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Table 16
Sex distribution of injuries to body parts

PARTS OF BODY	% MALES	% FEMALES
N/A	6.5	1.5
Head	7.4	24.6
Scalp	1.9	0.0
Nose	1.9	0.0
Mouth	0.9	0.0
Forehead	1.9	0.0
Neck	1.9	9.2
Shoulder	2.8	0.0
Arm	5.6	1.5
Hand	1.9	1.5
Fingers	2.8	0.0
Elbow	1.9	1.5
Wrist	1.9	0.0
Thumb	0.9	0.0
Chest	4.6	3.1
Breast	0.0	3.1
Abdomen	4.6	3.1
Ribs	2.8	1.5
Back	13.9	3.1
Hip	0.9	0.0
Thigh	20.4	0.0
Legs	0.0	12.3
Feet	0.9	9.2
Head + hands	0.0	4.6
Head + lip	0.0	1.5
Elbow + abdomen	1.9	0.0
Head + eye + back + abdomen + lip	0.0	1.5
Mouth + lip	0.9	1.5
Cheek + forehead	1.9	0.0
Face + leg	0.0	3.1
Scalp + arm	0.9	0.0
Abdomen + neck	0.0	3.1
Abdomen + hand	0.9	0.0
Back + elbow	0.9	0.0
Back + arm	0.0	7.7
Back + buttock	2.8	0.0
Thigh + nose	0.9	0.0
Vulva + legs	0.0	1.5
Penis	0.9	0.0
% TOTAL	100.3	99.7*

* Since decimal points were rounded to only 1 decimal place
% totals are not 100%

From Table 15 it is possible to gain an indication of the areas of the body which are most vulnerable in alcohol-related assaults. Lacerations were sustained predominantly in two areas of the body: the head and the thigh. All other laceration-type injuries were sustained in insignificant numbers to other parts of the body. Burns occurred most often to the back (a point which we have already discussed), although there were a number of burns to abdomen and feet also. Bruises occurred most often to the ribs, and to the back. There were two cases of bruises to the breast. The two fractures in this period were to the elbow and leg.

Table 16 shows that there were some clear distinctions between the areas of the body injured in men and in women. Perhaps the most significant of these is the high proportion of women who sustained head injuries. Head injuries constituted 24.6 percent of all female injuries compared with 7.4 percent of male injuries. Since most head injuries are lacerations, we can deduce that women who are injured in the head are lacerated in the head and thus it is they who sustained injuries of a critical type to a vulnerable part of the body. Women received proportionately more leg injuries than men, followed by neck, feet and multiple back and arm injuries. The injuries to the neck, feet and multiple back and arm were most often burn injuries. From this we can conclude that women burned themselves or were burned in these areas more than men.

Men suffered more back injuries than women and back injuries were usually burns (12 burns, 4 bruises and 1 laceration). Consultations by men were, however, predominantly for injuries to the thigh, being 20.4 percent of all male injuries. No woman sustained thigh injuries.¹⁹ Aiming for the thigh has a particularly male connotation in Aboriginal society, for it is the part of the body which sustains ritual spearing as punishment (see for example R.M. & C.H. Berndt, 1964:290). Presumably the aim of a laceration to the thigh under controlled circumstances was to make the victim 'sit down quietly' (Meggitt, 1975:100), inhibit movement and to interfere with the man's ability to travel long distances, and to hunt; this would indeed, punish him. If this were the case, the punishment for women should have curtailed their particular skills in the bush - foraging and digging, grinding seeds.

In the January-June sample there is no evidence that women sustained broken arms or fingers, injuries that would inflict such a disability. However, the data collected separately from the Clinic, covering the 1976-82 evacuations to hospital detailed the names of bones to be set. Over that period there were 17 fractures to the radius or ulna of women, and only three to those bones for men. This high number of forearm fractures for women may be simply because a woman might raise her arm in self-defence, to protect her face, and thus come into contact with the full force of a weapon. It is also possible that breaking a woman's arm was a punishment and that this form of 'punishment' is still in effect (see Berndt, R.M. & C.H., 1964:175). Bell and Ditton report a case at Hooker Creek where a husband injured his wife's arm with a boomerang for not preparing his dinner. What is more, he claimed that his attack was justified under the 'old' (i.e., Aboriginal) law. The Community Council disallowed this claim, saying that the fact that he was drunk meant that the 'old' law did not apply (1980:24). A 52-year-old Diamond Well woman, who was finally killed by her male partner in 1980, had had her arms broken

on several occasions to the extent that she had had steel pins inserted. In his defence, this man argued that he had found her drinking at night with some young men and that his attack was in a sense a punishment for this perceived wrong. However at his trial the Judge stated that the defendant had hit his wife 'no less than 25 times around the head and body' with a stick. She subsequently died.

In summary, alcohol-related disputes resulted in men being injured in the thigh, back and head, in that order. The preponderance of thigh injuries is remarkable as it indicates that strong cultural influences are penetrating the drunken state. Women were injured in the head, legs, neck and feet, in that order.

Alcohol-Related Deaths

Records of alcohol-related deaths were available for the period 1972-1982. They fell into the categories of neglect, violence, burns, motor vehicle accident, illness and overdose. Although in some cases, particularly illness, it was impossible for the nursing staff to give alcohol as the sole 'cause' of death, we have based our data on their considered opinion and close personal knowledge of the individual and the circumstances surrounding the death. In some cases an individual would receive the warning that if he/she continued to drink while on a particular medication, or after a specific diagnosis, then this would cause death. A subsequent death would then be noted as 'alcohol-related' in the Clinic records. Deaths from alcohol-related causes are presented in Table 17.

Table 17
Causes of Alcohol-related death for the ten years 1972-82#

	CAUSES OF DEATH						
	NEGLECT	VIOLENCE	BURNS	MOTOR VEHICLE	ILLNESS	O'DOSE	UNKNOWN
	(of child)			ACCIDENT			
MALES	-	4	1	5	6	1	3
FEMALES	2	5	-	-	2	-	-
TOTAL	2	9	1	5	8	1	3

Total alcohol-related deaths = 29

Total deaths from all causes = 99

Data only collected to June 1982.

The most significant point that can be drawn from Table 17 is that alcohol-related deaths constituted 30 percent of all deaths at Diamond Well over the ten year period. Table 17 also shows that most alcohol-related deaths were associated with violence, followed by illness and then motor vehicle accidents. Motor vehicle accidents have also caused some severe injuries among Diamond Well people were returning from a trip to obtain alcohol. Their car had broken down and they were pushing it at night, unlit along the highway. A semi-trailer crashed into them from behind and one man was killed. The Diamond Well Clinic has its own ambulance, which covers emergency calls for any accident on the highway in the vicinity of the settlement. The nursing staff commented that a substantial number of accidents they had attended, involving European Australians, were associated with alcohol.

Table 17 shows one death designated as an overdose. This was a death from drinking duplicating fluid, which was possibly mistaken for methylated spirits. A man from another community also died in this incident. Of the deaths by violence, five were women. Two of these deaths have involved publicised manslaughter trials. Similarly, a trial for manslaughter in Queensland provoked considerable publicity, particularly with reference to alcohol (Wilson, 1982). The fact that violence was the major cause of alcohol-related death among women is undoubtedly related to the high number of head injuries they sustained, more precisely lacerations to the head. Such injuries are associated with heavy loss of blood and subsequent death. As stated in Chapter 2, women and children often vacate the camps when heavy drinking is predicted or is in progress; if women stay in the vicinity, or are themselves members of drinking groups, they place themselves in danger of serious injury. The fact that severe injuries often lead to death is due to specific situational factors. The death of the woman referred to on above is an example. As stated, she received at least 25 blows to the head and body, and was herself 'very drunk'. After the assault, she was left overnight with no medical attention, and it was

only later the next morning that other residents of the camp realised that she was seriously hurt. By this time she had lost a lot of blood. A message was sent to the Clinic, that is, a vehicle had to be found and driven into the settlement. The nursing sister then drove out to the camp and gave medical attention. The woman arrived at the town hospital by ambulance at approximately lunch-time but was dead on arrival.

In conclusion, 29 Diamond Well people have died in a ten-year period from alcohol-related causes, constituting approximately 10 percent of the population. A simplified chart showing numbers of alcohol-related deaths from all causes was drawn up at the request of the Clinic (see Appendix III). This was done utilising the data we collected for this study. This chart, together with one depicting evacuations to hospital, was placed on display in the Clinic.

Alcohol and Clinic Time

Data on total consultations (that is, alcohol-related consultations and all others) at the Diamond Well Clinic were collected for the month of October 1981. In this month there were 672 consultations altogether. Of these, 99 were for alcohol-related causes, and of these, 52 were first visits (i.e., there were 52 separate incidents requiring medical treatment). Thus 15 percent of all treatments at the Clinic that month were alcohol-related.

Summary

Diamond Well Aborigines are under no illusions about the cost of drinking. From 1976 to 1982 they saw their friends and relatives taken to hospital for alcohol-related causes on 111 occasions and in the ten years 1972-82 they had seen 29 people die from alcohol-related causes. Alcohol was directly related to 30 percent of all deaths occurring in the Diamond Well population over the ten years 1972-1982.

From January to June 1982, which was a period of low to moderate drinking as a result of the Christian influence, 66 people sought medical attention at the Clinic - two-thirds of the drinking population. There were 181 attendances at the Clinic overall in the six months. Diamond Well people were suffering from pancreatitis, pneumonia, cirrhosis, gastritis and fits as a result of drinking alcohol.

In alcohol-related violence, they suffered lacerations more often than any other injury, followed by burns. Burn injuries required more return visits to the Clinic than any other injury and in the six months were designated as being more serious than any other injury. Some people were deliberately burned by others. Men and women experienced injury to dissimilar parts of the body. Women sustained more head injuries than men (24.6 percent of all female injuries). Men sustained thigh injuries (20.4 percent of all male injuries), while women had none. This suggests that, to some extent, cultural rules were in operation, even when people were thoroughly drunk. The element of deliberation which is implied in these results reinforces evidence presented elsewhere (MacAndrew and Edgerton, 1969), that when people are drunk they are not entirely out of control. Women died as a result of violence more than any other alcohol-related cause. It was clear that women risked serious injury and death if they

remained in drinking camps at night. Men died as a result of illness and vehicle accidents more than from any other alcohol-related cause. At times of heavy drinking children were sometimes not supervised very closely and this has caused injury and death.

CHAPTER FOUR

TOWARDS A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF DRINKING

To understand drinking is to put it in social context, and to study the meaning of the actions and their value for those who engage in the enterprise of drinking. Actions have meaning when they have a significance for a group of people who place a value upon them. Actions contextualised within the fabric of social living can also be characterised by the framework or structure within which an organised system of interaction is contained. The structure is described as a heuristic device representing a model of the way a thing can be understood to work.

This is a chapter of analysis. In it we seek to analyse the structural components within which the drinking act takes place and to derive meanings from the social interactions which are predicated upon that framework. Within a synthesis of meaning and structure lies an understanding of the drinking act. We work to demonstrate that drinking is ordered along particular and observable lines in order that desired ends may be considered achieved, but that the endeavour is frustrated because of constraints which are intrinsic to the structural relationship of component parts.

Aboriginal Powerlessness

In this analysis we make two initial assumptions. The first is that Aborigines are economically and socially lacking in power in their interactions with European Australians and that Aborigines are aware of this powerlessness. Secondly, we consider that Aborigines wish to rectify this situation of powerlessness.

The first assumption is not hard to accept. While some studies of Aboriginal communities have stressed their autonomy and vitality (e.g. Sansom, 1980) it is difficult to neglect the fact that Aboriginal communities are also subject to strong pressures to respond positively to European Australian influences. Even in current Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) policies in which self-management and self-determination are stressed, the reality is that Aborigines are island dependencies within a colonial administration. There is an ideological formation which lies at the base of this arrangement which has its roots far back in the colonial ethic. Aboriginal land, which was the economic base of a whole civilisation, was appropriated and its former owners incorporated into a new system of government and political organisation, legitimised by the maintenance of law and order through the exercise of coercive powers. The Aborigines were deprived of their economic base and offered material inducements to comply with the new dispensation. The settlers came to monopolise what the Aborigines needed to continue their existence and were largely indifferent to what Aborigines had to offer in return. The introduction of materialistic values, physical coercion, monopoly over resources and a disinterest in Aboriginal commodities or ideals constituted power for European Australians and powerlessness for the Aborigines.

Power, broadly defined, 'refers to all kinds of influence between persons or groups, including those exercised in exchange transactions, where one induces others to accede to his wishes by rewarding him for doing so' (Blau, 1964:115). When a group becomes dependent upon another because they cannot either do without the rewards, or require them and cannot obtain them elsewhere, then power is exercised which is not strictly negative in its application - that is, it does not involve coercive sanctions or the withholding of rewards. Blau wrote:

By supplying services in demand to others, a person establishes power over them. If he regularly renders needed services they cannot readily obtain elsewhere, others become dependent on and obligated to him for these services, and unless they can furnish other benefits to him that produce interdependence by making him equally dependent on them, their unilateral dependence obligates them to comply with his requests lest he cease to continue to meet their needs (ibid:118).

As a consequence of colonisation the Aborigines at Diamond Well have no economic resource of their own, have no viable alternative to those provided by European Australians, lack coercive force altogether and have not developed any ideology that might lessen their needs. That is to say, they have not developed any idealism which would stress that it might be better to do without what the White man offers in order to sever the dependence upon him. While Aborigines are landless they have no hope of obtaining viable economic alternatives elsewhere, and though land rights are a reality in the north of South Australia and in the Northern Territory, the situation even in these areas is far from restoring economic independence for Aborigines.²¹ In short, the Aborigines at Diamond Well have none of the conditions for independence outlined by Blau (ibid:124).

The development of the present state of affairs is not the spontaneous result of uncontrolled forces. It has eventuated because of the developed relationship between those who have power and those who have not. Powerlessness is a product of power, and those who are subordinated are in a structural relationship to those who are superordinate. The business of Diamond Well is composed of inter-relationships fundamentally formed from transactions between those who have power and those who do not. Government policies and contemporary directives for self-management and self-determination are cosmetic. They are doomed to failure because what they seek to obtain can only be achieved by a structural re-negotiation of the power base; a matter not allowed for in government programmes.

The Aborigines at Diamond Well are dependent upon European Australians for their cash and more or less dependent upon the cash economy for subsistence. At Diamond Well there are on average only between 35 and 45 wage-earners a week, and some of these work for less than five hours a week. The community has been developed to provide jobs for these workers but the community is in no way dependent upon them. If no one turns up for work the Whites may have to empty their own rubbish bins, but the community does not grind to a halt. Aborigines cannot then withhold their labour in order to gain power over the European Australians. The Whites live at Diamond Well only because they provide valuable services which the Aborigines cannot at present manage to provide for themselves: complex

mechanical repairs, maintenance of generators, ordering of stores and the running of the shop, sending telexes and writing memorandums to DAA. If the Whites withdrew their labour, the community as it is today would stop, no one would get paid, there would be no pensions, the store would not open and people would begin to go hungry. The European Australians, then, clearly have the power. Even the Aboriginal industry of artefact-making by which some men and women earn up to \$250 a month is administered by the White staff. Independent sale to tourists on the main road and not through the community artefact store would be unreliable, and it would be impossible to secure a living wage.²²

Most of the cash flowing into the community comes from pensions, supporting mothers' allowances, invalid pensions and family allowances.²³ Cheques are processed in the community office where they are also cashed. In principle an Aborigine can receive his cheque anywhere provided he has a postal address and so need not be dependent upon the community or its White staff. However, the dependence remains since the relationship between pensioner or beneficiary and the government and its European Australian agents is asymmetrical. Power is vested in the Europeans who decide who shall qualify for benefit and who will not, who will be sent a cheque and who will be cut off. They also control where the cheques will be sent. Aborigines are always obligated to European Australians for the cash they provide, even if the debt is not consciously registered.

The socio-political organisation of the community is run along European Australian lines. A White Community Advisor co-ordinates Aboriginal activities and a Council is elected by the Black residents to discuss issues of importance. The Council members exercise some influence over the Community Advisor in matters of minor importance. However, budget allocation, expenditure and utilisation of capital equipment are controlled from outside the community by DAA officials. The Council and Diamond Well residents are not able to make any major decisions concerning finance, purchase of capital equipment or the control and expenditure of money. They may express their opinions and these are taken into account by DAA, but fundamental policy and organisation is directed from outside the community and usually from Canberra. Even items of equipment, like a community truck, are provided by DAA funds for a designated purpose and strictly may only be used in connection with that purpose although it nominally 'belongs to' the community.

The Council and community members have no real power over the management of their affairs, although they have been told repeatedly that it is their community and that they should make all important decisions. In fact they make no important decisions, have no power over the control or direction of affairs or finance and are consequently alienated from the whole procedure, which they perceive as being part of the superstructure of the European Australian administration. The alienation, frustration and anger that Aborigines feel in their position of powerlessness has been similarly noted for North American Inuit by Brody (1975).

There is an underlying ideology on the part of European Australians that Aborigines should be trained to manage their affairs in a thoroughly European way which will be consistent with government policy. The philosophy of 'training for self-management' is built upon the assumption that Aborigines will wish to run their affairs more or less as a carbon

copy of the way Whites have done. There seems little evidence to support the veracity of this assumption. Moreover, the philosophy is also based on the premise that the Aboriginal system will remain a part of the European Australian one, and be contained within its power structure. Despite the involvement of Aborigines in self-management programmes very little real change in the power structure is either taking place or proposed. For some reason government planners seem to have been easily seduced into thinking that if power is transferred into Black hands outside the community then in an unexplained the situation of powerlessness will be remedied. Of course, it is no answer. The powerless remain powerless and the only thing which has changed is the colour of the hands which hold power.

Access to Power: Ritual Time Out

We have spent some time discussing the notion of powerlessness at Diamond Well and how it is manifest. This is because drinking and drunkenness take place within this context, and it is our purpose here to contextualise the drinking act. Herein lies the key to understanding the interactions and consequences we have described in this report. Aborigines are dissatisfied with their subordinate status, but are powerless to remedy the situation. They lack viable alternatives to economic and social dependency, they are not equipped to do without the services upon which they have been encouraged to become dependent. However, they have perceived one way out. That is, to suffer transformation during the time-bounded euphoria of the intoxicated state. During this state of transformation it is possible to demonstrate the existence of alternatives to compliance with power, and sometimes possible briefly to realise them. This transformation is not obtainable through mundane interaction because it requires a fundamental alteration to the state of affairs. It is considered attainable through a period which is best described as 'time out', or as in ritual process, a liminal phase in which the otherwise impossible, the unobtainable and the unthinkable, becomes possible and within the grasp of ordinary men and women.

A. van Gennep (1960), writing in 1909, described the ritual process as one in which the initiate is separated from society, endures a period of transition and is finally incorporated into society. Psychologically the initiate at first remains unaware of the stimuli which are the substance of the experience of the ritual. Then he enters a liminal phase when the stimuli are perceptible. Finally, in the post-liminal phase, he assimilates the stimuli and accepts knowledge of them. Van Gennep called this ritual process a rite de passage.

The drinking act conforms with a rite de passage. It is a ritual act of transformation in which participants enter an altered state and are regarded by others as belonging to a different order of existence. The initial organisation of drinking belongs to the preliminal phase. Drinkers have already marked themselves off as setting out upon a course of actions which will result in their transformation. Their intentions are declared, but the results of drinking (intoxication) are as yet pre-liminal.

The drunken state is absolute. A mark of a drunk is that he is physically incapable, often unable to stand and his speech is slurred. Drinkers adopt this state as a mark of their transformation, regardless of the absolute amount of liquor consumed. However, copious consumption is

regarded as a necessary inducement to enable the altered state to become a reality. The drunk is not himself, and assumes an altered persona. He often speaks in English, not in his own language, and is permitted all sorts of licence otherwise unthinkable. A drunk who injures himself or others does so because he is drunk. He cannot be held responsible for his own actions in his liminal state. Drunks are separated from the rest of society, both by physical distance and by the mental states which are markedly different from their non-drinking peers. Drunks are not ordinary people, their experiences are not those of ordinary people, and their abilities are likewise extraordinary.

When drinking is over and sobering up commences, the other-world mind state of the drunk recedes and there is a reversion to ordinary experience and understanding. The drinker is incorporated into society and assumes his old role there, until the next ritual drinking spree.

Drinkers have told us that when they are drunk they feel different from when they are sober. They feel themselves to have a greater facility with English and so are able to demonstrate that they belong to a world and discourse which is that in which decisions are made about the control and allocation of goods and services. Moreover, they feel that they can approach a European Australian as an equal in verbal interactions, not hindered by a lack of knowledge of the spoken word.

Drinkers have also told us that the drinking experience is one in which they become bold and audacious in their interactions with Whites and are prepared to state the nature of past injustices and demand restitution. When matters of current concern are considered to be the product of unjust dealings, then the drinker may demand that a European Australian right wrongs. Drinkers in their transformed state of forcefulness and linguistic facility establish their non-compliance with European directives. If necessary a drinker will back his requests or resistance with threats of violence or make an actual assault.

Coupled with assaults on persons are attacks on European Australian property. Windows are the prime target since they break easily and dramatically, though rocks and other missiles are hurled by drunks at walls, doors and roofs as well. The intoxicated state is the means whereby an Aborigine fashions an alternative to compliance. It enables him to take by force that which was formerly withheld or was unobtainable.

While coercion or threats of coercion are short-term alternatives to compliance, their enduring effectiveness is another matter. In fact, although a drunk may cause damage or injury thereby showing himself to be for the nonce physically superior, the structural framework within which his enduring powerlessness is contained remains unaltered. A possible outcome for the violent drinker is police arrest, conviction and incarceration. Moreover, his linguistic audacity may be little more than a series of slurred sounds, incomprehensible to the unsympathetic accosted White, who may be unable in any case to meet the demands of the drunk.

As our data have shown, injury and assaults on Whites and their property are by no means the only product of a drinking bout. Aborigines themselves suffer terrible injuries which are sometimes fatal. Those who feel themselves to be powerless when sober attempt to redress the balance

when drunk by making demonstration of their ability to enforce their will by strength of arm, establish their right by might and dominate by physical action. By such action they declare to all observers that there is an alternative to powerlessness. Actions which are statements of non-compliance serve to establish the position of an individual in relation to his consociates, but they are effected at great personal cost. Moreover, they are understood to be achieved and therefore effective only during the heightened liminal state of drunkenness and so do not determine relations contracted outside of that ritual period. However, what a drinker establishes when drunk regarding his coercive powers is real, and an aggressive drinker is treated with caution by others for his predicted violence. Such a drinker, provided he can survive the consequences of his aggression, establishes himself as being both beyond the immediate control of the European Australian power of law and order and, by taking what he desires by force, to have demonstrated an alternative to a compliant state.

Drinking acts are often violent acts but not inevitably so. Drinkers establish their non-compliance with the European Australian power structure by other, non-violent means. There are two devices employed to effect this. The first is by the establishing and sustaining of an Aboriginal business which is, in its own right, an enterprise in which exchange transactions are used to develop a wholly Aboriginal network of relations of indebtedness and obligation. In their organisation of the drinking business, the Two-up school and the fetching of port wine from Dindara, Aborigines are embarking upon an enterprise which involves no dependence upon Whites. This means they are able to forge obligations, discharge debts and create alliances through the pursuit of a valued commodity which they control, allocate and consume. Drinking and carting are statements of liberation from European Australian monopoly over goods and services. The fact that it is an illicit activity, which nevertheless thrives, is further endorsement of their non-compliance with White control.

The independence is to some extent contrived, since the source of all alcohol is a hotel where cash must be exchanged for liquor. Since cash must be received at the settlement from European Australians who effectively control its allocation, drinking cannot commence without initial commitment to dependency upon Whites. However, Aborigines at Diamond Well successfully transform cash into commodities which are wholly Aboriginal in their value and in the manner in which they are subsequently exchanged. Aborigines are able successfully to establish that they pursue business which is categorically outside of the control European Australians.

Drinkers become sentimental, ebullient and sometimes shamelessly hyperbolic about their home country, their beliefs and religious commitments. Drinkers sometimes stress the intrinsic spiritual value of their sites in the country and of their rituals and religious acts. This euphoric indulgence is a means whereby the ideology of Aboriginal religious belief is stressed and claimed to be as worthy and as of much value as anything the White man can muster. In the drunken state a man is able to convince himself, and perhaps others too, that his own beliefs are indeed a viable alternative to anything the European Australians can offer.

In summary, then, we state that drinking and the intoxicated state it produces are used by Aborigines to develop actions which are statements of alternatives to compliance with power. Actual physical coercion or physical strength is an effective means whereby power is challenged. The organisation of drinking and the stressing of the value of Aboriginal beliefs are means whereby Aboriginal transactions and values are sustained in a manner deemed to be independent of European Australians. We have also noted that the effectiveness of these strategies is limited by constraining factors, but the designated meanings of the drinking act are nonetheless real for those who indulge in it.

The New Christianity

A new Aboriginal Christianity was subsequently adopted by some, though by no means all, of the drinkers at Diamond Well. Drunkenness and Christianity at first glance appear to be dissimilar, but the pursuit of each activity can achieve similar ends. Christianity supplies a satisfying alternative to compliance and is more supposed than real because it is a matter of belief and faith rather than manifest outcomes. There is no physical violence in Christian practice, so the powerless cannot combat the powerful by assault or attack. However, a fundamentalist Christian is assured that damnation (the final assault) will be the end of all non-Christians, while he in turn is sure of a place in Heaven. It is, then, not so much a question of taking coercive action as an alternative to compliance but rather of waiting until God readjusts the status quo. Meanwhile, Christian teaching endorses the notion that all have free access to the ultimate power and a capability through prayer and mediation to alter the subordinate status and powerlessness which is their present experience. Fundamentalist Christianity as it is preached at Diamond Well involves participants entering into a state of mind in which they consider their whole being to be taken over and controlled by spiritual forces. In this state they believe they are in accord with a powerful spirituality formerly manifest as Christ. Aboriginal Christians believe they have access to power. It is then unnecessary for them to drink in order to demonstrate that they are not powerless.

The Failure to Remedy Powerlessness

Drinking is a positive expression of an alternative to compliance which Aborigines use in a vain attempt to rectify their powerlessness. But because they act out their expressions within the context of their very powerlessness they are ineffective in achieving any change. This can be explained as follows.

When there are two systems engaging one another then there is a dynamic. To characterise the two systems of interaction is to describe this dynamic and to describe the dynamic is to account for social process. We have characterised social structure at Diamond Well as an asymmetrical relationship between those who are superordinate and those who are subordinate. In a symmetrical relationship reciprocal exchanges between constituent groups create the dynamic through which the two systems are perpetuated and constantly modified in relation to one another and with respect to one another. Social process is modified through time by the effect one group exerts upon the other by virtue of superior access to

goods, or the obligations it elicits from the other. In an asymmetrical relationship, that is, one in which one group has much power, the other very little, the social form is perpetuated through a dynamic in which little account, if any, is taken of the powerless by the powerful. This is because those in a more powerful position have nothing to gain and much to lose by embarking upon interaction which might produce a dynamic resulting in modification or change in the power imbalance which is in their favour. Blau notes that,

...vested interests and powers, established practices and organisation, traditional values and institutions, and other kinds of social investments are forces of stability and resistance to basic social innovations and reorganisation (1964:338).

At Diamond Well the existence of an asymmetrical power relationship between European Australians and Aborigines results in an equally asymmetrical interaction between the two groups, so that while the interaction between the groups is sustained through social process, the dynamic does not allow for a change in the social formation because the interaction is controlled by the powerful who stifle and inhibit structural modification.

The substance of the exchange transactions at Diamond Well are a series of acts to which we have attributed both implicit and explicit meanings. In short, we have described how some Aborigines when drinking or being Christians are making statements about their subordinate status and developing alternatives to compliance. We have shown that in some cases these actions are real alternatives to compliance even if only for a short period of time. Aggressive violence, for example, is a real alternative to compliance. Other actions are based on wholly mythical assumptions which have no substantive effect on their powerlessness. However, the interactions which drinking or Christianity occasion can be, and often are, controlled by European Australians, who can decide when to intervene should it threaten their position. The exchanges between European Australians and Aborigines are one-sided and controlled and directed by Whites as they see fit. Moreover, the meanings of the acts perpetrated by Aborigines are either disregarded, ignored or made to be of no consequence by European Australians who thereby render them of no account in any transaction.

Some European Australians understand drinking as the cries of a dying race, others as the despair of those who lack initiative and imagination and have no self-control. At best, many European Australians understand excessive drinking as a sickness whose victims should be given remedial care or medication. Similarly, Aboriginal fundamental revivalism is regarded as a transitory ephemeral child-like faith which lacks sound theological doctrine and, on close inspection, is marked by synchronistic beliefs which should be discouraged.

The one-sided interaction and its associated frustrations which are the experience of Aborigines have been described elsewhere in Australia by R.M. Berndt (1962). On Elcho Island the Aborigines brought out sacred objects formerly never seen in public. They anticipated that the European Australians would respond by giving them greater political autonomy and some material benefits. The Europeans were unaware of the implications of

the Aboriginal action (*ibid*:84). The power balance remained unaltered, the Aborigines unappeased. So too at Diamond Well, the drinking continues while the Whites remain unaware of the implications of the acts, or rationalise them so that they can explain them without having to understand what they mean.

We have shown that within a definable structural relationship there is an interaction between members of component parts which we have described by developing the meanings of observable acts. This relationship of structure and meaning has shown that the interaction is constrained to the extent that the drinking act has a meaning for the Aborigines which is seldom, if ever, understood by European Australians. The dynamic which accounts for social process is one effectively dominated by Whites and allows for little if any synthesis of constituent parts. As a result, Aboriginal expectations, demands and desires, though present and expressed, are inadmissible to exchange transactions. Consequently the social formation is sustained more or less unmodified. Both drinking and Christianity are ineffective in changing the powerlessness of Aborigines, not because they are intrinsically unsuited to the purpose, although we have noted some serious flaws in their potential effectiveness, but because they have been adopted by a group that is constrained in its action by existing structural powerlessness which can only be remedied by radical innovative change.

Although drinking and Christianity are ineffective in creating real structural change they should be understood as bold attempts by the helpless (but not hopeless) to remedy their situation by demanding positive responses from European Australians. It is sad to consider that until recently excessive drinking was possibly the only avenue left open to Aborigines deprived of any opportunity for political formations. The Aborigines were economically dependent upon European Australians for their very existence and were, as a result of social dependency, unable to adopt independent action. Aborigines have shown themselves capable of much independence during thousands of years, and there is no reason why they should not do so again. But in order for this to eventuate they need first to gain real economic and social independence from European Australians, and to live their own way outside the colonial third world which has been the only birth-right of so many.

While we accept that this is a utopian ideal, it is better for men and women to work in the long term for an ideal, rather than in the short term for ideologically ill-considered convenience which will ultimately be of benefit to no one.

CONCLUSION

In their attempts to direct and curb Aboriginal drinking acts, Europeans associated with this community have consistently misunderstood and misread the actions performed by Diamond Well Aborigines. There have been four major assumptions made about the drinking at Diamond Well:

- a) The first was that the ready availability of beer at the Canteen would lessen the demand for fortified wine (port) and therefore bring the carting of wine to an end.
- b) The second was that the reallocation of beer cans by gambling (Two-up) indicated that the supply of beer was 'inadequate', and that gambling was in any case a problematic exercise which encouraged ill-feeling.
- c) The third was that structured educational programmes would be able to instruct Aborigines how to drink 'properly', and alert them to the deleterious effects of excessive drinking.
- d) The fourth was that the Aboriginal community and its Council had both the desire and the power to intervene in or prevent uncontrolled drinking.

All four assumptions were incorrect, and yet they have guided missionaries, government officials and even funding allocations to the community. The assumptions continue to be important and remain central to the development of community policies regarding drinking.

The instigation of the Canteen was, as we have shown, not a purely altruistic innovation on the part of the Lutheran Church. Its inception made no impact whatsoever upon the business of running port from outside sources through the use of taxis and later Aboriginal-owned vehicles. The Canteen may have had some beneficial impact in the sense that it provided an overt statement for the Aboriginal people of their right to purchase alcohol on their own premises. The Two-up game was a means by which the Aborigines undermined the White-imposed regime of the Canteen and transformed it into a wholly Aboriginal exploit. It did not evolve necessarily because the ration was inadequate but because the game injected a social and interactional component into an otherwise bland interchange. We found no evidence to support the assumption that the gambling itself aroused ill-feeling or hostility among participants.

Aborigines at Diamond Well have evolved a style of drinking which acts to fulfil certain requirements. They drank large amounts of port, irrespective of the availability of beer, though consumption was related to availability of cash and vehicles. They drank in their camps rather than in the settlement, with their own choices of drinking partners and on their own terms. It was generally accepted that drinking was synonymous with getting drunk - this was in fact the desired state. When the state of drunkenness was achieved, then other business could be accomplished - assignments fulfilled, arguments fought through, Europeans accosted - all encompassed and protected by the state of desocialisation which drunkenness wrought. Attempts to trammel and contain these established and deliberate patterns of consumption through instruction on the dangers of intoxication,

or even undisguised efforts to make Aborigines drink in the Western 'sociable' sense have, in the past, failed and will probably continue to fail. The fourth assumption is less easy to criticise. It has to do with matters of jurisdiction and of responsibility and is veiled with the jargon of self-determination and decision-making. Affairs on Aboriginal settlements, as we have stated, are ostensibly under the control of their Aboriginal Councils but are, in effect, strongly influenced by immediate and more distant advisors and government policy. Suggestions that 'something' must be done about drinking arose largely from concerned Europeans and occasionally from abstainers or ex-alcoholics among the Aboriginal population. These suggestions, accompanied by examples of disruptive behaviour, have been endlessly mooted at Council meetings over at least a decade. Councillors (some of whom were drinkers themselves) were expected to consider a variety of means by which their own drinking behaviour was to be contained. Moreover, men and women whose area of jurisdiction and influence over others was contained within certain structural boundaries were supposed to pass judgement, in effect, on others and interfere in the drinking business of social groups over which they had no right or powers of jurisdiction. Despite a public display of concern over the issue of drinking, evidenced by the minutes of Council meetings, the members of the community subscribed to the view that drinking was a universal right. As a result of this belief they avoided committing themselves to long term or authoritarian intervention strategies on the one hand, while simultaneously instituting minor 'rules' of comportment to keep the Europeans happy, on the other.

So what do we conclude from these observations and data? We have set out to show that drinking at Diamond Well is complex social action involving exchange of goods, the creation and discharge of debts and obligations and the effecting of a business so thoroughly Aboriginal that it has long been misunderstood, or dismissed, by European Australians who have failed to comprehend its complexity. Far from being the anarchistic acts of a despairing minority in chaos and confusion, drinking at Diamond Well is ordered, skilfully executed and governed by rules and procedures agreed upon by participants. This much we have demonstrated.

On the other hand, we have also shown in Chapter III that the sociological and physiological effects of drinking are generally negative and sometimes fatal. The injuries treated in the Clinic constitute a substantial part of the nurses' daily workload. Drinkers disturb non-drinkers, terrify wives or non-drinking kin, make unreasonable demands, are violent and often disruptive. Drinking can shatter the peace of the community, rendering daily tasks impossible to fulfil and sending White staff running to the comparative safety of their houses. The picture is bleak, the damage to life and property not to be understated. Why then do Aborigines choose to order their lives with so much care while enduring the legion of deleterious effects detailed in this report?

We have stated that drinking is a means whereby Aborigines attempt to remedy their perceived powerlessness in the ordering of their own community affairs. To be without power is to suffer the ignominy of being manipulated and directed, controlled and governed by others, many of whom do not understand or wish to understand Aboriginal priorities, aspirations or goals. However, the avenues open to them to remedy such a situation are few. As a result of their lack of an economic base and subsequent

dependence upon European Australians, coupled with their relative inexperience in matters relating to the wider Australian community, they have little likelihood at present of effectively altering the status quo. Aborigines at Diamond Well have control over neither resources nor land and have nothing with which to bargain. The very powerlessness which they seek to remedy is itself a major impediment to overturning the situation. With few options open to them, the Aborigines have embarked upon the social business of drinking and becoming drunk in order to gain access, so they may believe, to power. Few, we think, would challenge the view that drinking at Diamond Well is a success. Moreover, drinking is social action which is both seen and heard by Whites, either living on the settlement or merely visiting it.

The social organisation of drinking is, then, a series of acts embarked upon by men and women who, aware of the cost, have little alternative if they wish to attempt to remedy their powerlessness. The sad part is that the social and physical cost is so high and the means employed have no chance of success because they rest upon a wholly mythical assumption: that the altered mind state of the drunk gives access to power over goods, services and people, otherwise unobtainable. However, in this way Aborigines seek to achieve that which has been consistently denied them by European Australians: power to control their economic as well as social affairs in an autonomous dispensation. Such a dispensation was formerly enjoyed by them as land owners and masters and mistresses of their own domains and controllers of their own sources of wealth and subsistence. Effective restoration of the economic base is one sure way to remedy their powerlessness.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 As with criminal behaviour 'social background' theories can be used deterministically, suggesting that oppressed people are unable to rise above their circumstances in a positive way.
- 2 At the settlement people can purchase beer. It is the focus of certain actions which occur after drinking has taken place - actions which are noisy and public and intended to be so.
- 3 Under the Licencing Act 1967-73 (S.A.) Section 17. (See Eggleston 1976:261.)
- 4 Dr R. Penny, personal communication, 11 January 1982.
- 5 The quantities of alcohol purchased and consumed will be discussed in Chapter III.
- 6 A carton contains 24 cans of beer.
- 7 There was one case in which one man attacked another with an axe, but later complained to police that his victim had refused to give him port wine, and that was why he had attacked him with the axe. The severely injured man responded by claiming that his assailant was too young to drink, and that was why he had refused him port. Both men justified their action by reference to the drinking rules.
- 8 During the period from April 1981 - August 1982 there were four assaults on White staff that we knew about.
- 9 A Community Advisor of Diamond Well informed us that 'they only need a drop' in order to get drunk.
- 10 This refers to the popularity of accompanying gospel singing with electric guitars.
- 11 She stresses that if children were alert, active and happy in the midst of an episode of illness, or when distressingly unhealthy, they could not be designated as suffering from parental neglect. A case of real neglect is described in which the community disregarded the loneliness and distress of a child (1982:60,62).
- 12 On average the White staff consists of 24 adults. There are 11 teachers who work at the school.
- 13 As a lawyer pointed out, in effect, European justice is being differentially applied. Minor offences by juveniles at Diamond Well against White property and very serious assaults and manslaughter offences are reported and brought before the courts. The middle-range level of assaults pass unreported.

- 14 We were unable to obtain sufficient responses to some questions in the questionnaire to make any meaningful presentation of data.
- 15 Dr P. Pols (pers. com. 1983) has pointed out that at least three of the conditions noted (clot from mitral valve replacement, duodenal ulcer and hemiplegia) are not necessarily understood to be alcohol-related. Clinic staff, however, diagnosed these conditions as alcohol-related based on their familiarity over several years with the individuals concerned. In their opinion, then, alcohol consumption was a major contributory factor to the morbidity.
- 16 Information from N.T. Drug and Alcohol Bureau.
- 17 Personal communication, June 1982
- 18 P.M. & C.H. Berndt (1964:183) refer to the gordi (their spelling), the spirit which is released on completion of the mortuary rites. Part of the spirit remains as a mamu to haunt the living.
- 19 However, it is not unknown for women to be speared in the thigh in Aboriginal Australia. Meggitt (1975:100) in his study of the Walbiri, notes that a 'gentle' thigh spearing was recommended as a punishment by a husband to his wife (ibid:100) Meggitt details fights in which individuals sustained injuries to many different parts of their bodies: back and shoulders, fingers and heads (ibid:183,176,177). These were not, however, alcohol-related.
- 20 See Appendix IV
- 21 In 1982 Aborigines owned 28 percent of the N.T. freehold as a result of the land rights legislation passed in 1976. However, only 0.3 percent of this is productive pastoral country. Aborigines constitute 21.3 percent of the population of the N.T. Over 50 percent of productive pastoral country is owned by interstate and overseas investors.
- 22 It takes approximately two hours for a skilled and fast craftsman to make a boomerang. This will earn him \$4. Prior to this, of course, he must select and cut suitable wood. This may involve travelling many kilometres from the settlement.
- 23 For example, from 6 October to 6 November 1981 wages at Diamond Well amounted to \$16 828 and pensions of all sorts to \$22 516.

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APPENDIX I

A/R HEALTH CHECK SHEET

DATE:

CASE I.D. (eg initials, code no.)

AGE: (circle one) infant school age adult

SEX: male female

VISIT NO. (circle one) 1 2 3+

A/R ILLNESS

DIAGNOSIS:

.....

.....

Patient has been treated (for this illness) for

(circle one) 1 2 3 4 5+ years

Has this ailment required hospitalisation? yes no

A/R INJURY

(Circle relevant injury or injuries) bruise laceration

fracture burn

INJURY TO: (specify part of the body)

.....

Will the patient be hospitalised? yes no

SEVERITY OF INJURY (circle one)

1

2

3

4

5

6

(e.g. Minor,
limited area,
superficial
wound etc.)(e.g. Medium,
wounds affe-
cting wider
area, or
single more
severe injury)(e.g. Major,
extensive
&/or severe
injuries).

Death

ASSAILANT (if known, circle one)

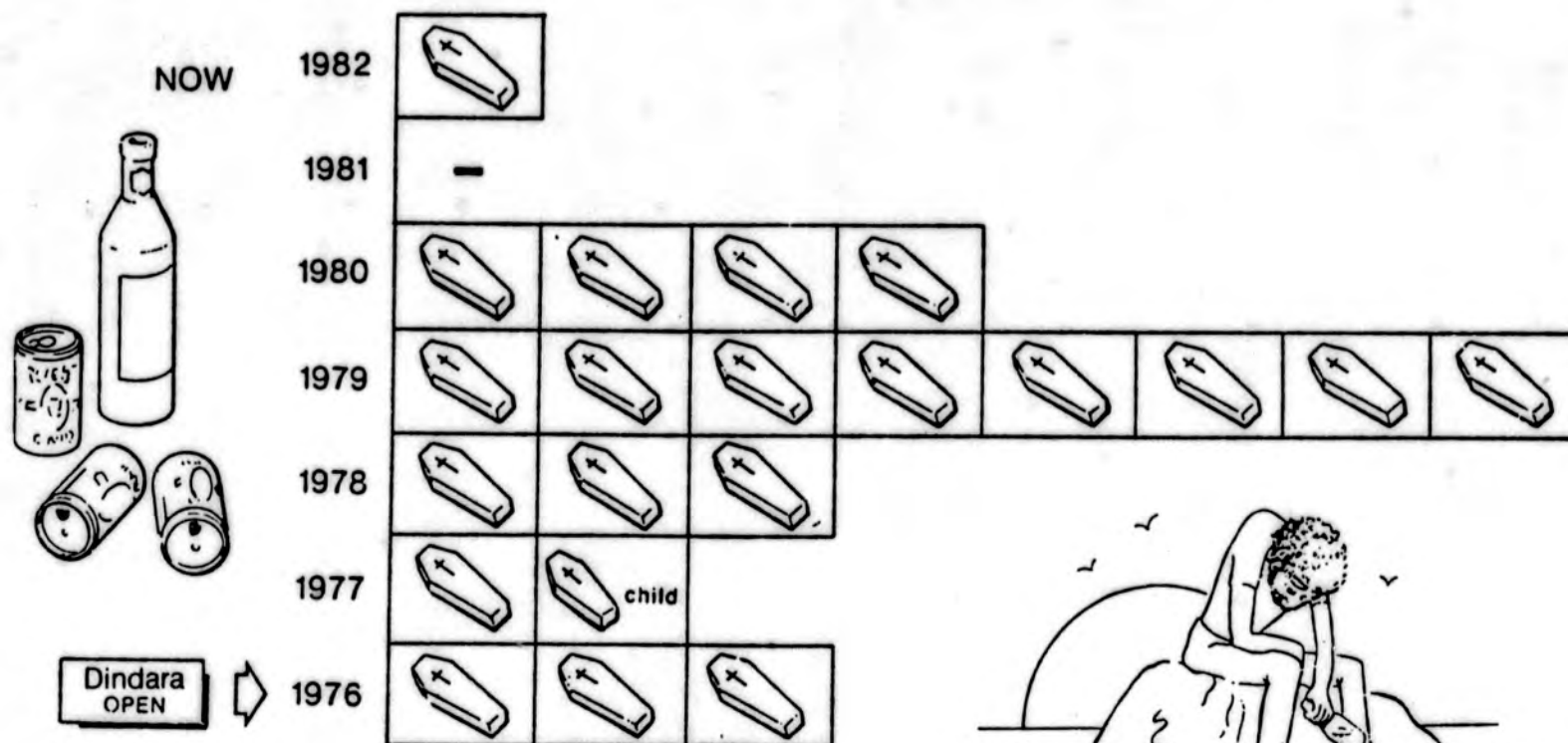
spouse

sibling

offspring/parent

other

Diamond Well people who have died from Alcohol-Related causes (Illness, Injury, Vehicle Accident)



(These ANANGU died from drinking wine)

APPENDIX I

A/R HEALTH CHECK SHEET

DATE:

CASE I.D. (eg initials, code no.)

AGE: (circle one) infant school age adult

SEX: male female

VISIT NO. (circle one) 1 2 3+

A/R ILLNESS

DIAGNOSIS:

.....

.....

Patient has been treated (for this illness) for

(circle one) 1 2 3 4 5+ years

Has this ailment required hospitalisation? yes no

A/R INJURY

(Circle relevant injury or injuries) bruise laceration

fracture burn

INJURY TO: (specify part of the body)

.....

Will the patient be hospitalised? yes no

SEVERITY OF INJURY (circle one)

1

2

3

4

5

6

(e.g. Minor,
limited area,
superficial
wound etc.)(e.g. Medium,
wounds affe-
cting wider
area, or
single more
severe injury)(e.g. Major,
extensive
&/or severe
injuries).

Death

ASSAILANT (if known, circle one)

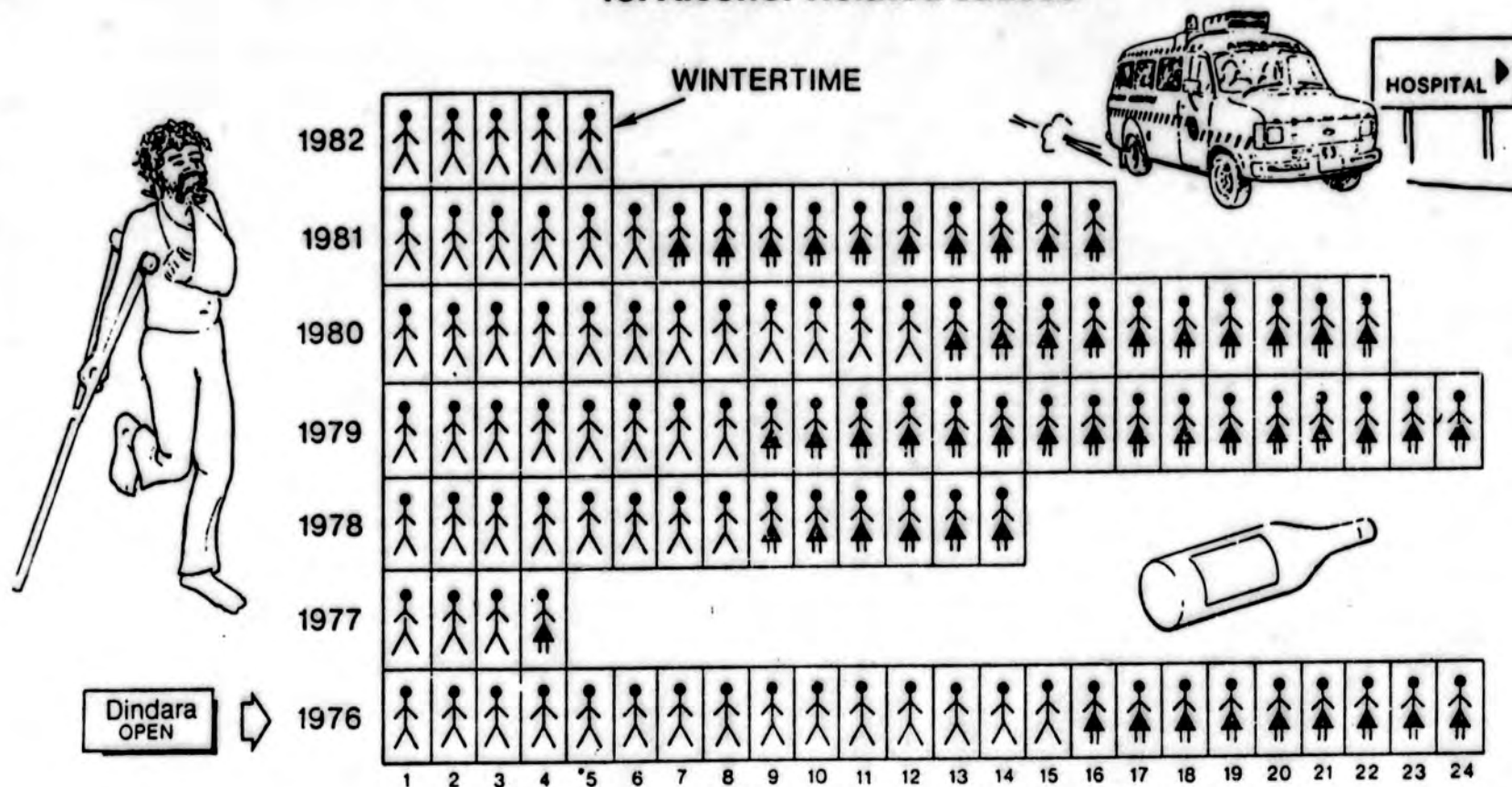
spouse

sibling

offspring/parent

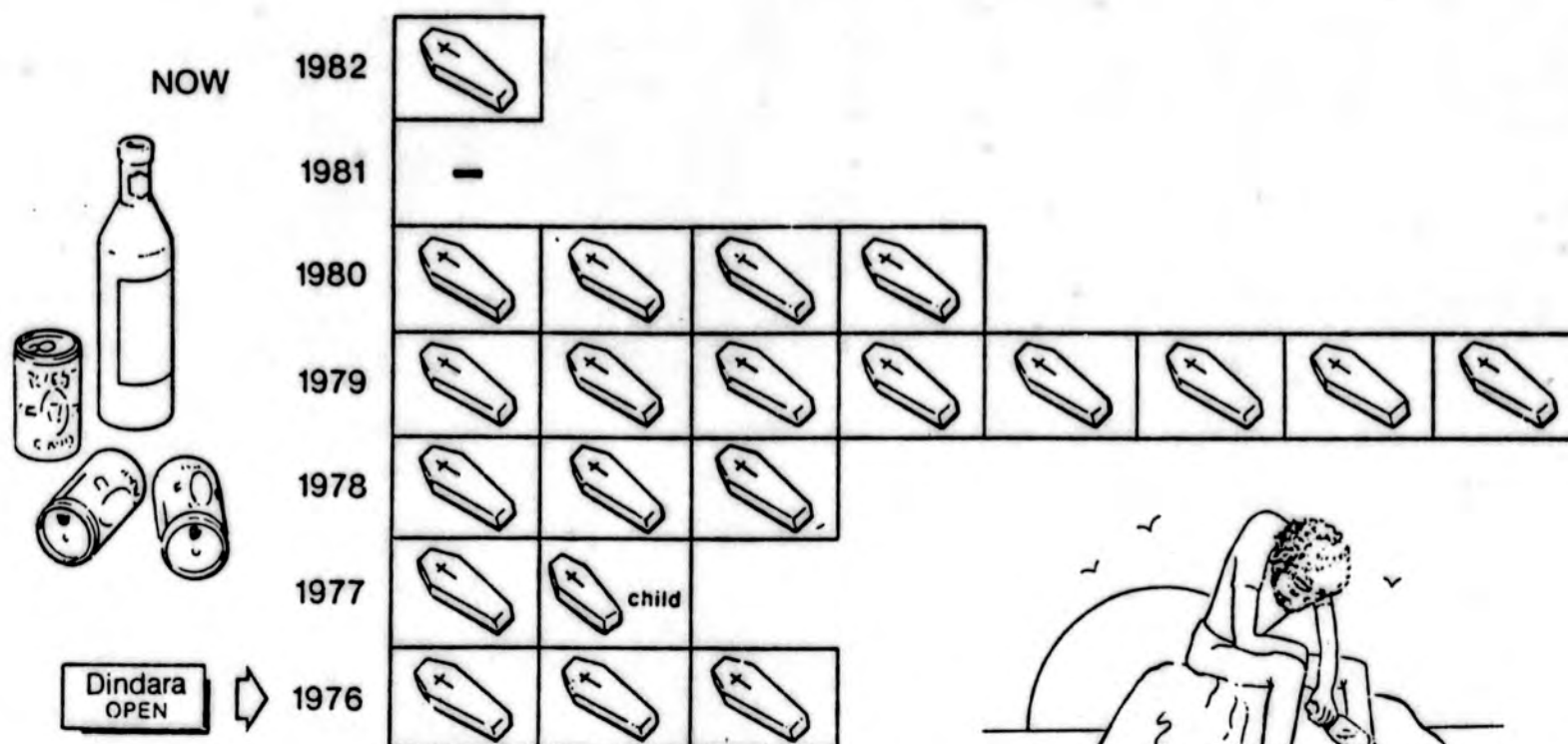
other

Diamond Well people evacuated to town hospital for Alcohol-Related causes



(These ANANGU went to hospital sick or hurt from wine)

Diamond Well people who have died from Alcohol-Related causes (Illness, Injury, Vehicle Accident)



(These ANANGU died from drinking wine)



APPENDIX IV

Information on the diagnoses of alcohol-related illnesses which resulted in death was available from 1976 to June 1982. We would point out once more that the diagnoses were approximations of the cause of death.

Deaths by alcohol-related illness of Diamond Well Aborigines 1976-1982

Year	Cause of death	Sex	Age
1976	Nil		
1977	Dehydration & bronchopneumonia	Male	45
1978	Uremia	Female	41
	Alcohol poisoning	Male	61
1979	Alcohol poisoning	Male	42
	Alcohol poisoning	Male	49
	Clot from mitral valve		
	replacement	Female	46
1980	Cardiovascular accident	Male	33
	Hepatoma	Male	42
1981	Nil		
1982	Liver failure	Male	44
	TOTAL deaths:	9	

ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE AMONG
YOUTH IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY:

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REVIEW OF
EXISTING RESEARCH.

by Maggie Brady

Alcohol and drug use among youth in the Northern Territory:
A bibliography and review of existing research. (From a report
commissioned by the Office of Youth Affairs, Canberra).

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4.2 List of references on drug use in the Northern Territory	

1. Summary of Bibliographical Items

In June 1983 the Office of Youth Affairs in Canberra asked for a review of the current extent of knowledge about drug and alcohol use by young people in the Northern Territory.

As a result of this request, local agencies and relevant Government Departments were contacted and the following bibliography and overview of existing research were compiled.

A literature search revealed sixty-four items which referred to the Northern Territory; forty-one were on alcohol use. Two of these were mentioned meths drinking. There was one article on 'Rinso' eating, and one article on petrol sniffing also referred also to clay-eating (pica). Apart from these two 'drug' uses, the entire drug literature available refers to petrol inhalation, and totals 22 items.

All the petrol sniffing material related to youth and all were on Aboriginal youth. However there was only one item which specifically considered youth and alcohol in the NT (NT Liquor Commission, 1979) and that study of Under-Age Drinking includes Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children. Of the 40 remaining items on alcohol use, only eight refer to youth and alcohol briefly.

Most of the material sighted was published in journals or books (32 items). Eleven were Government publications (e.g. Reports, Conference Proceedings, etc.); two were University theses (both on Aboriginal drinking); and 19 were unpublished local ephemera.

Half of all the material examined was published between 1976 and 1980; 16 were published before 1975 and 13 published since 1980.

Of the 41 items on alcohol, 29 considered Aboriginal drinking. Only two (Dodson, 1981; Leary et al., 1975) refer in passing to Aboriginal youth and alcohol. All the petrol sniffing items (22) and the 'Rinso' eating (1) relate to Aboriginal children. Petrol sniffing is known to occur among young adult Aborigines in the NT, however no item specifically referred to adult sniffing. Altogether, then, alcohol and drug material reviewed referred specifically to Aboriginal people in 52 out of the total of 64 items examined.

Research or comment on petrol sniffing focussed most frequently on Arnhem Land. Elcho Island and Maningrida appeared to be communities notable for the practice - however this may be because a small group of researchers had access to these communities, returned to them on several occasions and published additional material (e.g. Nurcombe, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1974; Eastwell, 1978, 1979). The 'Rinso' eating item referred to a community in Arnhem Land. Four items referred to petrol sniffing in Central Australian communities and four were relevant generally to the NT.

In contrast, alcohol items were more evenly spread over the NT, with 16 being of general NT content and only eight on Arnhem Land. Two of these related specifically to the Alligator Rivers regions (Allen, 1980; Fox, 1977). Seven items focussed on Alice Springs town and town camps, and six

on Darwin town and fringe camps. Only four items referred to Central Australia other than Alice Springs.

Methodologically, about 50 per cent of items were sociological in orientation, followed by those of a socio-legal framework. These included quasi-legal aspects associated with petrol sniffing, anti-social behaviour and community punishments. Eleven out of 64 were medical or psychiatric in orientation - however these 11 items contain considerable re-working of the same material (e.g., Nurcombe).

Twelve items considered the law itself - i.e. liquor laws, licences, restricted areas, or were submissions to change the law. All these referred to alcohol rather than drug use. Most of the material examined considered the individual and the social group rather than examining court statistics.

Large surveys were rare - there were only six items which could be designated as surveys over several communities or localities in the NT. One of these was the Under-Age Drinking Study (NT Liquor Commission, 1979). Twenty-two items could be considered to be small 'surveys', some of a 'personal observation' type. Only seven items contained statistics of any note, mostly on alcohol rather than petrol sniffing. Most of the available material was of a personal observation 'welfare' type rather than actual data collection or questionnaires - however some of these observations are by those experienced in the field with intimate knowledge of either the communities concerned or the subject matter. Eight items were based on anthropological participant observation methodology.

Ten items were in the form of submissions to Government enquiries or were the Reports of Government enquiries. Six were conference or workshop papers (e.g. ANZAAS).

The overall impression from this review is that there is a dearth of research into alcohol use among NT youth (one study, a few statistics), and a total absence of any literature documenting youthful drug abuse other than petrol sniffing.

Several individuals and agencies contacted complained of the inadequacy of the compilation of statistics on related areas (alcohol/drugs/crime) in the NT.

PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST

Although what follows does not always have specific reference to youth in the NT, these are items sighted to which I would draw particular attention. All are referred to in the Bibliography at the end of this Report (Section 5).

Reports

The Adams Report (1973) is a comprehensive document reporting on a Board of Inquiry investigation into the NT liquor laws. Apart from much detailed information on licensed premises, trading hours, convictions and other quasi-legal aspects, it contains case histories of the twelve 'worst offenders for drunkenness in Alice Springs', and discussion on liquor on Aboriginal Reserves. The Report concluded that the licensing system in the NT needed review and that its inadequacy contributed to the excessive consumption of liquor in the NT. In keeping with these conclusions, the Report recommended, among other things, the establishment of a Liquor Commission, redrafting the Liquor Ordinance, changes in trading hours and the instigation of educational programmes.

Another influential Report was the Hawkins-Misner Report of 1974. It recommended the decriminalisation of drunkenness. It also suggested the establishment of a detoxification centre in Darwin. The Liquor Commission's Reports are noteworthy (1979, 1982, n.d.) as they are excellent pieces of research based on substantial fieldwork and consultation. Their 1979 Study of Under-Age Drinking is the only one to deal specifically with youth.

The Liquor Commission's Report utilised questions which conform to those used in the Commonwealth Department of Health Survey. It is the only substantial survey of its kind in the NT. Questionnaires were sent to all NT high schools, totalling 5,500 pupils in all, between 12 and 17 years of age. Aboriginal schools were not surveyed but three Aboriginal colleges were included. 68 per cent of the school-attending population between those ages returned completed questionnaires. Unfortunately the Alice Springs part of the survey was largely invalidated as only 16 questionnaires were returned (out of 700); no explanation for this was apparent. The study also involved the convening of seminars in Darwin, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine.

Not surprisingly the findings revealed that a 'significant majority' of 12-17 year olds do drink alcoholic beverages, at least occasionally. The frequency of consumption rises sharply from 15-17 years. As the Liquor Commission Report concluded,

The study has led to the recording of basic information on underage drinking... The information obtained will be valuable in future studies (1979:6).

The only other study of alcohol in the NT which has attempted a survey was conducted under the auspices of the Regional Council for Social Development in Alice Springs (Wauchope, 1975). Ms Wauchope collected statistics on alcohol consumption in the NT and data from Alice Springs on

offences, accidents and treatment programmes in the alcohol-related area. 3000 questionnaires were circulated to Alice Springs residents (of which 413 were returned). The questions tapped the perceptions of the public on alcohol use in the town. 107 high school students were consulted (Leaving and Matric levels) and Wauchope found that all but one said they had drunk alcohol at least once; 68 per cent had been 'tipsy' at least once, 52 per cent said they drank at least once a fortnight.

Thirty interviews were conducted with Aboriginal fringe campers, most of whom were 'younger men' - age not specified.

Submissions to Enquiries, for funds etc.

There are two submissions I shall mention: Cutter and Perkins (1976), and North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service (NAALAS) (1981). Neither relate to youth but both contain valuable grass-roots information on the drinking patterns of Aboriginal people. Cutter and Perkins' submission for funds for an alcohol rehabilitation project/farm in Alice Springs was successful. Reference is made in passing to petrol sniffing. NAALAS wrote its submission in June 1981 in response to a press release issued by the Chief Minister in May concerning drunkenness and drinking in public places. This was to be the precursor to the 'Two Kilometre Law'. NAALAS expressed concern that the Government's proposals would cause mainly Aboriginal people - rather than European Australians - to fall foul of the legislation.

In 1975 a team of four people (three of whom were Aboriginal) conducted a 'general survey' of the causes and effects of alcoholism among Aborigines. This was as a result of recommendations of the Interdepartmental Committee on Alcoholism and Aborigines. Their Report (Leary et al., 1975) provides a useful overview of treatment and therapeutic facilities for Aborigines across Australia and Aboriginal opinion on the causes of, and possible intervention in, alcoholism.

A section in their Report is devoted to 'the Problem in Youth' and begins with the often expressed view that 'the authority structure had broken down and young people were going their own way' (1975:22). Attempts to rectify this perceived situation are described (i.e., reinstating Aboriginal 'Law') as are the difficulties encountered (i.e., young people were more interested in alcohol than in ritual affairs).

Leary et. al. suggest a variety of solutions: canteens, clubs, an educative task force. The writers express the view that 'preventative work in alcoholism must be given top priority' (1975:32). The issue of prevention is also discussed in Dodson (1981) - his realistic approach being that little change will take place in the dominant role played by alcohol in Australian society. Dodson describes what he calls the 'seed bed' for a life of excess drinking in a nine-year-old Aboriginal boy he met. 'When life pressures and the continuing colonising process threaten this lad, it's to this kind of environment he will be attracted. His memory will remind him where the seed bed of his emotional life was formed' (1981:10).

Research studies on petrol sniffing

Nurcombe et al (1970) undertook a study of petrol sniffing at Elcho Island which was psychiatric in orientation. They selected 44 children (22 sniffers and 22 controls) and administered a behaviour and family background questionnaire. Their results were inconclusive, there being only a trend for petrol sniffers (degree of sniffing is undefined) to be 'slower' at school and to come from two particular clans. Eastwell's (1979) Maningrida study has been much quoted, particularly by the medical/psychiatric profession in the south. However, anthropologically his material is questionable, and Elsegood (n.d.), a member of the Community Development Remote Area Team, has disagreed with Eastwell's findings. Eastwell's analysis hinges on the absence of outstations for petrol sniffing clans, a state of affairs more complex than his account allows.

Morice, Swift and Brady (1981) have produced a Resource Manual which overviews the medical, psychological and sociological research on petrol sniffing in Australia. It provides what factual knowledge there is about the effects of lead and hydrocarbons and documents the interventions that have been attempted by Aboriginal communities throughout Australia (including the NT).

Hayward-Ryan (1979) reviewed the state of petrol sniffing in the NT by sending a short questionnaire to chairmen of community councils. He asked for the number of sniffers (but made no distinction between chronic or occasional sniffers), clan groups, whether girls were involved, and names and ages if possible. He presents figures from nine localities across the NT, as at December 1978, on the assumed number of sniffers. Galiwin'ku, Yirrkala and Maningrida figures are broken down into clan and language groups. Hayward-Ryan makes some useful comments, and ends by recommending further research and the involvement of the National Aboriginal Conference.

Anthropological Studies

Since the mid-1970s some valuable anthropologically-oriented alcohol research has been written up. Reid and Mununggurr (1977) document the alcohol-related deaths of two Aboriginal men and the imputations of sorcery that ensued. The authors call for greater respect from health professionals for Aboriginal belief systems. Sansom (1977, 1980) and Collman (1979, 1980) each provide analyses of Aboriginal drinking patterns in town and fringe camp situations, the former for Darwin, the latter, Alice Springs. Stead (1980) compares two Aboriginal localities and the drinking business which takes place away from urban centres. He discusses the Central Australian Pintubi and the settlement of Borroloola, south of east Arnhem Land.

The 'two kilometre law' and the impact on drinking of town housing schemes with active Aboriginal councils are discussed by O'Connor (1983a, 1983b). However none of these items relates to drinking among young Aborigines. This may be because in at least some Aboriginal communities, drinking is an adult affair; petrol sniffing is 'kid's business', and the two age groups adhere to their choice of preferred intoxicant.

Overall there has been surprisingly little research undertaken in the areas of youthful drug taking and drinking in the NT. The only survey of drinking (NT Liquor Commission, 1979) was, methodologically, a straightforward questionnaire. The Liquor Commission's other research combined extensive consultation and fieldwork by known and sympathetic personnel with the compilation of hard data on alcohol sales. Research which blends participant observation with a precisely-aimed survey is one way of providing a balanced account. The findings from each area thus inform the conclusions drawn from the other, and prevent the statistical data from going 'off-target'. Such a methodology also helps to avoid approaching these issues one-sidedly.

RESOURCES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY ON ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

Resource Guides

The NT Department of Health has recently published two useful booklets listing resources in the area of drugs and alcohol. They are:

Directory of Northern Territory Drug and Alcohol Resources (1983)
NT Drug and Alcohol Bureau, NT Health. An essential guide to services and potential sources of current knowledge on alcohol, drugs and youth. Gives addresses, phone numbers and types of service.

The Media: A guide for workers in the health field with special reference to alcohol (1983).
NT Drug and Alcohol Bureau, NT Health.

The Department of Health has also published a volume entitled Alcohol Policies for the 1980s which contains the proceedings of the conference of the same name, in Darwin, February 1980. This contains useful data and comment on the road toll, treatment facilities and vulnerable groups. The Department of Education's contribution focusses on youth education policies concerning alcohol and a curriculum development programme, 'Education about Drugs', is appended (pp. 121-238).

Agencies in the field

There are several agencies in Darwin, for example, which have extensive knowledge about the current state of youthful drug and alcohol use. These agencies usually keep records of those they see, but naturally much of this information is confidential. However, I can note some examples of organisations which deal with children and adolescents and drug and alcohol use.

Fishermans Hut, Uniting Church, Darwin. A coffee shop, drop-in centre in town. They see some alcohol problems among under-age adolescents.

Sommerville Community Services, Outreach Programme and Drop-in Centre, Darwin (10-16 year age group). The Outreach programme operates a 'pick-up' service, a bus which covers Darwin streets until 3 am. This programme is now in its fourth year. Statistics are kept, but are strictly confidential as individuals are identified. However, the Director was able to tell me that there was, in his experience, little evidence of hard drugs among those they contact. However, alcohol abuse occurs in cycles and involves a range of children and young people from age six onwards. There have been occasional outbreaks of glue-sniffing associated with two major high schools in Darwin, but these outbreaks are sporadic and seem to be associated with a few key people.

F.O.R.W.A.A.R.D. (Foundation of Rehabilitation with Aboriginal Alcohol Related Difficulties) reported that they dealt with no under-age drinkers or drug cases.

The NT Police Department's Drug Squad collect statistics on the number of charges laid and amounts of drugs seized. These are monthly statistics passed onto bodies such as the NT Drug and Alcohol Bureau. However they do not have a uniform method of collecting statistics which would relate particular crimes to alcohol or drugs (other than breath-testing/driving offences).

Banyan House (Forster Foundation for Drug Rehabilitation), Darwin, produces bi-annual Reports to the Forster Foundation which contain statistics on their resident/outpatient/contact clients, their drugs of choice, history of drug-taking, family and ethnic background and other details. A spokesperson commented that the current trend is for multi-drug use (rather than pure heroin addiction as was the case 4-5 years ago). Banyan House take individuals from 18 years onwards, except in cases where a younger person is firmly entrenched in hard drug use.

The Department of Health Annual Reports include data on alcoholism and drug addiction, although prior to 1979 the Reports were very brief. From 1983 onwards there will be a section on alcohol and drug use statistics within the Department of Health Annual Reports. This will take the place of the Department's Quarterly Bulletins, which ceased in 1981.

A valuable compilation of statistics was published by the Department of Health in 1981: Some Statistics on Alcohol use in the Northern Territory (extract from the Department of Health Bulletin issue no. 31, quarter ending 31 March 1981). This compilation provides an overview of the major developments in alcohol policies and the recommendations of various Government Enquiries. It describes how the NT Drug and Alcohol Bureau came into being and describes one of its functions as being 'to monitor and report on alcohol and other drug issues in the Northern Territory' (1981:2).

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The social and political significance of two Swedish restrictive systems

BY PER FRÅNBERG

Per Frånberg, affiliated with the Department of History at the University of Umeå, Sweden, has recently published a historical monograph on the local alcohol policies in Umeå.

Background

When the United States, Finland, and Norway chose prohibition as a method of solving the problems related to alcohol, Sweden had already chosen another path with the introduction of the Bratt system in 1917. The Bratt system, which gave the Swedish government supreme control over the trade in liquor, was, however, not regarded as a final solution by members of the temperance movement in Sweden, who instead regarded the system with contempt and suspected an attempt by their adversaries to put the question of prohibition on ice. Their assumptions were to be proved right. The Bratt system contented many former prohibitionists, and the hard-liners thus lost the final battle in the referendum for prohibition held in 1922.

The Bratt system must be considered as a compromise between governmental financial interests and friends of moderate drinking, especially among politicians with roots in temperance. The system meant great benefits to the state

budget, while private profits in the liquor benefits were remarkably reduced. This fact became obvious even to politicians from the temperance movement who aspired to careers in government. In fact, many of these politicians tried to pour water on the prohibition fire in their own temperance organizations. This became obvious in 1915, when the International Order of Goodtemplars of Sweden met in Umeå. One faction of the Order wanted a policy that aimed at direct prohibition without delay or temporary compromise; another faction, led by the grand master and the professional politicians of the Order, wanted a temporary compromise, which the Bratt system offered, and they pressed for a local veto in questions related to trade in alcohol. The latter faction won the bitter struggle in the Order and the referendum was postponed, but they lost the voting over a local veto in the Parliament. The opponents in the Order claimed that this "tactical policy" ultimately also led to the defeat of prohibition in Sweden.¹

In my own research on this period and its aftermath, I have concentrated on the city of Umeå and its environs in the county of Västerbotten in northern Sweden. In Västerbotten the sentiment in favor of prohibition was very strong and prohibition as a political question dominated local politics almost entirely. When the Bratt system was enforced, much against the will of the people of the county, there was a strong reaction. The temperance movement in Västerbotten refused to realize that the cause was lost, even after the defeat in the referendum in 1922. The leaders of the temperance organizations in the county lived with the illusion that the only solution to the question of alcohol in society was prohibition and therefore they refused to give in. They also thought that the lost referendum only implied a temporary setback, which meant that temperance organizations all over the country would at last awake and intensify the struggle against the Bratt system until they finally reached their goal, prohibition. Therefore the movement in Västerbotten concentrated its strength immediately after the referendum on minimizing

profits in the liquor benefits were this fact became obvious even to the temperance movement who aspired to prohibition. In fact, many of these politicians tried to start a fire in their own temperance movement. This was obvious in 1915, when the International Congress of Sweden met in Umeå. The congress wanted a policy that aimed at direct prohibition or temporary compromise; the grand master and the professional wanted a temporary compromise, but the congress refused, and they pressed for a local veto to trade in alcohol. The latter struggle in the Order and the referendum they lost the voting over a local veto. Proponents in the Order claimed that the referendum also led to the defeat of

this period and its aftermath, I have been in Umeå and its environs in the northern Sweden. In Västerbotten prohibition was very strong and the question dominated local politics. When the Bratt system was enforced, much of the county, there was a strong temperance movement in Västerbotten refused to give in, even after the defeat in the referendum. The members of the temperance organization with the illusion that the only way to get alcohol in society was prohibition refused to give in. They also thought that the referendum was a temporary setback, which would intensify the struggle against the alcohol. They finally reached their goal, prohibition in Västerbotten concentrated on the referendum on minimizing

the injurious consequences of the Bratt system. It tried to shape a more restrictive system within the Bratt system; as a result of these efforts, the Umeå system emerged, which, without violating the law, in the end was to result in local (county) prohibition.²

The Umeå system was to a large extent built on the fact that the law made it possible in practice to enforce a local veto in spite of the rejection of such a reform in Parliament. People were only allowed to buy liquor and wine from special monopoly shops ("Systembolag"). These Systembolag shops were located primarily in the cities, which meant that the rural population had to go to town to get their liquor. Every Systembolag furnished its own limited district with alcohol and customers had to show a book ("motbok"), which told the shopkeeper how much alcohol per month a person was entitled to (a maximum of four liters). The town council had to give the Systembolag an "oktroj" and could thus also limit the rations of alcohol. It was possible to refuse oktroj, but then the inhabitants of the district had the right to move their ration books to another district and so receive their four liters a month. In 1923, when Umeå got a left-wing majority (freethinking Liberals and left-wing Social Democrats), this new prohibitionist council had to confirm the oktroj much against its will, but it cut down the rations to a maximum of one liter per person and also put strong restrictions on the sale of fortified wine. Furthermore, the restaurants and saloons in the district were deprived of their licenses. The chief feature of the system, however, was a manipulation of the age limit. The ordinary limit to get a motbok was 25 years of age. In the Umeå system, this limit was raised every year by one year and would thus guarantee that nobody who had not reached 25 years of age by 1923 would be able to get a book. The city of Umeå and the southern part of the county would be gradually dried out.¹

The Umeå system was much discussed in the prohibitionists' central organizations and was once launched as a program

for the entire temperance movement. The Umeå system was also the subject of a vote in the Parliament in 1925, but it fell through. The Umeå system did not get any branches in other parts of Sweden and was able to survive for only four years in Umeå. The fall of the system was due to several factors.⁴

Politically the system was dependent on a narrow left-wing majority in the city of Umeå. This majority was indeed so feeble that one or two frondeurs could overturn the system. This actually happened when two Social Democrats joined forces with the Conservatives in 1928. The weak point here was that the communities in the countryside, which were up to 90% prohibitionist, were not allowed to give their votes for the system. This was only a matter for the citizens of the town in which the Systembolag was located.

Economically the Umeå system caused troubles for shopkeepers and merchants, who complained bitterly that business suffered severely because almost every salesman tried to avoid the dry city. The merchants were generally Liberals and reluctantly had to follow the party line, which was drawn up by the majority of freethinkers. The prohibitionists in the party also threatened a boycott if a merchant should fail to fall into line. So, much against their will, the merchants had to give quiet approval to the system, but a secret plot was under way in their local organization at the time the system was abandoned.

Control factors were not sufficient. The chief of police regarded the system as almost illegal and tried to do as little as possible against violations. The police aversion to the system led to widespread vigilantism on the part of the temperance organizations, and this led to a clash with the police which became irreparable. This struggle went on for years and can easily be followed in the city's left-wing newspapers. The editors of these newspapers were the leading politicians of the Liberal and Social Democratic parties and their enthusiasm gave further nourishment to the vigilantist

Swedish prohibitionists lost many of their main arguments and drew up a revisionist policy. Only in Västerbotten was the banner of prohibition still waving high.

The Bratt system and the Umeå system

As shown above, there were many possibilities to manipulate and alter the Bratt system. This is very unusual according to Swedish legal practice. Research into the Bratt system has mainly been done by persons related to the Systembolag or its Control Board ("Kontrollstyrelsen"). Most research does not deal with broader legal and policy questions, but is primarily occupied with technical problems. Historians such as Sven Lundkvist have made great contributions to the understanding of the economic, political, and social background of the Bratt system, but Lundkvist's studies end where the Bratt system begins to function, and many interesting questions about the system are still unanswered.

Lundkvist's research in the field clearly reveals the uncertainty among politicians and parties before the introduction of the system.⁷ The Social Democratic party had a majority of prohibitionists at the beginning of the century, as did the Liberal party, where the freethinking Liberals rapidly grew in number. The temperance movement could exert strong pressure on these parties and there were well-advanced plans to form a genuine Prohibitionist party, which would certainly have depleted the two left-wing parties and would have caused an irreparable setback to their march to power.⁸ The leaders of the leftist parties, however, were very uncertain as to how to handle questions related to prohibition, but had no intention of making their parties purely prohibitionist. For the Social Democratic party, the connection with prohibition and temperance had been a great mobilizing resource; the leader Hjalmar Branting was rather irritated by the degree to which prohibitionist questions still influenced the party members.⁹ Branting and most of the leading politicians in the

most many of their main arguments policy. Only in Västerbotten was the law waving high.

the Bratt system

There are many possibilities to manipulate the Bratt system. This is very unusual according to research into the Bratt system has been related to the Systembolag or its "system" (Svenska Systembolaget). Most research does not deal with policy questions, but is primarily concerned with problems. Historians such as Sven Hedin have made contributions to the understanding of the political and social background of the Bratt system. His studies end where the Bratt system begins and many interesting questions remain unanswered.

The field clearly reveals the uncertainty of the parties before the introduction of the Bratt system. The Social Democratic party had a majority in the beginning of the century, as did the thinking Liberals rapidly grew in influence. The movement could exert strong pressure. There were well-advanced plans to introduce a new party, which would certainly bring down the existing parties and would have led to their march to power.⁸ The Social Democrats, however, were very uncertain as to the effect of prohibition, but had no party purely prohibitionist. For the connection with prohibition was a great mobilizing resource; the party was rather irritated by the degree to which prohibition still influenced the party membership. The leading politicians in the

party regarded the prohibition question as a hindrance to the solution of far more important issues. Therefore, they tried to tone down the significance the question had in the party and were willing to reach quick compromises in order to sweep it under the carpet.

The Liberal party had to face much the same situation. The leaders, Karl Staaff and Nils Edén, had to keep a minority of so-called city radicals and a majority of freethinkers in the same party fold. The city radicals were generally "wets" and supporters of the Bratt system, and the freethinkers were almost entirely "dry." The latter faction was very disappointed with the compromises that led to the Bratt system and threatened to found a Prohibitionist party of its own, hoping that discontented Social Democrats would join them. The freethinking Liberals dreamed of shaping a broad coalition party of the lower classes and making it a classless people's party. They certainly intended to use the strong grass-roots feeling for prohibition to achieve their goal. (They did not, however, form this party until after the referendum, in 1923, but by then prohibition had already lost most of its attraction.) Under these circumstances the Liberal leaders, who were not personally in favor of prohibition, willingly accepted the Bratt system as a life buoy.

In this situation, the Conservatives, who were against prohibition, benevolently accepted the system. As in the U.S., many industrialists were deeply disturbed by the drinking habits of their workers, which had a retarding effect on production.¹⁰ The Bratt system provided an excellent solution to this problem, since rations were related to the level of tax paid: an entrepreneur was often entitled to four liters a month, while his workers received less. The Bratt system thus was agreed upon by Conservative party leaders as a solution that could reduce prohibition fever.

Dr. Bratt himself was clearly aware of the political dilemmas attached to the temperance question. He therefore had to

keep the system open for local interpretation to a certain degree. Dr. Bratt declared in 1919 that it was possible for prohibitionists on the local level to hinder the formation of a Systembolag in their municipality. In his efforts to keep his system open, Bratt certainly saw himself as a spokesman for the leading politicians and thus could show his goodwill without risking anything.¹¹ This also indicates that Bratt must have had a strong mandate from leading political circles to shape a smooth system that could be accepted as at least a temporary settlement, even by prohibitionists. The narrow victory for the wet side in the referendum in 1922 underlined further to politicians the necessity of a flexible, functioning system. Under the Bratt system, the Social Democrats skillfully succeeded in neutralizing their prohibitionists in the 1920s.¹² The referendum meant the split of the Liberal party, but the freethinking Liberals very soon became aware that prohibition was no longer a single issue that could support a party; even they became inclined to accept the Bratt system within certain limits, and thus the air gradually went out of the prohibition balloon.

It is under these circumstances that the Umeå system should be seen, as having been formed as a protest against the Bratt system. But the Bratt system had the elasticity to swallow and finally destroy the Umeå system. The strength of the Bratt system was its flexibility, which made extensive compromises practicable, as in the case of the Umeå system.

The Umeå system could satisfy the dour prohibitionists of Västerbotten who had no intention of being overridden by the Bratt system. Paradoxically, the prohibitionists of Västerbotten led the crusade against the Bratt system, the only guarantee they had of being able to apply their restrictive rules. There was only a single protest from one member of the temperance movement in the county when the system fell in the 1950s. This is remarkable, as there was no talk of replacing the Bratt system with prohibition. On the contrary, the new alcohol policy (1955) gave every person the right to

local interpretation to a certain level in 1919 that it was possible for a local level to hinder the formation of a municipality. In his efforts to keep his word, he saw himself as a spokesman for the county and thus could show his goodwill.

This also indicates that Bratt must have been far from leading political circles to a point that could be accepted as at least a compromise by prohibitionists. The narrow margin of the referendum in 1922 underlined the necessity of a flexible, functioning system, the Social Democrats skillfully utilizing their prohibitionists in the event of the split of the Liberal party, which very soon became aware that it was a single issue that could support a compromise. It inclined to accept the Bratt system and thus the air gradually went out of

the fact that the Umeå system should be seen as a protest against the Bratt system. It had the elasticity to swallow and digest the strength of the Bratt system, which made extensive compromises with the Umeå system.

To satisfy the dour prohibitionists of the intention of being overridden by the county, the prohibitionists of Västerbotten, against the Bratt system, the only way was able to apply their restrictive protest from one member of the county when the system fell apart, as there was no talk of prohibition. On the contrary, it gave every person the right to

buy as much alcohol as he wanted in the Systembolag. Evidently, the prohibitionists in Västerbotten (and they were not alone) thought that the free availability of liquor would make people drink like mad, which would bring chaos from which prohibition would rise like a phoenix. Nothing of the sort appeared, however, and the result was that the temperance movement in Västerbotten very quickly lost footing. Prohibition was abandoned and the temperance societies of the county sought reconciliation with their parent organizations at the national level. The heyday of prohibition and a local autonomous system was bound to disappear even in Västerbotten, its last stronghold. The new policy of conciliation dealt a deathblow to the militant temperance societies in the county, which were now outnumbered by less-dedicated organizations; the International Order of Goodtemplars shrank from 6,000 members to 1,200 in ten years.

Conclusion

The Bratt system was not as formal as is sometimes thought. It was the product of several political and economic compromises between top politicians from the major parties and government (financial) interests. In the political situation of 1917, it was necessary to have a flexible system that could be accepted, at least reluctantly, by the strong temperance organizations. The Umeå system clearly shows to what limits the Bratt system could be stretched in a county where over 80% of the population voted for prohibition in 1922. There is not much research on the era of the Bratt system, but Professor Kjetil Bruun's initial studies on the subject clearly indicate that local variations within the system were not unusual, and the Bratt system therefore needs to be re-interpreted.

Notes

1. P. Frånberg, *Umeåsystemet: En studie i alternativ nykterhetspolitik 1915-1945* (Umeå, Sweden, 1983), p. 36; H. Johansson, *Den svenska godtemplarrörelsen och samhället* (Stockholm, 1947), p. 250.
2. Frånberg, *supra* note 1, ch. 6.
3. *Id.* at 130.
4. *Id.* at 151-56.
5. *Id.* at 139.
6. Johansson, *supra* note 1, at 96. For the discussion of introducing parts of the Swedish system in the U.S. and Finland, see N. H. Clark, *Deliver Us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition* (New York, 1976), p. 217; J. Kallénautio, "Finnish Prohibition as an Economic Policy Issue," *Scandinavian Economic History Rev.* 3 (1981).
7. S. Lundkvist, *Politik, nykterhet och reformer: En studie i folkrörelsernas politiska verksamhet 1900-1920* (Uppsala, Sweden, 1974).
8. *Id.* at 233.
9. For the discussion of these questions in Finland, see I. Sulkunen, *Why Did the Finnish Working Class Come to Support Prohibition?*, Report from the Social Research Institute of Alcohol Studies no. 151 (Helsinki, 1981).
10. L. Engelman, *Intemperance: The Lost War Against Liquor* (New York, 1974), pp. 7, 13.
11. Bratt, in *Tidskrift för Systembolagen* no. 2 (1918).
12. Frånberg, *supra* note 1, at 84-89. The party had to treat temperance with silk gloves until its goal, universal suffrage, was finally reached in 1921.

ALCOHOL RATIONING
AND
CONTROL SYSTEMS
IN GREENLAND

by

Elaine J. Schechter
Dept. of Anthropology
452 Schermerhorn Hall
Columbia University
New York, N.Y. 10027
U.S.A.

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field address: Grønlands Hjemstyre,
Sekretariatet, Postbox 1015, DK-3900,
Nuuk/Godthåb, Greenland/Denmark.

ABSTRACT

A semi-autonomous former colony of Denmark, Greenland has suffered the alcohol abuse problems common to both Inuit and Native American peoples and the nations of Northern Europe. From August 1, 1979 through March 31, 1982, Greenland's Home Rule Government attempted to control these problems through individual rationing, later replaced by a public information campaign urging voluntary moderation. Based on original fieldwork, this paper describes these attempts, analyzes their effects on related social problems (particularly crime), and compares them with alcohol control systems in Arctic Canada. Special attention is given to the complex inter-relationships between alcohol politics, criminal politics, and the economic and labor force needs of a developing country.

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Introduction: History

A semi-autonomous former colony of Denmark, Greenland has suffered the alcohol abuse problems common to both Inuit and Native American peoples and the nations of Northern Europe. Greenland has a long history of prohibition and rationing. In 1782, 41 years after Danish colonization of Greenland began, the colonial administration prohibited the sale or distribution of alcohol to Greenlanders. But various loopholes soon developed, enabling Greenlandic employees of the Royal Greenland Trade Department and the Christian mission to obtain liquor, although not as much as the Danes. Those Greenlanders not in government employ could be served liquor as a reward for special jobs such as whale-flensing, water-carrying and coal-mining. Rationing was introduced in 1929, still granting greater quantities to privileged groups--Danes and employed

Greenlanders. With the Constitution of 1953, which incorporated Greenland as an integral province of the Danish realm, demands grew for an end to these discriminatory practices. On December 15, 1954, alcohol rationing in Greenland was abolished (Udvalget for Samfundsforskning i Grønland 1961: 137-138; Wellemann 1974/75: 227-232).

In 1978, following a series of studies on alcohol abuse in Greenland and a public plebiscite regarding prohibition or alcohol restrictions, the Greenland Council passed a rationing ordinance. This attempt to control alcohol abuse problems by individually limiting supply went into effect on August 1, 1979--three months after the new Home Rule government took office. After two and a half years, and without any referendum, rationing was abruptly repealed by the Home Rule Parliament, effective April 1, 1982. In lieu of limiting supply, the government then instituted a public information campaign urging voluntary moderation.

This paper describes these attempts at alcohol control, analyzes their effects on related social

problems, particularly crime, and compares them briefly with alcohol control systems in Arctic Canada. Special attention is given to the complex inter-relationships between alcohol politics, criminal politics, and the economic and labor force needs of a developing country.

Prohibition

In some municipalities rationing was preceded by one month's prohibition or other short-term restrictions. On July 1, 1979, the City Council of Nuuk, Greenland's capital, abruptly shut down all sale and distribution of alcohol until August 1, 1979, when rationing was to go into effect. It was hoped that this brief prohibition would reduce absenteeism in the town's fish factory long enough to process three shiploads of codfish which had been waiting in the harbor. Here we come to one of the underlying themes of this paper--the relationship between the labor force requirements of a developing society and growing capitalism, and alcohol politics. We will return to this theme later.

Prohibition is, of course, an invitation to bootlegging, and the reef-studded waters between Nuuk

and Manitsaq (Sukkertoppen), the nearest neighboring municipality, were churning that month with ~~speculation~~ traffic. (See Figure 1.) Nevertheless, overall consumption in Nuuk was drastically reduced, the crime rate fell, institutions for children emptied out, and--possibly because it was so short-term--the one month of prohibition had generally positive results (Johannsen 1981).

Rationing: The Point System

On August 1, 1979, the point system of alcohol rationing went into effect in all of Greenland. Every person 18 years and over, and not under criminal sanction, was entitled to 72 points or rationing coupons per month. One point equalled one beer; luxury-strength beer required 1½ points; a ¾ liter bottle of wine was 3 points, reduced from 6 to encourage a more Mediterranean drinking pattern; a ¾ liter bottle of fortified wine (sherry or port) took 12 points, as did a small bottle (35 cl) of hard spirits; and a large bottle--¾ liter--of hard liquor required 24 points, which was a full third of a month's rations.

Figure 2 (q.v.) shows what a sheet of 72 points, or rationing coupons, looked like. It is easy to see the practical weaknesses of this system. Technically, when buying alcohol, one was supposed to present the entire sheet, with one's identifying sticker--showing name, address and birthdate on top. The coupons were legally non-transferable, yet these rules were never enforced. In practice, one need only present the coupons themselves; neither the top of the sheet nor any I.D. was ever requested. This obvious design weakness was ultimately used as a reason or excuse for abolishing rationing altogether, instead of simply changing the system.

Of course, the predictable occurred: points were openly sold on the black market, becoming a kind of alternate currency for which one could buy everything from skins to soapstone carvings. An entire sheet of 72 points sold for up to 1200 kroner, then the equivalent of about \$150-200.

Rationing: The Pros

Nevertheless, the point system had the following positive effects:

(1) Overall consumption of alcohol was reduced markedly.

(2) There was less drinking done at home (Spiritusarbejdsgruppen n.d.: 6).

(3) Children and youth were better cared for; child neglect occurred extremely rarely, and children's homes emptied out (Ibid.).

(4) Requests for emergency cash advances from the Social Welfare Office ceased almost entirely (Ibid.).

(5) By limiting the amount of money one could spend on alcohol, rationing indirectly made extra monies available to the population for other goods--clothing, stereos, TVs, records and tapes, as well as better hunting equipment, guns, etc.

(6) As indicated on Chart 1 (q.v.), Greenland's crime rate dropped markedly, especially violent crimes--murder, attempted murder, and assault. Even though rationing did not begin until after the middle of 1979, the murder rate for that year dropped 33% (from 15 to 10) from 1978, and fell yet another 30% (from 10 to 7) in 1980. Attempted murder was 12% lower (from 25 to 22) in 1979, and assault down 27% (from 437 to 321). Sex crimes dropped 19% (from 93 to 75), and suicides and

CHART 1

Comparison of Selected Crimes 1978-1982 Before, During and After Alcohol Rationing in Greenland (population 50,000)

Source of Data: Politimesteren i Grønland 1982

Nature of Offense or Event	Pre-Rationing 1978	Rationing Begins July/August 1979 (% change from previous year)	Rationing In Effect 1980 (% change)	Rationing In Effect 1981 (% change from previous year)	Rationing Ends April 1, 1982 1982 (% change from previous year)
All Reported Crimes	4683	4445 (down 5%)	4956 (up 11% from 1979; up 6% from 1978)	5399 (up 8%)	5725 (up 6%)
Homicide	15	10 (down 33%)	7 (down 30% from 1979; down 53% from 1978)	11 (up 57%)	11 (no change)
Attempted Homicide	25	22 (down 12%)	22 (no change from 1979; down 12% from 1978)	26 (up 27%)	34 (up 31%)
Assault	437	321 (down 27%)	358 (up 12% from 1979; down 18% from 1978)	405 (up 13%)	449 (up 11%)
Sex Crimes	93	75 (down 19%)	119 (up 59% from 1979; up 28% from 1978)	112 (down 6%)	131 (up 17%)
Theft	2525	2511 (down .6%)	2657 (up 6% from 1979; up 5% from 1978)	2745 (up 3%)	2953 (up 8%)
Suicide & Attempted Suicide	42	37 (down 12%)	45 (up 22% from 1979; up 7% from 1978)	43 (down 4%)	57 (up 33%)

(Continued on next page)

CHART 1 (continued)

Comparison of Selected Crimes 1978-1982 Before, During and After Alcohol Rationing in Greenland (population 50,000)

Source of Data: Politimesteren i Grønland 1982

Nature of Offense or Event	Pre-Rationing 1978	Rationing Begins July/August 1979 (% change from previous year)	Rationing In Effect 1980 (% change)	Rationing In Effect 1981 (% change from previous year)	Rationing Ends April 1, 1982 1982 (% change from previous year)
Detained Drunks	1538	1139 (down 26%)	1378 (up 21% from 1979; down 10% from 1978)	1698 (up 23%)	2376 (up 40% from 1981; up 108% from 1979)
Narcotics Offenses	17	53 (up 212%)	60 (up 13% from 1979; up 253% from 1978)	166 (up 177%)	134 (down 19%)
Drunk Driving (DWI)	223	186 (down 17%)	240 (up 29% from 1979; up 8% from 1978)	238 (down .8%)	255 (up 7%)
Traffic Accidents	84	72 (down 14%)	102 (up 42% from 1979; up 22% from 1978)	145 (up 42%)	117 (down 19%)
Vandalism	727	706 (down 3%)	754 (up 7% from 1979; up 4% from 1978)	828 (up 10%)	982 (up 19%)

attempted suicide fell 12% (from 42 to 37). The number of detained drunks was reduced by 26% (from 1538 to 1139), driving-while-intoxicated fell 17% (from 223 to 186), and traffic accidents, 14% (from 84 to 72).

In addition, a study conducted by Nuuk's Police Station Chief revealed that the number of domestic quarrels to which police were called in that municipality dropped 58% (from 253 to 105), if one compared the five-month period of January 1 through May 31, 1978 with the same period in 1980 (Rasmussen 1982a). For all of Greenland in that period, however, the decline was only 19.4% (Johannsen 1981).

(7) According to Greenland's Department of Corrections and Probation, during the entire period of alcohol rationing, fewer problems were experienced with clients under supervision/probation, and the recidivism rate dropped (Kriminalforsorgen i Grønland 1981: 2). In addition, since offenders who were sentenced to supervision with treatment for alcohol abuse, and offenders in Greenland's open correctional institutions, were simply denied their points/rationing coupons, the Department of Corrections

and Probation could avoid the forced administration of Antabus (Disulfuram), which they otherwise use. Thus alcohol rationing was a very useful tool in corrections in Greenland.

Rationing: The Cons

Unfortunately, after 1979's almost across-the-board fall in the crime rate, 1980 and 1981 saw it slowly inch its way up again.

Although the violent crime rate still reflected some restraint, the pattern of crime changed. More thefts, burglary and even occasional muggings occurred for the purpose of obtaining: points (rationing coupons), money to buy points (and alcohol), items to fence for points, and alcohol itself.

An active black market for points/rationing coupons developed. Outside the town's main supermarket trade took place openly. There was even a sign, hand-printed in Greenlandic, with the word "pointit" and an arrow, directing the non-cognoscenti to the area where one could buy and sell coupons. As mentioned, a whole sheet of 72 coupons could cost 1200 kroner, or \$150-200. Others dealt privately, some members of the Blue Cross Temperance Society reputedly selling

their points to regular customers every month. One policeman, who is Deputy Mayor of a large town, even condoned the practice some students had of selling their points, thus "earning" an extra monthly stipend for healthier hobbies and entertainment, such as records, tapes, stereo or photographic equipment. As this conservative politician pointed out, this extra income enjoyed by some students and aged did not cost the government anything--at least not directly.

Although prosecution for this type of individual-level sale of points was rare to nonexistent, black market activities had the effect of engaging a large segment of the population in criminal acts. And a few major cases of wholesale theft and re-sale of rationing sheets from a municipality, and outright printed forgeries of rationing sheets, were prosecuted in the courts.

In addition, heavy users who simply could not do without their accustomed quantities of alcohol, were forced to buy points. As the Department of Corrections and Probation stated, "the group which previously only used a considerable part of its earnings for alcohol must now use the rest to buy points. Therefore, there are relatively more persons

[i.e., among their clients] who wind up in social need because of the point system alone" (Kriminalforsorgen i Grønland 1981: 3). These negative consequences tended to strike the poorest in the population.

Predictably, alcohol smuggling increased, as did home-brewing and distilling, both of which were also illegal. One taxi company illegally sold hard spirits at night for at least 300 Danish kroner (then about \$50) per bottle. Theft of lighter fluid, glue, paint thinner, etc., occurred with significant frequency and in one case the accused had drunk hair-waving lotion.

Narcotics cases, almost exclusively involving hash, rose spectacularly from a mere 17 in 1978 to 53 in 1979 (the year rationing was introduced); then 60 in 1980, and in 1981 the figure rose to a whopping 166--almost triple the number of the year before. This rise was possibly due to greater police enforcement efforts, but also possibly due to "some unscrupulous elements [who had] attempted to take advantage of the current situation of deprivation among young people to build up a market in Greenland" (Johannsen 1983: 3). In some places, it was said, one could buy a gram of hash for 6 points (Ibid.).

Finally, the rationing system was also criticized as being expensive to administer (Spiritusarbejdsgruppern n.d.: 6-7).

Repeal: KeasQns

All these negative effects--especially the new patterns of criminality, black market, and the dangers of sickness from home brewing--were cited by many officials as arguments for repealing alcohol rationing.

A commission set up by the Home Rule Government to research the issue cited most of these pros and cons, also pointing out that rationing places individuals in a non-adult situation, thus echoing the complaint that rationing was an unnatural control, and that the people must learn to drink with moderation, not through external controls, but through a public education campaign (Spiritusarbejdsgruppern n.d.: 10-11).

Yet the commission admitted that, besides these many rationalizations, the real reason was the basic unpopularity of the system:

With a review and analysis of the statements and materials presented regarding the rationing system, the work group [commission] must point out,

that the current system cannot be said to be one-sidedly bad and

that the information presented on the drinking pattern of the population apparently shows a desirable change in the direction of greater consumption of alcohol-weak "home rule brew" [a light beer of only 1.75% alcohol] and of table wine, to the decline of strong beer, fortified wine and hard spirits.

That the work group [commission] despite this and despite the lack of concrete evidence/figures on the effects of the point system suggests anyway that the point system be abolished is due to the fact that in the population, in the municipalities, in the rest of the public administration, in some unions and organizations there seems to be a widespread desire that the point system be repealed.

(Spiritusarbejdsgruppern
n.d.: 13-14; translation
and emphases mine)

So, more than anything else, alcohol rationing was admittedly an unpopular system. And one might also point out that the government and legislature were coming up for re-election the next year. Only two members of the then 21-member legislature (20 were present) abstained from supporting the repeal of alcohol rationing during the vote taken on March 27, 1982. One of these was a member of Blue Cross, the

Temperance Society, and the other was a policeman who felt that the April 1 date for returning to open sale of alcohol was entirely too early, and that no preparations had been made to ease the population gradually back to unlimited access to alcohol, nor to handle possible negative results of that (Illisimi 1982: 22; Joelsen et al., 1982).

In addition, more than one individual in a position to know has suggested that alcohol rationing was repealed because it constituted a major inconvenience for those members of the government who are themselves accustomed to consuming large quantities of alcohol.

Finally, if one is truly seeking a possible hidden agenda behind the repeal of alcohol rationing, then one must look at the economic needs of a developing country. On February 23, 1983, just five weeks before the legislature's vote to repeal alcohol rationing, Greenland voted in a public plebiscite to withdraw from the European Economic Community (or Common Market). The pullout date was then projected as January 1984, a deadline which has not been met. In 1982, Greenland received 37.6 million Danish kroner (\$4.5 million) in assistance from European Community

(Common Market) funds, amounting to 3.9% of the Home Rule Authorities' total revenues. These figures for 1983 are projected to be 66.2 million Danish kroner (\$7.4 million), or 6% of revenues. Withdrawal from the European Community will mean loss of these grants, unless another relationship can be established with the European Community.

It can therefore not be deemed unwelcome that the enormous rise in the sale of alcohol following the abolition of rationing brought into Greenland's treasury a windfall of 107.6 million Danish kroner--\$12.9 million, and 24 million kroner or \$3 million more than expected--thus changing an anticipated deficit to a surplus.

Although this extra income was not the conscious reason that rationing was repealed, Greenland does, nevertheless, have a history of rising proceeds of alcohol taxes contributing to its treasury. In 1960, alcohol taxes contributed only 2.3 million kroner to the treasury, constituting 27% of the total proceeds from duties. In 1965, alcohol taxes gave 11 million kroner, or 41% of the total proceeds from duties; in 1966, 12.6 million kroner, or 40%; in 1967, 14.4 million kroner or 42%; in 1968, 14.6 million kroner or 36%; in 1969, 16.9 million kroner

or 38%; and in 1970, 22.5 million kroner or 47.9% of the total proceeds from duties, which was then 47 million kroner (Spilling 1974, Bilag III:3-5).

For whatever mixed bag of reasons, the Greenland Parliament voted on March 27, 1982 to abolish alcohol rationing in Greenland, effective April 1, 1982. With only four days' warning and no alternate program of control, the legislature made access to alcohol unlimited for those 16 and over. Although the work group/commission on alcohol rationing had recommended doubling or tripling taxes on strong beer, fortified wines and hard spirits to discourage consumption, the legislature raised taxes only 25% (to 8.5%) on strong beer and hard spirits. In addition, they legalized home brewing while maintaining prohibition against home distilling. This time home brewing was described on the floor of the legislature as a harmless Greenlandic tradition, usually consumed together with food and rarely exceeding the strength of ordinary pilser.

It is difficult to determine exactly why the legislature and government made these decisions, and why they ignored the recommendations of the alcohol commission regarding taxation. Perhaps such steep increases would have been regarded as punitive and been highly unpopular. And, as mentioned, everyone

was coming up for election just one year down the road.

Repeal: Results

As a result of the repeal of alcohol rationing, consumption skyrocketed. Figures from KGH--The Royal Greenland Trading Company(Den Kongelige Gronlandske Handel)--show that importation rose 60%, and, more or less, what gets imported gets used.

Demand for beer in Greenland was so great that in the summer of 1982, Denmark's two main breweries--Carlsberg and Tuborg--had to work three shifts around the clock just to meet Greenland's demand--the demand of a total adult population of only 33,735 people.

In the months of April, May and June 1981, 9.3 million drinks were imported. For the same months in 1982, the figure was a little over 15 million, reflecting a rise of a good 60%.

Importation in June 1982 was especially steep: 6.7 million drinks, or 7 drinks per adult per day. (And remember that these averaged figures include adults who do not drink or who drink very little, which means that some people were drinking even more!)

In rounded figures, these 6.7 million drinks were composed of:

- 4.5 million pilsners (ordinary beers),
- 56,000 luxury beers,
- barely 100,000 light pilsners (1.75% alcohol),
- 34,000 bottles of hard spirits,
- 131,000 bottles of table wine,
- plus 6,000 bottles of fortified wine (sherry and port).

From these figures, it is easy to see that the most popular drink is beer.

In the entire 15-month period from April 1981 through June 1982, 54.4 million drinks were imported-- a consumption rate of 3.8 drinks per adult per day-- of which 2.3 drinks took the form of ordinary beer. (Again, these figures include adults who abstain or drink lightly, which means that some individuals were drinking even more.)

Heavy beer drinking, then, marks the pattern of alcohol use in Greenland. In Greenland and Denmark, people drink beer much the way Americans drink Coca-cola. Beer is simply a beverage, but one that also happens to be alcoholic.

The alcohol consumption statistics for the

entire year 1982 were even more staggering: Consumption of beer rose 71%, "luxury beer" (1.0% stronger beers such as Gold Export Tuborg and Carlsberg Elephant) 313%, and hard liquor 85.5% over 1981. In a land with an adult population of 33,735 (the total population is about 50,000), there were imported (and consumed) 37.1 million ordinary beers (pilsner), 476,000 luxury beers, 244,000 whole bottles of hard liquor, 1.2 million bottles of wine, and--if one is also interested in nicotine addiction--141 million cigarettes and 2 million cigars and small cigars. That means that in 1982, each adult citizen consumed, on the average: 46 cartons of beer (and there are 24 beers to a carton), 14 luxury beers, 7 1/2 bottles of hard liquor, 34 bottles of wine, 1 1/2 bottles of fortified wine (e.g., port or sherry), 3792 cigarettes, and 58 cigars.

Considering that 16% of the consumption occurred in restaurants, the above cost the average consumer 17,100 Danish kroner (about \$2050)! If the above had all been purchased in the stores alone, then it would have cost the average consumer 13,600 kroner (about \$1630)!

In all, 461 million kroner (about \$55.21

million!) were spent in Greenland in 1982 for beer, wine and hard spirits. This brought in 107.6 million kroner (\$12.9 million) in liquor taxes, plus 1.6 million kroner (\$191,617) in tax on light beer (with 1.75% alcohol) into Greenland's Treasury (some 24 million kroner or \$3 million more than expected). Add to the aforementioned amount for alcohol duties, another 84.7 million kroner (about \$10.14 million) in tobacco taxes, and you have one-fifth of the Greenlandic Treasury's total income for 1982! That amount is some 41 million kroner (about \$4.9 million) more than estimated in the budget, and since tobacco consumption fell about 4% since 1981, this "unexpected" windfall is due to the explosion in alcohol consumption since the end of rationing on April 1, 1982. (See Figure 3.)

Of course, this binge is not without its human and social costs. In the capital of Nuuk, the public children's homes are overflowing, and the Social Welfare Office has had to place ads in the newspapers appealing for private homes willing to engage in child care. Nuuk's Police Station Chief estimated that the number of domestic quarrels that the police get called out to has increased by 100% since the end of alcohol

rationing (Rasmussen 1983). According to the police statistics for 1982 (Politimesteren in Grønland 1983), in Nuuk (pop. 10,000) alone, 1982 incidences of vandalism increased from 191 to 255 (up 33.5%), sex crimes tripled from 12 to 36, and the number of drunks held in detention increased from 502 to 703 (up 40%). Most interestingly, the number of narcotics violations more than quadrupled, from 18 to 82. Since alcohol seems to be the drug of choice in Greenland, one would expect other drug use to drop when alcohol rationing ended. (In fact, this was even used as a rationalization for ending rationing.) Since the "hash hound" (trained sniffing dog) only began to be used in the last month or two of 1982, the statistics cannot reflect the dog alone. According to Nuuk Station Chief Jens Rasmussen (1983), the figures reflect a police decision to crack down on drugs in Greenland. These drugs are mostly hash and related (cannabis) substances. Fortunately, there is no heroin problem in Greenland.

Several local police station leaders have gathered statistics for their municipalities comparing crime figures during and after rationing. In Sisimiut (Holstenborg), Greenland's second largest

town (population about 4,000), the 2½ month period between April 1 and June 15 were compared for 1981 and 1982 (Chart 2):

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>Percent Increase</u>
Break & entries and common theft	17	70	+311%
Domestic quarrels and fights	88	266	+156%
Assault	9	20	+122%
Detention of drunks	65	127	+ 49%
Serious vandalism	18	36	+100%

(Fisher 1982a)

Moreover, neither alcohol consumption levels nor crime statistics have shown any tendency to return to a more reasonable pre-repeal level.

A comparison of the first with the fourth month of post-repeal crime statistics in Nuuk showed the following (Chart 3):

	<u>April 1982</u>	<u>July 1982</u>
Homicide or Attempted Homicide	1	2
Assault	9	14
Theft & Break-in	57	91
Vandalism	30	31
Domestic Quarrels & Disturbing the Peace	157	142

Arrested/Detainees	118	114
Released without Charge (domestic quarrels, drunks)	67	69
Charged for Offense, Report Made	51	48

(Rasmussen 1982b)

When one looks at Greenland as a whole (see Chart 1), theft in 1982 increased 7.6% over 1981 (from 2745 to 2953 cases), vandalism 18.6% (from 828 to 982), and although homicide remained exactly the same (11), attempted homicide rose 30.8% (from 26 to 34), and assault rose 10.86% (from 405 to 449).

With a population of 50,000, Greenland probably holds a world record for suicide or attempted suicide. In 1982, the figure was 57 (over 40 succeeded in taking their own lives, according to the Station Chief), a 32.6% increase over 1981's 43, and a 54.05% increase over 1979's 37 suicides or attempted suicides. This means that in Greenland, the annual suicide rate is over 80 per 100,000. Compare with San Francisco and Denmark's 35-40 per 100,000.

It is also said that Greenland holds something of a world record for broken jawbones, which in some areas (e.g., Paamiut/Frederikshab) doubled and quadrupled in 1982, thanks to assaults committed under the influence

of alcohol. Thus beverage alcohol--even more than Coca Cola--can be dangerous to your teeth.

Hospitals and emergency rooms across Greenland have also felt the brunt of the repeal of rationing. In the first three months of 1982--while Greenland was still under rationing--only 60 people visited the emergency room in Ilulissat (Jakobshavn)--a town of about 2500 people. But after only two months and 10 days following rationing's repeal, 140 had to go to the emergency room there--triple the rate during rationing (Illinmi 1982: 22).

In Narsaq, a municipality of 2000 people, the number of injured persons per month has increased by 58% since the repeal of rationing. The number of injuries per month from assaults and muggings rose 126%--i.e., more than double that during rationing. Eighty-nine percent of the perpetrators of assault were male, and of these 96% were under the influence of alcohol when the assault was committed (Ibid.: 21).

In addition to injuries, doctors in Sisimiut (Holsteinsborg) recorded a 90% rise in venereal disease in the wake of rationing's repeal. On June 3, 1982, Sisimiut's head physician wrote to the town council. "It must be up to the politicians whether

action ought to be taken, but we in the health sector will support every system which limits alcohol abuse" (Sørensen 1982). In the summer of 1982, Sisimiut's Police Station Chief, Bjarne Fisher, and Department of Corrections and Probation officer, Mona Rosing Olsen, said in an interview that they would at that point even support complete prohibition in Greenland (Fisher 1982b; Olsen 1982).

The alcohol crisis has also had other side effects. Six murders occurred in a two-week period at the end of May and beginning of June 1982. Three of these murders were committed by an escapee from Nuuk's open correctional institution. These tragic events, most committed under intoxication, spurred a demonstration for "a peaceful and more harmonious society."

Because of the steep rise in crime as a result of rationing's repeal, tolerance for Greenland's extremely lenient criminal code and open correctional institutions began to wane. As a result of demands for greater security, the same Greenland legislature

that repealed rationing in March, approved construction in October 1982 of a closed wing in Nuuk's open correctional institution. Remarked one Greenlandic member of Parliament, "I didn't want to vote for it, but the people expected me to" (Steenholdt 1982). Although it is not the intention that this closed wing be used to house long-term inmates, it may well represent a developing nation's first step toward the birth of a prison. Some ordinary citizens are blaming the extremely lenient Greenland Criminal Code instead of the critical intervening variable, alcohol. Thus one can argue that the end of alcohol rationing spelled the beginning of the end of Greenland's extremely liberal criminal code and sanction system, which kept even murderers and rapists employed and integrated in the society (cf. Schechter 1982).

On the other hand, ironically, the alcohol crisis has made the inmates of the open correctional institutions extremely popular among one segment of the population--employers. The repeal of rationing has made Greenland's labor force more unstable, but the inmates in correctional institutions are seen (and sometimes preferred) as a stable labor force that comes on time, comes every day, and shows

up sober. It can be argued that if there weren't a serious alcohol problem in Greenland, it might be difficult to employ the inmates, who earn regular wages. But if there weren't a serious alcohol problem in Greenland, there would not be so many inmates to employ!

In terms of the economic life of this developing country, alcohol also takes its toll. Labor power is so unstable at Godthåb Fish Industry that it loses about two to three million kroner (about \$250,000-300,000) per year and often has to dump tons of codfish it purchased but could not get processed and frozen before spoilage occurred. In desperation it has even been suggested that confirmations, which usually turn into big drinking bashes, be held either earlier in the spring or later in the fall so as to avoid the busy summer fishing season. (See Figure

In addition, as monies pour into buying alcohol, other businesses suffer. Sale of clothing, radios and photography equipment dropped 25%, and businesses threatened to lay off workers. This is the exact opposite of what occurred during rationing, when businesses picked up by 25-50%.

Alternatives to Rationing: Public Information Campaign

In the spring of 1982, the Home Rule Government began distributing public information materials urging voluntary moderation in alcohol use. These materials consist of posters, buttons, stickers, newspaper ads, postcards, a TV videodrama, and a magazine serving as a forum for opinions on the "alcohol debate."

The earliest posters used scare and shame tactics. The poster in Figure 4 is a very realistically staged photograph showing a violent domestic quarrel, with an empty beer can in the background. The caption reads (in both Greenlandic and Danish): "Goodbye to points! But what about the women and children?" The poster in Figure 5 reads: "A confirmation: Does it have to end this way?" and shows the newly confirmed children, clad in their national costumes, standing glumly in the foreground, while in the background, the party the adults have made for them has turned into a drunken brawl. And the poster in Figure 6 shows a man passed out in the street, with the caption "Not me on payday!"

At the same time, a series of eight stickers

and identical buttons (much like campaign buttons) were distributed, also free of charge. Figure 7 shows these stickers with English translations. Although the stickers and buttons were intended to be serious, they were often regarded humorously, particularly the "I have a hangover" button, and the "Today I will be sober" button. The latter was sometimes worn to the bars with "not" added to the slogan.

Later posters and postcards took a much more subtle approach--so subtle that, in the case of the postcards, the alcohol control message might be lost. The new slogan is "Let us show the world that we can govern (meaning also rule or control) ourselves"--an indirect reference to Home Rule, a source of national pride. The postcards and posters in Figures 8 through 12 emphasize not the degradation of alcohol abuse, but pride in the beauty of the land and the strength of the traditional Greenlandic culture: the successful sealhunter in kayak, sealskins stretched out to dry by his industrious wife, a woman sewing sealskin boots, fishing boats in the moonlight, a shepherd on horseback, etc. New slogans urge: "Do not drink yourself from your knowledge" or "Do

not drink yourself from your freedom."

Pretty though these materials may be, their effectiveness--if measured by alcohol consumption and crime statistics--appears to be null.

Supply-Side Prevention: Rationing and Restrictions in Greenland Today

In Greenland, only two municipalities and a monopoly-run mining town have maintained alcohol rationing. Both municipalities are extremely isolated communities, whose inhabitants are dependent upon hunting for their livelihood, and hunting and drinking do not mix well. In Avanersuaq/Thule, in far Northwest Greenland, every person over 20 years old is allowed 50 points per month. In Illoqqortoormiut/Scoresbyaund, in far Northeast Greenland, three points are issued daily to each adult from Monday through Thursday, and six on Friday, three of which can only be used on Saturday. That totals 72 points per month, but the most one can save up is two weeks' worth of coupons, or 36 points. In both Avanersuaq and Illoqqortoormiut, a beer is worth 1 point, a bottle of wine, 5, and a half bottle of hard spirits, 10.

Both these municipalities had previously tried distributing points once a week, but too many people got drunk at the same time and could not work or hunt. And in both municipalities, the decision to ration and the form rationing takes are made by the town council.

Although the town councils of the local municipalities have the right to limit the sale and serving of liquor, only the above two of Greenland's 18 municipalities have continued rationing, and Avanersuaq/Thule is again putting the question before its citizens. Ten other municipalities have restricted the times during which liquor may be sold or served beyond that required by the law passed by the Greenland Parliament.

Nevertheless, the municipalities' local self-determination is limited, especially in granting or denying liquor licenses. In a recent case, the town council of Qeqertarsuaq/Godhavn twice refused to renew the liquor license of the town's only bar, located close to the town school. Despite vandalism in the school, assaults, and the accidental deaths of three people who had left the bar drunk (one froze to death and two fell into the harbor), the Green-

landic Parliament narrowly overrode the wishes of the municipality and renewed the liquor license for another eight years. The town council angrily reacted by prohibiting all serving of liquor on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and restricting service to Monday through Thursday, between 6 p.m. and midnight. Said the town's mayor, Lars Pele Berthelsen: "Why sacrifice so much money for the alcohol campaign and then at the same time impede us to this degree, as soon as we try to stop the drinking?" (SermitsiaK 1983: 5; translation mine).

In the mining town of Marmorilik, it is the mining company, Greenex, that decides how much one may drink. Two or three months after the end of alcohol rationing in April 1982, Greenex closed down the town bar permanently and instituted its own rationing system. Abandoning the point-coupon system, Greenex issued I.D. cards which are to be punched whenever an individual purchases alcohol. The sample I.D. card shown in Figure 13 makes illegal transference much more difficult than the coupon system.

Since the population consists of about 330 people, of whom some 300 are male manual laborers, the company decided to permit 24 points per week (96

points per month) plus unlimited purchase of table wine. These privileges, however, can be sharply reduced or completely curtailed if the individual fails to show up for work. Five absences or a single fight can be cause for firing.

Since the pay is good (about \$1700 per month minimum plus free room and board), the jobs desirable, and the labor force carefully screened before hiring, Greenex's system appears to be effective. Greenex Chief Consultant Jonas Nielsen, who is also the town constable, feels that a modified version of Greenex's I.D. card system, with a reduced ration of perhaps 60 points, would work in the rest of Greenland. Interestingly, one of the subgroups outvoted in the alcohol commission had suggested a similar alternative--rationing books which would be stamped--but this suggestion was never accepted (Spiritusarbejdsgruppen n.d.: 11-12). Recalling the Faroese system of denying liquor purchases to those who owed rent, taxes, etc., Nielsen further suggested that people only be issued quarterly alcohol I.D. cards if they were not behind on such payments (Nielsen 1982, 1983). Greenland's Minister of Social Affairs, Agnethe Davidsen, who has recently

publicly supported rationing, albeit not the coupon system, is also interested in the Faroese system.

Supply-Side Prevention: Alcohol Control in Arctic Canada

The Greenlandic pattern of alcohol rationing initiated by an island-wide referendum and legislated and repealed (this time without popular plebiscite) by the Greenland Parliament, reflects the profound centralizing tendencies of both the Greenlandic and Danish governments. This centralism can be seen in many other government areas, from land-and-city planning to the police and criminal justice system (cf. Schechter 1983).

By contrast, the system of alcohol control in Arctic Canada reflects that nation's federal tradition. The Northwest Territories' Liquor Ordinance provides for "Local Option," which is exercised to a far greater extent than the Greenlandic municipal councils' power to limit sale and serving of alcohol.

Local communities can choose between no restrictions (or "wet"), a prohibition system (or "dry"), and a community control system ("semi-dry"). Control systems vary, but often limit the amount or kinds of alcohol allowed into the community. In addition, locally chosen alcohol education committees may "indefect" individuals who abuse alcohol by limiting or halting their ordering privileges. That is done by placing their names on lists of indefected persons, and by refusing to sign liquor order forms for them. Figure 14 shows a sample form for ordering liquor from the government-run liquor store in Probiasher Bay to the settlement of Broughton Island, which has a community control system. The form bears two signatures and the stamp of the Broughton Island Alcohol Education Committee. Indefected persons may appeal the Alcohol Education Committee's decision to the local Justice of the Peace, who makes the final decision (Department of Social Services, Baffin Region n.d.: 1-3).

Most communities in the Northwest Territories do not have liquor stores. Fort Smith, Fort Simpson, Pine Point, Tungsten and Cambridge Bay have privately