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A Note from the Editor

This issue contains two substantive articles on topics less commonly studied under the heading of Addiction and Literature. Kathryne McDorman considers the detective fiction of Ngaio Marsh as an index of British social mores, especially regarding drug use, through much of this century, and instructively contrasts them with American attitudes to addiction. Jon Miller examines the drinking habits of the American Puritans, which were far more complex than the popular notion of "Puritan" might suggest.

In between these weighty pieces, we offer as a palate-cleanser Ivan Gold's account of an A.A. meeting in a parallel, literary universe. Ivan informs us that he has performed his piece, after the example of Dickens and James Whitcomb Riley (see last summer's *Dionysos*), to tumultuous applause.

Thanks again to Matts Djos and to all those who presented papers on Alcoholism and Literature at the ALA conference in San Diego at the end of May.

Such gatherings demonstrate that this journal has chosen a fruitful topic for its focus. We hope to publish some of those papers in future issues, along with an index of previous issues, as *Dionysos* enters its tenth year.

Jim Harbaugh, Editor--*Dionysos*

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Addiction and Respectability in the Novels of Ngaio Marsh

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All forms of fiction are an appropriate source for cultural historians who wish to examine problems, attitudes and social changes in a particular era. British detective fiction began with the Sherlock Holmes stories in the 1890's and reached its apogee in the middle years of the twentieth century during the so-called "Golden Age." It continues to be one of the most vital and popular forms of fiction, with its modern practitioners following in the traditions set by Arthur Conan Doyle and his successors, the "Grandes Dames," women authors of the Golden Age. Because it is a democratic fiction that appeals to readers in all strata of British society from the modest working man to the dons of Oxford and Cambridge, it provides rich information about their concerns. Detective fiction in the modern age becomes a version of the eighteenth century novel of manners, revealing in its portrayals the foibles and passions of an era.

By surveying almost a century of detective stories, the historian may discern how attitudes were developed and shaped by the passage of time and events. From the 1890s to the 1990s, Britain and British society have been subject to tremendous pressures arising from two devastating world wars, her demise as a great imperial power, economic depression, the rise and fall of Bolshevism. She has been forced to watch her class distinctions dissolve, her former military hegemony crumble, and her Victorian moral certainties succumb to the scrutiny of modern "situation ethics." Nowhere is the strain affecting modern British society more clearly delineated than in its attitudes towards the drug culture and the drug trade, as well as legislative and police efforts to control or stop it.

Throughout most of the nineteenth century the development of opiate drugs was considered an improvement in the pharmacology available to treat serious illness and pain.[1] In 1803 a German apothecary assistant first isolated crystalline morphine, and in 1898 the Bayer Company, also of Germany, developed heroin (Judson, 4). By the middle of the nineteenth century the opium trade had become so profitable in Britain that from 1839 to 1842 she fought a war against the Chinese, who tried to limit the amount of opium brought from British India into China. With the invention of the hypodermic needle in mid-century, a medical mythology emerged that if drugs were injected rather than ingested it was possible to avoid addiction because the drug did not reach the stomach (Parssinen, 208).

In all these centuries of drug use there is only one account of medical concern about the addictive properties of opium, recorded in 1701 by Dr. John Jones of London, but the vast majority of doctors regarded it as a staple in their treatments (Judson, 74). Indeed, opium was so commonly used in Britain that it was a major ingredient in many forms of patent medicines (Bean, 18; Parssinen, ix).

In addition to the opiates, stimulant drugs like cocaine were known in Europe at the turn of the century. At first it was usually "snuffed," but later injection of cocaine became increasingly common. As late as 1890, cocaine was deemed acceptable for general use, and was advertised as a drug that cured the "blues" or as a "wine for sportsmen." Sigmund Freud was the first doctor to study the pharmacological effects, and he was a regular user, as were Emile Zola, Henrik Ibsen and Robert Louis Stevenson (Kobayashi, 125; Parssinen, 117). Queen Victoria, that model of rectitude in the age that bore her name, undoubtedly took opiates, and perhaps cocaine as well, in her medicines. The Victorian era's most famous fictional detective, Sherlock Holmes, injected himself with cocaine with the full knowledge, if not the full approval, of Dr. Watson. Indeed, one of the first Holmes stories, "The Sign of Four," opens with Holmes taking a bottle from the mantle and a hypodermic syringe, and

> With his long, white, nervous fingers he adjusted the delicate needle and rolled back his left shirtcuff. For some little time his eyes rested thoughtfully upon the sinewy forearm and wrist, all dotted and scarred with innumerable puncture marks. Finally he thrust the sharp point home, pressed down the tiny piston, and sank back into the velvet-lined armchair with a long sigh of satisfaction (89).

His friend, Dr. Watson, comments that he has witnessed this ritual three times a day for "many months," but "custom had not reconciled my mind to it." Intimidated by Holmes' superb intelligence and superciliousness, Watson hesitates to speak, but finally overcomes his reluctance and asks Holmes which drug it is today, "morphine or cocaine?"

> He raised his eyes languidly from the old black-letter volume which he had opened.
> "It is cocaine," he said, "a seven-per-cent solution. Would you care to try it?" (89).

When Watson demurs and speculates on the physical strain that it puts upon the body, Holmes responds, "Perhaps you are right, Watson. . . . I suppose that its influence is physically a bad one. I find it, however, so transcendently stimulating and clarifying to the mind that its secondary action is a matter of small moment" (89). His friend further protests:

"Count the cost! Your brain may be, as you say, roused and excited, but it is a pathological and morbid process which involves increased tissue change and may at last leave a permanent weakness. You know, too, what a black reaction comes upon you. Surely the game is hardly worth the candle. Why should you, for a mere passing pleasure, risk the loss of those great powers with which you have been endowed?" (89).

Declaring that his mind "rebels at stagnation," Holmes merely smiles.

At the end of "The Sign of Four," Watson laments that the police have taken the credit for the solution of the case, and everyone but Holmes appears to have been rewarded. Holmes, already bored by his success in solving the knotty mystery, replies, "'For me . . . there still remains the cocaine-bottle.' And he stretched his long white hand up for it" (158).

In remonstrating with Holmes, Watson reminds him that as a medical man his opinion has authority. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Holmes' creator, was himself a qualified physician who also wrote works of history. Ironically, he would go to South Africa at the turn of the century to serve in the Boer War, a war in which more British soldiers died of disease than of wounds. Surely he would have used opiates there, including morphine, to treat the sick and wounded. Perhaps Doyle's personal experience of the power of addictive drugs altered his views on them. Critics have noted that Holmes' drug use abates during the course of the stories, and that Doyle does offer the occasional portrait of a hopelessly damaged addict. Nevertheless, Doyle's initial portrayal of the drug-stimulated detective seems to indicate an acceptance of drug use that would have been troubling after the turn of the century.

Attitudes towards drugs and addiction changed radically in the early twentieth century (Parssinen, 103). Previously, at the end of the nineteenth century, respectable Englishmen believed that most drug abuse was relegated either to the slums or to the bohemian lifestyle of the outrageous artistic crowd. But now, Parliament legislated control under the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1920, which sought to control the manufacturing and sale of opiates and "narcotics." In Britain the trade was condemned, but the user was viewed for the greater part of the century as a victim suffering from a medical problem (Bean, 6; Judson, 21). Indeed, in 1967 methadone maintenance became covered under the National Health Service. British detective fiction quite clearly reflects this nuanced position on drug use, not only by the attitudes it displays, but also by its rather sanguine response to "the drug problem."

Of the four Grandes Dames who wrote classical British detective fiction in the twentieth century, New Zealand-born Ngaio Marsh is in a

unique position as the colonial "outsider" over against the "insider" authors such as Agatha Christie, Margery Allingham and Dorothy Sayers. The peripatetic Marsh visited England for the first time as an adult in 1928, and would continue to spend a portion of each year in either country until 1974, dividing her time between London and her New Zealand home in Christchurch. According to Marsh, her homeland remained in such a frozen state of Victorian sensibilities that she experienced an acute sense of contrast each time she disembarked at Southampton. Traveling back and forth between England and New Zealand heightened her sensitivities and developed the special perspective from which she analyzed social change as she observed it. In her work one senses the breakdown of English class distinction, and one perceives in the character of her protagonist, Roderick Alleyn, an aristocrat and yet also a professional policeman, a symbol of that fundamental transformation. It is through a policeman's eyes that Marsh views the problems of modern England's permissive society.

During the years that Marsh wrote (1935-1982), England underwent a revolution in mores that witnessed the emergence of a drug "scene" that eclipsed anything that Sherlock Holmes could have imagined. Out of her thirty-two murder mysteries, seven portray drugs and the drug trade not exactly as a cause of crime and social decay, but certainly as a motive for murder, and a threat to the health of the body politic. From her second mystery, Enter a Murderer, published in 1935, to her next to last novel, Last Ditch, published in 1977, Marsh creates addicts, international drug lords, bogus religious sects that feature mind-altering drugs as "worship" experiences, drug smugglers and, in the midst of it all, the ubiquitous Alleyn, who must solve a murder despite the presence of all these drug-related distractions.

In Enter a Murderer Marsh employs for the first time a locale that will become her trademark--a theatrical setting. Alleyn is attending a drama called "The Rat and the Beaver," with his friend and first "Watson," Nigel Bathgate, when a stage murder turns into the real thing. The play features a group of villains engaged in the opium trade who have discovered that they have been betrayed by one of their own. The murdered actor actually played the part of the suspected "rat." In the course of his investigations, Alleyn finds that the play's producer, an inappropriately named Jacob Saint, had actually been accused of building his fortune on the drug trade. A number of years previously an anonymous article in the tabloids had proclaimed, "Ladies and Gentlemen with unattractive portmanteaux under their yellow eyeballs were . . . constantly being obliged with opium and cocaine by some agency controlled by a 'well known theater magnate'" (86, ch. 10). Saint had survived the charges but had never escaped the scandal entirely. Upon examining the murder

victim's apartment, Alleyn, Bathgate and Inspector Fox discover drug paraphernalia. Marsh allows life to imitate art when the murderer turns out to be another of the actors, who had been to heroin parties with the murdered man while at Cambridge, and who had actually been the author of the articles accusing his present producer. A group of villains involved in drugs, indeed! Although illicit drugs are not the focus of the story, they are a backlighting throwing into relief the web of sordid relationships.

Death in Ecstasy offers a very different and unusual look at drugs as a part of a pseudo-religious experience. Marsh will reprise this theme twenty years later in Spinsters in Jeopardy with a few new flourishes. In the earlier novel the murder takes place at London's House of the Sacred Flame, led by a self-proclaimed priest with the improbable name of Father Jasper Garnette, as sanctimonious a bit of goods as Marsh ever created. When one of the more sensible characters, Janey Jenkins, tries to explain to Inspector Alleyn the effect that "Father" Garnette had upon his flock when he preached, that "everything seems to be beautifully dovetailed and balanced," Alleyn remarks that "I believe opium smokers experience it" (86, ch. 7).

In this novel we have Marsh's first developed portrayal of an addict, Maurice Pringle, who is engaged to Janey. Alleyn immediately recognizes that he is an addict by his erratic behavior and his enlarged pupils.[2] Janey confronts her fiancé only to get the time-honored promises from Maurice that he will stop . . . soon . . . tomorrow . . . someday. Janey laments to Nigel Bathgate, "It's frightful. Not only the cigarettes, but--worse than that. He's taking it now, I know he is. You'll see. When he comes back he'll be excited and--dreadfully friendly. He's turning into a horrible stranger. You don't know what the real Maurice is like . . ." (245, ch. 20). Indeed, when Maurice returns from bathing and changing, Nigel is treated to a sample of his new, drug-induced personality: "His eyes were very bright. He had an air of spurious gaiety. He was like a mechanical figure that had been overwound and might break. He talked loudly and incessantly, and laughed at everything he said" (247, ch. 20). Of course this euphoria is followed within a short time by flagging energy, a hangover and extreme irritability. In despair Janey recognizes her helplessness to stop the nightmare of his addiction.

Later when Janey admits to herself that she knows who seduced him into this dependency, she rails, "It's Father Garnette. He's responsible. I think that he must be the wickedest, foulest beast that ever lived" (245, ch. 20). Alleyn had already concluded that the bogus priest was in truth simply a tarted-up drug pusher using the ploy of spiritual enlightenment. In one of his flights of verbal fancy, he gloats over the discovery of heroin-treated cigarettes in the priest's apartment:

"Oh excellent priest! Perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee. All the top cigarettes as innocent as the wild woodbine, but underneath in a vicious little mob, ten doped smokes. A fairly high percentage of heroin was found, from one tenth to as much as one-seventh of a grain per cigarette. Is it possible that the cigarette tobacco has been treated with a solution of diamorphine? Oh, Jasper, my dear, my better half, have I caught my heavenly jewel?" (233, ch. 19).

By the novel's end, the murderer has been caught and "Father" Garnette exposed for the charlatan that he is, largely through Pringle's accusations. For Alleyn the case is officially closed, but he gives a stern lecture to Maurice: "I think that you should go into a nursing home where such cases are treated. . . . It won't be pleasant, but is, I believe, your only chance. Don't answer now. Think it over and let me know. In the meantime, I have asked Dr. Curtis to have a look at you and he will help you, I am sure" (311, ch. 25).

Today that bit of advice would be looked upon as naive, ignoring as it does the medical model of addiction with its insistence on drug abstinence, but it was consistent with the British view of that day that the addict is not a criminal. Alleyn knows that Pringle's complete cure is uncertain, but leaves the decision in his (and Janey's) hands. As for Jasper Garnette, though he is not the murderer and not criminally culpable by British law for his followers' degradation, he is arrested for fraud connected to the House of the Eternal Flame's business. Alleyn practically spits out his judgment of Garnette, as compared to the murderer: "Him and his heroin! Devil take me, but I swear he's the nastier sample of the two" (319, ch. 25).

Marsh's next image of drugs and the drug trade ties them to the Jazz Age. Though jazz and night clubs made their most popular appearance in the Twenties just after World War I, Marsh doesn't write about them until after World War II. The righteous condemned jazz and nightclubs as sleazy entertainment that flaunted decent conventions (Parliamentary Debates. Vol. 594, No. 4, October 31, 1958). Many observers feared that the frank sexuality in jazz sounds and songs, and the nightclub's dimmed lights and sensuous decor, and the smoky, boozy atmosphere were mere rest stops on the path to damnation. Marsh's view is more sophisticated than the view of those who condemned them on moral grounds, but her story does confirm the suspicion in the mind of such puritans that jazz and nightclubs are fronts for crime and that many jazz musicians are hooked on drugs.

In A Wreath for Rivera (1949), Marsh creates one of the most delightful aristocratic eccentrics in her canon. Lord Pastern and Baggot is

known for his wild and fleeting enthusiasms. His wife describes him as having cycled through fascinations as varying as Central European religious sects, the study of voodoo, nudism and, most recently, jazz. He has hired a popular band leader, Breezy Bellairs, and his band to rehearse at his London town house in preparation for a nightclub date at which Lord Pastern himself will play the drums with the band. Meanwhile his daughter's unsuitable attraction to Carlos Rivera, Bellairs' saxophonist, has alarmed Lady Pastern, who has called upon her niece, Carlisle Wayne, to dissuade her daughter. While visiting the house, Carlisle reads an exposé article on the drug trade in a new popular magazine, Harmony,[3] in which "Two Latin-American business firms with extensive connections in Great Britain were boldly named. An editorial note truculently courted information backed by the promise of full protection" (26, ch. 3). Lord Pastern rather disingenuously praises the boldness of the article. "They're not afraid to speak their minds, b'God. See that thing on drug runnin'? Names and everything and if they don't like it they can damn well lump it. The police . . . are no good; pompous incompetent lot" (29, ch. 3).

Lord Pastern is about to encounter those "pompous" police in an unexpected way. During the band's performance at the Metronome nightclub Carlos is murdered. Alleyn's ensuing investigation uncovers the world of drugs, nefarious dealings, and swift death. While being held for questioning, Breezy betrays himself as an addict dependent on his "fix." When he begins withdrawal and the delusional behavior that accompanies it, Alleyn does for him what he did for Maurice Pringle; he arranges for the police surgeon, Dr. Curtis, to give him some of the drug so that he can be questioned. Again, this is consistent with British public policy, which views the addict as a victim, not a criminal to be punished. Afterwards Alleyn confronts Lord Pastern and accuses him of knowing about Bellairs' drug connection and ignoring it. Lord Pastern's sarcastic answer is, "Not bein' a detective inspector . . . I don't have to wait until a dope-fiend fits and passes out before I know what's wrong with him" (83, ch. 6). Breezy's band, on the other hand, denies that they knew of the dope; they insist that it was medicine for nerves.

Alleyn finally succeeds in persuading the timpanist, Skelton, to talk about the addiction. Skelton's confession adds another twist to the distinctly British view of the drug trade:

> "The drug racket . . . is like any other racket in a capitalistic government. The real criminals are the bosses, the barons, the high-ups. They don't get pulled in. It's the little blokes that get caught. You have to think it out. Silly sentiment and big talk won't work. I've got no tickets on the police department in this country. A fairly

efficient machine working for the wrong ideas. But drug-taking's no good from any point of view" (103, ch. 7).

Following this outburst, Skelton reveals that Breezy got his dope from the victim, Carlos Rivera, and that the nightclub had become a convenient distribution point from suppliers to users.

Skelton's suspicions that dope is really a capitalist plot offers an interesting sidelight on British policies. Three years before A Wreath for Rivera was published, England elected her first real socialist government. The Labour government under Clement Atlee enacted enormous changes in the National Health Service, and also subsequently nationalized many private industries. "Damn the capitalists!" would have been fairly common currency at the time.[4] The Labour Party in Britain was working to improve relations with Stalinist Russia, the greatest socialist state of them all. The post-war disillusion with the Soviets had not set in completely, and the Cold War had not really begun.

Carlos Rivera, as his ledgers reveal, is a fairly successful dealer, undoubtedly connected with one of the larger drug networks that Alleyn and his sidekick, Fox, would love to uncover. As they search his apartment, Alleyn explains to a young constable how drug smuggling works. "This will have come in by the usual damned labyrinth. . . . This is probably cocaine or heroin, and has no doubt traveled long distances in bogus false teeth, fat men's navels, dummy hearing aids, phony bayonet fitments for electric light bulbs, and God knows what else" (150, ch. 9).

As eager as they are to crack the drug trade, Alleyn and Fox have to remind themselves that it's a murderer they're after, and re-focus their search. As the novel ends, Alleyn suspects that Breezy himself had killed his supplier because of the threat of blackmail and Carlos' arrogant indifference to Breezy's drug needs. Breezy is in desperate shape, frantically trying to bargain and promising to quit taking drugs sometime soon. Fox, whom Alleyn calls "the drug Baron" because of his investigations, continues to pump Bellairs for information about bigger suppliers than Rivera. Bellairs will trade anything he knows to assure that Dr. Curtis will keep him in his supply. His withdrawal becomes worse: "Suddenly and inanely Breezy yawned, a face splitting yawn that bared his gums and showed his coated tongue. He rubbed his arms and neck. 'I keep feeling as if there's something under my skin. Worms or something'" (199, ch. 11). Once again Alleyn and Fox use the offer of drugs for information and finally make their murder case against Bellairs. Alleyn has the further satisfaction of revealing to the wily Lord Pastern, who had dismissed police as "pompous and incompetent," that he knows that Pastern is the moving force behind Harmony, the magazine that exposed drug traders. Lord Pastern's eyes light up, promising a new obsession to

replace jazz, as he queries Alleyn about how he might become a detective.

In 1953 Marsh published the most virulent anti-drug novel of her thirty-two books. It is also a rather peculiar novel, returning to the theme of Death in Ecstasy, bogus religious cults and the use of drugs for phony religious purposes. The action of Spinsters in Jeopardy takes place in Roqueville in the south of France, where Alleyn and his family have gone for a holiday. The holiday is partly genuine because Mrs. Alleyn has in the little French town a relative, P. E. Garbel, whom she wishes to contact. This family connection provides the cover that allows Alleyn to do some undercover snooping. In this novel, Marsh takes a gamble that her readers will tolerate rather lengthy and didactic expositions about the history and evils of drugs and the drug trade. The lectures convey information that Marsh must have deemed necessary to justify Alleyn, a domestic cop, being pulled into international intrigue, but it brings the flow of character development, plot and place to a dead stop. Ironically, if Marsh was motivated to preach against drugs, she creates this unsuccessful mystery as her pulpit and fails her audience. Indeed, here the exotic elements, extraordinary circumstances and preaching are so pronounced that the story risks becoming absurd.

As Marsh recounts, the international difficulties in coordinating police activities to stop the drug trade go back to the years before World War I. In those early years of the century, ideas about prescribing or using opiates and other drugs were changing. Gone were the makers of patent medicines who confidently mixed their opiate brews. The idea that these homeopathic substances created drug addiction shocked respectable opinion. Some of the legitimate drug industry went underground and became the illicit opium racket, intent upon supplying users and creating more consumers. Their activities had reached such alarming proportions that international meetings in Shanghai and The Hague considered how nations might act in concert to stop it. A few tentative decisions were reached, but the war intervened and nothing further could be done (Parssinen, 129-132).

After the War the drug traffic resumed and, in fact, surpassed its previous records. Many countries like Bulgaria became havens for drug manufacturing. Drugs were smuggled around Europe in diplomatic pouches as peacemakers and their staffs scurried continuously from one post-war conference to another. Reputable chemists were lured by high salaries into the manufacture of diacetylmorphine, or heroin. While fashionable and powerful people made staggering profits, street peddlers and addicts lived in a shadow world of supply, demand and death. When the mortality rate from drugs became a public scandal, the League of Nations appointed an Advisory Committee that made the first determined

efforts to stop it. By 1939 some progress had been made in seeking out and destroying factories and cutting the trade (Bean, 43-44).

After World War II the United Nations and its Interpol agency, an attempt at police cooperating across national lines, began the hunt anew--in vain (Bean, 45-46). In Spinsters in Jeopardy, Alleyn sighs as he tells Troy, "The police still catch the sprats at the customs counters and miss the mackerels in high places" (118, ch. 7). The police believed that the factories moved from Bulgaria to post-war Italy and even into southern France. Hence Alleyn's mission is legitimate in its plot and place, but Marsh has strayed from the conventions of her genre by skirting the dubious realm of propagandist literature. Perhaps she was moved to write such a passionate, if unsuccessful, novel by the intense debate about drugs going on in international conferences after the war. In 1946 the United Nations Economic and Social Council had established a Commission on Narcotic Drugs that in 1948 recommended a Protocol regulating the production of synthetic narcotics, especially pethidine. Synthetics had become popular during the war because of the interruption of supply of "natural narcotics." After the war the commission considered controlling the production and the supply of both natural and synthetic narcotics, suspending temporarily their concern over cannabis. After political wrangling in 1952 forced the commission to abandon hope for international control of production, the government of France suggested a compromise whereby the Permanent Central Opium Board of the United Nations would limit use of opium products and confine production to seven countries, including Bulgaria, Greece, India, Turkey, the USSR, Iran and Yugoslavia. Marsh's novel would have been conceived and written while these deliberations dominated the news in Western Europe (Bean, 46, 47, 48).

In preparing for the journey, Alleyn tells his wife, Troy, that M.I.5., the British national security branch, and the French Sureté are "having a bit of a party" (14, prologue), and that he has been called to do some fieldwork. His mission underlines some of the difficulties of international cooperation when a British citizen living abroad is involved with breaking the laws of both his native and his adopted countries. The citizen in question is one Albert George Clarkson, also known as Oberon, spiritual leader of the Children of the Sun in France. If he is a felon, to whom does he belong? Alleyn's task is complicated by the fact that, as the train pulls into Roqueville in the very early hours of the morning, he happens to witness what appears to be a murder in a lighted room opposite his darkened sleeping car.[5] He learns that this window is in an ancient Saracen citadel occupied by the Children of the Sun cult. As Alleyn and his family prepare to disembark, they are distracted by the sudden appendicitis attack of another passenger, a spinster, Miss Truebody. They

lift her gently from the train and seek medical assistance. By another happenstance, the only physician in Roqueville at that moment is an Egyptian doctor who is a member of the cult. All of these startling coincidences give Alleyn access to the citadel, where he becomes as concerned with catching the murderer whom he believes that he saw as with uncovering the drug connections.

Brought into the Citadel through the good offices of Miss Truebody's appendix, Alleyn meets a number of celebrities, actresses and socialites. All are rather obviously disoriented and ill with hangovers. He is concerned that one of the members of the cult, Annabelle Wells, the actress, knows that he is a policeman. Although Alleyn fears exposure, when he sees her wasted eyes, he cannot overcome the impulse to preach. After she admits that she is a heroin addict he responds:

> "Are you asking me if I could help you to cure yourself of drugging? I couldn't. Only an expert could do that. If you've still got enough character and sense of purpose to keep the faith, as you put it, perhaps you should have enough guts to go through with a cure. I don't know. . . . Go to a doctor in Paris and offer yourself for a cure. Recognize your responsibility and, before further harm can come out of this place, tell me or the local commissary or anyone else in a position of authority, everything you know about the people here . . . The place and all of you speak for yourselves. Yawning your heads off because you want your heroin. Pin-point pupils and leathery faces" (82-83, ch. 5).

Marsh insists that these heroin "junkies" began with the "devil weed," cannabis. Rabid anti-drug campaigns at the time insisted that what might begin as recreational use of soft drugs would lead inexorably to experimentation with more potent ones. Although modern research is ambiguous on this assertion, Marsh and her contemporaries believed it. Movies like Reefer Madness and the harsh penalties imposed for possession of marijuana in the fifties were certainly predicated upon this belief. In Spinsters in Jeopardy, Marsh describes the preparation that the Children of the Sun go through to receive their profane sacraments. Part of it involves smoking marijuana, with snacks thoughtfully provided should initiates get hungry. P. E. Garbel later confesses to Alleyn,

> "He started me on marijuana--reefers, you know--and I've never been able to break off. They see to it that I get just enough to keep me going. They get me up here and make me nervous and then give me cigarettes. . . . When I smoke I get very silly. I hear myself saying things to fill me with bitter shame. But when I've got the craving to

smoke and He's given me cigarettes, I, well, you've seen" (201, ch. 11).

A contemporary observer might find this unrealistic and even amusing. Current wisdom and research finds certain unhealthy long-term effects in heavy marijuana users, but this kind of craving and dependency is almost non-existent. It is a poor motive for Garbel's complicity in covering up a murder.

Alleyn learns the ritual babble of the cult, and, in disguise, finds his way into the sacred circle. While there he sees enough to mark the murderer and to arrest the whole sordid crew. One theme that Marsh had previously examined in Death in Ecstasy she here returns to: Alleyn solves the murders and breaks the drug connection through the assistance of the confessed addict. In the earlier novel Maurice Pringle, and now Troy's cousin, P. E. Garbel, provide evidence that nails a murderer, but by doing so they cut off their supply of drugs, heroin in Pringle's case and marijuana in Garbel's. The likelihood is remote that a policeman would be assisted, twice, by the very addicts who were enslaved by their suppliers. Marsh loses her touch for verisimilitude when she ventures into this murky world of seriously addictive drugs and the people who fall prey to its attractions. Inspector Dupont of the French Sureté expresses a more cynical and pragmatic approach to those who are not accessories to the murder: "I imagine that we take statements from the painter, the actress Wells and the two young ones and let it go at that. They may be more useful running free. Particularly if they return to the habit" (223, ch. 11).

In the 1960's England faced some difficult times in the war against drugs. In those years, Joseph Simpson, the Police Commissioner, established a Drug Squad within the Criminal Investigation Department, Alleyn's division of Scotland Yard. By April, 1970 it was clear that the Drug Squad had become a secret little empire of its own, using such questionable methods as entrapment and agents provocateurs in order to catch the Drug Lords. As David Ascoli describes it, they operated in an area "ill-defined by law and moral precept" (307). One of those ill-defined areas was the place where the jurisdiction of the Drug Squad overlapped with that of the Customs Bureau, since most illicit drugs were smuggled into the country. By 1970 twenty officers were involved in scandalous accusations. At this point the Home Office, which was responsible for police management, asked for a complete dossier on the Drug Squad. Some of their worst fears were confirmed in June of 1971 when the trial of Basil Sands, a major contact within the drug trade, exposed several questionable Drug Squad practices. On June 11 the Drug Squad was officially dissolved and the detectives assigned to it were sent to other postings.

In July, Scotland Yard announced that an investigation of Drug Squad activities would be carried out by Assistant Chief of Constables Harold Prescott. That the proud London-based C.I.D. could be forced to allow an officer from the provincial police to investigate it indicates how serious the trouble was presumed to be. Prescott reported in 1972 that there appeared to be no cause for criminal indictments, but the new Police Commissioner, Robert Marks, ordered two more internal investigations, after which six officers were brought up on charges (Ascoli, 319). In 1973, the six Drug Squad members stood trial, charged with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice; five were also charged with perjury. All were acquitted of the first charge but three were found guilty of perjury and sent to prison. Despite the acquittals, the message was clear that the C.I.D. must be brought under closer control and scrutiny (Ascoli, 321).

In the midst of this scandal, Ngaio Marsh published When in Rome, a mystery that, in a vein similar to Spinsters in Jeopardy, sends Alleyn to investigate the drug trade in a foreign country, where he is inadvertently involved in a murder. This novel was more successful than Spinsters, though it flirts with some of the same exotic themes. More recent audiences might, once again, find some quaint language in the book, as when Sebastian Mailer, the book's villain, victim and drug addict and pusher, and a British citizen, first confronts Barnaby Grant, the famous author, who confesses, ". . . I have acquired an addiction for cocaine. Rather 'square' of me, isn't it? I really must change one of these days, to something groovier. You see I am conversant with the jargon" (12, ch. 1). Marsh also reprises her theme of marijuana as leading to other drugs, but this time she dismisses the arguments of the opposition. As Kenneth Dorne and his elderly aunt discuss drugs, she asks,

> "In Perugia. Did you--did you--smoke--?"
> "There's no need for the hushed tones, darling. You've been handed the usual nonsense, I see."
> "Then you did?"
> "Of course," he said impatiently. . . .
> ". . . Kenneth, what's it like?"
> "Pot? Do you really want to know?"
> "I'm asking, aren't I?"
> "Dire the first time and quite fun if you persevere. Kid stuff really. All the fuss about nothing."
> "It's done at parties, isn't it?"
> "That's right, lovey, want to try?"
> "It's not habit-forming. Is it?"
> "Of course it's not. It's nothing. It's O.K. as far as it goes. You don't get hooked. Not on pot. . . . Try a little trip. In point of fact I could arrange a fabulous trip. Madly groovy.

> You'd adore it. All sorts of gorgeous gents. Super exotic pad. The lot" (27, ch. 2).

These two characters will be members of a tour of Rome that is organized by the disreputable Mailer as a way of recruiting new addicts and blackmailing other victims. Roderick Alleyn, billed as R. Allen, books himself on the tour, too, since he has been sent to Rome to ferret out new drug trade routes and suppliers. As he explains to his counterpart at Rome's police force, " . . . [T]he whole problem of the drug traffic, as we both know, is predominantly an Interpol affair, but as in this instance we are rather closely tied up with them--" (29, ch. 2). As Alleyn gets to know his fellow travelers he is startled to meet the respectable Barnaby Grant, who is being held prisoner in one of Mailer's twisted blackmail schemes. When Sebastian Mailer disappears and is later discovered dead in the catacombs beneath an ancient Roman church, it turns out that everyone on the tour had a motive to wish him dead.

Before Mailer is discovered Alleyn has an opportunity to observe the Rome drug scene first hand. Kenneth Dorne indiscreetly confides to "R. Allen" that he is thinking of trying new drugs: "The big leap. Pot head to mainliner. Well, as a matter of fact, I've had a taste. You know. Mind you, I'm not hooked. Just the odd pop. Only a fun thing" (101, ch. 5). Yet as much as he protests, Kenneth Dorne is clearly headed for disaster when the late night attractions of Mailer's tour involve a visit to "Toni's Pad." Toni turns out to be a fat, effeminate man who announces the evening's entertainment as "Keenky Keeks." Marsh primly avoids describing the sordid entertainment by sending Alleyn to make a drug buy. This is just the sort of agent provocateur activity that the Drug Squad would be excoriated for shortly after the book was published (Collison, 153). Alleyn feigns the symptoms of an addict in need in order to persuade the concierge at Toni's to sell him cocaine, heroin and the necessary paraphernalia.

Later when the emphasis shifts to the murder investigation, Alleyn reminds Dorne of their conversation about his conversion from soft to hard drugs. Alleyn reassures Dorne that he isn't going to arrest him; he just wants information that will help him trap the killer. Alleyn also uncovers the reason why Barnaby Grant cooperated in such a peculiar enterprise. When Grant reveals the blackmail to Alleyn, the detective's response is that "everything is grist that comes to our grubby little mill. . . . my masters sent me here on the drug-running lay and I find myself landed with . . . murder" (144, ch. 7). When Alleyn discovers the murderer, he also identifies the alleged drunk on the tour, Major Sweet, as a key figure in the drug trade. He confronts Sweet with the knowledge that he has gained about a new entry route for hard drugs, which is being employed by one of the major smugglers, Otto Zeigfeldt. Alleyn also uncovers the

fact that Sweet is really a courier for the Zeigfeldt connection, sent to check on Sebastian Mailer. With the death of the disreputable Mailer, Sweet's mission is compromised, with the unpleasant consequences for the drug barons that a policeman now knows too much about their operation. Alleyn also knows that Sweet may actually be in danger, since the unwanted exposure and the possibility that he is involved in a double cross to cut himself in on Mailer's profits may make him expendable to his masters. He offers Sweet a deal: protection in exchange for "a complete list of Zeigfeldt's agents and a full account of his modus operandi between Izmir and the U.S.A. Step by step. With particular respect to Mailer" (153, ch. 7). Sweet, cursing and sweating for a drink, agrees to Alleyn's terms. As the mystery concludes, once again a British policeman has released known addicts, made a deal with the drug merchant's agent, solved two murders and, with scarcely a bow to the limitations of his power as a C.I.D. agent abroad, ridden home in triumph (Collison, 154).

In her next-to-last mystery, Last Ditch (1977), Marsh once again weaves the international drug trade into the web of deceit in her plot. Ricky Alleyn, Roderick and Troy's grown son, has retired to a small fishing village on an unidentified British island off the coast of France to write a novel. While there he is charmed by the eccentric Pharamond family, puzzled by the late-night fishing expeditions of his landlord and caught up in a murder investigation. The only young man of his age with whom he has contact is a painter, Sydney Jones, who cultivates Ricky with the hope of an introduction to his famous painter mother, Troy Alleyn. Syd is also a minor villain in the piece and one who introduces the drug theme. One evening after a convivial drink in the town pub, Syd invites Ricky to his "pad." When Syd offers him a smoke and asks if he's ever taken a "trip," Ricky leaves quickly. Later, upon reflection, he realizes that Syd's odd behavior and suspicious trips to France for an imported artist's paint may mark him as both an addict and a smuggler.

This connection is validated when his father arrives in the village, supposedly on holiday, to visit Ricky. As Alleyn explains his presence to his son, "I'm here on a sort of double job which is my Assistant Commissioner's Machiavellian idea of economy. I'm here because the local police are worried about the death of Dulcie Harkness and have asked us to nod in and I'm also supposed in an offhand, carefree manner to look into the possibility of this island being a penultimate station in one of the heroin routes into Great Britain" (105, pt. 4, ch. 5). The French town opposite Ricky's little village haven has been identified by Scotland Yard as a probable new port of smuggling that the drug runners have resorted to after Major Sweet's revelations in When in Rome. Alleyn is

once again to chop off another of the hydra-heads of the Zeigfeldt drug empire.

The murder investigation yields surprising results after more and more strange events come to light. The police find that the victim's uncle, a fire and brimstone preacher, has amphetamines tucked into his pamphlets on eternal damnation, and Ricky's landlord, Gil Ferrant, emerges as a man with extensive connections, including chemical factories near Marseilles, that M. Dupont of the French Sureté has tracked down for Scotland Yard. M. Dupont, whose first appearance was in Spinsters in Jeopardy, cooperates with his old friend Alleyn as both lie in wait hoping to catch the biggest dealers, not merely the middle-sized ones. Syd Jones certainly qualifies as only a small-time operator, barely trusted by the drug pushers because he, himself, has become a junkie. Alleyn explains, "They don't use drug consumers inside the organization . . . they're completely unpredictable and much too dangerous" (159, pt. 5, ch. 6).

He is almost tragically right, for his own son will be taken hostage by Syd and a pal, who beat him severely in order to ascertain how much the police know. It is a rash act and only succeeds in hastening Alleyn's intervention and catching both the dealers and the murderer. After he finds his badly beaten son, Alleyn receives at least some small and legitimate amount of revenge by withholding a "fix" that Syd needs, in order to elicit his frantic revelations about drugs, murder and smuggling. The murder victim, Dulcie Harkness, had discovered that Syd was smuggling pellets of drugs to the island in his paint tubes. She was murdered to protect the route by which illicit drugs were moving into England and the fortunes that even smaller time dealers had begun to amass. Although Alleyn does not succeed in landing one of the big fish, he does succeed in identifying the director of the island operation, Louis Pharamond, one of Ricky's delightful hosts.

As in Spinsters in Jeopardy and When in Rome, Alleyn does not overstep his authority completely in Last Ditch. He is, after all, on British soil. Spinsters in Jeopardy and When in Rome underscored the problem of international cooperation necessary among national police forces; Last Ditch comments upon another area of tension between the domestic police and customs officials, as blame shifts back and forth about whose responsibility it is to protect England from the intrusion of drugs. Justice certainly has her day at the end of Last Ditch, but Marsh and Alleyn both acknowledge that ending a portion of the trade is but one battle in a long and frustrating war.

All of Marsh's books that weave the drug trade into their fabric of murder and mystery reveal a policeman's revulsion at the wasting of human qualities and potential by addiction to illegal drugs, but the more

common waste, alcoholism, is never mentioned. A good deal of social drinking is going on in these books, but the drunk is in no way compared with the doper. Drunkenness is an ugly part of the victim's personality in Enter A Murderer, and a kind of menacing violence accompanies it, but it represents little more than a social inconvenience, or as the smart young set aver, a "bore." A drunk is not quite a gentleman, but he is tolerated in society. Even the hapless Maurice Pringle of Death in Ecstasy is considered quite acceptable while he and Janey and Nigel drink highball after highball. It is only when he retires to his closet to drug himself that he appears dangerously changed. In A Wreath for Rivera the smart young people of the jazz clubs also drink a good bit, but evidently with no unfortunate results. In another of Marsh's novels, Scales of Justice, Commander Syce, retired military, is an alcoholic, but when he succumbs to a fit of lumbago, he also succumbs to the maternal charms of Nurse Kettle, who sets about to straighten him out, spine and habits, and does so. Is Marsh suggesting that all the drunk needs is the love of a good woman?

Two other retired military men who are drunks, villains and, in one case, a murderer, appear in When in Rome and Black As He's Painted. Major Sweet craves his bottle and stays half drunk throughout the infamous tour of Rome that results in Sebastian Mailer's death. Though Alleyn knows that some of the Major's befuddlement provides cover for his drug activities, some of it is real. As he sees the Major cleaned up after a night of hard drinking, Alleyn notes, "Perhaps the Major was all he seemed to be and all of it gone to the bad" (150, ch. 7). Major Sweet is, in fact, a bad 'un, having falsified his military identity, aided in covering up one murder and betrayed his drug boss. No benign old drunk is he, but a manipulative thorough scoundrel.

Another ex-military man who is a drunk appears in the 1973 novel, Black As He's Painted. Colonel Cockburn-Montfort has been legitimate career military and is now retired. He has been credited with the excellent organization and training of the army of Ng'ombwana, a fictional African nation emerging from colonial status to independence. Like many of his breed, Cockburn-Montfort knows no other life but the military and, after many years there, thinks of Ng'ombwana as his home. When the new rulers of the nation relieve him of responsibility and turn over the army to an African officer, he withdraws into drink, embittered and vengeful. His alcoholic ways hide the anger and bitterness, and Alleyn first tends to dismiss him as an impotent drunk incapable of a terrible double murder of two repulsive ex-colonials who are themselves suspected of ties to the drug trade. As Alleyn views the Colonel shortly after the murder, his

tendency, as with Major Sweet, is to see him as ludicrous rather than evil:

> Colonel Cockburn-Montfort lay in an armchair, with his mouth open, snoring profoundly and hideously. He would have presented a less distasteful picture, Alleyn thought, if he had discarded the outward showing of an officer and --ambiguous addition--gentleman: the conservative suit, the signet ring on the correct finger, the handmade brogues, the regimental tie, the quietly elegant socks and, lying on the floor by his chair, the hat from Jermyn Street --all so very much in order. And Colonel Cockburn-Montfort so very far astray (207, ch. 9).

As with Major Sweet, Alleyn discovers that Cockburn-Montfort is the murderer of the two victims. He murdered them, returned to his home, had a drink and passed out, as Alleyn has found him. Surely, in these two, drink is an unpleasant habit, but it is not roundly condemned. Alleyn cannot rouse himself to the same sense of moral outrage at their drunkenness, even when it has destroyed character as certainly as marijuana and heroin.

Critics have argued that those who write detective fiction are, by nature, social meliorists, intent on writing to right wrongs and serving the cause of justice. Other critics point to this as the genre's greatest flaw--the tendency to tie up all stray ends, tidy up the moral issue of murder, with definitive notions of "Right" always prevailing in the end. The murder victim is frequently an unpleasant or unpopular person, often ungrieved by the survivors. The murderer is always discovered, whether by police methods or by Poirot's little gray cells. The conclusion promises a world purged of doubt and murder. Leaving aside for the moment the fact that modern practitioners of the craft like P. D. James and Ruth Rendell are transforming the genre, critics complain that the world simply is not as the classic writers make it appear. The Grandes Dames of the Golden Age are looked upon by these critics as little better than romance novelists who provide an artificial resolution to all conflicts by the end of the story.

Nevertheless, murder, the act upon which all mysteries focus, is always portrayed as an act arising from individual responsibility. There is perhaps no more existential, more defining moment in life aside from the moment of birth. It has been regarded as a crime by most known societies regardless of social context or provocation. Methods of proof, trial and punishment may differ from one society to another, but the criminality itself remains constant. When murder occurs, the efforts of civilized men and women are directed toward resolving the loss, solving the puzzle and apprehending the perpetrator.

The blending of murder mysteries and drug addiction is an odd combination, an uneasy alliance. Drug abuse is most often seen as a social crime, not a moral one, in part because it is an act requiring a vast network of resources from supplier to user. Drug use may, in fact, be a social act, performed with others as companionable associates. Murder is most often a lonely crime requiring only two parties: the murderer and the victim. Addiction to drugs remains a denizen of the gray areas of the consciences of individualistic, capitalistic societies. Unlike murder, where the crime is defined as doing unto others, addiction is a matter of doing unto oneself. What is the moral issue here, and how can it be consistent with individual freedom? Certainly in serious drug use only the first experience can be defined as existential; most subsequent use is because of a physical or psychological imperative and inconsistent with freedom of choice. Can a victim be morally culpable?

Certainly reasonable men and women can disagree on whether the individual user is a victim or a co-conspirator in the illegal drug trade. The United States and Britain developed totally different policies in the early and middle years of the century. They have actually moved to greater concert in later years--Great Britain realizing that junkies are not helpless victims, but often become criminals driven to crimes against property to support their habit, the U.S. realizing that attaining the goal of jailing every user in order to stop the trade is impossible and futile. Surely both nations have been frustrated by their attempts to shut down the trade and the bastard children that it spawns--prostitution, gambling and moneylaundering. Yet typically the big drug barons do not relish murder--their trade is most lucrative in the shadows, and a murder investigation can turn up the lights, to the great discomfiture of pusher and user alike.

That Ngaio Marsh so often linked the use of drugs to bogus religious sects offers the most plausible climate for its inclusion in a murder mystery. Both drug use and religious sects demand an individual shaman or pusher, the surrender of individual will and, Sherlock Holmes notwithstanding, a strong community identity. Alleyn makes this connection in Death in Ecstasy when he notes that both Father Garnette's hypnotic preaching and his opium deliver a sense of transcendence and euphoria. Yet bogus religious sects seem out of place in the refinement of classic detective fiction: "A bullet creasing a well tailored dinner jacket, tea gently laced with arsenic in the Spode teapot, were the stuff of the English school of crime writing, served up with relish and wry" (Budd, xi).

All of this religious and geographical exotica seem so remote from the cozy little murder that the Grandes Dames were most famous for producing. Murder is most often motivated by greed, fear or jealousy--not a search for transcendence. Traditional detective fiction is an odd

dwelling place for addicts. Addicts take the emphasis off the plot and place it on reading character, which is typically the weakest part of Golden Age stories. Marsh is more skilled than many other writers in character development, but she is always concerned more with their actions than with their psyches. Yet addicts demand attention to their psyche; they cry out to be understood. Her novels that employ addiction as a theme are among her weaker productions. As brilliantly concocted as some of Marsh's plots are, the addition of addiction to the brew produces an odd hybrid . . . not a typical mystery and not a psychological character study. The fact that she chose to make the attempt tells us a great deal about the social concerns of her day, irrespective of whether or not these individual mysteries are successful. We see in her treatment of addiction and the drug trade her troubled reading of a troubled world. Surely the two world wars, the threat of total nuclear annihilation, and concurrently the threat of the loss of generations, not to war, but to addiction, shaped the world in which Marsh wrote her stories.

NOTES

1. Opium had been known in the ancient world as early as the Sumerians, and was used by the Greeks and Romans. Its assistance in healing and pain relief was praised in the writing of Paracelsus (1493-1541), who also developed a tincture of opium known as laudanum.
2. Marsh, a very proper Englishwoman/New Zealander, here seems to subscribe to the common error, caused no doubt by Anglo-American confusion about the exact meaning of "narcotic," that a heroin user will have enlarged pupils. In later novels she correctly ascribes pin-point pupils to them.
3. The magazine is secretly published by Lord Pastern, who also writes an advice column. Although Lord Pastern enjoys his reputation as an unpredictable eccentric, he supports serious journalism.
4. In an earlier novel, The Nursing Home Murder, published in 1935, Marsh featured a nurse, a Bolshevik sympathizer, who condemns everything from the health care system to the seduction of innocent young women as a capitalist plot. Nurse Banks was an embittered woman; perhaps if she had lived to see Atlee's election she would have been mollified.
5. Agatha Christie employs this same device in her mystery What Mrs. McGuillicuddy Saw. It works for Christie more effectively than for Marsh because the rest of the story does not strain credulity as much as Spinsters in Jeopardy does.

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The Mask of Amontillado

Ivan Gold

"My name is Fortunato, I am an alcoholic."
"Hi, Fortunato."
"Hello, group. It's good to be here tonight, sober. It would be good to be anywhere, sober. I haven't shared my experience, strength and hope at a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous for some little while, but when my home group called on me to join them on this speaking commitment tonight, well, if there's one thing I've learned in my years in this Godgiven Fellowship, it's when not to say no.

"I drank for twenty-seven years, and it would fall short of the truth were I to claim there weren't some good times, and some good years, among them. My first drink was at the age of five, literally at my father's knee. He was a connoisseur as well as a purveyor of the finest wine, and he lost little time in initiating me, his only child, into the art of appreciating a 'nose,' or distinguishing a meditative Graves from, let us say, a coy Chablis. So my drink of choice has always been expensive wine, although I came to understand, from what I've heard repeated in these halls, that had I persisted in my habits I would have soon grown desperate enough to consume whatever alcoholic beverage I could lay my hands on, grateful even for the dram or two of Night Train left in a pint bottle by some poor sot less desperate than I.

(Laughter)

"But through the grace of my higher power, Whom I choose to call God, I was able to find my way to AA while 'crates' of Medoc, and 'casks' of Amontillado, still exercised their siren call.

"Fairly early in recovery, guided by my AA sponsor, and with the help of AA's Twelve Steps, I was able to stop blaming my late father, or my 'dysfunctional family,' in that unhappy phrase, for the onset and progression of this baffling, cunning, insidious disease. I will say that Fortunato *pè\\re* was, for much of his life, a true lover of the grape, until one day without warning he stepped over the invisible line that separates the so-called social drinker from the hopeless drunk. I know I am taking his inventory with such a remark, but the fact is I used to watch him, in my teens, when he thought he was drinking alone. Deluded by his years of expertise, he'd uncork a bottle of the best and sniff it and sip it and, in caricature of the gifted oenophile he once had been, render his considered judgment to an empty room. Before long he'd be reeling and bellowing through the house with a bottle of Chateauneuf du Pape in either hand, pausing here and there to swirl the stuff around his mouth and spit it on the carpet. My dear mother would sometimes find the will to banish him

to the basement, no banishment at all, of course, since that was where he stored his wares. But hapless enabler that she was, she would shortly succumb to his pleas, his oath to take the pledge and seek out less dangerous employment. She'd let him back upstairs and back into the big bed, and he was there in the big bed, God rest his soul, when cirrhosis of the liver claimed him.

"But that, as I say, was *their* story. I became what *I* was --a falling-down drunk, a wearer of the jester's motley and his cap and bells, a man with a barbarously cruel tongue who was at the same time an easy target for a flatterer's wiles--, became these things all on my own, through the use and abuse of alcohol. No man or woman ever raised a cup and forced a drink into my mouth. Allow me to remind you that this is a threefold disease-- mental, physical and spiritual. The bad news is, it's incurable. The good news is that it can, one day at a time, be arrested. Not everyone who needs this Program finds his or her way here, or remains here if he or she gets here, and so I struggle every day to cultivate an attitude of gratitude. As some of you already know, those who have heard me speak before, or those I have confided in, or those familiar with Edgar P.'s skillful but incomplete rendering of these events in his tale *The Cask of Amontillado*, I very nearly drank myself into one jackpot too many, and barely escaped with my life.

"Of the (by his count) 'thousand injuries' I am said to have inflicted on Montresor, let alone of the unspecified 'insult' he alludes to, which drove him to want to end my life, I have little memory. This does not mean I take issue with his version of events. I know full well I was a mean drunk, and had my share of alcoholic blackouts, those bizarre states in which we continue, zombie-like, to function, although our behavior remains, usually for good reason, beyond our recall. In view of all this, I've written Montresor an amends letter, to which he has so far failed to reply. But of course the point of the Ninth Step, in which we make amends to people we have harmed (except when to do so would injure them or others), is not to elicit their sympathy or understanding or forgiveness of our derelictions, but to clean house for the sake of our own continuing sobriety. If we wish to remain sober we must first acknowledge the abysmal wreckage of the past.

"I, on my part, have forgiven *him* for luring me into his niter-encrusted vaults seven years ago on the pretext of having there a cask of the great wine Amontillado, which he pretended to need me, and my supposed expertise, to authenticate. I followed him willingly into his catacombs, like the damned drunken fool I was. He steered me into a *cul de sac*, chained me to the oozing rock, bricked me in and left me there to die.

"'Resentment is the number one offender,' Bill Wilson, our great co-founder, reminded us often: I believe he was saying that alcoholics,

unlike 'normal folk,' however one cares to define that anomalous contingent, can ill afford the luxury of anger, in their pursuit of a sober life. 'It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with *us*,' Bill's commentary on the Tenth Step says; it goes on to say that 'Few people have been more victimized by resentments than have we.'

"For the alcoholic there is a drink lurking in the snit, however justified our rage may seem, or righteous our indignation. And a drink, for us, means another, and several more on top of that, which is why you hear it said at meetings that one is too many, and a thousand not enough.

"So I forgave Montresor because I had to. I could not afford to allow him, as the saying has it, 'to live rent-free inside my head.' The AA member who relapses, like the alcoholic who never stops drinking at all, is sure to end in one of three places: mental institution, penal institution, early grave.

"And how, you may ask, did I escape that early grave? Why did his carefully-laid plans go awry?

"While I do not wish to compromise his anonymity, I feel compelled to share with you the fact that my erstwhile adversary has been seen around AA, usually at out-of-the-way suburban meetings; I am told he manages to put together a sober week, sometimes even a month, before he goes back out again. He may well be one of those unfortunates, cited in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, who are 'constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves.'

"I daresay he was as sloshed as I when we staggered off in search of the Amontillado, and we imbibed, from his ample stash, several hits of excellent Medoc along the way. So he was in no condition to notice -- nor, for several terrified moments, was I-- that the padlock he used to fasten the chains around my waist was ancient and defective, and if I but bided my time until the maniac departed I might be able to jiggle it open, and with luck survive.

"'Fortunato!' he called gaily as he worked, perhaps hoping to hear me beg for my life. 'Does it not make a lifetime of hard knocks worthwhile -- he! he!-- the exquisite bouquet of the Amontillado?' I responded by shaking my head, so that he might hear the jingling of the jester's bells. At last he put the final stone in place, and I closed my eyes against the bitter darkness. I could hear him gathering the skulls and bones that lay about the catacombs, and piling them --nice touch!-- against what was to be my tomb. I forced myself to hold back for an endless moment --how fast did mortar dry?!-- then reared back and kicked out that final stone.

"As I groped through the tunnel I appropriated a bottle of his Medoc, chiefly for use as a weapon, should I need one, but he was not to be found, and in the end that bottle did contain my final drink; I drained it

that very night, before I made my way to detox, and it was not long after I dried out that I found myself at my first AA meeting, which, as it happened, unfolded in this very hall. I have not, in the seven years since, found it necessary to pick up a drink or a substitute, and for this I'm deeply grateful to the Program, and to you people, and to my higher power, for a life second to none.

"But I've been up here much too long, and we have several fine speakers yet to come. So let me close by reminding any newcomers to the halls of AA of the basic tenets of this Program: Don't drink; ask for help; get yourself to a meeting. Thank you all for listening. Thanks for being here."

(Applause)

"Edgar P., would you care to say a word or two?"

"Heavens Good Cheer": Puritan Drinking in the Meditations of Edward Taylor, 1682-1725

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During the lifetime of Puritan preacher and poet Edward Taylor (1642-1729), most colonists drank more alcoholic than non-alcoholic beverages. Unable to store fresh water safely, colonists preserved water in the homemade beers and ciders which accompanied most meals and graced most gatherings. The consumption of alcohol pervaded everyone's everyday life, yet its symbolic and social meanings ranged beyond the ordinary. Drinking became more complicated as new, imported beverages displaced the consumption of homemade brews in select settings. As colonists gathered about bottles of European wine and jugs of Caribbean rum, they deliberately reinvented ritual, communal drinking in fashions Puritan religious leaders found offensive and blasphemous.

David Conroy has recently described how secular colonists democratized their communities through the emerging public sphere fostered by taverns and tavernkeepers.[1] His book, In Public Houses, focusses on the religious leaders of Boston who largely opposed these cultural innovations. Out on the Massachusetts frontier, Edward Taylor resisted the same kind of tavern-based cultural change, fighting the abuse and secularization of drink through sermons against gluttony, pledge drinking, drunkenness, and tavernkeepers.

1. From Gluttony to Temperance

In Edward Taylor's opinion, the best Puritan drinking took place at the Lord's Supper, the main religious ceremony of Puritans. At first, Taylor celebrated this drinking unequivocally. His poetic celebrations of wine drinking accrued qualifications, however, when his community, at the close of the seventeenth century, began what Richard Bushman calls the "refinement process" of desiring, acquiring, and adjusting to the proliferation of material goods, most of which catered to feasting. To trace his mounting alarm at his congregation's gluttony we must begin with Taylor's earliest celebrations of the Lord's Supper.

Every four to six Sundays, Taylor led a sacrament service comprised of his sermon, psalm-singing, and communion.[2] For the administration of the sacrament, he sat with the ruling elders at one end of the small meetinghouse, at a plain table, in a deliberate reenactment of Jesus' Last Supper. By receiving the sacrament, church members renewed their

covenant with God and found cause for confidence in their reception of grace. Since Puritans believed only an elite minority received grace, only an elite minority partook of the bread and wine.[3]

Recipients of communion underwent rigorous self-examination in a search for proof of their graced state. On Saturdays before sacrament days, Taylor often wrote one of the poems known today as "Preparatory Meditations" as part of his preparation for his own reception of the sacrament. Taylor scholars and religious historians generally agree with Norman S. Grabo's theory suggesting Taylor composed these Meditations by condensing the sacrament-day sermon into purer statement.[4] The Meditations thus provide an abridged history of Taylor's sacrament-day teachings.[5]

In the early years of his ministry, Taylor recruited full members by celebrating the plain sacramental cheer as a foretaste of heavenly riches, in the ancient Catholic tradition. He praised the simple fare as the most attractive feast imaginable, and, more importantly, he celebrated this feasting to recruit full members. Most half-way members were too shy to come forward with a conversion story, and Taylor, like many Puritan ministers of the time, concerned himself with encouraging these reluctant elect to recognize their election. Non- and half-way members were more anxious than indifferent; they so doubted God's choice of them that they paused before grave injunctions (like 1 Corinthians 11: 28-30) to participate only if worthy. In the early sixteen-eighties, Taylor dramatized the desire to eat and drink the Sacrament with an exuberance his community would find irresistibly appealing. It seems he succeeded: between 1679 and 1689 full church membership jumped from 30 to 40 percent of the adult population.[6]

In these early celebrations, Taylor emphasizes the higher social status attained with the consumption of sacramental cheer. This emphasis may have been part of his recruiting strategy. Certainly other religious leaders of this period experimented with the meaning of full church membership as they also recruited full members. The minister of neighboring Springfield, Solomon Stoddard, recruited full members by inviting the less spiritually refined, half-way members, to participate on a trial basis. While Stoddard was not necessarily democratizing the sacrament, Taylor attacked Stoddard's recruiting strategy as a vulgarity.[7] He insisted the sacrament remain strenuously exclusive, enticing church members by describing the sacramental cheer as "the richest" material goods "that heaven itself affords."[8] This "Good Cheer," he argued, was "Brewd by Pure Divinity" only for the "Humane Casks that ne'er / Were musty made by any Sluttery" (2.81: 31-36).[9]

Taylor likened the plain sacramental table to what the elect would encounter in the heavenly waiting-place they would inhabit until Resurrection. He compared this heavenly waiting-place to earthly waiting-places--to inns. Thus after death the elect would be served "Heavens Good Cheer" by Angelic servants in a heavenly banquet hall.

Dated October 1684, Meditation 1.10 comes from the early, exuberant recruiting stage of Taylor's ministry. The poem opens with a declaration of the intense thirst of the poet's soul. "My Soule had Caught an Ague," he writes, "and like Hell / Her thirst did burn" for grace, for salvation, for medicinal brandy, for the "Aqua-Vitae" which sprang from Christ's wounded side (7-8, 10). In seventeenth-century Massachusetts, backyard stills called "alimbecks" or "limbecs" produced homemade spirituous liquor, generically known as "aqua vitae," which served Puritans in toddies, cordials, and medicines.[10] Taylor, as physician to Westfield, would have routinely administered them to the sick.

The fluid metaphors of Meditation 1.10 are typical of his description of grace throughout his writings.[11] Complicating his use of metaphor is his conviction, learned from Calvin, that all attempts to describe higher truth through natural metaphor are doomed to failure. To emphasize and partly overcome the limitations of natural metaphor, Taylor qualifies his figures by conspicuously mixing and extending them.[12] Typically, then, the brandy of Meditation 1.10 becomes wine when Christ's "Golden Pipes, to give [the speaker] drink, did burst" (18). A "pipe" was a standard size for wine casks, the equivalent of two hogsheads. Granted, Christ's "pipes" were originally his veins, but here "Golden Pipes" sounds like something behind the counter in a first-rate inn catering to those wealthy enough for wine, which was, in colonial Massachusetts, "almost exclusively a delight of the well-to-do."[13] Since North Americans had very little viticulture, wines were imported, expensive and available only in the wealthier of inns, taverns, and groceries, for the wealthier of citizens; as the inn outshining all inns, the heavenly banquet room fittingly displays "Golden Pipes." (The communion wine was probably tent wine, imported from Spain--"Here is a Mudwall tent," he writes in 2.75).

Simply put, Taylor recruited full members by offering the spiritually well-to-do a taste of a treat more commonly sought by the materially well-to-do. For this, Taylor dignified the earthly luxuries of feasting by suggesting they are analogous to the heavenly luxuries awaiting the elect. Meditation 1.10 even describes this heaven as boasting "Wine Cellars" complete with servants to facilitate appreciation of the wine (22). The speaker can thus command, "Lord, make thy Butlar draw, and fill with speed / My Beaker full: for this is drink indeed" (19-24). And, significantly, in this early poem, the speaker wants more than a small glass or a decorous sip. He wants a "beaker," a large drinking cup, full to

the brim. He knows the Lord can supply him, too, for he sees the shiny casks ("butts") along the wall:

Whole Buts of this blesst nectar shining stand
Lockt up with Saph'rine Taps, whose splendid Flame
Too bright do shine for brightest Angells hands
To touch, my Lord. Do thou untap the same.
Oh! make thy Chrystall Buts of Red Wine bleed
Into my Chrystall Glass this Drink-Indeed. (25-30)

This drink is so dear, the Lord--cast here as the wealthiest of innkeepers--dares not trust Angelic servants with tapping duty. Nevertheless, Christ has already paid for the wine. There is no charge for it, even if the speaker wants a generous supply:

. . . though I make no pay for this Red Wine,
And scarce do say I thank-ye-for't; strange thing!
Yet were thy silver skies my Beer bowle fine
I finde my Lord, would fill it to the brim. (37-40)

The conviviality of these early Meditations should not be read, as John Gatta correctly insists, as Taylor extending an "invitation to . . . worldly frivolity."[14] Taylor's celebration of alcoholic consumption, however, remains part of a larger celebration of material luxuries which Taylor had yet to recant. For just as Taylor desires big butts of grace in these early Meditations, so too does he glorify the other material goods of wealthy feasting. Reading the "feast of fat things" (Isaiah 25: 6) as a type fulfilled by the New Testament antitype of the Last Supper, Meditation 1.11 describes the setting for such prodigious drinking of grace:

A Deity of Love Incorporate
My Lord, lies in thy Flesh, in Dishes stable
Ten thousand times more rich than golden Plate
In golden Services upon thy Table,
To feast thy people with. What Feast is this!
. . . .
This Shew-Bread Table all of God with white
Fine Table Linen of Pure Love, 's ore spred
And Courses in Smaragdine Chargers bright
Of Choicest Dainties Paradise e're bred.
Where in each Grace like Dainty Sippits lie
Oh! brave Embroderies of sweetest joy! (1-6, 13-18)

Taylor draws on the Old Testament in his descriptions of gold plates, but the table linens with sweet "Embroderies" have the unmistakable allure of material refinement. Meditating on the engraved exterior of a silver drinking vessel in Meditation 1.42 of 1691, Taylor even salivates: "Apples of gold, in silver pictures shrin'de / Enchant the appetite, make mouths to water" (1-2). Surely, few citizens of 1691 Westfield possessed

such wealthy goblets. Most people would have gathered about crude "Beer bowls"--punch bowls for beer--to share plain, common cups.

However, in the coming decades the stuff of such feasts would become, in Taylor's opinion, alarmingly available, to even the most graceless of citizens.[15] In the years that follow, Taylor recants this metaphoric gluttony as if his congregation had been taking him too literally. Meditation 1.28 of late 1688, for example, celebrates a strictly temperate thirst. Whereas earlier, in Meditations 1.10 and 1.11, Taylor's speaker wants a lot to drink--whole beakers, butts, cellars, and sky-sized bowls--in 1.28 the speaker asks for just a little bit.

> Thou, thou my Lord, art full, top full of Grace,
> The Golden Sea of Grace. . . .
> Untap thy Cask, and let my Cup Catch some.
> Although its in an Earthen Vessells Case,
> Let it no Empty Vessell be of Grace.
>
> Let thy Choice Caske, shed, Lord, into my Cue
> A Drop of Juyce presst from thy Noble Vine.
> My Bowl is but an Acorn Cup, I sue
> But for a Drop: this will not empty thine. (13-22)

The speaker desires, by analogue, moderate drinking: a "Cue" cup is a small, half-pint cup, the proper size for the kind of drinking episode sanctioned by Puritan law, and common to Puritan lifestyles. Donald Stanford glosses this poem by noting "Taylor is here, no doubt, recollecting his experience as butler at Harvard."[16] As the butler of Harvard College, Taylor poured cue cups of beer for his classmates at 6 am, 10 am, 11 am, 5 pm, and 7:30 pm. Indeed, Taylor's early appreciation of the material props for eating and feasting may also date from his Harvard days, since a significant duty of the college butler was the counting and maintenance of the expensive, hard-to-replace "College Vessells, and Utensells, great and small."[17]

As Stanford notes, the cup of 1.28 is that used by Harvard undergrads, but as I will discuss in section two, below, the setting of 1.28 seems more like a secular, 1690 inn than a pious, 1670 college. Beakers, bowls, and other such large-capacity cups may have been more popular in the 1690 taverns catering to secularized, communal drinking practices, but all 1690 inns would still have a cue-cup for Taylor's custom, especially since Massachusetts law (established by the clergy) still prohibited the consumption of more than a half-pint in a single sitting.

After Meditation 1.28, Taylor continues to pointedly contrast the wealthy, earthly life with the heavenly afterlife. Meditation 2.109 provides the best examples. Addressing the Lord, here Taylor lauds the cheer:

> Thy Table's set with fare that doth Excell

The richest Bread, and Wine that ever were
Squeezed out of Corn or Vines: and Cookt up well.
Its Mannah, Angells food. Yea, Heavens Good Cheer.
Thou art the Authour, and the Feast itselfe.
Thy Table Feast hence doth excell all wealth.
(2.109:37-42)

Even with such contrast, however, Taylor continues to offer china chargers--and the emotions they evoke--as analogues for heavenly wealth and the anticipatory emotions it ought to evoke. Earthly riches still figure as the closest, if distantly inferior, analogue. Thus Meditation 2.109 specifically evokes the attraction of the well-lit, fancy banquet rooms found in the wealthiest of taverns:

Suppose a Feast in such a Room is kept
Thats deckt in flaming Guildings every where,
And richest Fare in China Chargers deckt
And set on golden Tables. Waiters there
In flaming robes waite pouring Royall wine
In Jasper Cups out. Oh! what glories shine?

But all this Glorious Feast seems but a Cloud,
My Lord, unto the Feast thou makst for thine.
(1712:2.109:7-14)

The scene described could have been drawn from accounts of Thomas Selby's Crown Coffee House in Boston, which served only the elite. After all, the wealthy sought material pleasures as persistently as the poor who congregated in taverns partly because their own homes lacked chairs. By the early eighteenth century, Massachusetts had a tavern fit to every purse, and in Meditation 2.109, Taylor invokes Westfield's knowledge of the wealthiest. In place of Angelic butlers, Selby offered human servants; in place of golden Tables, Selby offered fine white linens.[18]

This Meditation, written during Taylor's most turbulent year--1712--was clearly drawn from a sermon addressing the new sins of a changing material culture. From the start he lectures on luxury, pomp, and gluttony to catalogue the range of secular feasts and contrast them with his religious feast:

A Feast is said to be for Laughter made.
Belshazzars Feast was made for Luxury.
Ahashueru's Feast for pomp's displayde.
George Nevill's Feast at Yorks, for gluttony.
But thou my Lord a Spirituall Feast has dresst
Whereat the Angells gaze. And Saints are Guests. (1-6)

Not until 1720 would Taylor baldly denounce such material indulgence. In Meditation 2.156 Taylor qualifies his elaborations on the

feasting table with the simple warning: "If any else had let such Dainties rush / It would be counted sauced blasphemy" (15-16). Eventually Taylor stresses the material stinginess of the Lord's Supper. His earlier exuberance for china chargers, gravies, wines, table cloths, and glorious roast beef is gone when he writes: "glut me Lord, ev'n on this dainty fare, / Here is not Surfeit; look upon this dish" in Meditation 2.163. When Taylor first proposed "surfeiting" in the 1680s, gluttony was a material impossibility in his small, frontier community. Forty years later, however, citizens of Westfield seem to have acquired their share of the material goods produced during New England's economic growth over the intervening years. So Taylor tempers his descriptions of the Eucharistic celebrations, and emphasizes the austere accouterments of the rich sacramental cheer. In the 1720's, he sounds cautious, as if to warn his followers against misinterpreting his characterization of the world's best cheer: "All is too little to suffice, this fare / Can surfeit none that eatst" (55-58).

Taylor's exuberance for spiritual wealth undoubtedly motivated many of his followers in their pursuit of material wealth; he admits as much in his repeated directions against precisely such misinterpretations of his spiritual teachings. Max Weber describes this secularization of Christian goals as though Christian leaders failed to notice it was taking place.[19] By the 1720s, however, Edward Taylor knew the spirits of capitalism were increasingly imbibed in the local public house, and he knew material goods had been widely secularized in his community. Yet even so he was still convinced the good life of "Tables, Benches Chairs and Cushens and / Their Table cloaths and Napkins all of Grace" offered a foretaste of the heavenly "feasting place," provided the flavor of such things had not been secularized by their status in the marketplace. Most importantly, then, Taylor reminds his followers that "God hath no market" for heaven's good cheer (2.159: 37-38, 40).

2. Pledge-Drinking Heathens

By 1688 Taylor attacked tavern-goers for more than letting "Dainties rush." Another target in Taylor's campaign against the abuse and secularization of alcohol consumption was pledge drinking.

Taylor knew what people did in inns. Meditation 1.28 and the occasional poem, "[When] Let by Rain," are both set in inns. Like all devout Puritans, Taylor imagined life as a religious journey, as a pilgrimage towards the afterlife; he liked travelling and evidently enjoyed its metaphoric dimensions. In both of these poems he likens his lamentable spiritual progress to the stalled physical progress of a traveler hindered ("let") by bad weather. In "[When] Let by Rain" the speaker

grapples with spiritual lethargy--with his indecisive, "Flippering" soul. In a similar Meditation, 1.28, the speaker despairs of his failure to deliver praise to God. Blaming a lost "Messenger," dispatched by the speaker with "some Bits of Glory," the speaker decides to deliver the gift himself (1-2). "Lord Cleare the Coast: and let thy sweet sun shine," he enjoins. The Lord doesn't clear the coast, however, and the speaker is left in this way station.

Meditation 1.28 goes on to testify to the prevalence of pledge drinking in Taylor's day. A good history of pledge drinking could clarify the nature and erosion of deferential community structures in the eighteenth-century colonies. Puritans took oaths seriously and considered a pledge, to any but God, heathenish. Taylor, for example, left England after being tested with an oath no sincere Puritan could conscientiously take. His only pledge was made--with wine--at every sacrament service. In the "Profession of Faith" that Taylor drew up at the 1679 founding of the Westfield church, he described the sacrament as, first and foremost, a pledge of allegiance:

> As for the word Sacrament its' not scripturall, but a military word denoting that Oath of faithfulness that Souldiers were bound withall unto their Generall: & brought thence by the Church of Christ to import the Seals of the Covenant of Grace which all Christians are publickly obliged by unto the Captain of Their Salvation.[20]

By contrast, in England, public house drinkers drank pledges to local sovereigns, as expressions of deference. By drinking to a person's health, such drinkers expressed a desire for the indefinite extension of his or her reign. Of course, healths also rationalized the purchase of more drinks. These expressions of deference probably meant less to tavern drinkers than they did to Puritans, who nursed cue-cups for half-hours and took offense at the levity of healths. New Englanders deemed graceless by men like Taylor rendered this deferential custom levelling by drinking healths to one another, in turn. By the Revolutionary War secular "Sons of Liberty" like Paul Revere were drinking from fine, ceremonial silver beer bowls, about the rim of which were etched, in a democratic circle, the names of members in a local drinking party assembled for mutual gain.

In Meditation 1.28, Taylor places his speaker before an earlier version of such a democratic drinking party. Beckoning to God the heavenly tavern-keeper, or perhaps one of his Angelic servants, the speaker orders a small drink, calling out, "Oh! fill my Pipkin with thy Blood red Wine." Now the center of attention, the speaker seizes this opportunity to instruct the gathered audience on the blasphemy of pledge drinking by telling the

one and only Lord: "I'll drinke thy Health: To pledge thee is no crime" (9-10; emphasis mine). Given that Taylor's meditations were distilled from lengthier sermons, this one line suggests a longer digression against such irreligious drinking. A few other Meditations also suggest anti-health drinking asides of sufficient importance to make the abridged, poetic versions. Puritan jeremiads occasioned by any event could turn, suddenly, against the blasphemy of current drinking practices; such digressions are commonplace in the sermons of other Puritan preachers.[21]

Edward Taylor also cautioned his congregation against light pledge-making in the public house by translating biblical stories into present-day pledge drinking situations. In Meditation 1.43 of early winter 1691, for example, the speaker flagellates himself for an inability to find humility. "Why mayn't my Faith now drinke thy Health, Lord?" he asks himself. For this he reasons he must be drinking the health of Satan, i.e., the health of "The Head of all [his] Sins" (19-20). In a later poem Taylor would describe Jesus' sacrifice for humanity as Jesus "pledging Death's health." And in 1720 he figured the sacrament as reciprocating Jesus' pledge, in Meditation 2.156: "Thou drinkst a Cup to me of't spiced wine / And bidst me pledge thee and I pledge will" (25-28).

3. Intoxicated Saints and Secular Publicans

As mentioned in Section 1, after his early period, Taylor qualifies his alcoholic metaphors with repeated clarifications of the line between spiritual and mundane intoxicants. In Meditation 2.60B, for example, Moses taps the rock in Horeb to draw forth "beere" (21). Taylor longs for this beer of grace, but his longing is tempered by an evident awareness that some may take his metaphors too literally. He opens the preceding poem, for example, with the otherwise curious qualification, "Count me not liquorish if my Soule do pine, / And long for Angells bread of Heavens wheate" (2.60A: 1-2). The Meditations of 1704-1714 suggest Taylor increasingly lectured the "liquorish" on the difference between pious and blasphemous drinking. Heavenly aqua vitae has a devilish, earthly counterpart in 2.78, for example, as Taylor warns, "Oh, here's a Spring: Indeed its Lethe Lake / Of Aqua-Infernales: don't mistake" (11-12).

Meditation 2.98 was distilled from a sermon which discussed drunkenness in some detail. Again we find Taylor presenting spiritual truths through everyday metaphors of drinking and dining. God's wine of grace, Taylor teaches, is not that "which too much tooke, the brain doth too much tole, / Tho't smacks the Palate, merry makes the Soule" (17-18); this wine is "not like other wine which took too much, / Whose Spirits vapor. And do wise men foole" (37-38). Instead, Taylor contrasts

earthly wines which "raise Clouds up when Liquors High" with the heavenly cheer which "doth clarify" (1-6):

But this the more is tooke, the Better such
Servants and Service best, best grace the Schoole.
Lord tun this Wine in me and make my Savour
Be ever richly filled with its flavour. (39-42)

Taylor was not above the vernacular: here a bit of seventeenth-century slang sneaks into line 41. "To tun" meant "to store," and drunkards were often accused of tunning their beverage of choice inside themselves. Taylor's church records show that at least one saint, Stephen Kellog, straddled the divide between church and tavern, tunning cider in himself on numerous occasions. Kellog, a weaver, came to Westfield in the 1690s and entered into full church membership in 1697. By 1710 Kellog and his crony, Joseph Mawdsley (a miller), acquired military titles which suggest the heightened sense of democratic dignity so characteristic of the quasi-formal pledge-drinking militias convening in colonial taverns.

Taylor prosecuted Kellog and Mawdsley for failing to observe a fast day in 1710. The younger men excused their failure by questioning Taylor's authority to call the fast day in the first place. Although Taylor responded with a punctilious proof of the fast's legitimacy, Kellog and Mawdsley returned with some book with which they claimed exoneration. Again Taylor reprimanded them. Unsatisfied, they turned to Solomon Stoddard for adjudication. Stoddard sided with his fellow clergyman and the two admitted defeat, but not before thus demonstrating their suspicion of Taylor's authority over what and when they ate and drank.[22]

Over the next few years, Kellog would be drunk "so many times sadly."[23] In 1712 he was found drunk at a non-member's home after a barn raising. Within a year he was caught again; testimonies were given that "he could not well get out of his Chair."[24] In 1714 Kellog vomited after "2 or 3" pots of drink before a host who found this offensive.[25] Longstanding Puritan laws had defined drunkenness as not being able to walk home, or throwing up, so Kellog's various excuses only made him look worse.[26] Taylor sighed heavily. He sadly recorded that "indeed [Kellog] was not a drunkard nor did fall on ordinarys, but unwariness was his fault when with others he might take more than was to be justified."[27]

Taylor's most serious disciplinary case would also turn towards secularized alcohol. In 1712 Ben Smith pressed a legal suit for guardianship over a feeble, wealthy man. Seventy years old himself, Taylor found distortions in Smith's petition and refused to sign it. Smith and Taylor exchanged harsh words. As did Kellog, Smith also sought help from Solomon Stoddard.

Outraged, Taylor barred Smith from the Lord's Supper. The congregation further incensed Taylor through their reluctance to discipline Smith; Smith now held a competitively high social position in this town built by Taylor.[28] Taylor disciplined the entire congregation by refusing to administer the Lord's Supper. A few months without spiritual feasting discouraged Smith's following. Effectively excommunicated, Smith left town.

Taylor seized this opportunity to deliver spirited disciplinary sermons. He found biblical justification for his excommunication of Smith in Matthew 18: 17: "If he shall neglect to heare them tell it to the Church. & if he neglect to heare the Church let him be to thee as an Heathen man, & a Publican." While Taylor read "Publican" in the biblical sense of ungodly tax collector--of men living well on ill-gotten wealth--within the year Smith became literally a "publican" by opening a public house, in which transpired, we can safely imagine, much "gluttonous" and "heathenish" drinking.[29] In one of his sermons, Taylor warns that Westfield is in danger of becoming like Boston, where many "notoriously Prophane, Adulterors, Drunkards, etc." attend church only to escape the fine for nonattendance.[30] Certainly tavern-haunting was the future of Westfield's most important family--Taylor's youngest son, Eldad, grew up to become Westfield's first tavernkeeper elected to political office.[31]

After the excommunication of Smith, Taylor entered a protracted meditation on the Song of Songs. As any Puritan would, Taylor recognized the wine, milk, and honey of the Canticles as the recipe for syllabub, a favorite toddy of the era. He kept bees, so it's likely he enjoyed homemade syllabubs.[32] As readers of *Dionysos* may be interested to read, he even attributed poetic creativity to something like alcoholic elevation. As he wrote in 1708, "When on thy Sillibub I sup and bib, / Thy wine and milk will make my Notes run glib" (2.86.7-12). Alcohol remained a part of his everyday life, and even the late Meditations offer its invigorating effects as analogous to the spiritual invigoration of grace. Taylor bent his pen against gluttony, pledge drinking, drunkenness and tavernkeepers, but he never forswore his homebrews.

ENDNOTES

My thanks to Joan Bennett, Tom Lutz, Phil Round and Bluford Adams, for the astute readings and generous assistance which helped this paper find its way.

1. For more on Puritan drinking, see Dean Albertson, "Puritan Liquor in the Planting of New England," New England Quarterly 23 (1950): 437-490; David W. Conroy, In Public Houses: Drink and the Revolution of Authority in Colonial Massachusetts (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1995);

David W. Conroy, "Puritans in Taverns: Law and Popular Culture in Colonial Massachusetts, 1630-1720," in Drinking: Behavior and Belief in Modern History, eds. Susanna Barrows and Robin Room (Los Angeles: U of California P, 1991); Daniel Dorchester, Liquor Problem in All Ages (New York: Hunt, 1886); Mark Lender, "Drunkenness as an Offense in Early New England," Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol 34 (1973): 353-366; Mark Edward Lender and James Kirby Martin, Drinking in America: A History. 2nd ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1987); Emil Oberholzer Jr., Delinquent Saints: Disciplinary Action in the Early Congregational Churches of Massachusetts (New York: Columbia UP, 1956); Kym S. Rice, Early American Taverns: For the Entertainment of Friends and Strangers (Chicago: Fraunces Tavern Museum, 1983); David S. Shields, "The Demonization of the Tavern," in The Serpent in the Cup. eds. David S. Reynolds and Debra J. Rosenthal (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1997), pp. 10-21. The restored interiors of Rice are probably overdone. See Richard Bushman, The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities (New York: Knopf, 1992), esp. p. 20.

2. The standard studies of Puritan religious practice are Norton Davies, The Worship of the American Puritans, 1629-1730 (New York: Lang, 1990), and Charles Hambrick-Stowe, The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1982).
3. There were three grades of church membership in Puritan communities. The full members--also called saints--were widely recognized as recipients of grace, and received communion. "Half-way" members needed a public profession of a satisfactory conversion experience to become full members, and thus receive full communion. Non-members--also known as the damned --were publicly recognized as lacking grace, and did not receive communion.
4. Norman S. Grabo, introduction, Edward Taylor's Treatise Concerning the Lord's Supper (East Lansing: Michigan State UP, 1966) ix; Grabo, introduction, Edward Taylor's Christographia (New Haven: Yale UP, 1962) and Grabo, Edward Taylor (New York: Twayne, 1961) 38. Charles Hambrick-Stowe's description of the meditation process also supports Grabo's theory. In addition to meditating on the text of his forthcoming sermon, Taylor probably also meditated, occasionally, on the beaker and bread of the forthcoming service. See Practice 206-211.
5. This is not to say Taylor's Meditations were not intensely private, even if the theme and structure of each poem found direction in the lengthier, public sermon Taylor was preparing to deliver. For a recent discussion of the mix of public and private tones in the Meditations, see Karen Rowe, Saint and Sinner: Edward Taylor's Typology and the Poetics of Meditation (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986) ch. 7.
6. Edward Taylor, "Church Records" and Related Sermons. eds. Thomas M. & Virginia L. Davis (Boston: Twayne, 1981) xxxiv.

7. For more on Stoddard's open communion, see James P. Walsh, "Solomon Stoddard's Open Communion: A Reexamination," New England Quarterly 43:1 (March 1970) 97-114.
8. Taylor, Treatise Concerning the Lord's Supper 169; quoted in John Gatta, Gracious Laughter: The Meditative Wit of Edward Taylor. ed. Donald Stanford (New Haven: Yale UP, 1960).
9. All references to Taylor's Preparatory Meditations are to the versions found in Edward Taylor, The Poems of Edward Taylor. ed. Donald Stanford (New Haven: Yale UP, 1960).
10. This vocabulary of distillation was also employed by alchemists. As other Taylor scholars have ably demonstrated, some of the Meditations are inscrutable without an understanding of seventeenth-century alchemy. The best discussion of this can be found in Joan DelFatorre's "John Webster's Metallographia: A Source for Alchemical Imagery in the Preparatory Meditations." Early American Literature 43 (1983/84): 223-241.
11. "Damnable Rhum" stands alone as the alcoholic beverage unfit for comparison to grace (Taylor, Minor Poetry. 223). A favorite beverage among the damned, rum was rejected unequivocally by Puritan leaders of Taylor's day. Taylor addresses rum in a 1720 poem composed while suffering illness. In his late seventies, Taylor bid "Farewell to the Terraqueous Globe":

    First I to liquids out adjue do Sing
    Whether only simply Flegm as Waters thin,
    Or Tinctures or Compounds, Methoglin reeks
    Or juyces Cider & Berry Wines all which
    Are much abused & destroy brave wits
    Making the brains like dishclouts watersoakt,
    Destroys the Eyes & bloats the Cheeks makes sols
    [sic--makes sad? see 223 1.141].

    Or good Strong Spirits that distilled are
    Or good Aqua Vitae or Elyxers rare
    Aqua Celst & infern in Sum
    Or that strong liquor called damnable Rhum,
    Or otherwise Kill Divell as its nam'd,
    And for its mischiefe is greatly blaimd.
    I bid you all farewell both good & bad
    You never elevated mee, nor sad
    Once have affected me, nor Punish nor Ache,
    I sing your Farewell as my passing take.

(107-123; Taylor, Minor Poetry 235.)

For more on the place of rum in colonial American history, see Charles William Taussig's Rum, Romance, and Rebellion (New York: Minton, Balch, and Company, 1928).

12. Taylor found precedent for the use of metaphors in Christ's example. See Robert Daly, God's Altar: The World and the Flesh in Puritan Poetry (Berkeley: U of California P, 1978) 162-166.
13. Lender, Drinking 6.
14. Gatta, Laughter 18.
15. Richard Bushman dates the inauguration of Boston's "refinement process" around 1690. Westfield seems to have been refining itself by at least 1716, when the community first expressed their desire for a new meetinghouse. Taylor stalled the erection of a new house until 1720, for unclear reasons. The construction of the church would have been funded by the selling of seats. The wealthiest citizens, making the most significant donations, would acquire good seats in the new house; surely the minor and mediating church officials did what they could to accommodate the taste of Westfield's wealthier citizens. New churches thus constructed social hierarchies determined by wealth as well as piety. In eighteenth-century Boston, citizens regularly and shamelessly relocated from older structures to the newer, larger, and more materially refined churches which fast became fashionable with the sober, religious, and wealthy. See Stanford, introduction, Poems. by Edward Taylor (New Haven: Yale UP, 1960) xlvii-xlviii; Bushman, Refinement 348-352. For more on the hierarchical seating practices of Congregational churches, see Robert J. Dinkin, "Seating the Meetinghouse in Early Massachusetts," Material Life in America, 1600-1800. ed. Robert Blair St. George (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1988) 407-418.
16. Stanford, "An Edition of the Complete Poetical Works of Edward Taylor," diss., Stanford U, 1953, 553.
17. The diet and daily schedule of seventeenth-century Harvard can be found in Samuel Eliot Morison, Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century (Cambridge, 1936) I, 89ff.; the duties of the college butler are listed in the Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts XV (1925): 46-48. Both are quoted in Stanford, "An Edition," viii-ix.
18. For more on Selby's, see Conroy, Public Houses 89-96.
19. Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1958).
20. Taylor, Church Records 57.
21. For one example, see Cotton Mather, "Some ACCOUNT of the Earthquake That shook NEW-ENGLAND, In the Night, Between [Sunday] the 29 and [Monday] the 30 of October, 1727." repr. in Cotton Mather, Days of Humiliation: Times of Affliction and Disaster, 1696-1727 (Gainesville: Scholars Facsimiles & Reprints, 1970).
22. Taylor. Church Records 201-202.
23. Taylor. Church Records 241.
24. Taylor. Church Records 205.
25. Taylor. Church Records 236-237.
26. Albertson, "Puritan Liquor" 485; Lender, "Drunkenness" 355.
27. Taylor. Church Records 237.

28. Taylor, Church Records xxx-xxxi, 207-236, 472 n. 83.
29. The OED first cites "publican" as describing one who keeps a public house in 1728.
30. Taylor, Church Records 379.
31. David Conroy does not seem to recognize Eldad Taylor of Westfield, though he lists him on page 325 of his Public Houses.
32. When he died in 1729, his estate inventory included a bee hive. Stanford, "An Edition" lxxxi.

NOTES AND COMMENT

Roger Forseth

Anya Taylor's Bacchus in Romantic England: Writers and Drink 1780-1830 has just been published by St. Martin's. Marty Roth reviewed her previously published chapter on Coleridge in Dionysos (Spring 1993). . . . St. Martin's will also publish (in 1999) Jane Lilienfeld's Reading Alcoholisms: Theorizing Character and Narrative in Selected Novels of Thomas Hardy, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf; and Jane Lilienfeld and Jeffrey Oxford, eds., The Languages of Addiction. . . . "Alcoholism and Literature I & II," panels organized and chaired by Matts Djos (Mesa St C), were included in the American Literature Association conference in San Diego, May 28-30. Papers read were: Jim Harbaugh, S.J. (Seattle U), "Raymond Carver: The Growth of Empathy in 'The Bath' and 'A Small Good Thing'"; Roger Forseth (U WI-Superior), "Addiction Studies: A Review of Research"; George Wedge (U KS), "Neo-Prohibitionism and the Drinking Writer"; Nick Warner (Claremont McKenna C), "Interpreting Intoxication in American Literature"; Aiping Zhang (CA St-Chico), "The 'Greatest, Gaudiest Spree': F. Scott Fitzgerald and His Literary Alteregos"; Renee Curry (CA St-San Marcos), "Bishop, Bakhtin, Bachelard, and Booze." In addition, three related papers were presented at the ALA conference: George Monteiro (Brown U), "Stephen Crane, Temperance, and George's Mother"; Todd Richardson (U SC), "Leading E. A. Poe Through a Standard Test for Alcoholism"; Ellen Lansky (U MN), "Miss Amelia's Pharmacy: Gender, Carnival, and Drugs in Ballad of the Sad Cafe." . . . "Anton Rosenberg, a storied sometime artist and occasional musician who embodied the Greenwich Village hipster ideal of the 1950's cool to such a laid-back degree and with such determined detachment that he never amounted to much of anything, died on Feb. 14. . . . He was 71 and best known as the model for the character Julian Alexander in Jack Kerouac's novel The Subterraneans. . . . But if [he] never made a name for himself in either art or music--or pushed himself to try--there was a reason: once he had been viewed in his hipster glory, leaning languidly against a car parked in front of Fugazzi's bar in the Avenue of the Americas, there was simply nothing more he could do to enhance his reputation. . . . Mr. Rosenberg, who appears as a character in William Burroughs' book Junkie, was an addict for most of his adult life" (Robert McG. Thomas Jr., "Anton Rosenberg, a Hipster Ideal, Dies at 71," NY Times 22 Feb 1998: 23). . . . John W. Crowley says of Whiskey's Children, by Jack Erdmann with Larry Kearney (Kensington): "This is a terrific booze book, better than anything I have read in this line since

[Frederick] Exley. . . . What sets this book apart is its clever manipulation of narrative, such that the story seems to get more disoriented and foggy as the drinker gets drunker." . . . The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders has been treated with something less than reverence by Herb Kutchins and Stuart A. Kirk in their Making Us Crazy, DSM: The Psychiatric Bible and the Creation of Mental Disorders (Free Press 1997). See also John Leo, "Doing the Disorder Rag," U. S. News & World Report 27 Oct 97: 20); Lawrence Douglas and Alexander George, "Yes I Said Yes I Will Take My Prozac Yes," NY Times Book Review 5 Nov 1997: 39. . . . "The role of alcohol in Western civilization has changed dramatically during this millennium. Our current medical interpretation of alcohol as primarily an agent of disease comes after a more complex historical relationship" (Bert L. Vallee, "Alcohol in the Western World," Scientific American June: 80-85). . . . Lester Goran's She Loved Me Once (Kent State UP 1997) consists of a series of short stories based on pub culture at Pittsburgh's Irish Club. . . . The latest in the "Annals of Addiction" series in the New Yorker are: Abraham Verghese, "The Pathology of Sex: Why Can't Some People Stop Having It?" (16 Feb: 42-49); David Samuels, "Saying Yes to Drugs: Twelve-Step Treatment Programs Used to be Anonymous. Why Is the Hazelden Foundation Going Public?" (23 March: 48-55). . . . Marcus Grant, Dwight Heath, and Alan Marlatt were on the program of "Permission for Pleasure: Alcohol and Pleasure from a Health Perspective," sponsored by the International Center for Alcohol Policies (New York 28 June-1 July). . . . Jack London: A Life, by Alex Kershaw, has been published by St. Martin's. . . . "Eight years after her death it seems that people still find it hard to decide whether or not they like Mary McCarthy. Edmund Wilson has been dead for 25 years, . . . [A]cquaintances, and others, continue to speak of him with affection. . . . Can this be because our culture is still more tender to talented drunken male lechers than to talented free-living and free-loving women?" (Frank Kermode, "Wilson and McCarthy: Still Entangled," NY Times Book Review 23 Nov 1997: 51). . . . Everybody Was So Young, Gerald and Sara Murphy: A Lost Generation Love Story, by Amanda Vaill, has been published by Houghton Mifflin. . . . Lorian Hemingway, daughter (Gregory) and granddaughter (Ernest) of alcoholics, has published an account of her own addiction and recovery (Walk on Water: A Memoir, Simon & Schuster). . . . Dionysos contributor John Maxwell O'Brien recently delivered a lecture at UW-Madison: "Dionysus, Drinking and Drunkenness." . . . U OK P has published Yesterday's Addicts: American Society and Drug Abuse, 1865-1920 by H. Wayne Morgan. . . . Bill

Moyers' five-part PBS series "On Addiction: Close to Home" (March) elicited national attention, not all of it positive (e.g., Eric Gibson, "Addiction Lesson in Five Parts: Sick, Blameless," Wall Street Journal 3 Apr: W11; Sally L. Satel, "Don't Forget the Addict's Role in Addiction," NY Times 4 Apr: A23). . . . "Many of my friends have recently become addicts. They have not taken up some new drug or habit. They're doing the same thing they have been doing for years. They smoke. They became addicts because of a push, socially and legally, to 'medicalize' smoking--that is making their habit a medical problem" (Kevin Wm. Wildes, S.J., "Addiction Addicts," NY Times 20 Nov 1997: A23). . . . The El Museo del Barrio (New York), in its exhibition "Taino: Pre-Columbian Art and Culture from the Caribbean," is showing images of Taino shamans and priests in drug-induced hallucinogenic states of "prolonged visionary ecstasy, but one with debilitating side effects. One of the show's most vividly naturalistic images is the ceramic figure of a man sitting on a stool, his shoulders hunched forward, his torso emaciated, his eyes hollow in the aftermath of a chemical adventure in which mortal and divine were temporarily joined" (Holland Cotter, "Out of the Caribbean Past, the Art of a Lost People," NY Times 23 Nov 1997: 47). . . . "Since the 21st Amendment repealed Prohibition and legalized the sale of alcohol in 1933, Chicago has never been known as a place where thirst goes unquenched. But a new temperance movement has taken hold in this shot-and-a-beer city, a crusade to make some Chicago neighborhoods as sober as Salt Lake City on Sunday morning" (Dirk Johnson, "Temperance Movement Grows in Chicago, a Precinct at a Time," NY Times 19 Apr: 16).

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Roger Forseth, former editor of Dionysos, is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Wisconsin-Superior, and has published a number of articles on writers and addiction.

Ivan Gold is the author of Nickel Miseries. a book of stories, and two novels, Sick Friends and Sams in a Dry Season. He is an old friend of Bill's, and teaches at Boston University.

Kathryne Slate McDorman is an Associate Professor of History and Director of the Honors Program at Texas Christian University. She has written extensively on classical British murder mysteries, including a full-length social criticism of the novels of Ngaio Marsh, published in 1992.

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