing it to be more nutritious or cost effective than different forms of healthy sustenance. Unfortunately, malnutrition can lead to permanent brain damage, and in some cases, death.[178] Combined, alcoholism and malnutrition creates an "altered dendritic structure" in the brain, and a leads to a substantial "loss of neurons."[179] Under the belief that alcohol could replace food in times of hardship, many early Americans mistakenly chose alcohol over bread to feed their families. In an age where the FDA did not exist, the toxicity levels of homebrews or poorly made moonshine lead to a variety of neurological and mental disorders. For example, Wernicke's

[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.

encephalopathy is a common neurological disorder, in which heavy drinkers suffer from a lack of thiamine.[180] Symptoms include the loss of mental activity, breakdown of muscle coordination, and tremors.[181]

A wide range of historical illnesses and plague were probably nothing more than liver failure, psychosis, and neuropathy. Polyneuropathy, which encompasses "paresthesias, pain, and weakness, especially in the feet," is present in descriptions of elderly members of society.[182] Polyneuropathy develops through malnutrition, and is a common symptom of alcoholism. Alcoholic myopathy is common in heavy drinkers as well, and in some cases, can develop after several days of heavy drinking. Abdominal pain, cramps, muscle weakness, renal failure and death are all potential outcomes of consistent, heavy drinking.[183] It is unknown how many Philadelphians died as a direct or indirect result of heavy drinking. However, one thing is certain: alcohol played a central role in the degradation of public health in and around Philadelphian communities.

Alcoholism is also present in other areas of early American history. When an individual abuses alcohol on a regular basis, the unfortunate soul typically experiences a series of recurring economic, social, or medical consequences.[184] Alcoholics tend to continue drinking despite all negative consequences. This principle works on two levels. On a micro-economic scale, for example, an early American

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[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid., 279.
[182] Ibid., 283.
[183] Ibid., 284.
[184] Ibid., 279.

community may have had a high rate of physical dependency on rum or other liquor. Homemade alcohol provided a means of survival for a particular family unit. On a macro-economic scale, the rum trade in the colonies and early states represents an economic addiction critical to the survival of the early republic. Investors depended on the transatlantic rum trade in order to make money. Neuro-history, as a form of historical narrative, can thus shed considerable light on economic history.

American history is subject to not only the whims and fancies of great and small men and women, but to the chemicals that flood their brains and influence their decisions. As we know today, alcohol stimulates the production of serotonin and dopamine. Similarly, it sometimes affects an individual's craving for food, sex, desire, and aggression. Unfortunately, it is also responsible for a wide variety of mental illness. Modern science is able to determine the biological processes behind intoxication. A neuro-historical framework changes alcohol from the "Good creature of God" into the great silent American actor. Cultural intoxication is a physical process, a process through which large groups willingly choose to consume (what is essentially) an addictive poison. Applying biology to social history can allow us to define new narrative, as will be explained in the next section of this thesis.

Alcohol as a Connection to our Evolutionary Past

Social, political, and economic historical approaches have deepened our understanding of eighteenth-century tavern life. However, none of these frameworks offers an entirely satisfactory explanation of the "Great American Binge." They also

fail to address the public health consequences of widespread alcoholic intoxication. of early American binge drinking and its relationship to the progression of history. Adopting a biological approach to early American tavern culture is possible by using "Deep History," and a thorough examination of our evolutionary past. Deep History, as a methodology, allows biology and science to help explain the past. More importantly, however, it constructs the tavern as a biological requirement rather than a socio-economic institution. A new, biologically driven narrative can be constructed, one that uses our evolutionary past to explain the rise of early American tavern culture.

Consciousness, as a biological concept, is a fundamental aspect of human existence. Appropriately, the relationship between consciousness and the act of changing it by consuming alcohol remains quite close. Michael Polan explores this concept in *The Botany of Desire.* He examines the concept of intoxication within mammals as well as their instinctual/innate desire to consume psychoactive materials. According to Polan, humans rarely consume psychoactive substances strictly for caloric purposes. Instead, most living organisms, conscious of their surroundings, actively seek out new ways to change or alter their brain chemistry. Pointing to the research of Dr. Ronald Siegel, Polan searches for examples of intoxication within the animal kingdom in an effort to explore the relationship between conscious and biology in more detail.[185]

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[185] Michael Polan, *The Botany of Desire*. (N.p.: Random House, 2001). Pg. 38. Using Siegel's findings, Polan explores a variety of Cattle that regularly consumes toxic amounts of locoweed. Bighorn sheep often destroy their teeth by chewing specific

At some point in their evolutionary development, Polan argues, early mammals began using psychotropic mechanisms to alter the way they felt. Expropriated by early hominids, psychotropic consciousness-change persists throughout the entire evolutionary timeline of *Homo*. The fact that animals consume psychotropic mechanisms suggests that the concept of intoxication exceeds traditional Lamarckian definitions of historical progression. It transcends the emergence of state, and development of civilization. Deep History seeks to break down the barrier between pre-historic human beings and anatomically modern Homo sapiens, in an effort to demonstrate a shared neurological physiology. Similarly, Deep History illuminates psychotropic history as far more significant to our developmental past than previously believed. Intoxication and consciousness are agents of biology. The process of ingesting substances to alter one's biological consciousness is not a product of civilization, but evolution. The presence of intoxicant-seeking behavior throughout the animal kingdom suggests that consciousness, regardless of intelligence, often craves change.

The desire to consume mind-altering chemicals remains within the human species. For example, children in the midst of psychosocial development will seek out or engage in behaviors that alter their consciousness or perception of reality.[186]

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hallucinogenic lichen. Abyssinian shepherds noticed that their flock became much more energetic when they consumed coffee berries. Ancient Chinese sailors reported strange behavior by pigeons that fed on cannabis seeds. Indians living in South America regularly observed predatory carnivores (such as the Puma) high on Cinchona bark, a highly potent hallucinogenic tree back.

[186] Polan, 138.

Children achieve altered perceptions of reality by spinning until dizzy or hallucinating via hyperventilation.[187] Children also crave and actively seek out sources of sugar. As a chemical, sugar possess addictive properties, and contains psychoactive neuro-chemicals. Sugar consumption, amongst children, elicits compulsive and semi-addictive behaviors.[188] Thus, the drive to alter one's consciousness via chemical ingestion of a particular substance occurs during early human social development. Behavior amongst young children in regards to consciousness and chemical psychotropy is important because it runs parallel to similar behavior in adults. However, adults tend to consume substances that possess active neuro-chemical inhibitors or stimulants. Poland's insight into human behavior suggests that the desire for altered states of awareness is a natural aspect of human biology.

Homo sapiens, along with most species of mammals, possess a system within their brain that actively rewards survival-conducive behavior. Achieving a goal or engaging in a particular behavior activates a variety of different chemicals within the brain. Most of these behaviors are necessary to survival, such as sex, the consumption of food, and the like. Alcohol, as a chemical, wreaks havoc on the neuro-chemical reward system and effectively "cheats the system." Alcohol demonstrates a trend unique to the neuro-historical development of our species: If various psychoactive substances replicate the effects of "survival rewards," then those psychoactive

[187] Ibid, Others smell particular types of fumes in order to obtain a short mental high.
[188] Ibid., 138

substances may become associated with survival itself. In other words, humans can easily associate the effects of alcohol with survival. Individuals seek out alcoholic intoxication because it impersonates feelings similar to comfort and survival. Thus, the concept and promotion of survival falsely relates to the consumption of alcohol.

From a strictly Darwinian perspective, this methodology dictates that those who remained intoxicated in the wild would die out, a form of "the survival of the soberest."[189] Would animals, who are "high" in the wild, not be "more accident prone, more vulnerable to predators, and less likely to attend to their offspring?"[190] Surprisingly, not always. For example, Amazonian Indians ingest neuro-chemical toxins for millennia, chemicals that help them hunt more efficiently.[191] This contradicts Darwinian theory that those who ingest substances usually fail to succeed and are eliminated from the gene pool. Beneficial qualities offered by psychotropic mechanisms (like coca, tobacco, and ethanol) frequently far outweigh the potential side effects of physical addiction. Altering consciousness can promote survival as well as failure. Enhanced creativity, elevated levels of testosterone, pain-alleviation, and increased levels of endurance are side effects of psychotropic mechanisms that increase an organisms likelihood for survival. Based on this theoretical approach, psychotropic mechanisms may act as tools, pushing humans along a developmental pathway. Once a social group understands how to use these chemical tools effectively, Polan argues, they "may be able to cope with everyday life better than

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[189] Polan, 141.
[190] Ibid.
[191] Ibid.

those who don't."[192] Using this approach, we can construct a new tavern narrative in early, one based not on sociology or economics, but neuro-chemicals and the consolidation of power.

Neuro History as an Explanation for Tavern Culture

Tavern culture and early American binge drinking share a close relationship to our evolutionary past. Within the animal kingdom, social grooming "generates a pleasant dose of dopamine and serotonin, along with oxytocin, the peace-and-bonding neuro-transmitter."[193] Oxytocin from different forms of social interaction helps to create social contracts and elicits feelings of safety within the animal kingdom. Accordingly, pleasurable neurotransmitters are elevated through the process of social grooming. 1.5 million years later, hominids continue to utilize this survival mechanism. In fact, the practice of social grooming is one of the oldest survival mechanisms Homo sapiens possess. This section views tavern culture as a means from which humans obtain oxytocin and practice social grooming within a public space. It will also demonstrate how taverns functioned as stations of social grooming.

Before our evolutionary ancestors possessed speech capabilities, contractual alliances were "limited by the size of the neocortex, where primates keep track of their mutual obligations."[194] Social groups among hominids grew larger with the development of speech and language. In addition, the ability to create and maintain

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[192] Ibid.
[193] Shryock and Smail, *Deep History: The Architecture*, 64.
[194] Ibid.

relationships without the energy expenditure of physical grooming provided social security benefits; benefits that helped increase the survival of a particular group. Of course, as language and speech developed, gossip did as well. As a survival mechanism, gossip allowed hominids to greet and direct attention to several individuals at once.[195] Biologically, the spread of gossip allowed for the extension of "neurochemical bonds across a much wider network."[196] Through gossip, social signals become "transformed into sound waves…across the gap between individuals," where they are "turned back into electrical signals and neurotransmitters."[197] Gossip, an evolutionary mechanism, replaced the physical process of social grooming. Gossip also elicits oxytocin. Thus, the development of speech and (and gossip) helped ensure the survival of a particular group. It also ensured the continuation of a neuro-chemical reward system based around social interaction. Speech fostered the development of larger social hierarchies, but more importantly, it also changed the way in which hominids negotiated the world around them.

Taverns helped facilitate neurochemical bonds between different social groups, bonds reinforced through the shared consumption of alcohol. Because taverns provided a great deal of early American news, they also served as centers of gossip. Modern tavern narratives speak frequently about the "conviviality" present in early American drinking establishments. Deep History can help draw parallels between "conviviality" and the facilitation of Oxytocin through news gathering and drinking.

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[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.

Relationships fostered between patrons were entirely dependent on these connections established through speech and gossip. Similar to dopamine, oxytocin strengthened and reinforced the tavern as a necessary social institution. Gossip functioned as "one of the essential components of our natural history."[198] Tavern culture fulfilled a biological need, and functioned as a center of neuro chemical distribution. They also provided a means from which social bonds created and maintained themselves through communal drinking.

As sixteenth-century French philosopher Etienne de la Boetie argued, "theatre, games, spectacles, marvelous beasts, medals, tableaux, and other such drugs were for the people of antiquity the allurements of serfdom, the price for their freedom, and the tools of tyranny."[199] In other words, social intoxication, distributed through entertainment or psychotropy, is a powerful form of social control. Early American taverns, strictly regulated by the upper classes, helped foster a relationship between power and alcohol distribution. Thus, taverns tried to function as a complex form of neuro-social control.

In Philadelphia, stress likely distributed itself unevenly across the social spectrum.[200] Social alliances maintained through "the adroit manipulation of the nervous systems of others"[201] often found more success than other means of social control (religion, republicanism, and the like). Stress control, medicated through

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[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid., 65
[200] Ibid., 65. This is the opinion of Robert Sapolsky.
[201] Ibid.

tavern visitation, suppressed the desire for neuro-chemical relief. Alcohol temporarily allowed early Americans to "feel better" and to participate in communal grooming. Similarly, Philadelphian social hierarchies depended on a group's ability to "manipulate the nervous systems of other people."[202] Tavern regulations helped to institutionalize the concept of neurological control. Seen in this light, Philadelphia's social hierarchies were maintained, in part, through neuro chemistry.[203] The prevalence of Philadelphian taverns lay not in the area of economics, but in our evolutionary past. Taverns functioned as an institution from which various evolutionary mechanisms manifested themselves within in a public setting.

CONCLUSION

Final Remarks

Contemporary transatlantic histories often neglect to explore the neurochemical changes that took place after the Columbian exchange. Traditionally, socio-economic

[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.

histories have chosen not to include a biological analysis of cultural intoxication. Fewer still have included intoxication, biology, and history within the same narrative. Alcohol history, to most social historians, is comprised of legal histories and markers of social deviance. Traditional tavern narratives that include stories of cultural drunkenness are rife with legal analyses and reactionary legislative actions. In other words, drunkenness is overwhelmingly associated with methods of authority and discipline in Early America. Neuro history, as a methodology, offers a new interpretation.

The numerous early American taverns that existed throughout the 18th century functioned as evolutionary mechanisms, institutions that inadvertently allowed early Americas to accept and resist biological discipline. In Foucaultian theory, biological docility is paramount to maintaining control over a particular population (usually the "lower sorts"). The amount of time and effort early Americans committed to curbing drunkenness within taverns is quite extensive. Legislators went to extreme lengths in an effort to control alcohol consumption, putting "the body…in the grip of very strict powers".[204] The social process of tavern regulation, according to Foucaultian theory, helped provide the illusion of control over personal "economy", the "efficiency of movements", and the "internal organization" amongst the lower orders of Philadelphian citizenry.[205] By asserting upper-class authority over those who drank too much or acted indecently in public, "coercions that act upon the body" exposed

[204]Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York, NY: Random House, 1984), Pg. 180
[205] Ibid, 182

intoxicated Philadelphians to methods of "calculated manipulation" perpetrated by those in control.[206] Disciplinary actions did not assert total control over an individual, nor did they mean to. They merely wanted them to act a certain way and to engage in behavior synonymous with docility.[207]

Docility falls apart, however, with a neuro-historical interpretation of social tavern regulation. Authorities possessed limited power over an individual during a period of neurological intoxication. While Foucault acknowledges the role of biology throughout history, he neglects to explore the neurological 'dead zone' of intoxication. If everything (according to Foucault) has a history, why would alcohol not be included in his list of regimes that subjugate human beings? Getting drunk helped early Americans escape an array of methods designed to assert biosocial discipline and class subversion. Taverns, it could be argued, were not the bulwarks of republican virtue nor were they houses from which to 'control' social intoxication. Using this framework, perhaps taverns sheltered and protected individuals from the tyranny of oppressive 'regimes' existent during the eighteenth century?

As a process, biological intoxication is free from Foucaultian discipline, and punishable only after the body metabolizes it. It resides within a philosophical 'gray area'. Laws, discipline, and methods of social control carried little weight within the realm of neurological intoxication. The use of force, while physically oppressive, does nothing to control or change the state of neurological intoxication. Drunkenness

[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.

is a chemical state of existence entirely independent of social discipline (until the imbiber wakes up in jail). Alcohol and drunkenness quite possibly challenged and protected the contested space of human bodies within early Philadelphia. The concept of contested space, within a neuro-chemical context, ties alcohol into an endless stream of new historical narratives. Similarly, neuro-history offers a new explanatory paradigm, one in which individuals take shelter from biosocial and political regimes of power. It is important to note that tavern regulation did not always fail. Many early American communities obtained an idealized state of social existence between alcohol and the individual, control and discipline. Despite these exceptions, alcohol still "…acted as a solvent of old regimes".[208] Perhaps alcohol acted as a liberator of consciousness, a chemical free from social and economic forces? Within this framework, alcohol transforms into a biological consciousness changer.

Deep History legitimizes the neuro-chemical relationship between the progression of time and the human species. It enables alcohol to serve as a microscope into our social and developmental past. For this reason, it possesses a surprising amount of agency. In fact, psychotropy and its relationship to neuro-historical narratives may some day be able to redefine current definitions of social and cultural progress. As Smail and others have pointed out, the universal pursuit of pleasurable neuro-chemicals is an entirely legitimate way to measure the social progression of a particular group of people. By adopting this framework of neuro-

[208] Smail, *Deep History*, 185.

progress, a new "grand explanatory paradigm" emerges.[209] This new narrative interprets the progress of civilization as the result of "ongoing experiments with new psychotropic mechanisms", not the progression of ideas or nation building. Exploring consciousness, and the way in which it has changed over the past, may be the key to entering a new era of historical discourse.

Foucault reminds us that history has never been exempt from science or biology. The pursuit of mind-altering substances is an instinctual behavior that is present in almost every predecessor of Homo Sapien Thus, the methods from which we have obtained, distributed, and regulated neuro-chemicals are responsible for more than evolutionary advantages in the wild. Alleviating environmental stress improves the likelihood of survival amongst our species. Psychotropic mechanisms found in the wild have contributed substantially to our evolutionary dominance and ultimate success. Judging by the ferocity with which modern primates defend and claim fruit trees, it is likely that the process of ingesting fermented fruit is a story older than bipedalism itself. Alcohol, over the millennia, has performed admirably alongside the humans who have consumed it. Its involvement in our developmental past is every bit as significant as plague, war, economics, and social theory. As a species, we are "in a sense…addicted to the wash of oxytocin or dopamine" elicited by engaging in survival-conducive activities.[210] Humans independently seek out and manufacture a variety of different substances to change the reality in which they exist.

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[209] Ibid, 187.
[210] Ibid, 160.

Seen in this perspective, our species is little more than a successful group of self-conscious bipedal apes; hominids whose behavior and evolutionary mechanisms are still present and visible in our modern neuro-physiology.

To establish this neuro-historical dialogue between Homo Sapien and Homo Erectus, we must turn to a larger, grander neuro-historical narrative. Smail, a proponent of this methodology, suggests that the "unguided human cultural progression" made over the last 10,000 years has been more or less the result of humans experimenting with psychotropic mechanisms.[211] Thus, alcohol and the techniques that our ancestors used to procure it may be one of the most important evolutionary behaviors present within our deep past.

A narrative that honestly attempts to explain the story of human development through psychotropy does not challenge or claim superiority over pre-existing methodologies. Moreover, Deep History provides an addition to a rich tradition of Western history. Historical narratives, even the beloved classics, can benefit from biological interpretations. Neuro-history, especially when applied to an early American context, is certainly not the "be-all-end-all" of historical analysis. It is, however, the start of a new beginning. Alcohol must be distanced from the age-old categorical association of "frivolous history", and assume its rightful place beside the great movers and shakers of the past.

Deep History has its fair share of criticism. Historians grounded primarily in economic or social theories often cite the fields lack of empiricism, and claim that

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[211] Smail, *Deep History*, 187.

science and biology have no place in historical discourse. However, those who have advocated for deep historical narratives have largely dispelled deterministic anxieties based on age-old methodologies. Deep History obtains its legitimacy from science, chemistry, and biology, and builds arguments with anthropology and non-traditional methods of interpretation. Historians must not be afraid of using these methods to advance preexisting historical narratives. Neurohistory does not claim ignorance to the works of historians like Sharon Salinger or David Conroy. It simply offers a new interpretation, one that both enriches and builds upon preexisting research. The strength in neuroscience lies in its ability to determine what kinds of behavior took place within early American taverns, and the biological processes at work within each establishment.

Alcohol is the great Silent American Actor. It has played a substantial role in the development of our species, and has created an enormous impact on "the shape and nature of human cultural evolution".[212] Psychotropy, as a biological process, has challenged, shaped, and ultimately changed the way Homo sapiens move within their environment. It is a core feature of the human experience. At no time throughout world history has any other psychoactive neuro-chemical had such a profound effect on a single species.

If Deep History scares an older generation of historians, they must remember that its scientific methodologies ally themselves to modern science and neurology. "New developments in the art of changing body chemistry" serve as legitimate

[212] Ibid, 189.

historical timelines, frameworks used to explain how or why we descended from the treetops.[213] This assertion (which is staunchly- anti Lamarckian) contradicts traditional viewpoints involving the progression of history. Neurohistory tells a story of shared experience; an experience centered on the neurochemical 'pursuit of happiness'. As a species, we go to great lengths to achieve happiness. Could psychotropy not be the pursuit of happiness; happiness driven by neuroscience?

Deep History and neuroscience reflects our shared identity as human beings. Neuro historical methodologies will continue to be visible "in the structure of our minds and bodies, and in the material and social worlds we have made".[214] As we learn more about our bodies, and ourselves, Deep History will continue to evolve. Thus, the biological language of our brains, and roots of our success as a species, continue to exist within every human being.

The human brain is susceptible and influenced by the chemicals we ingest. By using neurochemistry and applying it to an historical context, "historical dialogues" begin to emerge between the interaction of the "dopamine reward system" and the "stress response" system.[215] Our evolutionary success is attributed to the pursuit of pleasure and happiness, not fame or glory. Viewed in this way, alcohol, intoxication, and historical drunkenness transform into a lens of historical discourse. Alcohol is a drug, but it is also a poison. It is a toxin, which psychoactively changes the way in

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[213] Ibid, 187.
[214] Shryock and Smail, *Deep History: The Architecture*, 165.
[215] Ibid, 165.

which humans negotiate their mental and physical surroundings. Deep History legitimizes alcohol as an agent of human progression.

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