CRAFT CHRISTIANITY:
CHRISTIANITY AND CRAFT BEER AMERICA

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by
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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

Craft Christianity: Christianity and Craft Beer in America

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and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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Dedicated to Michael the Dog.
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Introduction

One Saturday evening a month, the century-old doors of the First Christian Church are opened to those gathered outside. Whether enticed by the sense of community, curiosity, or simply the promise of free beer, as many as a hundred people routinely trickle in. Throughout the following hours, this historic church in downtown Portland, Oregon becomes a different kind of sacred space. Once the meeting place of temperance activists decrying the evils of alcohol, the sounds now emanating from its halls are fueled in part by alcohol. Since 2013, this congregation’s monthly “Beer and Hymns” has transgressed boundaries and struck at the legacy of its temperance past.¹

While many would likely anticipate such seemingly peculiar behavior in this city known as a bastion of oddities, Portland’s First Christian Church is only one location in which the blending of religious praxis and beer imbibing are occurring. Whether drinking, discussing, or even making beer, a growing number of American Christian communities are fermenting their own “Craft Christianity” (Figure 1).

A screenshot from “Pub Theology,” a website that provides a directory to some of the locations of where “The format is simple: beer, conversation, and God.” and “there’s likely a good craft beer you haven’t tried yet!” This is by no means the entirety of Craft Christian groups.  

Whereas some congregations come together for the social act of drinking beer, others are venturing into the production of their own once forbidden fermentation. St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Wilmington, North Carolina began brewing beer in 2010. With dwindling numbers and an aging congregation, the 150-year-old church turned to making homemade beer, homebrewing, initially to attract younger potential members.  

Their success with the brewing experiment was also found to foster the strengthening of existing relationships within the congregation. Riding this wave of beer as community-building, St. Paul’s spread the homebrewing gospel to nearby churches. Within a year, an annual brewing competition between rival congregations was established. With the

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3 While craft beer production and homebrewing can certainly be argued as having their own distinct cultures, both champion the same values and often share the same narratives and thus will not be distinguished in this piece. For my purposes, homebrewing is one end of the craft beer spectrum.
help of a local craft brewery, the aspirant beer-makers learned the foundational techniques essential to the process of brewing. While the trophy and bragging rights ultimately went to the “Hopostles” from St. Mary’s Catholic Parish in the most recent iteration of this annual competition, together, with St. Paul’s “Brew unto Others”⁴, and the other teams, the competitors were successful in raising money that was then given to a local charity.⁵

Of course, as many Christians have begun blending religious praxis with beer-drinking, others have objected. The inaugural “Beer and Hymns” at East Side Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Tulsa, OK, drew nearly 100 people in 2014. As the crowd inside joined together in singing “old classic hymns” another group was assembling outside. Holding signs that read “They also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way. Isaiah 28:7” and “Repent or Perish,” 20 protesters proclaimed those inside were “going to hell” and deemed the leader of the church a “devil outreach pastor.”⁶ As more Christians are reformulating their orientation to beer, others continue to see it as a clear sign of evil. In this religious response to another religious response (that of the protesters to those inside who are finding themselves responding, in part, to craft beer culture) beer becomes a powerful religious symbol, demarcating, for some, between holiness and evil.

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⁴ Their team slogan was “God’s peace. Happy yeast.”
Dry and Wet Worlds

"In the Christian world, alcohol gets shunned, but it doesn't have to be something that you have to be scared of. Beer and Hymns brings the two worlds together."

- Heidi Barrett, Belmont Church, Nashville, TN (2012)\(^7\)

The boundaries crossed in these events are ones that have historically served to reinforce the existence of two worlds in American society. One is where alcohol is prohibited. In this Dry World, alcohol exists as a danger, if not at times a fundamental evil, that threatens to disrupt and ultimately destruct family, relationships, and society itself. It must be kept away, or heavily ritualized as in the case of the history of wine in the United States. As I will discuss below, this prohibition in places of work and worship has not always been ubiquitous, however, but exists, rather, as a legacy of the powerful nineteenth century temperance movements that once dominated the popular and political worlds of American culture.

If there is a world where alcohol is not permitted in America, then there is also one where it is accepted. Superseded by the Dry World through governmental restrictions and religiocultural norms, this Wet World has historically been painted as the antithesis of America’s sacred values, a world of immoral actions and chaos. However, where these boundaries have been drawn in America have always been subject to change. Similarly, how these boundaries have historically been created and what they have signified have also undergone shifts. Religion, whether institutional or cultural, has always had a relationship to alcohol in America. The intersections of gender and class with religion and religious symbols have been two of the most significant ways in which

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this relationship has been constructed.

As not only the gatekeepers, but also the makers of the boundaries between these worlds, America’s Protestant middle class stands as the arbiters of these rules and cultural norms. Everything from food, sex, and body image to even the conceptions of what constitutes “religion,” the so-called secularization of America in actuality reflects a nation that is both unable to break free of its Protestant roots and is also constantly being changed by “others.”8 In short, the notion that there exists a clear divide between the religious and the secular in America has been increasingly challenged by scholars since the millennium. This process of exchange between Protestant-secularism and the “other” has influenced what Americans have and have not done with food. As I will discuss further, competing foodways of alcohol, in particular, have been a source of division in the U.S. 9

What is happening in this old Portland church, St. Paul’s revived flock, and in other communities across the U.S. is a renegotiation of the “wet” and “dry” worlds and the boundaries between them. In this restructuring of the foodways of beer in the U.S., the powerful influence of America’s once seemingly perennial temperance movements is being shaken from within and outside of church walls. What is sacred and what is profane is not being redrawn by beer, however. In what follows is not an argument that beer is becoming a sacred substance. Rather, in what follows is an argument that beer remains a sacred substance in America, though how this remains the case has certainly

9 In Culinary Tourism (2004), folklorist Lucy M. Long defines ‘foodways’ as “the network of behaviors, traditions, and beliefs concerning food, and involves all the activities surrounding a food item and its consumption, including the procurement, preservation, preparation, presentation, and performance of that food.”
changed. Along the way, I hope to also both raise and inspect some of the questions the advent of Craft Christianity pose. How has such an alleged insidious evil become the darling of an increasing body of American Christians? Where along the American journey was beer discovered, or more appropriately re-discovered, as a symbol of community?¹⁰ What mechanisms pried open church doors enough for kegs to be lugged inside? Is this simply a popular culture phenomenon or the expression of a much larger religious tradition in the United States? All of this is framed within a culture that continues to both drink less and finds itself increasingly not in pews on Sunday mornings.¹¹

The invention and subsequent emergence of the “craft beer” segment of the larger American beer industry and its merging with some of America’s Christians is, as I argue, no coincidence. Rather, this melding is a culmination of religiopolitical values, histories, and fears that have played out in this particular way. Within the last decade, not only has craft beer made its way into America’s bars, grocery stores, and home refrigerators, but also into religious communities. The narratives, and values communicated in those narratives, often cited as the backbone of this niche industry, have appealed to a growing number of Christian communities. As I will discuss, mixed within the barley, hops, and yeast of craft beers are ideas and messages of tradition, community, and purity, all swirling around an emphasis on authenticity. These craft beer/”Craft Christian” values find themselves at home within Historian of Religion Catherine Albanese’s theorizing on

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¹⁰ For many German immigrants to America, beer was exactly that. Beerhalls in the first half of the nineteenth century offered German-Americans a family space to socialize. See historian Maureen Ogle’s *Ambitious Brew: The Story of American Beer.*

America’s cultural religion, where Puritan millennial themes serve as a constant in America’s religious imagination and landscape.\textsuperscript{12} They also find themselves consistent with the larger discourse of the influence of Protestantism within American culture.

Examining the language, messages, and values of those within and that which has been written about the craft beer movement (both producers and consumers) through the lens of cultural religion, the “Craft Christian” phenomenon emerges as both cultural and religious innovation \textit{and} tradition. To capture the important movements, shifts, and attitudes that brought us here requires an exploration of a particular history of alcohol’s foodways in the U.S. and the ways in which religion and essential components of it (constructs of gender and class) have and very much continue to distinguish a mostly Protestant middle class from an undefined “other.”

Before arriving at this seemingly contradictory conclusion of innovative tradition, however, it is essential to examine American foodways of beer from colonial America to present day more closely. Roughly tracing this history along the lines of gender and class, there emerges not a concrete image of what Americans think and have thought about beer, but, rather, a mosaic of events and cultural trends where alcohol has always been a powerful symbol.

In the significantly lengthener first chapter, I ultimately use nineteenth century America’s transformation of foodways of drinking as a case study to highlight the ways in which alcohol, specifically beer, can be utilized to elevate certain communities while minimizing others. I begin by first exploring America’s drinking culture from its colonial roots to early national formation. Here I discuss the status of alcohol and how its

\textsuperscript{12} Catherine Albanese, \textit{America: Religions and Religion} (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2013), 213.
transformation from innocuous to intolerable established a longstanding understanding of alcohol that is only now being revisited and revised. With the coming together of rapid industrialization, mass migrations to urban enclaves, the country’s Second Great Awakening, the rise of scientific authority, and an emerging middle class, fears and anxieties in navigating this new America resulted in an overhaul of its drinking culture. Ideas of class, ethnicity, race, and gender were all featured prominently in the national phenomenon of temperance organizations that would dominate the cultural, political, and religious spheres of the new nation. For the first time in America’s short history, drinking/nondrinking and identity were tightly bound together.

Next, departing from nineteenth century America and arriving roughly on the eve of National Prohibition, I track how alcohol was further gendered and classed through the avenue of popular culture. Following marketing trends and portrayals of drinking coming out of Hollywood, the media, acting as both a soundboard and mouthpiece for understandings of America’s cultural religion, becomes the most influential way in which the foodways of alcohol and beer are created and reinforced. Following America’s second global conflict and with it a rush of standardization that beset the nation’s consumer culture, I examine how the beer industry parted from its small and local roots to the birth of the conglomerates that remain industry giants in contemporary America.

With the establishment of what will be regarded as “Big Beer,” I will locate the emergence of craft beer within its historical context and attempt to establish how some beer became “craft.” As I will show, these narratives about craft beer, especially as it is typically discussed as a “movement,” roughly funnel into one type of story or “narrative formula” of rebellion where revolution in the name of purity and authenticity is
consistent, perpetuating a millennial theme Albanese traces back before the conception of a United States. Most simply, craft beer producers and consumers communicate their allegiance to this revolution through the manufacture and consumption of a foundational message of purity. Purity also serves the craft beer industry as its primary political weapon against the two (now soon to be one) commercial beer behemoths that dominate beer markets globally.

Finally, with both temperance and the craft beer movement serving as models, I will then attempt to bring the two to bear witness on the rise of “Craft Christianity” and its class and gender dimensions. The religious communities that have gathered around craft beer communicate similar values as the craft beer they are now downing in their quest to construct identity, community, and morality encapsulated within their understanding of an authentic beer-friendly Christianity. It is also within this last section that I take an essential closer look at the intersection of religion, class, and gender to elucidate how craft beer is becoming the handmaiden of a particular form of mainstream Christianity.

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Chapter 1: 19th Century Class Crusade and Beer

The role of alcohol and forms of alcoholic beverages in identity formation in young America underwent two distinct phases. From a vital substance of everyday consumption to a symbol of temptation and immorality, alcohol passed through the changing religious and political spheres of nineteenth century America accumulating assumptions and associations that had religious, cultural, and ethnic implications. As communities of German and Irish immigrants became symbols of danger that were perceived as threatening to America’s Protestant Anglo-Saxon hegemony, xenophobic anxieties were in-part expressed through temperance movements. As a symbol demarcating America’s emerging temperate middle class from an intemperate working and mostly immigrant class “other,” attitudes towards or against alcohol demonstrated cultural, class, and ethnic allegiance.

Before the emergence of temperance that ultimately evolved into a total objection to all forms of alcohol, the drinking culture of America was much more in line with that of which the German and Irish immigrants brought to the young country. Through this discussion of America’s drinking history, I hope to illuminate the ways in which religion, gender, and class intertwine, formulating and reinforcing cultural trends and wider social assumptions about alcohol, its consumption, and those who consume it. I argue that the success of temperance at becoming a national phenomenon was due largely to three interrelated factors in American culture. First, as sociologist Joseph Gusfield contends, the movements of the Second Great Awakening further challenged established religious
and political authority set in motion first by the Revolution and temperance was an attempt by those elites to regain power. However, this moral crusade would ultimately be folded into the revivalist rhetoric of those who had challenged the elites. Second, America’s first middle class sought distinction from social inferiors in navigating its new social position. Temperance would provide the cultural capital to do just that while reflecting the popular religious ideas. This use of alcohol as a symbol used to elevate one group while simultaneously relegating another as inferior will later be key to my analysis of Craft Christianity. Lastly, the arrival of millions of Irish and German immigrants would find employment in the emerging industrial complex, filling the ranks of the working class. In addition to their language and religion, these immigrants also brought their foodways. Of these, I am most interested in their foodways of social beer drinking which would ultimately be juxtaposed against the temperate and later teetotaling ideology of middle class temperance organizations.

As stated above, this discussion will hopefully flesh out the mechanisms and give more historical context to the current movements of Craft Christianity as a means of middle class Christian articulation, demarcating the temperate moral from an immoral “other.” Both non-drinking temperance supporters of nineteenth century America and contemporary drinking Craft Christians viewed and view their particular orientation to drinking as moral progress. While where these social reformers have stood on either side of the issue of drinking, the symbol of alcohol remains one that communicates class status, gender, and ethnicity. For champions of temperance and Craft Christians religion functions as the vehicle that facilitates the arrival to these particular orientations.

The complexities of the American experience with antebellum temperance cannot
be overstated. Though ethnicity is surely an important aspect of nineteenth century temperance ideology and vision, it was not simply a reaction to mass immigration. Similarly, it was not simply a class, religious, or scientific crusade, but rather a coming together of all of these particular dimensions (and many more) in particular ways and understandings and reactions to them. However, as previously stated, for the purposes of this exploration, I am most interested in how this movement, like the Craft Christian phenomenon, reinforces and challenges ideas about class and gender through religious ideas about alcohol. Whereas both temperance and Craft Christian communities utilize alcohol as a symbol in their religious framework, they stand on opposite ends of an alcohol continuum.

**Beer Riots**

On April 21, 1855, chaos erupted in Chicago. What had been a growing tension between the newly-elected government and immigrant populations was now crystallizing into a day of violence. Two German men were dead and dozens were injured as Chicago’s police force clashed with hundreds of mostly German protestors. The catalyst for this eruption had been set in motion weeks prior, with the election of Levi Boone. A known supporter of the prominent anti-alcohol, anti-Catholic, and anti-immigrant Know-Nothing Party, Boone’s election signified Chicago’s changing political reality, showing the political might of the marriage of nativism to temperance.\(^{15}\) In this Antebellum Chicago, the lines between Catholics, immigrants, class, and alcohol for those not considered “ethnic” were blurred, in which discussions of one entailed the others. As is part of my larger argument, alcohol for nineteenth century America was a powerful

symbol that carried with it ideas, fears, and longings of where America was going and had been. Alcohol, whether the German-style lager beer, rum, or other distilled spirits, was never and has never been just alcohol. Cloaked within the new mayor’s concerns about alcohol were also anxieties about the increasing immigrant communities that made up nearly half of Chicago’s population by his inauguration. Not only were these newcomers bringing their foodways of alcohol to Chicago, but they were also mostly Catholic and made up most of the city’s working class. In examining sections of Boone’s inaugural address, the symbolic significance of “intoxicating liquors” illuminates the mounting tension in the nation, represented in the microcosm of Chicago:

It is well known that for many years I have been decidedly opposed to licensing any body to sell intoxicating liquors… Both parties in the recent contest, came to the ballot box one week ago to-day, with this issue fairly in view. The liquor influence, from the wholesale dealer to the most unfortunate victim of intemperance, was directed in one solid column against me, demonstrating most conclusively that they were not mistaken in my position.16

Like many of his fellow contemporary physicians, Boone’s objection to alcohol reflected both the leading scientific opinion and an increasingly potent political orientation. While Boone was clearly opposed to alcohol, the lines between concerns of health, science, immigrants, and religion in his address are less clear. While the legality of whether the city government could prohibit the sale of alcohol was still being debated, Boone framed it as beyond simply a legal decision, but a moral imperative:

If there is no power given us in the Charter to prohibit the sale, and there are persons who chose to take the responsibility of dealing out to their fellow men a poison alike destructive of health, happiness, reputation, property and life, reducing to beggary, wretchedness and despair, the

widow and the helpless orphan, let them do it; to their own master they must give account, and so must I, and I much prefer not to be in any measure responsible for such results. It has also seemed to me very inconsistent for a City Government to license a part of its inhabitants to make men drunkards.\textsuperscript{17}

For Boone, the issue of alcohol’s status was not merely of legal or economic policy but rather of cosmic significance for all: the drunkard, those “dealing,” and even those attempting to stop it. This “poison” threatened the very lives and souls of Chicagoans, sending even the most successful to moral and material poverty, the most popular fear perpetuated by temperance literature.

Until Boone could get the city government to ban alcohol, he was determined to use his new position and the political system to at least slow it down. He proposed, and would be successful, in changing the city’s liquor licensing fees from an annual $50 fee to a quarterly $300.\textsuperscript{18} After this proposal, his crusade against alcohol again spilled beyond the borders of the city and into the realm of a cosmic warfare:

\begin{quote}
\textit{…I wish to bespeak your active co-operation, in closing all places where liquor is sold upon the Sabbath day. Our city has too long been disgraced and the holy Sabbath profaned, by the practice which has heretofore prevailed, of keeping those places open, and suffering them to be the resort of those who disregard the sacredness of that day as well as the feelings and rights of those who desire to spend it in the manner designed and commanded by its Author; and I am determined to close them if there is sufficient authority in the laws and power in the police force of the city to accomplish it.} \textsuperscript{19}
\end{quote}

For Boone, establishments whose participation in Sunday alcohol sales not only failed to recognize the sacredness of that day, but also harbored those who, according to Boone, ignored the holy day altogether. Both the businesses and those who frequented

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{18} Ogle, 150. \\
\textsuperscript{19} Boone, “Inaugural Address.”
\end{flushright}
them, especially on Sundays, were guilty of not only breaking man’s law, but God’s as well. With his alcohol stance and political intensions presented, Boone was quick to remind the city that despite being known as “the ‘Know-Nothing’ candidate,” he was not against immigrants:

First of all, then, let me say, that I should feel it beneath me as a man, much more so as a public officer, to make any distinction either in my personal or official treatment of my fellow-citizens, on the single ground of their nationality. As a man I have only to discover the broad seal of our common humanity, to make him who wears it my brother, and to make me his friend.20

By 1855, the population of Chicago could be roughly split in half between native and foreign-born, of which the largest were made up of either German or Irish. With the assurance that every “fellow-citizen” was equal in his eyes, he continued:

When, however, I come to count the true friends of our country, and those to whom our institutions may be safely committed, I am frank to confess, gentlemen, and I know many, both of native and foreign birth, who think with me, I cannot be blind to the existence in our midst of a powerful politico-religious organization, all its members owning, and its chief officers bound under an oath of allegiance to the temporal, as well as the spiritual supremacy of a foreign despot, boldly avowing the purpose of universal dominion over this land, and asserting the monstrous doctrine, that this is an end to be gained, if not by other means, by coercion and at the cost of blood itself.21

The newly-elected mayor of one of the country’s most quickly developing and admired cities in the world was clear that no Catholic was a “true friend” of Chicago or “our country.” For those who witnessed this address or would be exposed to it through print in the coming days, Boone’s anti-Catholic rhetoric would not have been found particularly shocking. Neither would it have been seen as noticeably different from many

20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
other powerful positions in the government now in the hands of similarly-minded men.

In the midst of mass waves of German and Irish immigration to the United States, Boone’s inaugural address was but a microcosm of the political atmosphere in Antebellum America. Not only was Boone firmly against the Catholic “foreign despot,” be he assured Chicagoans that he was determined to fight it:

Against such doctrines and such schemes, gentlemen, I wish to be known as taking my stand, and to their defeat I must cheerfully consecrate my talents, my property, and if need be my life.\(^\text{22}\)

With almost the same breath, Boone promised both equal treatment and delivered a warning to the same population of Chicago. To be a “true friend,” true Chicagoan, and ultimately a true American, required abandoning alcohol and the Catholic Church and adopting an “American” identity that was also tied closely to mainline Protestantism.

In the following weeks Chicago’s legislature followed Boone’s recommendations to change both the licensing fees and mandatory Sunday closures. In defiance of the new law, many of Chicago’s immigrant-owned taverns kept their doors open on “Sabbath day.” 200 tavern owners were subsequently charged with violating Sunday closing.\(^\text{23}\)

A center for not only drinking, but for community for America’s new arrivals, many of Chicago’s German and Irish taverns served an important function in the lives of immigrants. Of Chicago’s nearly 675 drinking establishments, 625 were owned and operated by immigrants.\(^\text{24}\) With the six day work week established as the norm in this increasingly industrial Chicago, Sunday was the one day of the week many of the

\(^{22}\) Ibid.


\(^{24}\) Ibid.
working classes had off and, therefore, the busiest day for taverns.

In the midst of arrests and forced closings, April 21 was established as the first day of prosecuting the noncompliant. As the prosecution and defense battled over the fate of the German tavern-owner, protesters assembled outside. In response to what Boone had anticipated, the newly-tripled in size and strictly native-born Chicago police force was mobilized to clear the crowd, arresting nine.\textsuperscript{25} Determined to rescue their compatriots, armed protesters assembled and began marching to the courthouse, clashing with police. Days later the \textit{Chicago Tribune} recounted the scene, highlighting many of Boone’s anxieties. According to the \textit{Tribune}, as they approached the courthouse, “They [Germans] filled the sidewalks, and pushed the American citizens who were passing along, into the street.”\textsuperscript{26} With the fight between police and protesters ensuing, another group of protesters were meeting in a tavern: “In the Lager Beer Saloon other parties were engaged in loading their guns, and preparing apparently for a fight.”\textsuperscript{27} Boone’s warnings of the dangers of alcohol were coming to fruition. For Boone, these establishments were not only threatening the individual prosperity of Chicago’s residents, but were serving as centers of insurrection for violent criminals and terrorists. Similarly, in highlighting the otherness of Chicago’s German population, the \textit{Tribune} discussed the fight: “The Germans fought savagely and repelled the officers with the obstinacy so peculiar to that race.”\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
only one of several similar events that transpired on the eve of the country going to war with itself.\textsuperscript{29}

Cincinnati would see a similar three day conflict in coming weeks. Nineteen were killed in what became known as “Bloody Monday” in Louisville shortly thereafter.\textsuperscript{30} The next year Baltimore became the site of violence, leaving fourteen dead.\textsuperscript{31} Behind this atmosphere of violence was a steady rise in politically charged anti-immigration groups that had demonstrated the efficacy of temperance movements in galvanizing America politic.

At the heart of these protests and the violence that ensued across these cityscapes were fundamental ideas about purity, danger, morality, and, ultimately, alcohol. With temperance activists emerging as political leaders espousing their commitment to purify America of its social ills, entire immigrant populations became objects who needed to be purified.

Itinerant preachers traveled across the nation, sharing morally and emotionally charged warnings of the dangers of drinking. The rapid printing of the Bible was rivaled only by the similarly massive wave of temperance literature that told tales written to inspire fear and distinguish the moral middle class and the immoral working poor. Temperance literature espoused that a man’s respectability was tied to his commitment to self-improvement, of which abstinence from drinking was a crucial first step.

\textbf{Pre-Temperance and Pre-Independent American Drinking}

Before this particular moral crusade to purify America of social evils and the

\textsuperscript{29} Ogle, 26.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} Kathleen Arnold, \textit{Anti-Immigration in the United States} (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2011), 217.
violence it ushered in Antebellum America, however, the role of alcohol in most of colonial America had been an essential part of everyday life and communal celebrations. In this pre-independent America, the much longer-standing foodways of alcohol thrived. The economic, political, social, and religious cogs of the colonial America system were greased by alcohol. From before the rising sun to after the last sliver of light faded into the distance, Americans imbibed. From gunsmiths to doctors and preachers, and farmers and coopers, Americans had their days filled with drink. From weddings to funerals, alcohol found its way into events of celebration and bereavement and was essential to the political process. In hopes of securing his election to the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1758, a young Colonel George Washington spent thirty-seven pounds seven shillings on his campaign, of which thirty-four was for “brandy, rum, cyder, strong beer, and wine.” Before the coming advent of gendering drinking, the drinking culture of America found men and women both wetting their lips and warming their spirits with the fermented and distilled contents of bottles and barrels.

From its colonial roots to its national formation, America was a drinking culture where alcohol was celebrated and considered vital to life. This orientation to alcohol is perhaps best encapsulated in the anonymous writing of an early American, circa 1690:

It sloweth age; it strengtheneth youth; it helpeth digestion… it abandoneth melancholie; it lighteneth the mind; it quickeneth the spirits; it strengtheneth the hydripsie… it pounceth the stone; it expelleth the gravel; it puffeth away ventosities; it keepeth and preserveth the ethad from whirling, the eyes from dazzling, the tong from lisping, the mouth from snaffling, the teeth from chattering, and the throat from rattling; it keepeth… the stomach from wambling, and the heart from swelling, it keepeth the hands from shivering… the veins from crumbling, the bones

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33 Ibid., 18.
from aching, and the marrow from soaking.\textsuperscript{34}

Of course, while alcohol was largely an important social commodity, its consumption was marked by social and religious understandings, approvals, and disapprovals. Drunkenness, despite being rarely actually defined yet biblically founded nonetheless, remained largely considered a personal failing, or among Calvinists, sin.\textsuperscript{35}

Particularly in pre-independent America, the role of religious institutions in governing social life, including drinking behavior, was paramount. In this deferential society, drunkenness was seen as not only harming the individual, materially and financially, but threatened to undermine the harmony of the community.\textsuperscript{36}

Though widely remembered for their social conservatism, including the misconception that they were alcohol abstinent, many American Puritans were at least ambivalent to alcohol and its consumption.\textsuperscript{37} Leading Puritan theologian Increase Mather (1639-1723) reflected larger cultural and religious norms in his 1673 \textit{Wo to Drunkards}. In it, Mather reminded his flock that alcohol was indeed “a good creature of God,” who restored strength and vigor to the working woman and man and that it should “be received with thankfulness.”\textsuperscript{38} However, he also reiterated that “the abuse of drink is from Satan” and “the Drunkard is from the Devil.”\textsuperscript{39}

For most Americans, Mather’s orientation towards alcohol would have found him literally and figuratively preaching to the choir. Not only did most other early American

\textsuperscript{34} Eric Burns, \textit{The Spirits of America} (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), 30.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Lender and Martin, 16.
\textsuperscript{39} Burns, 47.
theologians share similar ideas, but most laypeople as well. Though the connections between Protestant theology and drinking culture may appear incongruent in modern America, for nearly all eighteenth century American Christians, these two worlds were largely inseparable. Unless deemed a drunkard or bound to discriminating laws based on race or occupation, alcohol and its consumption was largely not significant to the formation of one’s identity or class situation in society.40

Just as the Protestant work ethic kept the Christian toiling towards salvation in the next life by their labor in the worldly one, alcohol, too, was a spiritual labor. The puckering of the lips, the burning of the throat, and the warming of the body were not only thought of as strengthening one’s physical self against sickness, but also focusing the mind on one’s task at hand, a religious discipline.41 The stronger the drink, the better for the body and spirit.

Benjamin Rush

“In folly, it causes him to resemble a calf,---in stupidity, an ass,---in roaring, a mad bull,---in quarrelling and fighting, a dog,---in cruelty, a tiger,---in fetor, a skunk,---in filthiness, a hog,---and in obscenity, a he-goat.”

- Benjamin Rush, An Inquiry into the Effects of Spiritous Liquors on the Human Body, 1790

Before the break from the British crown, America’s drink culture was being called into question by some of the leading voices in what would become the revolution. Fears of the breakdown of social stability in the context of a country increasingly fond of the much more alcoholic rum and whiskey led such figures as John Adams to pen the

40 Gusfield, 43. Native Americans, Africans, African Americans, slaves, and servants and apprentices were legally barred from purchasing alcohol in many states. Throughout the colonial and well into the independent American era, traders routinely supplied alcohol to Native Americans, especially when discussing land deals. This led to the stereotype of the “drunken Indian.” See Lender and Martin for more on this topic.
41 Burns, 32.
dangers of taverns to social harmony as early as the 1750’s. Foreshadowing the concerns of Chicago’s Levi Boone that would reemerge a century later, Adams warned the tavern had once been a necessary center of community gathering, but had now become a center of iniquity. While Adams was unable to effect a drinking revolution in his time, his concerns would later be revisited and amplified.

Following the revolution and in the wake of the creation of an independent America, the new nation’s political leaders held to the ideal of virtue. Through the sacrificial blood of the revolution, it had been hoped that the nation would be purified and her people would emerge virtuous. Citizens would act, vote, and think out of the common good, not personal gain. While in some ways the revolution did unite Americans under one independent flag, America’s break from England demonstrated that structures of power could be changed, fought, and even brought down. What emerged was a nation that valued individualism and, to some degree, pluralism, moving further away from a colonial system rooted in deference and authority. The social stability that many of the revolution’s figures had longed for was proving to be more ideal than reality.

By the last decade of the eighteenth century, the respectability of drinking began being challenged from a religioscientific perspective, establishing a recurring ghost of sorts that has haunted American drink culture ever since. Under the guide of the most popular medical authority and a Declaration of Independence signer, Dr. Benjamin Rush, scientific research on alcohol was now arguing a radical change to America’s drinking. Determined to make Americans healthier, both physically and morally, and thus America

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42 Lender and Martin, 34. The future second president’s concerns were quite ironic considering that these taverns would become centers of meetings and recruiting for the revolutionaries.
43 Ibid., 36.
healthier, Rush penned two widely publicized pamphlets in which he urged the nation that drink, particularly that of “ardent spirits,” only led to destruction. Though first published in 1784, his later 1790 edition of *An Inquiry into the Effects of Spiritous Liquors on the Human Body* included among his warnings of alcohol a “Moral and Physical Thermometer” detailing the relationship between the quantity of alcohol consumed ranging from 0 to 80 (although the type of measurements used are unspecified) and the corresponding effects in the form of a chart.\(^{44}\)

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<tr>
<th>VICES</th>
<th>DISEASES</th>
<th>PUNISHMENTS</th>
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<td>10</td>
<td><em>Idleness</em> (italics added)</td>
<td><em>Debt</em> (italics added)</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Gaming, peevishness</td>
<td>Jail</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>Lying and swearing</td>
<td>Sore and swelled legs</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>Stealing and swindling</td>
<td>Jaundice</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>Madness, despair</td>
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As previously demonstrated, Rush’s connections between alcohol consumption and moral failure were certainly not novel. However, what was significant about this particular tract was not only what would become its wide reception, due to the emergence of temperance societies that took Rush’s warnings and expanded upon them, but its power to offer a solution to America’s social woes and stability in a time of rapid change,

\(^{44}\) Ibid., 37.
all wrapped within the authority of science and religion. What had earlier been considered a reason for America’s liberation from the British crown and a common instrument of the physician was now threatening liberty and the body.\textsuperscript{45} If America had a chance at survival, according to Rush, it required temperance if not complete avoidance from what he deemed the “anti-federal substances” which supported “all those vices… calculated to dishonor and enslave our country.”\textsuperscript{46} The drunkard, Rush warned, could never be the virtuous citizen that America needed.\textsuperscript{47} In his urgent message, Rush concluded that temperance from spirits and a reviving of the social mechanisms that had firmly governed America’s drink culture were essential.\textsuperscript{48}

In what now may appear as curious, Rush’s crusade against alcohol did have a limit that would live on, at least at first, in the coming phenomenon of temperance movements in America. If Americans were to defeat the evils of alcohol, Rush posited, they should abandon hard liquor (the preferred beverages) altogether and reach instead for less dangerous beer and light wine.\textsuperscript{49}

**Rum, Whiskey, Beer, and Wine**

From the beginning of the British conquest of North America, colonists had carried their cultural foodways of beer as an essential element to life to the New World. Coming from Europe where water was largely considered unsafe to drink, the travelers aboard the *Mayflower*, finding themselves running dangerously low on beer, were forced

\textsuperscript{45} Tyrrell, 17.
\textsuperscript{46} Burns, 57.
\textsuperscript{47} Lender and Martin, 37.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} Burns, 56.
out of desperation to drink the local water. Until production was standardized, reflecting the much longer beer-making tradition, colonial women were the first European brewers in the New World. Typically forced to make beer from local ingredients, American beer differed from that which the colonists had been familiar with. Everything from pumpkins to parsnips, Indian corn, and chips of walnut trees found their way into early American brew kettles. Despite the American ingenuity that went into brewing, beer in colonial America would never reach the popularity it had achieved in its mother country. Hard liquors, however, would prove a different case. While brandy and gin quickly eclipsed beer as America’s favorite alcoholic commodity, beer remained an essential part of colonial life.

Though whiskey, beer, cider, and wine each had their markets in early colonial America, by 1700, rum had firmly replaced beer and cider as the preferred alcoholic beverage of colonial America. Rum, being cheap and readily available, was brought to the British colonies of North America primarily from Caribbean sugar plantations. Powered by the slave trade, the Caribbean sugarcane became molasses which was then distilled and sent northward to colonial America. Rum would continue to be immensely popular throughout colonial America until the British levying of taxes on sugar and the subsequent revolution, which afterward resulted in skyrocketing costs and legislation barring its import, with the exception of the nation’s first president who ordered the “best Barbados rum” for his inauguration party. In response to the rum industry running dry and a boom in grain cultivation, a domestic whiskey market emerged. By 1800, this

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50 Lender and Martin, 4.
51 Ibid., 5.
52 Ibid., 9.
fledgling market of 2,500 distilleries had exploded to 14,000, making roughly 25 million gallons of whiskey annually.\textsuperscript{53} America remained a drinking culture.

While the shift to whiskey emerged as a consequence of the nation’s break from its mother country, the vacuum created did not allow beer to fill in. America’s preference for hard liquor was well-established. At the same time that Americans began downing domestic whiskey, beer production lagged behind with a total of 200 breweries. Comprising almost entirely of makers of dark English-style ales, these beer producers made modest livings out of a mostly dying industry.\textsuperscript{54}

As the New World and newly independent America became increasingly appealing to non-British European immigrants at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the emergence of different foodways also came to the young Republic. By the third decade into the century, lager beer production and consumption in particular, a traditional style of beer of the yet to be unified Germanic people, was established in major cities, particularly among German populations. The same time lager beer was becoming increasingly popular in America’s cities, more Americans continued to turn away from alcohol. By 1830, temperance reports boasted their efforts had led to one in every ten Americans abstaining from alcohol altogether.\textsuperscript{55}

**America and the Atmosphere of Temperance**

Other trends also dominated the young nation. With the dawn of the nineteenth century and with it industrialization and the emergence of a rising but fickle middle class, a crusade to purify and perfect the new nation took hold. Drinking, the once powerful

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 16.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{55} Tyrrell, 5.
social mechanism of colonial life and ally of the clergyman was now facing the gallows. Calls for temperance established and cemented new beliefs, practices, and attitudes around alcohol in the United States that would have a powerful and long-lasting effect. Legitimated through popular religious trends, drinking would come to demarcate the Anglo from ethnic, the middle class from the working class, and Protestant from the Catholic. And finally, for many, such as Levi Boone and the millions of Americans turning towards temperance, it would also distinguish between those who were righteous and those who were leading the nation and themselves to damnation.

**Religion in America**

By the end of the eighteenth century America had become a battleground and marketplace for religious ideas. The abolishing of state-sponsored religious organizations, a move which reflected the country’s founders’ association of state religion with tyranny, created a vacuum in which endless groups sought to fill. No longer dependent upon state coffers, many also worried for their survival. These factors, coupled with the expanding boundaries of the country and rapid population growth, resulted in many Protestantisms in America that both prided themselves and was made anxious by their independence from the state and ecclesiastical authority, sparking the Second Great Awakening. In this religious marketplace laypeople doubled as salespeople for their brand of Protestant religion. One of the first historians to study religion in America, Robert Baird (1798-1863), identified America’s religious exceptionalism as “the voluntary principle” which utilized congregants to advance their

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56 Albanese, 253.
cause “wherever the Gospel is to be preached, wherever vice is to be attacked, wherever suffering humanity is to be relieved.” When alcohol emerged as such a “vice” to be “attacked,” more than the contents of bottles and barrels were to be the targets.

The opening decades of the nineteenth century also saw the re-emergence of revival movements with a strong sense of what Albanese identifies as “moralism,” particularly in urban areas. Motivated by the perception of a sense of American moral decline and a hope in correcting it, Christians across the country asserted themselves in a divine mission to save American souls. As temperance would emerge as the second most important political issue, slavery being first, it would be filtered through moralism and established as of cosmic significance. Of course, this would also have significant social effects, particularly for those who did not heed the warning. As Joseph Gusfield writes, as with most moral reform movements, calls to temperance in nineteenth century America were also, put succinctly, “the attempt of the moral people… to correct the behavior of the immoral people.” Moral reform, argues Gusfield, not only distinguish the moral from the immoral, but by doing so, also attempt to “preserve, defend, or enhance the dominance and prestige” of the self-proclaimed moral group. Thus drinking and nondrinking became much more than cultural behaviors, but rather, symbols of one’s social status, markers of where the individual was located in society. This will also be significant in understanding Craft Christianity and the ways in which the consumption of particular beverages signifies one’s status. Similarly, through literature and public speeches, the temperate of nineteenth century America and contemporary

58 Ibid.
59 Albanese, 260.
60 Gusfield, 2.
61 Ibid., 3.
Craft Christians champion industriousness, hard-work, and self-control. In their understanding, they reflected the tenants of Protestantism. Conversely, the temperate saw those not belonging to their ilk as marginal, dangerous, and a threat to the nation, an association most visible through one’s orientation to alcohol. While much can be said about the ethnic and religious objections of the temperate to the drinking and largely Catholic and foreign-born “other,” drinking itself was a powerful dividing line between the self-proclaimed hard-working, middle-class, Protestant “us” and the destructive “other.”

Professor of theology at Oberlin College and champion of temperance, Charles Grandison Finney (1792-1875) embodied this moral crusade, leading revivals from the frontier to the largest cities of the Northeast. In an attempt to galvanize his fellow American Christians to action, Finney wrote, “more than five thousand million have gone down to hell, while the church has been dreaming, and waiting for God to save them…”

In a reciprocating process, revivalist rhetoric worked with Rush’s increasingly popular orientation to alcohol to dramatically effect America’s drink culture. Even before official temperance organizations were formulated, the first being 1811, Presbyterians, Quakers, and Methodists began incorporating Rush’s concerns into their own divine mission to save the nation. Presbyterian minister, prolific temperance writer, and co-founder of the American Temperance Society, Lyman Beecher (1775-1863) called alcohol “the sin of our land” and warned that if no action was immediately

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62 Tyrrell, 6.
63 Gaustad and Schmidt, 145.
64 Martin and Fender, 64.
taken, it would “defeat the hopes of the world.” In a Protestant culture undergoing rapid change, a message of self-control and stability took hold.

**Industrialization and the Creation of a Middle Class**

Indications that Jefferson’s agrarian republic would eventually be superseded by an urban nation were visible from the turn of the nineteenth century. While many Americans poured out of the Eastern regions, drawn westward in hopes of land and economic opportunity, many others shifted their gaze towards the promise of emerging industrial and economic centers of the Northeast and a number of rising cities across the frontier. Abandoning plows for wages, the city presented itself as an antidote to the uncertainty of farm life.

However, this promise of opportunity and stability was not kept for all. Even those who found employment were often confronted with treacherous working conditions. A century before the advent of even the most rudimentary labor laws, employment in the fledgling American industrial complex entailed excruciatingly long hours, pitiful pay, and the possibility of injury or death at every turn.

Despite the very real possibility of failure, many Anglo-Protestant families did begin advancing an increasingly accessible socioeconomic ladder. Some even became extremely wealthy. Caught between those who slid into inescapable poverty and a well-established elite was America’s first middle class. The construction of this emerging social position required not only a negotiation of new scenery and living in close physical proximity, but also expectations and boundaries. New worlds and sub-worlds marked by

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gender, ethnicity, and class culminated in a middle class disoriented by newness and rapid development. The home became not only a signifier of socioeconomic status, but a seemingly constant point of orientation from which all life revolved, juxtaposed against the dangers of the city, of which drink served as the doorway to all others. It was this idea that temperance literature would both establish and reinforce primarily through the use of fear.67

The emerging middle class also posed a political threat and dealt a new reality to the ruling elite. Particularly in New England, the Federalist aristocracy lost influence to evangelical Protestants, rural farmers, and the uneducated middle class.68 For the once powerful elite, these competing standards of morality were in need of reform. Temperance organizations, initially established by those losing their political and social influence, attempted to preserve and project their way of life as the morally superior and thus most desirable in the nation. As Gusfield argues, “if they could not control the politics of the country, they reasoned that they might at least control its morals.69 As this elite would discover, however, while they may have initiated the first movements, the phenomenon of temperance would quickly get away from them. Not only would the leadership change, but the message of temperance would quickly morph into one of total abstinence from alcohol. No longer would beer and wine be considered an acceptable lesser evil.

Not only was temperance a reaction to America’s industrialization, but it was also a part of this process. As historian Ian Tyrrell points out, “the very forces of economic

67 Holly Berkley Fletcher, Gender and the American Temperance Movement of the Nineteenth Century (New York: Routledge, 2008), 28.
68 Gusfield, 5.
69 Ibid.
development which middle-class temperance reformers applauded created the social problems which prohibition claimed to be able to solve.” With the line between moral and material progress blurred, self-control and sobriety were essential in America’s increasingly industrial complex that shifted away from task and toward time-oriented labor. Colonial America’s drinking culture would not mesh with a society increasingly fixated on efficiency and progress. At the local level, support for the temperance movement was found strongest among the manufacturing sectors. Both clergymen and economic entrepreneurs sang the praises of temperance in hopes of cementing a society of disciplined, sober workers. Similarly, those who would join the ranks of temperance communities credited their success to their own sobriety.

**Temperance Groups and the Ghost of Benjamin Rush**

The first temperance societies were assembled in Massachusetts by 1813, with the first national temperance organization (the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance) coming into being in Boston in 1826. The emergence and quick popularity of temperance movements in America’s cities revolved around diametrically opposed assumptions about alcohol, all deriving from anxieties of class and validated through American Protestant movements and popular science. Through the drinking or nondrinking of alcohol, identities were created, approved of, or considered immoral. One’s foodways of alcohol communicated much more than simply one’s behavior. Social class, ethnicity, religion, and gender all revolved around, both drawing from and

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70 Tyrrell, 10.
71 Ibid., 19.
72 Ibid., 8.
73 Ibid., 7.
74 Ibid., 12.
contributing to, the issue of alcohol. For women, themselves deemed the moral bedrock of the nation and champions of Christianity, temperance was to do battle against Satan and his primordial temptations from which alcohol was the forbidden and fermented fruit. For men, temperance offered social and political capital, setting them on the side of the cultural issue that could be most advantageous. For members of temperance movements, two worlds and two forces were gripped in a spiritual war with the highest of stakes: both the prosperity and morality of the self and the fledgling republic.

Although initially these movements only rejected drunkenness, by 1825 the message of total abstinence from alcohol became the primary message.\(^{75}\) By 1830, temperance organizations claimed one in every ten Americans were alcohol abstinent.\(^{76}\) The particular call to moral action and rectification of the young America’s trajectory that would come to be a part of mainstream American culture was a result of several powerful trends in American culture.

First, advances in print technology sparked a nationwide birth of literature. Temperance groups were quick to adopt these technologies to promote their crusade against immoral behavior. Mass-printing also allowed for the messages of temperance to travel across the continent, creating the possibility of national organizations, such as the American Temperance Society and the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance which were both founded in 1826.\(^{77}\) Within a decade, the American Temperance Society had created five thousand state and local temperance groups with over a million members. Though regional variation existed, most temperance groups

\(^{75}\) Albanese, 260.
\(^{76}\) Tyrrell, 6.
\(^{77}\) Albanese, 260.
were more united than ever before.\textsuperscript{78}

Temperance movements were far from the only Christian groups to quickly incorporate the advent of American literature into their cause. In 1816, the American Bible Society (ABS) was created with the intent of making the Bible both inexpensive and available across America.\textsuperscript{79} Similarly, the American Tract Society (ATS), which published “instructive Tracts” promoting their sense of morality, were able to create ten-page documents at the price of one penny.\textsuperscript{80} Like the ABS and ATS, temperance organizations often worked across denominational lines in an attempt to unite the nation’s middle class and mostly native-born Christians against the forces of religious fragmentation, indifference, and dangers to the nation’s morality.\textsuperscript{81}

Second, couched within intentionally frightening warnings of intemperance were constructs of gender that were simultaneously emerging alongside an uncertain middle class. Through print, the ideology of gender was articulated and legitimized, especially for the middle class. Women as helpless victims of intemperance became such an immensely powerful and effective trope of temperance literature that it has been internalized and remains in mainstream American culture two hundred years later.

As the head of households and routinely exposed to the temptations of the city, men were considered at greatest risk for intemperance. Inebriated men, according to the thriving body of temperance literature, became monsters as the innate aggression reserved for business manifest within the home. Women (portrayed as mothers, daughters, wives, sisters) and children, considered weak and defenseless against the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{78} Fletcher, 28.
\item \textsuperscript{79} Gaustad and Schmidt, 140.
\item \textsuperscript{80} Ibid., 141.
\item \textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
beast, became victims of male drunkenness. Floods of temperance literature espousing this travesty swept the nation, finding sympathetic readers in every locale. However, as dangerous as male drunkenness was purported to be, it did not directly threaten to unleash chaos upon the nation. Women held society together, though, paradoxically, their participation in it was highly limited.

**Gender and Intemperance**

In temperance literature, the doorway of the home served as the threshold of two worlds: domestic and public. Each of these imagined worlds possessed firm gender expectations and understandings of danger. While these distinct and distinctly gendered spheres set women and men in different realities, the constant reminder that alcohol threatened both reinforced its status as a symbol of danger.

The domestic sphere, the realm of the woman, was one in which the home was to be a moral haven from the chaos of the city. Cooking, cleaning, and especially rearing children were the primary roles ascribed to women. As keepers of the domestic cult and the guardians of the nation’s future, the “proper” woman became the embodiment of America’s morality. The burden of the responsibility of preserving America’s Protestant-derived morals required dedication, selflessness, and control. In essence, it required temperance and preservation in contrast to an outside world, a public world, of constant change, uncertainty, and danger. It should not be surprising that portrayals and ideas of Jesus in this America exemplified virtues assigned to women. The future of America was not a given, but, rather, seen a careful navigation between total material poverty and

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total spiritual immorality.

As temperance literature painted a picture of the “proper” behavior of women and men, they also detailed, often through intentionally terrifying scenes, the consequences of intemperance. Women intemperance not only undermined the ideology of the new middle class but was also portrayed as one of the greatest threats to the popular construction of female nature. Because of its perceived heinousness, women drunkenness, when discussed in temperance literature, was heavily demonized. Through female drunkenness, the two greatest expectations of women were threatened: keeping order in the domestic sphere and preserving female purity. A common trope in temperance literature when on the subject of a woman’s drunkenness often remarked that it would make her forget “her sex and her duties in this unnatural indulgence.” Temperance, therefore, not only kept the social world from collapsing, but also preserved the natural world. It was also through drunkenness that women challenged fundamental differences between male and female natures. Because drunkenness was associated with male traits such as increased appetite and aggression, drunk women exhibiting this behavior called into question the ideology of gender.

Throughout this period of temperance literature three images of women emerged that reinforced the developing middle class ideology occurring simultaneously. One was that of women as the helpless victims of intemperate men. Second was that of women as the embodiments of morality that both preserved the nation and served as a model for the intemperate. Finally, though significantly less presented, were intemperate women.

84 Martin, 21.
85 Ibid., 32.
86 Ibid., 39.
The women who did not belong to the ranks of the middle class, or who embraced alcohol, could then only belong to the third classification. It was in this group that Irish and German Americans found themselves in the temperance literature. 

While urban middle class women acclimated to their new domestic role, many men, for the first time, now left home during the day to find work in the bustling cities. Flowing, though not freely, between these two worlds, a “good” man worked to advance the public sphere while financially preserving the domestic cult, the backbone of the nation. Seen as naturally rational and aggressive, men were expected to excel in the rational and aggressive economic and industrial fields of urban America. However, despite their perceived innate strength and superior intellect, men were also vulnerable to the vices and dangers of the city. The physical distance between work and the moral center of home engendered endless opportunities for moral failure. Gambling, prostitution, and other immoral behavior became immoral manifestations that were ultimately rooted in what would be deemed the most insidious evil: drink. Temperance literature attempted to reach out to middle class men through warnings that, “If you are determined to be poor… to starve your family… to blunt your senses, be a drunkard, and you will soon be more stupid than an ass… You [will] be dead weight on the community.”

Women, denied direct access to the public sphere, became arbiters of morals in the domestic world. Meanwhile, men flowed between the world of work and the domestic sphere. Gender roles became more rigid as marked differences in how time was spent varied between men and women. Views of men as naturally rational, strong, and

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87 Fletcher, 9.
aggressive creatures were expected to support the household by conquering the worlds of business, politics, and war. Women, believed to be embodiments of grace, love, beauty, and irrationality, were held to utilize their divine attributes to pacify their wild husbands and uphold the virtues of the republic. This artificial binary between the genders, when properly formed, insured for the protection and progress of the nation, temperance advocates argued. A need for order permeated the burgeoning urban middle class. Anything that threatened to undermine or question the “natural” categories of the male and female dichotomy threatened the future of the nation itself. It was in alcohol that the still-developing middle class perceived one of its greatest threats.

**German and Irish**

Difficulties in navigating and negotiating this new urbanizing and expanding America were compounded by immigration waves of a mostly German and Irish “other.” As the image of the tavern became increasingly one of immorality, a new challenge of massive immigration waves soon presented itself to temperance movements. In the 1830s, 600,000 European immigrants arrived on America’s shores. The following decade saw 1.7 million more. Finally, in the last decade leading up to the shots fired at Fort Sumter, 2.6 million European immigrants spilled into the nation of a total population of 23 million. Three quarters of these new Americans were either of German or Irish descent.

As temperance movements gained popularity and emerged on the scene of mainstream America, alcohol and those associated with it became symbols of danger to the nation. Rooted in the purity crusade of temperance ideology, spurred by the writings

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88 Ogle, 4.
of Rush, alcohol and those who associated with it (mostly German and Irish immigrants) became targets of public violence and discriminatory laws on the eve of the Civil War. Because most German and Irish immigrants who arrived during the first half of the century occupied the working class and had a cultural heritage of social drinking, the association of drinking (which through temperance literature would develop into synonymous with drunkenness) with the working classes served to legitimize temperance ideology.

The association of drunkenness with the Irish and German had social, class, and cultural dimensions. Riding in on the immigration waves that consistently brought millions to the United States, many new German and Irish Americans comprised of the working class. It was also in this class that most temperance literature placed its intemperate characters, creating and reinforcing stereotypes that would have implications in the wider culture.89 In the popular temperance fiction Nora Wilmot the heroine encounters an inebriated Irish American mother who longs for “a wea throp of thrink.” On later recounting the story to her uncle, he hopelessly responds,

I have hope in almost any case where the subject is nativeborn, but our German and Irish populations, with a few very rare exceptions, are entirely hopeless… And not the least of the evil is that the women are almost as much addicted to a fondness for ‘a wea throp’ as the men are, and a debased woman is a far more formidable character than a debased man.90

The arrival of millions of German and Irish immigrants between 1800 and 1860 gave temperance organizations well-defined and relatively defenseless targets at which to direct their concerns. As most of these new arrivals occupied the working class, this,

89 Ibid., 36-37.
90 Ibid., 35.
combined with the dangers and anxieties of an emerging industrial complex and a
cultural heritage that embraced drinking, German and Irish immigrants became the *ne
plus ultra* when the temperance finger needed a quick target. As evidenced by the events
in Chicago and those that followed in cities across the United States until the outbreak of
the Civil War, the message of temperance slowly evolved to one that was also of
nativism.

Driven largely by political oppression, poverty, and the Great Famine, many Irish emerged from the bowels of ships with little more than the clothes on their backs, a
cultural heritage of hard work and drinking, and Roman Catholicism.91 By the 1850s,
New York, Boston, and Philadelphia each had sizable Irish communities.92 The vastly
unskilled and uneducated Irish who remained in the cities quickly filled the ranks of the
working class, providing these industrializing centers with a seemingly inexhaustible
source of cheap labor.93 While the burgeoning and increasingly temperate Protestant
middle class clashed with the newly-arrived Irish on the grounds of alcohol, the Roman Catholicism that had also been brought by the Irish served as a major source of division
and, as Boone lamented, fuel for identifying those who could not be “true friends” of the
nation. Catholicism, drinking, and lower socioeconomic position all melded into an
image many Protestant middle class Americans could easily identify as the antithesis of
what they had envisioned as American. This fear of immigrants combined with a longing
for purification, which included ridding the nation of the newly-deemed evil of alcohol,
were at the backbone of the rise of the nativist Know-Nothings political party that would

91 Lender and Martin, 58
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
come to prominence in Antebellum America. In response to a culture that rejected them, Irish communities gathered together, often, as they had in Ireland, around drink. The utilization of drink as a symbol of community and ethnic loyalty further alienated them from mainstream Americans.

Many Germans, in contrast, were primarily lured to the United States by the promise of economic opportunities. Forming the largest immigrant group for most of the century, Germans were also the largest non-English-speaking group. Unlike the Irish, most Germans came to the New World with some money and knowledge of a trade. For some, such as future American beer icon Phillip Best, this knowledge was of brewing beer.

Enmeshed within their cultural and ethnic identities, German and Irish immigrants were people with deep connections to social drinking. Arriving amidst the recent successes of temperance movements to promote a negative view of alcoholic beverages in mainstream culture, the cultural drinking practices of German and Irish immigrants perpetuated separate “moral typographies,” a term Kelly E. Hayes defines as “a local terrain of social relations, practices, ideas, and discourses that classify people and spaces according to widely shared ideas about propriety, decency, and legitimacy.” The cultural practices, ideas, and social relations that revolved around alcohol illustrated an irreconcilable void between German and Irish immigrants and those Americans who drank instead from the well of temperance. Dark, socially marginalized, and not

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94 Ibid., 59.
95 Ibid., 61.
96 Arnold, 272.
97 His brewery later became the Pabst Brewing Company.
hospitable to families, British-style taverns did not appeal to most German immigrants. While the British-style tavern did not appeal to German families, the German-style drink establishments did not typically draw non-German or even Irish patrons. brightly lit, open, and receptive to families, the seemingly innocuous attitude towards beer by the Germans perpetuated the temperance theme that the dangers of evil were not always clearly visible.

By 1840, hundreds of German-owned breweries could be found dotting American cityscapes. Forty could be found in Philadelphia alone, while New York had even more. Similarly, St. Louis and Milwaukee, each having large German communities, became major brewing centers and remain culturally tied to this history. All but a handful of these family-owned operations cultivated local markets that relied almost exclusively on fellow immigrant patrons. Meanwhile millions of other Americans were scrambling to pledge to abstain from alcohol. Between 1830 and 1840, the annual consumption of alcohol dramatically dropped from 7 gallons per capita to 3. Despite the decline, German breweries and beerhalls continued to thrive, particularly and increasingly among the working classes, regardless of nationality.

In stark contrast to the typical American tavern, German centers of drinking (beerhalls) served as a place of community, where families and friends would routinely gather around German music, food, and beer that flowed throughout the halls. As mostly members of the working class, Germans were often allotted but one day of rest. When

99 Ogle, 20.
100 Ibid., 13.
101 Martin and Lender, 61.
102 Ogle., 22.
103 Martin and Lender, 61.
possible, the festivities were brought outside where families would imbibe the lightly-colored froth of their homeland. It was on their day off, Sunday, that Germans especially congregated at beerhalls, setting the stage for prohibitions on the sale of alcohol on Sundays, or “Blue Laws,” that Boone in Chicago would successfully enforce.

The German acceptance of beer-drinking into their social lives did little to tip the stance of alcohol taken by temperance groups. In actuality, most temperance supporters interpreted German drinking customs as further evidence that the ethnic “other” were culturally behind. The juxtaposition of the dark, forbidden tavern against the light, open beerhall is demonstrative of two cultural orientations towards a material culture (i.e. beer) that served as a major divisive issue. As tensions between these diametrically opposed attitudes towards beer intensified, it would spill beyond the borders of the domestic sphere and into the public, leading down a path to ethnic violence, government-backed discrimination, and a legacy of moralizing drinking.

**Innocuous to Intolerable**

For both antebellum and postbellum temperance movements, the use of alcohol as a symbol of danger highlighted the concerns of social progressives in their crusade to simultaneously save and perfect the nation. In the face of seemingly escalating social problems in cities, a consequence of rapid urban growth and industrialization, the temperate found a scapegoat in alcohol. Alcohol was not only threatening the new nation, they cried; it was preventing its perfection. It needed not to be controlled, but, by 1850, eradicated altogether. For these reformers, the evidence was most clearly evident in the nation’s increasing immigrant populations who were seen as unable to achieve the new middle class American dream, weighed down, activists cried, by their cultural
dependence on alcohol. Lower socioeconomic status coupled with foodways that included social drinking reinforced the connection between moral and material poverty and drink. Those who refused to heed the warnings from America’s scientific and religious communities, according to the temperate, were in essence aligned with evil. In his inaugural address, Levi Boone was quick to draw the line between an “us” that sought “progress” in Chicago and America and a drinking “other” that threatened both.

Between the Civil War and Prohibition, anti-alcohol movements would periodically reemerge in the American public. Though the stereotypes of German and Irish drunkards were fading, post-war temperance largely shifted away from issues of ethnicity, concentrating its gaze primarily on the urban poor more generally as evidence that alcohol was dangerous. This focus on lower classes as objects in need of purification would be the backbone of the emergence and popularity of the “social gospel” that would come to rise as America entered the twentieth century. Eventually these Progressives would gain enough political power to influence national politics and make the entire nation, at least legally, alcohol-free in 1919. While the popularity of temperance literature would slowly fade, the tropes firmly established would remain. It was clear to most Americans that drinking was dangerous and if done at all would have to be done carefully.

This era would establish the haunting of America’s drink culture by the ghost of Benjamin Rush. Rush’s popular branding of alcohol as a harm to the individual and nation has long remained a mainstream idea. Reflecting the reciprocal relationship of science and mainline Protestant beliefs, alcohol as a symbol of danger was legitimated through these two most powerful cultural authorities. As will be discussed further in the
concluding chapter, until only recently has the scientific community found alcoholic imbibing to be anything other than detrimental, physically and socially. Much like their nineteenth and twentieth century ancestors, twenty-first century mainline Protestants are now also rethinking their relationship to alcohol.

As I have discussed above, the ways in which the religious symbol of alcohol, in addition to many others, served to divide and unite the new nation continues in twenty-first century America. With nineteenth century America’s struggles to accept and reject drinking on the eve of the Civil War as a test case in which the symbol of alcohol intersected with America’s cultural religion, including within it ideas about gender, class, and ethnicity, the current phenomenon of Craft Christianity can more easily be examined. In short, alcohol remains a powerful religious symbol in America, and provides the scholar with an interesting way in which to study religion in the now two hundred and forty year old republic. As historical context is crucial to exploring this symbol and its use in contemporary Craft Christian culture, an understanding of the invention of craft beer and the factors that helped establish it as an immensely popular cultural product is also key.
Chapter 2: From the Eve of Civil War to Standardization

Somewhat miraculously, by the eve of the Civil War the longstanding American foodways of alcohol had been completely flipped. Clergymen and physicians, once proponents of drinking for the body and the soul, were now united in singing a new song, warning that drink could only lead to darkness. The power of only a handful of influential voices had ignited what had become a major national political issue that was framed as good verses an unquestionable evil. By 1851, the two generations of temperance movements had gained such political influence that that year Maine became the first state to go completely dry. Inspired by Rush’s example, the famed mayor of Portland, Maine, Neal Dow was known nationally as the “Prophet of Prohibition” and the “Father of the Maine Law.” Under his guidance, Dow hoped to save the city from the moral and material destruction alcohol offered and serve as an example to the nation’s other political leaders. And this he did. Vermont and New York followed suite in 1852 and 1854, respectively. Before the outbreak of the Civil War fourteen states in total and one territory had adopted similar laws.

As in Chicago, Louisville, and other major cities that would host episodes of civil violence before the outbreak of war, those most effected by legislation against drink remained immigrant populations who refused to subscribe to temperance ideology and did not immediately join the ranks of the emerging middle class America. It would take the descent of America into the four-year nightmare of the Civil War for the anti-

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104 Lender and Martin, 43.
105 Albanese, 261.
106 Ibid.
107 Tyrrell, 9.
German and anti-Irish sentiment to be largely quelled. Following 1865, views of German
and Irish Americans had been changed, as the children of first-generation immigrants
began moving into the mainstream and up the socioeconomic ladder.\textsuperscript{108}

Nativism, however, would continue to periodically re-emerge, often following
subsequent mass-immigration. Concerns of immigrant drinking, though not as prevalent
in postbellum America, would remain a source of temperance concern. Reverend Daniel
Dorchester, a prominent figure in the late nineteenth century temperance movements,
echoed other Americans’ concerns as he argued the alcohol industry remained “in the
hands of a low class of foreigners.”\textsuperscript{109} This fear of “low class foreigners,” a recurring
trope throughout America’s first iteration of temperance, would be overshadowed by an
even more terrifying figure.

While the image of the Irish and German drunkard slowly dissipated, it was
replaced with the stereotype of the poor drunkard, or, at times, the poor ethnic drunkard.
Trading xenophobia for class anxieties, the image of the poor drunkard would serve as
the symbol of the antithesis of what temperance ideology, and increasingly mainstream
America, desired from a virtuous citizen.\textsuperscript{110} Businessmen, social reformers, and religious
leaders alike sought order as an antidote to a nation undergoing dizzyingly rapid
industrialization

**Postbellum America**

Despite the incredible successes of nineteenth century temperance organizations
in turning the nation against drink, the issue of slavery and subsequent Civil War would

\textsuperscript{108} Martin and Fender 60.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., 98.
\textsuperscript{110} Martin and Lender, 96.
largely overshadow the temperance cause. While many temperance organizations remained in post-war America, it appeared as if their moment of cultural transformation had passed. By 1871, America was home to just over 3,000 breweries, almost all small-scale producers with local clientele. Americans were drinking again, but certainly not to the extent that it had once done. Two years after this brewery milestone, however, the rumblings of temperance were again slowly appearing in the American mainstream. By the time the nation went completely dry in 1919, alcohol had again become the single largest political issue. Again, framed as the cause, not the effect, of social ills in the continuing industrializing cityscapes, social reformers armed themselves to do battle with what they perceived as an insidious evil. By the end of the nineteenth century, the worlds of business, social reform, and religion were again united in their cause against alcohol.

**Progressive Era Movements and Revived Temperance**

Much like their early nineteenth century ancestors, the attitudes toward alcohol in early twentieth century America also reflected the influence of religopolitical movements (this time known as the Progressive Era movements) against what activists (again, mostly white, educated, and Protestant) deemed the social woes of American society.\(^{111}\) Powerful Christian single-issue interest groups such as the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the National Temperance Society again led the charge against alcohol in their moral crusade to save the nation. For a second time, activists tied the nation’s social woes to drinking. And again activists proclaimed America had lost its morality. The WCTU found drinking as “not only the root of the most social evil but a

\(^{111}\) Ogle, 139.
symbol of cities, sexual freedom, and the eroding ethics of modern life in general.\footnote{Nash, 1970, 145.} According to the WCTU, America needed not drink, but rather a “stricter moral order and a cleaner, simpler nation.” The nation needed control and alcohol was chaos. The nation needed a self-controlled, temperate, and ultimately Protestant Jesus, not Satan and his fermented and distilled temptations. Mather’s “good creature of God” remained forgotten and buried.

This iteration of the cultural crusade ultimately culminated in legislation ratified on January 16, 1919.\footnote{Ogle, 136.} The 18th Amendment, prohibiting the production, transport, and sale of alcoholic beverages meant the end for many breweries and other alcohol producers.\footnote{It did not, however, spell the end of drinking. During Prohibition beer, already not as popular as spirits, faded into the shadows as illegally produced spirits hit the underground market. Gin, because of its relative ease in producing, quickly emerged as the most popular alcoholic contraband.} Even after this legislation had been repealed, Prohibition’s legacy would continue to haunt the American consciousness. Drinking, though legal again, would still carry with it the weight of being labeled as dangerous. Similarly, the image of the poor drunkard would remain. These ideas would remain almost completely unchallenged for the rest of the century.

Just as America’s Revolution and Civil War dramatically shaped the foodways of drinking, so too would National Prohibition, its subsequent repeal, and post-World War Two cultural and economic trends. Similarly, these touchstone moments in American cultural religion would also be informed by and inform understandings of class and gender. As drinking would be largely curtailed during Prohibition for both men and women, many of those who did continue to drink were those with enough capital, both
financial and cultural, to do so. The associations and images of those who drank distilled spirits as classy, chic, and powerful would endure well into the century. Conversely, beer was largely relegated to the peripheral, as it remained a symbol of the working-class, solidified by the working-classes of nineteenth century immigrants. Post-World War Two America would see the makers of distilled spirits and Hollywood reinforce these associations. Other trends in America’s consumer culture, marketing, and advertising would seek to standardize products. The beer industry would prove no different, setting the stage for the emergence of a countercultural response through beer by the 1980’s, now regarded as the craft beer movement.

Just as exploring the drinking culture of America pre-Prohibition illuminated the ways in which alcohol has been utilized as a powerful religious symbol in the nation, so too will a closer look at how this symbol provided the context for the creation and subsequent rise of craft beer, the backbone of Craft Christianity. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the craft beer movement has historically presented itself as a revolution. Before arriving at this revolution, however, an understanding of against whom or what this revolution is revolting is crucial.

**Road to Appeal**

“Our country has deliberately undertaken a great social and economic experiment, noble in motive and far-reaching in purpose. It must be worked out constructively.”

– President-elect Herbert Hoover (1928)\(^{115}\)

By the 1928 presidential election National Prohibition had been in place for eight of what would ultimately be thirteen years. Though the future of the Volstead Act seemed certain (only a handful of political leaders even mentioned the possibility of

\(^{115}\) Martin and Lender, 133.
repealing the legislation), the once nationally-embraced crusade against drink was beginning to unravel publicly. The disenchantment with prohibition had reached the point that Democrats wagered to run not only the first Catholic candidate in the nation’s history, but also an openly wet one, Al Smith of New York.\textsuperscript{116} Though the popular Governor of New York would ultimately lose to the dry Hoover, the 1928 presidential election was telling of a nation that was increasingly dissatisfied with National Prohibition.

While both sides of the fight over drink admitted, some reluctantly, that Prohibition had in fact been successful in effecting the curtailing of drink across the nation, America had never run completely dry. Openly non-compliant states, seemingly endless underground drinking establishments, gangsters whose empires were built on the illegal trade, and mom and pop distillers were evidence that America remained thirsty.\textsuperscript{117}

In regards to beer-drinking, prohibition, besides largely making it illegal, sent the once increasingly popular drink out of favor with most Americans. Those who defied the law of the land most forgot beer and turned to hard liquor to quench their thirst. Between the eve of Prohibition in 1919 and its demise in 1933, beer consumption percentage is estimated to have fallen drastically, going from 55 percent of what Americans imbibed to only 15. Distilled spirits, however, rose from 37 to a whopping 75 percent in the same period.\textsuperscript{118} For practical reasons, distilled spirits made a more efficient illegal commodity, both logistically (spirits were more easily transportable) and in terms of production (distilled spirits, unlike beer, require less specific ingredients and is more easily made).

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 161.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 150.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., 146.
Of course, practicality has only ever been but one reason Americans have consumed particular products.

   Culturally, during prohibition the image of distilled spirits became one many understood as chic and classy. This association would be reinforced by economic factors. As the price of booze soared under the direction of the high cost of the underground industry, drinking would prove to only be for those who could afford it. Northwestern cities watched as the price of cocktails increased five-fold from 15¢ in 1918 to 75¢ in a matter of only a couple of years. Similarly, between 1918 and 1930 the average price for a quart of domestic spirits nearly quadrupled from $1.39 to some $4.01. For domestic lager beer, the once established favorite among the working-classes, barrels of brew went from a national average of $10.50 to over $160, increasing over fifteen-fold. This image of the spirits consumer as both classy and chic would endure even after the repeal, making its way into popular films, while beer remained largely overshadowed.

**Post-Prohibition**

   With the stock market crash of 1929, resulting in one in every four adults out of work and skyrocketing inflation, the issue of alcohol fell to the wayside as the nation embarked on historic levels of social problems. By 1931, much to the dismay of the nation’s drys, it was clear to most Americans that the eradication of drink did not automatically lead to social harmony. Similar to the crusade of temperance during the Civil War, the Great Depression also largely quieted the dry camp. Seeing an opportunity, organizations dedicated to repealing the Volstead Act now presented repeal

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119 Martin and Lender, 145.
120 Admittedly, there is seemingly a contradiction as to why liquor, if indeed less expensive than beer, would become the drink of the elite. To this scholar’s knowledge there have been no attempts at explaining this.
as a source of both much needed jobs and tax revenue. The 1932 election demonstrated that not only were Americans frustrated with how President Hoover had handled the economic collapse, but that the era of Prohibition was at its end. What Hoover had hailed as the “great social and economic experiment” was now over.\textsuperscript{121}

The following year, with a stroke of a pen, newly-elected President Franklin Roosevelt ended the thirteen-year thirst.\textsuperscript{122} Forty-eight hours after the repeal, $10 million of tax revenue from alcohol sales flowed into federal, state, and municipal coffers.\textsuperscript{123} 331 breweries, still a fraction of the 1871 peak of over 3,000, were back in business by the end of that year.\textsuperscript{124} This celebration would be short-lived, however, as brewers soon realized there was no going back. The thirst Americans had for beer before prohibition had been replaced by other alternatives. Additionally, by 1930, forty percent of the American adult population reported they had never consumed alcohol.\textsuperscript{125}

While ultimately the federal Prohibition of alcohol effectively destroyed what had been the fledgling, localized American beer culture, some of the biggest contemporary names in American beer were able to weather the thirteen year storm by changing production, drawing on family wealth, illegal activities, or a combination thereof. For the Prohibition survivors, America emerged from the 1933 repeal as a different world where the foodways of beer and its production, consumption, and distribution were in flux.

Within the next year, 84 percent of breweries faced financial hardship or failed

\textsuperscript{121} Martin and Lender, 168.
\textsuperscript{122} Ogle, 196.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid., 202.
\textsuperscript{124} While some had weathered Prohibition, others emerged out of intrepid entrepreneurs who saw brewing as one of the few industries immune to the crippling economy of the U.S. (Ogle, 2006, p. 204). Ironic, considering it takes much longer to produce even 5 gallons of beer.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid., 190.
altogether. Until shortly after the Second World War, beer producers struggled to survive in an atmosphere wrought with rationing and an American society still reeling in the aftermath of Prohibition. Despite the demoralizing sales that reflected a culture no longer thirsty for beer, not all beermakers sat idly by. Over the course of the decade following the conclusion of the Second World War, beer makers either abandoned the sinking industry or boldly continued to invest in the hopes of a thirsty revival. Those who endeavored on bringing beer to the forefront of the drinking culture of America would ultimately emerge as the industry’s most powerful leaders.

By 1949, the Miller Brewing Company had expanded its assets, adding a new brewhouse, grain storage building, warehouse, and bottling facility capable of producing two million bottles a day. The next three largest beer producers (Anheuser-Busch, Ballantine, and Pabst) followed suit, spending millions on construction. Into the 1950s, paradoxically, the per capita consumption of beer continued to decrease.127

50’s and Standardization
A shift in the American palate ushered in the 1950s. Convenience became a catch-all theme of American life. Advertising, which began focusing on the consumer and less on the product, perpetuated this ideology of accessibility. Innovation and technology driven by efficiency, the essence of Modernity, culminated in changing foodways in America. The use of preservatives, artificial flavorings, and food processing quickly took hold. The expanding web of highways crisscrossing the continent combined with TV and radio advertising, and the economic boom of 1950s culminated in the

126 Ibid., 204.
127 Between 1948 and 1961 the per capita consumption of beer went from an already discouraging 18.5 gallons to below 15, an historic low (Ogle, 225).
emergence of national brands owned by the country’s largest corporations in history.\textsuperscript{128} The United States had become a nation united in products.

The beer industry was not immune to this transformation.\textsuperscript{129} Miller’s $7 million advertising campaign, targeting women, in 1950 was one major reason profits began to rise. By 1955, Miller reported an incredible increase of 275 percent for the company over the next five years.\textsuperscript{130} Other beer makers emerged alongside Miller as competition to be the top national seller raged, quickly becoming a battle between giants.

Small brewers, unable to compete financially, became pawns in this industry game. In order to expand their reach, Miller, Anheuser-Busch, and Schlitz, flush with profit, began purchasing small breweries. While some acquired the facilities for equipment and began brewing their own beer, others were more interested in gaining access to the middleman: distributors. Others still, simply bought these small operations to eliminate competition. All the while, the diversity of American beer continued to shrink. For the next two decades, the fate of beer in America rested with the corporations who continued to expand, relentlessly gorging on their competition.

By the end of the 1950s, pale lager produced by the likes of Miller, Anheuser-Busch, and Schlitz dominated the beer industry. Though control of the beer industry by these names continued into the 1970s, in 1966 a transformation occurred that would set the stage for the next forty years. In that year, moved by her religious convictions, the controlling stock holder and granddaughter of the founder Frederick Miller, Lorraine Mulberger, gave-up her 53 percent of the Miller Brewing Company to the billion-dollar

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 225-27.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 229.
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., 232.
conglomerate W. R. Grace for $36 million.\textsuperscript{131} Other mergers soon followed, establishing a trend of buyouts in the American beer industry that endures today. The ensuing storm of brewery mergers further pummeled the already decimated small breweries. By 1965, there remained but one microbrewery, held together solely by its owner’s family wealth.\textsuperscript{132} By 1967, of the roughly 50 remaining American beer producers, the four largest controlled 33 percent of the market.\textsuperscript{133}

While the beer production of America surely underwent a transformation in the post-World War II decades, so did the consumer culture. Marketing in particular would both establish and reinforce appropriate drinking practices in the United States, in addition to ideas about gender, class, and the American dream. From the 1950’s throughout the late 60’s beer marketing presented and championed the white middle-class heterosexual nuclear family with beer as a sophisticated beverage for ideal American families. In these ads women served as partners and guardians of the home while men were portrayed as the family ‘breadwinners.’ This relationship would largely disappear in the 70’s (as well as women themselves) from the beer advertising world. In this era of beer ads beer became rediscovered as a symbol of heterosexual male bonding and a reward for hard-working men. When women began to reappear in beer ads in the 80’s and increasingly in the decades that followed, they were now cast as either sexual prizes and fantasies or symbols of commitment that threatened the male bonding around drinking.\textsuperscript{134}

\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 243.
\textsuperscript{132} Anchor Brewing Company in San Francisco that had been bought by Fritz Maytag earlier that year.
\textsuperscript{133} Ogle, 256.
\textsuperscript{134} Michael A. Messner and Jeffrey Montez de Oca, “The Male Consumer as Loser: Beer and Liquor Ads in
Gendering Drinking (Again)

Innovations in marketing and technology would further firmly divide how Americans would come to understand and associate drinking, both for beer and distilled spirits. Just as they had done since before the birth of the nation, ideas about gender reflected and reinforced the foodways of alcohol in America that would lead to a solidification of gendering beer, specifically. During the standardization processes of the beer industry, beer would emerge as a symbol of stability, particularly one for the ideal middle class white family. Two developments in America commercialization would ultimately be the most powerful in influencing the gendering of specific alcoholic beverages.

Following the repeal, distillers began a campaign of promoting their products as sophisticated and chic, especially for women, through Hollywood. Through film portrayals, distilled spirits were found in the hands of classy, white heroines who were not dependent upon men socially or economically. This established a relationship between the media and America’s emerging consumer culture that worked together to construct and reinforce the expectations and limitations of drinking along gender and class lines, in addition to gender and class themselves. As Anne Meredith Sugar argues, “[the media’s] influence was particularly potent in the first half of the 20th century when the medium was new and had little or no visual competition with television.”

However, this image would be short-lived.

As the United States entered the Second World War, the image of an independent,
individualistic white woman who enjoyed social drinking would be challenged and eventually replaced by one of the virtuous, homemaking, self-sacrificing, alcohol-temperate woman who stood as the guardian of American morality and the mother of the nation’s children, reminiscent of the image of women in temperance Antebellum America. The reemergence of temperance, and with it constructs of gender, further divided what was considered acceptable and unacceptable drinking behavior for women and men. Unlike the religiopolitical movements of the nineteenth century and the since repealed legislative reforms of the early twentieth to influence American drinking, this third wave of temperance appeared through the more subtle, but arguably more effective, form of film.

Wartime films (either produced or endorsed by government entities) resurfaced gender tropes believed essential to a nation at war. Like the beginnings of the nineteenth century temperance movements, this iteration of temperance touted moderation over complete prohibition, framed within class and nationalistic lines, but communicated most powerfully, as Sugar argues, through gender. Again alcohol became a symbol of danger to the nation and the ideology of gender that placed women intemperance as the greatest threat. Through intemperance, it was feared that women would not only fail to do their part in the war effort (factory work, volunteering, raising children, and rationing) but would also be likely to loosen their morals and thus engage in immoral behavior. Infidelity would not only constitute the possibility of illegitimate children, already a social sin, but would literally add an additional strain (another mouth to feed) on the

136 Ibid., 45-48.
137 Ibid., 53.
138 Ibid., 54.
nation in a time conserving resources was vital, in addition to threaten the morale of the
fighting men across the world.139 Thus, female intemperance could literally lose the war.
As Sugar points out, unlike the liberated socialite of 30’s film, “[wartime] films idolized
the contributions and sacrifices of middle- and working-class women… in an effort to
associate labor with patriotism and encourage women to work outside the home while
simultaneously managing their households.”140 Cultural trends and the failures (both
economic and legal) of Prohibition had demonstrated America relied on alcohol.
However, moderation and self-control were essential in a time the nation needed to
conserve.

Curiously, while films throughout the Depression-era 30’s and wartime 40’s
underwent a transformation of feminine drinking, beer never appeared in the hands of
women. In short, combined with the prohibition-era shift away beer, the makers of beer
had not undertaken the same campaign as those of distilled spirits. By the early 1960’s,
nearly two decades behind their distilled competition, beer producers launched major
advertising campaigns in an attempt to bring style and class to their product.141

In 1960, TV-viewers watched as the widely recognizable and attractive Joan
Kemp moved before a jazz quartet in chic evening attire, singing the praise of Budweiser.
A man’s voice replaces Kemp’s as she watches, with a broad smile, a glass poured,
presumably for her. Her smile remains as the scene cuts into a closer look at the beer,
bubbles now slowly coming to the surface.142 A year later, viewers again saw Kemp,

139 Ibid., 55.
140 Ibid.
141 Martin and Lender, 110.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAPGIKOaRmk.
now casually dressed, suggest the viewer “pick a pair” of Budweiser six-packs. Again, a man’s voice echoes Kemp in urging consumers Budweiser is the right choice. Though Kemp never actually imbibes in either of the commercials, the viewer can easily surmise that the beers are not only for her, but she will obviously enjoy them. Commercials such as those starring Kemp would be short-lived, however, as beer regained its male working-class dominance in following decades.

**Gender/Class Beer Intro**

The cultural trends that stripped beer drinking of its 1960’s emerging feminine association would create and subsequently reinforce a drinking culture that is still very much a part of the American beer experience. In particular, two trends set the stage for America’s drinking culture. One, massive marketing campaigns shifted their target consumers and in so doing shifting the images of their products. Again, understandings of gender and class featured prominently in these campaigns. Into the 1970’s beer marketing largely relegated women to a peripheral position, if not forgetting about them altogether, while highlighting and championing men, especially those of the working-class. Beer, according to these ads, were for “true men.” Second, the blending of scientific findings, and legislative moves that reflected those findings, more greatly influenced women drinking than men’s. These trends would not only effect what was consumed (by whom, when, and where) in their time, but firmly establish understandings about beer that are now being drawn upon by Craft Christians. As I will discuss further below, despite being regarded as a “revolution” these ideologies surrounding craft beer

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144 Sugar, 35.
culture in America’s cultural religion continue to serve this once countercultural
movement. Specifically through class and gender, the craft beer movement can be seen
both challenging and reinforcing the foodways established in this era of beer
standardization that solidified how, where, and when Americans drank.

**Beer is for Men**

In the first week of 1971, representatives of America’s largest beer distributors
gathered in Boca Raton, FL, for Miller Brewing Company’s national sales meeting. Big
changes were happening for then America’s seventh largest brewing operation.
Production was underway in Fort Worth in a new facility. A recent purchase of land in
Delaware suggested a new plant was in the pipeline. All the while, small competitors
were being bought out. Despite the advances towards the top beer producer, the focus
was on the new owner and where they hoped to take the company. Having acquired
Miller the year prior, the tobacco giant Phillip Morris was determined to turn Miller beer
into the most profitable operation in the country. This, the executives of Phillip Morris
argued, would require a restructuring of the brand’s intended audience. America’s “The
Champagne of Beers” would now target men through a new campaign that brought class,
gender, and labor to beer in a way previously unseen. The “If you’ve got the time, we’ve
got the beer” marketing campaign would establish a trend in beer marketing that would
act to firmly place beer in the hands of men in America’s foodways and cultural
religion.¹⁴⁵

Focused on the work-reward relationship, beer, according to Miller, was for hard-
working men who deserved a good beer after a long, and often difficult day. Reflecting

¹⁴⁵ Ogle, 260-265.
their new relationship to Phillip Morris and their iconic Marlboro man, Miller commercials. Rugged-looking men, often laboring in dangerous conditions, began appearing then dominating Miller commercials. The message was simple. The men in these commercials drank Miller simply because it tasted good, not because of its color, smell, or quality ingredients. This masculinizing of beer would pay off. Miller, largely through the marketing and advertising campaigns led by the executives of Phillip Morris, would jump from America’s seventh largest beer maker, with seven million barrels annually produced, to second, with 31 million barrels. Seeing Miller’s success, rival producers followed suite in promoting beer as a reward for hard-working men.

Miller’s success would also be a result of an unlikely new product. 1973 saw the release of America’s first light beer, Miller Lite. There was a problem, however. In the wake of a nation suddenly concerned with health and food, a beer that had less calories threatened to undermine the ideology of masculinity. Being a man did not entail being concerned about one’s caloric intake. To assuage this issue, Miller again turned to marketing, bluntly masculinizing their beer. From the start, Miller Lite commercials throughout the 1970s not only had rugged men, but the most undeniably masculine men in America’s cultural religion: iconic football players. America’s cultural religion hinged on that moment. Nothing, in the eyes of most Americans, could be more masculine than being a football legend. Thus the contradiction between a “healthier” beer and an American masculinity that was not concerned with health was overcome, allowing men to both be consumers of light beer while retaining, if not contributing to, their

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147 Ogle, 260.
masculinity. Framed within an America that would see the greatest loss of blue-collar jobs and the successes of second wave feminism, America’s masculinity needed something to anchor itself to. In this culture of consumer capitalism, this masculinity found beer.¹⁴⁸

Incredibly, in only a few decades the image of the workingman drinker, a powerful symbol of fear mobilized in prohibitionists’ crusades, was now being used to encourage men to drink. The fear of the father and husband treating himself with his modest but hard-earned wages to drink was now being championed, and capitalized on, by beer-makers!

The Return of the Ghost of Benjamin Rush

If marketing served as a powerful force in cementing gender ideas around beer, scientific findings provided justification for this process. The role of science in effecting America’s drink culture would largely drown out the calls of temperate women to abandon the evil substance. Science and the increasing number of experts who drew their authority from it further pushed the American public away from fears of alcohol as sin. Replacing sin with sickness, alcohol, especially within the realm of problem-drinking and alcoholism, would largely, though not entirely, move from individual moral failure to illness. As Americans had experienced through the concluding years of National Prohibition, ending drink did not necessarily lead to social harmony. No longer would the eradication of alcohol be understood as the solution to society’s social ills. While the cries of Christian temperance that had proved so powerful perennially since the nineteenth century had lost its potency, science now challenged Christianity as the guide

¹⁴⁸ Sugar, 46.
to morality in understanding alcohol. However, understandings of both gender and class (both those that were challenged and those that challenged them) would continue to serve as powerful categories in this era many historians identify as the “alcoholism movement.”149 As historian Lori Rotskoff examines in her analysis of this era, while the fields of social science, medicine, and psychiatry challenged the ways in which drink intersected with other social categories, there still emerged a normalizing of gender and class and how they intersected with drink.150

While legislatively alcohol became a carefully controlled ambivalent substance, popular science continued to tout it as a danger with no positive effects, individually or culturally. Despite the legal authorization of alcohol distribution, the scientific and religious communities continued to categorize alcohol as a danger. Again the ghost of Rush would find its way into America’s drinking culture, reinforcing the cultural trends in gendering beer.

In 1960, the FDA approved the use of the birth control pill for contraceptive use. By 1965, 6.5 million American women were using it.151 This access to greater reproductive and sexual agency set the stage for the Sexual Revolution by the end of that decade.152 As Sugar argues, the image of a drinking woman as a sexual deviant and thus morally questionable reemerged in the American consciousness.153

Two decades later, in 1981, the discovery of the fetal alcohol syndrome and the subsequent response by the Surgeon General that pregnant women should not imbibe

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150 Rotskoff, 5.
151 Sugar, 73.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid.
further pushed women away from the beer world. Drinking women were not only potentially immoral but also potentially threatening the lives of babies. Backed by science, women were again at-risk drinkers. Marketing beer to women would have the effect of undermining both the religious and scientific communities, though of course the two are not so easily separated.

**Commodified and Standardized Masculinity**

By the end of the 1970’s beer had been cemented in media as a masculine commodity with a working-class dimension. While women continued to appear in beer commercials they were no longer the ones who most enjoyed the beverage. Relegated to the positions Sugar identifies as either “Hotties” (attractive, sexualized, “prizes for men’s victories and proper consumption” or “Bitches” (wives, girlfriends, and other women who represented commitment), women were largely stripped of their beer-drinking culture. While the advent of the Craft Beer Revolution has allowed many women to join the movement, it remains largely a male subculture.

Through the processes of standardization, marketing trends, and the increasingly potent authority of medical science, the symbol of beer would firmly find its place in America’s cultural religion by the eve of the craft beer revolution. The coming together of gender and class as central to this symbol would not fade as the revolution began and continues to endure, however. As I will discuss further below, both gender and class are key in understanding both the craft beer movement and the Christian commodification of that movement.

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155 Messner & Montez de Oca, 1885.
Chapter 3: The Revolution Begins

The rise in popularity of craft beer in the United States since the 1970’s is typically regarded as a “revolution.” But what is revolutionary about this particular aspect of American beer history? Who are these “renegades” and exactly what and/or whom are the rebels revolting against? While there are many answers to these questions, by exploring the cultural and countercultural reactions to the standardization of the American beer industry I will attempt to illuminate the stage upon which craft beer producers and consumers now interact, define, and police “the revolution.” In this social drama, there are many of the same cast members from 19th century America, but this time their roles are different. Calls of morality, authenticity, and quality from a white middle-class mostly male America all find their place in this revolution, but this time instead of proclaiming their objection to beer, they praise it.

Similarly, in this particular iteration of cultural fascination with beer drinking, drinking is again used to define, articulate, and reinforce gender, class, and nationalism, setting the stage for the final act where the careful navigation of religion’s role in praising beer is discussed.

Central to this history and the narratives surrounding craft beer, the processes of acquisition and merging of the beer market in Post-WWII America provided a Goliath in which to battle. Crystallized into the “evil beer empire,” craft beer revolutionaries are discussed as heroic renegades, determined to undermine the dominant beer powers. As I have discussed above, the decades that followed the Second World War for beer followed along with most of the other trends in food in America. Modernization, efficiency, and standardization combined with technology and marketing innovations established a
culture where sameness and perfection were desired in the mainstream. By 1970, however, sameness, modernization, and corporations became subjects of criticism for an American public that began rejecting corporations, big government, and “the Man.” In light of the Civil Rights movements, women’s rights, the Vietnam War, environmental disasters, and political scandals, criticism of structures of power was swallowed into mainstream America. It is in this vein of countercultural critique that I locate the origins of the Craft Beer movement.

1970s and the Revolution Begins
At the same time Miller was beginning its campaign to catapult its product to the number two spot in American beer, other powerful food trends emerged that allowed for a backlash against the emerging beer giants. A shift in how Americans began approaching food in the 1970s was followed by a similar interest in beer. Small, local, and natural became common household words as the focus on convenience was replaced with authenticity.156 As argued by Jeff Rice, what first began as a trend in food has become a national obsession, in which beer is only one.157

Mistrust of the government and other large entities (i.e. corporations) reinforced a backlash against institutions of power, becoming more mainstream than even the previous decade. In 1971, the pamphlet titled The Chemical Additives in Booze was picked-up by newspapers across the country and released upon the American public. In this seething treatise, microbiologist Michael Jacobson alleged “Big Beer” of endangering American lives by using unsafe additives to stabilize their product. Though Jacobson’s article was later found to lack any evidence, it emerged at a time when similar

156 Ogle, 269.
discoveries were destabilizing America’s foodways. The Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) warnings of mercury in tuna, violet food coloring, and other food dangers in the early 1970s reinforced an atmosphere of skepticism and fear.\textsuperscript{158} It was in this quest for authenticity and rejection of capitalist behemoths and harmful chemicals that small craft brewing was reborn.

From local cheese shops to farmer’s markets, Americans began celebrating “the local.” As noted by historian Maureen Ogle (2006), “where food went, drink followed.”\textsuperscript{159} This reformation on America’s culture spanned beyond the confines of food and drink, however, and into how many Americans understood themselves and how they related to the natural world, developing understandings that became the central focus of life. From the rise of homesteading to organic gardening, DIY guides, and recycling, these were not simply trends in America’s consumption, but rather expressions of a countercultural orientation to the modern world.\textsuperscript{160} To use Charles Long’s succinct definition of religion as an “orientation in the ultimate sense,” the craft beer movement then becomes one expression of a much larger shift in America’s cultural religion through the avenue of its foodways.\textsuperscript{161}

Before the conceptions of such little giants in craft beer as Sierra Nevada and Boston Brewing, however, there were the homebrewers. As with several of the most significant innovations out of the twentieth century, the American craft beer renaissance began serendipitously among communities who, according to craft beer narratives, dared

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item\textsuperscript{158} Ogle, 268.
\item\textsuperscript{159} Ogle, 270.
\item\textsuperscript{160} Albanese, 464.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
to question the status quo. These “dreamers,” from high school drop-outs, professors, navy officers and artists to computer scientists and bicycle mechanics, sought greater choice than the handful of American lagers that dominated the beer market. The eclectic group who comprised of the earliest homebrew clubs gathered around to share and learn about the hobby in informal communities. While some began questioning the ingredients in their beer others began exploring traditional brewing techniques. Experimenting with hop, yeast, and malt varieties and combinations through homebrewing “provided a training ground for some of the finest brewmasters of the late twentieth century”.162

While the focus on beermaking remained a central component in these communities, ideas about authenticity, quality, and values were also essential. This meaning-making around the symbol of beer, in part, laid the foundations of America’s craft beer revolution which finds itself fitting within Albanese’s discussions of “cultural religion.”163 Ironically, despite the rise in popularity, homebrewing remained illegal under federal law. It would not be until 1978, under the Carter administration, that the federal homebrewing ban was removed.164

**Revolutionaries**

Charlie Papazian was one of the most prominent figures of the homebrewing movement, exemplifying both a love of beer and learning. Beginning his homebrewing passion while a student at the University of Virginia, Papazian later became a teacher of

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162 Ogle, 277.
163 Albanese, 465.
164 The law then allowed states to determine their legal status. The last two states to legalize homebrewing were Mississippi and Alabama, both in 2013 (see Steve Hindy, *The Craft Beer Revolution: How a Band of Microbrewers Is Transforming the World’s Favorite Drink* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2014)).
and prolific writer on the hobby.\textsuperscript{165} According to writings from and about the craft beer world, like many of the clubs across the country, homebrewing for Papazian did not revolve around the creation, but rather the sense of community that the interest inspired. This mixture of “pleasure and fellowship” moved Papazian to establish the American Homebrewers Association the same year it became legal to make beer at home.\textsuperscript{166} As I will discuss further below, this combination of pleasure and fellowship are also central to Craft Christianity.

Eventually many homebrewing communities produced those brazen enough to open their own small, independently-owned breweries. Early pioneers such as Ken Grossman and Jim Koch led the way.\textsuperscript{167} What began on the edges of continental America in California and Massachusetts slowly worked its way through the rest of the country. Like the temperance literature that had once united American communities, the stirrings of the craft beer movement served to define and spread values, symbols, and ideals about beer, drinking, and quality. In the coming years, Grossman, Koch, and those who followed would revive beer styles unseen in America for a century, all the while espousing the same attention to quality and authenticity that Americans had determined they wanted in their food.

**Dividing the American Beer Industry: Quantity and Quality**

While the initial stirrings of what is now considered the “craft beer movement” were underway by 1980, the category of “craft” was first applied to this small segment of the American beer industry in 1986. In his guide to breweries and brewpubs of the

\textsuperscript{165} Ogle, 280.

\textsuperscript{166} Ogle, 281.

\textsuperscript{167} Sierra Nevada Brewing Company and Boston Brewing Company, respectively.
Pacific Northwest, Vincent Cottone defined a “craft brewery” as “small… using traditional methods and ingredients to produce a handcrafted, uncompromised beer that is marketed locally.”¹⁶⁸ Now thirty years old, Cottone’s definition endures within the industry. This emphasize on “traditional methods and ingredients,” “handcrafted,” and “uncompromised,” each culturally imbued with a degree of moral superiority, were later canonized by what would emerge as the authority on the niche industry, the Brewers Association (BA). A craft brewery, according to the BA, is “small, independent and traditional.”¹⁶⁹ Reinforcing the connection between the craft beer industry and moral actions, the BA maintains that craft breweries “tend to be very involved in their communities through philanthropy, product donations, volunteerism and sponsorship of events.”¹⁷⁰

**Moral Production and Consumption**

Moralizing small-scale production serves as one way the craft industry separates itself from the much larger competition. Craft beer producers are significantly smaller in size in relation to industry counterparts. To qualify as a “craft brewery” according to the

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¹⁶⁸ Vincent Cottone, *Good beer guide: Breweries and pubs of the Pacific Northwest, British Columbia, Washington and Oregon* (Seattle, WA: Homestead, 1986). While Cottone may have been the first to wed “craft” to “beer,” he was not the first to divide the industry into subcategories. Renowned beer expert Michael Jackson termed similar producers as “boutique breweries” while some Canadian enthusiasts had been using the category of “cottage brewery.” The term “microbrewery” was also emerging in America at this time.

¹⁶⁹ The BA defines “small, independent, and traditional” as follows, respectively: “Annual production of 6 million barrels of beer or less (approximately 3 percent of U.S. annual sales)”; “Less than 25 percent of the craft brewery is owned or controlled (or equivalent economic interest) by an alcoholic beverage industry member that is not itself a craft brewer”; “A brewer that has a majority of its total beverage alcohol volume in beers whose flavor derives from traditional or innovative brewing ingredients and their fermentation.”


¹⁷⁰ Ibid.
BA, breweries must not produce more than six million barrels per year.\textsuperscript{171} By comparison, each beer producer of the non-craft beer segment of the beer industry in the U.S. (e.g. Anheuser-Busch InBev, MillerCoors, and Heineken International) is capable of production that massively dwarfs the \textit{entire} segment of craft beer producers combined.\textsuperscript{172} Because of their production limitations and lack of access to continental distribution networks, craft brewers are often unable or, in some cases, unwilling to get their products beyond regional geographies or across state lines.

However, despite only making up 10-15\% of beer sales in the U.S. (or $14.3 billion of the $100 billion American market), the craft beer industry has been surging in numbers and popularity since at least 2000.\textsuperscript{173} While the number of breweries in post-prohibition America once dwindled down to 45 just three decades ago, at the end of 2015, over 4,000 craft breweries could be found once again dotting the American landscape.\textsuperscript{174}

**Crafting a “Craft Beer” Identity**

The rhetoric and narratives employed by those within the craft beer movement on brewery ‘About Us’ pages, professional writings, and profiles of specific products proudly displayed on the sides of bottles is one that attempts to appeal to those who value and identify with particular ideas of history, authenticity, quality, originality, and place.


\textsuperscript{172} Ibid.

Anheuser-Busch InBev alone controls 46 percent of the market in the U.S. and made over 351 million barrels of beer in 2015. In second place, SABMiller produced 276 million barrels the same year.


By championing these types of values as central to their mission (coupled with production and distribution limitations), the craft beer industry establishes itself as the underdog of the beer industry.

Of course, as sociologist Wayne Brekhus writes, identity work is always also boundary work. Just as important as it is to espouse held values for the craft identity, it is equally imperative that this community distance itself from the larger market. In not only painting itself as the righteous David of beer brewing, it has conversely presented large beer producers as faceless corporate Goliaths who lack values, sacrificing quality for quantity in the morally-questionable quest for profits. Similarly, though the foundations of this craft market are rooted in narratives of revolutionaries of different names, the characters themselves remain remarkably similar, each exemplars of “craft values” established by William Morris, an instrumental figure in the British Arts and Crafts Movement of the nineteenth century.

As professor of writing rhetoric and beer enthusiast Jeff Rice pointedly illustrates, the legacy of William Morris runs through the craft beer narrative of the contemporary United States. In propagating that the craft (or handmade) represents purity and authenticity while the industrial denotes sameness and inauthenticity, the craft beer culture presents itself as revolutionary. Consuming craft beer then becomes not simply consumption as pleasure, but an ideological act, an intentional strike against the status quo. In this vein, careful, intentional consumption becomes revolution against mindless

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176 Rice, 10.

consumption. Craft producers and craft consumers become agents of the revolution, battling homogeneity in the name of authenticity. Stories told by craft producers about themselves are subsequently retold by those who connect to those stories within the consumer world.

Since at least the early 1990s, this dichotomy between craft and non-craft beer has appeared in media, most popularly in newspapers. “The notion of handcrafted beer stands in curious defiance of some of the strongest trends in the U.S. food and beverage industry—national marketing, franchising uniformity, and advertising,” wrote John Balzar of the Los Angeles Times in late 1991 before further illustrating this divide: “Industrial brewers spend millions promoting their light… beers and regular beers of absolutely consistent composition. Craft brewers are just the opposite, offering richer, more complex beers… using little if any advertising.”

By 1995, while the craft beer market only made up an estimated 1.4% of the beer market, The New York Times noted that craft beer “is accomplished without test marketing, major advertising campaigns and the like, something the top three beer producers—Anheuser-Busch, Miller Brewing Company and Coors Brewing Company—cannot accomplish.” Within a decade of the market’s development, craft beer was being established as something markedly different from other sectors of the industry, propagated not only by industry insiders, but also the media.

Just as they have been and are for the cultural religion of the United States, stories of revolutionaries doing battle against giants is essential to the “movement.”

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this struggle does not end at the production end of craft beer. Consumer culture of craft beer is entrenched within this war of ideology. By supporting the movement through consuming craft beer, consumers stake a claim in the struggle while communicating and reinforcing their values and identity.

These narratives do not attempt to convert, but rather further inundate the already initiated. By speaking to and reinforcing belief systems already held, the craft community further strengthens the industry gap between craft and the non-craft “other.”

**Craft Narrative**

The specific origins of the craft beer movement are often contested, but typically incorporate the same cast of actors who are viewed as visionaries and renegades by both the makers and consumers of the movement. Fritz Maytag (Anchor), Ken Grossman (Sierra Nevada), Sam Calagione (Dogfish Head), and Jim Koch (Samuel Adams) are routinely employed as the first pioneers to pursue a beer revival through rebellion.179 Often this theme finds itself into narratives breweries tell about themselves or their product.

In preparation for the release of a beer named the “Brooklyn Defender” in 2012, brewmaster and industry writer, Garrett Oliver, published a short tale allegorical to a commonly-championed history of American beer in the craft world. Invoking themes of Puritan millennialism, Oliver’s story incorporates time, place, and moral actions into this only partially fantastical story:

Once, a long time ago, benevolent Beer Gods bestrode the lands of the world, bringing wonderful beer and great happiness to the People. Collaborating joyously among themselves, the Beer Gods defended the

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179 Similarly, while new craft brewers are now considered third and sometimes even fourth generation, the narrative formula is still remarkably analogous.
pleasures of the table and promulgated the virtues of Flavor, Variety, Deliciousness, Versatility and Honesty in beer. And the People loved them for it.\textsuperscript{180}

As is essential to the American/Puritan millennial theme, a key component to this revolutionary rhetoric is promoting craft beer as a return to purity. Encompassing and validating other values of the craft narrative, this appeal to history invokes a time before the market was corrupted by evil, specifically a capitalist evil. Beginning with an unspecified time of innocence and joy, Oliver establishes the Eden of American beer. This particular history harkens back to an America that, toward the end of the nineteenth century, had over 4,000 breweries, a signifier to craft beer supporters of a healthy, locally-oriented industry. Next, he reinforces the common trope of craft beer culture of comradeship over competition, elevating small beer producers while setting the stage for the inevitable Fall, the narrative of prohibition and the subsequent ruthless takeovers of the market by a handful of beer producers in post-prohibition America:

But the Beer Gods were far too trusting – in truth, they were not without enemies. Out of the stygian depths of the Earth’s crust rose a cabal of anti-Beer Gods, the Megaliths. Taking the peaceful Beer Gods by surprise, the warlike Megaliths cast a powerful spell that drove the Beer Gods down into the shadows. Flavorful beer vanished from the land, and the People wept. Their victory complete, the Megaliths sent among us the ghostly pale, thin tasteless beers known colloquially as “foam jobs”. Blandness led to mediocrity, mediocrity led to hate, and hate led to suffering. And O, how the People suffered! They forgot the true taste of beer, the soft rustle of barley, the smell of hops.\textsuperscript{181}

In this section, Oliver first reinforces the innocence of the small-scale beer producers (the “Beer Gods”) whose only failings were being “too trusting.” As Albanese points out,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[181] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
innocence is also vulnerability in millennial narratives, opening the door to sinister agents. Blinded by innocence, these Beer Gods were unaware of the powerful Progressive Era anti-alcohol movements (the “Megaliths”) that ultimately led to the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. Just as they are unaware of the impending evil, innocent societies are also unable to defend themselves, according to Albanese.\footnote{Catherine Albanese, \textit{America: Religions and Religion}, 4th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2013), 274.}

Then, following Prohibition, Oliver seemingly conflates the moral campaigns of temperance with the merger and acquisition arms race that concluded in the homogeneity of American beer. Of course, essential to this millennial drama, there is a savior:

And then, just as it seemed that the darkness had stamped out all good things, a new dawn rose. A hero came to rescue the people from the iron grip of the Megaliths – The Defender! Spawned in deepest Brooklyn and robed in a cowl of shimmering amber, the Defender wielded the rich power of caramel malts, the sharpest unbreakable blade of pure hop bitterness and an incredible focused blast of hop aroma to shatter the Megaliths’ spell. The Beer Gods awoke to find themselves forever shielded within the hearts of the People, and once again the great virtues of true beer spread through the land. Even now, the Defender will be a light to you in dark places, when all other lights go out. Should your shadow ever grow long, your spirit sag, and your knees buckle, you need only remember these words — BRING FORTH THE DEFENDER!\footnote{Oliver, “The Defender.”}

When all hope seems to be extinguished, the savior arrives. Not only is this hero a figure who rescues the people, but is also ultimately a symbol of virtue in a world of darkness and despair. Righteous violence is the Defender’s method of liberation, delivering both “the People” and the “Beer Gods” from the “iron grips” of industry. The “Beer Gods,” now saved from corporations through the Defender’s actions, are “forever shielded within the hearts of the People” and the “virtues… spread through the land.” Oliver’s piece not only gives meaning to the craft beer movement, but situates the consumer within the
drama. They now have a chance for righteousness, if they open their hearts... and drink this beer.

As Albanese points out, this recurring narrative formula has long been immensely popular in American print, television, and film. The characters found in this narrative formula come to represent not only sacred figures of Protestant America, but also manifestations of American values. The sacred individualism of America is reinforced. Much like the millennial goal of a New World, heroic figures stand out for their quick action and bravery.\(^{184}\) Similarly, this narrative formula is also key to understanding how Craft Christians construct and locate themselves in a beer-fueled Christianity.

**Class and Gender: Some Change, Some Not**

While the rhetoric of craft beer is often presented as “revolutionary” and in opposition to “Big Beer” culture, there are other themes that are still very much shared between the two. Still riding the marketing wave set forth by the Marlboro Man-inspired Miller campaign that firmly established beer as a masculine commodity, craft beer in America remains a largely male world. Though craft, and thus non-industrial or handmade, is clearly crucial to the ideology of the craft world, it is only a particular type of history of men that is revered. Despite the fact that women have, until only the Industrial Age, been the brewers of beer, ideas of brewing tradition only seem to remember men in the craft beer world. Dating back to at least the Neolithic Age, women were the first makers of beer.\(^{185}\) Under the guidance of the goddess Ninkasi, Sumerian women were the sole makers of beer. In fact, the oldest surviving beer recipe doubles as

\(^{184}\) Albanese, 4th ed., 274.

\(^{185}\) McGovern, 2009.
a song dedicated to this goddess of beer.\textsuperscript{186} The brewing methods and association with women gender roles would later find their way into Egypt where it continued.\textsuperscript{187} From Egypt to the European Middle Ages, women remained the brewers. Though it largely goes unacknowledged, the nuns of St. Hildegard of Bingen in Germany were the first to add hops, which is still used universally in the production of beer, as a preservative in the 12th century.\textsuperscript{188} Even within the American context, the first brewers in what would become the United States were colonial women.\textsuperscript{189} Though some attempts at paying homage to history have occurred in recent years, craft beer has largely forgotten its foremothers.

In 2001, the average craft beer enthusiast, according to the Brewers Association’s chief economist, was 39 years old, white, highly educated, geographically concentrated along either side of the continent, and had a relatively high income.\textsuperscript{190} By 2014, the makeup of craft beer consumers had changed, though white middle class males remained the industry’s largest demographic. Women, particularly younger women (21-34 years of age), pushed out of the beer world in the 1970s, were still only responsible for 15 percent of sales by 2014. How exactly women were turned onto craft beer is not exactly clear, one variable has remained a constant in craft beer culture: class. Though women were now consuming craft beer, both the women and men tended to be middle class.\textsuperscript{191} According to the marketing firm Mintel, in 2015, craft beer consumers were more likely

\textsuperscript{186} Nurin, 2015a.  
\textsuperscript{187} McGovern, 15.  
\textsuperscript{188} Nurin, 2015a.  
\textsuperscript{189} Meacham, 7-12.  
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid.
to come from households earning $75K+ annually and less likely to be in the South or black.192

While gender has remained a notable aspect of who is consuming craft beer, it is also significant in the products of craft beer makers and how these are reviewed. The most popular beer review website Beer Advocate (www.beeradvocate.com) boasts reviews and information on over 83,000 beers. On a scale from 1 to 5, members can rate and review beers on four categories: look, smell, taste, and feel. Of Beer Advocate’s top 250 beers, 21 (8.4%) were beers with “male” names and/or featured an image of a man on the label. By contrast, only 4 (1.6%) had “female” names and/or featured an image of a woman on the label. Similarly, of the 203 ratings of Beer Advocate’s top-rated beer (Tree House Brewing Company’s ‘Good Morning’) only five were made by members self-identified as women.193

In addition to identifying non-craft beer by its ubiquitous labels plastered on everything from grocery stores to multi-million dollar Super Bowl commercials, the craft consumer can also distinguish inferior products by their pricing. Beers identified as non-craft are typically markedly less expensive than those of craft, making craft beer far less appealing to those belonging to a lower socioeconomic position. Because price-cutting is seen as synonymous with sacrifice of quality, craft producers demand more money for their purely and morally superior product. Commodified purity communicates middle class status. For Craft Christians, spending $12 for a six-pack of craft beer shows not

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only that the consumer has good taste, but also good intentions. In short, it is a Weberian sign of the middle class “elect.”

**Evangelizing the “Movement”**

Ultimately, most craft beer narratives can now be found on the Internet. Product reviews, ‘About Us’ pages, and beer forums serve as the most popular ways in which craft beer consumers and makers can communicate their craft identity virtually, hone craft vocabulary, and police the craft community. The role of social media in supplying the rhetorics for craft beer is of the most influential ways in which the craft beer movement is maintained and changed. From reviews to stories, craft beer is portrayed as personal. Narratives are also an essential component in identity formation. In this postmodern world, simply the consumption of a product does not communicate one’s status. Whether they are stories about a consumer’s first craft beer, finding a special beer, or traveling for and to beer, these stories communicate more than simply an interest in a product. They present what the consumer finds important, exceptional, and worth sharing through storytelling.

Other mediums also serve to retell and reinforce the craft values. *Beeradvocate*, *All About Beer*, *Beer Connoisseur*, and *Draft* are of the most popular digital and print magazines about the industry. Similarly, iconic craft beer leaders have also published their own writings on the craft and the industry’s history. Blogs and organizations such as Girls Love Beer Too, Women Enjoying Beer, Chicks Love Beer, and Daughters

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195 Jeff Rice, *Craft Obsession*, 2016, x.

196 Jeff Rice, “Professional Purity,” 3-10.

197 Examples include Ken Grossman, Tony Magee, and Sam Calgione. Ibid.
of Beer attempt to not only bring more women to the craft beer culture, but also underscore how absent women have been from the movement.
Chapter 4: Jesus Drank Beer

“’I think Jesus probably would have had a beer,’ she said with a laugh.”

- Melissa St. Clair, Heart of the Rockies Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Fort Collins.198

Nearly every Sunday from 5 to 7 p.m., 30 to 40 craft beer and Jesus enthusiasts can be found among those at Zio Carlo, a brewpub in the sprawling downtown of Fort Worth, Texas. Sponsored primarily by the Calvary Lutheran Church, Kyrie (or its informal name “Church-in-a-Pub”) has included performers, Bible discussions, and communion in its weekly service since its formation in 2011.199 With its emphasis on community-building and a “subtle” or “nuanced” approach to proselytizing Christianity, Kyrie, like many of the groups incorporating craft beer into worship, offers a religious gathering that is both informal and public.200 The pastor Neil Christopher described the atmosphere of Kyrie’s service as “community” and “not evangelism.”201

While the sight of beer brewing in church basements or congregates with a pint in one hand and a Bible in the other would have been unimaginable even a decade ago (though not noteworthy some two centuries ago), Craft Christian communities are now bubbling up across the country. The narrative themes that have existed in mainstream American culture for centuries now surrounding craft beer have clearly struck a chord within these religious communities. For some, the craft beer movement is not simply a trendy fad, but a symbol of the type of Christianity they hope to usher in, one that

199 Kyrie refers to “kyrie eleison” which is Greek for “Lord have mercy” (McGraw, 2012)
200 In an interview with Fox News in 2013, Calvary Lutheran Church pastor Phillip Heinze describes their method of promoting Christianity: “We’re trying to do it in a way that is more subtle, perhaps, or just nuanced or respectful” (Snyder, 2013).
201 Ibid.
similarly champions comradeship over competition, intention over mindlessness, and craft over industrial. As throughout America’s religious history, images and ideas of Jesus find their way into Craft Christian theology and come to serve as the exemplar of Craft Christian values. Framed within the context of the rise of conservative evangelicalism, post-9/11 nationalism, and a national decline in religious affiliation (especially among Millennials), Craft Christianity promotes itself as the authentic alternative to the religious status quo. Despite how “revolutionary” Craft Christianity is, or is not, it is not without its class and gender dimensions.

**Expansion and Contraction: Conservative Evangelicalism and ‘Nones’**

In the wake of the attacks on September 11, 2001, prominent televangelist, one-time presidential candidate, and former leader of the conservative Christian Coalition, Pat Robertson and similarly controversial creator of the Moral Majority Jerry Falwell delivered a dire warning to America: repent or face further wrath authorized by an angry god. In citing America’s secularism as the reason for the terrorist attacks, Robertson and Falwell divided the country into those who would either take this jeremiad as a call to action or those who were also to blame: “I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays, and the lesbians (who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle), the ACLU, people for the American Way, all of them who tried to secularize America…” After a short pause, he continued, “I… point the finger in their faces and say ‘you helped this happen.’” An unmoved Robertson responded, “Well, I totally concur.” While Robertson and Falwell were quick to blame

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202 “Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson Blame 9/11 on Organizations Like People For the American Way,” Filmed [September 13, 2011]. YouTube video, 1:46. Posted [April 2, 2010], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMkBga9_oQ4
anyone who they believed had “tried to secularize America” for terrorist attacks, their vitriol response to 9/11 was likely not a surprise to those familiar with their rhetoric. What had begun as a political awakening of evangelicals to purify the sins of the nation in the 1970s was crystalized in their message that Americans were complacent in the events of 9/11. While some American Christians did take up the jeremiad of the two men, most resisted, seeing Robertson and Falwell’s threats as, at the very least, problematic.

The rise of a politically-charged conservative evangelicalism both united denominations across the U.S. while also galvanizing Christian and non-Christian voices who found rhetoric such as Robertson and Falwell’s radical and dangerous. Certainly the voices of anger and disgust at American culture and its continuous cries for reform or face damnation have no doubt contributed to the emergence of the American religious phenomenon known as the “Nones.” Defined by Pew as the “self-identified religiously unaffiliated,” the topic of “Nones” has continuously appeared in America’s media and popular culture.203 When Pew’s first findings were released in 2008, media sources pounced on what they perceived as America’s religious decline. Headlines such as the ever-flagrant Glenn Beck’s “God Is Old News; Just Ask the Government” in 2009 were followed by similarly religiously affiliated concerned Americans’ call to action.204 For Robertson (Falwell had died in 2007), this was further proof of America’s inching toward certain annihilation. Particularly troubling for faith leaders across the U.S. was Pew’s findings that the highest concentration (35%) of those who fell into this “none” group

were also those born between 1981 and 1996, the Millennials. Since the shocking 2008 research, Pew has continued to find America’s sliding away from “religion.” More broadly, one-in-five Americans as of 2015 who were raised in Christian homes no longer identify as Christian. Self-identified Christians fell from 78.4 percent in 2007 to 70.6 by 2014. Conversely, “nones” have gone from 16 to 23 percent over the same period.

However, what Robertson and the media had failed to acknowledge or realize at that time was that while this group had seemingly disavowed much of the institutionalized religion, many traditional ideas of religiosity had endured. According to Pew, two-thirds of America’s “nones” still believed in God while one in five said they prayed every day. While religious affiliation has continued to decline in the U.S., its people still largely cling to conventional religious ideas. In short, “religion” seems to have developed a negative connotation in America while religious ideas have endured.

While some pundits like Robertson sought to blame a perceived rise in secularism in the U.S. for this turning away from institutionalized religion, others have blamed Robertson and other members of the religious right. Others still, blame themselves and their own church for failing to reach out to the Millennial generation. Regardless of where or towards whom the finger is being pointed, a religious response to the rise of the religious right and to the problem of the “nones” was inevitable.

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206 Ibid.
207 Ibid.
208 Ibid.
209 Ibid. “belief in God; absolutely certain” (63%), “belief in Heaven” (72%), and daily “frequency of prayer” (56%).
In her monumental “America, Religions and Religion”, Catherine Albanese discusses the ways in which America’s religious communities have responded to and initiated cultural shifts. With the rise of the social sciences and with it a fascination with the ‘Orient’ at the close of the nineteenth century, most of America’s Christian communities responded by expanding, adopting the “new” and exotic, and, simultaneously, contracting, rejecting the new and buckling down on what they saw as traditional in the name of purity.\(^{210}\) Those who primarily underwent the process of contraction would, following 1910, largely become self-described as “fundamentalists,” after the series of publications “The Fundamentals.” In twenty-first century America, Craft Christianity is an expansive response to the rise of craft beer (adopting, sacralizing, and celebrating craft beer foodways) with the careful navigation of the problem of the “nones” and the contractive rejection to the rise of conservative evangelicalism.

One way these mostly mainline Christian communities is navigating these issues is through attempting to piece together a form of Christianity that rejects conservative evangelicalism and appeals to “nones”. By expanding to incorporate craft beer as a way to reconstitute their ideas of what Christianity should look like, Craft Christians not only support craft values, but bring them into their own fold to make sense of what they are doing. By acknowledging their socially peculiar position to drinking, Craft Christians also subscribe to being a part of a religious rebellion against “Big Church” in response to “nones.” The recurring rhetoric of “meeting people where they are” provides Craft Christianity both the legitimacy and justification for seeking fellowship around craft beer that also reflects the idea that church is no longer an appealing place.

\(^{210}\) Albanese, 281.
However, while turning away from corporate sameness and “Big Church” may seem like a quantum leap for most American Christians, through the recent cultural avenue of craft beer, Craft Christians are provided a symbol that communicates their rebel status that does not require a major overhaul of behavior. Craft Christianity is a way to strike a blow against conservative evangelicalism that emerged and has dominated much of the attention of the American public since the 1980s. When asked what the Bible said about beer, Pastor Brandon Brown of Milwaukee’s CollectiveMKE church, a locally-oriented nondenominational church, was quick to reference beliefs held by other congregations: “It [The Bible] does say, ironically, don’t get drunk because it leads to bad things. A conservative Christian might read the passage and say ‘the Bible says don’t drink.’ But that’s not what it says. It doesn’t even in that passage say that the drinking itself is bad.”211 “Jesus & Beer,” CollectiveMKE’s twice a month gathering at some of Milwaukee’s most popular craft beer bars, provides a context where disagreement and conversation are encouraged, and beer is served. Similarly, in an interview about this blending of Christianity and beer-drinking, professor of biblical interpretation and theology at Trevecca Nazarene University, Dan Spross reinforced a divide between Craft Christians and “older, traditional Christians” who he argued would “not be terribly comfortable with the setting of, ‘Let’s have a beer and let’s sing hymns’… They wouldn’t think those things meshed very well.”212 This reclaiming of Christianity through craft beer both articulates a longing to look toward a hopeful future (a liberal trait) while also retaining what its followers see as an authentic Christianity, all the while distancing

212 Hall, The Tennessean.
itself from how it believes a ‘conservative Christianity’ would interpret its relation to drinking.

**Revolution Rhetoric: Christian Rebellion**

Images, ideas, and stories told about Jesus both reflect and reinforce the lives, hopes, and values of those who share and hear them. They also provide context of where and when a particular Jesus emerges. Economic, social, and political realities and imaginations also make their way into how Americans have come to see the most famous man from Nazareth. In his *“American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon”* (2003), professor of Religion at Boston University, Stephen Prothero argues:

“What Americans have seen in him [Jesus] has been an expression of their own hopes and fears—a reflection not simply of some ‘wholly other’ divinity but also of themselves and their nation.”213 By examining how some Craft Christians view their beer-drinking hero, particular themes (which I argue are also values) emerge around this character. Equally important in analyzing Craft Christian Jesus is the material, themes, and narratives that curiously do *not* make their way into this imagined Jesus.

Tapping into the craft beer rhetoric that has been crucial to its emergence in American culture, Craft Christians adopt these narratives while finding Jesus within them. For these Christians, Jesus is not only the son of God, but also a figure who challenges (some) social hierarchies and established religious praxis. He is the exemplar of craft beer and thus Craft Christian values. This Jesus is the savior of souls and the hope of Christianity in a time when the image of the church is seen by some as losing its appeal. Jesus is the mysterious stranger who appears just in time to save the people from

213 Prothero, 9.
Oliver’s Megaliths. In short, for Craft Christians, Jesus is the Defender, not a corporate pretender.

A.J. Viola, co-creator of Raleigh’s “Beer and a Bible,” echoes this emphasis on Jesus and minimization of the idea of ‘church’: “Whether you are a fan of church or not, or wherever you are spiritually, Jesus was a cool guy, right? He did a lot of good things.”214 “Many in the American public like the person of Jesus much more than organized or institutional religion, or they view themselves as more spiritual than religious,” says Warren Bird, the director of research and intellectual capital at the Christian marketing and strategy firm Leadership Network, alluding to the Pew findings.215 This ‘person of Jesus’ provides a heroic figure whose righteous violence is revolutionary acts to overthrow corporate oppression and religious conservatism. For many Craft Christians, their Christianity is less about church and “religion” and more about Jesus. Like many Craft Christians, pastor of Heart of the Rockies Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Colorado, Melissa St. Clair easily finds drinking beer and Jesus to be congruent:

"Jesus was so countercultural in that way. He did all the things you wouldn't expect him to do as son of God, messiah, savior of the world. And that's what makes Christianity so awesome and so challenging: Jesus ate with people that society said he shouldn't, he healed people that people thought didn't deserve it, he touched people that other people thought were unclean."216

By establishing Jesus as “countercultural” St. Clair provides the basis for her church’s own moves against the status quo:

215 Hall, The Tennessean.
216 Sexton, Coloradoan.
"And so, in that sense, as a church, we're called to be counter-cultural, which drinking beer doesn't really sound like, and yet it is, because it's counter to church culture. It's kind of breaking ourselves out of the stained glass mold and being present in the world, which is where God put us."\textsuperscript{217}

While apparently not flipping tables and driving money changers from sacred spaces, this charge to rebel against the status quo (in this case the lingering rejection of alcohol) falls in line with ideas about Jesus and the virtues these Christians attribute to him. For this pastor, drinking beer is an act of righteous revolution, an alcohol-fueled \textit{imitatio christi}.

**Relaxed Jesus**

This iteration of Jesus is also one who not only strives for social reform but also wants his followers to be happy, casual, and comfortable, an increasingly visible theme of Christianity in America that also reflects craft beer culture and middle class values.\textsuperscript{218} In 2014, Mintel found nearly half of America’s craft beer drinkers associate craft beer more strongly with casual rather than formal events, including celebrations.\textsuperscript{219} Geoff Little, organizer of Nashville’s Beer and Hymns, alludes to the miracle of Jesus turning water into wine in the Gospel of John in asking “Why was Christ’s first miracle to be the ultimate bartender? Jesus was interested in celebration.”\textsuperscript{220} In 2012, Uncle Charlie’s bar in Cheyenne, Wyoming, was the site of the weekly “Bibles and Beer” gathering of nearly fifty participants. Led by the Presbyterian minister Rodger McDaniel, “Bibles and Beer” in Uncle Charlie’s was seen by its organizers as “a much more relaxed atmosphere than

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\textsuperscript{217} Ibid.
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\item \textsuperscript{218} These themes are most visible in examining more conservative writings criticizing them. Posts and articles with titles such as “If Your Church Makes Christianity ‘Cool’ And Comfortable, You Should Find A New Church” or “Is 'Sit Back, Relax and Enjoy the Service' Killing the Church?” attest to a perception by some communities of Christians who have gone too far in embracing popular and consumer culture.
\item \textsuperscript{220} Hall, \textit{The Tennessean}.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotes}
in a church basement.”\textsuperscript{221} The rhetoric of providing an event that is both religious \textit{and} relaxed, a possible antidote to what some religious-leaders see as the problem of religion being threatening, is a recurring theme in discussions of Craft Christianity. Twenty-year old James Wronski found his attendance at a 2016 “Theology on Tap” event in Milwaukee to be appealing to Millennials: “I think this kind of \textit{relaxed} (italics added) social atmosphere where you come, you meet people, you drink, you \textit{relax} (italics added) and you kind of learn and educate yourself, that’s a big draw to millennials.”\textsuperscript{222}

\textbf{Revival and Sacred Substance}

"\textit{Beer provides the opportunity to tap into that deeply God-given desire to create.}"

– Jeff Heck, Westside Presbyterian Church, Atlanta.\textsuperscript{223}

As Americans are increasingly identifying as “spiritual” and not “religious” the contents of the categories of sacred and profane are also changing. Craft Christians situate themselves in these discussions. For many of them, craft beer is not only a symbol of rebellion and community, but a symbol of holiness. Craft Christians are therefore not necessarily making beer into a sacred substance, but rather, repositioning it to the righteous end of a sacred continuum. As I have discussed, alcohol has been a sacred substance (“set apart and forbidden”) in American culture since before the nation’s birth.\textsuperscript{224} For Craft Christians, craft beer remains a sacred substance, something that requires attention and decorum, but unlike in the temperance legacy, it is now on the side of righteousness and God. It is this Gospel that Craft Christians are sharing. Craft

\textsuperscript{221} Raasch, \textit{USA Today}.
\textsuperscript{222} Carrie Antlfinger, “Jesus and beer: Religious groups combine faith, cold brews,” September, 15, 2016, bigstory.ap.org/article/649bcfa67dc149658f16496525229aa9/jesus-and-beer-religious-groups-combine-faith-cold-brews
\textsuperscript{223} Phillips & Kesling, \textit{The Wall Street Journal}.
\textsuperscript{224} Émile Durkheim, \textit{The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life} (New York: Free Press, 1912), 75.
Christianity is a revival that attempts to utilize craft beer, comfort, and casualness to bring Americans to a craft beer-drinking, comfortable, and casual Christianity through a beer-drinking, comfortable, and casual Jesus.

While Kyrie utilizes a “subtle” approach to proselytizing, others have abandoned it during Craft Christian events altogether. Pastor Jodi Houge of Humble Walk Lutheran Church in Saint Paul, Minnesota, recounts in *The Atlantic* the success of her church’s Beer and Hymns: “That [Beer and Hymns] has really actually shaped our community in an unpredictable and vital way. We don’t do anything other than sing. There’s no sneaky Jesus in there like, ‘Oh and then I’m going to do a mini sermon, or now I’m going to pray for you.’” Even from the first event, says Houge, “It was like no singing we had ever experienced before. It just had that sort of energy and this magic.”

From that evening on, Humble Walk Lutheran Church’s Beer and Hymns grew from a small assemblage to an event that left hopeful attendees waiting at the door. Others have also found beer-fueled Christian hymns to be particularly powerful, even reminiscent of Christian revival gatherings. Dave Perkins, an associate director of Religion in the Arts and Contemporary Culture at Vanderbilt University, recounted how his first experience with Beer and Hymns effected both him and his wife: “I don’t think I’ve heard such a passionate singing of the old hymns since my parents would take us to revival meetings from time to time. My wife and I were moved to tears. The beer may have helped with that, too.”

For some, beer and the making thereof can even be imbued with a spiritual

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226 Ibid.
227 Hall, *The Tennessean*. 
quality, being an intersection between creation and creator. Pastor Bistayi in Allendale, Michigan echoes the sacredness of the beverage while also, perhaps unknowingly, paraphrasing Increase Mather: “Drunkenness is a sin, but beer or alcohol in moderation can be a gift from God's creation.”

Back in Fort Worth, Kyrie’s Neil Christopher epitomizes the ways religious leaders are redrawing the categories of sacred and profane through the use of alcohol:

I propose that there is no such thing as a sacred space and that everywhere is a sacred space. I propose that the nature "church" is completely different than anything we ever imagined… Sacramentals [sic] are not limited to the "approved" ones in Church history, but can be anything if we are helping man or bringing glory to God. So too, a bar can become a sacred space, music can become worship and that rock in your pocket can become a sacred object.

Craft beer for Kyrie’s Christopher and Pastor Bistayi in Allendale is not an evil vice, but rather evidence of God’s creation and love. It is a gift. And like any gift, it does not come freely. Marcel Mauss examined exchange in what he deemed “archaic societies” in the first half of the twentieth century. For Mauss, the gift was never without its cultural, social, political, economic, and religious dimensions. As with this proclaimed “gift from God,” beer becomes a reminder of the covenant. However, echoing Mauss’ approach to understanding exchange, understanding Craft Christianity and how and why craft beer is a potent symbol is not without its class and gender dimensions.

**Middle Class Jesus**

Not only do changing views on alcohol distinguish liberal congregations from

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more traditional and fundamentalist Christians, they also illuminate the distinctions between social classes. Similar to the early nineteenth and later twentieth century Christian forbearers, Christians advocating for a new orientation in relation to alcohol also considers themselves “Progressives,” or as the Gilead Church of Chicago identifies itself, “uber progressive.”

Rev. Rebecca Anderson of Gilead Church Chicago holds two bottles of beer produced for her church by a local craft brewer. The church turned to making beer in an attempt “to appeal to younger generations of Christians” and also to “take away some of the more melancholy aspects of church.”

Craft Christian Jesus is also one whose reflection is washed in an implied social class. This Craft Christian Jesus interacted with the downtrodden, but was clearly not of

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231 Ibid.
them. For St. Clair back in Colorado, Jesus was not of the poor for Jesus “ate with people who society said he shouldn’t” and “did all the things you wouldn't expect him to do.” Similarly, Pastor Evan Taylor of East Side Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Tulsa remarked during the church’s inaugural “Beer and Hymns” in 2014 that though he could acknowledge why some would be opposed to the event he assured that “Jesus drank wine with hookers.”

If this Jesus had also renounced wealth and possessions in the name of righteousness, then how would St. Clair’s “society” have been able to distinguish between Jesus the savior from Jesus another property-less and poverty-stricken man of Judea? For St. Clair and Taylor, Jesus was not among the poor, but stepped down to them. This middle class Jesus shows congregants like St. Clair that being righteous means going beneath yourself, socially, which, in this understanding, is an act of rebellion.

This Jesus is preserved in the image of a Craft Christian middle class that sees itself as both morally and socially superior. In his seminal “Elementary Forms of Religious Life,” Émile Durkheim argued that conceptions of deities both reflect and reinforce the virtues of the society to which they belong. Through his quest for understanding the ways in which religion operated within the societies of aboriginal Australians, Durkheim hoped it would serve as a miniature and more simplified model for industrial nations and how they constructed and utilized religion. Since his work, scholars of religion and sociology have sought to broaden his initial ideas. By breaking down society into separate, and paradoxically often overlapping, categories in relation to identity formation Craft Christianity can be viewed as a twenty-first century attempt at

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Christian middle class articulation, much like such cultural trends as temperance.

**Marked Categories**

Historically, in America Jesus has not looked like everyone, but rather a white Protestant middle class that has been the basis of America’s cultural religion. Of course portrayals of a nonwhite Jesus have been a part of this nation’s religious history, but they have also been acknowledged and labeled as such. Nikolaj Trubetzkoy and Roman Jakobson were the first to investigate how one item in a phoneme pair always goes unnoticed while the other is noted or accented. By 1982, sociologist Waugh broadened this ‘unmarked’ and ‘marked’ binary beyond linguistics, finding it to also be social. Marked categories not only draw attention to what is ‘socially relevant,’ but as marked features, are often associated with narrowed and more socially articulated concepts than the unmarked. For instance, the nonwhite Jesus is a ‘marked’ Jesus, in which a qualifier is nearly always applied: black Jesus, woman Jesus, brown Jesus. In America, unmarked Jesus is also the unmarked white Jesus. Similarly, for St. Clair, Jesus’s implied middle class also goes unmarked because it reflects her own unmarked class. Social class goes largely unacknowledged or is likely even invisible for those within the craft beer culture, more generally.

**Class, boundary work, and symbolic exclusion**

Cultural taste has been largely examined along lines of inclusion and exclusion within separate fields, and also boundary work with individual identity. Weber (1978) and Bourdieu (1984) each argued that taste serves as one way in which a more powerful

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233 Brekhus, 25.
235 Ibid.
group denies resources to another.\textsuperscript{236} Where there is taste there is also distaste, or as Bourdieu put it “tastes are perhaps first and foremost distastes.”\textsuperscript{237} Consumer behavior (both consumption and avoidance of) acts as one way in which the boundaries between classes are maintained. As I have attempted to illuminate, the non-consumption of alcohol during the zenith of nineteenth century temperance America acted as a powerful symbol to communicate one’s belonging to the middle classes, relegating drinking to an association with the working class ethnic “other.” With the advent of craft beer and “craft values”, however, America’s middle classes are permitted to retain their self-imposed superiority while also having beer through what Veblen (1899) termed “invidious comparison.” This type of conspicuous consumption occurs when a member of higher status consumes conspicuously to differentiate themselves from lower status individuals and groups.\textsuperscript{238}

Both Weber and Bourdieu further suggested that high-status individuals view lower-status culture as crude, vulgar, and/or dishonorable, thus distasteful.\textsuperscript{239} Bourdieu termed this process of exchange of social knowledge for economic gain as “cultural

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\item\textsuperscript{237} Bourdieu, 56-57.
\item\textsuperscript{238} Thorstein Veblen, \textit{The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study in the Evolution of Institutions} (Macmillan, 1899), 33.
\item\textsuperscript{239} While Bourdieu and Weber’s thoughts on the intersection of taste and class continue to be drawn upon, they are not without critique. In contrast to high-status simply disregarding low-status as distasteful, this does not seem to account for the body of sociological literature that suggests religious and political tolerance increases with education. Between these two polarities is a more nuanced understanding of taste and its class dimensions. Accompanying the middle and high class value of education is “political tolerance,” or multiculturalism. Put differently, in America it is tasteful to be knowledgeable and appreciative of a determined amount of different cultures. Therefore, high status does not automatically mean most exclusive.
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capital.”240 This process is governed by two interconnected types of exclusion: social and symbolic. “Social exclusion” is the exclusion of groups or individuals who do not meet a previously determined criteria of cultural attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs. The arbiters of high culture taste are therefore those with more cultural capital (i.e. education, status, and wealth). If “social exclusion” is the process of identifying and subsequently denying resources to the “other,” then “symbolic exclusion” is the well from which “social exclusion” draws. What constitutes as tasteful and thus distasteful is derived from and reinforced through “symbolic exclusion” in the process of “boundary work.”241 As I have demonstrated, foodways of beer in the United States have served as cultural cues to signify socioeconomic position, gender, ethnicity, and religious identity. However, how this has been carried out in the social landscape of America has always been undergoing a process of change. The advent of the craft beer movement is likely the most powerful force in this reorientation. Like and dislike of social groups can be associated with like and dislike of beer and classifications of beer.

As I have established, while craft beer is seen as authentic and pure, its consumption is also so. With this mindful consumption, craft consumers distinguish themselves from mindless consumption of inferior and impure products propagated by “Big Beer.” As quality is equated with good taste, low quality is similarly associated with poor taste. Therefore, for Craft Christians, if drinkers of non-craft beers cannot

drink for mindful enjoyment and reverence to God then they must be drinking for the wrong reasons. They must be consuming mindlessly or only to get intoxicated, which continues to be held as sinful in the Craft Christian worldview.

Craft Beer, Craft Christian, and Middle Class America

The study of religion in America and America in religion now illuminates that despite the concerns of both the political right and political left, America has been and continues to be, seemingly paradoxically, both a multireligious and heavily Protestant nation. The long-held “secular” ideals upon which this nation was formed, often attributed to the Enlightenment, are now being critically examined. As argued by historian Tracy Fessenden, beneath the masks of logic and progress of a so-called secular America has always been an undercurrent of competing Protestantisms whose sensibilities and norms have provided the context in which “secular” ideas have been framed.242 From concerns of body image which began at the tail end of the nineteenth century to everything from food and foodways, gender, marriage, science, race, and of course alcohol none have escaped the Protestant filter. However, while non-Protestant religions have certainly been impacted by America’s Protestants, so too have America’s Protestants by these non-Protestant voices.

If the history of the United States is told through the lens of Protestantism, then it is also a history of whiteness and middle class. Since the industrial turn, the vehicles of American popular culture and social change have rarely moved without the approval or disapproval of a middle class comprising mostly (if not almost totally at times) of white

Protestants.

Similar to their nineteenth century predecessors, the middle class of twenty-first century America also finds itself in a process of defining and articulating in a time that this section of society also sees as threatening to its existence. Economic inequality in the United States continues to lead among Western industrialized nations. Similarly, rates of social mobility also ranks at the bottom.\textsuperscript{243} What it means to be middle class in America is surely changing. What this also means, as it always has done, is that what being Protestant American is also changing. Craft Christian ideology not only distinguishes its congregations and groups from other religious communities, but also articulates boundary work along class, racial, and nationalistic lines. Just as temperate Christians could identify those of their flock from an intemperate, and thus immoral, “other” in their relation to alcohol, today’s Craft Christians have also established systems that both communicates their moral superiority (righteousness) along similar methods, but also work along lines of class, gender, and religion to illuminate apostates.

\textbf{Science}

“This did science and morals go hand in hand.”

- Kurt Vonnegut, “Welcome to the Monkey House,” 1968.\textsuperscript{244}

Just as in the case of nineteenth century temperance movements, Craft Christians of twenty-first century America are also able to draw upon an emerging field of scientific findings that reflect and reinforce their understanding of alcohol. Whereas Benjamin Rush’s treatise on the dangers of alcohol set the precedent for research and the wealth of


\textsuperscript{244} Kurt Vonnegut, \textit{Welcome to the Monkey House} (Delacorte Press), 1968.
scientific findings that further regarded alcohol as nothing more than a physical and
social danger, over the last decade, studies in psychology and neurophysiology have
increasingly concluded that while drinking can certainly be detrimental to health, a
moderate amount of alcohol and even slight intoxication can be beneficial physically,
emotionally, and even socially. In 2012, researchers at Pittsburg University concluded
that moderate alcohol consumption in a social setting contributes to group formation.245
Coupled with the seemingly endless studies that have implicated moderate alcohol
consumption to longevity, cardiovascular health, stroke and even cancer prevention, this
new scientific orientation has continuously found its way into America’s government
entities and media. Even institutions that were created to preserve the image of alcohol
as dangerous, such as the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, now
concedes that alcohol does in fact have health benefits.246 The ghost of Rush that has
haunted the American consciousness is now slowly, at times grudgingly, appearing as a
friendly ally. In short, these studies echo both craft beer and Craft Christian conceptions
of drinking. The shared song of white male middle class America and mainstream
science endures.

God’s Plant?
From Mather’s “good creature of God” to Rush’s “dishonorable vice” to Pastor
Bistayi’s “gift from God's creation,” beer has never been without its relationship to
religion in America. Once a symbol demarcating the materially, and thus morally, poor
from the fledgling Christian middle class in nineteenth century America. Now a symbol

245 Michael Sayette et al., “Alcohol and Group Formation: a multimodal investigation of the effects of
246 “Alcohol Facts and Statistics,” National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2016,
demarcating the materially, and thus morally, poor from the fledgling Christian middle class in twenty-first century America. The foodways of beer are ever-changing, and though it remains a religiously-charged class symbol, the ways in which this symbol has acted and been acted upon is also not monolithic. The advent of Craft Christianity raises question about the future of religion in the United States. How “non-religious” (or how seemingly non-institutional) can a ‘religion’ such as Christianity be? Will the negative associations of the term “religion” be, in turn, rebelled against by the next generation? What about craft beer? At what point will craft beer lose its rebel status and instead be another sign of conformity? What about other substances considered “drugs”? The lifting of the federal prohibition on producing one’s own beer was a monumental legislative moment that contributed to the craft beer revolution. As America inches closer to the federal legalization of marijuana, will the next generation find Christians turning to Genesis for justification for also passing a pipe packed with “God’s plant”? Perhaps only if it is ethically cultivated.
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