

**THE MEDICAL-MORAL ECONOMY OF REGULATIONS:  
ALCOHOL LEGISLATION IN B.C., 1871-1925**

by

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation analyzes the process by which alcohol production, distribution and consumption in British Columbia became subject to state control between 1871 and 1925. The dissertation utilizes primary and secondary sources to examine the construction of economic, moral, and medical-moral discourses about alcohol. Archival material including official reports, private correspondence, relevant newspaper articles and articles published in professional magazines was examined in order to allow a reconstruction of the ways in which these discourses were designed and employed.

The analysis of these historical documents reveals that the enactment and administration of alcohol regulations originated in a dynamic process of negotiations among reformers, professionals, civic officials and liquor entrepreneurs. Struggles over alcohol consumption and its control reflected the ideas of reformers and professionals about the kind of social and moral order which should prevail in the Province. These ideas originated in the response of these moral entrepreneurs to waves of immigrants coming to the Province starting in the 1890s. Believing that scientific knowledge allowed experts to create an "ideal type of citizen", professionals and reformers designed and applied a whole range of legal and social regulations. They believed that through the inculcation of middle-class white Anglo Saxon values -- hard work, discipline and temperance -- members of

the working classes and various non-white races could be absorbed into modern democratic society.

The enactment of alcohol regulations entailed an expanding intervention by state and professional institutions into private life. The research indicates that the introduction of alcohol regulations primarily targeted women, workers and members of racial minorities. Alcohol regulations, like many other system of regulations, helped to partly construct the differences between minority groups and other members of British Columbia society. These regulations became a vital part in the process by which the moral texture of British Columbian society was produced.

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DEDICATION

For Michael, Ido and Adi

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: THE STUDY OF ALCOHOL REGULATIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1871-1925

The main concern of this dissertation is the processes by which alcohol production, distribution and consumption in British Columbia became subject to state control between 1871 and 1925. Starting in the latter part of the 19th century, a network of administrative, legal and medical regulations as well as educational initiatives gradually developed to monitor and control the distribution and use of alcohol. The dissertation argues that the enactment of these regulations cannot be seen as the outcome of any single cause, but rather as being generated by a complex of political, ideological, moral professional and social forces. The analysis of the forces which shaped the construction and enforcement of alcohol regulation in British Columbia draws on recent theoretical and empirical approaches in the sociology of law, the sociology of social control and feminism. These perspectives emphasize the ideological and political forces which influence the enactment and administration of laws and regulations.

#### 1) Sociology of Law and Vocabulary of Motives

In order to reconstruct the processes through which alcohol regulations were enacted and enforced in British Columbia, the dissertation describes the activities of

reformers, state officials and professionals who participated in struggles and campaigns relating to alcohol distribution and consumption. The study examines the images, rhetoric and representations used by these people in their attempts to secure certain goals. The examination of these practices is located within an analysis of wider developments and changes occurring in the province and outside. To study the reasoning which supported regulation and enforcement, and to investigate the cultural context of this reasoning, the dissertation draws on theoretical and empirical approaches formulated by Mills (1940), Melossi (1987, 1990) and Sumner (1990b). As early as 1940, Mills coined the term "vocabulary of motives" to refer to the justifications people offer for their conduct. For Mills, these justifications are situated in a specific historical and social context (Mills 1940:906). The analysis of vocabularies of motives reveals various kinds of normative constructs which shape motives and actions in particular situations.

Applying this mode of analysis to the study of law creation, Melossi (1990) maintains that the vocabularies of motives which are mobilized by law creators and enforcers emerge through a dynamic process of struggle and conflict. In each historical period people employ competing sets of vocabularies of motives in order to translate their interpretation of what is acceptable behavior into legal and social practices (Melossi 1987:38). The selection of one vocabulary of motives over others (or a particular combination

of various vocabularies) in the process of law creation and its enforcement is socially and culturally grounded. In order to examine the enactment of laws and their administration, Melossi (1990) proposes a sociological theory of law which reconstructs "point by point" (p. 151) the formulation and mobilization of vocabularies of motives derived from business, political, and bureaucratic organizations at a specific time. Such study should examine the processes through which "hegemonic vocabularies are created and maintained, and are able to exert influence on the actual decisions to arrest, convict, and sentence" (p.152).

The significance of locating the development of a specific reasoning within wider social and cultural circumstances is emphasized by Cohen (1983), who examines the utterances of social control agents in a dialectic way. Such an approach should acknowledge that ideas:

do not exist in some numinous realm of their own, abstracted from political and material interests, but they do vary over time and one must argue seriously about why they take particular and successive forms. . . . The structure might indeed only 'allow' certain ideas to dominate at any one time, but once this facilitation occurs, the ideas take on something of a life of their own -- a life which generates its own social facts (p.109).

According to this view, reasoning is historically contingent, an outcome of political and social contexts.

Central to Melossi's theoretical perspective is a critical examination of the existing categories of crime and deviance. His perspective depicts these categories as an

outcome of complex struggles and conflicts among various groups in society at a specific historical conjuncture.

A kindred perspective to that of Melossi is provided by Sumner's sociology of censures (Sumner 1990b). For Sumner censures are "negative ideological categories with specific, historical application" (p.26).<sup>1</sup> The definition of a behavior as criminal or deviant is thus considered by Sumner to be a moral judgment "of what is truly immoral, useless, dangerous, anti-social and inadequate" (p.16). Sumner proposes that in order to understand the social construction of these categories, sociologists should examine various components of censures: the social relations which support a censure; the human fears which are represented in a censure; the phenomena it interprets and signifies; and the historical conjuncture at which the censure is developed and applied (p. 29).

Like Melossi, Sumner proposes to examine the reasoning which is employed by individuals and groups involved in the various activities relating to the creation and application of a censure. The analysis of "moral language" (Sumner 1990b:31) through which censures are articulated should encompass "the target of the censure, the agencies and procedures of targeting, and the shifts in its meaning and contexts of use"

1. Sumner sees ideology as

both sectional reflections of social structure and as active, creative, integral components of reflexive social practice, not simply as the systematic, intellectualized, false consciousness of group interest (Sumner 1990b:29, emphasis in original).



(p.31). Following Sumner's concept of censure, McLaren and Lowman (1990:24) examine the "vocabularies of censure" and "vocabularies of resistance" to the censure of prostitution at the turn of the 20th century in Canada. The various vocabularies of censure and resistance are (for convenience) referred to by McLaren and Lowman as "discourses". Similarly, this dissertation examines the various "discourses" which were promulgated in British Columbia between 1871 and 1925 in the domain of alcohol distribution and consumption. In other words, this work explores the array of discursive and non-discursive formations and explains: 1) how and why they emerged at this time; 2) how and why they had the authority to change values, beliefs and attitudes; and 3) how they were mobilized by various groups to become institutional practices.

The manufacture, distribution and sale of alcohol constitutes an economy, and this dissertation demonstrates that this particular economy was discursively constituted first morally, then medically, and then by a combination of moral and medical reasoning. The study explores the historical emergence and application of this sequence of discursive interpretations of alcohol.

This reconstruction of the processes through which regulations were introduced and enforced in British Columbia differs from existing studies analyzing the enactment and enforcement of alcohol regulations.

## 2) Existing Explanations of the Enactment of Alcohol Regulations

A review of the scholarly research on alcohol regulations reveals that four models have been used to explain the creation of alcohol regulations. The first two models do not take as a subject for inquiry the processes by which alcohol regulations were introduced and enforced.

i) *Medical Progressivism*: The dominant approach in the literature on alcohol use is concerned with the effects of excessive alcohol consumption on an individual's health. Medical studies examine etiological factors and symptoms of various forms of alcoholism and locate them in the physiology or mental condition of individual subjects (Keller 1960; Wexberg 1951). Recently, sociologically-oriented work identified social networks and family dynamics as leading to an individual's involvement in heavy drinking (Estes and Heinemann 1986; cf. Room 1982:57).

These etiological studies are supported by the notion that individuals who suffer from sickness related to the consumption of alcohol could be diagnosed, treated and cured by professionals. Assessing preventive and treatment policies<sup>2</sup>, these works discuss the societal reaction to alcohol consumption in administrative and technical terms. Changes in policies dealing with alcohol-related problems are described as originating in medical developments and

2. Policy may be defined as a concept, document, or activity that expresses a social value or provides a guiding principle, and it is upon the basis of the expressed value that subsequent decisions (e.g., legislation, regulations, directives, etc.) are shaped.

reflecting advances in techniques of information gathering specific to alcohol-related problems (cf. Room 1982:76). This "public relation history" (cf. Scull 1989) presents the "evolution" in treatment policies as a replacement of moral responses to alcohol by scientific, value-free interpretations based on objective facts (Bacon 1967; Estes and Heinemann 1986:p.ix).

ii) *Historical Studies*: The historical social response to alcohol consumption has been examined in studies which describe the activities of temperance and prohibition movements. In Canada, a handful of works trace the rise and fall of such movements in various provinces (Campbell 1988; Forbes 1971; Gough 1988; Hiebert 1969; Hallowell 1972; Sheehan 1983). These works do not analyze the nature of the societal reaction to alcohol consumption. They do, however, provide useful material upon which an analysis of the history of alcohol regulations in Canada can proceed.

The studies which take the societal response to alcohol as a subject for sociological inquiry are informed by two theoretical approaches which examine the way in which law is being constructed and applied.

iii) *The Social Constructionist Perspective*: During the 1960s, the societal response to crime and deviance became the central theme of sociological inquiry for proponents of the social constructionist perspective. Becker (1963), Lemert (1967) and their colleagues examined processes leading to the definition of certain individuals as deviants or sick. Studying the

"deviantization process" (cf. Schur 1980:135), social constructionists focused on the strategies used by moral entrepreneurs (Becker 1963) and claims-makers (Spector and Kitsuse 1977) to encourage legislators to introduce penal policies or apply them in certain ways.

For Becker (1963) interest groups involved in campaigns demanding the introduction of favored policies shape the process of law creation. According to Becker, each of these groups left its imprint on the process by which behavior was defined as criminal or deviant. He observes that while translating regulation into daily operation, law enforcement agencies often change the intent of the original regulation. This transformation occurs as social control personnel attempt to achieve their own interests such as the appropriation of power and resources (pp. 155-162).<sup>3</sup> For social constructionists legislation is a representation of moral and political interests.

While the social constructionists turned the process of law creation into a subject of sociological concern in its own right, they neglected to examine the relations between these processes and social structures of various kinds. Commenting on this limitation, Downes and Rock (1982:183-184) claim that labeling theorists visualized society as a series of small

3. Changes and deviation from the original aims were identified by Rothman (1971) who examined the establishment of the prison and the asylum in America. He maintains that the goals of the reformers were routinely undermined by pragmatic and managerial considerations and thus resulted in systematically altered consequences.

units without any overarching structure. The failure to locate microsociological mechanisms and social processes within macrosociological structures resulted in a failure to examine the sources of power that enable certain groups to translate interests into policies, and to define behavior as deviant or pathological.

Various sociological studies which investigate the origins of alcohol regulations have pointed to the significant role of lobby groups in the enactment of alcohol regulations (Gusfield 1963, 1967; Harrison 1971). Gusfield's classic study has shown how religious groups used the passage of the prohibition law in the United States to enforce the traditional Protestant moral code. While he provides a detailed account of the campaign, and sheds light on the influence of lobby groups on political activities, he does not examine various elements of the complex structural conditions under which the moral crusade regarding alcohol took place -- elements such as the influence of gender and race structure and changing patterns of state involvement in private life.

Gusfield (1981), Levine (1978, 1984), and Reinerman (1988) have shown how various lobby groups used medical professional knowledge in the process through which alcohol consumption was defined as a medical problem. For Gusfield, the "ownership" (p. 10-11) of alcohol-related problems by the medical profession led to the introduction of various policies which contributed to the expansion of medical services dealing

with alcohol use and abuse. Chauncey (1980) and Roman and Blum (1987) see the definition of alcohol use as a medical problem as originating in the growing power of the medical professions and the establishment of institutions during the 1970s and 1980s dealing specifically with alcoholism. Weisner (1983) and Weisner and Room (1984) observe that treatment agencies in California were often susceptible to pressures to expand their clientele in order to meet fiscal needs. Medical practitioners employed in treatment institutions redefined alcohol problems more broadly, and demanded additional funding, along with a more secure status within the social services bureaucracy. The tremendous growth of the treatment system created the perpetual need for a large enough clientele to warrant continued and even increased funding. From the 1980s, the treatment of alcoholics was privatized and was controlled mainly by profit-making organizations trying to find new sources of clientele. Several strategies were adopted to secure more clients: 1) a campaign was launched, which used notions of 'hidden alcoholics' and 'co-alcoholics' (especially family members of alcoholics) who must be diagnosed and cured by the experts in these institutions; 2) work places and unions were encouraged to incorporate treatment for alcoholism as a part of services given to employees in need (Roman 1980, 1981; Wagner 1987); and 3) the criminal court was used as a source of clients for treatment institutions.

Scholars such as Fingarette (1983, 1988), Giffen (1966, 1975) and Mitchell (1988) have analyzed the influence of

medical interpretations of alcoholism on legal policies. Fingarette (1983) and Mitchell (1988) have observed that assumptions based on erroneous information about alcoholism were incorporated into judicial reasoning in criminal cases, usually by forensic authorities who provided to the courts medical testimony on intoxication.

These profession-oriented studies provide an important insight into the definition of alcoholism as a sickness -- a definition which served the interests of medical experts. They, however, do not locate the expanding power of the medical professions within a broader structural framework. The medical profession is seen as a unified institution and thus the existence of conflicting ideas and attitudes within the medical profession towards alcoholism in particular, and sickness in general is ignored.

This dissertation does not ignore the physical, mental and social consequences of alcohol consumption (see Boyd 1991 for a discussion of the social costs of alcohol). The dissertation, however, will examine how these consequences were understood, interpreted and portrayed in a specific historical time.

iv) *Marxist Explanations*. Trying to address questions of power and to locate its social sources, Marxists set out to develop a theory which would explore the relations among law, economy, and the state. According to Marxists, the foundations and operations of penal practices must be explained in terms of relations of production. The instrumentalist version of

Marxist criminology portrays legal institutions in liberal capitalist democracies as control mechanisms used by members of the dominant class to advance their political interests (Quinney 1974:52). According to this view, law is an instrument of the ruling class used to secure the survival of the capitalist social order (Quinney 1974).

Instrumentalist Marxism reduces the criminal law to its economic and hegemonic functions thus ignoring the complex set of forces shaping the creation and application of controls. Using a similar theoretical perspective, Dorn (1983) and Rumbarger (1989) set out to examine the structural roots of alcohol regulations. Dorn (1983) follows changes in alcohol-related policies in England from the 14th century until 1980. He shows how drinking practices in England became redefined as troublesome, especially at times when there was a need for greater discipline of the labouring classes. The enactment of 19th century legislation which controlled the drinking practices of the working-classes is explained as an effort to maintain "social control and ... [to ensure] the economic and political subordination of that class" (p.43). According to Dorn, the introduction of alcohol-related legislation is thus tied to the specific interests of a class which aimed to maintain a disciplined, tractable work-force.

Dorn argues that the British authorities interpreted alcohol use by workers as a source of social unrest. In contrast, Vogt (1984) maintains that the consumption of alcohol by workers in 19th century Germany was used by



employers as a means to ensure social stability. Vogt observed that company managers systematically exploited their workers by paying for their work with alcoholic beverages. Levine (1985) argues that the repeal of prohibition in the U.S.A. originated in a similar willingness on the part of the new business community and professional middle classes to prevent unrest among members of the working classes. These groups feared that the experience of lawlessness resulting from the inability to enforce the Prohibition Act would lead to disrespect for the law. Rumbarger (1989) emphasizes the pivotal role of the American business community in the introduction of prohibition, as well as its repeal. For Rumbarger, this involvement was motivated by the attempt to secure the capitalist social order.

Even though this Marxist approach examines the social and political roots of control mechanisms, the actual debates and struggles surrounding the introduction and application of penal practices have not been exposed to a sociological scrutiny. Garland and Young (1983:24) have observed that these scholars were principally engaged in an abstract general discussion of law and ideology and have generally failed to produce a detailed examination of the process of law creation and its operation.

3) The Study of the Enactment and Administration of Alcohol Regulations in British Columbia, 1871-1925

The theoretical approach adopted in this dissertation marks a shift from the social constructionist perspective and Marxian theories by starting to integrate microsociological and macrosociological perspectives. In order to reconstruct the process through which alcohol regulations were enacted and administered in British Columbia between 1871 and 1925, this dissertation describes the activities of members of social and moral reform movements as well as initiatives of professional groups such as educators, medical practitioners and psychiatrists. The dissertation traces the activities of civic officials and law enforcement personnel, and situates this analysis in an examination of social, moral, professional and political changes and developments.

The integration of analyses of social structure and human agency also draws on Giddens' structuration theory (Giddens 1979; 1983). According to Giddens, social actions are outcomes of social practices situated in a specific historical conjuncture and organized "in a skilled and knowledgeable fashion by human agents" (Giddens 1983:19). These activities are bounded by structural conditions. According to Giddens, the analysis of social action should emphasize the duality of structure: "the structured properties of social systems are simultaneously the medium and outcomes of social acts" (Giddens 1983:19 emphasis in original). This integration between micro and macro processes -- an integration which

Melossi (1985) calls 'grounded labelling theory' -- shares with the sociology of social control the desire to "rebuild labelling theory's limited studies of social control 'culture' or control agencies to a more politically and historically informed map" (Cohen and Scull 1983:7).

#### 4) Alcohol Regulations and Professional Knowledge

Beginning in the late 19th century, physicians, psychiatrists, educators and public health officers spearheaded various initiatives around a variety of social issues, including alcohol use. For convenience, they will be referred in this dissertation as "professionals". Even though they often differed in their perceptions about these issues and their application, they nevertheless had in common an authoritative voice on such social issues. They produced a specific type of professional knowledge which played an important role in the developments examined here. These professionals, together with a range of moral and social reformers, grounded their calls for control of the distribution and consumption of alcohol in a medical interpretation of alcohol use. Mobilizing scientific reasoning and expert knowledge, they claimed that the consumption of alcohol harmed the health and morality of British Columbians. This interpretation paved the way for the creation of a network of controls exposing various aspects of individual conduct to state surveillance and control. The employment of scientific reasoning and expert knowledge by individuals and

groups involved in the creation of controls is theorized by Weber (1978a; 1978b) and Foucault (1973; 1979; 1980). For both scholars law creation should be understood as influenced by, among other things, expert knowledge, scientific developments and epistemological changes.

Weber has demonstrated that developments of control mechanisms in modern societies are part of a broader process "in which social practices come to be 'rationalized' and 'instrumentalized', in a utilitarian fashion" (cf. Garland 1990:179). Weber traces the emergence of rationalization to the "elimination of magical thought and practice" (Giddens 1971:183). This elimination led to the establishment of new forms of social knowledge and actions deriving from it. Prior to the period of modernity, social actions were governed by emotions, habits or other irrational factors (Garland 1990:179). With the rationalization of "western" society, human activity became calculated and informed by scientific knowledge.

This is also the case with domination. Weber defines domination "not merely as a structure of command that elicits obedience, but as obedience that is willingly given" (Parkin 1982:74). Such obedience is achieved when subordinates believe in the legitimacy of their subordination. For Weber, science, technology and the intellectuals who use new scientific knowledge all play an important role in the securing of such legitimation.

In the Western world, legitimacy is created by the "rational bureaucracy which is founded upon legal domination" (Giddens 1971:157). While the bureaucracy itself obeys a certain set of rules, it is considered by Weber to be a special status group by virtue of its control of the means of administration. Since the management of information and the control over administrative strategies are significant for the operation of the capitalist state, bureaucrats can manipulate information and thus dramatically influence the process of policy making.

The influence of professional knowledge on the shaping of penal and other practices is central to the work of Foucault (1973, 1979, 1980). For Foucault, transformations in responses to madness, criminality and sexuality in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe originated in the shifting configurations of knowledge in the social sciences. Developments in these sciences produced knowledge which served to divide populations through their identification, segregation and categorization (Foucault 1979). The examination and division of the population was supported by the development of behavioral "norms". This development is depicted by Foucault (1979) as part of the "normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish" (p. 184). Summarizing this process, Cohen (1988) claims that for Foucault, new forms of knowledge created

a system of finely graded intervals that distribute individuals around a norm. This normative rationality (in psychiatry, sexuality, criminology)

undermines legal authority (the binary opposition between permitted and forbidden) by creating new categories and gradations of normality, anomaly, and preventions that the techniques of discipline are designed to eliminate (240).

The development of classification schemes created new categories of criminality and deviance leading to the formulation of new sets of controls to discipline the population. These disciplinary techniques which aimed to eliminate criminality, sickness and deviance operated through various institutions arrayed around the prison, at varying distances from that centre of intense control. These institutions were part of a carceral net reinforcing disciplinary norms both inside and outside the boundaries of the institutions. Foucault (1980) insists that in his analysis of the creation of these controls, he does

not mean to say that the law fades into the background or that the institutions of justice tend to disappear, but rather that the law operates more and more as a norm, and that the judicial institution is increasingly incorporated into a continuum of apparatuses (medical, administrative, and so on) whose functions are for the most part regulatory (p.144).

The extension of the judicial institution to other areas is also central to the work of Donzelot (1979). Studying the formation of the modern family, Donzelot has observed that, through a series of techniques and interventions in France in the 19th century, the family became an agent of socialization reinforcing and reproducing norms which were central to the existing social order. According to Donzelot, these interventions exposed family members to controls monitoring

various aspects of their life. The mother was considered to be the appropriate agent of socialization. The identification of the mother as the main agent of reproduction exposed her behavior to various directive principles for managing the family in a way which would produce the "ideal" citizen. In this way, the modern family functions as one element within a continuum of institutions regulating the behavior of family members.

Central to these series of interventions is the influence of the medical system and the involvement of experts in the creation of controls over family members, particularly children. Donzelot observed that psychiatrists and medical practitioners played a vital role in creating and operating controls of mothers and children. He argues that legal, educational and medical interventions operated through a new domain which he defines as the social. This domain exists in a special space between the private and the public spheres. The social for Donzelot is a hybrid sphere which came to be a site of struggles and alliances between various forces and institutions. The social does not

merge with the public sector or the private sector, since on the contrary it leads to a new hybrid form of the public and the private, and itself produces a repetition, a novel interlacing of interventions and withdrawals of the state (p. x).

For Donzelot, state intervention in the family should not be understood as following a hierarchical model. Instead, the family was located at the centre of a series of "concentric circles" (p. 103) and was exposed to a network of controls.

According to Donzelot, the social does not merge with the judicial. Instead it "extends the field of judicial action" (p. x). The surveillance and discipline of private behavior is thus depicted by Donzelot as originating in and being legitimized by the interrelations among control apparatuses which operate in the social domain.

Analyzing similar changes in the role of the state in private life, Garland (1985) describes the development of control over individual conduct as expressed in a range of social programs. Examining the emergence of penal and welfare policies in Britain at the turn of the 20th century, Garland emphasizes the significance of scientific reasoning and medical practices in the creation of controls. He investigates further the reasoning offered by the creators of these controls to legitimize the intervention of the state in private behavior. According to Garland, the belief in the ability of experts to design policies shaping individuals' conduct supported the formulation of a whole range of techniques dealing with criminals.

Starting at the end of the 19th century, professionals and reformers believed that the state should be authorized to interfere in private behavior in order to prevent criminality and sickness. They claimed that this intervention should employ scientific technologies to diagnose, prevent and cure criminals. In this way, criminality became a "knowable positive entity which, with the aid of scientific investigation and appropriate practical techniques, could be



removed from the social body" (p.106). This belief in the social-engineering ability of experts was central to various programs -- social work, social security and Eugenics -- which were developed in Britain. Garland maintains that the presentation of crime and sickness as threatening the very existence of society legitimized the creation of new controls over criminals and persons thought to become criminals in the future. Garland depicts these controls and their legitimation as paving the way for the development of the welfare interventionist state.

Drawing on insights from Foucault, Donzelot and Garland's analysis of the impact of expert knowledge on the creation and application of control mechanisms, the dissertation examines the role of professional knowledge in the process through which alcohol regulations were introduced and enforced in British Columbia. In particular, the dissertation examines how forms of knowledge about the causes and effects of alcoholism were constituted in the discourses on alcohol which emerged during this time. The dissertation traces the ways in which these forms of knowledge were employed by various groups and individuals to support the demands that their particular interpretation of alcohol use would be translated into regulation or prohibition.

Based on Foucault's ideas, this dissertation will show how alcohol regulations reflected an emerging conception of a "normal" citizen -- a norm against which individuals were measured. This norm influenced the nature of discussions about

alcohol and at the same time was applied to practices such as inspection of immigrants and examination of children.

Informed by Donzelot's analysis, this dissertation will trace changes in the relationship between the family and the state as they were expressed in the discourses on alcohol. In particular, the dissertation will examine the ways in which the knowledge and authority of the medical profession shaped these changes. It will also examine the role of alcohol regulations in broader attempts to construct the mother as an agent of socialization and reproduction of a desired social order. Through these efforts, the mother was made an object for a variety of formal and informal controls. At this juncture, the work will be informed by feminist works emphasizing the notion of auxiliary centers of power which control and regulate women's life. Barrett (1985), Gavigan (1986) and Smart (1990) demonstrate that the power to regulate women's behavior is exercised by various control agencies, including medical institutions, familial structure and the educational system. Chunn and Gavigan (1988) and Smart (1990) maintain that the relations between these controls and the state are historically and culturally contingent. Thus, an analysis of the role of the state in the creation, legitimation and implementation of controls should be sensitive to the relations among various controls relating to women's behavior at a particular historical time. Informed by these works, the dissertation will examine the role of medical

and legal regulations and educational initiatives relating to the consumption of alcohol in regulating women's behaviors.

Drawing on the work of Garland (1985), the dissertation will examine how medical notions and concepts about alcohol as developed in hereditarian and eugenic theories were mobilized by certain groups to support demands that the state regulate the distribution and consumption of alcohol. These authoritative claims changed the portrayal of heavy drinking from a private, individual foible to a threatening pathology endangering the society at large. By analyzing this change in the portrayal, image and practices relating to the distribution and consumption of alcohol, the dissertation will engage in an examination of the discourses on alcohol as one element in the state's increasing involvement in the regulation of its populations.

As in the works of Weber and Foucault, this dissertation does not conceptualize the state as a unified institution but as an aggregate combination of "branches, apparatuses and agencies co-existing in a complex web of inter-relations" (Colwill 1987:281). The dissertation examines the operation of the state and the social construction of legitimation for this operation, in relation to the distribution and consumption of alcohol in British Columbia between 1871 and 1925.

##### 5) The Focus of the Study: 1871-1925

This dissertation examines the processes by which alcohol regulations were crafted and enforced in British Columbia

between 1871 and 1925. These years are characterized by a gradual increase in control of alcohol consumption. Restrictions were imposed on the hours of sale of alcohol and on the places in which it could be consumed. Moreover, specific laws and regulations forbidding the use of alcohol by drunkards, minors, and native Indians were introduced. In 1916 the British Columbia Prohibition Act outlawed the manufacture, sale, and use of alcohol. The Prohibition Act was replaced in 1921 by the Government Liquor Act which gave the government the authority to control the production, distribution, and consumption of alcohol.

This period has been selected as the focus of the research because during these years the distribution and consumption of alcohol sparked intense public and official debates. These exchanges between various individuals and groups involved not only alcohol-related issues but also a whole range of legal, social, medical and political matters. These included the responsibility of the authorities for the welfare and health of citizens; the role of religious institutions in Canadian society; and the appropriate societal response to a condition defined as a sickness. Consequently, these public debates over the enactment and enforcement of alcohol regulations offer rich material providing opportunities to examine the process by which alcohol regulations were introduced and enforced. These debates provide an insight into important social, legal and political developments in the province.

The activity around the introduction and implementation of alcohol regulation in British Columbia was influenced by political, social, professional and legal developments elsewhere, both in Canada and beyond, and especially in the United States and Britain. But it is beyond the scope of this study to examine primary material relating to developments which took place outside the province. Thus, the study concentrates on the experience of one province, British Columbia, and through secondary sources examines the relations between this specific experience and broader developments and changes.

#### 6) Methodological Considerations

The dissertation involves three levels of analysis and two methods. At the first level, the study reviews alcohol regulations introduced in British Columbia from 1871 to 1925. Federal regulations regarding the manufacture, distribution, and consumption of alcohol introduced during this time are examined as well. This analysis includes a description of federal and provincial statutes relating to alcohol and legislative activities as described in the Journals of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly and in newspaper accounts of debates in the legislature.

At the second level of the analysis, the work describes the activities, arguments and struggles which led to various sets of alcohol regulations between 1871 and 1925. These include policies proposed for dealing with alcohol

consumption, the justifications for such policies, and the conditions for their acceptance or rejection. At this level, the study explores the activities of the major participants in the debate: the Women's Christian Temperance Union; members of the People's Prohibition Association; officials of the British Columbia Temperance League; medical experts; legislators; worker organizations; and law enforcement agents.

In order to reconstruct the process by which alcohol regulations were introduced, the following sources were consulted:

- a) Debates in the legislative assembly as recorded in the Journals of British Columbia and in newspaper articles<sup>4</sup>.
- b) Reports published in the Sessional Papers of the British Columbia Legislature<sup>5</sup>; report of the Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic in Canada, 1895; the first and second reports of the Prohibition Commissioner, 1919 and 1920; annual reports of the Liquor Control Board between 1922 and 1925; report of the Royal Commission on Mental Hygiene, 1927.
- c) Correspondence; sermons; bulletins; pamphlets and other material found in the files of the British Columbia Prohibition Association; the British Columbia Temperance

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4. The Journals provide only summaries of debates which took place in the legislative assembly. Since the provincial Hansards were not published before 1971, newspaper articles contain the most detailed information of these debates.

5. Sessional Papers contain annual reports of various government departments.

League as well as in the collection of Hugh Dobson, the field secretary of the Methodist Church.

d) Additional documents produced by members of provincial and federal prohibition and temperance groups which are found in various files in the Special Collection library of University of British Columbia and in the pamphlet collection of Vancouver City Archives.

e) Correspondence among police officials and between representatives of law enforcement agencies and citizens found in files of the provincial police; the Attorney General; the Vancouver Board of police; and the Liquor Control Board.

f) Articles published in the following newspapers and magazines: The Western Recorder which was the official organ of the Methodist church; Social Welfare which was the main publication of the Social Service Council as well as the Western Women's Weekly which was the official organ of women's groups in the province; articles in newspapers published by labour unions: The Western Clarion and The British Columbia Federationist.

Articles published in the Public Health Journal, the Canadian Journal on Mental Hygiene and Canadian Medical Association Journal. These newspapers, magazines and journals do not have an index which could guide a selected reading of articles dealing with the introduction and enforcement of alcohol regulations. Thus, a review of all issues of these publications was undertaken.

g) Articles published in the daily newspapers of the province. In order to find relevant articles in the newspapers, the index card was searched, using the following code words: "liquor laws", "prohibition", "liquor traffic" and "alcoholism". Newspaper articles kept in the newspaper collection of the Vancouver City Archives were reviewed. This analysis identifies and describes the various discourses on alcohol and alcohol regulations.

At the third level of the analysis, the study locates arguments, debates and activities relating to alcohol regulations within a broader social and political context. In order to ground the activities within this wider context, secondary sources examining social, political and ideological changes in the province were consulted.

a) *The Analysis of Historical Documents*

The reconstruction of the processes by which alcohol regulations were introduced and enforced depended on documents written by participants in the struggles around alcohol regulation. These sources of data presented three methodological problems:

a) **The problem of "selective survival"**. Material recording operations of individuals who were active in the creation and enforcement of alcohol regulations was destroyed. For example, court and prison documents containing information on individuals who were arrested and charged for alcohol related offences have been lost. The research was therefore confined



to the scant information recorded in the appendix of the Journals and in the Vancouver Prisoners Record Book. While these materials do not permit exhaustive tracing of law enforcement practices, they do reveal general patterns of enforcement.

b) **Selectivity**. The available records omit written accounts of members of marginal groups who did not have access to printed documents. Since no records written by these individuals exist, it is impossible to ascertain their attitudes towards the distribution and consumption of alcohol as well as their perception of wider social and political issues.

c) **Reliability**. The available accounts of active participants in the struggles are second-order constructions or "other people's construction of what they and their compatriots are up to" (Geertz 1973:9) and might not be identical to the observations of individuals who did not engage in these campaigns.

In spite of these shortcomings, the research unearthed a wealth of historical data relating to the introduction and enforcement of alcohol regulations. The examination of these records, along with an analysis of secondary sources made it possible to trace the complex process in which alcohol regulations were introduced. This form of historical discourse analysis allowed a detailed examination of the ways in which specific discourses were constructed and deployed.

## 8) Organization of the Work:

**Chapter 1** introduces the theoretical perspectives which inform the research and outlines the methodology used in this study.

**Chapter 2** examines the promulgation and application of "economic" and "moral" discourses on the consumption of alcohol, which emerged in the province between 1871 and 1890. It traces the various interests involved in the creation of these discourses. The chapter analyzes the process by which an administrative system of alcohol distribution was established and analyzes attitudes towards alcohol consumption by native Indians, "drunkards" and children.

**Chapter 3** examines the changes in form and content of "moral" and "economic" discourses. The chapter locates these changes in the context of reformers' attitudes towards demographic changes occurring in the province between 1890 and 1910. In turn these attitudes are examined within a broader analysis of the emergence of the social gospel movement. In particular, attention is drawn to the way in which alcohol consumption by workers and family members was depicted as being immoral. The chapter further maps the way in which racist attitudes towards Orientals were translated into legislation that prohibited them from distributing alcohol.

**Chapter 4** examines the "medical-moral" discourse promulgated by reformers and professionals between 1910 and 1925. The chapter locates the construction of this discourse in developments in the social sciences which conceptually

relocated the source of criminal behavior from an individual's will to conditions beyond his/her control. The demands that the distribution and consumption of alcohol be outlawed are analyzed in the context of an examination of reformers and professionals desire to create the "new Jerusalem."

**Chapter 5** examines the application of the "medical-moral" discourse to the consumption of alcohol by immigrants, describing the activities of professional groups who lobbied the government to introduce legislation monitoring the health of people wishing to immigrate to Canada. The chapter goes on to examine the application of the same "medical-moral" discourse to family life.

**Chapter 6** describes the application of the "medical-moral" discourse to the productivity of laborers. The analysis traces the reasoning which supported arguments of reformers and businessmen about the nature of the liquor industry. The chapter explores further the translation of concerns about alcohol use into the daily operation of the police.

**Chapter 7** concludes the dissertation by examining various forces which shaped the enactment and administration of alcohol regulations. The chapter goes on to examine the process through which members of marginalized groups came to be the targets of regulations controlling the distribution and consumption of alcohol. The analysis concludes with a discussion of the role of the state and other institutions in creating and legitimizing alcohol regulations.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE ORIGINS OF ALCOHOL REGULATIONS: 1871-1890

#### 1) Introduction

Between 1871 and 1890 two main discourses relating to the distribution and consumption of alcohol developed in British Columbia: an economic discourse which described alcohol distribution and consumption in organizational and administrative terms and a moralistic discourse which emphasized the moral degenerative influence of the consumption of alcohol. The promulgation of these discourses and their translation into regulations originated in a dynamic process of negotiation between members of several groups. Civic officials and individuals involved in the liquor trade<sup>1</sup> encouraged the government to establish a legal framework to supervise the distribution and consumption of alcohol. Members of the British Columbia chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) which was established in Victoria in 1883, lobbied the government to ban the distribution and consumption of alcohol.

For civic officials and liquor entrepreneurs, the establishment of the Province of British Columbia as a political entity was an opportunity for the creation of an administrative system granting the alcohol trade a respectable image. Representatives of the WCTU, however, saw the establishment of a new provincial government as opportunity to

1. The definition of liquor at this time was broad. It included "all spirituous, fermented, and malt liquors, and all combination of liquors and drinks, and drinkable liquids which are intoxicating" (Licences Amendment Act 1888, c.18, s.8).

create a legal system based on moral Christian values. The major focus of the moral discourse was the distribution and consumption of alcohol by Natives. Alcohol use by Natives was interpreted by both Christian missionaries and government authorities as a sign of the barbarity of the Native race. The regulation of alcohol consumption by Natives became one mechanism, among others, of controlling Natives' lives.

The interpretation of these events was shaped by wider perceptions of the members of the various groups regarding the relations between individuals and the state. The participants in debates and activities around the distribution and consumption of alcohol generally believed that the state ought not to interfere in private lives, but should control certain types of behavior. This doctrine, however, came to be challenged, mainly by representatives of the WCTU, who encouraged the government to assume greater responsibilities for children's conduct. The attitudes of members of these groups towards alcohol consumption will be discussed in this chapter.

## 2) The Historical Context of the Discourses

The Province of British Columbia was established in 1871 when the British colony joined the Canadian federation. The 36,247 residents of the young province were Natives (70.8%), European immigrants (23.7%) and Orientals (4.3%) (Barman 1991:363). The economy of the province was linked with the exploitation of natural resources: minerals, timber and fish.

A large proportion of the non-Native population was male (72.9%); seeking employment in these extractive industries. Since fishing and lumbering provided only seasonal employment, there were many transient workers (Hiebert 1969:5). The non-Native population of the province increased from 10,124 in 1871 to 17,150 people in 1881 (Barman 1991:363). Most of the newcomers were employed in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The opening in 1887 of the railway connecting the province with eastern Canada, and the latter development of port facilities to serve sailing ships to Asia, led to the development of bigger cities, notably Vancouver.

In these early years, the social and administrative framework of the province began to evolve. It was during these years that the first alcohol regulations were introduced.<sup>2</sup> These regulations represented the establishment of an administrative system aiming to promote alcohol consumption and secure revenues from the liquor trade. Other regulations restricted the consumption of alcohol by certain people -- Natives, "drunkards" and minors.

### 3) The Liberal Philosophy of the State

The moral and economic discourses which supported the creation of alcohol regulations drew on a liberal philosophy of the state. This doctrine emphasized free enterprise and

2. The British North America Act allocated different powers to the federal and the provincial governments. It empowered the provinces to enact regulations relating to the distribution and consumption of alcohol (Russell 1984:26).

freedom of the individual. According to this doctrine, the role of the state is to protect private property and to facilitate investment. Commenting on Victorian England, Garland (1985) observes that the state was limited to intervention which was "justified as a necessary and instrumental evil, rather than a positive end in itself" (p.44). In British Columbia, entrepreneurs involved in the liquor trade lobbied the government to introduce regulations monitoring the distribution and consumption of alcohol. Such demands represent a level of state intervention different from that which Garland identifies in Victorian England: in British Columbia, the resulting regulations aimed to facilitate a free enterprise system organized and administered from above. The operation of state institutions in the social sphere remained, however, remote and isolated, and restricted by the logic of liberal philosophy. Only when individuals were perceived as lacking the ability to behave according to a moral script, thus losing their right to be "free", could the state's institutions legitimately interfere with their liberty. Such was the case with certain drinking behaviors.

#### 4) The Administration of the Liquor Trade

The various acts introduced between 1871 and 1890 set out to establish an administrative system for collecting revenues from the liquor trade. The use of a licence scheme to collect revenue was not new in British Columbia. During the 1850s, gold mining was regulated through a licence system devised to

raise revenue and "to keep a record of the number of adventurers entering the gold region, and to provide salaries for law enforcement officers and gold commissioners" (Gough 1989:18). A similar system was established during the 1870s to regulate and raise revenue from the forest industry (Reid and Weaver 1974:14). This "economic intervention" (cf. Thompson 1984) into the liquor industry helped to define the relationship between private enterprise and the state. The state maintained the conditions under which private business could generate and accumulate profits. Control mechanisms were created and licensed practices were monitored.

The first alcohol-related legislation introduced in British Columbia allowed the municipalities to collect taxes from any person engaged in the liquor business. Saloon keepers and liquor retailers were required to apply for licences every six months.<sup>3</sup> In 1877 amendments introduced to the Licences Ordinance, 1867 Act set the licence fees as follows: for selling fermented liquors by retail in a town of not less than 50 inhabitants: \$100 for every 6 months; for the same retail vending carried on in rural districts: \$30 for every 6 months. Each person who kept a saloon where a billiard table was used was required to pay \$5 for each table every 6 months.<sup>4</sup>

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3. S.B.C. 1872, c.35. s.26.

4. R.S.B.C. 1877, c.106. schedule A. According to other provisions of this Act, the sale of opium was a legal practice at the time -- a practice which required the issuing of a licence every 6 months (R.S.B.C. 1877, c.106. schedule A, s.g).



With the foundation of an administrative licensing system in 1878, the process by which liquor licences were issued was further elaborated. This act established a centralized licensing institution harmonizing the various components of the liquor trade. The system was based upon the Municipalities License Courts which composed of the "Mayor or Reeve, the Police Magistrate (if any), and any one or more Justices of the peace resident in such municipality."<sup>5</sup> Another layer to this administrative system were the by-laws introduced by various municipalities, regulating the sale of liquor in such places as theatres, grocery shops and barber shops.

The Municipalities License Courts were empowered to grant licenses for the sale of liquor and suspend or revoke licences in the case of complaints against licence holders.<sup>6</sup> Amendments introduced in 1885 to the Licenses Ordinance, 1867 authorized the Superintendant of Police to require a security by bond "for the orderly conducting of the licensed premises, and that the licensee will not offend against any law for the time being in force relating to the supply of liquor to Indians."<sup>7</sup>

Between 1871 and 1890 the circumstances for granting or revoking a licence remained vaguely identified and thus could allow enforcement agencies to exercise considerable

5. According to this Act, such court should not consist of less than three members. Moreover, the mayor or the reeve were required to preside at every sitting of the court (The Municipal Act 1881, c.16, s.152).

6. Ibid., s.156.

7. S.B.C., 1885, c.18, s.2.

discretion. A series of applications requesting a licence to sell liquor at Rock Creek lends some evidence to the idea that individuals could request the issuing of such licence for all sorts of reasons. The conditions for granting a licence were not related only to the ability of the licensee to guarantee orderly behavior in the premises. H.B. Roycraft, the Provincial Superintendent of Police, in recommending the issuing of the required licence, explained that "I believe this will be a large camp near the boundary. No doubt a great deal of illicit whisky will be sold. It will be better to have a few good licensed houses, than have the liquor peddled".<sup>8</sup> In this case the circumstances under which a license was recommended aimed to create a practical environment in which law enforcement agencies could operate. It seems that the police preferred that alcohol be consumed only in a few manageable spots.

The enactment of these regulations was encouraged by representatives of the business community who saw them as securing a respected and valuable trade in the developing province. New sites for the sale of liquor -- such as the opera house in Vancouver -- were welcomed and described as carrying with them a potential economic benefit to existing trades.<sup>9</sup> An analysis of arguments made by members of the business community suggests that the formation of a legal

8. B.C. Sessional Papers, 1888:354.

9. "A Business Man speaks." The Vancouver Daily World 1890. November 3:2 (a letter to the editor).

system governing the liquor trade was perceived not only as an administrative tactic but aimed also to facilitate liquor profits. The potential economic benefit of the liquor trade was a main concern of members of the Canadian government who called for the right of merchants to establish a liquor trade, one which would be based on the principles of British honor, "justice and fair play."<sup>10</sup> Evidently inspired by ideas like this, Mr. Ross, MP for West Middlesex, argued that the government should endeavor

to promote, as much as possible, the use of our wholesome Canadian wines and ales ... and promote a carefully considered license law which will afford a good opportunity of making a living to the keeper of a well-conducted hotel.<sup>11</sup>

At this time, questions of public disorder and of physical, mental and moral harm attributed to alcohol consumption were overshadowed by business confidence in the good to be derived from profits secured and protected by the law. Supporting the establishment of a respected licensing system, hotel keepers in Vancouver insisted that under this regulatory system their business could not harm the public order of the city. Presenting this view, Wilson McKinnon claimed that "crime is notoriously rare in this city, in spite of a small body of police ... [this situation] points to the

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10. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons. February 15, 1881:971.

11. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, May, 4, 1880:1961.

fact that the hotel and saloon keepers are careful and law abiding in the conduct of their business."<sup>12</sup>

Between 1871 and 1890 the establishment of a respected legal liquor trade was opposed only by members of the WCTU. Its members argued that the legislation introduced in British Columbia granted a respectable status to the liquor trade and placed the "organized evil that curses our world to-day"<sup>13</sup> under the protection of the law. Protesting against the introduction of a licensing system in British Columbia, the WCTU used the following analogy:

If a mad dog were turned loose with a high license collar around his neck, a big tax receipt on his back, and a government revenue stamp tied to his tail, he would be a mad dog still. His nature would not be changed, and his bite would be as deadly as ever.<sup>14</sup>

In their opposition to the establishment of the liquor licence system, members of the WCTU emphasized the economic damages which can result from the consumption of alcohol to private and public property. They rarely portrayed the consumption of alcohol as causing moral and physical harm to individuals. When personal harm was mentioned by members of the WCTU it was attributed only to certain individuals who should be dealt with by the legal system.

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12. "The Appointment of a Chief of Police." The Vancouver Daily World. 1890. February 10:4.

13. "High License or Prohibition." The Colonist. 1887. April 16:4.

14. "Temperance Department." Industrial News. 1886. Vol. 1. No.4:7.

Until 1890, the British Columbia chapter of the WCTU lacked support from any other established institution in the province (Gough 1988:17). In spite of their efforts to receive assistance from the church, most denominations in B.C. opposed WCTU activities and philosophy. Barnes (1968:6) indicates that up until 1893, the WCTU failed in its campaign to promote the use of unfermented wine at various religious ceremonies.

#### 5) Restrictions on Alcohol Consumption

Economic claims made by civic officials and liquor entrepreneurs were combined with moralistic arguments. Immoral behavior caused by the consumption of alcohol was thought of as affecting only members of certain groups. This attribution allowed representatives of the business community to highlight the economic benefits which could be generated from the liquor trade and ignore harm associated with the consumption of alcohol. This line of reasoning drew on assumptions of the classical liberal philosophy which was structured around a utilitarian philosophy of individualism. According to this doctrine each individual was perceived as a "free, rational, responsible subject, choosing and acting in accordance with utilitarian calculation, in possession of his self and his destiny" (Garland 1985:42).<sup>15</sup> Maximum individual freedom

15. The development of the notion of free, rational, responsible subject is considered by scholars to mark the establishment of the modern society in which "sons were born free and equal and, as adults, were as free as their fathers" (Pateman 1989:37). Pateman argues, however, that the creation of modern society based on the notion of free and equal political subjects excludes women's participation and thus should be seen as a change from a "traditional (parental) form

depended on the minimal intervention of state institutions in the social sphere. The state could legitimately interfere only when it was believed that certain individuals did not act according to a rational calculation based on a specific moral code. In British Columbia between 1871 and 1890, three groups were identified as requiring state control: Natives, "drunkards" and minors. The perceived bad character of these people justified the state in limiting their personal liberty. State intervention resulted in a variety of controls, including the restriction of alcohol consumption by members of these groups.

a) *Alcohol Consumption by Natives*

Heavy drinking by Natives was perceived as reflecting a weakness in the entire Native race. This image of Natives was translated into a general restriction of their rights. This characterization was rooted in political, social and economic relations between the white and the Native communities in the province -- relations in which alcohol played an important role.

While originally the relationship between the fur trading companies and the Native communities appears to have been marked by cooperation, the trading companies -- competing with one another for fur suppliers -- eventually began to exploit and dominate the Natives, and alcohol played a role in the

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of patriarchy to a new specifically modern (or fraternal) form; patriarchal civil society" (p.35, emphasis in original).

exploitation (Friesen 1984: 32-33, 86).<sup>16</sup> Opinion as to when this occurred is mixed. Although most authors acknowledge that alcohol played a part in the development of the fur trade, not everyone agrees when it began to play a significant part.

According to Smart and Ogborne (1986), the strategy of supplying alcohol to Natives accompanied official negotiations aimed at appropriating tribal land (Smart and Ogborne 1986:3). Exploitation and control characterized the relations between the two communities -- relations which repressed the Native community politically, economically and culturally.<sup>17</sup>

Control over Natives was exercised through federal laws and regulations. According to Barman (1991:154), these regulations isolated the Natives from the white community and aimed to "reorder the three fundamental components of natives' lives: their relations with the land, their unique social structure, and the way they educated their young" (Barman 1991:158). These controls over Natives reflected economic interests of business groups and the white authorities as well as a religiously rooted desire to change Natives' culture. These interests and imperatives were rooted in the

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16. According to Thatcher (1986), the Hudson's Bay Company encouraged the "intoxication of Native people at prime trading times in order to take advantage of them in the bargaining process" (p. 277).

17. Infectious diseases of Europeans led to the death of thousands of Natives. In 1862, for example, a smallpox epidemic killed about twenty thousand Natives in British Columbia (Barman 1991:156).

belief that European Christian culture was a superior form of civilization.

### I) **Natives and the White Authorities**

During the 19th century, white settlers and land speculators lobbied the authorities of British Columbia to transfer to them lands which Natives occupied. The whites portrayed the Natives as holding land that they had no true legal title since they did not settle or cultivate it (Fisher 1977:104). In 1866, the daily British Colonist asked: "Shall we allow a few red vagrants to prevent forever industrious settlers from settling the unoccupied lands?" (cited in Fisher 1981a:166). The answer given in this article mirrors the racist attitude of many whites towards Natives. However, this racism was combined with an economic concern: Natives did not deserve to control land which could be used more effectively by white settlers. Emphasizing the inferiority of Natives, the reporter encouraged the authorities to isolate them from the white community:

Locate reservations for them in which to earn their own living, and if they trespass on white settlers punish them severely. A few lessons would soon enable them to form a correct estimation of their own inferiority (cited in Fisher 1981a:166).

Justifying their right to gain control of the land, the white settlers further described the Natives as lazy and immoral, members of an inferior barbarous race. As early as 1850, Joseph Trutch, who was later appointed Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works in the Colony of British Columbia, claimed



that the Natives of North America are "the ugliest and laziest creatures I ever saw" (cited in Fisher 1981a:155). Drunkenness and violence were interpreted as signs of barbarity, primitiveness and racial inferiority (Fisher 1977:104, Thatcher 1986:277). Arguing that drunk and uncivilized Natives ought to give their land to members of the white community, the British Colonist in 1860 suggested that

it would be much more to our advantage if we were to encourage a thrifty white population, who would buy town lots, build cottages, bring their families hither, and pay taxes, rather than a horde of redskins, who spend their money for whiskey and never contribute a dollar towards the public treasury (cited in Fisher 1977:110).

The perceived threat to property was compounded by a perceived threat to moral values: the settlers portrayed all Natives as immoral and thus threatening the "morals of the white Inhabitants" (Fisher 1977:111). This portrayal of the Natives was used by the settlers to mobilize the authorities of British Columbia to remove the Natives from white settlements and towns into isolated places. Even though this "moral quarantine" was justified as a safeguard for the values of the white community, it nevertheless was accompanied by economic benefits.

In isolated communities with a predominantly native population, European officials often interpreted native alcohol use as a justification for control of the entire native population. In a letter sent to the Attorney General in Victoria in 1881, the Justice of the Peace in Dog Creek (near Clinton, B.C.) complained that Natives were obtaining

liquor from a variety of sources and, after consuming it, were becoming the terror of the tribe. The writer condemned heavy drinking by Natives as dissolute and immoral, and intensified this judgement by showing that drinking was associated with another vice: bar-room gambling. The perceived immoral behavior of Natives and the threat they posed to the community were used by the Justice of the Peace to justify his request that liquor licences no longer be issued in Dog Creek and that more law enforcement officers be appointed.<sup>18</sup> A similar complaint was forwarded to the Attorney General through a petition signed by residents of 150-Mile House: "during the past year an alarming illicit whisky trade has been carried on amongst the Indians, and also a large number of cattle stolen from various ranches or farms."<sup>19</sup> The description of economic losses was used by the residents to justify their proposal to appoint a resident constable to protect the district's white settlers and their agricultural interests.

In a letter to the Attorney General, a settler in Alert Bay demanded a similar administrative intervention in Native communities. He described the Natives as spending their time in all kinds of "debauched" activities, such as heavy drinking and gambling. Being occupied with these activities, the Natives had neglected their traditional jobs as hunters, which in turn resulted in "a loss to the Province in general and to our neighborhood in particular. Instead of producing furs and

18. B.C. Provincial Archives, Gr 429, Box 1, File 10,179/81.

19. B.C. Sessional Papers, 1888:361.

oil a large number merely consume the illicit earnings of their women."<sup>20</sup>

The representation of economic loss and immoral behavior was further supplemented by the European perspective on family life according to which wives were dependent on their husbands' labor. Male Natives were seen as deviating from this model of family life by refusing to work, while female Natives were described as deviating from this model by working as prostitutes. The notion about the relations between wives and husbands was expressed in other ways too. Native women who did not adopt European ways were considered barbaric and primitive. Women who followed the European ways of life were described as improving their husbands:

The women have their share in the improvement. In place of the original hut or wigwam there are now houses, well constructed, with shingle roofs, and divided into apartments .... These houses contain cooking-stoves, tables, chairs, and bedsteads .... A feature in these homes is the woman's sewing-machine of the latest style; and instead of curing hides, the making of butter, and bread with yeast, and the raising of poultry, are the tasks assigned to the squaw (MacNab 1898:96).

The representation of alcohol consumption by Natives as causing immoral behavior and idleness was part of a wider concern about Natives' attitudes towards work. In a guide for settlers, MacNab (1898) described these concerns in the following way:

The problem for the white man was how to fit these wild creatures into some rank in the new constitution of things. How were men who looked upon

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20. B.C. Provincial Archives, GR 996, File 4, 254/86.

the mere suggestion of any kind of work as a gross personal insult, to be fitted into a modern industrial community? How were the roving huntsmen of the boundless prairies to be converted into farmers? How were the banditti of the mountains to become law-abiding citizens? (p.93).

The negative attitude of Natives towards work was seen as a source of economic concern and as a "source of perpetual danger and unrest" (MacNab 1898:94). In order to change this attitude, officials suggested that Native behavior should be controlled by "a strong military force" (MacNab 1898:94). The suggested controls included the appointment of police officers to monitor Natives' behavior, especially the consumption of alcohol. The emphasis on law enforcement defined power relations between Natives and members of the white community as matters of administration, management or coercive control. This approach legitimized the neglect of broader political and economic issues associated with the consumption of alcohol in particular and other aspects of Natives' lives in general. This attitude towards Natives was further reinforced by apparent lack of attention paid to members of the white community responsible for supplying illegal liquor to Natives.

#### **ii) Christians' Attitudes towards Alcohol Consumption by Natives**

The need to regulate Native behavior was given further impetus by Christian missionaries, first Catholic and then Protestant. Perceiving them as distinct and inferior to white people, the missionaries argued that Natives required not only policing but education and Christianization (Whitehead 1981:2). The missionaries aimed to "save" Natives from their

barbarous, immoral ways by elevating them to the moral level of the civilized Christian world (La Violette 1973, Tobias 1983:40). For the missionaries alcohol consumption by Natives symbolized deep rooted immoral behaviors of a pagan and primitive race. Alcohol consumption was described as unleashing these deep traits, leading Natives to behave "like a wild beast" (Spence 1919:20).<sup>21</sup>

The description of Natives as undeveloped and uncivilized was consistent with attitudes of the European upper classes who viewed the behavior of other social groups, regardless of their race, as inferior. These inferior behaviors were defined as requiring modification by representatives of the "civilized" classes. In British Columbia, the notion of "civilization" was used by European missionaries to distinguish themselves from the Native community. This distinction legitimized Christian moral intervention into certain aspects of Native life. This intervention allowed the missionaries to impose the values, or their version thereof, of the white community on the entire Native culture.

While the response of Natives to the civilizing activities of the church is mainly unknown,<sup>22</sup> the missionaries

21. Fisher (1987) shows how the description of the Natives of North America as physically vulnerable to alcoholism set the stage for their control by the whites. This use of a bio-genetic model of alcoholism reduces political, cultural and social relations between the white and Native communities to the physiological traits of Natives. Fisher disputes the alcohol-race connection as mythical.

22. Mitchell and Franklin (1989) describe the process by which the Natives' voice got lost:

portrayed the Natives as welcoming them. For example, the author of a newspaper article published in 1873 reports that Natives

are not slow to perceive the advantages of civilization and Christianity when thus presented to them. They find themselves not only immeasurably happier and more prosperous, but as their minds expand and powers of intellect develop they are brought into a world of ideas which otherwise would have remained forever hidden from them .... Savage tribes who still cling to their heathenism and ancient customs ... will eventually be brought to exchange paganism for Christianity and the wretchedness of barbarians for the advantages of civilized life.<sup>23</sup>

Among the strategies adopted by the missionaries to "civilize" Natives, was the education of Native youth in special Christian schools. The attitude of the missionaries to Natives is described by the Superintendent of the Presbyterian Missions for Manitoba, the Northwest and British Columbia. He explained that when the child entered the school

his clothes are all taken off and destroyed and he is given a thorough bath, it might be called a scouring. Both these things are done for obvious reasons. The boy is then put to bed, where he stays till the next morning and is comparatively happy.<sup>24</sup>

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With the arrival of Europeans in the late eighteenth century, louder voices, predominantly male and foreign, were heard and, ultimately, prevailed. Many Native voices, indeed, whole linguistic communities, were silenced by fur traders' cannon, by epidemics of smallpox, and other devastating diseases, by the plague of alcohol, and by the despair of poverty and political powerlessness (p.48).

23. "Matlahkatiah Missions." Victoria Daily Standard. 1873. December, 3:3.

24. "Presbyterian Missions." The Vancouver Weekly World. 1890. September 4:5.

In the process of "saving" the Natives from their barbarous ways, the missionaries built Christian villages in which they aimed to turn the inhabitants into Christian citizens by teaching them the English language, forcing them to participate in religious ceremonies, instructing them in habits of order and discipline and prohibiting them from consuming alcohol (Fisher 1981b:122). By doing so, the missionaries contributed to the segregation of the Natives from the white community in the province.

In order to justify the isolation of Natives, the missionaries argued that the life of the white settlers presented temptations to the Natives. In 1883, the first bishop of New Westminster, Acton Windeyer Sillitoe, noted that proximity to the white man results in "drunkenness and fornication" (Gowen 1899:113) by Natives. According to the Bishop these influences and temptations prevailed, along the line of railway construction, where liquor was sold in licensed houses (Gowen 1899:110). The assumption that religious training would contribute to the protection of Natives was supported as early as 1858 by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, who asked Governor Douglas to settle the Native tribes in separate villages in order to civilize them. Moreover, he argues that in these villages "[L]aw and Religion would become naturally introduced amongst the red men, and contribute to their own security against the aggressions of immigrants .... "25

Religion was thus considered as a moral "buffer" (cf. Reckless 1973:55-56) allowing individuals to resist temptations.<sup>26</sup> The notion that Christianization of Natives would solve alcohol-related problems served to depoliticize broader political and economic issues associated with Native experience in the province; it legitimized their neglect. One feature of this neglect was the relative lack of attention given to the suppliers of illegal liquor -- members of the white community.

Moral and legal interventions into Natives' lives were key elements in Canadian policies of the time. Kellough (1980) suggests that two contradictory principles governed these policies. She argues that "Indians were to be assimilated into the larger society, while at the same time they were to be isolated from the culture they were expected to assimilate into in order to protect them from the worst features of this society" (p.346). This contradiction could be seen as a "bilateral endangerment". On the one hand, white settlement life was presented as a danger to Natives. On the other hand, Native behavior and morals were presented as a danger to the white community. The combination of these two arguments

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25. B.C. Sessional Papers, 1876:89.

26. The development of inner constraints or containments allowing individuals to resist external pressures to adopt deviant behaviors was central to control theories which were constructed during the 1960s and 1970s.



justified isolating Natives and enacting laws which were presented as being "humane."<sup>27</sup>

Christian missionaries aimed to recast Natives in their own image, to have them embrace industrious discipline and temperance values. Central to their efforts was the creation of categories by which they evaluated individual behavior. In their activities they distinguished between Christians and non-Christians, moral and immoral individuals, Whites and Natives and civilized and uncivilized people. The portrayal of Natives as uncivilized non-Christians paved the way for educative programs aiming to regulate and change their lives. The establishment of programs merged with the punitive sanctions of the state aiming to order Natives' behavior. The religious imperatives and the educative strategies created a network of policies regulating Native behavior. The legal authority of these imperatives contributed to a process in which the categories developed by missionaries were reinforced by and in turn helped to reproduce the political, economic and culture subordination of the Native community. In this context, religion enhanced law on two accounts: first, by the creation of educative institutions which became part of the network of controls over Native life; second, by supplying a highly esteemed framework for justifying the legal repression of Natives.

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27. "Report of the Government of British Columbia on the Subject of Indian Reserves." British Columbia, Sessional Papers, 1876:59.

The presentation of Natives, especially while drinking, as dangerous to the white settlers led to a network of federal and provincial legislation prohibiting the sale of alcohol to Natives. In 1874, alcohol consumption by Natives in British Columbia, came under state control with the introduction of a federal Act which stated that "it shall be lawful for any constable, without process of law, to arrest any Indian whom he may find in a state of intoxication."<sup>28</sup> The Act further empowered a judge to imprison for any period not exceeding one month, Native accused of drunkenness. Moreover, when the accused refused to reveal the source of the liquor, he/she was liable to imprisonment for another fourteen days.<sup>29</sup> Amendments introduced in British Columbia in 1885 to the 1867 Licenses Ordinance authorized a judge of the Supreme Court of British Columbia to cancel the licence of a premise which was found in proximity to an Native settlement, and "not situated within a municipality, or in a town, or in such a place as in the opinion of the Judge they are required for the convenience of a reasonable number of white settlers or travellers."<sup>30</sup>

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28. An Act to amend certain Laws respecting Indians, and to extend certain laws relating to matters connected with Indians to the Provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia. 37 Vic, cap. 21, s.3(4).

29. Ibid. In 1876, the various acts relating to Natives were consolidated in the first "comprehensive Indian Act" (Milloy 1983:57).

30. S.B.C., c.18, s.3.

b) *Alcohol Consumption by Drunkards*

The representation of individuals as responsible for their activities supported the response to the consumption of alcohol by "drunkards."<sup>31</sup> The 1887 Habitual Drunkards Act suspended the rights of a person defined by the Supreme Court of British Columbia as a "habitual drunkard" to "manage or dispose of any real or personal estate."<sup>32</sup> In the first and second readings of the Act in the Provincial Legislature, the intention was to control the civil rights of imbeciles as well as the rights of habitual drunkards.<sup>33</sup> During the third reading, however, the statute was narrowed to deal only with the latter.<sup>34</sup> The broader version might point to the fact that the introduction of this Act was another step in a trend of transferring to the state the property of persons defined as irresponsible. The first stage in this trend was the enactment of the 1872 Lunacy Jurisdiction Act which allowed the Supreme Court of British Columbia to appoint guardians to manage the "estates of natural-born fools, lunatics, and persons deprived

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31. The introduction of controls monitoring Natives' behaviors generated a variety of official and other accounts which makes it possible to examine in detail the social context of these controls. The enactment of legislation regarding alcohol consumption by "drunkards," however, has not been well documented.

32. S.B.C., c.11, s.1.

33. B.C. Journals, Feb. 16, 1887:21; Feb. 23, 1880:27.

34. B.C. Journals, April 5, 1887:84.

of understanding and reason by the act of God, and unable to govern themselves or their estates."<sup>35</sup>

The definition of an individual as a "habitual drunkard" did not depend on a medical diagnosis but relied on the observation of husband, wife or any other "blood relative."<sup>36</sup> Upon a request from one of these people, an officer of the peace was empowered to make a "due enquiry"<sup>37</sup> and to file a petition in the Supreme Court "praying that such drunkard may be interdicted."<sup>38</sup> This official process was followed by a judicial procedure in which a jury heard evidence of witnesses "for or against the drunkard in reference to the charge."<sup>39</sup> When the jury was convinced that the alleged person was an "habitual drunkard" and was not able to manage his/her own affairs, the judge was authorized to declare him/her interdicted. At the same time, the judge was empowered to "appoint a proper person to manage the estate of any such person, as if such person were a minor; and such person shall thereafter be considered for all legal purposes a minor."<sup>40</sup> A person defined as a "habitual drunkard" was allowed to supply

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35. S.B.C., c.25. s.1.

36. The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1887. S.B.C., c.11. s.3.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid. s.8.

40. Ibid.

evidence that "he has refrained from drunkenness for fully twelve months"<sup>41</sup> and request that his/her rights be restored.

The absence of medical opinion while declaring the existence of a "habit" or "chronicity," and the dependency on a legal procedure, indicate that heavy drinking was regarded as a willful choice and thus warranted punishment. The civil rights of the "habitual drunkard" were exposed to total state control. Drunkards lost their rights to manage property and their drinking behavior became regulated with the introduction of the The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1887 which made the sale of liquor to a "habitual drunkard" an offence punishable by a maximum fine of \$50. The state's authority to suspend the rights of drunkards and restrict their drinking was depicted as legitimized by the description of drunkards as the "worthless part of the community."<sup>42</sup> Reinforcing the accountability of individuals for their behaviors, an author of an article published in The Canadian Monthly in 1877 argued that a man

has no right to put himself in a condition in which he is disabled from performing his duties to society, or driven by a fury within him flagrantly to violate them, as in the case of the drunkard who disables himself, temporarily or permanently, from maintaining his family by his labour, or puts himself into a condition in which he brutally maltreats them, nor even, to bring himself to a premature grave, and leave society to support his children.<sup>43</sup>

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41. Ibid., s.11.

42. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, May, 4, 1880:122.

c) *Alcohol Consumption by Minors*<sup>44</sup>

Young children were perceived as potential victims of temptations and thus were described as requiring protection by state institutions. The level of state intervention and its form was negotiated by members of the WCTU and state officials. Children were portrayed by members of the WCTU as being unable to resist temptations awaiting them in the saloons. Thus, the 1877 Youths' Protection Act prohibited the sale of liquor to children under the age of 16. Moreover, this Act did not permit a liquor licence holder to allow a minor under the age of 16 to remain in a place where liquor was sold, or to engage in any game of cards in a saloon, bar room or a place where liquor was being sold.<sup>45</sup>

The protection of children from temptations was not left only to legal institutions. The educational system was used as another venue charged with developing a strong moral character in children and assisting them to resist such temptations (Van Brummelen 1986:20). But not all children were equally exposed to education. Analyzing the regulation of children in Toronto and Vancouver, Chunn (1990) observes that working-class

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43. Fidelis. (1877) "The Temperance Problem." The Canadian Monthly. April:373.

44. Similar to the nature of public attention regarding alcohol-related regulation by "drunkards", the consumption of alcohol by minors was accompanied only by scant debates and discussions.

45. S.B.C. 1877, c.30. In 1891 minors under 15 were prohibited from using tobacco in a public street, road highway or building (S.B.C. 1891, c.28, s.3).

children were employed in "agriculture, domestic service, mining, retail shops and street trading. Schooling remained under parental control and was thus generally spasmodic and dependent upon the exigencies of the family economy" (Chunn 1990:91). It would seem that two different systems operated to encourage children to avoid alcohol consumption in saloons. The behavior of working-class children was controlled by the legal system which prohibited them from visiting saloons and barrooms. Middle and upper-class children who visited school were exposed to an additional control mechanism which guided their moral development.

The available evidence regarding the debates surrounding the enactment of this legislation indicates competing visions concerning the appropriate extent of state control. Members of the WCTU saw the introduction of the 1877 Youths' Protection Act, which outlawed children's presence in barrooms, as the first step in the creation of a net of legislation aimed at bringing the behaviors of children under the supervision and control of legal institutions. Among the proposed statutes were curfew by-Laws and a higher age of consent. MLA Mr. Fisher, however, demanded that the punishment of children be regarded as a private matter left in the hands of parents, and not transferred to the penal realm.<sup>46</sup>

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46. "Second Provincial Legislative Assembly." The Colonist 1877. April, 17:3.

## 6) Enforcement of Alcohol Regulations

Recording of law enforcement operations during this time was irregular. Thus, it is hard to recover exact and comprehensive data on the administration of alcohol regulations. It is impossible, for example, to examine patterns of law enforcement regarding illegal alcohol consumption by "drunkards" or minors. The Annual Reports of the Superintendent of Police present data on people sent to jail for criminal offences of "supplying liquor to Indians"<sup>47</sup> or for "being drunk and disorderly." An analysis of these data suggests that officials responsible for law enforcement were influenced by and in turn contributed to negative attitudes towards Natives. These data indicate noticeable differences in the penalties given to Natives and other accused of alcohol-related offences. The 1881 Annual Report of the Superintendent of Police, for example, provides detailed information regarding prisoners liberated from the gaols in Victoria, Nanaimo and New Westminster.<sup>48</sup> As indicated in Tables 2.1 and 2.2, the majority of the prisoners who were

47. S.C. 1880, c. 28, s. 90.

48. The record of 1881 is informative and unique in its comprehensiveness. Additional details about people liberated between 1882 and 1884 from the jails in British Columbia can be found in the annual reports of the Superintendent of Police. These records are not consistent. For example, in 1882, a list of people liberated from Nanaimo gaol is not included in the report. Also, throughout these years different types of categorizations were employed: some of the reports did not distinguish between Natives and Non-Natives. Because of these inconsistencies, it is impossible to produce a sequenced summary of the data and to identify patterns of enforcement.



sentenced for alcohol-related offences and were released from these three gaols during 1881 were Natives:

**TABLE 2.1**

NUMBER OF PRISONERS SENTENCED FOR ALCOHOL-RELATED OFFENCES AND RELEASED IN 1881 FROM THE GAOLS IN VICTORIA, NANAIMO AND NEW WESTMINSTER

	VICTORIA	NANAIMO	NEW WESTMINSTER	ALL THREE GAOLS
OFFENCE				
SUPPLYING LIQUOR TO INDIANS	29 (12%)	20 (24%)	60 (28%)	109 (20%)
BEING DRUNK AND DISORDERLY	101 (43%)	38 (45%)	82 (38.%)	221 (42%)
OTHER OFFENCES	103 (44%)	26 (31%)	74 (34%)	203 (38%)
TOTAL	233	84	216	533

Source: calculated from the Annual Report of the Superintendent of Police Respecting the Prisons of British Columbia, 1881. B.C. Sessional Papers 1882.

TABLE 2.2

NUMBER OF PRISONERS SENTENCED FOR BEING DRUNK AND DISORDERLY  
AND RELEASED IN 1881 FROM THE GAOLS IN VICTORIA, NANAIMO AND  
NEW WESTMINSTER (NATIVES, NON-NATIVES)

	VICTORIA	NANAIMO	NEW WESTMINSTER	ALL THREE GAOLS
Natives	50 (50%)	34 (89%)	59 (72%)	143 (66%)
Non-Natives	51 (50%)	4 (11%)	23 (28%)	78 (35%)
TOTAL	101	38	82	221

Source: calculated from the Annual Report of the  
Superintendent of Police Respecting the Prisons of British  
Columbia, 1881. B.C. Sessional Papers 1882.

As indicated in table 2.3, an analysis of the penalties given to Natives and other prisoners who were released from New Westminister shows that while 70% of the non-Native group were sentenced to 6 hours imprisonment for being drunk and disorderly, the sanctions for the same offence for Natives were much more severe:

TABLE 2.3

SENTENCES FOR BEING DRUNK AND DISORDERLY GIVEN TO OFFENDERS  
RELEASED FROM NEW WESTMINSTER GAOL IN 1881  
(NATIVES, NON-NATIVES)

SENTENCE	NATIVES	NON-NATIVES
1 MONTH HARD LABOUR	3 (5%)	--
10 DAYS HARD LABOUR	1 (2%)	--
7 DAYS HARD LABOUR	11 (19%)	2 (9%)
4 DAYS HARD LABOUR	1 (2%)	--
3 DAYS HARD LABOUR	12 (20%)	--
10 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	1 (2%)	1 (4%)
7 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	5 (8%)	2 (9%)
3 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	23 (39%)	2 (9%)
1 DAY IMPRISONMENT	1 (2%)	--
3 DAYS BREAD AND WATER	1 (2%)	--
6 HOURS IMPRISONMENT	--	16 (70%)
TOTAL	59	23

Source: calculated from the Annual Report of the Superintendent of Police Respecting the Prisons of British Columbia, 1881. B.C. Sessional Papers 1882.

Not one of the Native prisoners was sentenced to less than one day imprisonment; 39% of them were sentenced to 3 days imprisonment, 20% to 3 days hard labour and 19% to 7 days hard labour. Moreover, while the most severe punishment for a Native was 1 month hard labour, the most severe punishment for a non-Native was only 7 days hard labour. One of the two non-Natives who received this severe disposition was a 'half-breed'.

As noted in table 2.4, a comparison between penalties imposed on Natives and non-Natives in all three gaols during 1881 indicates similar differences in the penalties for alcohol-related offences.

**TABLE 2.4**

SENTENCES FOR BEING DRUNK AND DISORDERLY GIVEN TO OFFENDERS RELEASED FROM THE GAOLS IN VICTORIA, NANAIMO AND NEW WESTMINSTER IN 1881 (NATIVES, NON-NATIVES)

SENTENCE	NATIVES	NON-NATIVES
1 MONTH HARD LABOUR	5 (4%)	--
10 DAYS HARD LABOUR	1 (1%)	--
7 DAYS HARD LABOUR	11 (8%)	2 (3%)
4 DAYS HARD LABOUR	1 (1%)	--
3 DAYS HARD LABOUR	12 (8%)	--
1 MONTH IMPRISONMENT	5 (4%)	--
5 WEEKS IMPRISONMENT	--	1 (1%)
14 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	13 (9%)	1 (1%)
10 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	1 (1%)	1 (1%)
7 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	14 (9%)	4 (5%)
3 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	27 (19%)	2 (2%)
2 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	1 (1%)	--
1 DAY IMPRISONMENT	2 (1%)	--
3 DAYS BREAD AND WATER	1 (1%)	--
6 HOURS IMPRISONMENT	48 (34%)	67 (86%)
BAIL ESTREATED	1 (1%)	--
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>78</b>

Source: calculated from the Annual Report of the Superintendent of Police Respecting the Prisons of British Columbia, 1881. B.C. Sessional Papers 1882.

While 86% of the non-Native offenders were sentenced to 6 hours imprisonment, only 34% of the Native population received this penalty. Further than that, as indicated in table 2.5, the Act which was supposed to protect the Native community, and to stop the white population from supplying liquor to Natives, targeted more Natives than non-Natives.

**TABLE 2.5**

SENTENCES FOR SUPPLYING LIQUOR TO NATIVES GIVEN TO OFFENDERS RELEASED FROM VICTORIA, NANAIMO AND NEW WESTMINSTER GOALS IN 1881 (NATIVES, NON-NATIVES)

SENTENCE	NATIVES	NON-NATIVES
6 MONTHS HARD LABOUR	--	10 (20%)
4 MONTHS HARD LABOUR	--	1 (2%)
3 MONTHS HARD LABOUR	--	4 (8%)
2 MONTHS HARD LABOUR	6 (10%)	12 (24%)
5 WEEKS HARD LABOUR	--	3 (6%)
1 MONTH HARD LABOUR	30 (51%)	14 (28%)
14 DAYS HARD LABOUR	6 (10%)	--
3 DAYS HARD LABOUR	2 (3%)	--
3 MONTHS IMPRISONMENT	--	1 (2%)
40 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	--	1 (2%)
5 WEEKS IMPRISONMENT	1 (2%)	--
1 MONTH IMPRISONMENT	8 (14%)	1 (2%)
21 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	1 (2%)	--
10 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	1 (2%)	--
3 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	--	1 (2%)
2 DAYS IMPRISONMENT	1 (2%)	--
6 HOURS IMPRISONMENT	3 (5%)	--
REMADED	--	1 (2%)
FINE AND IMPRISONMENT	--	1 (2%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: calculated from the Annual Report of the Superintendent of Police Respecting the Prisons of British Columbia, 1881. B.C. Sessional Papers 1882.

As noted in table 2.5, while 50 non-Natives who were released from Victoria, Nanaimo and New Westminster gaols had been imprisoned for supplying liquor to Natives, 59 Natives had been sentenced and sent to the prisons for the same offence. Fisher (1977:112) argues that the laws which made white people their object were not strictly enforced, and resulted in the flourishing of a trade which furnished Natives with illegal liquor.

#### 7) Summary

The early years of the province of British Columbia, witnessed the emergence of economic and moralistic discourses around the distribution and consumption of alcohol. These discourses are not homogeneous but are characterized by tensions which reflect the diversity of groups who constructed and used them. The economic discourse was promulgated and mobilized, mainly by civic officials and individuals involved in the liquor trade. Members of these groups emphasized the financial profit to be gained from a respected liquor trade. However, also using economic arguments, members of the WCTU warned the public that the prosperity and reputation of the province would be harmed rather than enriched by the establishment of such a legal trade. Emphasizing the economic harm to the community, they opposed the creation of a taxation system of liquor.

The moralistic discourse was promulgated and used by various groups representing different interests. Civic officials and liquor entrepreneurs recognized that the consumption of alcohol could lead to disorderly behavior which some considered to be immoral. They attributed such behavior to a free choice exercised by responsible individuals. According to civic officials and alcohol entrepreneurs, persons who chose to pursue disorderly and immoral activities should be punished. This punitive response aimed to teach these individuals moral values. This approach is evident in the response to "drunkards" who were penalized for choosing to become involved in heavy drinking.

Civic officials and representatives of the business community used the moral discourse to legitimize their request to develop an organized legal trade. At the same time, however, the moral discourse was used by members of the WCTU to support their calls to ban the liquor trade. In particular, they claimed that immorality associated with the consumption of alcohol would harm the character of young children. Thus, they called for the regulation of children's behavior in order to protect their emotional and moral growth. Using the moral discourse, Christian missionaries created a "coalition of interests" with the white authorities and established controls prohibiting alcohol consumption by Natives. These controls were part of a wider net of regulations and policies aiming to educate Natives according to Christian values. The introduction of these regulations was justified by the

presentation of alcohol as unleashing immoral traits inhering in the Native race.

These discourses were constructed and applied during the formative years of the province; they were rooted in concerns about the nature of community formation. Particularly, they reflected perceptions about behaviors thought to be threatening society.

Two types of threat were identified during this period. The first type was a threat to the idea of responsibility embedded in liberal philosophy. Male "drunkards" were described as threatening the well-being of the community since they deviated from one of the moral obligations of all males: the demand that husbands and fathers would support their families. The second type of threat was material: a threat to the settlement project. Natives were depicted as threatening the general moral values of the whites. This moral threat was combined with an economic threat since the land that Natives occupied was required for white settlers.

During these formative years, various ideas were formulated regarding the nature of the relations between individuals and society. The introduction and enforcement of alcohol regulations and the establishment of the economic and moralistic discourse led to a "slight" change in the level of state intervention in the economic and social spheres. The introduction of alcohol-related regulations suggests that the original laissez faire doctrine, which saw state intervention as negative and justified only in rare occasions, did not



always prevail. Taxation and the establishment of a licensing system encouraged the state to create an environment in which the alcohol industry could operate freely. This economic intervention also authorized the state to control practices associated with the trade.

In the social sphere, state officials now felt justified in intervening when individuals were perceived as unable to behave in a responsible way. The definition of "responsibility" depended on a contradictory mixture of notions about vulnerability to immorality and moral responsibility. On the one hand, Natives and minors were described as victims of alcohol consumption requiring protection by the state institutions. On the other hand, immorality associated with alcohol consumption by these people was thought to be calculated. This combination paved the way for the introduction of legislation aiming to protect, and at the same time to discipline and punish, members of these groups by outlawing their presence in tempting environments and prohibiting them from consuming alcohol. This identification exposed members of these groups to a regulatory network which was presented as providing a protective screen from temptations awaiting them in the saloons. In this context, the law marked the boundaries between moral environments -- the world outside the saloons -- and the tempting immoral environments of the saloons themselves. For Natives, the moral environment was thought to be an isolated

reserve; the immoral environment was the entire white community.

The attribution of alcohol-induced immorality only to certain individuals helped to separate social and health issues from commercial concerns. The banning of alcohol consumption by members of these groups allowed the authorities and liquor entrepreneurs to ignore the moral issues and health hazards associated with alcohol consumption and, instead, to emphasize the economic benefit which could be derived from the alcohol trade. By this process, the administrative and the restrictive themes which characterized alcohol regulations in the late 19th century, were combined with law playing the conjunctive role. The same law which was perceived as giving the liquor trade its respected image was perceived as protecting persons likely to abuse alcohol. Although the restrictive aspects of government intervention in the liquor trade may at first seem to have been an obstacle to the trade, they in fact, contributed to a general trend towards producing, enhancing and securing opportunities for the commercial exploitation of alcohol consumption.

The economic and moral discourses which were promulgated during these formative years were characterized by tensions regarding the relations between individuals and the state. Despite these tensions, however, these discourses did emphasize a central element of the liberal philosophy of the state: the existence of equal legal subjects which were the responsible adult white males. In other words, liberal

philosophy envisaged the "just" society as a community of equal individuals without significant differences distinguishing them -- that is, without relevant differences in opportunity, ability or economic and social circumstances. At the same time, liberal philosophy cultivated the image of the family head -- adult, male, European -- maintaining his family. These images were challenged during the next two decades when British Columbia witnessed massive demographic and social changes.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE MORAL ECONOMY OF ALCOHOL REGULATIONS: 1890 - 1910

#### 1) Introduction

Starting in 1890, the content and form of the moralistic and the economic discourses around alcohol had changed. Individuals using the moral discourse talked about the moral harm associated with drinking more broadly than before. Formerly, Natives in particular had been described as susceptible to the morally degenerative influence of alcohol. Now other groups -- and indeed the entire community -- were perceived as vulnerable to the moral damage attributed to alcohol. The content of the economic discourse had also changed, from a concentration on the profit to be derived from alcohol sales to a focus on economic losses resulting from the consumption of alcohol.

Moral reformers associated with the Methodist church were in the forefront of those groups who promulgated and used both discourses. Moral reformers and members of the WCTU lobbied the government to restrict the distribution and consumption of alcohol. Company managers and individuals involved in the liquor industry encouraged the government to enforce existing alcohol regulations. These ideas regarding alcohol regulation reflected the ways in which members of these groups reacted towards demographic and social changes occurring in the province. Moral reformers saw the law as a mechanism of social engineering capable of inculcating moral values among

new immigrants to the province. Company managers depicted alcohol regulations as a useful tool to be used in regulating the behavior of their workers. Liquor entrepreneurs saw the enforcement of alcohol regulations as protecting them from the competition of Orientals.

The major focus of the moral discourse was the consumption of alcohol by workers or by family members. For moral reformers, alcohol destroyed the moral character of the worker. Immorality associated with drinking was depicted as harming the morality of mothers and in turn the entire family. Finally, the distribution of alcohol by Orientals was depicted as threatening the morality of the entire community.

These attitudes of participants in debates about the distribution and consumption of alcohol drew on wider assumptions about the relations between individuals and society. Moral reformers encouraged the state to interfere in individuals' lives in order to ensure their proper moral conduct. Company managers and individuals involved in the liquor trade called for a more limited level of state intervention, particularly in situations where their financial operations were endangered.

These dynamic relations between members of the various groups and their responses to the demographic change occurring in British Columbia will be analyzed throughout this chapter.

## 2) The Historical Context of the Moral Discourse

The opening of transportation lines in the 1890s between British Columbia and Eastern Canada and the USA brought with it entrepreneurship, financial capital and technology which expanded the existing job market of the province (McDonald 1981:372). This economic development was accompanied by demographic change. Between 1890 and 1910, the population of the province almost doubled from 98,173 people in 1891 to 178,657 in 1911 (Barman 1991:363).<sup>1</sup> Newcomers to the province were occupied in expanding industries which were based on the extraction and processing of natural resources. These people usually resided in small towns and camps near their workplaces. Other immigrants populated the cities, mainly Vancouver and Victoria. For example, Vancouver's population of residents was increased from 13,709 in 1891 to 100,401 in 1911 (McDonald 1981:377).

Available data indicate that the growth of the population led to a per capita increase in the amount of alcoholic beverages consumed in the province (Hiebert 1969:11). An analysis of statistical information on alcohol consumption shows that the consumption of alcohol gained popularity in the early years of the province. From 1888, the consumption of alcohol apparently increased:

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1. While the non-Native population increased, the number of Natives dropped from 27,305 in 1891 to 20,174 in 1911 (Barman 1991:363).

TABLE 3.1

APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF BEER, WINE AND SPIRITS, AND TOTAL  
ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION PER CAPITA OF 15 YEARS AND OLDER\*

YEAR	BEER+	WINE+	SPIRITS+	TOTAL+	TOTAL PER CAPITA (PERSONS 15 YEARS AND OLDER)
1872	.9	2.5	14.1	17.5	.67
1873	1.2	2.1	19.7	23.0	.85
1874	5.6	2.2	23.7	31.5	1.13
1875	9.3	3.2	24.5	37.0	1.28
1876	8.7	3.2	27.7	39.6	1.32
1877	7.5	2.9	23.8	34.2	1.10
1878	7.6	2.9	26.8	37.3	1.17
1879	7.5	3.4	34.9	45.8	1.39
1880	7.1	2.9	19.4	29.4	.86
1881	8.1	4.1	26.7	38.9	1.11
1882	8.2	5.6	29.3	43.1	1.11
1883	10.5	6.8	34.5	51.8	1.21
1884	13.2	7.4	34.1	54.7	1.19
1885	14.5	8.8	42.2	65.5	1.31
1886	15.8	8.3	40.6	64.7	1.20
1887	17.5	8.3	35.2	61.0	1.07
1888	20.8	3.9	42.3	67.0	1.10
1889	25.8	5.4	53.3	84.5	1.30
1890	29.2	7.5	65.7	102.4	1.48
1891	34.3	7.9	60.9	103.1	1.41
1892	39.5	8.1	71.4	119.0	1.51
1893	39.1	7.6	68.8	115.5	1.36

+ Figures represent thousands of imperial gallons of absolute alcohol.

Source: Popham and Schmidt (1958:22-23).

Alcohol consumption became the focus of several campaigns demanding that alcohol distribution and use be banned in the province. Active participants in these campaigns came from the

Presbyterian and the Methodist churches. These churches established new congregations in Western Canada at the turn of the century. Their members emphasized the moral degenerative influence of alcohol on individuals and the community. Their efforts were directed towards the introduction of regulations restricting the use of alcohol and towards persuasion of individuals to abstain from the use of alcohol. Their description of immorality associated with the consumption of alcohol was confirmed by an illustration of drinking establishments as sources of demoralization and as a "black blighting curse on everything that is pure and holy and good in society."<sup>2</sup> In a social reform magazine published in Hamilton and distributed in British Columbia, Reverends Mackay and Woodstock, described the saloon as a "little, dirty, smoky, whisky-smelling room [in which] you get nothing but what demoralizes and destroys."<sup>3</sup> This representation of the saloon contrasted with the moral, bright and happy environment provided by the church.

Newcomers to the province were identified by representatives of the church as requiring education regarding their drinking habits. For example, Rev. Dr. Rowe, explained that the increase in alcohol consumption has resulted from the "opening up of new territory and the influx of settlers that

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2. Mackay, W.A. and D.D. Woodstock (1896) "The Evil and the Remedy." The Templar Quarterly. Vol. II. No. III:9.

3. Ibid.



had not been always in temperance sentiment."<sup>4</sup> Concerns about the consumption of alcohol by immigrants were accompanied by wider questions about their moral behavior. In particular, members of the church condemned behaviors which did not follow the moral Protestant code: hard work, temperance and thrift. Calls to abstain from alcohol use and demands to outlaw its distribution and consumption were part of a broader policy thought to reshape moral behavior according to the Protestant moral script. The calls of church representatives to enact legislation aiming to enforce particular moral values drew on wider developments within the church itself. In particular, these calls were grounded in the new doctrine which emerged at the end of the 19th century in the USA, Britain and Canada -- the doctrine of the social gospel.

### 3) The Social Gospel Movement

From the middle of the 19th century, the social gospel movement supported and initiated various social and moral reforms in Canada (Allen 1971:3). The basic premise of the social gospel movement was the belief that Christianity was a social religion concerned with the "quality of human relations on this earth" (Allen 1971:4). Believing that individuals were able to create a moral and just world, social gospellers saw the church as the representative of "the universal society that was to come, and was commissioned to be an agent in its

4. "Temperance Secretary appointed." The Western Methodist Recorder. 1902. Vol. 4. No. 4:5.

fulfillment" (Allen 1971:5). This practical relation between society and religion, which paralleled similar developments in the church in England and America developed out of 19th century "social Christianity" -- an attempt to relate the biblical message to moral and social reform. Such attempts originated partly as a response of the church to massive unemployment and poverty in Europe and North America. In face of these social and economic conditions basic concepts of the traditional theological message, which promised salvation to individuals in the future, were challenged and the church experienced a crisis in its ability to persuade people to follow Christian values. In this context, the church's former promise of salvation in the after-life seemed irrelevant. The vision of spiritual redemption was replaced by a vision of salvation on earth in the mortal realm (Cook 1987:174-175, Allen 1971:3-17). Responding to these social events clergyman, such as Joseph Tuckerman in Boston, became involved in religious social service and Protestant philanthropy (Hopkins 1967:4).

Inspired by these developments and ideas, the Canadian Reverend George W. Dean, called on the church to reject 16th-century theology and to help the politicians solve the problems of the day (cf. Mosher 1974:9). This shift of emphasis from the "spiritual to the temporal and from the individual to the collectivity" (Thompson and Seagar 1985:59) helped to shape the response to "social problems" (drunkenness, prostitution, gambling and poverty). Salvation

could be achieved by reconstructing society according to Christian values which emphasized purity, sobriety and thrift (Forbes 1971:18, Fraser 1988:5).<sup>5</sup> At the Christian Endeavor Convention in British Columbia, Reverend J.H. Oliver from Ontario told his audience that the "church of Jesus Christ was the organization that should rid the world of sin and save the world and she should make herself a force in the political life of the nation".<sup>6</sup>

Institutions of the state were considered as having the means enabling such fundamental reform of society. In particular, the law and the police became the chief object of attention for the reform movements (Allen 1982, McLaren 1986). In 1905, for example, members of the Methodist church in Nova Scotia stated that the church, "must enter the field of politics as our opponents the liquor interests have done and fight this battle for God and our homes" (cited in Forbes 1971:20). Supporters of temperance legislation saw themselves as fighting against the laws which gave alcohol use its respected status. Calling for a political battle against alcohol distribution, an author in a prohibition magazine described the alcohol trade as an evil which is

legalized, and that is its strong defence. Entrenched in legislation, it can only be dislodged by legal enactment; and to secure this result

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5. According to Allen (1971) the aim became "'the Christianization of the world in our generation'" (p.7).

6. "Vital Subjects were Discussed." The Vancouver World. September 5, 1908:6.

Prohibitionists must make the fight on political lines.<sup>7</sup>

Analyzing this call for social reform in the USA, Timberlake (1963) argues that the church:

sought to overcome the corruption of the world in a dynamic manner, not only by converting men to belief in Christ but also by Christianizing the social order through the power and force of law. According to this view, the Christian's duty was to use the secular power of the state to transform culture so that the community of the faithful might be kept pure and the work of saving the unregenerate might be made easier (p.7).

#### 4) The Social Gospel in British Columbia

In the Eastern provinces the doctrine of the social gospel contributed to the emergence of reform movements aiming to bring issues relating to social vices to the political arena. These groups demanded that alcohol use be prohibited (Birrell 1977:24). British Columbia, however, experienced only a limited demand to ban alcohol use. Indeed up until 1908 -- the year in which the British Columbia chapter of the Local Option League was established -- the province did not witness any organized temperance or reform activity. The editor of the Methodist Recorder complained that, "whilst temperance sentiment is increasing so rapidly throughout the Dominion, we in British Columbia seem to be retrograding rather than advancing."<sup>8</sup> Confronting this lack of concern, social gossellers described the need to arouse an indifferent public.

7. "A Political Issue." The Templar Quarterly. 1895 Vol. 1. No. II. August:13.

8. "Temperance." The Methodist Recorder. 1903 Vol. IV. No. 13:2.

In 1904 the General Secretary of the Department of Temperance and Moral Reform for the Methodist Church<sup>9</sup> claimed that

the whole Province calls loudly for a great revival of public interest in all questions which relate to the moral and religious safe guarding of the people (cited in Mosher 1974:15).

Most British Columbians affiliated with the Church were Anglicans (Barman 1991:205, 211, Hiebert 1969:6).<sup>10</sup> This church did not support calls for the elimination of the liquor traffic.<sup>11</sup> Rev. S.D. Chown noticed in 1904 that in British Columbia, workers focused their attention on problems of unemployment rather than temperance:

[the] most insistent question of the common people is not, what have you to say about temperance and prohibition, but, what is your message in respect to capital and labor; what is your scheme for bettering the material conditions of the people (cited in Mosher 1974:64).

Temperance activity in British Columbia was carried on by small groups such as the Royal Templars of Temperance, the Vancouver Total Abstinence Association, the Temperance and Moral Reform League of Victoria and the WCTU all of which

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9. Dr. S.D. Chown.

10. In 1901, most British Columbia residents affiliated with the church were Anglicans (23.2%), followed by Presbyterians (19.3%) and Roman Catholics 19% (Barman 1991:337).

11. Summarizing the attitudes of the major religious denominations towards temperance reform and prohibition, Hiebert (1969) observes that both the Methodist Church and the Baptist Church supported all efforts to outlaw the liquor trade. The Presbyterian Church was divided on this question. The Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church favoured the introduction of restrictive legislation, but opposed prohibition.

called for the restriction and regulation of alcohol use (Ellis 1959:102-103).

The handful of Protestant ministers who followed the philosophy of the social gospel, especially those from the Methodist churches, came from Eastern Canada or from Great Britain (Mosher 1974:12). At the turn of the century, social gospel ideas were spread by these ministers and by guest speakers and lecturers who visited the province.<sup>12</sup> Circulating their ideas, social gospellers used the vehicles available for them at the time: sermons, lectures and publications in the Methodist Magazine, the Western Methodist Recorder. According to Mosher (1974), activists dominated provincial delegations to national conferences (p. 14).

British Columbia social gospellers called for moral reform on spiritual grounds.]] An analysis of their arguments shows that their plans for changing society followed two parallel tracks: moral reform of individuals and of society. In his lecture delivered at the British Columbia Methodist Conference of 1907 Rev. R. Newton Powell explained this dual aim thus:

it is the solemn duty of the Church of God to constitute herself as an active force, seeking by means of education and moral suasion to bring about the enactment ... of such laws as shall make for the betterment of social conditions. (cited in Mosher 1974:62).

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12. Mosher (1974) observes that Westminster Hall, the Presbyterian college in Vancouver organized visits of social gospellers such as Shailer Matthews of the University of Chicago and other leading ministers from the British free churches (p.13).

Both types of reform involved the establishment of a new legal system based on the moral values of the Church. This system would become the framework enabling individuals to follow religious moral guidelines. For the proponents of the Social Gospel, the law operated as an educative instrument establishing standards for public morality and for transferring moral imperatives to the entire society. A solution to drunkenness articulated by the author of an article published in the Methodist Recorder sheds more light on the ideal legal framework the Social Gospellers called for.<sup>13</sup> The author emphasized the way in which the ideal legal system would create a democratic moral framework, and called for the prohibition and restriction of alcohol use and distribution.

Expressing his concern for people who did not conform to this legal framework, the author recommended that such individuals should leave their community. The community, in turn, would be cleansed of individuals who refused to be morally reformed: "the men who must *drink* may move and there will begin the cleavage in society which ultimately must rend it from top to base, the cleavage between the incorrigible and the saveable, which as I see it, is eternal cleavage."<sup>14</sup> The author goes on to suggest that in communities in which most of the citizens would prefer the continued sale of alcohol, the

13. "Temperance Reform." Methodist Recorder 1901. Vol. III. No. 6:2, (emphasis in original).

14. Ibid.

trade should be restricted and controlled by the municipalities. Strict control measures -- such as limitations on the amount of liquor purchased and monitoring of the behavior of individuals purchasing it -- would discourage them from drinking alcohol.

The liberty of individuals to choose their activities as well as the strict legal system which determined this choice were manifested in the attitude of Social Gospellers to "social problems." They saw wider social processes and developments, especially modernization, as creating social ills. Expressing this idea, Rev. Elliot Rowe maintained that industrial development divided individuals "into widely separate and extremely hostile classes."<sup>15</sup> He went on to argue that:

the land, tools of industry and the means of transportation are largely held and operated by a few gigantic corporations with power to dictate the conditions of life to their thousands of employees and to exert an enormous influence upon the political life of the nations ... Wealth has been the end and men the means.<sup>16</sup>

Yet Social Gospellers also saw individuals as responsible for these same social ills. Rev. R.G. MacBeth, a Presbyterian minister, suggested that:

it must be a man that is the cause of social wrongs and personal poverty. It is quite clear some people bring evils upon themselves by personal habits, but it is equally clear that others have evils forced upon them by the greed and the ambition of other men who stand behind movements of operation. In presence

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15. Ibid:2.

16. Ibid.



of these things men should reform their own lives so as to remove as far as possible the personal causes of their troubles, and they ought to lend their aid to end the troubles of the world.<sup>17</sup>

Expressing a similar idea, the editor of the Methodist Recorder argued that the solution to social problems rests with individuals: "Improve the man and you improve the environment. The reformation of society can only be accomplished by the regeneration of the individual."<sup>18</sup> Social Gospel rhetoric emphasized the need to change the social structure in order to bring about the transformation and education of individuals. At the same time, they reinforced notions of persons' responsibility for their own condition -- a condition which could be changed only by educating and disciplining them.

The centrality of the notion of individual responsibility for advocates of temperance movements is evident in their opposition to new medical explanations of heavy drinking. Towards the end of the 19th century a number of physicians in England, the USA and Canada argued that heavy drinking originated in factors which were beyond an individual's control. In particular, these physicians saw heavy drinking as originating in the "inherited weakness" of certain people (cf. Krasnick 1985:15). Proponents of temperance resisted this claim because it relieved individuals of their responsibility

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17. MacBeth, R.G. (1903) "Social Problems." The Province. February, 16:3.

18. "Temperance Reform." Methodist Recorder 1901. Vol. III. No. 6:8.

for drinking; they insisted that alcoholism must be understood as resulting from a wrong moral choice freely made. As early as 1874, an American welfare administrator explained that inebriety "is not a disease but a self-provoked temporary perversion of our natural functions, induced for purposes of sinful gratification" (cited in Krasnick 1985:15).

Not all physicians believed that alcoholism is totally beyond an individuals' control. Some physicians observed that the cause of heavy drinking depended on the social class to which a person belonged. George Beard, an American neurologist, interpreted lower class's heavy drinking as resulting from their freedom to engage in "vicious conduct -- the vice of drunkenness" (Krasnick 1985:16). Beard explained that heavy drinking of members of the upper and middle classes originated in social and political conditions beyond their control. According to Beard, technological developments required these individuals to achieve success by excessive work. Their efforts to gain success in modern life, especially by relying on their "'brain work'" (cf. Krasnick 1985:16), exposed them to the disease of inebriety. A similar view was expressed by a Toronto physician, Dr. Rosebrugh, who saw inebriety of businessmen and professionals as being caused by overwork and general neglect of healthy living.<sup>19</sup>

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19. Rosebrugh, A.M. (1898) "The Treatment of Inebriety." The Canadian Journal of Medicine and Surgery. Vol. III:243.

##### 5) The Moralistic Interpretation of Worker Alcohol Consumption

Church leaders suggested that consumption of alcohol negatively influenced a person's will to search for honest, steady work. For example, the editor of the Methodist Recorder argued that saloons, brothels and gambling dens undermine "the foundations of character of the employee."<sup>20</sup> Alcohol consumption was portrayed as immoral since it contradicted the notion that hard work is a fundamental element of the person's morality. In 1904, T.B. Kilpatrick, an influential member of the Presbyterian church, claimed that work is an integral part in the education of a free modern individual: "to be an intelligent citizen in an ordered universe, to be a willing agent in its great design, is the highest dignity of man; and this dignity work enables him to attain" (cited in Fraser 1988:40). Reformers in British Columbia interpreted heavy drinking by workers as a choice made by rational individuals who preferred drinking to work. Temperance organizations saw drinking as an obstacle to personal salvation in the future, and also as an impediment to progress of society in the present. Expressing this notion, the pastor of the Central Congregational Church Rev. W.J. Hindley described heavy drinking as

the foe of progress, a detractor of labour, a waster of values, a menace to free government, and a destroyer of homes .... Booze and success can never

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20. "Moral Issues at the Civic Elections." The Western Methodist Recorder. Vol. 4. No.3. 1903: 10-11.

go hand in hand under the strenuous conditions of  
the twentieth century.<sup>21</sup>

The moral interpretation of 'work' appeared in the educational system in the province as well. Van Brummelen (1986:21) observes that the school curriculum at the turn of the century encouraged hard work as a way of developing the ideal modern citizen. Commitment to hard work was considered as a means to fight idleness and other temptations leading to involvement in vices, including heavy drinking.

The emphasis on 'work' as opposed to idleness drew upon Protestant ideology which saw 'hard labor' as indispensable to the character of each individual. Weber (1958) traces the development of perceptions about the significance of work to the Puritan doctrine of 17th-century Europe. According to Weber (1958) the Protestant ethic embodied in Calvinism, Puritanism and Methodism emphasized values such as "hard work, the belief that God helps those who help themselves, keeping one's attention from the devil, and the absolute avoidance of anything which detracted from this generally ascetic way of life" (Zeitlin 1968:129). Opposing the spontaneous enjoyment of life, the puritan ethic encouraged systematic work as an element necessary to the rational conduct of individuals (Weber 1958:153). Puritan philosophy emphasized self discipline and personal coercion. Workers were thus required to discipline their activities both inside and outside the

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21. "For Control of Liquor Traffic." The Province. January 19, 1902:4.

workplace. A central element in the disciplining process was the avoidance of any activity which interfered with the commitment of workers to their work.

For Weber, the Puritan doctrine was an important element in the matrix of forces behind the origin and development of capitalism. Analyzing the impact of religious values on "economic conduct" (cf. Zeitlin 1968:122) within the complex forces of capitalism, Weber identified the rationalization of the conduct of life in general, and a rationalistic ethic as necessary to the development of the new socio-economic system in Western Europe. The ethical elements of Protestantism and the spirit of capitalism mutually reinforced each other to produce a devotion to work (Zeitlin 1968:124). Analyzing the relations between Methodism and the political economic structure of society, E.P. Thompson (1963) similarly observes that the Methodist Chapels produced disciplined labor and a stable, productive and reliable workforce by emphasizing the fact that "irrational behavior" (cf. Turner 1983:113), such as drunkenness, gambling and all forms of idleness, blocked the possibility of a person's salvation.

The response of European and American temperance movements towards the consumption of alcohol by workers has been explained as originating in the requirement for disciplined workers to ensure the accumulation of capital (Dorn 1983, Prestwich 1980, Rumbarger 1989). Members of temperance societies in Europe and the USA were drawn from middle class circles and a close connection existed between

the movements and the industrial communities. Members of temperance associations in Britain saw working-class people as maintaining barbaric traditions and recreational habits, and thus criticized fairs and festivals organized by the working classes (Dorn 1973:54). Temperance reformers argued that the fairs were not held for the purpose of transactions of business, but for the purpose of

'what is called pleasure, alias drinking ... gambling and fighting ...' they were feudal relics, or 'fossil' memorials of obsolete degeneracy' ... they had declined into 'mere assemblages chiefly for the purpose of amusement' (Harrison 1971:328-329).

Prestwich (1980) identifies similar reasoning in the arguments of the founders of the French temperance movement, among whose aims was to put an end to working class alcoholism. This group explained workers' alcoholism as originating in their laziness and ignorance, characteristics which led the workers to spend their money on drink rather than saving it for the future, especially for their retirement (p.41). The group awarded medals to temperate workers, encouraging them to engage in regular work. In order to qualify for the lowest medal the worker was required to "spend ten years of 'honesty and temperance' in the same firm" (Prestwich 1980:41).

Rumbarger (1989:113) observes a similar reaction to drinking behaviors of members of the working-class in the USA. Saloons were condemned as the centres of working-class leisure activity which interfered with the commitment of workers to a steady employment. This interference was thought to create obstacles to the smooth development of industrialization in

the USA. Rumbarger (1989) maintains that various companies prohibited the use of intoxicating drink by employees inside and outside the workplace. Blaming accidents at work on worker alcohol use, company managers allied themselves with temperance movements which demanded the prohibition of alcohol in order to solve "the Nation's labor problems" (Rumbarger 1989:129).

#### 6) The Moral Economy of Alcohol Consumption by Workers

The attitudes of reformers to heavy drinking of individuals drew on ideas and assumptions developed in communities which had undergone industrialization. The available data regarding temperance activities in British Columbia do not indicate whether temperance movements and members of the business and industrial communities cooperated. However, it appears that some directors of companies did consider the use of alcohol as harmful for their workers' efficiency. Using the moral discourse constructed by reformers, they created a "coalition of interests" with representatives of the church and called the government to regulate the distribution and consumption of alcohol. While members of these groups demanded that drinking be subject to state control, they did not agree on the appropriate level of state intervention.

Church organizations demanded that consumption of alcohol be outlawed in places where the majority of residents so

wished. Businessmen and civic officers called for a more limited version of state intervention.

Managers of companies blamed the existence of drinking places for the inability to recruit workers, especially in mining and other industries located in isolated places. This concern is illustrated in the complaint of the Managing Director of the St. Eugene Mine at Moyie who argued that heavy drinking prevented his employees from regularly reporting to work. Moreover, heavy drinking sometimes disrupted their work efficiency. Explaining the reason for the difficulties his company experienced in getting a "steady lot of men",<sup>22</sup> the managing Director claimed that in Moyie,

there are a great many hotels, all of which I understand have licenses to sell liquor. On a great many occasions, our operations have been seriously interfered with, due to the fact that the night before there had been in the town a most disorderly general drink.<sup>23</sup>

Even though the manager blamed the saloon and its immoral influence for his workers' behavior, he punished those who failed to report to work because of alcohol consumption. Since this punitive response did not "remedy the matter", the Director appealed to the legal authorities of the province to assist him to secure the regular operation of the company. He asked the Chief Constable in Fernie to instruct the police officer in Moyie to enforce the liquor regulations requiring saloons to close at 11 o'clock Saturday night and during

22. B.C. Provincial Archives GR 93. B 8451. Vol. 3:973.

23. Ibid.



Sunday -- the time in which workers were free to enjoy leisure activities. In order to support the demand for controlling his workers outside the workplace, the Managing Director argued that the enforcement of these regulations would benefit the morality of the community by preventing "disgraceful and disorderly occurrences".<sup>24</sup>

Some police executives who were responsible for maintaining order in the camps established for workers of the Canadian Pacific Railway saw alcohol consumption by workers as leading to work disruption. The officers claimed that one of their main aims was to ensure that the work would not be interrupted by the presence of liquor.<sup>25</sup> This interpretation of heavy drinking as a cause of labor shortages and inefficiency enabled company managers to neglect working conditions which affected work efficiency. Among these conditions were: insecurity and irregularity of work; unsafe working conditions; improper housing; lack of medical services; and the lack of social activity in isolated camps. (Bolton 1954: 30-33, Comack 1986:73, McCormack 1981:479). Harris (1989) describes work conditions in the mines in the Kooteney's Slocan valley thus:

Work was irregular. Mines opened and closed, men were taken on and laid off ... power drills were increasingly used; with them dust levels and the frequency of miners' consumption (silicosis) rose

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24. Ibid.

25. Report of Inspector G.E. Sanders on the Crow's Nest Railway Construction, North-West Mounted Police, Macleod, November 2, 1898 (cited in Clark 1942:407).

... underground work was always dangerous, especially as the new technology increased the depth and speed of operation and brought electricity into wet workplaces. Throughout the Cordillera about one miner in eighty was killed underground each year. In the Slocan far more miners were crippled by accidents or rheumatism (p.304).

The law, including alcohol regulations was seen as a device for ordering the behavior of the workers without questioning the wider and deeper circumstances affecting their lives.

The neglect of the wider circumstances affecting workers' experience in their workplace was resisted by members of the Socialist Party of British Columbia. The editor of the official organ of the party challenged the notion that the cause of heavy drinking was solely the individual. He claimed that the only way to abolish drunkenness is not through legislation restricting worker alcohol consumption, but by changing the "inequalities of the social system which breeds it -- the capitalist system."<sup>26</sup> The editor maintained that alcohol use is not the source of all physical, moral, mental and social ills:

Put the dissolute and dissipating millionaires to honest work, and they will stop debauching themselves and their mistress with champagne. Provide the workingmen with clean, cheerful homes and the means of intellectual culture and they will stop drinking bad whiskey in filthy and malodorous saloons.<sup>27</sup>

Another writer in the magazine refused to separate the liquor business from other businesses and social institutions. He

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26. "Editorial." Western Clarion. 1903. October, 29:2.

27. Ibid.

suggested that in the arguments of the temperance movements it is,

pointed out that the Socialist movement suffers from the saloon which keeps the workers away from it. So, also does it thus suffer from the schools, the theaters, the dance halls and newspapers, the magazines, the churches and any other capitalist institution.<sup>28</sup>

Prestwich (1980) suggests that working-class organizations and trade unions in France developed a similar reaction to the tendency of temperance advocates to blame alcoholism on the individual worker. Workers' organizations insisted that alcoholism is the product of an industrial capitalism that produced cheap alcohol. Because of miserable working conditions, workers were encouraged to use alcohol as an escape. These organizations objected to temperance activities which targeted individuals, and claimed that alcoholism would disappear with the workers' revolution (p.44).

Alcohol consumption was not the only behavior perceived as carrying with it a negative influence on the will and motivation of the worker to engage in steady and regular work. Gambling in saloons was thought to have the same negative consequence by destroying the commitment of workers to hard work. The enforcement of provincial alcohol regulation was considered one appropriate mechanism to control gambling activities. In 1908, for example, a citizen residing in Port Essington reported that

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28. "Booze." The Western Clarion. 1909. January, 9:2.

on the night of the 18th Nov. there was a gambling game of "black Jack" going on in the bar-room of the Caledonia Hotel at Port Essington, at which money was lost and won ... I live near the Caledonia bar-room, and the scenes of reeling, drunken men staggering from this saloon using the vilest language known to the English tongue, which I, and all who live in the neighborhood, are daily forced to witness are simply appalling.<sup>29</sup>

Supporting his demand that the hotel liquor license not be renewed, the author of this letter described gambling as a regular event harming the morality of all members of his community.

#### 7) The Regulation of Alcohol Consumption by Workers

Demands that the consumption of alcohol by workers be controlled were translated into regulations introduced between 1890 and 1910. These regulations restricted the means by which alcohol was lawfully sold and consumed, the activities which were undertaken while alcohol was consumed, and the people who were allowed to consume alcohol in a licensed premise. The 1891 Liquor License Regulation Act prohibited the sale of alcohol from 11.00 o'clock on Saturday evening until 1.00 o'clock on Monday morning.<sup>30</sup> An Act introduced in 1899 prohibited gambling in any place licensed for retail sale of liquor.<sup>31</sup> In 1901, the prohibition on selling alcohol to

29. B.C. Provincial Archives. B 8451. Vol. 3:781.

30. S.B.C., c.21, s.4.

31. The 1899 Liquor Traffic Regulation Act Amendment Act. S.B.C. 1899, c.41, s.3. The Act outlawed the following gambling activities "draw poker, stud poker, black jack, faro, or any other games of chance to be played for money, or for checks, or other devices that represent money."

minors under 16 was extended to include persons under 18 years old.<sup>32</sup> Finally, the 1910 Liquor Act outlawed the sale of alcohol to vagrants, tramps and prostitutes.<sup>33</sup>

These regulations brought the liquor premises under more control and surveillance by extending the existing licensing system through the establishment of a new licensing body: the Board of License Commissioners.<sup>34</sup> The role of police officers responsible for the administration of alcohol regulations was expanded with the introduction of the 1899 Liquor License Act, which defined all provincial constables as 'Licence Inspectors' empowered to inspect the premises on which liquor was served and sold.<sup>35</sup> The results of these inspections were reported regularly to the Licence Commissioners and the reports were examined by the Board during the consideration of a licence renewal. Among the items which were inspected were "the manner in which the house was conducted", the character of the persons frequenting the house, and the character of the license holder.<sup>36</sup>

The enactment of these laws extended the control of employers over their workers' conduct. Workers were subject to controls which ensured that their behavior outside the

32. Youths' Protection Act Amendment Act, 1901. S.B.C., c.51, s.3.

33. S.B.C., c.30, s.65.

34. License Act, 1895, S.B.C., c.30, s.6.

35. S.B.C., c.39, s.8.

36. Ibid, s.28.

workplace would not harm their work efficiency. Thus, these regulations served the interests and intentions of company managers. The available data suggests that at the turn of the century, the introduction of these regulations was the outcome of lobby efforts of reformers demanding that the government limit the hours in which workers could lawfully consume alcohol. These campaigns were part of the broader aim of reformers to regulate moral conduct of individuals. These demands coexisted with isolated, rather than organized, calls of company managers to regulate their workers' drinking habits.

#### 8) The Family and the Moral Economy of Alcohol

The representation of alcohol use as harming the moral character of workers and their commitment to work paved the way for a new perspective on the appropriate role of the state. Unlike the traditional liberal doctrine which emphasized minimal intervention of the state into individuals' behaviors, the state was seen now as authorized to monitor workers' drinking behaviors. The relationship between the individual and the state was further reshaped by the representation of the consumption of alcohol as harming the moral foundation of the family. This assertion was made mainly by representatives of the churches who wanted the state to introduce legislation abolishing the saloons. These arguments indicate a shift in the perception of members of temperance

groups regarding the relations between the family and the state.

Liberal philosophy created a gulf between the private and public spheres. The public sphere, which comprised such areas as the market and politics, was considered to be a legitimate object of state control. Family life was thought to belong to the private sphere, which was seen as beyond state intervention. According to Zaretsky (1986:97), the family was thought to be an autonomous economic unit supporting itself without depending on any outside assistance. A central element in the operation of this independent and self-reliant unit was the control of the moral character of family members, especially the females. Women's morality was assumed to be controlled by the family unit without the need for the state's involvement. Outside intervention was called for only in rare cases, and as a last resort. Feminist scholars have maintained that the view that family life is a private matter reinforces male hegemony, allowing husbands to control their wives. The dichotomy between the public and the private spheres depoliticizes power relations between males and females and between women and the state (cf. Rose 1987, Stang Dahl and Snare 1978).

For Pateman (1989:121), the logic which supported this separation reflects the powerless position of women. Because of their perceived natural characteristics, females were regarded as unable to sell labour-power. Also, they were thought to be irrational. Thus, females were not considered to

be full citizens and were regarded as a legitimate target for control by their husbands. The 1887 Habitual Drunkards Act demonstrates the relation between females and the state. This Act empowered a women to declare that her husband was a "drunkard" and to request state intervention into family life. This alliance between the state and the wife did not, however, grant the wife state assistance to replace the husband's support. By prohibiting the "drunkard" from managing his estate, his financial matters were transferred to the state. At the same time, however, his obligation to support his wife was not assumed by the state institutions. In this case, state intervention into family life left the wife to support herself or required her to seek assistance from existing charitable institutions.

At the turn of the 20th century, members of church organizations had challenged this liberal philosophy and argued that the morality of families should become a matter for state concern. In particular, they argued that the state should enact laws protecting women from their husbands' heavy drinking and from immorality stemming from saloons. This call for state intervention was informed by attitudes of members of temperance organizations towards females and towards members of working-classes.

Calls for state intervention into family life reflected concerns of moral reformers about the perceived immoral atmosphere of the new cities established in the province. Concerns about the influence of immorality on the family were



widespread in eastern Canada and the USA (Chunn 1990, Zaretsky 1986:98). In particular, moral reformers believed that industrialization and urbanization weakened familial ties, leaving children and females without appropriate moral guidance. The state was called to perform roles fulfilled in the past by parents, especially mothers.

a) *Alcohol Consumption and the Moral Foundation of the Family*

Temperance organizations, especially the WCTU, claimed that the consumption of alcohol by husbands destroyed the foundation of the family. Members of the WCTU argued that alcohol consumption prevented husbands from protecting their wives. In this way, women became victims deserving of state protection. Members of temperance organizations presented husbands both as victims of the saloons and as being morally responsible for their visiting drinking establishments. Rev. J.G. Shearer, the founding father of the national Moral and Social Reform Council, for example, emphasized that husbands were responsible for their immoral behaviors, mentioning that a Vancouver resident "untrue to the solemn marriage vows taken upon himself ... continually resorted to a den of vice, regardless of his sacred duties owed his wife or children" (cited in Snell 1983:120).

Family life was seen to be threatened not only by the drinking habits of husbands, but also more generally by the immorality spreading out from the saloon. Women were thought to be vulnerable to immorality and thus were depicted as

victimized by the immoral atmosphere surrounding the saloons. Canadian advocates of temperance pointed to the harm caused to women's morality by alcohol use, and supported their claims by using medical evidence indicating that such behavior harmed women's ability to tell the truth. For example, Dr. Norman Kerr is quoted as saying that females "lose the sense of truth even more completely than do males. Seen in the very act of laying down the just emptied glass, lady patients have coolly and solemnly denied to me that they had partaken of the contents."<sup>37</sup> These claims were used by members of temperance associations to support their demand that saloons be abolished. Their calls did not, however, aim to subject the behaviors of family members to surveillance and control. Instead, they saw the state as engineering conditions which would enable females to uphold the morality of their families.

#### b) *Prostitutes and Alcohol Consumption*

Members of the WCTU and members of other moral reform organizations saw women who worked in or visited saloons as sources of temptation and moral harm for husbands and the family (McLaren 1986:127).<sup>38</sup> A representative of the WCTU, for

37. Kerr Norman. (1895) "Inebriates are Liars." The Templar Quarterly. Vol. 1. No. II. August:13.

38. The Vancouver Chief of the police identified brothels in Vancouver as a source for illicit sale of liquors in his evidence to the Royal Commission of 1895. He explained to the commissioners that this practice was "very little outside of houses of ill-fame. There was, of course, some sale in these and there were a considerable number of them in the city" (Royal Commission 1895:213).

example, complained that the Standard Theater in Victoria harmed the moral fabric of the city in general and the morality of the family in particular since "girls dressed in tights were in the habit of supplying liquor to those who patronized the Theater."<sup>39</sup> Members of reform movements, such as the Vancouver Moral Reform Association, demanded that prostitutes' activities should be restricted by law (Nilsen 1986:209).

The anti-prostitution lobby in British Columbia triggered fears for business in addition to concerns about the morality of the family. Prostitutes were blamed for damaging business and property interests in areas in which they worked. The editor of the Methodist Recorder explained that alcohol consumption, prostitution and gambling should be stopped since they "are hindrances to legitimate trade; ... the saloon, the gambling house and the house of prostitution divert money from the channels of business, reduce the purchasing power of the people."<sup>40</sup>

The calls for the enactment and administration of strict regulations monitoring saloons were not always welcomed by law enforcement officials. Several Commissioners of the Victoria Licensing Board opposed the claim that a women's dress had a negative effect on the morality of the community. They claimed that in London, Paris and New York women attended saloons and

39. "Liquor Licenses." The Colonist. September 24, 1891:2.

40. "Moral Issues at the Civic Election." The Methodist Recorder 1903. Vol. IV. No. 8:10.

worked as barmaids without harming the moral atmosphere of these places. Moreover, the Commissioners saw the establishment of saloons as a sign of the city's progressive nature and as making an important contribution to its prosperity: "if Victoria was to make any progress, they should have such a house there also."<sup>41</sup> Resisting the demand of the WCTU that the city cancel the license for the Standard Theater in Victoria, the Mayor insisted that

if the temperance people of this city were opposed to the granting of licenses, why did they not start a good temperance hotel? No man was obliged to partake of intoxicants in a licensed hotel, nor was any person obliged to drink at the Standard Theater.<sup>42</sup>

Such views were consistent with the perception that individuals should be free to choose their own behaviors, and that this choice should not be controlled by legal authorities. This view was expressed by members of the Victoria Council in their response to the request of the Temperance and Moral Reform Association to purify the city by enacting laws suppressing prostitution. The Mayor refused this request by claiming that "fallen women"<sup>43</sup> should be dealt with through Victoria private charitable institutions rather than by the state.<sup>44</sup> Alderman Smith went on to argue that the best

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41. "Liquor Licenses." The Colonist. September 24, 1891:2.

42. Ibid.

43. "Moral Reform." The Colonist. 1890. December, 18:1.

44. Ibid.

response to the evils of the city lies with parents, mainly mothers, who should:

bring up the children well and try to keep them away from such places. [Moreover,] the city is well provided with churches of all denominations, and if the ministers in their pulpits will only inculcate morality and virtue they will do much more than by railing at the City Council.<sup>45</sup>

For civic officials the consumption of alcohol by family members was seen as a private matter which should be addressed by parents and the church. The concept of individual's rights to behave freely was used in this context as a counter control argument which resisted the idea of transferring responsibilities from the family to the state. This view presented family life as an appropriate site for moral intervention exercised by the church.

The calls for regulating the moral environment of the saloon, especially by controlling the distribution and consumption of alcohol by women, were unsuccessful until the end of the first decade of the 20th century. It was only in 1909 that these demands resulted in the enactment of a Vancouver By-law which prohibited a female from serving liquor in saloons.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, the 1910 Liquor Act restricted women's rights to hold a license to sell liquor. It automatically transferred a female's license to her husband upon her marriage. If the husband was not qualified to hold

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45. Ibid.

46. "New Rules for Licensed Premises." The Province. 1909. October. 19:11.

such a license, the Act empowered the Superintendent of the Provincial Police to transfer or cancel the license.<sup>47</sup> The same regulation prohibited license holders from selling or serving alcohol to women and to prostitutes with the presumption that the former, through the consumption of alcohol, were in danger of becoming the latter.<sup>48</sup>

These regulations were supported by the assumption that women needed to be protected from the immoral environment of the saloon. This perception was grounded in the wider approach towards females, one which saw women's family status as more important from their civic status. This notion was reinforced by reformers who claimed that females should fulfil their social role as mothers and wives. This reference to women's experiences through their familial relations reinforced their dependent position in society.

#### 9) The Moral Economy of Alcohol Distribution by Orientals

Orientals who distributed alcohol were represented as a source of moral harm for the entire white community. This description drew on a combination of racist attitudes towards Orientals and on economic concerns relating to their presence in the province. At the turn of the century, civic officials and businessmen suggested that distribution of alcohol by Chinese threatened the moral foundations of the community. In

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47. The Liquor Act, 1910, S.B.C, c.30, s.57 (3.).

48. Ibid, s.66, 65 (g.).

particular, Chinese who owned or worked in drinking premises where gambling took place were argued to constitute sources of immorality. Orientals were accused of involving whites in gambling activities, thus spreading immorality in the province. Orientals were further depicted as living in general filth. They were described by reporters as carrying with them "loathsome diseases" which could spread through the cities (Roy 1989:30). These arguments, related to public health agenda, reinforced the notion that Orientals were contagious and thus threatened both the physical and moral welfare of the white community.<sup>49</sup>

Racist attitudes to Natives held them to be an inferior group which should be transformed and assimilated into the white community. In contrast, racist attitudes towards Orientals assumed that their behavior could not be changed and thus they did not merit assimilation efforts. These different attitudes were shared by representatives of the churches as well as by the official authorities of the province. In 1892, the first Bishop of Westminster, Acton Windeyer Sillitoe, explained that the Chinese have,

no consciousness of the need for mission work -- indeed there was little visible sign of their belief in any religion whatever -- nor was there any great enthusiasm among the Church people of the diocese on

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49. Delaporte (1986) observes that in 19th century France, east Indians were considered as contagious, spreading cholera among the French residents. This image was supported by a comparison between the civilized citizens of France who followed certain rules of hygiene and the uncivilized Indians whose inferior physical conditions exposed them to the disease (pp. 15-20).

behalf of a mission. Rather ... there was a sort of unchristian conviction that such a mission was a mistake and a needless waste of time (Gowen 1899:190).

Ministers of the church felt that the "social mixture of the races is an impossibility from a moral point of view" (Dickie 1925:105). Drawing the line between the Christian and the Oriental communities, the Rev. Alexander Dunn argued that they cannot "exist side by side. In their very nature they are opposed to each other, and never can be harmonized."<sup>50</sup>

Ward (1978) suggests that racist attitudes were grounded in the belief that Orientals were jeopardizing the economic interests of the white community of British Columbia. Orientals were described as members of an immoral race and as ready to accept "low pay, long work days and low standards of living" (p.103). Thus, they were perceived to be competing in an unfair way with whites over the existing jobs in the province (Ormsby 1958:350). Ward (1978:103), for example, argues that the Japanese were perceived to be aiming to gain control over specific industries, especially the fishery.

These portrayals of Orientals also drew on the nationalist notion that an alien race was a potential threat to the dominance of the superior white race of the province (Roy 1981:657). Roy (1972) indicates that such a presentation rested on a demographic assumption that there was an "'amazing'" (cf. Roy 1972:243) birth rate among the Japanese already residing in the province. British Columbians feared

50. "Sabbath Desecration." The Vancouver Daily World. 1890. March, 20:4.



that immigration of Japanese would result in the submersion of the white race, leading to "racial deterioration" (Ward 1978:106). Comack (1986) indicates, however, that this threat was more imaginary than real, since Caucasians entering British Columbia during the first decade of the 20th century far outnumbered Orientals (p.81). Between 1906 and 1907, however, there was an increase in the number of Chinese, Japanese and East Indian immigrants who came to the province following an economic expansion (Roy 1989:164). Roy (1989) observes that this wave of Oriental immigration was accompanied with strong anti-oriental feelings among members of the white community. These racist attitudes led in 1907 to the Vancouver riot against Orientals (pp. 164-183).

The presentation of the Oriental community as creating a problem of racial degeneration was supported by their suggested involvement in immoral activities: opium smoking<sup>51</sup>, prostitution<sup>52</sup>, gambling and alcohol distribution. The fear that alcohol distribution by Orientals would lead to moral degeneration of whites was expressed in the petition of Lillooet's residents who claimed that "in the town of Lillooet a Chinaman, Ah Foo by name, sells spirituous liquors by retail

51. In 1908, Mackenzie King observed that opium smoking was spread by the Chinese "not only among ... men and boys, but also among women and girls" (cited in Clark 1942:439).

52. Tracing the origins of public concern regarding white slavery, McLaren (1987:73) observes that during the first decade of the 20th century various women's groups warned the public that the Chinese, "not content with importing their own women to satisfy their lust for vice, had ... now turned their attention to white girls."

and by bottle, much to the detriment of the health and morality of the youthful residents."<sup>53</sup> The portrayal of the sale of liquor as harming the younger generation was used to justify the demand to "stop this great nuisance."<sup>54</sup> A similar demand was made by the Local Executive of the Provincial Licensed Vintners Association to the Police Commissioners in Vancouver requesting them to instruct the Police Department,

to close all lotteries and other forms of gambling now being openly conducted in Chinatown, as we are thoroughly convinced it is detrimental to the trade of all classes of merchants in this city. We understand that these games are largely patronized by white men, and even boys, and intoxicating liquors are supplied gratis.<sup>55</sup>

Similar racist attitudes towards Orientals prevailed in the USA at the turn of the century. The president of the American Federation of Labour, Samuel Gompers, lobbied the Congress to pass a law prohibiting Chinese from immigrating to America. In order to support his claims that the Chinese threatened the superiority of the white race, he described them as immoral: "the yellow Man found it natural to lie, cheat, and murder and 99 out of every 100 Chinese are gamblers" (cited in Szasz 1975:73).

Racist attitudes to Orientals led the authorities in British Columbia to introduce legislation confining Orientals

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53. B.C. Sessional Papers, 1899:283.

54. Ibid.

55. A letter to the Vancouver Police Commission. From the Provincial Licensed Vintners Association of B.C. November, 12, 1904. Vancouver City Archives. 75(A), File 7.

to specific residential areas and to specific industries, such as agriculture and the retail and service trades (Roy 1972:243). Included in this restrictive legislation were alcohol-related regulations which gradually excluded Orientals from the alcohol trade. This process of exclusion started in 1897 with the enactment of the 1897 Rural Liquor Licence Act which excluded Japanese, Chinese or Natives from the list of residents in rural areas who were eligible to sign a petition supporting the granting of a liquor license in their community.<sup>56</sup> Two years later, these restrictions were extended to include Orientals living anywhere in the entire province.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the same Act prohibited the issuing or transferring of liquor licenses to "any person of the Indian, Chinese or Japanese Race."<sup>58</sup> Finally, a Vancouver By-law introduced in 1909 prohibited Orientals from serving liquor in saloons.<sup>59</sup>

The application of these restrictions became a site of tension between civic officials and interest groups involved in the alcohol distribution industry. For example, the Mayor of Victoria was described by the Police Magistrate as being involved in the organization of illicit alcohol trade by Chinese in his city and as responsible for collecting taxes

56. S.B.C., c.23, s.2.

57. Liquor Licence Act, 1899. S.B.C., c.39, s.22.

58. Ibid, s.36.

59. "New Rules for Licensed Premises." The Province. 1909. October. 19:11.

from this illegal trade.<sup>60</sup> Another attempt to collect taxes on alcohol sales by Orientals was undertaken by a member of the Vancouver Board of License Commissioners, who suggested granting a license to "some Japs with an unspellable name ... "<sup>61</sup> to sell wine and beer on their premises, arguing that since "the Japanese got the liquor anyway ... perhaps a revenue might be obtained by granting a license."<sup>62</sup>

The Hotel and Saloon Keepers' Protective Association protested against this practice of securing revenues and claimed that the Vancouver police used unfair methods when administrating liquor regulations. The Association complained that while many illegitimate Oriental clubs were selling liquor and allowing gambling to take place, the legitimate licensed houses were being monitored closely by the police and were being fined for minor infractions of the city By-Laws. The Association argued that since their members paid considerable revenue to the city, they should be better served by the police.<sup>63</sup>

An analysis of the arguments surrounding the introduction and enforcement of regulations restricting the participation

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60. "Police Magistrate Scents a very grave Conspiracy." The Colonist. April 7, 1904:1.

61. "Would abolish Saloon Licenses in Vancouver." The Province. 1902. November 22:1.

62. Ibid.

63. A letter to the Vancouver Police Commission. From the Hotel and Saloon Keepers' Protective Association. December 2, 1906. Vancouver City Archives. 75(A) File 13.

of Orientals in the alcohol industry also suggests a shift in perceptions regarding the role of the state and the level of its intervention in an individual's activities. Up to that time, debates about alcohol distribution and consumption were supported by the liberal philosophy which was accompanied by a the perception that the state is not authorized to interfere with individuals' activities. The calls for legislation restricting Orientals' participation in the alcohol industry mark a change in this concept: now the legal system was encouraged to interfere in the behaviors of individuals. That an important shift had occurred in this perception is especially clear when we see that the combination of racism and moralism led, in this instance, to claims that presented the distribution of alcohol as a threat to the state itself. Against such a threat, state intervention was perceived to be necessary.

#### 10) Summary

Between 1890 and 1910, moral and economic discourses around the distribution and consumption of alcohol grew more encompassing. Neither discourse is homogeneous; rather, they reflect tensions and conflicts among the various groups involved in their promulgation and mobilization. Civic officials and liquor entrepreneurs continued to emphasize the economic gains to be derived from the liquor trade. They resisted the demands of moral reformers to cancel licenses for alcohol outlets and to ban the distribution and consumption

of alcohol. Instead, they encouraged the state to enact regulations supervising the liquor trade in order to ensure its efficiency and respectability. However, using the same economic discourse, moral reformers and company managers pointed to the financial harm to be sustained by the province in general and by private businesses in particular. Specifically, moral reformers and company managers saw workers' alcohol use as interfering with economic operations. In order to prevent such harm, they encouraged the government to restrict the consumption of alcohol by laborers. Adding another element to this complex discourse, individuals involved in the liquor trade claimed that the distribution of alcohol by Orientals created unfair competition. In order to maximize their own profits, they demanded that Orientals be prevented from distributing alcohol.

Moral discourse was similarly characterized by a diverse set of interests promoted by the groups which promulgated and applied it. Civic officials used moral discourse in order to justify their calls for an organized and supervised liquor trade. They described the consumption of alcohol as a free albeit immoral choice exercised by individuals. Civic officials believed that the church and the family should educate alcohol drinkers. Moral reformers, however, used a moral discourse to justify their calls to restrict the consumption of alcohol. They claimed that alcohol use could lead workers and parents to neglect their proper moral

obligation as committed workers, responsible husbands and fathers and moral mothers.

Company managers used moral discourse to justify their calls for the introduction of limitations on the use of alcohol. They argued that the consumption of alcohol by workers led to disorderly behavior outside licensed premises. According to some company managers, this conduct harmed the moral atmosphere of the community. Moral discourse was used by individuals involved in the liquor trade to justify their demands that Orientals be prohibited from distributing alcohol. Using racist ideas they claimed that Orientals were deliberately attempting to spread immorality among whites and thus should be barred from the liquor trade.

These discourses were constructed and applied during a period in which the province was faced with waves of immigrants. The economic and moral discourses reflect the ways in which various groups responded to this volatile social situation. In particular, they display the assumptions of various groups regarding the appropriate social order at a time of social formation and organization in face of these demographic changes. For moral reformers, the conduct of the newcomers was a cause of concern. They interpreted the "immoral" behavior of these people as harming the moral foundation of both the community and individuals. Their calls for changing individuals' drinking habits also drew on wider developments within the church. Basing their arguments on the doctrine of the social gospel, they claimed that a legal

system informed by Christian values should be used as a mechanism of social engineering. Such a legal system would create an "ideal" individual following the moral values of the white Protestant culture: hard work, thrift and temperance.

At this time of community formation, mechanisms were developed to deal with marginalized people: workers, women and Orientals. Each of these groups was seen to threaten the moral values of society and thus to require control. Controls aimed to protect the community from immoral activities and also to teach workers and women moral values. This instruction was thought of as an instructive tool which would turn workers into equal members of society. Such instruction, however, would allow women to be accepted into the community only through their matrimonial relations. Orientals were perceived as aliens who did not deserve citizenship, persons who should be controlled in order to prevent them from harming society.

These regulations and the discourses which supported them represent a change in the liberal philosophy of the state. The representation of workers, women and Orientals as threatening the existence of the community supported calls for more state intervention to defend the province's future. These calls stood in a sharp contrast to the individualistic view which resisted such intervention. In this context, alcohol regulations and indeed the legal system itself were assigned a new role. While in the previous period the law was perceived as protecting Natives, "drunkards" and minors from immoral environments, now the rationale for control had been extended



to protect everyone from immoral individuals and places. The law helped consolidate the marginality of certain groups by producing an index which defined behaviors as moral and acceptable at this particular time.

During the next decade, alcohol consumption by workers, women and members of racial minorities continued to be interpreted as a threat to the morality and health of the community. In cooperation with members of new professional groups reformers designed a series of policies subjecting various aspects of the lives of women, children, racial minorities and workers to more extensive state control. It is to the social construction of these ideas and policies that I now turn.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE MEDICAL-MORAL CONCEPTION I: ALCOHOL REGULATIONS, 1910-1925

#### 1) Introduction

During the second decade of the 20th century a medical moral discourse which emphasized the *physical, psychological* and *moral* degenerative nature of alcohol consumption was promulgated in the province. This hybrid discourse was constructed by moral reformers, law enforcement personnel and members of professional groups. Emphasizing damages which could be caused by the consumption of alcohol to the *morality* and *health* of individuals and the community, members of these groups demanded that the distribution and consumption of alcohol be banned.

Civic officials and members of the business community continued to promulgate and use the economic discourse which had been constructed in earlier periods. These people emphasized the economic benefits to be derived from the liquor trade. Up until 1917, they lobbied the government to continue supervising the existing liquor trade and to resist reformers' demands to outlaw the distribution and consumption of alcohol. Starting in 1919, they lobbied the government to create a new legal system which, they claimed, would ensure a moderate use of alcohol. Moral reformers used the same discourse to warn the public that the consumption of alcohol by workers, soldiers and children would cause economic damage to the province.

These attitudes towards alcohol regulations reflect the response of the various groups to demographic and economic events occurring in the province. The province continued to absorb waves of immigrants. By the outbreak of the war, British Columbia had the highest urban population in Canada. Moral reformers who created a "coalition of interests" with professional groups saw the laws as a tool to educate immigrants and members of working classes to follow values and patterns of behaviors appropriate for citizens of a new society -- particularly as these concerned their moral conduct and health. In the economic sphere, the end of the war brought with it high rates of unemployment. The province was faced with labor unrest created by various workers' organizations such as the Industrial Workers of the World (Barman 1991:213). The law in general and alcohol regulations in particular were depicted as appropriate mechanisms for maintaining the social order.

Ideas about law, morality and health drew on wider developments in Eastern Canada, Britain and the USA. With new discoveries in the human sciences, a strong belief in the ability of professionals to eliminate a whole range of vices emerged. The main focus of the economic and the medical-moral discourses were south-eastern Europeans, members of working-class, mainly the "idle poor" and some of those who were engaged in menial often seasonal labouring jobs. Alcohol consumption by these people was thought to be a sign of their immorality. They were depicted by moral reformers and

professionals as carrying with them physical diseases, feeble-mindedness and madness. A focal concern of the reformers and professionals were immigrant and working class mothers who were perceived to be ignorant, immoral and unable to raise their children as moral and healthy citizens.

The promulgation of these discourses and the various regulations which were enacted reflect another change in the liberal philosophy of the state. In the second decade of the 20th century, more aspects of a citizen's life became exposed to state control. This intervention into private life was depicted as positive and necessary.

The relations between the various groups involved in the control of alcohol along with the influence of broader approaches and developments which shaped their activities will be the subject of the next three chapters. This analysis begins, in the current chapter, with the social construction of medical-moral discourse during this particular period.

## 2) The Historical Context of the Discourses

Up until the First World War, fishing, forestry and mining flourished as a result of foreign investment (Barman 1991:182). A steady flow of immigrants continued to come to the province. The province's population had increased from 392,480 in 1911 to 524,582 in 1921 (Barman 1991:363). The number of females in the province had increased from 89,528 in 1911 to 149,781 in 1921 (Barman 1991:369). In the second decade of the 20th century, British Columbia had the highest

urban population in Canada. Many immigrants resided in towns which were turned into commercial and industrial centers (McDonald 1981:377).

Racial minorities and some segments of the working class were perceived by reformers, professionals and members of the business community as immoral and as carrying with them physical diseases, feeble-mindedness and madness. Mrs. D. McKay, the British Columbia representative of the Social Service Council,<sup>1</sup> explained that one of the "acute problems" facing British Columbia in the 1920s was:

our geographical position at the door of the Orient with an increasing tide of Oriental invasion from India, China and Japan. The invaders come bringing their vices, their Oriental habits and religions with them.<sup>2</sup>

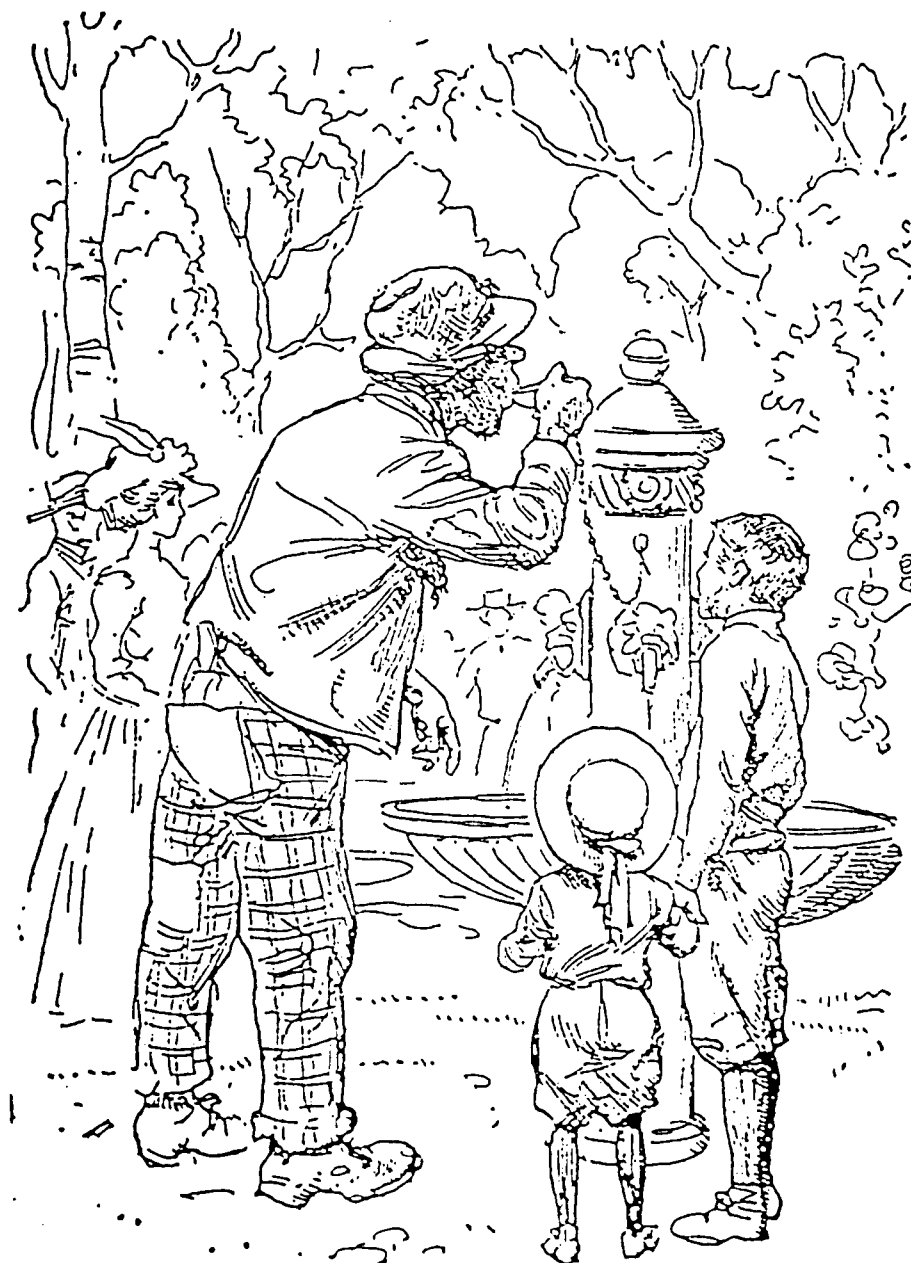
This attitude is illustrated in a physiology and hygiene textbook used in the provincial schools at that time (Ritchie and Caldwell 1926). Members of marginal groups were described as sources of germs which could infect innocent children and respected members of Canadian society. The authors explained that scientific studies have identified the "common cup" used for drinking as a source of infection. The picture which is reproduced in Figure 4.1 depicted a poor man drinking from the public cup as a threat to children and respected adults.

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1. The Social Service Council was a national federation of religious and lay groups which operated in Canada between 1919 and the late 1920s dealing with a variety of social issues (Thompson and Seager 1985:62).

2. McKay, D.M. (1926) "Reports of Provincial Councils. British Columbia." Social Welfare. Vol. VII. No. 5:3.

Figure 4.1



It is never safe to use public drinking  
cups.

Source: John W. Ritchie and Joseph S. Caldwell (1926).  
Physiology and Hygiene for Public Schools. Toronto: The  
Educational Book Company:284.

The urban centres where most members of these populations  
resided were described as pollutants, spreading disease and

immorality all over the city.<sup>3</sup> In a lecture in Toronto which was reproduced by the British Columbia Prohibition Association, Professor Almy from Buffalo warned his listeners that if left untouched "the diseases and vices of the poor [would] cross ward lines."<sup>4</sup> The vice, disease and ignorance of the new masses were seen by reformers and professionals as threatening the future of the community and its ability to progress in the modern world.

For members of various social and moral reform movements, heavy drinking, prostitution, mental illness and poverty symbolized the customs and conditions of past generations. The existence of these "pathologies" signified the ignorance and inability of parents to deal effectively with vice and sickness. In contrast, reformers praised the ability of modern administrators and planners to utilize knowledge gained in scientific studies in order to control or eliminate these old maladies. In particular, they felt that information accumulated in new areas of investigation, such as medicine, industrial, social hygiene and scientific management, would provide the means to remove and prevent these problems.

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3. Foucault (1965) describes a similar fear of French reformers during the second half of the 18th century, in France. They saw the hospital, the house of correction and other places of confinement as "tainting the air and spreading their contagion in the atmosphere of the cities" (p.206).

4. Almy, Fredric. (1920) "The meaning of Poverty." Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Conference on Public Welfare. Hamilton, Ontario:62-63.

Melossi (1990) identifies a similar response of leaders of the "Progressive Era" towards new immigrants coming to American cities. Most of these newcomers were perceived as culturally and biologically inferior to the ideal American settlers. In order to integrate the immigrants into the newly formed democracy, various policies, informed by professional knowledge, were suggested in attempt to socialize these people to American society. Central to these policies was the use of law as a mechanism for social engineering aiming to "reach policy goals" (p.109).

For social reformers in British Columbia, the first decades of the 20th century were seen as formative years in which the province was developing its social framework and moral foundations. They argued that the authorities should use modern knowledge to shape the future of the community. The outbreak of the First World War was seen as an additional opportunity to reconstruct society. The author of an article published in Social Welfare encouraged his readers to devote their time to reforming the masses: "the four years of war, although so terrible in their destruction, were, nevertheless, in some respects, constructive beyond any years of the ages that had preceded."<sup>5</sup> The Superintendent of the International Reform Bureau described his version of a new society to be built after the war:

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5. Harkness, B.A. (1919) "Prohibition and Reconstruction." Social Welfare. April. 1:170.



The war news brings us a good omen. We are nearing the Jerusalem end of the Jericho Road ... We are encouraged ... as we look forward to the New Jerusalem -- the better social order we confidently expect after the war; a fraternity of democracies living in a warless and saloonless world.<sup>6</sup>

### 3) Alcohol Regulations: 1910-1925

Until 1916, representatives of the WCTU and members of the Local Option League were in the forefront of efforts to outlaw the distribution and consumption of alcohol. They were supported by the Baptist, Methodist and Congregational Churches which found new members among businessmen, professional men and their families who had immigrated to the province. Their campaigns led to the introduction of regulations which added more layers of control to the ways in which alcohol could be lawfully distributed and consumed.

These regulations restricted the time during which licensed premises were permitted to sell alcoholic beverages. The Liquor License Act Amendment Act, 1913 prohibited the sale of alcohol from 10 o'clock Saturday evening until 7 o'clock Monday morning. During weekdays, the sale of alcohol was not allowed from 11 o'clock in the evening until 7 o'clock in the morning.<sup>7</sup> Amendments introduced in 1916 further limited the time during which liquor could be sold lawfully by allowing the opening of licensed premises only at 11.00 o'clock in the

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6. Crafts, Wilbur. (1919) "Winning the fight against Autocracy, Alcohol and Anarchy." Public Health Journal. Vol. X. No. 1:25.

7. S.B.C., c.20, s.5.

morning instead of 7 o'clock.<sup>8</sup> The same Act outlawed the use of any "musical instrument, dancing, or other form of entertainment".<sup>9</sup> In 1916, the quality and type of liquor sold in licensed premises came under state control; the Superintendent of the Provincial Police, his constables or officers or the Board of License Commissioners were empowered to ensure that liquor was not "adulterated or of inferior quality".<sup>10</sup>

In 1915, with the establishment of the British Columbia People's Prohibition Association (PPA), the provincial prohibition campaign grew more intense (Campbell 1988:34). The association drew its supporters from the middle-class members of the evangelical churches. Heibert (1969:32) observes that proponents of prohibition were at the forefront of the religious, business and political life of the Province. Moreover, the association was supported by the Liberal Party which, as early as 1909, made Local Option legislation (along with other reform programs such as women's suffrage) part of the party platform (Heibert 1969:61). With the outbreak of the First World War, prohibitionists mobilized nationalistic feelings in order to lobby the government to eliminate the liquor traffic for the duration of the war (Schweighofer 1988: 181-182).

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8. S.B.C., c.37, s.3 (1.).

9. S.B.C., c.20, s.9 (81.).

10. S.B.C., c.37, s.5.

In a 1916 plebiscite conducted in the province, 57.7% of the voters supported the enactment of the Prohibition Act (Hiebert 1969:88). The British Columbia Prohibition Act of 1916 outlawed the sale of alcohol.<sup>11</sup> The Act was in force between 1917 and 1921 when it was replaced by the Government Liquor Act. Not all alcohol use was eliminated by the Prohibition Act. The law did not prohibit individuals from purchasing or receiving alcohol from sources outside the province, nor did it outlaw the consumption of alcohol within "a private dwelling-house."<sup>12</sup>

Brewers and distillers licensed by the federal government were permitted to continue to manufacture liquor.<sup>13</sup> The Act allowed the sale of liquors by vendors appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council for "medicinal, mechanical, scientific, and sacramental purposes."<sup>14</sup> The administration of the Act was assigned to the provincial and municipal police forces<sup>15</sup> supervised by a prohibition commissioner.<sup>16</sup>

The available data suggest that the Prohibition Act was not strictly enforced. The Act gave rise to corruption involving both medical practitioners, whose members were

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11. S.B.C., c.49.

12. Ibid, s.12.

13. Ibid, s.18.

14. Ibid, s.4.

15. Ibid, s.29.

16. British Columbia Prohibition Act, Amendment Act, 1918 (S.B.C., c.68, s.4(a)).

allowed to prescribe liquor for medical use, and law enforcers. The first Prohibition Commissioner was charged with illegally smuggling alcohol into the province (Campbell 1988; Hiebert 1969).

At the end of the war, the Act was challenged on several grounds. Law enforcement officers and public officials claimed that it was impossible to administer the law; returning soldiers claimed that the Act deprived them of their right to consume alcohol; businessmen and public officials complained about loss of revenues accruing from the sale of alcohol. In 1919, a group of businessmen, lawyers and prominent military men established the Moderation League to lobby the government to repeal the Prohibition Act (Hiebert 1969:124). In a plebiscite conducted in 1920, 62.4% of the electorate defeated prohibition (Campbell 1988:36).

In 1921, the Government Liquor Act replaced the Prohibition Act. The introduction of this legislation led to a significant change in the manner in which alcohol was purchased and used in the province. Municipal Board Commissions were replaced by a system in which alcohol distribution was monopolized by the provincial government. Under the new regime, distribution of alcohol was transferred from the hands of private entrepreneurs to the government. In this way, the state became the "director of a large business concern" (Hose 1928:7). The Act allowed the distribution of only sealed packages of liquor through government liquor stores, and restricted alcohol consumption

to private homes or to the guest rooms of hotels. The Act outlawed the display of signs containing words previously associated with alcohol distribution. The display on any building or shop signs of the words bar, bar-room, saloon, tavern, wines, beer or liquors was prohibited.<sup>17</sup> Under this Act, importation for private use was allowed, but imports were taxed. The controls on alcohol distribution were relaxed in 1923 with the introduction of amendments which allowed the sale of beer by the glass in licensed clubs.<sup>18</sup>

In order to administer the Act, a Liquor Control Board, responsible directly to the Attorney General, was appointed.<sup>19</sup> The board enjoyed a broad jurisdiction in managing the liquor trade and enforcing the law. Among the responsibilities of the Board were: the establishment of warehouses and stores which sold alcoholic beverages to the public; the selection of personnel working in these places; the control of the hours and days in which liquor could be sold; the price of alcoholic beverages; the determination of the amount of liquor which could be purchased by individuals at any one time; and the issuing of individual permits which enabled their holders to purchase alcohol in these stores (see chapter 6 for details).

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17. S.B.C. c.30, s.45.

18. S.B.C. c.45, s.17.

19. S.B.C. c.30, s.3,4.

#### 4) Prohibition and Professional Knowledge

Supporters of prohibition did not restrict their activities to alcohol. They were active in the creation of policies relating to child welfare, education reform and public hygiene. Central to their program was the belief that the health and morale of Canadians were a matter for state intervention -- an intervention which should be informed by professional knowledge. Prohibitionists, especially women's organizations, created a "coalition of interests" with medical practitioners, educators, psychiatrists and law enforcement personnel in attempt to define a whole range of issues as appropriate for state concern.

These calls for state intervention reflected the concerns of reformers and professionals about deviance, immorality and sickness among new immigrants and members of the working class. They feared that criminal and deviant activities would lead to the moral and physical degeneration of the community. In order to prevent such damage, they constructed a series of policies attempting to diagnose and treat sickness along with programs aiming to control and manage deviants. Reformers and professionals believed that these policies would change deviants' behavior according to a script designed by the responsible members of the community. Among these programs were plans to prohibit the consumption of alcohol. These programs drew on wider developments in the "human sciences" (cf. Foucault 1973), in particular medicine, psychiatry, genetics, economics, and sociology and criminology.

Discoveries in these disciplines led to a new perception of the causes of criminal and deviant behavior. Theories which treated crime as a free choice was challenged by new evidence. This liberal view was replaced by an approach which located the source of criminal activity in physical, biological or social conditions, all of which were beyond the control of each individual. Garland (1985) observes that the individual's conduct came to be perceived as a function of 'personality' or 'character' which "depends for its construction upon 'heredity, psychological and social circumstances'" (p.91). Consequently, the identification and cure of the pathology that leads a person to crime, was seen as the appropriate response to crime. Central to this corrective penalty was the development of knowledge which focussed on an individual's character, family background and social environment (Foucault 1979:128). Various groups of experts designed policies to examine and classify criminals in order to find a way of treating criminals.

The creation of classification schemes distinguishing different types of criminals challenged the liberal doctrine which assumed that all individuals were free, responsible and behaving in a rational way. Garland (1985) explains that the new discoveries led to the view that

there are categories which pose exception to the rule, classes which exhibit only limited degrees of freedom and a large population of 'special cases'.

Neither reason nor responsibility can any longer be simply presumed in the presence of juveniles, vagrants, habituals, inebriates or the feeble-minded (p.25).

The emphasis on differences in individual and collective behavior paved the way for the involvement of experts in various attempts to diagnose and eliminate criminality. According to Cohen (1985), at the end of the 19th century the belief that experts could diagnose and treat criminal behavior was interwoven into reform initiatives. Reformers in Europe and the USA believed that social reform grounded on scientific knowledge would lead to the elimination of crime and other social vices: "science and technology would usher in a new era; disease, misery and crime were capable of being vanquished" (Cohen 1985:198).

##### 5) The State and Public Hygiene

In Canada, these ideas informed the activities of reformers and members of professional groups. They believed that crime, deviance and sickness would be eliminated by transferring the responsibility for the physical and mental health of Canadian citizens from families and voluntary charitable institutions to the state. For reformers and professionals, state institutions were the only mechanisms capable of ensuring the proper development of individual well-being which, in turn, would contribute to the nation's health. In 1918, with the establishment of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene these ideas were given an institutional base (McLaren 1990:59). The committee lobbied



Federal and Provincial governments to recognize that "human brains are our greatest resource, and therefore deserving of primal consideration as to their conservation and improvement."<sup>20</sup> Members of the committee explained that physical and mental qualities are significant for the efficient operation of the nation since "a nation built up with a people of sound mental and physical health will survive -- one erected on an unstable mental and physical basis will surely succumb."<sup>21</sup>

The involvement of psychiatrists in the process of policy design signifies a change in their professional role. In fact, up until the First World War, most psychiatrists worked as medical superintendants responsible for the administration of asylums. They were not perceived to be experts capable of advising politicians about issues relating to the health of the community (Brown 1984:316). During the war, however, psychiatrists were called upon to deal with soldiers who suffered from shell shock. In order to deal with this phenomenon, British and French military authorities established special hospitals where psychiatrists diagnosed and treated soldiers. In his analysis of the role of psychiatry during the 20th century, Rose (1990:21) points out that in England after the war, psychiatrists were called upon

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20. Hincks, C.M. (1919) "The Scope and Aims of the Mental Hygiene Movement in Canada." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. April. Vol. 1. No. 1:20.

21. Clarke, C.K. (1919) "Immigration." The Public Health Journal. Vol. X. No. 10. October:444.

for the first time to design policies in such areas as the family, the workplace and educational institutions.

The involvement of Canadian psychiatrists in the war motivated them to demand that their profession be recognized as being as valuable and important as medicine which dealt with "physical disease."<sup>22</sup> Trying to achieve this recognition, psychiatrists highlighted the contribution which psychiatry could make to the efficient operation of the community. Criminals were identified as potential clientele for programs administered by psychiatrists. In the first volume of the Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene, the editor described the current state of psychiatry thus:

for years, we have been puzzled as to how to deal effectively with our criminals, our juvenile delinquents, our prostitutes and our moral degenerates. To-day, it is becoming generally recognized that mental factors play a great part in this problem and that human behavior can be neither successfully studied nor effectively directed without taking into account the facts of mental life.<sup>23</sup>

In the process of devising policies to deal with criminals, psychiatrists aimed to replace traditional theory which saw criminals as being possessed "by demons"<sup>24</sup> with a new explanation which traced criminal activity to mental states and to the external circumstances affecting a person's

22. Bridges, J.W. (1928) "The Mental Hygiene Movement." The Public Health Journal. Vol. XIX. No. 1:2.

23. "Foreword." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. 1919. Vol. 1. No. 1:1.

24. Bridges, J.W. (1928) "The Mental Hygiene Movement." The Public Health Journal. Vol. XIX. No. 1:2.

mental hygiene. Psychiatrists argued that in order to prevent further criminal activities, the mental disorders and the conditions which nourished them should be identified and cured.<sup>25</sup> They went on to claim that the ability of psychiatry to identify the disorders and the conditions which propelled individuals into criminal activities should assist the courts in a variety of ways: "law would be well advised to meet the psychiatrist more than halfway and devise a method of dealing justly and sanely with those who require care and treatment, rather than punishment."<sup>26</sup>

The National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor adopted this idea and suggested that girls and women awaiting trial be sent to a "detention house . . . providing for proper classification and separation of different types of offenders."<sup>27</sup> After being convicted, they should be conveyed to a

central clearing house ... for scientific study, including physical and mental examinations, and study of family history, home surroundings and previous experience in life; and from which such [institutions] girls and women shall be returned to the court for sentence with recommendations as to their distribution in accordance with the findings of these examinations.<sup>28</sup>

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25. "Disease or Sin." The Canadian Medical Association Journal. 1913. Vol. 3. November. No. 11:990.

26. C.K. Clarke. (1924) "The Fourth Maudsley Lecture." The Public Health Journal. Vol. XV. No. 1:10.

27. "National Committee on Prison and Prison Labor." The Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. 1921. Vol. III. No. 2:79.

28. Ibid: 79-80.

Government concern over the sickness and health of all citizens became apparent during the First World War. The examination of Canadian volunteers by the military authorities revealed that more than 30 per cent were unfit for military service. At least some physical defects were detected among 50 per cent of the recruits (McCuaig 1980:485). Members of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene used these results to support their calls for the state to promote the health of the nation. In particular, they argued that psychiatric classification schemes used to distinguish between offenders should be used to classify all members of the community.

The potentially deleterious influence of alcohol consumption on the national psyche and physique and on its military ability was enlisted by the president of the British Columbia Women's Christian Temperance Union to support her demand to prohibit alcohol consumption for the duration of the war. Coloring her argument with patriotic appeals, she wrote:

Many have warned that alcohol was breeding inefficiency in the race; yet the governments have failed to cope with this enemy from within, until the danger of the enemy from without caused them to sense 'that the fittest only can survive.' And the present great struggle has at last convinced them that no drinking nation can be 'fit' (cited in Hiebert 1969:63).

These representations of harm associated with physical and mental disorders served as a basis for demands for the state to reconstruct society, and in particular to detect and eliminate conditions jeopardizing the health of Canadians.

The state was called upon to empower medical practitioners to detect and abolish anything that would contaminate the health of the Canadian nation. In particular, the ability of scientists to diagnose and predict illness and to prevent its occurrence was used to encourage the state to develop scientifically informed policies.

Scientific knowledge was sought to identify undesirable individuals who would threaten the existence of the community through their incompetence and lack of productivity. Thus, medical practitioners should be empowered to design medical and legal mechanisms to remove these individuals from Canadian society. This principle of social reconstruction was supplemented by criticism of any existing policies that supported individuals who could not take care of themselves. William Tait, a professor of psychology at McGill University, argued that social programs introduced in the Western world during the 20th century were supported by a 'maternalism' which emphasized soft and tender attitudes towards the sick, unemployed and the poor:

In former times ... only the more rugged survived, that is, those who could resist temptations or had the intelligence to protect themselves from dangers. Now all things are changed and instead of looking after ourselves we look after one another.<sup>29</sup>

Proponents of eugenics considered these (soft) attitudes to be based on "mistaken, unscientific and unoriented social welfare

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29. Tait, William D. (1921) "Democracy and Mental Hygiene." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. July. Vol. 3. No. 2:33.

schemes"<sup>30</sup> that would lead to the destruction of the civilized world. In order to secure the future of the "superior type,"<sup>31</sup> they called for the creation of laws which would be informed by masculine principles and encouraged by scientific knowledge. These principles would follow the laws of natural selection by identifying the "unfits, misfits and ineffective"<sup>32</sup> and allow them to die out from "exposure, syphilis, alcohol [and] war."<sup>33</sup> This backlash towards individualistic ideology marks a new attitude towards individuals thought to be unable to take care of themselves. Previously they were left to themselves or were punished for their behavior.<sup>34</sup> The ability of medical knowledge to identify these individuals now exposed them to a form of medical intervention which segregated them from society. This "exclusionary mode" (cf. Cohen 1985:225) targeted individuals

30. Ibid:34.

31. Ibid:36.

32. Ibid:33.

33. Ibid:33.

34. An author in the Canadian Monthly expressed this attitudes towards the weak and the drunkards. He argued that "natural selection" ought not to be

cheated in its operation by a universal artificial system of preserving the constitutionally weak, to propagate their weakness and uncontrol, instead of endeavoring -- by appeals to reason, to the sense of right, to the affections, to self-interest -- to rouse the sluggish will and invigorate self-control; and thus, constituting this the test of their improvability and of their title to survive.

(Allen "the Temperance Problem: A Reply to Fidelis." The Canadian Monthly. 1877. September:285. (Emphasis in original)).

who were perceived to be "irreformable"<sup>35</sup> and beyond cure and treatment.

The dependency of state institutions on professional knowledge entailed a wider reconsideration of the relations between individuals and the state. With the formulation of new techniques aiming to protect the health of individuals and the community, more aspects of private lives were subject to medical, pedagogical and legal intervention. With the establishment of initiatives and facilities aiming to monitor and regulate the health of citizens, a whole range of controls were developed, screening the private lives of individuals.

The reliance on scientific knowledge was central to the prohibition campaign. Prohibitionists used medical notions about alcohol consumption in particular and about health and disease in general to support their demand that alcohol consumption be banned. Ideas about alcohol consumption were combined with ideas about the physical and moral conditions of individuals to form a moral-medical discourse used by temperance leaders and medical practitioners to demand more state intervention into private life.

6) The Medical-Moral Conceptualization in the Temperance Agenda

In their various campaigns, supporters of prohibition emphasized the morally degenerative influence of alcohol

35. Murphy, Arthur. (1920) "What Knowledge will do towards the Betterment of Social Conditions." Western Woman's Weekly. Vol.3. No. 31:1.

distribution. Their moral claims were grounded in a scientific conception of alcohol abuse. This conception was based on the notion that scientific studies would contribute to the accumulation of objective knowledge about alcohol. The information gained in this scientific process would uncover the truth about alcohol use and would allow legislators and law enforcement agencies to deal efficiently and effectively with alcohol-related problems.

The new discourse which integrated scientific rationality and moralism led to a change in the definition of harm attributed to the consumption of alcohol. Previously, alcohol consumption was described as harming the morality of individuals, particularly workers, women and members of racial minorities. The new discourse of alcohol use saw this behavior as harming the morality and health of the Canadian nation and indeed the entire white race. Since the existence of the community was threatened, the state was called on to design policies protecting its future.

The medical interpretation of alcohol consumption was used by prohibitionists to support their demand that the distribution and consumption of alcohol be banned. These calls were one element within a wider campaign in which moral reformers aimed to eliminate a whole range of vices and crimes, including alcoholism, among members of marginalized groups. Particularly, they believed that problems of deviance and crime would be solved through the coaching of members of these groups to behave according to middle class, white Anglo-



Saxon values: thrift, temperance and hard work. These reform initiatives were grounded in scientific reasoning which granted an authority to their claims. This integration of moral and medical reasoning characterizes the rhetoric of reformers in British Columbia at the second decade of the 20th century. In their efforts to introduce a series of reforms in such areas as family life, health and education, reformers drew on two doctrines: the Protestant doctrine which emphasized individual responsibility and secular liberal doctrine which called for social change. Integrating the religions and the secular reasoning, reformers created a medical-moral discourse "capable of justifying social engineering in both religious and secular terms" (McLaren and Lowman 1990:69). This discourse was used by the reformers to define the consumption of alcohol as a moral and health hazard.

Prohibitionists and other reformers supported their claims with quantitative information, usually derived from studies conducted in England or the United States. These studies and their interpretation were shaped by the beliefs of scientists and moral reformers. The combination of scientific knowledge and moral script is echoed in the address of the General Secretary of the World League Against Alcoholism who, in 1922, argued that:

the reason for prohibition of the beverage liquor traffic must rest absolutely upon fundamental truth. In the last analysis, prohibition must find its sanction in scientific knowledge of the relation of

alcoholism to the economic, social political, moral and religious life of the world.<sup>36</sup>

He explained that the basic premises of this scientific knowledge are based upon Christian values and beliefs: "what is bad in morals is fundamentally bad, economically, socially, and politically ... there is but one code -- 'one law, one God, one element, and one far off divine event, towards which the whole creation moves'."<sup>37</sup>

The appeal of moral reformers to the authority of scientific knowledge helped to make moralistic claims more respectable. This respectability was further confirmed by the idea that science is objective. Value-free scientific discoveries were depicted as parallel to legal rationality. The use of scientific justifications for the demands of moral reformers allowed scientific notions and principles to be appropriated and helped to shape public ideas about how to deal with alcoholism in particular, and disease and health more general. The scientific rationalization of moral ideas about alcohol use was based on developments in the biological and medical sciences at the turn of the century. These notions included a variety of issues which combined hereditarian notions, eugenic principles and the concept of hygiene into a public health agenda.

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36. Cherrington, Ernest H. (1923) "Opportunity and Obligation of the World Movement Against Alcoholism." Social Welfare. January:72.

37. Ibid.

a) *Alcoholism, Heredity and Eugenics*

Starting in 1910, members of Canadian temperance groups claimed that alcohol use, especially by mothers, activated a "degenerative spiral" (cf. Bynum 1984:61) which influenced the moral capabilities of their children. These children were described as being born with a degenerate nervous system, a propensity for immorality or a tendency towards excessive drinking. Alcohol use which persisted more than one generation resulted in "mental degeneracy" (cf. Horsley and Sturge 1911:254). This condition could be observed in the high involvement in crime of children of alcoholics and their high incidence of mental disorders. Alcohol was described as possessing "the power of destroying the children through their parents."<sup>38</sup> The Medical Superintendent of the Provincial Mental Hospital in British Columbia, C.E. Doherty, illustrated this point by arguing that "King Alcohol still sits firmly on his throne, with society behind him, and, with an 'incompetent' born every other minute, he should never lack for subjects."<sup>39</sup> In this context, prohibitionists claimed that the elimination of alcohol use was a necessary element in a global plan to save society:

The thinking men of today are doing all they can to safeguard the future for the children and to remove from them the dangers not only of becoming slaves to

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38. "The World Convention at Toronto." Prohibition Bulletin: A Monthly Journal of Social Service and Civic Reform. 1923. February. Vol. 3. Nos.1 and 2:5.

39. "Annual Report of the Mental Hospital of the Province of B.C." British Columbia Sessional Papers. 1914: H8.

drink, but also of becoming mental, moral and physical wrecks as a result of the effects of drink and of the furtherance to vices to which it usually leads.<sup>40</sup>

Developments in medicine during the 18th and 19th centuries in America and Europe brought about a change in attitudes to alcohol consumption. Attention was shifted from the moral decline of individuals to the endangerment of innocent children and the moral degeneration of the community. As early as the 1780s, the American physician Benjamin Rush and the English physician Thomas Trotter had challenged the traditional belief which situated the cause of "habitual drunkenness" in the free will of individuals. They claimed that an irresistible desire for the consumption of alcohol was caused by a "disease of the will" (cf. Levine 1978:152). These claims laid the foundation for the identification of chronic drunkenness as a distinct disease (Conrad and Schneider 1980:79). Their approach opened new areas of investigation and paved the way for the formulation of a series of new definitions of this disease. This new perception on alcoholism led to development of diagnostic schemes aiming to identify the causes of the disease, to classify its symptoms and to suggest strategies to deal with individuals found to be stricken.

Such a diagnostic scheme was developed in 1849 by the Swedish scholar Huss, who coined the term chronic alcoholism or intoxication which he identified by "certain cumulative

40. "Prohibition or Government Control?." Western Woman's Weekly. 1920. September 11. Vol. 3. No. 40:2.

pathological psychic, motor and sensory symptoms which develop in those who have consumed excessive quantities of alcohol over many years" (cited in Sournia 1990:47). Moreover, Huss developed a classification scale which distinguished between several types of alcoholics according to the various physical symptoms they exhibited. Physicians emphasized the mental dimensions of the disease as well as its physical attributes. In 1830 the French physician Esquirol concluded that the inability to abstain from alcohol was caused by a mental disease which he defined as a form of monomania (McCandless 1984:53).<sup>41</sup> In 1874, Magnan, a French psychiatrist, formulated a new systematic classification scheme which attributed more detailed psychological symptoms to alcoholism (Sournia 1990:81). Among these manifestations, he identified such conditions as hallucinations, jealousy, hypochondria and insanity (Prestwich 1988:43).

In England, the idea that the craving for alcohol was a distinct medical entity was given an institutional basis with the establishment of the British Society for the Study of Inebriety in 1884 (Bynum 1984:65). Members of the society created the finer distinction between chronic alcoholism and inebriety or dipsomania. While the former was the "physical

41. Busfield (1986) notes that the notion of partial insanity had been used in the 17th century in relation to melancholia. In the 19th century it was further developed by scholars such as Issac Ray, Prichard and Esquirol. Esquirol distinguished between melancholia and monomania or partial insanity which "corresponds with maniacal melancholy, maniacal fury, or with melancholy complicated with mania" (cited in Busfield 1986:275).

and mental deterioration following lengthy excessive drinking" (Bynum 1984:65), the latter was a mental disease manifested in a disorder of the appetite and the will. Norman Kerr, the president of the society believed that early diagnosis and treatment could prevent the development of inebriety. Prestwich (1988:40) has observed that the definition of alcoholism as a separate medical phenomenon provided psychiatry with a respected medical status since it allowed psychiatrists to relate biological or organic attributes to mental diseases.

The identification of alcoholism as a distinct medical entity was consolidated by another development at this time - the emergence of hereditarian theories which located the cause of illness in the transmission of defective genes from one generation to the next. This biological determinism was developed in Europe towards the end of the 19th century in studies which aimed to explain the evolution of physical and moral traits among various African tribes and cultures which were described as inferior to white civilized culture (Lorimer 1990:373). This integration of "scientific racism" (cf. Gould 1981:39) and social Darwinism had its roots in experiments in physiometry, phrenology, polygeny and craniometry which were conducted in Europe and America at the beginning of the 19th century (Gould 1981: 30-72).

The concept of alcoholism was interwoven into these perspectives in 1857 by the French doctor Morel. Examining the nature of hereditary degeneration, Morel observed that

'intoxications' including alcohol, opium and hashish were the main causes of a degenerative pattern in families (Bynum 1984:61). This theory influenced scholars in Germany who concluded that children of parents who used alcohol to excess were born without willpower and morality, or with a "strong predisposition towards chronic alcoholism" (Vogt 1990:152). A more detailed explanation of the role of parent intemperance in the disorders of their offspring was presented by the Swiss psychiatrist Forel. He concluded that intoxication at the time of conception would probably result in "an increased number of epileptics, imbeciles and other abnormalities" (Bynum 1984:64).

In Canada, these hereditarian explanations were used to explain the etiology of general mental illnesses such as 'feeblemindedness.' In 1919 Dr. Clarence Hincks, one of the co-founders of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene, explained that mental illness which was transmitted from one generation to the next resulted in a variety of antisocial behaviors. Among these were "crime, juvenile delinquency, illegitimacy, prostitution, spread of venereal disease, pauperism, unemployment, industrial unrest and inefficiency in educational institutions."<sup>42</sup> Alcoholism, or even the moderate use of alcohol, was described as the cause of the spiral chain leading to mental disorder. At the same

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42. Hincks, C.M. (1919) "The Scope and Aims of the Mental Hygiene Movement in Canada." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. April. Vol. 1. No. 1:25.

time, alcoholism was considered to be an indication of the immorality exhibited by the offspring of feebleminded individuals.

The Royal Commission on Mental Hygiene, appointed in 1925 to study the increase of patients being treated in mental hospitals in British Columbia, explained the role of alcoholism in the development of mental illness: "Many drink excessively because of their mental condition. In others the mental condition is to some extent at least, the result of the alcoholic habit."<sup>43</sup>

In the prohibition agenda the principles of heredity were accompanied by eugenic ideas. These ideas were based on notions developed in Europe at the end of the 19th century by Francis Galton and a group of scientists. They concluded that the inter-generational transmission of moral and physical qualities would not only determine the characteristics of members of one family, but would establish the traits of social groups and eventually the entire race. According to the notion of natural selection derived from Darwinism -- an evolutionary process in which only the strongest and fittest individuals or groups survive -- any abnormality transmitted from one generation to another could cause the elimination of an entire group or culture. In order for the white race to survive, scientists claimed that sources of defective genes must be identified. Moreover, scientific knowledge should be

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43. "Report of the Royal Commission on Mental Hygiene." British Columbia Sessional Papers. 1927:CC 11.



used to design mechanisms to eliminate these defective genes in order to improve the "racial qualities of future generations" (cf. McLaren 1990:15).

Alcoholism was identified as contributing to conditions which produce defective genes. Alcohol was described as an "anti-civilization drug" (Horsley and Sturge 1911:90) or as a "racial poison"<sup>44</sup> threatening the existence of the white civilized race. Children of alcoholics were thought to be born with mental abnormalities which blocked their opportunities to survive and succeed in the world. In another line of reasoning children of drinkers were said to be liable to reproductive problems, thus threatening to produce population decline (Sournia 1990:108). Calls were heard in Europe to prevent alcoholic mothers from reproducing by segregating them from the community, or by their sterilization (Jones 1986:33).

By the second decade of the 20th century hereditarian and eugenic ideas were adopted by Canadian medical practitioners, prohibitionists and women's organizations who warned that mental illness and alcoholism could lead to the destruction of the white race and would hinder the efficient operation of the Canadian nation. This representation marked a qualitative shift in their attitude to alcohol consumption. Prior to this time, heavy drinking was defined by temperance advocates

44. "The World Convention at Toronto." Prohibition Bulletin: A Monthly Journal of Social Service and Civic Reform. 1923. February. Vol. 3. Nos.1 and 2:5.

mainly in terms of its effects on morality. By the second decade of the 20th century, the attention was shifted to the influence of alcohol consumption on the Canadian position in the evolutionary progress of the civilized world.

#### 7) The Medical-Moral Response to Alcoholism

In Europe and America, the identification of alcoholism as a distinct disease led to the development of a medical discourse which included the works of experts investigating the addictive nature of alcohol and the physical and psychological characteristics of alcoholics. Physicians devised policies targeting alcoholics rather than alcohol itself -- that is, the user rather than the substance. These policies aimed to identify and treat alcoholics in specialized clinics and detoxification centres (Sournia 1990:48, 121, Vogt 1984:562).

The idea that alcoholics could be identified and cured was translated into a set of regulations which forced individuals diagnosed as alcoholics to be placed in institutions. As early as 1898 this idea was incorporated in the British Inebriates Act. This Act provided an opportunity for the court to order offenders defined as "habitual drunkards" to be detained in a treatment institution for an indeterminate period (Garland 1985:217-218). In 1909 a committee appointed by the Home Secretary proposed to expand the law to the entire population. The committee called for the compulsory detention of any individual defined as

inebriate.<sup>45</sup> In 1915, these recommendations were included in the Inebriacy Bill, which would have empowered the authorities to send drunks who had committed one offence, or those who were intoxicated frequently, to a reformatory institution (Jones 1986:33).

Central to these policies which targeted alcoholics was the belief that the moral condemnation of heavy drinking should be replaced by a medical approach emphasizing treatment rather than punishment. In the daily operation of the new regulations, however, the moral condemnation of heavy drinking was not removed but was instead reinforced by a new "scientific moralism". Medical strategies aimed to discipline alcoholics. medical interpretation of heavy drinking was transferred directly to the judicial arena where it was converted to a set of legal claims which were added to established moral interpretations of alcoholism.

Ideas relating to alcoholism and its treatment imported into Canada by social reformers were used in their campaign to ban the consumption of alcohol. The cartoon which is reproduced in figure 4.2 published in the Vancouver World illustrates how these concepts were utilized in this campaign: individuals who opposed prohibition were portrayed as suffering from delirium tremens and as experiencing hallucinations which lead them to believe that the proposed Prohibition Act would not be successful. The portrait of the

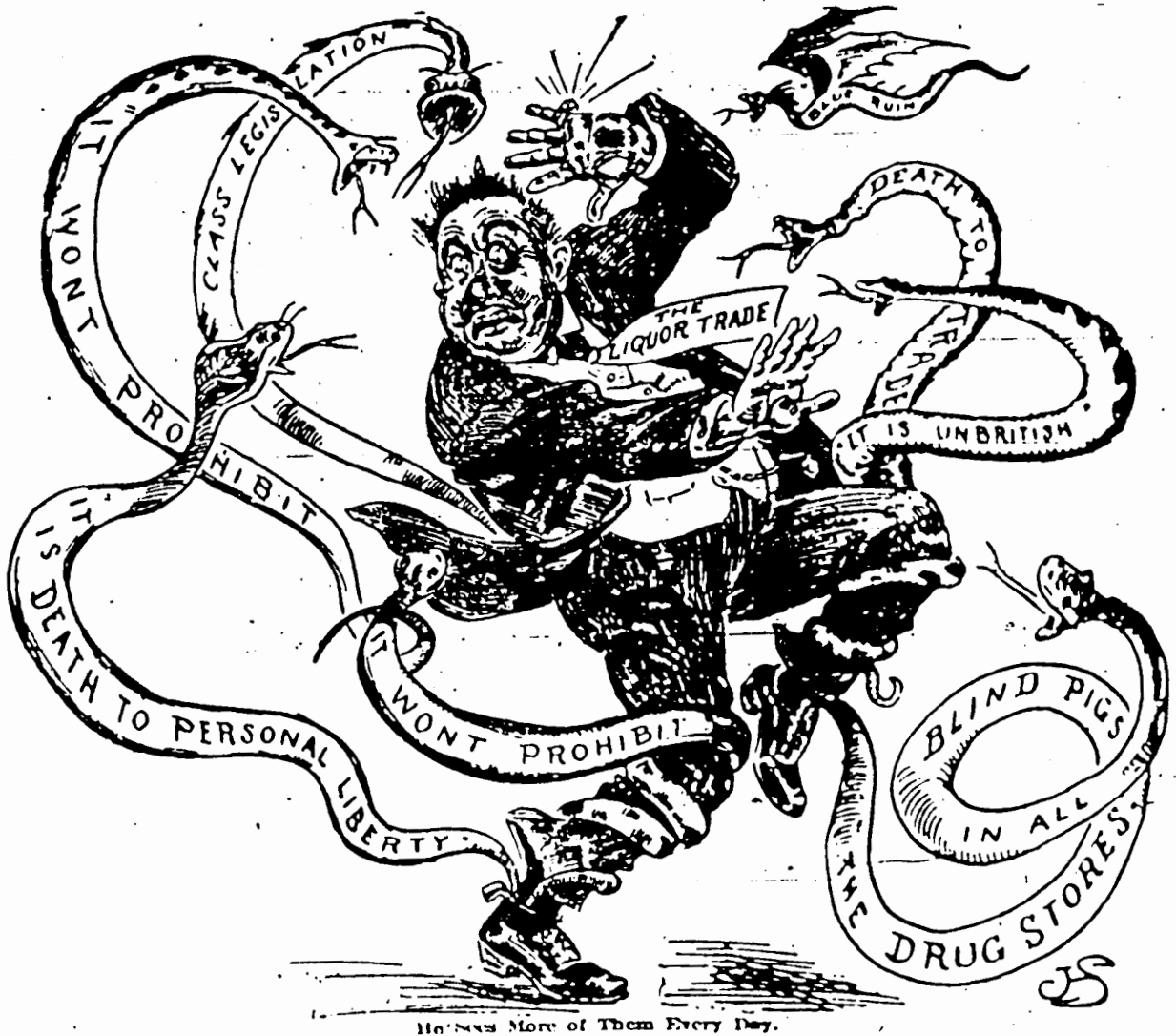
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45. "Proposed Law to make possible Reform of Drunkards." The Province. 1909. February. 5:8.

drunk who failed to distinguish between imagination and reality now included anyone who refused to agree with the claims made by prohibitionists.

Figure 4.2

### A BAD CASE OF "D. T'S"



Source: The Vancouver World. 1916. September, 7:1

Medical opinion was by no means unanimous on the causes and effects of alcoholism, even if Canadian prohibitionists suggested that it was. Importing into Canada only arguments which supported their demands, prohibitionists ignored divided opinion within the medical community. Moreover, they overlooked criticism of the medical approach to alcoholism. During the 19th century, physicians in England, for instance, criticized the genetic explanation which argued that drinking to excess was genetically transmitted (McCandless 1984:56). Other physicians challenged the idea that parental alcoholism led to insanity, epilepsy, idiocy, crime and immorality among their children. They argued that these conditions could be attributed not solely to the alcoholism of the parents, but as well to their immediate social environment.<sup>46</sup> After the First World War, hereditarian theories were challenged mainly by physicians who followed Freud. This new school of thought shifted the attention of psychiatrists from mental or biological traits of individuals to their personality (Bynum 1984:68).

Ignoring these medical disputes, Canadian prohibitionists described families, and indeed the entire white race, as being caught in cycles of alcoholism which started with the consumption of alcohol by parents, and particularly mothers. This portrayal gave authority to demands that the supply and

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46. Among these conditions were: poor nutrition, neglect and the "psychological trauma of living in a 'turbulent home' (cf. McCandless 1984:53).

distribution of alcohol be controlled. In the process of translating these demands into legal regulations, however, the logic of treatment was erased, and was replaced by new regulations exposing them to punishment. According to these regulations, dipsomaniacs -- individuals found to be "openly and notoriously of drunken habits ... [or] openly and notoriously addicted to drunken debauches or sprees"<sup>47</sup> -- were defined as criminals deserving of control and punishment. These individuals were prohibited from purchasing alcoholic beverages and from frequenting or loitering in licensed premises.<sup>48</sup> If they refused to reveal the supplier of their alcohol, they could be further punished by fine or imprisonment.<sup>49</sup>

Even though prohibitionists supported their claims with notions taken from the medical discourse on alcoholism, they nevertheless continued to define involvement in heavy drinking in moralistic terms. Inspired by the moral condemnation associated with heavy drinking, the author of a

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47. The 1910 Liquor Act (S.B.C., c. 20, s.75 (a.), (b.), (c.)).

48. Cf. The Liquor License Act Amendment Act, 1912. (S.B.C., c.20, s.9).

49. The Liquor License Act Amendment Act, 1912. (S.B.C., c.20, s.8).

rhyme printed in a prohibition bulletin suggested that even animals could not tolerate drunks:

ODE TO A PIG

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As near as I remember,  
It was late in last December,  
I was strolling down the street in maud-  
lin pride.  
With my heart all in a flutter,  
I lay down in the gutter,  
And a pig came up and lay down by my  
side.

While I lay there in the gutter,  
With my heart all in a flutter,  
A lady passing by was heard to say:  
"You can tell a man that boozes  
By the company that he chooses,"  
And the pig got up and slowly walked  
away.<sup>50</sup>

The rationale which ranks drunks at the lowest social level implicitly assumes that their drinking has earned them this station. This interpretation justified the response: moral condemnation for their choosing to be involved in heavy drinking. Even though prohibitionists grounded their arguments in the representation of alcoholism as a pathology they nevertheless saw alcoholics as responsible for their own condition.

8) Alcoholism and Psychiatry

In the first decades of the 20th century, medical practitioners rarely were involved in the design of policies

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50. Prohibition Bulletin: A Monthly Journal of Social Service and Civic Reform. 1923. Vol. 3. Nos. 1 and 2:7.

to deal with alcoholics. A review of articles published in The Canadian Medical Association Journal between 1900 and 1925, for example, reveals only a handful of articles dealing with alcoholism, its causes, and suggestions for policies to deal with it. Dr. Procter, a physician from Vancouver, observed that medical practitioners in British Columbia did not direct the government to deal with alcohol-related problems "along lines of sane and wise legislation."<sup>51</sup> When medical practitioners did express their views on alcohol-related policies, their comments were vague and general. C.E. Doherty, the medical superintendant of the provincial mental hospital, claimed that in order to reduce mental illness caused by excessive indulgence in alcohol, the government should enact laws which "prescribe and enforce a purity standard; these, coupled with the proper physical training and education of the masses, should eventually reduce the traffic [in alcohol]."<sup>52</sup>

An exceptional attempt of physicians to devise a policy for dealing with alcoholics occurred in 1906 with the establishment of the Ontario Society for the Reformation of Inebriates. Physicians belonging to this society proposed to subject individuals who came before the courts to a diagnostic test designed to identify alcoholics. The committee further suggested that a medical officer and a probation officer be

51. "Doctors Agree on this Point." The Vancouver Daily World. 1909. November 20:20.

52. "Annual Report of the Mental Hospital of the Province of B.C." British Columbia Sessional Papers. 1914: H8.



authorized to attend the police court in order to carry out this classification procedure. Individuals found to be alcoholics would be sent to a treatment institution, since "it is only in such an institution that these cases can be properly cared for and treated with any hope of success."<sup>53</sup> The successful translation of this idea into practice, however, had to wait 60 years for changes in the political and cultural climate as well as for developments in medicine. Ultimately, British Columbia became the first province in Canada to recognize chronic alcoholism as a sickness. In 1966, the courts were presented with an opportunity to order a chronic alcoholic accused of public drunkenness to "attend at or be detained in an institution where treatment and rehabilitation is provided."<sup>54</sup>

But in the first decade of this century, it seems that the Ontario physicians' plan was premature. Alcoholism was not yet selected as a special field of inquiry. Thus, treatment techniques were not developed and institutions dealing with alcoholics were not established. At this juncture the professional view on heavy drinking was narrow: psychiatrists did recognize alcohol as a cause of mental illness but this view was not an expression of fully developed expertise. Records from the period show that psychiatric

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53. "A Hospital for Inebriates." The Canadian Medical Association Journal. 1911. Vol.1 . August. No. 8:765.

54. Summary Convictions Act Amendment Act, S.B.C. 1966, c.47, s.64 (a).

classification referring to alcohol was rough indeed. A review of the diagnoses of patients admitted to the provincial mental hospitals between 1905 and 1911 and between 1917 and 1923 reveals that an average of 5% of the patients was classified as suffering from mental sickness caused by alcohol use (see Table 4.1)<sup>55</sup>.

The attribution of mental illness to the consumption of alcohol did not originate in any systematic study of the causes and effects of heavy drinking. Rather, it echoed general assumptions held by physicians and lay people, which were based on easily recognized behavior and symptoms. This repetition of common knowledge characterizes the methods used by Canadian psychiatrists during this period in interpreting heavy drinking along with various other behaviors. Classification schemes used by psychiatrists to distinguish various sicknesses were crude and undeveloped, as the admission records of the provincial mental hospitals indicate. Between 1902 and 1925 an average of 50% of the patients was diagnosed as suffering from an "unknown" illness. Other patients were diagnosed as suffering from heredity, syphilis and old age. All these sicknesses shared organic symptoms or a family history which could be easily identified by lay persons as well as by psychiatrists.

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55. The increasing in patients being admitted to the hospital between 1912 and 1915 was largely due to opening of the Essondale Mental Hospital in British Columbia (Foulkes 1961:651).

Table 4.1

NUMBER OF PATIENTS ADMITTED TO THE PROVINCIAL MENTAL HOSPITALS  
DUE TO THE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL

YEAR	ALLEGED CAUSE OF ATTACK	NO. OF PATIENTS			TOTAL ADMISSIONS		
		M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.
1905	INTEMPERANCE (ALCOHOLIC)	9	0	9	90	33	123
1906	"	8	1	9	108	42	150
1907	"	18	1	19	168	53	221
1908	"	13	1	14	176	54	230
1909	"	13	-	13	165	67	232
1910	"	14	1	15	216	64	280
1911	ALCOHOL	56	4	60	259	73	332
1912	"	49	3	52	274	101	375
1913	"	40	5	45	276	104	380
1914	"	25	5	30	268	134	402
1915	"	19	2	21	221	111	332
1916	"	16	2	18	233	120	353
1917	"	18	4	22	245	126	371
1918	"	8	-	8	231	144	375
1919-20	"	23	1	24	403	171	574
1920-21	"	26	2	28	339	150	489
1921-22	"	14	1	15	308	170	478
1922-23	"	13	2	15	296	142	438
1923-24	"	19	2	21	285	162	447
1924-25	"	18	3	21	289	172	461

Source: calculated from the Annual Reports of the Mental Hospitals of British Columbia. B.C. Sessional Papers 1904-1925.

The identification of alcohol consumption as a cause of mental illness originated in this general interpretation of behaviors believed to cause mental illness. But this broad interpretation did not lead Canadian psychiatrists to devise well-articulated separate strategies for detecting and treating heavy drinking or identifying its causes and effects. The medical conceptualization was instead interwoven into the activities of reformers and professionals. During the second decade of the 20th century, these ideas were applied mainly to immigrants, women, children and workers. Chapter 5 proceeds to analyze the promulgation and application of medical-moral discourse in relation to alcohol consumption by immigrants, children and women.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE MEDICAL-MORAL CONCEPTION II: IMMIGRATION AND THE FAMILY

#### 1) Introduction

Medical-moral discourse was applied by prohibitionists, moral reformers and members of professional groups to immigrants and family members. Alcohol consumption by members of both groups was depicted as harming the health and morality of the Canadian nation. The combination of moral claims-making and scientific reasoning supported demands to create regulations for the protection of the community. Reformers and members of professional groups, who lobbied the government to introduce such regulations, emphasized the ability of experts to design strategies preventing moral and physical damage.

Immigrants, mainly those who came from South Eastern Europe, were thought of as aliens who could not be transformed into useful citizens of a new civilized society. This representation paved the way for demands to prohibit their entry into the country. Immigrants who already resided in Canada, in turn, were regulated closely by various institutions. Women and children were thought of as needing education in order to follow such values as responsibility, self discipline and efficiency. Educative strategies were designed in order to imbue them with these values. The emphasis on the ability of experts to diagnose, prevent and treat potential harm led to the extension of law into new terrains and to the creation of new institutions with the aim

of shaping and reconstructing British Columbian society and its citizenry.

## 2) The Monitoring of Immigrants

During the second decade of the 20th century, medical practitioners and social reformers demanded that legislation be introduced to monitor individuals wishing to immigrate to Canada. Immigrants were portrayed as potential sources of physical and mental sickness which could infect Canadian citizens. These calls were founded on a combination of moral values, economic anxiety, racism, "nativism"<sup>1</sup> and scientific logic -- a combination which portrayed members of racial groups as belonging to inferior cultures which could impede the natural social and economic progress of Canadian society. Discriminatory attitudes towards racial minorities had been already expressed in the past. Natives and Orientals were described as morally inferior to members of the white race. This racist portrayal paved the way for calls to prohibit these people from consuming or distributing alcohol. In the second decade of the 20th century, racist attitudes towards immigrants were issued from a scientific reasoning which emphasized the moral and physical inferiority of racial minorities, demanding their exclusion from society.

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1. The term "nativism" refers to negative attitudes held by reformers and professionals to racial minorities and certain groups among Caucasians who were thought of as culturally and morally inferior to Anglo-saxons.

Racism was manifested mainly in official and public attitudes towards immigrants coming from South-Eastern Europe. They were described as coming from "the home of illiteracy, the breeding-ground of blood feuds, racial animosities and religious bitterness."<sup>2</sup> Heavy drinking was presented as evidence of these barbaric behaviors. In 1909, the Social Gospeller James S. Woods emphasized this racial distinction by describing the Slavs and Galicians as "addicted to drunken sprees and animalized" (cited in McLaren 1990:47). Temperance leaders warned that members of these "inferior races" would not be able to resist the temptation of alcohol, would fall prey to the saloons and, in turn, would spread physical and mental abnormality among the citizens of Canada.<sup>3</sup>

The Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene was at the forefront of the groups which called for the preservation of the Canadian nation by prohibiting immigration of inferior people. These demands relied mainly on surveys undertaken by the committee of the mental health of residents of different provinces. The mental health of British Columbians became the subject of such a survey in 1919. After examining official reports of admissions to mental health institutions and jails, the committee concluded that the majority of insane people and criminals in the province were drawn from the immigrant

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2. "Immigration and Assimilation after the War." Western Woman's Weekly. 1918. March 14. Vol. 1. No. 14:10.

3. Ibid.

population.<sup>4</sup> For example, the committee calculated that 72.72% of the individuals admitted to insane institutions were born outside Canada.<sup>5</sup> The committee observed as well that most of the immoral behaviors in the province were carried out by Chinese and members of "lower grades of the Greeks."<sup>6</sup> The committee ignored the possibility that discrimination may have been responsible for the admission of these people to institutions. Broader social and economic conditions experienced by immigrants were overlooked as well. The committee warned that immigrants were a source of crime and mental disease adding massive and unnecessary burdens to the province.

A combination of medical logic and economic anxiety characterized the arguments made by individuals active in campaigns to more closely supervise the immigrant population. This combination is echoed in the description provided by C.K. Clarke of one of his patients in the Psychiatric Clinic in Toronto. Maggie C. began to drink gin and Scotch whisky at an early age and followed a life of prostitution. After being arrested several times, she was confined in a home for

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4. "Mental Hygiene Survey Province of British Columbia." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. 1920. Vol. 2. Number 1: 41.

5. Ibid, 48.

6. "Mental Hygiene Survey Province of British Columbia." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. 1920. Vol. 2. Number 1: 39-40. There is reason to question the accuracy of the figures used by the committee, particularly in terms of how nationality was defined: there are no criteria to specify who should be defined as a Canadian.



inebriates. Upon the recommendation of the "Lady Superior" of this institution she was sent to Canada and was employed as a domestic for a month. Maggie spent all her wages on whiskey and gin and was rearrested and then sent to the asylum. Dr. Clarke goes on to argue:

at the end of a month's residence in Canada Maggie became a public charge. Figuring her maintenance at \$350, per annum, a modest estimate, she has already cost the Province of Ontario \$8750, and if interest were compounded and overhead charges compiled it is readily seen why such people are not a profitable investment.

Financial costs of maintaining criminal and insane immigrants were not the only perceived difficulties associated with their admission into the country. They also engendered broader social, political and economic problems. The secretary of the Immigration Branch of the Y.M.C.A. in Quebec declared that the majority of "our national internal problems ... have their roots in the problem of the immigrant."<sup>8</sup> During periods of social and economic unrest, fiscal problems were described as being caused by massive waves of immigrants who exploited the limited financial resources of the country. In British Columbia, this reasoning was used by the Royal Commission of Labour which investigated working conditions in the province in 1914. The committee concluded that unskilled

7. C.K. Clarke. (1921) "A Study of 5,600 cases passing through The Psychiatric Clinic of the Toronto General Hospital. A Special Study of 188 Clinic Cases -- Also A Survey of 767 Cases of Illegitimacy." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. July. Vol. 3. No. 2:15.

8. Lee (1913) "The Effects of Immigration on the National Health." The Public Health Journal. March:134.

laborers immigrating to the Province drifted to the cities where they competed for jobs with Canadian citizens.<sup>9</sup> Charlotte Whitton, one of the major activists in matters related to child welfare, explained that the financial costs of maintaining unproductive foreigners led Canada to experience a variety of economic problems after the First World War (McLaren 1990:63).

With increasing unemployment resulting from the return of soldiers after the war, these concerns were intensified and were colored by patriotic arguments. In 1918, the city Council of Victoria passed a resolution urging the federal government to stop immigrants from Germany, Austria and Bulgaria from entering Canada:

British Columbia has sent 25,000 soldiers to the war, and she has got to find employment for them when they return. That is a problem that will be rendered doubly difficult if we have large numbers of aliens holding jobs here.<sup>10</sup>

Ald. Fullerton lobbied the federal government to deport citizens of enemy countries who already resided in Canada. Explaining that "we have to build up a country for white British immigration", he argued that "the Prairies have been flooded with enemy aliens, who have never assimilated with the

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9. Report of the Royal Commission on labour. British Columbia. Sessional papers. 1914:M26.

10. "Urge Closed Door to Enemy Aliens." The Daily Colonist. 1918. December, 17:4.

Britishers, but which have stampeded elections like flocks of sheep."<sup>11</sup>

### *Immigration Regulation*

Inspired by these and similar observations, members of the committee and other moral and reform groups demanded the development of a scheme of selective admission into Canada.<sup>12</sup> Utilizing medical techniques, this selective strategy would allow the authorities to detect individuals bringing with them potential harm to the community and to prohibit their entry into Canada. Selective admission was not a new tactic in monitoring immigration. The 1885 Chinese Immigration Act<sup>13</sup> had aimed to restrict entry of Chinese into Canada and required \$50 tax on most Chinese immigrants. Boyd (1984:108) argues that by exempting Chinese merchants, scientists and students from payment of the tax, this legislation targeted laborers who were seen to compete with white workers for jobs.

The 1869 Immigration Act required the "Master of any Vessel carrying Passengers and arriving at any port in Canada"<sup>14</sup> to report to the collector of customs the name and

11. Ibid.

12. An English Surgeon suggested to the Canadian Medical Association in 1910 to "shut out all degenerate foreigners as you would exclude a mad dog." Cited in: Page, J.D. (1919) "Immigration and The Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. April. Vol. 1. No. 1:59.

13. Chinese Immigration Act 1885, s.71, s.4.

14. The Immigration Act 1869. Cap. X, s.9.

age of passengers who are "lunatic, idiotic, deaf or dumb, blind or infirm stating also whether they are accompanied by relations able to support them."<sup>15</sup> These restrictions aimed to prevent individuals from entering Canada who would be dependent on the support of the authorities. Bilson (1982:405) observes that, at the turn of the century, individuals who showed signs of alcoholism were classified as "public charges" and deported. In the second decade of the 20th century, similar reasoning was enlisted. The editor of the Canadian Medical Association Journal explained the rationale for these screening strategies:

while the capable, self-supporting immigrant is an asset and should be encouraged to come to Canada, the undesirable immigrant merely constitutes an increased expenditure and an addition to that dependent class of citizens which should have no place in a new -- or indeed in any -- country.<sup>16</sup>

Between 1910 and 1927, new provisions were added to the Immigration Act empowering medical practitioners to prohibit from entering Canada individuals defined as harmful to the health of the country. These provisions demonstrate the relations between the law and medical knowledge. The Act continued to prohibit individuals in danger of becoming dependent from immigrating. The new provisions used a more detailed medically-based classification scheme to define harmful individuals, among whom were "persons of

15. Ibid.

16. "The Medical Inspection of Immigrants." The Canadian Medical Association Journal. 1912. November. Vol. II. No. 11:1021, (an editorial).

constitutional psychopathic inferiority; [and] persons with chronic alcoholism."<sup>17</sup> The Immigration Act empowered medical practitioners to identify individuals suffering from chronic alcoholism. This medical identification exposed these persons to punishment because they wished to immigrate to Canada. In effect, the law gave further discretionary powers to doctors since the diagnosis of chronic alcoholism was based on general and vague signs. In a textbook for medical students, Horsley and Sturge (1911) described the distinguishing signs of the sickness, among which were "lack of ability to comprehend and deal with the facts of life in a sensible way [and] restlessness and irritability of body and mind" (116-117). These symptoms could be accompanied by "muscular weakness and digestive derangements" (116-117).

Methods used by doctors to screen immigrants were rarely based on medical examination. Dr. A. Clark, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Department of Health in Ottawa, described these screening strategies as follows:

Third-class passengers are disembarked into the Immigration building and present themselves in single file before the medical examiner before being passed on to the civil inspectors. Those who are obviously defective, or whose appearance raises doubt as to their mental or physical fitness, are detained for secondary examination.<sup>18</sup>

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17. The Immigration Act, (RSC) 1927, c.93, s.3, (e,k,l).

18. Clark, D.A. (1926) "Medical Aspects of Immigration." The Public Health Journal. Vol. XVII. No. 8:371.

The restrictions on immigrants were aimed at detecting the "unsuitable elements"<sup>19</sup> who would provide an obstacle to keeping the "young country sane."<sup>20</sup> In practice, however, these policies were administered in a way which assessed the economic value of immigrants in addition to their potential harm to the health of the country. Thus, medical examination targeted unemployed immigrants, especially those from South Eastern Europe. South East Europeans who were recruited by the railway companies were allowed to bypass the required medical examinations of the Department of Immigration and Colonization (Thompson and Seagar 1985:130-131). In British Columbia, the Royal Commission on Labour declared that farmers, farm laborers, and domestic help were needed to ensure the proper operation of the provincial economy and thus should be encouraged to immigrate to the province. The Commission recommended that they would be required to convince the Ministry of Agriculture that they were "bona-fide farm-labourers and domestic help."<sup>21</sup> This report did not recommend medical examination of these immigrants.

Immigrants to Canada were exposed to regulations ensuring that they continued to work in the jobs for which they originally had been brought to the country. Church organizations monitored women brought to Canada for domestic

19. Clarke, C.K. (1919) "Immigration." The Public Health Journal. Vol. X. No. 10:441.

20. Ibid:443.

21. Report of the Royal Commission on Labour. British Columbia. Sessional Papers. 1914:M26, (emphasis in original).

services (Valverde 1991:126). When these women left their workplace, they were brought to the attention of immigration officials and were deported.

In the process of establishing legal and medical controls over immigrants, a complex notion of "dangerousness" was constructed. The fear that certain individuals would endanger the community by becoming dependent on its financial resources supported calls to prohibit immigrants from entering the country. The notion of "dangerousness", included a whole range of behaviors which were perceived by moral reformers and professionals as inappropriate. Analyzing the social meaning of the notion of "dangerousness", Menzies (1986) argues that,

the identification and containment of "dangerous" persons has been embedded within a cascade of symbolic meanings and ideological overtones. The term has been recurrently mobilized and endorsed, by the public and its putative guardians, as the quintessential adhesive for crusades launched under the interconnected banners of scientific progress, individualized punishment, preventive protection, and therapeutic control (p.182).

It seems that, at the first decades of the 20th century, notions of mental and physical illness, ignorance, dependency and deficiency merged together to create a specific meaning of "dangerousness". This combination was based on the belief that medical practitioners were able to detect and prevent physical and mental sickness. This scientific rationale was combined with the attitudes of moral reformers towards a new society based on moral values emphasizing hard work and temperance. Members of reform movements and various professionals reinforced the notion that citizens in the new democratic

society must contribute their maximum effort so as to ensure the well-being of society. Finally, racist attitudes were added to this combination so that certain potential immigrants were thought to be dangerous to the community.<sup>22</sup>

### 3) Families and the Medical-Moral conceptualization of Alcohol

The second decade of the 20th century witnessed the development of controls over several aspects of family life. At the turn of the century, members of the WCTU had begun to challenge the doctrine that the state should not interfere with family life. They claimed that immorality stemming from saloons prevented mothers from fulfilling their role as the moral guardians of the family. This portrayal supported the demand of representatives of the WCTU that the state regulate saloons. Starting in the 1910s, the demand for the moral ordering of society was used by prohibitionists to encourage the government to outlaw the production, distribution and consumption of alcohol. The moral reasoning at this time was based on the medical interpretation of alcohol as harming both the moral and physical health of the family.

Supporters of prohibition stretched the negative influence attributed to alcohol beyond the family unit to the entire nation as a whole. They saw the immorality of families

22. The available data do not permit an analysis of the application of the monitoring policy prohibiting people with drinking problems for immigrating to Canada. Information contained in the Census and the Canadian Year Book does not include a detailed categories corresponding to all groups of people who were denied entry into Canada.



as undermining the foundations of democratic societies (McLaren 1986:129). This belief was shared by most Christians at the time. In 1913 A.G. Sinclair, the Winnipeg representative to the Pre-Assembly Congress of the Presbyterian church, claimed that "the condition of home-life is the test of all civilization and all progress. You can estimate the danger to the nation of any one of the great social evils of our day by its destructive effect on the home" (cited in Fraser 1988:101). The portrayal of alcohol consumption as a threat to the family, democracy and civilization was used by prohibitionists to demand that saloons be abolished.<sup>23</sup> John Nelson the chair of the PPA, called on the residents of British Columbia to support prohibition:

Let your vote tomorrow be on the side of Progress against reaction, of Virtue against Vice, of Efficiency against Debauchery of the Home, the Mother and the Boy against the Saloon, the Brothel and the Distillers Profits (cited in Hiebert 1969:82).

Members of the WCTU and other moral reform movements thought that in the face of such dangers, a moral cleansing of the community was only one step towards saving society. They claimed that mothers should adopt Christian values in order to secure the moral stability of the family and the nation. Expressing this idea, a representative of the British Columbia WCTU said: "If God is exalted, if we teach and live high

23. "A Prominent Catholic on Prohibition." Prohibition Bulletin: A Monthly Journal of Social Service and Civic Reform. 1923. Vol. 3. Nos. 1 and 2:7.

ideals of purity, temperance, patriotism and brotherhood, tomorrow will be a brighter day than today."<sup>24</sup> In order to achieve this goal, they called for mandatory temperance teaching in schools and other educational settings, instructing family members in strategies of self control over appetite for alcohol.

This interventionist position vis-a-vis alcohol consumption and other personal habits was held by members of many moral reform movements -- particularly women's groups -- and educators, psychiatrists, public health officers and medical practitioners. These groups called on the state to regulate child rearing practices. This period was characterized by the development of new professions which were responsible for dealing with issues relating to child welfare and education. Differing in the issues they addressed, members of these groups nevertheless all emphasized their ability as experts to deal effectively with a whole range of issues relating to family life: personal hygiene, identification of mental and physical sickness and education of parents and children.

A central feature of programs established by professionals and members of moral reform movements was the call for mothers to stay home and raise their children. Dr. Petersky, a health officer from Lucerne, B.C., explained:

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24. Armstrong, Boert. (1921) "Scientific Temperance." Western Woman's Weekly. September. 3:3.

"personally, I haven't any children yet, but if I have I shall consider I have to put in my time to look after them."<sup>25</sup> Parents were warned by health officials not to leave children with nurses. Dr. Petersky argued that some nurses "drink, and what can be expected of the children if they have such a nurse for an example?"<sup>26</sup> These claims granted a professional authority to calls demanding that females be removed from the workforce. These demands were expressed at the end of the First World War, when British Columbia was faced with a massive wave of unemployment (Barman 1991:236, Ormsby 1958:406). A reader of the Colonist, for instance, complained that the Civil Service Commissioner published an advertisement for female clerks. Characterizing females' employment as an 'injustice,' the reader asked: "why females should be required at \$100 a month when there are hundreds, and possibly thousands of returned men who would be glad of such a job."<sup>27</sup>

The new groups which called for state intervention into family life differed in their aims and means. They focused on different aspects of family life and at times their relations were characterized by tensions among themselves. Dr. Petersky, for example, pointed to a conflict between teachers and school medical inspectors. She complained that

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25. "Annual Report of the Provincial Board of Health." B.C. Sessional Papers. 1918:G140.

26. Ibid:G145.

27. "Why not returned Soldiers?" The Daily Colonist. 1919. January, 21:13, (a letter to the editor).

teachers as a rule -- though some of them are polite to us -- they think we are a blamed nuisance coming and interfering with their work .... I think that the Health Department ought to take that up and make the teachers .<sup>28</sup> . treat the School Inspector with a better spirit.

As early as 1900, Mrs. Agnes Deans Cameron, associate editor of the Educational Journal of Western Canada and a teacher, pointed to the tension between teachers and moral reformers. She complained that reformers upset the smooth operation of the school: "[you] can't open your school room door for a breath of fresh air without having someone with a mission fall in" (cited in Gough 1988:77). Responding to her accusation, members of the Council of Women condemned her as "lazy" and "unprogressive" (cited in Gough 1988:78). Even though tensions developed among these groups in relation to the nature and target of intervention, they nevertheless shared the aim of mobilizing the government to introduce controls over parents and children.

#### a) *The Regulation of Parents*

A major concern for reformers was the moral and physical health of immigrant families coming to the big cities. In particular, their personal behaviors and their influence on their children were seen as in need of control and change. Members of the WCTU argued that since immigrants, particularly mothers, were ignorant, they would fall prey to the evils of alcohol. They believed that only if the immigrants followed

28. "Annual Report of the Provincial Board of Health." B.C. Sessional Papers. 1918:G145.

Christian ways would they be able to resist the temptations awaiting them in saloons. Thus, the British Columbia WCTU encouraged its members to

put before ... [immigrants] the ideal of an educated, loyal, Canadian citizenship, and what is most important, to bring them into vital connection with the only kingdom which is eternal, the Kingdom of Christ. In this way, these foreign peoples may become an asset to our country, instead of the menace they will be if left in ignorance to become a prey to the schemes of the liquor party or political avarice.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, immigrant mothers became the subject of educational efforts trying to "Canadianize"<sup>30</sup> them by teaching them to adopt values of thrift, industry and sobriety (Sheehan 1983:395).

Reformers claimed that because of their ignorance, immigrant mothers and working-class families could not be relied on to teach their children appropriate codes of behavior relating to moral conduct, nutrition and personal hygiene (McCuaig 1980:481). This assumption was manifested in the attitudes of reformers to the spread of tuberculosis. In British Columbia in 1910, school teachers were recruited to combat the disease by educating the children of poor families to follow rules of personal hygiene and ensure proper nutrition. Again the argument included commentary on the use

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29. "Provincial W.C.T.U. urges High Ideals of Citizenship." Western Woman's Weekly. 1921. July 9:2.

30. Ibid.

of alcohol. The Provincial Inspector explained the need to teach these children certain rules of diet:

truly pathetic are the results of this erroneous doctrine [use of alcohol to cure Tuberculosis] in the families of the poor, where instead of procuring good nourishment for the invalid, liquor has been bought in far too large quantities, so that often there was not enough money left for food for the sufferers nor for the other members of the family.<sup>31</sup>

The fear that the ignorance of mothers would harm their children inspired doctors to demand that the provincial government organize various educational programs. These pedagogical efforts taught mothers techniques required for raising a family. Dr. Petersky demanded that "the average mother should have a certificate that she has the education to fit her for her position."<sup>32</sup> According to Dr. Petersky, every mother should know "enough about cooking not to poison her husband, and she should know enough about mixing various formulas of milk in case it is necessary, and also know what disturbances may be caused in the stomach."<sup>33</sup>

Medical Health workers encouraged the government to distribute educational pamphlets to mothers.<sup>34</sup> These manuals supplied parents with details regarding daily child rearing practices. For example, The Normal Child: Its Care and

31. Taken from a lecture delivered in 1903 by S.A. Knoff M.D. of New York City. Cited in the Public School Report. British Columbia. Sessional Papers. 1910: A67.

32. "Annual Report of the Provincial Board of Health." B.C. Sessional Papers. 1918:G145.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid:G147.

Feeding, published in 1923 by Dr. Alan Brown of Toronto instructed parents in issues such as "feeding, sleeping, bathing, airing, and the performance of bodily functions at stated times every day" (Thompson and Seagar 1985:153).

Calls for the state to supervise the rearing of children were based on the notion that the state had a "parental authority."<sup>35</sup> This idea was expressed by civic officers who wanted to assist parents to protect their daughters. License commissioner Crehan expressed this view in his address to the Vancouver Board of License Commissioners. The Commissioner described an incident in which "two respectable ladies"<sup>36</sup> visited a licensed cafe and were asked by two men to join them for a drink. He insisted that this behavior should be prohibited since it threatened the morality of respectable women:

such actions are a positive disgrace and should not be allowed in any licensed place in Vancouver ... It might be a member of our own families who would be thus insulted and as Commissioners we ought to fully protect the public.<sup>37</sup>

After the First World War, social reformers argued that the state should assume "responsibility for the thousands of war orphans who lacked the guiding hand of a father."<sup>38</sup> This

35. Ernest, Thomas. (circa 1919) Women of Canada; Defend your Homes!. Toronto: The Department of Evangelism and Social Service of the Methodist Church, (No. 63).

36. "Says Ladies were insulted in Cafe." The Province. December 2, 1910:1.

37. Ibid.

38. "Nellie McClung fiercely attacks Liquor Traffic." The Vancouver Sun. 1920. October, 11:3.

intervention into family lives allowed the state to monitor parents' behavior by instructing them to follow advice given by experts. In his analysis of the development of the family, Donzelot (1979) describes similar relations between the family and the state in France. He argues that expert knowledge gave the authorities the means by which families were furnished with information about moral and physical hygiene. This information allowed the family to carry out its "educative and health-promoting tasks" (p.199). This intervention into the daily life of the family reinforced the notion that the family continued to hold its traditional power "over the social destiny of its children" (p.199).

More than child rearing practices alone were being exposed to state intervention. Using eugenic ideas, doctors argued that parents were transmitting to their children mental and physical traits as well as "tendencies to wrong habits"<sup>39</sup>. A medical health officer who advocated biological engineering argued that "the man of mature age that is a drunkard or a drug-fiend, or an idiot or a degenerate of any kind"<sup>40</sup> should be prevented from marrying. Attempting to prevent a similar transmission of genes, representatives of the British Columbia WCTU instructed their women readers to adopt selective methods

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39. Arthur, Isabel. (1917) "Child Welfare." Paper delivered in the Meeting of the Health Officers of British Columbia, Vancouver, September 12-13. "The Report of the Provincial Board of Health." B.C. Sessional Papers. 1918:G140.

40. Ibid.



when choosing their husbands. They warned girls away from marrying a husband who was accustomed to consuming alcohol:

never marry a man whose life has not always been as pure as your own .... Many lives have been disrupted by suffering and sorrow because of the early life of the father .... How unwise for a girl to risk such a future by giving her life into the keeping of one who may transmit to her children a sorrowful inheritance.<sup>41</sup>

b) *The Regulation of Children*

Reformers, educators and doctors saw the educational system as an appropriate venue for changing children and families. Representatives of the WCTU explained that the school should inculcate families with values appropriate for Canadian citizens:

Our public schools are a most effective Canadianizing agency and an important social center, as well as a means of educating the mass of the people. Through the children we can reach and teach even the parent.<sup>42</sup>

Dr. Peter Bryce, chief medical officer of the Dominion Department of the Interior, explained this idea in 1910:

when it is fully realized that the school is the first place where the State . . . comes into official contact with the individuals of a community and that, for some time, it largely undertakes the control of life of the future worker or producer in

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41. Barber, H.G. (1922) "Provincial W.C.T.U. News." Western Woman's Weekly. January, 21:7. Representatives of the WCTU encouraged middle-class women to bear many children (Strong-Boag 1988:149). They condemned women who used birth control devices describing them as selfish and as contributing to a "race suicide" (cf. McLaren and McLaren 1986:15).

42. Armstrong, Boert. (1921) "Scientific Temperance." Western Woman's Weekly. September. 3:10.

some branch of industry, it is of the utmost importance that this control should be of the most perfect character, viewed from the physical standpoint (cited in Matters 1973:52).

The 1910 School Inspection Act demonstrates the techniques used by the educational system to control parents' behaviors. The Act required that each child be exposed to physical inspections in the school. In cases where a defect was found, a report was sent to the parents advising them to consult an expert in the area.

School educational programs relating to the physical and moral health of children were supported by a combination of medical knowledge, scientific reasoning, economic anxiety and beliefs about race, class and gender. Temperance leaders, doctors and educators argued that children who were born with a disposition to drink or with weak moral personality hindered the efficient operation of Canadian society. In 1912 the president of the Dominion WCTU expressed this idea in the following way: "every alcohol-tainted child is not only deprived of its rightful heritage of being well-born, but becomes a real menace to the development of the highest and best in our national life" (cited in Valverde 1991:60).

While in school, these disordered children were said to prevent their peers from making "normal progress".<sup>43</sup> Upon leaving school, they became a public charge as they added to "the ranks of the criminal and vicious who fill our reformatories, workhouses, and gaols" (Horsley and Sturge

43. "Report of the Royal Commission on Mental Hygiene." British Columbia Sessional Papers. 1927:CC 22.

1911:254). It was not only children of alcoholic parents who were blamed for hindering the educational system. Children of racial minorities were also identified as a threat. The Principal of an elementary school in Vancouver argued that "the presence of Oriental children in school will make it impossible for ... [teachers] to transmit to the next generation the social inheritance of the present and the past generation" (cited in Barman 1988:48).

The representation of the consumption of alcohol as harming the physical and moral health of children paved the way for demands that the state establish preventive programs. Two strategies were adopted for this purpose: systematic examination of school children, and educational programs aiming to teach children proper behavior.

I. Examinations: Medical practitioners argued that since symptoms of feeble-mindedness caused by alcoholism could be detected at an early age, a compulsory examination system must be established by the local authorities. These examinations would enable medical experts to identify children who exhibited such symptoms and to remove them from the regular class. Professional examination was thought to be necessary because some symptoms of feeble-mindedness were hard to discover. The professional literature of the time distinguished between two groups of children who suffered from feeble-mindedness caused by alcoholism: the first group included children defined as "dullards" (cf. Horsley and Sturge 1911:254). These children showed clear signs of mental

disorders and thus could be recognized easily by teachers. Children who were defined as morally defective belonged to the second group. These children were "very bright at their lessons" (Horsley and Sturge 1911:254) and kept their mental disorders hidden.

The calls for the examination of children and the segregation of those found suffering from mental disorders were part of a wider philosophy and policy which divided school children into "normal" and "subnormal" groups. Children defined as subnormal were described as "one of the chief sources of primary school inefficiency as far as the education of normal children is concerned, and, in addition, are factors in the spread of moral contagion."<sup>44</sup> Starting in 1910, school children in British Columbia were required to undergo physical and mental inspections by the local authorities and by the National Committee of Mental Hygiene. In 1918, a psychological clinic was established by the school Board of British Columbia to observe children in order to detect "all types of mentality varying from the normal".<sup>45</sup> The clinicians classified the children into such groups as: "the super-normal child, the sub-normal child, the child with speech defect, the Psychopath, the cripple, [and] the pre-tubercular."<sup>46</sup>

44. "Mental Hygiene Survey Province of British Columbia." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. 1920. Vol. 2. Number 1: 14.

45. Dauphinee, Josephine E. (1921) "Vancouver's Sub-Normal Problem." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. Vol. 3 No. 1:119.

46. Ibid.

Children failing to show normal progress were sent to special classes established for mental defectives (McLaren 1990:41). Although the available data do not indicate whether children of alcoholics were sent to these classes, Dr. J.H. McDermot of Vancouver did at least propose that such children should be removed from the regular educational system: "children of alcoholic parents and of people who should not be at large ... should not inflict such progeny on the community."<sup>47</sup>

It seems that social and economic considerations were among the criteria used to explain the mental ability of children. For instance, in 1919 the National Committee of Mental Hygiene examined the mental capacities of children in 5 schools in Vancouver, Victoria and New Westminster. The committee found a high percentage of abnormal children in the McDonald school in Vancouver. The committee reported that the majority of the McDonald pupils were "untidy, poorly nourished, and showing evidence of poverty."<sup>48</sup> The high level of abnormality in this school was attributed by the committee to the fact that these children were members of poor families which probably exhibit "a fairly high incidence of mental defect."<sup>49</sup> The explanation that mental disorders of children

47. "Annual Report of the Provincial Board of Health." British Columbia Sessional Papers. 1918:G149.

48. "Mental Hygiene Survey Province of British Columbia." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. 1920. Vol. 2. Number 1: 15.

49. "Mental Hygiene Survey Province of British Columbia." Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. 1920. Vol. 2. Number 1: 17.

were rooted in the poverty of their families did not result in calls to examine and change the social and economic circumstances which led these families into poverty. Rather, physicians, educators and social reformers concentrated on the development of mechanisms which would allow the identification of these children and their removal from the regular school system.

The examinations were seen not only as enabling the identification and removal of children suffering from mental diseases, but also as providing an opportunity for scientists and authorities to accumulate knowledge about all children. This idea is echoed in an address given by Sir John Gorst, Vice President of the Council of Education in England, and which was reported in the British Columbia Public School Report. Encouraging teachers to examine and inspect school children, he explained that

you have a rare, a unique opportunity to test and examine the health of your people. No way in the world could be more accurate or more timely. If there is anything in your social order which tends to the deterioration of the race, here you find it out directly.<sup>50</sup>

This knowledge would enable educators and doctors to advise legislators and other policy makers on how to regulate the behavior and health of the population.

II) Education: Children who were not classified as suffering from mental disorders were exposed to educational programs

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50. "Public School Report." British Columbia. Sessional Papers. 1910:A69.

aiming to guide their moral development and behaviors. In 1907, with the appointment of Dr. H.E. Young as the Minister of Education, teachers in British Columbia were encouraged to instruct their students in the basic principles of hygiene and sanitary rules (Lewis 1982:152). The dangerous influence of alcohol became a subject of courses which dealt with physiology and hygiene. These classes emphasized the integral role of scientific discovery in paving the way for the true understanding of harm associated with the consumption of alcohol.

Ritchie and Caldwell (1926) the authors of a textbook used in these courses, compared contemporary and previous knowledge about alcohol. They explained that while in the past physicians could not identify the influence of alcohol on the human body, currently, all physicians agreed that the consumption of alcohol damaged the brain and the body. The authors claimed "the chief effects of alcohol, aside from those on the nerve system, are on the heart, blood vessels, lungs, stomach, liver, and kidneys" (p.183). They went on to highlight the progressive knowledge made available by scientific discoveries: "To-day we have come into an age of science, and we are substituting knowledge for guesswork" (p.181). Basing their explanations on this newly accumulated knowledge, the authors warned children that alcohol would shorten their lives, lead them to crime, and turn them into bad workers, soldiers and parents. Emphasizing the negative influence of alcohol on the body, several textbooks explained

that the use of alcohol, even in small quantities, would harm their "perfect health" (cf. Sheehan 1986:196).

Describing children as pure springs which should be channeled towards the desirable fields (cf. Valverde 1991:72), members of the WCTU took it upon themselves to teach temperance principles and "principles of Christianity as related to the human body and morality" (Barnes 1968:18). This instruction was designed to prepare children to resist temptations awaiting them in saloons, clubs or any other alcohol outlets. At the turn of the century, reformers believed that instructing children with moral values would help them resist temptations leading to idleness and heavy drinking (Van Brummelen 1986:21). But by the second decade of the 20th century, temperance educators had come to believe that when children were supplied with knowledge about harm caused by the consumption of alcohol, they would resist temptation. In this context, knowledge supplanted strict moral instruction as the main "buffer" assisting children to resist temptation.

Most of the textbooks used by temperance instructors depended on "scientific" temperance materials from the U.S.A.. Importing this information, prohibitionists overlooked the available criticism of these materials. Towards the end of the 19th century, American physicians and educators had challenged the scientific basis of temperance teaching and argued that the material used in the textbooks was distorted and exaggerated. Such criticism was expressed by members of the



Physiological Sub-committee of the Committee of Fifty who examined various aspects of the consumption of alcohol.<sup>51</sup> Comparing material published in temperance textbooks with available medical knowledge, they criticized the definition of alcohol as a poison leading individuals who consumed even a small amount to lives of sickness and criminality. Members of the committee concluded that temperance instruction in schools was "neither scientific ... nor instructive" (cited in Mezvinsky 1961:52).

Temperance teaching in the British Columbia reinforced notions about the responsibility of parents towards their children and the responsibility of families to avoid situations leading to cultural degeneration. The author of one of the textbooks told future parents that:

it has often been observed that children of intemperate parents frequently fail to develop into manhood or womanhood. They may not be deformed, but their growth is arrested, and they remain small in body and infantile in character ... Such are examples of a species of degeneracy, and are evidences of the visiting of the sins of the fathers upon the children, which may extend even into the third and fourth generations (cited in Sheehan 1986:196).

The calls for the teaching of temperance ideas were supported by a combination of attitudes towards social

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51. The committee evolved out of a group of persons affiliated with American academics who met to discuss social research. In 1893, their discussions concentrated on the physiological, economic, legislative, and ethical aspects of the production and consumption of alcohol. Among the participants in these meetings were such scholars as Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard University, Francis Walker, the president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Carroll Wright, the chief of the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics (Babor and Rosenkratz 1991:267).

Darwinism and moral training. Prohibitionists adopted the scientific belief that mental traits were transmitted from one generation to another and determined moral behavior. For example, the author of an article published in the Prohibition Bulletin explained, that all children were born with "all the weaknesses and tendencies of the race."<sup>52</sup> This social Darwinist doctrine, however, contradicted traditional religious doctrine since the former proposed that "the structure and process of natural phenomena were the product, not of a teleological purpose, but of purely fortuitous changes and circumstances" (Turner 1983:41).

At the same time, prohibitionists continued to believe that individuals could develop moral values assisting them to resist temptation. Education, and in particular temperance instruction, was described as a preventive measure which would enable children to avoid falling into the traps of immoral behavior. This view was based on attitudes which had been developed by puritans in England during the 1870s and 1880s. Combining principles from social Darwinism with traditional moral philosophy, they explained that the order of human beings in the evolutionary process depended on their ability to master immoral desires (Mort 1987:110-111). Future generations were encouraged to continue this tradition and

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52. "A Prominent Catholic on Prohibition." Prohibition Bulletin: A Monthly Journal of Social Service and Civic Reform. 1923. Vol. 3. Nos. 1 and 2:7.

raise themselves on the evolutionary scale by learning how to control their desires and feelings.

At the beginning of the 20th century, this social Darwinism had also developed some gender-specific principles: desires were considered to be manifested in different ways in boys and girls. Boys were expected to behave as gentlemen and thus were instructed to avoid visiting saloons:

the young man starting out in life should take with him the moral training which will enable him to be a gentleman, and be considered a polite gentleman, though he absolutely refuses ever to enter a liquor saloon in order to treat or be treated to drink.<sup>53</sup>

Since respectable girls were not allowed or expected to go to saloons, their immorality was anticipated in other areas of behavior. Their sex-lives and their moral conduct at home were defined as the two major sites in which immoral behavior could spring.<sup>54</sup> Thus, girls were encouraged to control their sexual desires. They were instructed in domestic science, a discipline which prepared future wives for efficient domestic duty. In particular, they were exhorted to build moral homes and to encourage members of their family to stay home instead of visiting saloons and brothels (Bacchi 1985:94).

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53. Taken from a lecture delivered in 1903 by S.A. Knoff M.D. of New York City. Cited in the Public School Report. British Columbia. Sessional Papers. 1910: A66.

54. The Superintendent of the Montreal General Hospital expressed a similar idea: "if crime is the resulting evil of drug addiction in men, so also is prostitution the evil in women." Haywood, A.K. (1923) "Vice and Drugs in Montreal." The Public Health Journal. Vol. XIV. No. 1:6.

While most of the educational programs were directed towards school children, members of other marginal groups were exposed to similar educational efforts which aimed to spread "true education and enlightenment among them."<sup>55</sup> The Young Women's Christian Association, for example, delivered educational lectures to working women aiming to reshape their moral behavior (Valverde 1991:64). The British Columbia WCTU set out to teach prisoners temperance principles and to convince them to realize that "their appetites have provided them with the present free, though cramped, lodgings."<sup>56</sup>

c) *Children and the Community*

The regulation of children's behavior and the monitoring of their moral and physical development were supported by notions which emphasized the advantages associated with such intervention for the community rather than for the children themselves. In this process, children were seen not only as individuals whose health should be protected for their own good, but also it was through them that the welfare of the community could be secured. Experts involved in the education of children were described as "guardians for the health and the future."<sup>57</sup> At the end of the First World War, this idea

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55. "Child Welfare." Western Woman's Weekly. Vol. 2. No. 13. April 12:2.

56. Armstrong, Boert. (1921) "Scientific Temperance." Western Woman's Weekly. September. 3:3.

57. Arthur, Isabel. (1917) "Child Welfare." paper delivered in the Meeting of the Health Officers of British Columbia,

was expressed in nationalistic terms. The secretary of the British Columbia Social Reconstruction League explained that

if we are to re-build our national life along broader and truer lines, we must start at the foundation. It is to the Children of to-day that we must look to fill the places left vacant by those who answered their country's call to arms. The new civilization, whatever it may eventually be, will belong to them and theirs will be the task of moulding the greater Empire to come.<sup>58</sup>

In order to prepare the foundations for the new society, various groups developed medical and pedagogical policies to bring the issue of child welfare "before the mind of the state."<sup>59</sup> The presentation of children as "the possibility of the nation, the hope of the future"<sup>60</sup> led to the formulation of strategies concentrating on child development. These strategies were presented as an economic investment by the community. Calls for the city of Victoria to pass by-laws providing for the creation of playgrounds for children were justified by the description of such expenses as useful for the city since the "healthy and strong child, physically and mentally, is an asset for which the city cannot spend too much."<sup>61</sup> Programs enhancing the physical and moral character

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Vancouver, September 12-13. "The Report of the Provincial Board of Health." B.C. Sessional Papers. 1918:G140.

58. Coleman, Bromley. (1918) "New Ideals in Education." Western Woman's Weekly. Vol. 1. N. 43:11.

59. Arthur, Isabel. (1917) "Child Welfare." paper delivered in the Meeting of the Health Officers of British Columbia, Vancouver, September 12-13. "The Report of the Provincial Board of Health." B.C. Sessional Papers. 1918:G140.

60. Ibid.

of children were presented as constituting financial advantages. Dr. Isabel Arthur explained that child welfare was:

a business transaction, and results are what we are looking for in all business transactions. We do not want inferior products turned out that may answer the purpose, but as perfect a thing as can be produced -- something to be proud of; something with stability and quality, that can be used for the purposes of development and advancement and for the protection, if need be, of the State to which it belongs.<sup>62</sup>

These programs were described as bringing with them financial advantages since the community would save the costs spent on maintaining children in welfare or penal institutions.<sup>63</sup> Thus, educational strategies aimed to develop individuals who would enjoy financial and moral independence from state institutions.

These calls added a new aspect to the reasoning used to legitimize state regulation of alcohol consumption. Until 1910, demands for state intervention centered mainly around the notion that behaviors of certain populations were a contemporary threat to the community. The new representation justified state intervention by emphasizing a future threat.

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61. Humber, Russ. (1911) "For Public Welfare." Victoria Daily Colonist. November 16:10, (a letter to the editor).

62. Arthur, Isabel. (1917) "Child Welfare." paper delivered in the Meeting of the Health Officers of British Columbia, Vancouver, September 12-13. "The Report of the Provincial Board of Health." B.C. Sessional Papers. 1918:G140.

63. An Address by Sir John Gorst, late Vice President of the Council of Education, Great Britain. Public School Report. British Columbia. Sessional Papers. 1910:A69.

This new aspect of legitimation drew on a rationale which emphasized the predictive ability of scientific techniques. This power of prediction underlined calls to design policies preventing the destruction of the Canadian nation or the entire Anglo-Saxon race:

If the British people are to maintain that leading position in the International industrial and commercial struggle which they have had for the last hundred years, practical steps must be taken to show that they thoroughly realize the importance of their youth possessing a sound mind in a sound body.<sup>64</sup>

This merging of past and future stretched the time horizon of control strategies. Glorifying the past, reformers encouraged children to follow moral values in order to save the future. Such an approach was expressed by V.L. Denton, a school inspector who argued that teachers should include fairy-tales in their teaching. The inspector explained that the educational system should aim to build up a moral character. According to the inspector

contact with the present provides one side of this character-building; acquaintance with the best in our race history provides the perspective that lends balance and clarity to this present.<sup>65</sup>

The campaigns and programs developed in the second decade of the 20th century were part of a larger perspective which confirmed and elaborated the state's role in the lives of individuals and families. These policies exposed several aspects of family life to the intervention of state

64. "Our Educational System." The News-Advertiser. February. 3. 1910:4.

65. "The 1916-1917 Report of the Superintendent of Education." British Columbia Sessional Papers. 1918:A33.

institutions. This intervention was justified as assisting families to operate in the best way required for the development of society. The requirement that families be controlled by expert knowledge can be seen as a point of transformation for the family as an institution. This control weakened the family's structure by exposing it to a set of mediatory agencies. This opened the family itself to state regulations and control. At the same time the centrality of the family for society was emphasized. The combination of these two processes led to the creation of a family monitored by state institutions.

#### 4) Alcohol and Venereal Disease

As in the previous period, prohibitionists and other reformers blamed prostitutes for contaminating the morality of family members. In the second decade of the 20th century, however, this harm was described as originating in prostitutes' bodies as well as in their behavior. Prostitutes were described as infecting innocent males, mothers, children and indeed the entire white race with venereal disease. This representation paved the way for calls to regulate and discipline prostitutes.

Medical practitioners, law enforcement officers, prohibitionists and other moral reformers were active in the campaigns demanding that prostitutes be closely controlled by state institutions. Prohibitionists identified saloons as the main place of venereal disease infection and used this



identification to support their calls to outlaw the consumption of alcohol. The association between alcohol consumption and venereal disease granted scientific authority to prohibitionists' claims. Locating their arguments within the growing medical explanation of venereal disease, they emphasized the infectious nature of the disease, proclaiming that it could lead to the physical and moral decline of the nation (Cassel 1987:145).

During the second decade of the 20th century, physicians and moral reformers announced that venereal disease had reached epidemic proportions. They identified the disease as a source of feeble-mindedness, immorality and "lack of self criticism and of sound judgement."<sup>66</sup> Moral reformers and members of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene used hereditarian notions to explain that venereal disease was transmitted in families from one generation to another.<sup>67</sup> Describing venereal disease as the "disease of the innocent",<sup>68</sup> they argued that syphilis or gonorrhoea were not just "the property of the down and out".<sup>69</sup> Not only the health

66. "Prohibition in relation to Social Problems." The Public Health Journal. July. 1919. Vol. X. No. 7:335.

67. Yarros, Rachelle. S. (1920) "The Prostitute as a Health and Social Problem." The Public Health Journal. January. Vol. X. No. 13:607.

68. Emily, Murphy. (1920) "What Knowledge will do towards The Betterment of Social Conditions." Western Woman's Weekly. July 10. Vol. 3. No. 31:1.

69. Paterson, R.H. (1920) "Some Social Aspects of the Venereal Disease Problem." Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Conference on Public Welfare. Hamilton, Ontario:33.

of the community was regarded as being harmed by the disease but also its financial resources. Emphasizing the financial loss being suffered by the community, Judge Emily Murphy of the juvenile court in Edmonton cited a study conducted in Massachusetts which followed 100 men who died from syphilitic insanity. The study found that "189 of their descendants were thrown as a charge upon the rate-payers, and that the State paid \$39,312 for the care of these patients, and that ten of them represented a financial loss of \$212,248."<sup>70</sup>

Alcoholism was described by social reformers, doctors and police as the consequence of venereal disease as well as one of the sources of its infection. The Toronto public health officer in charge of venereal disease reported that between 27.5% and 35% of patients treated in the United States and Canada blamed alcohol consumption for their infection.<sup>71</sup> In particular, social reformers claimed that innocent, respected people fell prey to the disease. Since it was believed that drinkers could not be held responsible for their behavior, temperance advocates argued that under the influence of alcohol, men were tempted by prostitutes suffering from venereal disease to have sexual relations with them.

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70. Emily, Murphy. (1920) "What Knowledge will do towards The Betterment of Social Conditions." Western Woman's Weekly. July 10. Vol. 3. No. 31:1.

71. Bates, Gordon. (1918). "The Relation of Alcohol to the Acquisition of Venereal Disease." The Public Health Journal. June. Vol. IX. No. 6:267.

The field Secretary of the Methodist Social Service, Rev. Ernest Thomas, claimed that "the chief factor in spreading venereal diseases which are the chief cause of enhanced death rate among respectable people is to be found in the use of alcohol".<sup>72</sup> Dr. Gordon Bell, the medical officer for Manitoba, is quoted as stating that under the influence of alcohol, respected citizens lost the self control which is essential to full morality and hence exposed themselves to the disease.<sup>73</sup> The attribution of responsibility for infection with venereal disease was gender specific. Males visiting saloons were described as innocent victims of alcohol and licentious prostitutes. Prostitutes, were portrayed as responsible for their own pathology as well as for the male's infection.

a) *The Medical-Legal response to Venereal Disease*

The notion that alcohol use can lead innocent people to be infected by venereal disease was widely publicized by prohibitionists and physicians during the First World War (Buckley and McGinnis 1982:338). The fear that, under the influence of liquor, soldiers would fall victim to prostitutes and would attract "unnamed diseases" (Thompson 1982:291), was expressed by a medical officer in the following way:

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72. Ernest Thomas. (1920) "Should the State interfere with Domestic Use of Liquor?" Western Woman's Weekly. September 25. Vol. 3. No. 42:10.

73. Ibid.

Cut out the damned beer, Cut out the beer and ninety per cent of the venereal disease goes ... [Soldiers'] mothers have given them up, to death, if need be, but not to this rotten damnable disease (cited in Thompson 1982:291, emphasis in original).

The depiction of venereal disease as a national threat and as an obstacle to the "progress of the race"<sup>74</sup> was used by social and moral reformers to motivate the state to control its spread. Strategies to achieve this aim once again varied according to the gender they targeted. Males, especially soldiers, were exposed to educational programs instructing them that the best preventive method was "sexual continence."<sup>75</sup> Moreover, they were told "that prostitution is the main source of these infections."<sup>76</sup> The WCTU claimed that, in order to protect soldiers from falling prey to prostitutes' immoral behavior, the men should not be allowed to consume alcohol.

Prostitutes were exposed to a strict regime of legal and medical control which forced them to be examined and treated when found suffering from the disease. During the First World War, Canadian military authorities demanded that the Federal government introduce legislation which would provide for the imprisonment of women suspected of infecting soldiers (Buckley and McGinnis 1982:339). In British Columbia, the Venereal

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74. Cavers, C.W. (1918) "Vice and Venereal Disease in Montreal." The Public Health Journal. November. Vol. IX. No. II:532.

75. Yarros, Rachelle. S. (1920) "The Prostitute as a Health and Social Problem." The Public Health Journal. January. Vol. X. No. 13:608.

76. Ibid.

Disease Suppression Act<sup>77</sup> introduced compulsory examination and treatment of people suspected to be infected with the disease. Walkowitz (1980) observed a similar gender difference underlying the Contagious Disease regulations in England during the 19th century. According to Walkowitz, these regulations reinforced a double standard of sexual morality which justified male sexual access to a class of "fallen women", but which penalized women for engaging in the same vice as men (p.3).

It was not only soldiers who were perceived as requiring protection from prostitutes' immoral behavior. Unborn children were also described as potential victims of the disease. In order to protect society from the spread of venereal disease and its hereditarian effects, moral reformers demanded that prostitutes infected with venereal disease be "segregated during the child-bearing period."<sup>78</sup> In 1917, William Goldie, a professor of clinical medicine at the University of Toronto, recommended a more extreme preventive method. He argued that in order to save society from the spread of the disease, "unsexing" (cf. McLaren 1990:43) of prostitutes should be carried out by the medical authorities.

Prostitutes suffering from venereal disease were considered "incorrigible" (cf. McLaren 1988b:241) and were

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77. S.B.C., c.88.

78. Emily Murphy. (1920) "What Knowledge will do towards The Betterment of Social Conditions." Western Woman's Weekly. July 10. Vol. 3. No. 31:1.

prohibited from having children. These "therapeutic" policies authorized coercive medical intervention into the private lives of prostitutes. The idea that they threatened the health of innocent people and the community was used to justify tempering with the reproductive capacity of prostitutes. This argument, which was based on a combination of medical information and moral values, extended the scope of state intervention.

Medical and moral interpretations of alcohol use supported demands to restrict the consumption of alcohol by workers. Chapter 6 proceeds to analyze the construction and application of these calls.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE MEDICAL-MORAL CONCEPTION III: LABOR AND THE LIQUOR INDUSTRY

#### 1) Introduction

Between 1910 and 1925, prohibitionists used medical-moral discourse to support their demands that the distribution and consumption of alcohol be outlawed. In particular, they warned the government and members of the business community that alcohol consumption by workers was eroding their moral commitment to work and their efficiency. During the First World War, prohibitionists similarly claimed that alcohol use by soldiers affected their performance in the battlefield.

At the same time, prohibitionists and members of other groups continued to promulgate and apply economic discourse, a focal concern of which was the operation of the liquor industry. Prohibitionists argued that immorality associated with the liquor trade affected the integrity of state personnel. Members of the business community emphasized the profit to be derived from the liquor trade. They encouraged the government to repeal the Prohibition Act and replace it with a new act ensuring moderate use of alcohol. The financial problems the province faced during and after the war were used by these groups to convince the government to accept their proposals. Prohibitionists claimed that money derived from alcohol distribution should be directed to assist war efforts. Members of the business community claimed that the Prohibition Act led to economic losses. They argued that taxation on

liquor distribution would assist the government to overcome financial crises engendered by the war.

The exchanges between prohibitionists and members of the business community drew on their respective perceptions regarding the wider relations between individuals and the state. Prohibitionists claimed that the state was authorized to interfere in private lives in order to secure the well-being of the community. Members of the business community thought that the state should be authorized to control an individual's conduct only when he/she failed to behave in a responsible way. The activities of these groups along with their different ideas about the appropriate relations between individuals and the state will be traced in more detail throughout this chapter.

## 2) Labour and Alcohol Consumption

### a) *The Efficiency of Workers*

Representatives of the church continued to emphasize the moral degenerative influence of alcohol on workers. In particular, alcohol consumption was described as harming the will of workers to work hard. Grounding their arguments in medical perspectives of heavy drinking, prohibitionists now claimed that alcohol influenced the health of workers, thereby harming their efficiency. Alcohol consumption was further portrayed as simultaneously afflicting workers, companies and



the economy of the nation.<sup>1</sup> Inspired by the idea that the consumption of alcohol harms the principle of efficiency, which was thought to be among the central foundations of the ideal moral society, Dr. Cherrington declared at a Methodist convention in Toronto that

the complexity of modern machinery and industrial processes, efficiency and the safe-guarding of human life demand abstinence from the use of liquor. America will never go back from Prohibition, and a drunken Europe cannot compete with a sober America and Canada.<sup>2</sup>

He went on to argue that at a time of rapid economic progress and competition no nation "can afford to quibble about the problem of alcoholism."<sup>3</sup> The inefficient worker was further perceived as depriving his employer of "both physical and mental energy, for which he is paying."<sup>4</sup> For Rev. Cook, even the moderate drinker threatened the smooth operation of any company. Big American and British corporations refused to employ moderate drinkers because it was thought that these people were "so bad [an] investment that only in rare cases

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1. Cook, A.E. (1919) Liquor's Last Stand; or the Moderationists and Prohibition. A Sermon preached in the First Congregational Church. Dobson Collection. Box A1 File N. P.8.

2. Cherrington, Ernest. (1923) "Opportunity and Obligation of the World Movement against Alcoholism." Social Welfare. January:75.

3. Ibid.

4. "The Benefits of Prohibition." 1921. Social Welfare. November, 1:27.

[is it] worth while to bother with tinkering and repairing [them]."<sup>5</sup>

This sort of perception led to the exclusion of drinking laborers in two ways. First, the representation of drinkers as incurable legitimized their removal from the workplace in order to secure the efficient operation of the company. Even though prohibitionists defined alcohol using workers as victims of sickness, they were punished by firing them from their jobs. Second, the portrayal of drinkers as sick attributed their behavior to individual physical or psychological abnormalities. This emphasis legitimized the neglect of a whole range of economic and social circumstances which could lead workers to consume alcohol.

Concerns about the inefficiency of workers intensified during the First World War. During this time, workers were called upon to work as much as possible to help the country through the war (Peck 1925:141). In this context, moral reformers warned that alcohol consumption by workers would impede the prosecution of the war. In England, the fear that under the influence of liquor, workers would not be able to produce ammunition and other military supplies, resulted in the 1914 Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act. This Act established the Central Control Board which regulated

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5. Cook, A.E. (1919) Liquor's Last Stand; or the Moderationists and Prohibition. A Sermon preached in the First Congregational Church. Dobson Collection. Box A1 File N. P.11.

breweries and public houses in areas where ammunition industries were located (Rose 1973:73).

In Canada, the requirement that individuals devote their ability to the war effort and not remain "in idleness at a time when the country most urgently requires the services of all human energy available"<sup>6</sup> was translated into legislation in 1918. A federal Order-in-Council required that "all persons domiciled in Canada shall, in the absence of reasonable grounds to the contrary, engage in useful occupation."<sup>7</sup> Drawing on these concerns, prohibitionists in British Columbia demanded that the manufacture, distribution and consumption of alcohol be banned at least for the duration of the war and "for a reasonable time thereafter" (cf. Hiebert 1969:89).

During the war, prohibitionists and public officials warned that alcohol consumption could harm a soldier's health and fighting efficiency. The Canadian Minister of Militia, Sam Hughes said: "the one drawback to a soldier is over-indulgence in liquor" (cited in Hiebert 1969:63). Aiming to protect soldiers' health, members of the WCTU lobbied the federal government to close 'wet' canteens where alcohol was served (Thompson 1982:291).

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6. Cook, A.E. (1919) Liquor's Last Stand; or the Moderationists and Prohibition. A Sermon preached in the First Congregational Church. Dobson Collection. Box A1 File N. P.11.

7. "Canada's New Anti-Loafer Law." Canadian Food Bulletin. 1918. April 13. No. 14:38229-1.

Historians who have analyzed the prohibition campaign in the USA observe that the business community supported the introduction of prohibition on the grounds that it would ensure the efficiency of their workers (Timberlake 1963:81, Levine 1985:66). In their propaganda, supporters of prohibition in British Columbia argued that members of the business community had joined the prohibition campaign. The editor of the The Vancouver World, for example, described the response of businessmen towards prohibition thus:

The present movement springs from causes, classes and interests which in the main have not hitherto been identified with temperance reform . . . It is supported by the church, but it is outside and beyond the church . . . One has only to move about in the business community of this city and province to be convinced how comprehensive is the extent of the present sentiment.<sup>8</sup>

However, a review of articles published in daily newspapers and an analysis of letters found in files of the prohibition and temperance movements do not support this description. Even though employers expressed concerns about the consumption of alcohol by their workers, they did not translate these anxieties into an organized support of prohibition. The business community's response to drinking was not in fact identical to the prohibitionists'. The difference may be attributed to conflicting visions of the two communities vis-a-vis the relations between the individual and the state. Certainly during this period, some company managers did continue to protest against the existence of alcohol sales

8. "Prohibition During the War." The Vancouver World. 1915. August. 10:1.

outlets. Such a complaint was raised by a mine manager in Coalmont who described the situation near his mine:

we have a disorderly house here, next door to the Post office, where liquor is sold openly, also at Grantie Creek there is a sort of segregated district where liquor is dispensed without let or hindrance .... Our men are making good wages, but a large part of it is spent with these people. After each pay-day the roads are thick with "drunks". It is hardly necessary for me to state that this condition of affairs is hurtful to successful operation by my Company.<sup>9</sup>

However much this complaint resembles the propaganda of the prohibitionists, the writer's proposed remedy was different. To correct the situation he demanded that a police officer be appointed to "maintain at least a modicum of law and order in this district."<sup>10</sup> This request was supported by the belief that state institutions, including law enforcement agencies, should secure the public order, enabling the operation of private companies. While directors of companies believed that state intervention should be limited to matters of public order, prohibitionists assigned the state a more active role. For both, however, consumption of alcohol by workers and the harm associated with it were seen as a sufficient reason for the state to control the workers' use of alcohol.

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9. A letter from a mine manger to the Attorney General. 1922. May 1. Provincial Archives. B-1974. 40-2380.

10. Ibid.

b) *Labour Organizations*

When addressing workers, prohibitionists described the liquor industry as the "meanest branch of Capitalism"<sup>11</sup> which exploited honest workers by turning them into slaves to alcoholic beverages. According to prohibition supporters, these workers could not resist the consumption of alcohol and became vulnerable to exploitation by their employers. In 1914, H.H. Stevens, a Methodist and a Conservative member of Parliament, presented his views to a group of Vancouver businessmen who supported prohibition. He argued that drunkenness among workers originated in their work conditions, particularly long hours in unhealthy occupations (Hiebert 1969:29). An author of a rhyme published in a pamphlet distributed by the People's Prohibition Association compared the power of the liquor industry to the powerless position of innocent people:

Bar, Bar, Black Sheep,  
You're getting all the wool.  
You're fleecing foolish citizens  
when you have made them full.  
It's all for the master,  
And none for the man;  
Bar, Bar, black sheep  
Deny it if you can.<sup>12</sup>

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11. Bayley, W.D. (1915) Labour and Liguor. A Pamphlet issued by the People's Prohibition Movement of B.C. Vancouver City Archives. 1915-38.

12. Robert Hughes. (undated) Rags, Ruin and Red Noses. A pamphlet issued by the Department of Social Service and Evangelism of the Methodist Church. No. 33 -- B.C. Series, No. 3.

Prohibition was presented as offering wholesome employment opportunities:

bottle-makers will still be needed; breweries become pickle factories (that is, under Prohibition, they will pickle cabbage instead of cabbage heads). It takes more hands per capital invested to 'can' tomatoes than to 'can' humans.<sup>13</sup>

Prohibitionists went on to describe the consumption of alcohol as interfering with the struggle of labor against capital. Alcohol was thought to be used by employers to replace striking workers.<sup>14</sup> The consumption of alcohol was seen as reducing the motivation of members of labor unions to fight for improved work conditions. For instance, in a prohibition pamphlet, a Labor candidate in Manitoba was cited as saying that "booze does not clear the brain nor strengthen the organization, nor stimulate the right kind of will power to win against the exploiting interests of our land."<sup>15</sup>

Advocates of prohibition argued that in communities where alcohol consumption was outlawed leaders of labor unions supported the prohibition campaign. These leaders were quoted as claiming that the ban on the consumption of alcohol facilitated their organizing activities.<sup>16</sup> Such evidence was supplied by a leader of a British Columbia union who was

13. Bayley, W.D. (1915) Labour and Liquor. A Pamphlet issued by the People's Prohibition Movement of B.C. Vancouver City Archives. 1915-38.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Barber, H.G. (1922) "Provincial W.C.T.U. News." Western Woman's Weekly. Vol. 5. No. 27:11.

quoted as saying that after prohibition became law "the men come to the meetings soberly, regularly and with money, [and] business can be transacted sanely and readily."<sup>17</sup>

The available accounts indicate that while individual members of labor unions actively participated in the prohibition campaign, organized unions did not support the Prohibition Association (Adams 1958:86, Hiebert 1969:71). Representatives of various miners' trade unions, for example, claimed that beer was necessary for miners to perform their jobs:

men who had to labor for the most part underground were called upon to endure strain of the most arduous and strenuous nature. For that primary reason it had been found that the solid properties of beer to a large extent counter-balanced loss of energy from the physical tax endured.<sup>18</sup>

In the process of confronting the prohibitionists, the miners supported their claims with racist attitudes towards Orientals.<sup>19</sup> Comparing the physical appearance of Asians and Anglo-saxons, they claimed that "physical inferiority of the Asiatic races"<sup>20</sup> resulted from the lack of alcoholic beverages in their diet. The superior physical condition of members of

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17. "The Results of Prohibition in Canada." Social Welfare. 1918. November 1:33.

18. "Miners ask that Beer may not be taken from them." Victoria Daily Times. 1917. August, 16:13.

19. See chapter 3 for a discussion on racist attitudes towards Orientals in British Columbia.

20. Ibid.



the Anglo-saxon race was presented as depending on the consumption of alcohol.

An organized response against prohibition came from workers and employers involved in the liquor trade itself. The Workers' Equal Rights Association was established to demand compensation in the event that liquor traffic might be banned (Adams 1958:66). Protesting the introduction of the Act, the employers formed the Merchants' Protective Association, and the Licensed Vintners Association. A hotel owner in Kelowna explained to the readers of the Victoria Times the necessity for compensation:

we own an hotel with a mortgage on it and have overdue bills against it ... and if prohibition comes at the present time without compensation we will be unable to pay the mortgage and consequently will lose the property.<sup>21</sup>

These calls for compensation drew on the perceived relations between the state and private enterprise. During the 19th century, individuals involved in the liquor industry believed that the state ought to protect private property and establish an economic environment favorable for collecting profit. Members of the new organizations resisting the introduction of prohibition invoked the same rationale. They argued that the ban on the distribution and consumption of alcohol would abolish their trade. Thus, they called on the state to protect their industry by resisting the demands of prohibitionists. Moreover, they claimed that when the state

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21. Johnston, H. F. (1916) "One Effect of Prohibition." The Victoria Daily Times. May, 20:11. (A Letter to the Editor)

fails to secure a stable environment in which private enterprises could operate, it should compensate persons victimized by this failure.

## 2) Morality and the Liquor Industry

Up until 1919, individuals involved in the liquor industry encouraged state intervention in order to secure a respected and profitable trade. In particular, they believed that the state should be authorized to control immoral behaviors caused by the consumption of alcohol. Attributing immorality to certain groups and individuals, alcohol producers and distributors emphasized the economic benefits which could be derived from the industry. Protesting against the introduction of the Prohibition Act, they insisted that "prohibition robs the country of a good and substantial revenue ... The country derives a big revenue from the liquor trade, and it is money secured without being a burden on anyone."<sup>22</sup>

Members of the prohibition association resisted this profit oriented description of the trade. They argued that the liquor trade could not be evaluated solely on the basis of its economic contribution to the community; rather it should be assessed according to a scale embracing a matrix of economic and moral indicators. Using such a scale to measure the

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22. Lewis, Alfred. (ed.) (Circa. 1916) Facts and Figures Against prohibition. Edmonds, B.C.: Burnaby Printing and Publishing Company. Provincial Archives. NWP 178.1 L673:7.

contribution of the liquor trade, they insisted that it was not a profitable industry. They maintained that the liquor trade caused economic losses as a result of immorality, crime, death and general inefficiency.<sup>23</sup> According to prohibition supporters, an additional economic loss resulted from the fact that capital invested in liquor-related businesses diverted money from the production of honest, respectful and "more useful commodities."<sup>24</sup> They argued that revenues derived from this trade should be condemned since the trade undermined the moral foundations of social institutions such as the church, the criminal justice system, the press and political parties.

In British Columbia, this description of the liquor trade was woven into a political dispute between church members and political authorities regarding the financial operation of the provincial government. At this time, the province lost money because of investments in a variety of unsuccessful companies and projects. (Woodcock 1990:195, Barman 1991:195). In 1915, in response to this situation, Rev. A.E. Cooke, a social gossamer from Vancouver appointed himself and his associates the 'moral leaders of the people.' They formed the Ministerial Union of the Lower Mainland, aiming to convince the public that the government was dishonest (Woodcock 1990:195). They argued that these bad investments were made by a corrupt government preferring to achieve financial gain for favored

23. Robinson, T.R. (1924) "The Ethics of Prohibition." Social Work. February: 93.

24. Ibid.

private businesses rather than serving the public. According to some members of the Methodist church, the main source of corruption was the liquor industry which used its capital to contaminate the government.

During the First World War, claims about financial loss to the provincial economy again drew on patriotism. Money used for alcohol production and consumption was described as detracting from war efforts. Invoking such patriotic feelings, Alderman Bell declared that "the war was costing Canada \$90,000,000 per annum, but the drink bill of the Dominion was double that."<sup>25</sup> This argument supported calls for the introduction of prohibition to ensure the "national efficiency required by the present necessities."<sup>26</sup> Conversely patriotic claims were also invoked by individuals involved in the liquor trade who struggled against the introduction of the Prohibition Act. Drawing on the image of British principles of justice, they blamed the Act for interfering with personal behaviors and thus depriving

soldier and citizen of the right of 'Personal Liberty,' a British principle from the days of the Magna Carta ... [it] uses the policeman's club, the sheriff and the prison cell to keep, by force, a man from doing that which, in the eye of God or man, is not wrong.<sup>27</sup>

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25. "Prohibition is to get Consideration." Victoria Daily Times. 1915. August 9:11.

26. "Seeks Prohibition for Balance of War." The Daily Colonist. 1915. May, 27:7.

27. "The B.C. Prohibition Act is Un-British." 1916. A Pamphlet. University of British Columbia. Special Collection Division. Spam 1660.

At the end of the war, individuals challenging the ban on the distribution of alcohol shifted their attention from British principles to local economic conditions. In 1919, the province found itself in an economic depression originating from the collapse of military industries and the rise of unemployment occasioned by the return of soldiers from the war (Woodcock 1990:201). In this context, a group of businessmen suggested renewing the liquor trade, which had been restricted in the province by the Prohibition Act, in order to generate revenues for the provincial budget.<sup>28</sup> State regulation of an industry for the purpose of securing revenues at a time of economic deficit was not new in British Columbia. As early as the 1880s, the government had introduced a series of controls over the forest industry -- measures which reduced competition between small companies and led to the centralization of the trade -- in order to cover losses in the provincial budget (Reid and Weaver 1974:14).

In 1919, several members of the business community in Vancouver established the Moderation League, aiming to convince the provincial government to repeal the Prohibition Act. They argued that, in certain situations, immorality was associated with the consumption of alcohol. In particular, they pointed to saloons and bars as breeding grounds for immoral behaviors. In order to eliminate conditions leading to immorality, they opposed "re-establish[ing] the system of bars

28. "Seek less stringent Liquor Regulations." The Daily Colonist. 1919. January, 1:5.

as they existed"<sup>29</sup> and suggested that the distribution of alcohol be supervised and controlled by the government. According to members of the League, such control would remove conditions providing opportunities for immoral behaviors and at the same time would turn the liquor industry into a profitable contributor to the economy. Trying to convince the residents of the province to support the demand that the Prohibition Act be repealed, they argued that control of the government over the supply of alcohol would ensure the sale of "liquor of pure quality, at local centers throughout the Province, in quantities consistent with moderation and temperance, and will provide proper safeguards against its abuse."<sup>30</sup>

Prohibitionists challenged the representation of government distribution of alcohol as a mechanism which would separate immorality and profit. They argued that under the new system, individuals responsible for the repression of immorality would be the same individuals who would encourage the consumption of alcohol and thus would create more immorality. They warned the public that "under Government Control and sale, those who made the law, those who break the law and those who try the law breaker will be one and the same."<sup>31</sup> According to the prohibitionists, this system would

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29. Ibid.

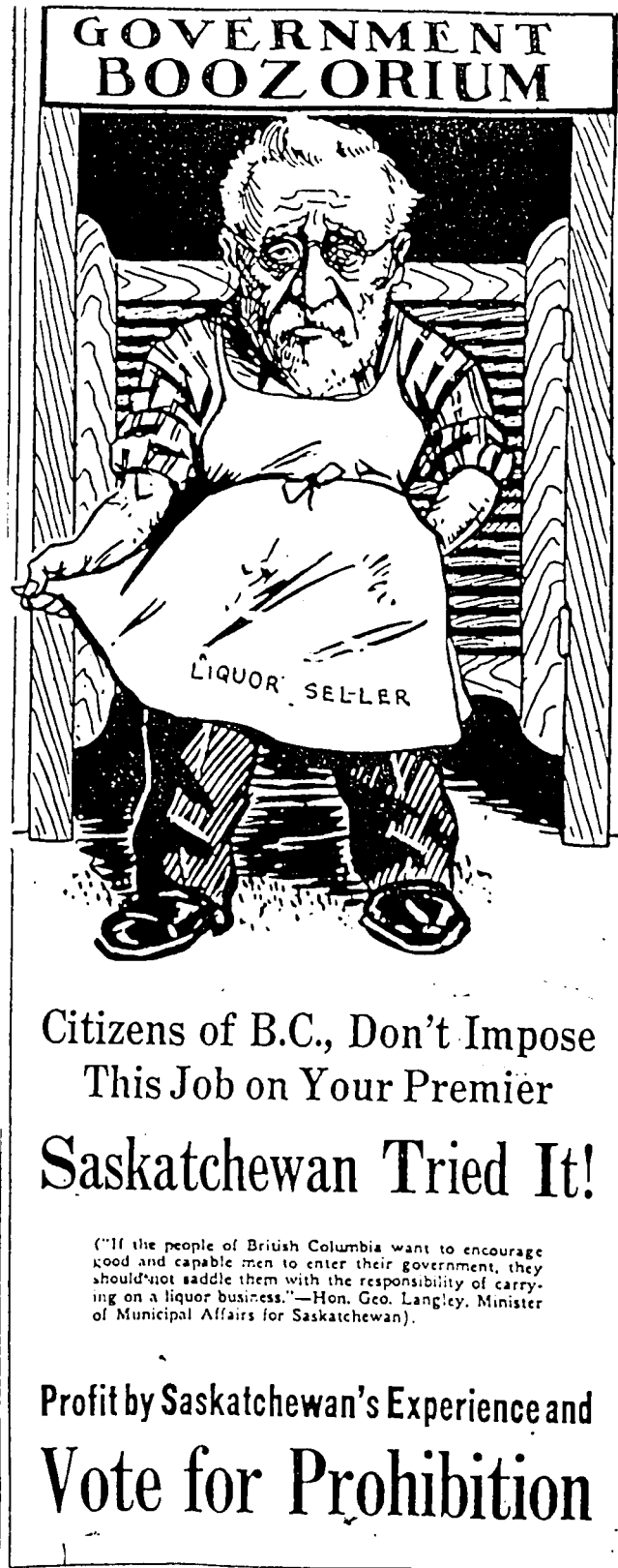
30. "Moderation League of British Columbia: Its Principles and Aims." The Vancouver Sun. 1920. October 8:2.

expose the government to corruption. This representation of the new system supported their conclusion that the liquor trade would continue to harm the community and thus could not be considered as a valuable economic activity. Prohibitionists used the Saskatchewan experience in government controlled liquor marketing as evidence for the corruption argument. The advertisement reproduced in Figure 6.1 is a typical characterization of the Saskatchewan experience.

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31. "Police paid by the Liquor Dealer?" The Vancouver Sun. 1920. October. 9:10.

Figure 6.1



Source: The Vancouver Sun. 1920. October, 11:7.



In order to support their demands that the Prohibition Act not be repealed, members of the Prohibition Association once again drew on the medical discourse on alcoholism. They cited scientific studies which were said to indicate that even the moderate consumption of alcohol could "harm the human system."<sup>32</sup> They argued that the consumption of any amount of alcoholic beverages would lead individuals to commit crimes. While addressing prohibition supporters in Vancouver, Judge Nellie McClung, from Manitoba, described a case in which "an Irishman ... murdered his wife as a result of taking home a bottle of whisky."<sup>33</sup> For Rev. Ernest Thomas, from the Methodist Board of Evangelism and Social Services, moderate consumption of alcohol could lead individuals to commit a whole range of crimes:

drinking which stops short of drunkenness so seriously impairs the power of self criticism and restraint and so seriously increases the susceptibility to any kind of suggestion which is made, that offences of all kind increase rapidly, especially offences such as cruelty to animals, obscene language, vagrancy, disorderly conduct and frequenting bawdy houses,<sup>34</sup> to say nothing of recklessness on the streets.

Members of the Moderation League resisted this idea and argued that moderate consumption of alcohol did not jeopardize

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32. "Nellie McClung fiercely attacks Liquor Traffic." The Vancouver Sun. 1920. October. 11:3.

33. Ibid.

34. Ernest, Thomas. (1923) "Moderation versus Prohibition." Social Welfare. September:346.

the physical or mental health of individuals. In 1921 the Moderation League recommended that controls would encourage moderate use of alcohol. These suggestions were adopted in the Government Control Act. This Act gave the government the authority to control the production, distribution and consumption of alcohol. The Attorney General, Alex Manson, outlining the principles of the Act, explained that he would,

administer the liquor act from the standpoint of the good morals of the people. As long as I am Attorney-General the moral consideration will rule. I won't be party for one single minute to the administration of the act for revenues.<sup>35</sup>

Members of the Moderation League drew on principles thematized in liberal philosophy which emphasized individuals' freedom and minimum state intervention. The level of justified intervention depended on the perceived ability of individuals to control their own activities. Thus, the state was seen as a legitimate monitor and regulator of any "confirmed drunkard."<sup>36</sup> But it was thought that the state should not interfere with behaviors of individuals "capable of self control."<sup>37</sup> In particular, the state ought not authorized to

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35. "Liquor Law aim Moral not Profit Manson says." The Victoria Times. 1922. May. 6:1.

36. Cowper. Ernest S. (1920) "'Should the State interfere with our Domestic Use of Alcohol?'" Western Woman's Weekly. October. 16:1.

37. Ibid.

"dictate to men and women what they shall eat and drink."<sup>38</sup>

Expressing this idea, a supporter of the League explained that

the nature of each individual man is a kingdom over which he himself rules with absolute sway ... In the legislative courts of his own consciousness he can pass what laws he will for the regulation of his conduct and none can say him nay.<sup>39</sup>

An analysis of claims made by members of the Moderation League indicates that the freedom they called for was geographically specific: that is, individuals should be protected from state intervention only when they consumed alcohol in their private homes; but there should be strict control of individuals consuming alcohol in public places. This control was articulated in the Government Control Act and its amendments which allowed the consumption of alcohol only in certain strictly monitored locations such as licensed clubs.<sup>40</sup> The Alcohol Control Board established to administer the Act was legally empowered to determine such details as whether food would be served, whether entertainment would be provided, and whether women would be admitted in public places serving alcoholic beverages. The Board regulated hours of sale, and the number, type and location of outlets. Outlet owners were screened and licensed. Campbell (1985) describes

38. Cowper, Ernest. (1920) "Sees no Hope in Coercing Men into Lives of Sobriety." Western Woman's Weekly. October. 16:5.

39. Cowper. Ernest S. (1920) "'Should the State interfere with our Domestic Use of Alcohol?'" Western Woman's Weekly. October. 16:1.

40. The Government Liquor Act Amendment Act, 1923. (S.B.C., c. 38).

Vancouver's first beer parlour, opened in 1925, and strictly regulated by the government in the following way:

No standup bar was permitted; patrons sat at tables and purchased from a waiter. Owners could not sell soft drinks, food or cigarettes, or offer entertainment of any kind ... The removal of the varied attractions of saloons left patrons with little to do but drink. According to a former parlour worker, you were not to enjoy yourself, but to 'sit down, shut up and drink your beer' ... [women] were often treated as prostitutes by parlour owners (p. 137).

The Act further exposed individuals purchasing liquor in government liquor stores to a monitoring system. Each individual was required to obtain a permit allowing him<sup>41</sup> to buy liquor. In order to obtain such a permit, applicants were asked to specify their citizenship, address and occupation. Purchases were recorded on the permits and a copy was sent to the office of the Board (Hose 1926:424). Beyond the controls established by the Act itself, the Liquor Control Board introduced further regulation of customers' behaviors. In 1922, for example, the Board suggested that the head cashier of the liquor store should be empowered to monitor his customers' behavior and supervise their "general appearance."<sup>42</sup> When individuals purchasing liquor exhibited "problems",<sup>43</sup> the manager of the store was authorized to regulate their drinking by limiting the brands of liquor they could buy. Moreover, the Act extended the federal law which

41. Women were not allowed to purchase liquor.

42. "B.C. Buyers of Liquor are to have Numbers." The Vancouver Sun. April. 26:12.

43. Ibid.

authorized police officers to punish drunkenness only when it was associated with disorderly conduct and created a new offence criminalizing individuals found to be drunk in a public place.<sup>44</sup>

One feature of legal institutions is their separation of public and private spheres. The criminal justice system reinforces "a distinction between public and private morals, thus creating a public world, a polity, with formal standards of behavior, and a private world where anything goes if you can afford it" (Sumner 1990a:42). Stinchcombe (1963) notes that the definition of behavior as legitimate while being conducted in private places, and as criminal while being carried on in public places, exposes individuals with little or no access to private places to police control. People who do not possess property which can be defined as a private place are being excluded from a whole range of activities such as the consumption of alcohol. The definition of individuals as criminals, thus, becomes an "index" (p.157) of lack of control of property rather than of a specific behavior. In British Columbia, the distinction between private and public consumption of alcohol was complicated by race, gender and class issues. Women were not allowed to purchase alcohol or to visit licensed clubs. The elimination of bars and the restriction on the consumption of alcohol in public places targeted members of the working-class who were used to

44. The Government Liquor Act, 1921. (S.B.C., c. 30, s. 33).

drinking alcohol in saloons. Thus, most white, middle-class males did indeed enjoy freedom from state intervention while consuming alcoholic beverages. But the drinking habits of members of marginal groups were controlled and their freedom restricted.

The monitoring of the consumption of alcohol in public places, and the restrictions on alcohol use in bars and saloons, signify a departure from the liberal philosophy which emphasized minimum state intervention into private lives. This change might be attributable, in part at least, to the political and social developments of the period. The postwar years were characterized by labor unrest, orchestrated by newly formed revolutionary organizations (Comack 1987:231). Between 1919 and 1921 members of trade unions, returned soldiers and the unemployed protested against structural inequalities in Canadian society and challenged the hegemony of the capitalist system (Heron 1989:59, Palmer 1983:168-169). Palmer (1983:171) observes that legislators and businessmen feared that trade unions would adopt ideas and practices from the Bolshevik revolution. The editor of the Victoria Daily Times, for example, expressed these feelings while encouraging the authorities to prohibit gatherings of people who were suspected of "undermining constitutional government".<sup>45</sup> Justifying the restriction on individual activities, the

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45. "'Free Speech.'" Victoria Daily Times. 1919. February. 4:4, (editorial).

editor explained that "there is room for only one flag in this country, and it is not the red flag."<sup>46</sup>

Responding to the challenge of trade unions, the authorities extended measures that had been introduced during the war to restrain 'enemy aliens.' Starting in 1919, such controls were used to monitor and repress members of labor organizations (Comack 1987:231). The operation of these controls established a new perspective on levels of state intervention. Members of the business community thought that the state ought to be authorized to regulate members of marginal groups who were considered threats to the social order. In their demand that the consumption of alcohol in public places be prohibited, members of the League echoed attitudes towards government intervention already at work in other spheres.

The response to labour unrest might also have inspired the demands that the Prohibition Act be repealed on yet another ground. At this time, officials were attempting to restore the government's legitimacy by emphasizing the authority of state institutions and the need for law and order. In this context, authorities aimed to reinforce a high respect for legal institutions. Paradoxically, the Prohibition Act failed to inspire this kind of respect: there was, a general feeling in the province that the Act was systematically flouted.

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46. Ibid.

Members of the Moderation League feared that this feeling would project an image of lawlessness and thus challenge the authority of government. A supporter of the moderation message claimed that "there is danger to the whole fabric of law when one law is held in open contempt by the populace."<sup>47</sup> Inspired by this idea, the editor of the Vancouver Sun explained that the repeal of prohibition was required in order to maintain law and order. Members of the Moderation League presented the repeal of the Act as a safeguard against a general disrespect for legal institutions in particular and for the state's authority in general.

### 3) Enforcement of Alcohol Regulation

The translation of moral, medical and economic concerns into law enforcement activities was influenced by the internal economic and practical considerations of police forces. Between 1900 and 1917, provincial and municipal police records provide only scant information about patterns of alcohol regulation enforcement. Some details about individuals accused of breaking the liquor laws can be found in the Vancouver Prisoners Record Book. Notes kept in this book indicate that after being charged with an alcohol-related offence only a handful of individuals were sentenced to imprisonment by the magistrates of the Vancouver Police Court. Most of these

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47. Ernest S. Cowper. (1920) "'Should the State interfere with our Domestic Use of Alcohol?'" Western Woman's Weekly. October. 16:1.



prisoners were males in unskilled and industrial jobs; most of them were accused of supplying liquor to Natives.<sup>48</sup>

Other accounts of alcohol regulation enforcement can be found in the stories and biographies of the period. These reports indicate that, at the turn of the century, liquor law enforcement was lax and bootlegging was common (Keller 1986, Lowry 1985, Marlatt and Itter 1979, Sager and Frye 1984).<sup>49</sup> This information, however, does not allow a review of forces which influenced the administration of alcohol-related regulation. Nor does it provide an opportunity to trace patterns of law enforcement and resistance to law enforcement activities. Nevertheless, the introduction of the Prohibition Act did generate formal correspondence between prohibitionists and officials responsible for the administration of the Act. Also, official reports were compiled by law enforcement personnel. An analysis of this material sheds light on the external and internal forces which shaped the methods and goals of law enforcement agencies while applying alcohol regulations.

a) *Prohibitionists and Law Enforcement*

After the Prohibition Act was passed, members of the British Columbia prohibition movement closely monitored its

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48. Prisoners Record Book. Vol. 4: 1912-1917. Vancouver City Archives. 118(b)1.

49. See Gray (1974) for a description of law enforcement in Alberta.

operation. In particular, they identified situations which they saw as causing immoral behaviors and demanded that they be eliminated. In his analysis of the American prohibition movement, Gusfield (1963:117-121) observes that the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment banning the distribution and consumption of alcohol was regarded by prohibition supporters as a symbolic victory for the middle-class. Moreover, proponents of prohibition recognized that a significant minority opposed the Act, regarding it as illegitimate. Attempting to avoid opposition to the Act, prohibition supporters in the U.S. therefor adopted a "system of institutionalized evasion" (p.121) and did not monitor its operation. In contrast to this passive response of the American prohibitionists, members of the prohibition movements in British Columbia became directly involved with the administration of the Prohibition Act. Their participation in the daily operation of law enforcement was supported by the view that the Act was necessary for the construction of a moral society. The administration of the Act was thus seen as part of a process of legal and social engineering. As early as 1915, this idea was expressed in the constitution of the People's Prohibition Association. Insisting that the administration of the law was as important as its enactment, members of the association declared that they would "devise, promote and assist such effort or efforts as will make such prohibition thoroughly effective" (cited in Ellis 1959:110).

In 1917, the PPA appointed a special committee to assist police in their enforcement efforts (Ellis 1959:126). The committee provided law enforcement officials with names of suspected people and places where alcohol was consumed or sold unlawfully, along with detailed instructions for dealing with offenders. One such letter was sent to the Prohibition Commissioner:

When in Okanagan Valley I learned that the Chinese in Enderby, Vernon and Kelowna are suspected of selling cider that carries more than 2.5% proof spirits .... Might I suggest that you instruct your Provincial Police to purchase samples of the same, as well as samples of near beer in the hotels where they operate a bar, and take the samples personally to Victoria for analysis.<sup>50</sup>

In yet another instance, more details were provided: "at a Real Estate office of Mr. R. they gamble and drink I believe until all hours Sunday night ... you can depend on E.W. in the Post office or E.B. for information."<sup>51</sup>

An analysis of reports sent to law enforcement agencies indicates that racist attitudes were implicated in demands that the Act be vigorously enforced against racial minorities. Arguing that he represented the white residents of the Okanagan Valley, a member of the PPA, for instance, encouraged the Prohibition Commission to punish the Chinese who were selling liquor to Natives: "if these foreigners are guilty,

50. A Letter from the Peoples' Prohibition Association. 1919. June 27. Provincial Archives. Add.Mss. 17 Vol. 14. No. 1919.

51. A letter to the Prohibition Commission. 1918. January. 23. Provincial Archives. GR 1425. Box. 1. File 4. (actual names are given in the letter)

they should receive the benefits of the law that forbids the same."<sup>52</sup>

Starting in 1918, the portrait of immorality was extended to include law enforcement personnel. In particular, police officers were blamed for co-operating with bootleggers by supplying them with details about police investigations. Such a co-operation is described in a letter addressed to the Mayor of Vancouver and the Board of Police Commissioners. The author of the letter explained that the members of the PPA followed cars which were involved in the importation of illegal liquor to Vancouver. He argued that private detectives hired by the association chased two of the cars

out of the city of Vancouver ... we pointed out to the police that these car loads were being secured by what was commonly known as the Tulk Company (The Western Canada Liquor Company). When the police decided to search the premises of that company the reporters were notified of the fact and it was advertised in the public press for two days.<sup>53</sup>

Police officers who were thought to be assisting bootleggers were described not only as immoral but also as traitors. This image is echoed in the letter sent by a resident of Hope who claimed that these policemen "betrayed us to the enemy ... such contemptible conduct will do more to defeat prohibition than liquor men can do."<sup>54</sup> In order to

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52. A letter from the Peoples' Prohibition Association. 1919. June 27. Provincial Archives. Add.Mss. 17 Vol. 14. No. 1919.

53. A letter from the Peoples' Prohibition Association. 1919. December, 22. City Archive. Board of Police Commissioners General File. 75 (B) 4. File 7.

remedy the corruption of law enforcement personnel, the provincial president of the WCTU, Secillia Spofford, nominated herself for the position of police commissioner in Victoria. Soliciting votes for her candidacy, she promised to rearrange the police force and to supervise the efficient operation of the Prohibition Act. The advertisement is reproduced in Figure 6.2

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54. A letter to the Prohibition Commission from R.G. Wilkinson. 1918. March. 12. Provincial Archives. GR 1425. Box 1. File 4.

Figure 6.2



## To the Electors of Victoria:

I have been asked by a number of representative men and women to allow myself to be nominated as a Police Commissioner.

If elected I shall among other matters endeavor to see:—

- 1. That the Prohibition Act Is Strictly Enforced***
- 2. That the City Police force is Reorganized.***

On these grounds I have consented and now solicit your support and vote.

**CECILIA SPOFFORD**

Central to the claims of the prohibitionists was the belief that efficient and honest law enforcement officers would be able to ban the distribution and consumption of alcohol in the province:

Four years ago the men of this, and our other provinces, went out across half-the-world to prove that even a foreign nation could be made to keep the laws of humanity, and ... righteousness triumphed and law was enforced. Shall the whiskey-rebellion in British Columbia be allowed to succeed?<sup>55</sup>

The idea that a disciplined police force could successfully enforce the law was emphasized during 1919 and 1920 when the Prohibition Act was challenged. At this time, the responses of prohibitionists towards the administration of the Act varied according to the audience they addressed. On the one hand, in their letters to law enforcement agencies, they continued to complain that the law was not being enforced. Under different circumstances, however, they actively disputed claims by proponents of the Moderation League about the non-enforcement of the Act. In this instance they defended the police arguing that the moderationists used "false and contemptible methods ... to ruin the reputation of men charged with the administration of the Temperance Laws."<sup>56</sup> After the Prohibition Act was repealed and replaced by the Government Control Act, members of the prohibition movement continued to monitor the activities of law enforcement officers, after

55. Cook, A.E. (1919) Liquor's Last Stand; or the Moderationists and Prohibition. A Sermon preached in the First Congregational Church. Dobson Collection. Box A1 File N. P.7.

56. "Prohibition." Social Welfare. 1919. May, 1:197.

which time most of their complaints emphasized the way the liquor industry corrupted police officials.<sup>57</sup>

b) *Police Management*

The administration of the Prohibition Act was shaped by a combination of external pressure and internal bureaucratic and practical considerations. Police officers negotiated these external and internal pressures in order to fit their own understanding of the reality within which they operated. This process of negotiation has been identified by Ericson (1982) as systematically influencing the routine work of police officers. Explaining the nature of the integration of external and internal pressures, Ericson maintains that the sense of order held by police officers "is reflexive: they think that they are doing what the powerful and respectable want at the same time as they see this as something they themselves support, but in a way that sustains their own sense of autonomy and purpose" (p.9).

In British Columbia, the relations between police officers responsible for the administration of alcohol regulation and members of the community were expressed in different ways. In some instances, police officers were instructed by their superiors to investigate individuals who were identified by prohibition supporters as breaking the law.

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57. "Moral Conditions in British Columbia." Social Welfare. 1923. January:81.



Such an investigation is described by the Chief Constable in Ashcroft:

I wish to state with reference to the assertion made by the informant about Mr. K., that I have searched K's soft drink premises on several different occasions, have also searched his private dwelling-house, also his suitcases between the train and his residence when he was returning from a trip and I have failed to find any liquor whatsoever.<sup>58</sup>

The influence of prohibitionists on police operations was not always so direct. On a more general level, racist ideas held by prohibitionists influenced the attitudes of police officers towards Natives and Orientals. The available police records do not indicate the race of individuals who were arrested or convicted. Reports of police officers and newspaper articles covering police activities, however, suggest that Orientals and Natives were targeted frequently by the police. The reasons for police activities changed from one police officer to another. The officer responsible for law enforcement in Powell River, for example, targeted Natives only when they were intoxicated in public.<sup>59</sup> The police officer in Duncan, arrested Orientals when they supplied liquor to workers.<sup>60</sup> This officer made "a thorough search"<sup>61</sup>

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58. A letter to the Superintendent Provincial Police. 1919. December, 20. Provincial Archives. GR 1425. Box 1. File 4.

59. A letter to the Deputy Inspector. Provincial Police Office. 1919. March. 15. Provincial Archives. Add.Mss. 17. Vol. 14. File 1919.

60. A letter to the Superintendent of the Provincial Police. April, 22. 1920. Provincial Archives. GR 1425. Box 1. File 2.

61. Ibid.

of the laundry of one of the Chinese residents warning the "Chinaman at the time of searching"<sup>62</sup> not to sell liquor to workers in the future.

In other instances prohibitionists' ideas were replaced by "administrative logic" (Garland 1990:188) leading the police to change the original aims represented of the Prohibition Act. Adopting the recommendation of prohibitionists, the legislature decided that offenders breaking the law would be punished vigorously. And indeed, for a first offence, the minimum penalty for selling liquor was set at six months' imprisonment with hard labor.<sup>63</sup> Police officials, however, did not welcome the unexpected financial costs of maintaining prisoners. Nevertheless, they saw the application of such a law as an opportunity to generate revenues for the police (Hiebert 1969:109). Thus, they demanded that the penalty be replaced by a fine to assist the municipalities "for the expense of keeping prisoners."<sup>64</sup> Supporting this idea, the Prohibition Commissioner added another reason for changing the law. He claimed that because of the severity of the punishment, police magistrates were

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62. Ibid.

63. S.B.C. 1916., c. 49, s. 28 (1.). The section distinguishes between "every person" committing the offense and a corporation. While persons were liable to imprisonment, a corporation was liable to a penalty of \$1,000.

64. A memo re. the Prohibition Act. (undated) Vancouver City Archives. File of Police Commissioners. Location: 75(B)3. File no. 9.

reluctant to impose it and thus dismissed cases which were brought before them:

After a close study of the effect of this penalty the commissioner can only state that in his opinion the severity of the penalty is thwarting the very purpose it was intended to serve -- viz., to prevent the illegal sale of liquor by the conviction and punishment of those who engage in this unlawful practice. There would appear to be grounds for believing that more convictions would be obtained if Magistrates had the option of imposing a fine for the first offense.<sup>65</sup>

This recommendation was adopted, and amendments introduced in 1920 changed the punishment for a first offence from imprisonment to a fine of \$500.<sup>66</sup>

An analysis of law enforcement records reveals that the police translated moral, medical and economic concerns into technical issues. The report of the police officer in Sidney illustrates the way those broad matters were narrowed. Asking his superior for instructions regarding liquor found in a residential location, he provides the following details:

these bunkhouses are only used for sleeping in, the only stove contained in each being a heating stove, and not suitable for cooking. There were no tables, chairs, cooking utensils, or dishes contained in the bunkhouses .... These bunks all contained bedclothing, which was apparently in daily use.<sup>67</sup>

The police officer went on to report that he did not seize the liquor found in this place "owing to being undecided as to

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65. Province of British Columbia. (1919) First Report of the Prohibition Commissioner. Victoria, British Columbia.

66. British Columbia Prohibition Act Amendment Act, 1920. S.B.C., c. 72, s. 14.

67. A letter to the Superintendent Provincial Police. 1917. October, 24. Provincial Archives. Gr 1425. Box 1. File 2.

whether these bunkhouses could be classed as private dwelling houses."<sup>68</sup> His inquiries point to the fact that new classification schemes were being developed by the police in the process of enforcing a law which prohibited the consumption of alcohol in public places and at the same time allowed its use in private dwelling houses.

#### 4) Summary

Beginning in the second decade of the 20th century, a hybrid discourse about the distribution and consumption of alcohol was promulgated and applied in the province -- the medical-moral discourse. This discourse was marked with tensions which reflect conflicts among various groups which constructed and applied it. Using this discourse, prohibitionists, reformers, members of professional groups and law enforcement personnel defined the consumption of alcohol in biological and pathological terms. In particular, alcoholism was associated with feeble-mindedness and venereal disease and was depicted as leading to the destruction of the community and the white race as a whole.

At the same time, these people explained heavy drinking as originating in the immoral behaviors of certain individuals. Alcoholism was thought to lead to the moral decline of individuals, the community and democracy. Emphasizing the psychological, physical and moral damage

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68. Ibid.

associated with the consumption of alcohol, prohibitionists and law enforcement personnel demanded that the distribution and consumption of alcohol in the province be banned. Individual members of professional groups became active in the campaign for prohibition. The available data, however, do not show that members of these groups collectively supported the introduction of prohibition. Indeed, British Columbian physicians challenged the Prohibition Act by providing their clients with forms allowing them to purchase medicines containing alcohol.

The depiction of alcohol consumption as a cause or an outcome of alcoholism and other physical and mental diseases recurs in the reports, recommendation for policies and other practices taken by members of professional groups during this time. Data collected by these groups were used by prohibitionists and members of moral reform movements to grant their claims to scientific authority. During the second decade of the 20th century, the calls of reformers, professionals and law enforcement officers were translated into a series of legal and social regulations relating to the consumption of alcohol. In this context, the introduction of prohibition and the creation of educational initiatives for temperance instruction can be seen as one element within a whole range of regulations controlling the conduct of British Columbians.

The economic discourse was promulgated by various groups representing a diversity of interests. Moral reformers claimed

that harm caused by the consumption of alcohol led to economic losses. Among these losses were the diversion of money from more "appropriate" industries. Other losses were attributed to the costs of maintaining people afflicted with alcoholism, venereal disease, feeblemindedness, crime and poverty. Using the same discourse, however, individuals involved in the liquor industry claimed that prohibition of the distribution and consumption of alcohol would lead to economic losses to their business, and they encouraged the government to resist the pressure of prohibitionists to ban the distribution and consumption of alcohol. Members of the business community and representatives of the government emphasized a similar loss to the province budget and encouraged the government to design policies ensuring moral conduct while consuming alcohol.

The available data indicate that the application of the regulations did not always correspond directly to the aim of reformers or other individuals and groups involved in the creation of the policies. Regulations requiring immigrants to be examined by the medical authorities were ignored or overlooked in order to meet the demands of specific industries for additional labour power. As a result of pressure by representatives of the police, the severe penalty for violating the Prohibition Act was softened in order to allow the police to gain money from the administration of the act.

As indicated earlier, these discourses were promulgated and applied at time of major social transformations occurring in the province. Waves of immigrants continued to come to

British Columbia. The outbreak of the war symbolized for reformers a turning point in their plans to build a "new Jerusalem." According to their vision, the new society would be founded upon moral and scientific principles. These principles would allow the authorities to eliminate vice and sickness, including alcoholism. The dependency on scientific knowledge drew on broader developments and changes. Particularly, new developments in the social sciences shifted the classic perception about the causes of immoral behavior, deviance and crime. As a result of these developments, the causes of criminality and other "social problems" were located in forces which exist beyond the control of individuals. Such causes were thought to be found within an individual's "character", family history and environment. Experts became involved in the creation of classification schemes aiming to identify, treat and prevent criminal behavior.

In British Columbia, experts made attempts to diagnose and prevent immoral behavior. Particularly, they were involved in educational initiatives instructing mothers and children on rules of personal hygiene and moral behavior. Many of these policies targeted members of marginal groups who were considered to be pathological, diseased, immoral and feebleminded. The targeting of these groups through a biological reductionist method contributed to a process in which structural problems of inequality in society came to be considered as a product of individual sickness. The attribution of sickness and criminality to the pathologies of

individuals depoliticized these wider issues. At the same time, it exposed members of marginal groups to an expanding network of regulations, discipline and control. The scientific legitimation of the regulation of these people issued from a biological interpretation of human behavior -- an interpretation which led to various forms of social engineering.

The discourses and regulations reflect a qualitative shift in the perception of the relationship between individuals and society. During the 19th century, individuals were perceived as being responsible for their own behaviors. The state's institutions were authorized to intervene in an individual's life only when it was assumed a person was not responsible for his/her behavior. This intervention was justified by arguing that certain individuals lacked the ability to take care of themselves. Towards the end of the century, a challenge to this perception emerged, and more groups -- such as workers, Orientals and women -- were defined as unable to control their own behavior and as reactive victims of vice and temptations. This representation was accompanied by the description of their behaviors as threatening the existence of the community. In order to defend society from these individuals, and to protect them from temptation, certain behaviors were prohibited: among them the participation in the distribution of alcohol and in some cases its consumption.



By the second decade of the 20th century the challenge to liberal philosophy drew growing support from various groups. During this time, partly as a result of developments in scientific theories, the health, morality and welfare of individuals were no longer thought to be individual matters. They were evaluated according to their contribution to the well-being of the community. In this context, physical or moral damage associated with alcohol consumption was defined in collective terms and was measured according to its implications on the "civic good".<sup>69</sup> This new perception reinforced notions of individual responsibility, emphasizing the need for each individual to follow advice given by experts for the sake of the community. Developments in science, and the construction of new areas of investigation such as preventive medicine, provided techniques which could be applied to shaping the individual's behavior and thus were used to justify more intervention into private lives.

In this process of intervention, criminal and civil regulations were assigned a new and active role. Up until the second decade of the 20th century, the law was perceived as marking the boundaries between safe and unsafe individuals and areas. Now, the law became an active participant in the screening process through which people were defined as hazardous to the community. In its new role, the law depended

69. Spencer, D. (1912) "Vice Area and Hotel Bars Twins City must eventually be doomed." The Vancouver Sun. December, 12:12.

on scientific knowledge and at the same time provided the legal framework within which screening procedures and the shaping of an individual's behavior could take place. This relation between law and science added a new element to the protective dimension of law. While in the past, the law was called upon when it was found that certain individuals were involved in a prohibited activity, now the law operated as a form of "anticipatory regulation" (cf. Garland 1985:104). This new development allowed legal, educational and medical intervention into private life in order to prevent an activity from taking place or a sickness from emerging in the future.

This change in the level of state intervention was also expressed in the relations between the state and the liquor industry. According to classic liberal philosophy, the state ought not to interfere in the operation of private businesses. When the state did become involved in the economic sphere, this involvement was justified as necessary to create a stable environment in which business could operate. With the introduction of the Government Control Act, the state was authorized not only to supervise the distribution of alcohol but also to control every aspect of its production and distribution. This intervention was thought to be necessary to safeguard against the immorality associated with alcohol consumption and to generate financial profit for the provincial economy.

Justifications for state intervention grew more encompassing, adding a scientific and economic rationale to

the existing moral rationale. This moral, medical and economic matrix led to the introduction of regulations exposing more aspects of individuals' lives to state control. These controls did not originate in a central locus monitoring the social field with the intention of securing certain political and economic interests. Rather, this philosophy of social engineering emerged from a dynamic process of negotiation shaped by moral, economic and professional values and interests.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION: THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF ALCOHOL REGULATIONS

Between 1871 and 1925, the production, distribution and consumption of alcohol in British Columbia became subject to a network of regulations. The historical records examined in this dissertation reveal that the construction of alcohol sale and alcohol distribution as behaviors deserving of state control reflected important social and cultural dynamics. In particular, the "vocabularies of motives" which were used to justify "censures" on alcohol sale and consumption make an important contribution to our understanding of the history of alcohol regulations.

Following Sumner's conceptualization of censure (Sumner 1990b), the current study has examined various components of the censure of alcohol: the human fears which were represented in the censure; the phenomena it signified; its target population; and the historical conjuncture in which it was developed and applied. Locating discourses on alcohol in wider professional, social, political and moral developments, the dissertation demonstrates that they were the outcome of a dynamic process of negotiation and struggle by various groups.

The detailed examination of the discourses and their application offers an opportunity to examine the way deviance is socially constructed, how law relates to other policies; and how the state responds to demands that certain activities be prohibited or regulated.

## 1) Law and Vocabularies of Motives

Between 1871 and 1925, three types of discourse about alcohol use emerged in British Columbia: an economic discourse which emphasized the financial profit to be gained from a legal trade of alcohol; a moral discourse which highlighted the morally degenerative nature of alcohol consumption; and a medical-moral discourse which pointed to the harm caused by the consumption and distribution of alcohol to the health and morality of individuals and the community. None of these discourses was distinct. Instead each one was promulgated and employed through a process of tensions and struggles, one which was influenced by wider forces: they cannot be seen as a "sudden and contingent creation" (Melossi 1990:173).

The discourses were changed and reshaped according to the particular interests of individuals who used them to support demands that their own interpretation of the sale and use of alcohol be used to guide legislation. Civic officials and individuals involved in the liquor trade, for example, emphasized the economic benefits to be gained from the distribution of alcohol. Using the very same discourse, members of temperance movements argued that the consumption and distribution of alcohol produced huge financial losses. Similarly, moral discourse was utilized in the pursuit of different interpretations of alcohol consumption. Prohibitionists claimed that alcohol consumption led to individual immorality. In contrast, members of the business community and liquor entrepreneurs attributed moral disorders

to the pathologies of individuals. This rhetoric allowed them to justify their demand that the government establish a legal liquor trade. In this way, the moral discourse was mobilized to advance the interests of liquor entrepreneurs to gain profit from the distribution of alcohol.

Differing in their perceptions of the impact of alcohol use, members of the opposing groups called for the enactment of different types of alcohol regulations. Civic officials and liquor entrepreneurs encouraged the state to create a state-regulated system of liquor distribution. Advocates of temperance demanded that the distribution and consumption of alcohol be banned.

Since the discourses were mobilized in the pursuit of a range of different interests, individuals involved in campaigns relating to alcohol found themselves drawn into coalitions with other interest groups -- often in relationships which were specific only to alcohol related issues. The initiatives and demands of these different groups for the introduction of specific legislation thus sprang from an amalgam of interests which were not totally compatible. Referring to the creation of such coalitions, Cohen (1988) maintains that the definition of behavior as criminal should be understood as an outcome of a complex process, which includes among other things "strange alliances" (p.251). Calls for criminalization, according to Cohen, can be supported "on the basis of quite different conceptions of the essence of the behavior in question" (p.253). In British Columbia at the

turn of the century, the moral discourse, for example, was promulgated and employed by different groups each claiming that the distribution and consumption of alcohol affected the morality of workers. Advocates of temperance depicted alcohol use as destroying the moral character of laborers, especially their moral commitment to work. This rhetoric supported their demand that the state prohibit the use and sale of alcohol. Aligning themselves with reformers, company managers pointed to the harm caused to their operation by workers' use of alcohol. In order to support their calls for the strict regulation of laborers' behavior, they reasoned alcohol consumption was immoral because it impeded worker efficiency and productivity. While they shared the same rhetoric, they did not share the religious assumptions supporting this reasoning. The demands of this coalition led to the enactment of regulations limiting alcohol availability for workers.

In addition to the complexity of interests, motives and values which led to the regulation of the distribution and consumption of alcohol, gaps appeared between the original aims of reformers and particular interests of agencies assigned to enforce the law. Analyzing such a gap between "laws in books" and "laws in action", Melossi (1987) argues that the enforcers of laws actually "'use' the law instead of 'enforcing' it ... [S]uch 'usage' is the outcome of a situation determined by the input of vocabularies other than the law in the books" (pp. 38-39). Enforcing alcohol regulations, the police in British Columbia mobilized

reasoning derived from the sphere of their own institutional setting. Attempting to create an environment in which alcohol regulations could be practically enforced, the police lobbied the government to introduce changes to the Prohibition Act. Moreover, the police saw the application of the law as a source of financial revenues for their organization. Police officials lobbied the government to replace the severe punishment of imprisonment with the option of a fine.

Other gaps emerged between the aims of individuals involved in the creation of alcohol regulations and their actual application. Reformers and professionals warned the public that all immigrants coming from south-east Europe potentially carried with them diseases, vices and immorality. This depiction paved the way for the legal requirement that these immigrants be medically examined before entering Canada. As the historical record demonstrates, at times of labour shortage company managers found legal means to bypass these requirements.

The censure of alcohol distribution and consumption was influenced not only by the complex set of interests held by the creators and enforcers of alcohol regulations, but also by wider social forces. The most influential of these forces was the expert knowledge used by professional groups and reformers to support their demands. Starting in the second decade of the 20th century, prohibitionists supported their claims by drawing upon "scientific" studies about the causes and effects of alcoholism and venereal disease. They warned that the



consumption of alcohol constituted a moral and a health hazard.

The reliance of prohibitionists on expert knowledge can be interpreted as one instance of a wider process occurring at this time. Believing in the ability of experts to identify and cure a variety of vices and sickness, medical professionals and reformers lobbied the government to regulate a whole range of behaviors. The involvement of medical professionals in these campaigns drew on wider developments in science occurring in the Western world. With the development of preventive medicine and the establishment of Eugenic theories and hereditarian perspectives, medical professionals and reformers tried to convince the government that the state should be informed by medical and scientific knowledge. The "deposits of power" (cf. Cohen 1985:161) within which professionals operated both supported, and were supported by, knowledge produced by examination, classification and scientific observation.

In the early 20th century British Columbia, three specific groups -- soldiers, children and inmates of mental hospitals and prisons -- were subject to "scientific" investigations. Utilizing "scientific" data, experts in the fields of medicine, education and psychiatry urged the government to design specific programs eliminating vice and criminality, including heavy drinking. In this way, alcoholism became an object of investigation and control.

Foucault (1972, 1979) attributes the creation of controls in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe to epistemological changes in such disciplines as medicine, psychiatry and criminology. The developments of these disciplines yielded knowledges used by experts to classify and divide individuals according to certain "norms" (Foucault 1979:184). This process was central to the constitution of various behaviors as criminal, sick and as requiring control. Foucault (1972) discusses the impact of professional knowledge and medical practice on such social constructions in the context of the rise of secular rationalism.

At the turn of the century, the construction and application of professional knowledge about alcohol was shaped by both moral values and secular scientific reasoning. Both professional groups and moral reformers lobbied the government to introduce a set of regulations allowing medical practitioners and other professionals to detect and eliminate criminality, disease and vice. In the case of alcohol, temperance advocates combined their moral interpretation of alcohol with medical concepts. This combination had an impact on a whole range of policies from temperance education and prohibition to mental hygiene programs.

The medical-moral discourse described in this dissertation thus reflects both medical and moral "norms." These norms reflected the ideas of reformers that a "normal" citizen is someone who follows such Christian middle-class values as hard work, temperance and discipline. Moreover,

according to reformers and professionals, the "normal" social order should be based on similar principles.

## 2) Alcohol Regulations and Members of Marginalized Groups

Alcohol consumption was one among many indicators by which the "normal" human being was measured. Individuals deviating from the norm were depicted as threatening the community, and thus requiring control and surveillance. Since the "norm" by which people were classified consisted of white middle-class Protestant males, members of racial minorities, children, women and workers were depicted as a threat to British Columbian society. Natives, women, and children were prohibited from consuming alcohol. Orientals and women were not allowed to participate in the liquor trade. Immigrants, particularly those who came from south-east Europe, were exposed to medical examinations aiming to detect alcoholics. Children, prisoners, immigrants and working class women were subject to various educational initiatives to foster temperance.

The historical records examined in this dissertation demonstrate that alcohol policies developed not only from interpretation of alcohol itself, but from interpretations of the groups to which the criminalized individuals belong. It was ideas about Natives, Asians, south east Europeans, women and children that shaped the introduction of alcohol regulations as much as it was ideas about alcohol and its effects. Consumption of alcohol by members of those groups

presented a potential threat to the desirable social and moral order.

Between 1871 and 1890, alcohol consumption by Natives was considered to endanger both the economy and the morality of the community. This belief originated in racist attitudes which depicted Natives as physically and culturally inferior to whites. Starting in the 1870s, a series of controls were enacted aiming to secure lands occupied by Natives. These regulations isolated Natives from the white community, and exposed them to various controls monitoring their behavior. Among these controls were regulations outlawing both the provision of alcohol to Natives and its consumption by them. These regulations were part of the general response to Natives in the province which aimed to Anglicize their culture so as to turn them into "civilized" people.<sup>1</sup>

At the turn of the century, racist attitudes came into the legal arena once again. Orientals involved in the liquor trade were described by liquor entrepreneurs and reformers as threatening the moral values of the white community. The description of Orientals as a source of moral decline spawned the introduction of regulations prohibiting them from distributing alcohol.

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1. Since this dissertation has examined only written documents, the response of members of marginalized groups to discriminatory policies in the area of alcohol is not discussed. Various studies suggest that in specific situations, members of marginalized groups resisted repressive legislation and its application. For example, Barman (1991:163-164) suggests that various Native bands actively opposed the federal government's repressive policies.

Starting in the 1890s, the consumption of alcohol by workers and women was depicted as a risk to British Columbian society. Those reformers who drew on the Social Gospel doctrine and believed in the creation of a new society according to Christian principles interpreted the consumption of alcohol as a threat to the creation of a new moral order. The consumption of alcohol by workers was depicted as harming their moral character and their obligation to work hard. Alcohol consumption by women was depicted as preventing them from fulfilling their social role as mothers and wives. Law was seen by reformers as a mechanism for social engineering and as a tool for social change.

In the second decade of the 20th century, various groups of professionals and reformers employed scientific theories to articulate the harm caused by the consumption of alcohol. This shift resulted in a new definition of the threat which alcohol use posed to the community. Behaviors earlier depicted by reformers as threatening the morality of individuals were now described as generating cycles of disease, particularly feeble-mindedness. This new interpretation of alcohol consumption and the hazard to the community changed the response towards individuals defined as generating these diseases. Alcohol consumption by members of racial minorities continued to be seen as a sign of their physical and cultural inferiority. Prohibitionists and members of professional groups used ideas formulated mainly by Eugenic and Hereditarian theorists to characterize the consumption of

alcohol by these people. Alcohol was portrayed as leading to the moral decline of the community and in turn to the elimination of the entire white race.

The reliance on scientific data led not only to a shift in the identification of the threat that alcohol posed, but also to new demands to introduce policies to eliminate the source of the danger. Believing in the ability of experts to detect and prevent sickness and criminality, reformers and professionals lobbied the government to introduce a range of policies prohibiting the entry of South-East Europeans to Canada.

The presentation of such ideas through the unquestioned authority of a scientific lens generated public fear which was translated into legislation.<sup>2</sup> In British Columbia, these fears were promoted by reformers and professionals who cited the results of surveys which reported that the majority of mental hospitals and prisons inmates were not born in Canada. These concerns and anxieties were translated into a set of regulations exposing immigrants from south-east Europe to legal and medical controls and various educational initiatives.

The emergence of a medical-scientific portrayal of the threats presented by heavy drinking had consequences for groups other than racial minorities. Citing "scientific"

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2. See Gould's discussion on the significant role of examinations and observations for the development of "scientific" racism (Gould 1981).

studies, prohibitionists claimed that the consumption of alcohol by workers affected not only their moral commitment to work but reduced their efficiency. Referring to other sets of "scientific" investigations, reformers emphasized that the consumption of alcohol by mothers harmed their offspring. These arguments led to demands that women be prohibited from consuming alcohol. Moreover, a whole range of polices were developed by reformers, particularly members of the WCTU, aimed at educating women about the specific threats which alcohol posed for them. Arguments about the biological reproductive nature of women were used to criminalize them for an activity that was quite legal for white men. Analyzing the introduction of similar "protective" legislation, feminist scholars such as Smart (1990) have observed that the preservation of the health of offspring has often led to punitive policies oppressing women.

In other ways too, perceptions about women's biological nature supported legislation that targeted women. Prohibitionists and public health officers associated the consumption of alcohol in saloons and beer parlours with the spread of venereal disease. Prohibitionists claimed that prostitutes afflicted with the disease tempted innocent husbands by intoxicating them. In turn, husbands were transmitting the disease to their wives and in turn to their offspring, and to the entire community. This portrayal led to the introduction of legal and medical regulations exposing prostitutes to examination and treatment. In some instances

the rhetoric was even more severe: reformers called for the segregation and sterilization of infected prostitutes.

Medical controls introduced at this time targeting members of marginalized groups were grounded in the belief that scientific knowledge allowed experts to identify, categorize and cure the pathological behaviors. Through the inculcation of the values of hard work, temperance and discipline reformers believed that members of marginalized groups could be converted to normal (if not equal) citizens. It was hoped that these policies would allow deviant individuals to be absorbed into modern democratic society. Alcohol regulations can be seen as but one mechanism of social engineering aiming to inculcate members of marginalized groups with the values of the white middle class mainstream. The various controls which targeted members of marginalized groups were presented as attempts to allow them to achieve the status of full and equal citizens. In practice, however, these regulations actually reinforced the differences between the marginalized and dominant groups in society.

While the controls on the distribution and consumption of alcohol played an important role in the repression of members of marginalized groups, they also played another vital role. Through the identification of specific behaviors as dangerous, accepted values were reinforced and affirmed. Foucault (1980) alerts us to this "positive" or "constructive" function of regulations. Insisting that criminalization should not be seen only in negative and repressive terms, he claims that the



regulations of sexuality in the 18th and 19th centuries "actually created new spaces to talk about sex" (cf. Cohen 1988:256).

Analyzing the censure of suffragists at the turn of the century in Britain, Young (1990) adopts a similar perspective. She proposes that the various policies introduced to control suffragists carried with them wider implications for women in Britain. According to Young such control was

not just overtly repressive in the form of augmented policing powers or disapproving public opinion; it was also productive and affirmative, strengthening sexual and social norms threatened by the ... [suffragists] actions (p.158).

Young proposes thus that any analysis of censure should examine both the repression of the targeted group and the affirmation of values and norms. By identifying alcohol consumption as dangerous, alcohol regulations enacted in British Columbia can be understood as helping to shape the moral texture of British Columbian society. In this way an index of accepted behaviors was crafted, refined and implemented.

Although alcohol regulations are obviously based on these wider assumptions concerning "normality" and deviance, their development is also important as an example of fundamental changes in the nature of the state and its relationships to individuals and families. Alcohol regulations introduced between 1871 and 1925 were part of a considerable expansion of state control over private life.

### 3) Alcohol Regulations and the State

As this dissertation demonstrates, innovations in alcohol regulations did not originate in an "omnipresent, omniscient 'total' state that has no limits and no vulnerability to reform or change" (Lowman, Menzies, and Palys 1987:6). Rather these regulations were enacted through a complex process of negotiations and struggles among professionals, reformers, civic officials and law enforcement personnel. Members of these groups encouraged the state to regulate and control alcohol consumption. Rather than willfully intervening in the previously private matter of alcohol consumption, the state needed to be exhorted to participate in programs designed by professionals and reformers.

During the first years, the consumption of alcohol was depicted as a private matter beyond state control. The state had the authority to control an individual's behavior while consuming alcohol only in limited cases. Thus, drunkards, Natives and children were prohibited from entering saloons and from consuming alcohol. Through a gradual process, the state extended its purview in various areas relating to the distribution and consumption of alcohol. The hours in which individuals could lawfully consume alcohol were limited and the conduct of individuals while consuming alcohol in licensed premises became regulated by the state. Prostitutes, women and vagrants were prohibited from consuming alcohol in public places. The state supervised the people who could lawfully

distribute alcohol by issuing licenses to workers in saloons. The passage of the Prohibition Act outlawed the consumption of alcohol in public places. Public drunkenness (with or without disorderliness) became an offence. Finally, with the introduction of the Government Liquor Control Act the state assumed the authority to decide which types of alcohol could be distributed. The liquor control Board had the authority to monitor individual activity and supervise drinking habits.

It was not only the behaviors of individuals while consuming alcohol which became subject to state control. In addition, the "normalization" process led to attempts to categorize individuals according to their heredity and physical constitution. Regulations were enacted which exposed children and immigrants to medical examinations attempting to detect, among other things, alcoholism. These regulations were supplemented by a series of temperance initiatives. These programs operated within public schools as part of a broader instruction in the principles of hygiene. Other temperance instruction programs were initiated by members of the WCTU who took it upon themselves to teach women, children, prisoners and immigrants the principles of temperance.

These regulations and programs were part of a broader process through which the relations between the individual and the state were transformed at the end of the 19th century. The extension of the involvement of the state in private behavior sprang from a gradual change in the perception of the role of the state and the appropriate limit of state power. During the

earlier periods discussed in this dissertation, individuals and groups involved in the struggles and campaigns relating to the consumption and distribution of alcohol thought that the state should not have the power to interfere in the private behavior of individuals, including alcohol consumption. These laissez faire assumptions portrayed adult males as responsible individuals whose conduct should not be controlled by the state. Gradually, these assumptions were challenged by reformers and professionals who identified alcohol consumption by certain people as requiring state control.

Legitimations for state intervention grew more encompassing when reformers grounded their claims within scientific reasoning. Supporting their claims with data collected by various researchers in Canada, Britain and the USA, reformers argued that the state ought to be authorized to regulate alcohol consumption since it endangered the community. Calls for the creation of new controls were supported by the notion that experts could predict, detect and prevent alcoholism. In this way, the incorporation of medical knowledge created new fields for legal intervention into the lives of the citizenry.

Restrictive state legislation was only one component of the effort to promote the health, productivity and morality of the citizenry. Other important initiatives emerged simultaneously which focused on the family as the privileged location of reproduction and socialization. Starting at the end of the 19th century, reformers and professionals depicted

the family as the primary locus of socialization. Through the development of educational strategies and other initiatives, the relations between the family and the state changed. Prior to 1900, state intervention into family life was limited. But these programs opened up the family to various kinds of state control. This new relationship between the state and the family manifested themselves in many areas including public education, domestic science, education and child rearing techniques.

#### *Families and alcohol Regulations*

Drawing on the idea that the ideal social order should reflect the principles of commitment to work, temperance and discipline, members of reform movements saw mothers as the primary vehicle of the moral education of children. At the turn of the century, mothers were encouraged to create an educational environment -- an environment based on Christian values. The idea that mothers and wives should be the main vehicle for reproducing social and moral order was elaborated during the second decade of the 20th century. A series of programs were developed to instruct mothers on how to raise their children, how to create a moral and healthy atmosphere in the home and how to shape family members' conduct. With the development of the discipline of domestic science, the notion of domesticity was granted a respected scientific authority. Grounding ideas about the traditional role of mothers and wives in a mantle of scientific knowledge, professionals and

reformers turned motherhood into a subject to be taught by experts. In this way, mothers were required to follow detailed professional advice about inculcating in their children the values of hard work, temperance and discipline. This control over family life and the instruction of mothers in techniques of child rearing reinforced the role of the mother as the main agent of socialization. In this way, the school and the family turned into a continuum of institutions aiming to teach, discipline and educate individuals.

In his analysis of the formation of the modern family, Donzelot (1979) maintains that a similar alliance between the mother and the state occurred in France and led to a fundamental change in the relations between the family and the state. Prior to 1900, the state delegated power to the patriarch. With the assignment of new educative and health-promoting duties to mothers, the state gained access to the family. Being exposed to such intervention, the family

carried out new educativeness tasks at the cost of a loss of its coextensive with the social field; it was dispossessed of everything that situated it in a field of exterior forces. Being isolated, it was now exposed to the surveillance of its deviations from the norm (p.45).

This development is described by Donzelot as a transition from a "government of families to a government through the family" (p. 92). In this way, the family became both an object of direct management and a social institution transferring norms to its members. The development of educational initiatives in British Columbia instructing mothers and daughters to abstain

from alcohol and to teach children and husbands temperance principles can be seen as part of a similar process in which the family became an object for state intervention.

The creation of these new techniques monitoring family life and individuals' behavior changed the dichotomous relationship between the private and the public spheres. The development of educational and medical policies created links between these two spheres, legitimizing various types of intervention. The state was able to exercise a new form of authority by regulating family life, relations between children and parents, sexuality, and the consumption of alcohol. The introduction of controls over individual conduct thus transformed formerly private behaviors by allowing them to be articulated in political terms. In the case of alcohol, the interventionist state played an important role in creating a "social" (cf. Donzelot 1979) domain in which medical, legal and educational mechanisms of control operated. For Garland (1985) such a domain is

a multi-layered mosaic, the product of layer upon layer of organizational forms, techniques and regulatory practices, each one partial in its operation, each one dealing with the residues and traces of previous strategies as well as its contemporary rivals and limitations (p.155).

Operating through this complex web of institutions and agencies, alcohol regulations did not originate in a unitary state apparatus.

The current study has looked at one instance of the development of the interventionist state -- the regulation of

the distribution and consumption of alcohol. Being restricted to the regulation of alcohol it did not deal with similar developments in other areas of legislation. The focus on the discourses about alcohol has allowed us to understand what reformers thought about alcohol and particularly about the various kinds of people who consumed it.

Alcohol regulations are clearly one response to the personal and social consequences of alcohol use. However, the history of alcohol regulations in British Columbia is also the history of a community's production and transformation of social and cultural values. These values embodied images of gender, race and class but were expressed in rules about the use of alcohol. Discourses about alcohol provided a stadium for the display of the forces, instabilities and concerns of the community and provided a site for their expression and negotiation.



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