

Fish into Wine: The Historical Anthropology of Demand for Alcohol in Seventeenth-Century Newfoundland

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A strong demand for alcohol and tobacco in seventeenth-century Newfoundland and throughout the North American fishing periphery is an example of the distinct role maritime communities played in the emergence of a consumer society. Exchange of these little luxuries served social and cultural as well as economic needs. Demand for red wines and brandy in particular reflected contemporary humoral theories about the human metabolism. In this period, distribution, no less than restriction, of alcohol can be seen as a form of social control.

Au XVII^e siècle, à Terre-Neuve et dans la zone de pêche de l'Amérique du Nord, l'importante demande d'alcool et de tabac témoigne du rôle distinct que jouaient les collectivités maritimes dans l'apparition de la société de consommation. L'échange de ces petits luxes comblait les besoins sociaux, culturels et économiques. La demande de vins rouges et de brandy en particulier confirmait les théories contemporaines sur le métabolisme de l'homme. Il est possible de considérer la distribution comme la restriction de l'alcool à cette époque comme une forme de contrôle social.

SINCE THE EARLY 1650s, Christopher Selman had sailed annually from Dartmouth in South Devon "to use Newfoundland", as he put it. Like other visitors to seventeenth-century Newfoundland, he was struck by the quantities of alcohol and tobacco imported into the Island. In a deposition of 1667 he gave his view of the trade:

The Inhabitants ... have ben very destructive & prejudiciall to the said fishing Trade ... & by keepinge of Tipling houses & selling of Brandy & other strong waters, wine Beere & Tobacco deboist [debauch] the fishermen sent thither in fishing voyadges & thareby hinder them & detaine them from there

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Employments to the greate losse in the Voyadges ... & cause them to Expend & wast a greate part of their wages.¹

Selman's testimony was a *parti pris* in a contemporary debate over British settlement policy.² We should, therefore, discount his inflammatory language, or at least suspend judgment on whether planters actually "debauched" crews by supplying alcohol and tobacco. Selman's opinions depended on a particular ideologically grounded view of the consumer demands working persons might properly make. Such views are part of the history of the early modern world, but are best set aside, for the nonce, in the interests of answering a more fundamental question: What did the consumption of the little luxuries like wine and tobacco mean to the men and women who lived and worked in the early modern fishery? We may then be in a position to return to the issue of social control implicit in Selman's prejudices about appropriate forms of consumption.

This exercise sheds some light on the social history of the early English settlements in Newfoundland, but it also addresses some wider questions. The socio-cultural aspects of neither drinking nor smoking are well researched for any historical period.³ Alcoholism has attracted much more scholarly attention than the normal use of alcohol. Dwight Heath's survey of cross-cultural studies concludes that alcohol is not ordinarily a problem, whether or not drinking is customary or even drunkenness common.⁴ The unexplored issues pertain to perceived properties and customs of use, not to problems caused by occasional abuse. In the early modern fishery, the social activity of drinking among young men away from home served, in part, to provide pseudo-domestic space within the workplace. Through the creation of social capital, distribution of drink reinforced patron-client and creditor-debtor relations. Alcohol became a valuable that functioned, at times, as a form of specie. The consumption of wine in particular reflected contemporary humoral conceptualizations of metabolic needs. This pattern of demand is an example of the distinct and strategic role played by early modern maritime communities in the development of a consumer society. A number of interesting issues are raised by the question of how and why the early European inhabitants of Newfoundland turned fish into wine.

1 West Devon Record Office, Plymouth, W360/74, Christopher Selman, Deposition, November 27, 1667.

2 Keith M. Matthews, "A History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fisheries" (D.Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1968), pp. 197-239.

3 Mary Douglas, "A Distinctive Anthropological Perspective", in Douglas, ed., *Constructive Drinking: Perspectives on Drink from Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 3-15; P. W. Black, "The Anthropology of Tobacco Use: Tobian Data and Theoretical Issues", *Journal of Anthropological Research*, vol. 40, no. 4 (1984), pp. 475-503.

4 D. B. Heath, "A Decade of Development in the Anthropological Study of Alcohol Use: 1970-1980", in Douglas, ed., *Constructive Drinking*, pp. 16-69.

The oft-made and oft-challenged assertion that the English cod fishery at Newfoundland was a multilateral trade is not a claim about the geographic path of every ship venturing from Newfoundland with a cargo of dried fish, but an economic analysis of the flow of goods.⁵ Whatever the itineraries of individual ships, the trade was essentially triangular. The Newfoundland cod fishery of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries solved an English problem with the balance of payments. In the late sixteenth century, England's imports of wine, then primarily from France, were not balanced by exports to the wine-producing regions.⁶ Robert Hitchcock emphasized this point in a political cartoon illustrating his *Pollitique Platt* of 1580 (Figure 1).⁷ Hitchcock argued that the trade in fish was "the best (and of lightest coste that can bee founde) to countervaile" the trade imbalance. He emphasized the potential of North Sea herring and Newfoundland cod in this respect, stressing strong Iberian demand for well-cured fish.⁸ Since France had already established her own fisheries at Newfoundland, England would have to look further south to turn fish into wine.⁹

England's trade with Spain and Portugal rose rapidly in the first half of the seventeenth century, and wine became the staple of this trade.¹⁰ The wine trade was seasonal, like the cod trade, and these commercial cycles meshed perfectly: the vintage shipped in the early fall, a month or so after the end of the summer fishery at Newfoundland.¹¹ Commercial efficiency dictated that the ships carrying Malaga and other wines to Britain were, in the main, the "sack ships" that had arrived from Newfoundland with fish.¹² The very name suggests the importance of sack, or wine, in this

5 On multilateral trade, see Matthews, "A History of Newfoundland Fisheries", pp. 60–98; Gillian T. Cell, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland, 1577–1660* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), pp. 2–21. On shuttle voyages, see J. F. Shepherd and G. M. Walton, *Shipping, Trade and the Economic Development of Colonial North America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 49–71.

6 On wine imports into England, see A. D. Francis, *The Wine Trade* (London: A. & C. Black, 1972), p. 45; André L. Simon, *The History of the Wine Trade in England*, vol. 3 (London: Holland Press, 1964), pp. 253ff.

7 Robert Hitchcock, *A Pollitique Platt for the Honour of the Prince, the Greate Profite of the Publique State, Relief of the Poore, Preseruation of the Riche, Reformation of the Rogues and Idle Persons, and the Wealth of the Thousandes That Knowes not Howe to Live* (London: John Kyngston, 1580), reprinted (without illustrations) in R. H. Tawney and E. Power, eds., *Tudor Economic Documents*, vol. 3 (1924; London: Longmans, 1953), pp. 239–256.

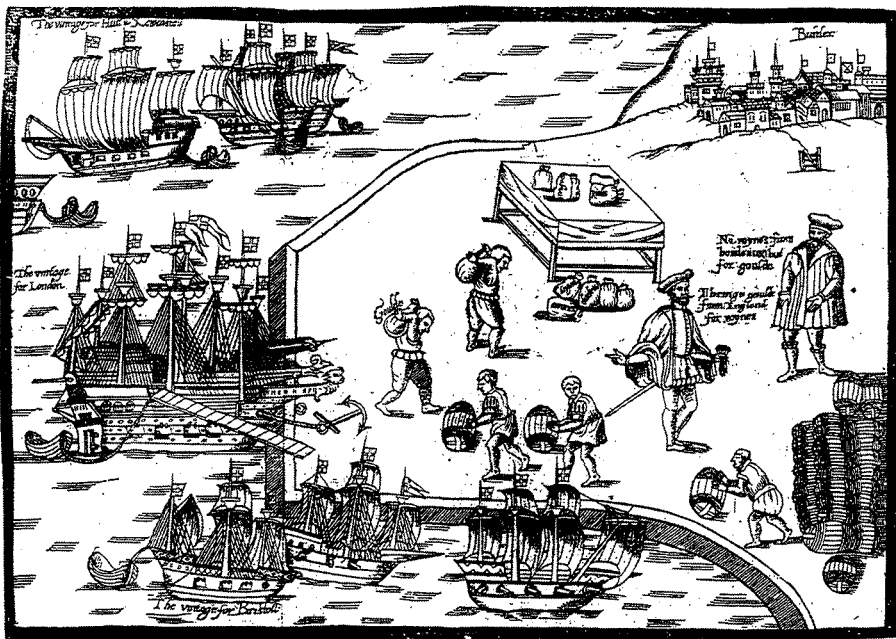
8 *Ibid.*, pp. 245, 251.

9 On the establishment of the French fishery, see Laurier Turgeon, "Le temps des pêches lointaines : permanences et transformations (vers 1500 — vers 1850)", in Michel Mollat, ed., *Histoire des pêches maritimes en France* (Toulouse: Privat, 1987), pp. 134–181.

10 Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the 17th and 18th Centuries* (1962; London: National Maritime Museum, 1972), pp. 228, 229; Tim Unwin, *Wine and the Vine, an Historical Geography of Viticulture and the Wine Trade* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 233–269. Simon, in *The History of the Wine Trade*, p. 339, underestimates imports from Malaga.

11 Davis, *The Rise of English Shipping*, p. 231.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 230; "Sack ship", in G. M. Story, W. J. Kirwin, and J. D. A. Widdowson, eds., *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982).



A vision of England's balance of payments problem with wine-exporting regions in the late sixteenth century, according to Robert Hitchcock, *A Politique Platt for the Honour of the Prince* (London: n.p., 1580). The French vintner (right) tells the merchant from London, "No wyne from Bordeaux but for goulde," and the buyer replies "I bringe goulde from England for wyne."

multilateral trade. "Sack" probably derives from *vino de sacca* or "wine set aside for export" rather than from *vino secco* or "dry wine".¹³ The wines in question were, in fact, sweet rather than dry, which suited the English palate and enhanced their shipping qualities.¹⁴ A similar trade developed with the Atlantic islands, particularly Madeira, the Canaries, and later Fayal in the Azores.¹⁵ By the 1670s a few New England sack ships bound for the

13 T. B. Duncan, *Atlantic Islands: Madeira, the Azores and the Cape Verdes in Seventeenth-Century Commerce and Navigation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), pp. 38, 39. Harold A. Innis, *The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy*, rev. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1954), p. 54n, and Simon, *The History of the Wine Trade*, p. 322, propose derivation from *sec* or "dry". Note that the French "saque" had a different function, to carry crews, oil, and equipment back to France. See J.-F. Brière, *La pêche française en Amérique du Nord au XVIII^e siècle* (Québec: Éditions Fides, 1990), p. 54.

14 Simon, *The History of the Wine Trade*, p. 18; Francis, *The Wine Trade*, pp. 50–51.

15 G. F. Steckley, "The Wine Economy of Tenerife in the Seventeenth Century: Anglo-Spanish Partnership in a Luxury Trade", *Economic History Review*, vol. 33, no. 3 (1980), pp. 335–350; Duncan, *Atlantic Islands*, pp. 154–155.

West Indies took fish from Newfoundland, and Yankee traders brought rum and molasses northwards.¹⁶ However, Newfoundland's trade in the seventeenth century normally linked the island with England and the wine-producing regions of southern Europe, typically France at the opening of the century and Spain after 1630.

If the Newfoundland trade was triangular, it was a flow with two steady streams and one trickle. While southern markets imported Newfoundland cod and exported wine, England in its turn imported wine and exported labour and supplies to Newfoundland. The ships venturing to the fishery, however, were normally not heavily laden in tonnage or in value. The wealth extracted from the sea and the value added by the making of salt fish returned to England from southern Europe, whether in specie or in the form of wine, raisins, olive oil, cork, or other goods. Only a small fraction of these returns were redirected to Newfoundland.¹⁷ Throughout the seventeenth century, fishing servants considerably outnumbered the permanent residents of Newfoundland's English Shore, particularly during the summer season of commercial activity. Thus servant demand shaped basic imports during this period. The diet of wheat, peas, oatmeal, cheese, butter, oil, and salt meat suggested by surviving import records is unremarkable. The remaining material culture, apart from that required for the fishery, is typical of seventeenth-century Western European societies, and included ready-made clothing, shoes, iron tools, soap, candles, and pewter, as well as substantial quantities of wine, alcoholic spirits, and tobacco.¹⁸

It may be useful to place questions about demand for alcohol within the larger context of the development of a consumer society in the early modern period. The so-called consumer revolution, like its obverse the industrial revolution, is best understood as an evolution: a change in direction lasting several centuries.¹⁹ As Joan Thirsk has pointed out, a number of characteristically modern consumption patterns can be dated to the late sixteenth century. Mass demand of a modern kind developed early in maritime areas, for seamen had cash incomes and no aversion to standardized goods. Mari-

16 For example, the 60-ton *Nicholas*, which went to Barbadoes from Renewes in 1677. See Public Record Office, London (hereafter PRO), Colonial Office, CO 1/41 (62viii), ff. 168–169, William Poole, "...Ships from Trepassey to Cape Broyle", September 10, 1677; Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass., Acc. 16, f. 100, Joseph Buckley, "Ledger 1693", 1693; cf. R. G. Lounsbury, "Yankee Trade at Newfoundland", *New England Quarterly* (October 1930), pp. 607–626.

17 Peter E. Pope, "The South Avalon Planters, 1630 to 1700: Residence, Labour, Demand and Exchange in Seventeenth-Century Newfoundland" (Ph.D. dissertation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1992).

18 Cf. David Cressy, *Coming Over, Migration and Communication between Europe and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 107–129.

19 See Joan Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects: The Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England* (1978; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660–1760* (London: Routledge, 1988); C. Shammas, *The Pre-industrial Consumer in England and America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

time communities could tap international flows of goods, even when these were directed elsewhere, geographically or socially. Inventories of c.1700, sampled by Lorna Weatherill, suggest that mariners often had the opportunity to express demand for novel goods before their landlubber social peers.²⁰ This would have been true for various classes of seamen over several centuries for succeeding suites of goods. We need not be surprised, then, that c.1600 to 1650 common mariners were consuming goods not previously known among persons of their humble status. The most notable cases are tobacco, wine, and spirits. Of these goods, tobacco was a complete novelty; consumption of distilled alcohol for non-medicinal purposes was rare before 1600 and expanded rapidly in the following century, as did consumption of wines.²¹ In each case mariners constituted a significant part of the new market for these goods.²² The post-medieval expansion of demand was not simply a trickling down of consumption habits from social superior to social inferior. Consumption habits spread (they are, after all, learned behaviour), but not necessarily from the top down.

At least two distinct patterns of demand would have existed among the inhabitants of Newfoundland in the seventeenth century. The permanent boat-keeping residents, or planters as they were called, had a status comparable to that of tradesmen or the less affluent yeomen of the old country.²³ One would expect planter household demand in the late seventeenth century for the suite of consumer durables then typical of lower middle-class inventories, for example ceramic serving vessels, chairs, chests of drawers, and glass.²⁴ Earlier in the century planters' lives were doubtless simpler, but we

20 Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, Tables 8.1, 8.4, pp. 168, 188, and cf. Tables A2.1 and A2.3, pp. 209ff. See also the discussion in Pope, "The South Avalon Planters", pp. 375ff.

21 G. L. Apperson, *The Social History of Smoking* (London: n.p., 1914), pp. 4–23; Bernard Laufer, *Introduction of Tobacco into Europe*, Anthropology Leaflet no. 19 (Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1924), pp. 97–162; F. P. Braudel and F. Spooner, "Prices in Europe from 1450 to 1750", in E. E. Rich and C. H. Wilson, eds., *The Economy of Expanding Europe in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 407ff; C. A. Wilson, "Burnt Wine and Cordial Waters", *Folklife*, vol. 13 (1975), pp. 54–65, and in *Food and Drink in Britain* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984), 332ff; C. Dyer, "English Diet in the Later Middle Ages", in T. H. Aston, P. R. Coss, C. Dyer, and J. Thirsk, eds., *Social Relations and Ideas: Essays in Honour of R. H. Hilton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 191–216; Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History 1200–1800* (London: Longman, 1983), pp. 106, 209–211, 239; Ralph Davis, "English Foreign Trade 1660–1700", *Economic History Review* (2nd series), vol. 7, no. 1 (1954), pp. 150–166, Table 2.

22 A. Rive, "The Consumption of Tobacco since 1600", *Economic History*, vol. 1 (1926), pp. 57–75; S. A. Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane: Tobacco in Sixteenth Century Literature* (New York: New York Public Library, 1954), pp. 131, 132; Clark, *The English Alehouse*, p. 95. On wine, see the discussion below. Apperson, in *The Social History of Smoking*, p. 25, notes elite demand for tobacco but admits that tobacco use spread rapidly among all classes.

23 "Planter", in *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*; Pope, "The South Avalon Planters", pp. 257ff.

24 For example, Buckley, "Ledger 1693".

should expect demand for cooking vessels, linen, and various iron tools.²⁵ Newfoundland fishing servants, on the other hand, were recruited among husbandmen and labourers and shared a similar status, although they were generally better paid.²⁶ We should not expect, in the seventeenth century, demand among this class of working men for consumer goods that were still middle-class novelties. On the other hand, we should not be surprised that fishing crews were part of the early maritime mass market for small metal goods (like knives), clothes (like knitted stockings and caps), as well as alcohol and tobacco.

Victuals exported to Newfoundland usually included wine and spirits. Consider, for example, the cargo of the *Unicorne* of London, which went to Newfoundland in 1640 with 40 barrels of Irish beef and 20 cwt of sea biscuit, as well as three tuns of French *aqua vitae* and 30 cwt of tobacco.²⁷ This was not an isolated venture. The *Jonathan* of Minehead took a pipe (460 litres) of Fayal wine when she sailed from Barnstaple for the Newfoundland fisheries in March 1647.²⁸ In 1651 William Fishman brought 15 pipes (6,900 litres) of wine from the Canaries on the *Adventure* of London and "sold or trucked" this at Newfoundland with Sir David Kirke.²⁹ In 1660 the *St. Laurens* of Amsterdam took a cargo of salt and brandy from France to St. John's.³⁰ Five of the six vessels reporting dutiable exports from Barnstaple, Devon, to Newfoundland in 1664 carried Malaga, sherry, or French wines.³¹ John Bass, master of the 45-ton sack ship the *John* of Topsham, took her to Fayal for wine before bringing her into Caplin Bay for fish in 1677.³² Tobacco came into Newfoundland from the continental colonies in a trade of long standing.³³

Beginning in 1675 we have a number of detailed reports on Newfoundland's English Shore in the forms of senior naval officers' "Replies to Heads of Inquiry". Of 50 sack ships arriving with cargoes between Tre-

25 Cf. H. Waddocke and J. Gibbines, "A true Inventory of the reall estate of Ambrose Berry", November 4, 1661, in C. T. Libby, ed., *Province and Court Records of Maine*, vol. 2, *York County Court Records* (Portland: Maine Historical Society, 1931), p. 124.

26 Pope, "The South Avalon Planters", pp. 343-356.

27 PRO, King's Remembrancer, E. 190/44/1, f. 90v, London Searcher, Port Books, 1640.

28 PRO, E 190/952/4, n.p., Barnstaple Searcher, Port Books, 1647.

29 PRO, High Court of Admiralty, HCA 13/124, n.p., J. Bewley, Answer to allegations in *Fishman et al. vs Bewley*, July 25, 1651; HCA 13/65, n.p., H. Oldreday, Examination in the same case, July 16, 1651.

30 Gemeente Archive Amsterdam, Notarial Archives 2213, ff. 527-531, in Jan Kupp, "Dutch Documents taken from the Notarial Archives of Holland Relating to the Fur Trade and Cod Fisheries of North America", National Archives of Canada, MG 18 012, p. 517, J. Frederickson and T. Thompson, Deposition, September 5, 1662.

31 PRO, E 190/954/2, Barnstaple Customer, Port Book, 1664; PRO, E 190/954/4, Barnstaple Controller, Port Book, 1664.

32 PRO, CO 1/41 (62viii), ff. 167-168, William Poole, "...Fishing & Sackships from Trapassy to Cape Broyle", September 10, 1677.

33 Pope, "The South Avalon Planters", pp. 404-405.

passey and St. John's in 1677, about 16 or one in three imported alcohol.³⁴ Figures for 1675 indicate that fishing ships also imported alcohol to Newfoundland, although the vessels most likely to do so were small ones on multi-functional sack-like voyages employing only a few boats for fishing. The 1675 report also named five West Country merchants as suppliers.³⁵ A 1677 report on the provisioning of St. John's Harbour confirms that alcohol comprised a significant proportion of imports.³⁶ The wine, brandy, and rum listed would have exceeded the value of all other imports brought into St. John's. Wine alone must have outweighed most other commodities except flour and peas. Rum accounted for only 8,000 of the 44,000 gallons of wines and spirits imported at this time. A century later, in 1770, the continental colonies would send 274,000 gallons of rum to Newfoundland, making the Island the largest New World market for this product.³⁷

Surviving statistics confirm that seventeenth-century Newfoundland was well supplied with wines and spirits, but interpretation of these data is problematic. One difficulty is that Newfoundland was an entrepôt: the fishermen and merchants of the West Country and New England exchanged goods there.³⁸ What the former supplied the latter was often wine and brandy.³⁹ This is evident in the bill of lading for goods shipped from Newfoundland to New England aboard the *David* of Ferryland in 1648.⁴⁰ Of goods valued at £548, £252 or 46 per cent consisted of 18 butts (over 8,000 litres) of Canary and Madeira wines, by far the major component of the cargo. Documentation of the trans-Atlantic current of alcohol that washed the shore of Newfoundland confirms that the planters and their servants had access to wine and brandy in wholesale quantities but does not prove Newfoundland fisher-folk were wholesale consumers. The problem is broader. Fisher-folk were a major part of the New England market for

34 PRO, CO 1/35 (17i), ff. 136–148, John Berry, "... Shipps making Fishing Voyages", September 12, 1675. This assumes "Barbadoes goods" would have included rum, and imports from the Canary Islands, wine. "Provisions" from New England are not assumed here to have included rum, although they probably often did.

35 PRO, CO 1/35 (17i and 17iii), ff. 136–148 and 157, Berry, "Shipps making Fishing Voyages" and "List of those that have furnisht ... Brandy, wines &c", September 12, 1675.

36 William Poole, "Severall sorts of wyne & Provisions imported this yeare only in St. John's Harbr", 1677, cited in C. Grant Head, *Eighteenth Century Newfoundland, a Geographer's Perspective*, Carleton Library no. 99 (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1976), p. 101, Table 6.1 as "CO 1/41, bundle D paper 14".

37 J. J. McCusker, "The Rum Trade and the Balance of Payments of the Thirteen Continental Colonies, 1650–1775" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1970), pp. 481–482, Table VIII–3, cf. 497.

38 Lounsbury, "Yankee Trade".

39 PRO, CO 1/38 (83), f. 226, John Wyborn, "Account...", December 7, 1676. Cf. PRO, CO 1/35 (81), ff. 325–326, John Berry, "Observations...", August 18, 1676, and f. 239, Francis Wheler, "Answers", 1684.

40 David Kirke and Nicholas Shapley, "Invoyce of Goods shipped aboard the *David* of Ferryland ...", September 8, 1648, in J. P. Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of the State of Maine*, vol. 6, *The Baxter Manuscripts* (Portland: Maine Historical Society, 1900), pp. 2–4.

alcohol; the question raised by wine supply to Newfoundland is thus not what made Island residents such consumers but why fisher-folk in general, including those of Newfoundland, were such consumers. This question has two aspects: quantity and quality. What impressed observers was not simply the amounts consumed but the fact that planter suppliers to ordinary working people regularly stocked "good liquour".⁴¹ Wines were, in seventeenth-century England, a middle-class luxury.⁴² Yet along the Atlantic littoral fishing men and women consumed wines and spirits in quantities considered unusual, given their modest social standing.⁴³

There is an additional interpretative problem. Contemporaries attest to a strong demand for alcohol among fishermen at Newfoundland and in the seventeenth-century fishing communities of Maine and Massachusetts.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, such social commentary can be called into question. Middle-class Englishmen, like the merchants and naval officers who have left us their observations of the fishing periphery, were beginning to question publicly the levels of drinking of their social inferiors. Contemporary criticism of the alehouse can be seen as an early salvo in the effort to exert the kind of class-based cultural hegemony that resulted, in the eighteenth century, in the "closed parish".⁴⁵ The first and most vociferous criticisms of the Newfoundland "tippling house" coincided with a wave of similar doubts about workers' drinking establishments in England.⁴⁶ This spate of

41 William Poole, "Answers to heads of Inquiry", p. 149.

42 Clark, *The English Alehouse*, pp. 8, 96, 125; Francis, *The Wine Trade*, p. 26.

43 Peter Pope, "Historical Archaeology and the Demand for Alcohol in 17th Century Newfoundland", *Acadiensis*, vol. 19, no. 1 (1989), pp. 72–90.

44 For example, PRO, Co 1/22 (69), ff. 115–116, "Reasons for the settlement of Newfoundland", c.1668; PRO, CO 391/1, n.p., Committee for Trade and Plantations, Minutes, February 2, April 8, and May 5, 1675; Charles E. Clark, *The Eastern Frontier, the Settlement of Northern New England, 1610–1763* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1983), pp. 22–23; Christine Heyrman, *Commerce and Culture, the Maritime Communities of Colonial Massachusetts, 1690–1750* (New York: Norton, 1984), pp. 35, 218; cf. Duncan, *Atlantic Islands*, pp. 154ff.

45 Keith Wrightson, "Alehouses, Order and Reformation in Rural England, 1590–1660", in Eileen Yeo and Stephen Yeo, eds., *Popular Culture and Class Conflict, 1590–1914* (Sussex, N.J.: Harvester Press, 1981), pp. 1–27; Peter Clark, "The Alehouse and the Alternative Society", in David Pennington and Keith Thomas, eds., *Puritans and Revolutionaries: Essays in Seventeenth-Century History Presented to Christopher Hill* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), pp. 47–72; Clark, *The English Alehouse*, pp. 40, 166–187. For New England parallels, see R. P. Gildrie, "Taverns and Popular Culture in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1678–1686", *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, vol. 124, no. 3 (1988), pp. 158–185. For doubts that such attempts at social control were novelties of the early modern period, see M. Spufford, "Puritanism and Social Control?", in A. Fletcher and J. Stevenson, eds., *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 41–57.

46 PRO, CO 1/10 (28), f. 46, Exeter Justices, Petition to Privy Council, January 10, 1640; PRO, State Papers, SP 16/442, f. 77, R. Gabbes (Mayor of Plymouth) *et al.*, Petition to Archbishop Laud, January 22, 1640; B. Nicholl (Mayor of Plymouth) *et al.*, Petition to House of Lords, March 24, 1646, in Leo Francis Stock, ed., *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments Respecting North America*, vol. 1, 1542–1688 (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1924), p. 177; R. Gybbes

criticisms was voiced by merchants of the same social background as those concerned with the maintenance, or establishment, of social order in England. It is difficult, therefore, to accept contemporary accounts of drinking and smoking by Newfoundland fishermen at face value, since these accounts express in part a class bias against working-class "waste" on luxuries like tobacco and alcohol, or, in the case of the latter, against working-class consumption of inappropriately expensive forms of alcohol like wine or spirits.

One way of testing the objective reality of such perceived consumption patterns is to look at the archaeological evidence in a comparative perspective. Excavations at Ferryland, an early fishing settlement on Newfoundland's English Shore, have recovered a wide variety of artifacts. A study of ceramic vessel forms from one site suggests that fishing servants of the mid-seventeenth century used at least one of the permanent structures at the Pool Plantation as a kind of tippling house.⁴⁷ A second, more general, comparative statistical study of the ratios of ceramic vessels, bottle glass, and pipes recovered from various seventeenth-century contexts at Ferryland suggests strong demand for alcohol and tobacco relative to demand for goods like non-beverage ceramics.⁴⁸ Among comparative contexts of the period, only a fort and a tavern at St. Mary's City, Maryland, seem to have been occupied by people so strongly inclined to immediate gratification. The inhabitants of Quebec City seem to have been almost as inclined to drink, but at Exeter, Devon, only one of many contexts bears much similarity in the functional distribution of artifacts. The archaeological evidence from one site cannot prove that fisher-folk were abnormally inclined to consume alcohol and tobacco any more than one document could establish such a point. Taken together, however, the documentary and the archaeological evidence consistently suggest that fishermen did exhibit a preference for these goods, among those on which they might have spent their disposable incomes, which were high relative to the wages semi-skilled workers could expect in the old country.⁴⁹

What did fishermen use alcohol or tobacco for? At one level they used each as their young, mobile, predominantly male, erratically-employed

(Mayor of Plymouth) *et al.*, "Petitions of Plimouth agt Sr. Da. Kirke", c.1650, in *Winthrop Papers*, vol. 3 in *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections* (5th series), vol. 1 (1871), pp. 499–501. Cf. David Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 84ff, 239ff.

47 Peter E. Pope, "Ceramics from Seventeenth Century Ferryland, Newfoundland (CgAf-2, locus B)" (M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canadian Theses on Microfiche, 1986), and "Historical Archaeology and Demand".

48 Peter E. Pope, "Past Time Pastime: A Statistical Assessment of Tobacco and Alcohol Use on Early Modern Sites", unpublished paper, Canadian Archaeological Association, Montreal, 1993, and "The South Avalon Planters", pp. 414–435.

49 On wages, see Pope, "The South Avalon Planters", pp. 318–364.

counterparts did in the home country: as an occasion for socializing.⁵⁰ The *Young Men's Delight*, which brought wines from Plymouth to Ferryland in 1675, was well named.⁵¹ But how did fishermen use these goods, or, to put it another way, what was it that made tobacco and alcohol "sociable"?⁵² Did they have a special role on the English Shore?

It may seem wilfully obtuse to ask why people enjoy alcohol or tobacco, but the question is not frivolous. Nor is the answer straightforward. The recent anthropological literature supports the consensus of psychologists and sociologists that the "cardinal" value of alcohol is pharmacological: as a cheap, easily administered tranquilizer.⁵³ The value of tobacco is also rooted in its effect as a tranquilizer, although unlike alcohol this depends on its addictiveness in small dosages. The physiological and pharmino-kinetic effects of both drugs are socially processed: interpreted and expressed in terms of familiar attitudes and expectations.⁵⁴ Mary Douglas has proposed that the use of alcohol can be seen in three distinct aspects: not merely as a component of economic activity, but also as the ceremonial construction of an ideal world and as a manifestation of the structure of social reality.⁵⁵ These apply, surely, to tobacco as well. While it is not easy to pin down the cultural and social construction seventeenth-century mariners put on the pharmacological effects of their drugs, we have enough evidence to try.

Alcohol and tobacco both seem to have functioned as "little hearths".⁵⁶ Each was thought to satisfy the need for warmth in a cool climate. Captain Francis Wheler argued in 1684 that at Newfoundland the "Intolerable Cold ... would make it hard liveing with out Strong drink."⁵⁷ Dr. Everard's early seventeenth-century defence of tobacco argued that those proposing a ban should take into account that some users could not abstain from it: "Seamen will be supplied with it for their long voyages; Souldiers cannot want it when they keep guard all night, or are upon other hard duties in cold and tempestuous weather."⁵⁸ It is difficult to see this perceived warmth as a physiological effect. Smoking a pipe of tobacco did involve a warm glow, but physiological warming probably had less to do with the combustion of a few grams of dried leaves than with the need to approach a hearth for an ember to light the pipe.⁵⁹ The warmth ascribed to tobacco is probably often

50 See Clark, *The English Alehouse*, pp. 49, 114, 139, 148.

51 See Berry, "Shippes making Fishing Voyages" and "Brandy &c".

52 Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, p. 158.

53 Heath, "A Decade of Development", p. 39.

54 Black, "Anthropology of Tobacco", pp. 486, 494; *ibid.*, pp. 39, 46.

55 Douglas, "A Distinctive Anthropological Perspective", p. 8.

56 This is Ralph Pastore's felicitous phrase.

57 PRO, CO 1/55 (561), ff. 247-248v, Francis Wheler, "Observations ...", October 27, 1684.

58 [Aegidius] Everardus, *Panacea; or The Universal Medicine, a Discovery of the Wonderful Virtues of Tobacco* (London: [John Rowland?], 1659), A [3].

59 Cf. William Barclay, *Nepenthes, Or, the Vertues of Tobacco* (Edinburgh: A. Hart, 1614).

a social warmth, since the good is often shared. Mariners thought of alcohol as a source of warmth as well, although it actually contributes to cooling the body by dilating surface blood vessels.⁶⁰ It provides physiological warmth only as a concentrated and surprisingly inexpensive source of calories.⁶¹ Arguably, the association of alcohol and heat was also primarily symbolic.

This symbolism is rooted in ancient theories about the four elements (earth, water, air, and fire) and the four primary properties (coldness, moisture, dryness, and heat).⁶² The association of the latter with alcohol in general and with sweet wines and spirits in particular is explicit in a tract from 1622 on "Divers Kindes of Drinke". Tobias Venner argues that one of the "commodities of Wine" is that it "mightily strengtheneth the naturall heat". Ale, beer, even white and Rhenish wines he dismisses as cold, like water. Sack, on the other hand, is "compleatly hot" as are Canary wine and the wines of western France. Predictably, he treats distilled *aqua vitae* as hot and cautiously suggests moderate consumption "be permitted unto cold and phlegmatic bodies, especially in colde and moyst seasons", as did William Vaughan, the Newfoundland promoter, who calls *aqua vitae* "the most dry and fiery of all liquids" in his *Directions for Health, Naturall and Artificiall* of 1626.⁶³ Venner and Vaughan could hardly have written more explicit prescriptions for those facing the rigours of the Newfoundland fishery. What would new arrivals face? Cold and moisture. How could they deal with this? With drinks that were conceptually hot and dry. The beverages Venner identifies are precisely those most in demand at Newfoundland. From this point of view tobacco was also entirely appropriate for the North Atlantic environment, for smoke is also hot and dry.⁶⁴ The "ideal world" that wine, brandy, and tobacco constructed for the planters and fishing servants of the English Shore may well have been simply a warmer and drier one.

60 L. O. Simpson and R. J. Olds, "Ethanol and the Flow Properties of Blood", in K. E. Crow and R. D. Batt, eds., *Human Metabolism of Alcohol*, vol. 3, *Metabolic and Physiological Effects of Alcohol* (Boca Raton, Florida: CRC Press, 1989), pp. 62–75.

61 Witold Kula concluded that distilled alcohol provided the cheapest available calories for the eighteenth-century Polish peasantry, according to Braudel and Spooner, "Prices", pp. 415ff; cf. McCusker, "The Rum Trade", p. 478.

62 For a brief summary, see E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963), pp. 77–83; cf. Bradley E. Brooks, "Fill the Other Bowl Boys: Alcohol, Behavior, Gender, and Social Group in 18th-Century American Gentlemen's Clubs", and Beverly Ann Tlusty, "Defining 'Drunk' in Early Modern Germany", papers presented at the International Congress on the Social History of Alcohol, London, Ontario, May 1993.

63 Tobias Venner, *Via Recta ad Vitam Longam or A Plaine Philosophical Discourse of Nature Faculties and Effects, of All Such Things, as ... Make for Oreservation of Health* (London: T. S. for R. Moore, 1622), pp. 23–36; William Vaughan, *Directions for Health, Naturall and Artificiall* (London: John Beale for Francis Williams, 1626), pp. 81, 82; cf. Richard Short, *Of Drinking Water, Against our Novelists that Prescribed it in England* (London: John Crook, 1656). On Vaughan see Gillian T. Cell, "Vaughan, Sir William", in G. W. Brown and M. Trudel, eds., *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, 1000 to 1700 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979).

64 Cf. Vaughan, *Directions for Health*, p. 82.

The question that remains is how the use of tobacco and alcohol manifests the structure of social reality, or “constructs the world as it is”, in Douglas’s words. Desirable, portable, divisible “little luxuries” like alcohol and tobacco are well suited as prestations, that is, gifts that create social obligations.⁶⁵ Such prestation may take place among peers in association with labour exchange or from aspiring patrons to their potential clientele.⁶⁶ For planter or servant, no less than for the merchant, alcohol and tobacco were “valuables” appropriate for exchange and short-term storage of capital: they had high unit value and were reasonably durable, although not durable enough for long-term accumulation. Binges would disperse such short-term “savings” in a neighbourly way.⁶⁷ The use of these goods in other contexts suggests that the capital in question would then become social capital: the distributor of little luxuries would acquire social credit among those with whom he shared.⁶⁸ The consumable nature of these goods is important, for a small gift of liquor or tobacco could hardly be passed down the line.⁶⁹ The use of alcohol to seal bargains is surely related to generalized exchange in the interest of creating social capital. Insofar as economic relationships were a continuous succession of mutual favours, payment without prestation of drink in particular may have been the exception, not the rule.⁷⁰ In a Newfoundland boatkeeper’s budget reported by Captain Wheler in 1684, he noted that his informant, whom he calls an “intelligible” planter, had “given away for encouragement: In Liqueur £6”.⁷¹

Because they have the power, when presented, to say “we are friends here, we share more than just the cash nexus”, the little luxuries are markers of sociability. John Josselyn noted of contemporary coastal Maine: “If a man of quality chance to come where [the fishermen] are roystering and gulping in *Wine* with a dear felicity, he must be sociable and *Rolypoly* with

65 H. F. Reading, *Dictionary of the Social Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1977), p. 160; cf. M. Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans. Ian Cunnison (London: Routledge, 1970).

66 Heath, “A Decade of Development”, p. 40; Black, “The Anthropology of Tobacco”, pp. 481, 488ff.

67 On the social function of drinking binges, see Clark, *The English Alehouse*, p. 114; on valuables, see Colin Renfrew, “Varna and the Emergence of Wealth in Prehistoric Europe”, in Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 141–168.

68 Jeff Collman, “Social Order and the Exchange of Liquor: A Theory of Drinking among the Australian Aborigines”, *Journal of Anthropological Research*, vol. 35, no. 2 (1979), pp. 208–224; Gerald Mars, “Longshore Drinking, Economic Security and Union Politics in Newfoundland”, in Douglas, *Constructive Drinking*, pp. 91–101; Black, “The Anthropology of Tobacco”.

69 Cf. Collman, “Social Order”, p. 216.

70 J. R. Barrett, “Why Paddy Drank: The Social Importance of Whiskey in Pre-Famine Ireland”, *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1977), pp. 154–165; Felicity Heal, “The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England”, *Past and Present*, vol. 102 (1984), pp. 66–93.

71 PRO, CO 1/55 (56iii), ff. 251v, 252, Francis Wheler, “Charge for fitting out two Boats”, October 27, 1684.

them, taking off their liberal cups as freely, or else be gone.⁷² As proof of sociability, alcohol acts in modern Western societies as a boundary marker for periods of leisure, just as the exchange of cigarettes marks short breaks from labour.⁷³ In the task-oriented world of the early modern fishery, alcohol and tobacco probably already served similar functions.

Drink reflects social reality in another sense, insofar as various forms of alcohol can be distinguished, ranked, and read symbolically. Seventeenth-century accounts indicate that consumers ranked beer, wine, and spirits in social prestige as well as in alcoholic content, a ranking emphasized in England by the fact that wines and spirits were permitted only in taverns and not in alehouses.⁷⁴ In *Wine, Beere, Ale and Tobacco Contending for Superiority*, an early seventeenth-century burlesque, drinks appear as social labels: Wine, Beer, Ale, and Water are, respectively, a gentleman, citizen, countryman, and parson.⁷⁵ When visitors brought such perceptions to Newfoundland, there arose a fundamental contradiction between social norms (working men drink beer, gentlemen wine) and what was simply common sense (cold, wet men should have “hot”, “dry” drinks). The evidence suggests that common sense prevailed.

Robert Hitchcock’s late Elizabethan vision of Englishmen exchanging fish for European wines became a seventeenth-century reality. What Hitchcock had not foreseen was the extent to which English demand for wine would be expressed at the third apex of his proposed triangle of trade: the fishing periphery itself. The economy of the cod fishery and the economy of the wine trade were most closely interconnected at the Iberian, Mediterranean, and Atlantic island ports where London and West Country ships delivered Newfoundland fish. The tobacco and cod economies meshed at tobacco-distributing Devon ports like Barnstaple, which had close ties with the Chesapeake, as well as Newfoundland.⁷⁶ These macro-economic structures did not, however, preclude exchange at Newfoundland itself, and in a sense they required it. In the situation of chronic specie scarcity typical of the early modern world, merchants were under great pressure to develop returns for the goods whose export they organized: they could not hope to pay for fish entirely in coin, for coin was too scarce.⁷⁷ The reasonably high unit

72 John Josselyn, *Account of Two Voyages to New England* [1674], p. 212, in Paul J. Lindholdt, ed., *John Josselyn, Colonial Traveller, a Critical Edition of Two Voyages to New England* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1988), p. 145.

73 J. R. Gusfield, “Passage to Play: Rituals of Drinking Time in American Society”, in Douglas, *Constructive Drinking*, pp. 73–90.

74 Clark, *The English Alehouse*, pp. 8, 125.

75 Gallobelgicus [pseud.], *Wine, Beere, Ale and Tobacco Contending for Superiority* (London: T. C. for I. Grove, 1630).

76 A. Grant, *North Devon Pottery: The Seventeenth Century* (Exeter: n.p., 1983), pp. 116–125.

77 See W. T. Baxter, *The House of Hancock, Business in Boston, 1724–1775* (1945; New York: Russell and Russell, 1965), pp. 16, 295; Jacob Price, *Capital and Credit in British Overseas Trade: The View from the Chesapeake, 1700–1776* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980),

value and portability of sweet wines, spirits, and tobacco made them useful commodities in this respect. Alcohol sometimes served as a quasi-currency on the Atlantic littoral.⁷⁸ Brandy in particular was used as a surrogate for wages: in 1680 Captain Sir Robert Robinson thought the fortifications at St. John's could be improved at little cost "except some small gratuity to the seamen in time of labouring, in brandy or the like".⁷⁹ Divisibility is an important economic property of such quasi-currencies, which analysts of alcohol and tobacco exchange have noted in other contexts from the Australian outback to the twentieth-century St. John's waterfront.⁸⁰ Divisibility also made it possible to tap the passing flow of these goods.

The quantity and quality of alcohol consumed by the planters and fishing crews of the English Shore were, in the last analysis, determined by what made sense to them. If goods like wine, brandy, and tobacco were socially and culturally useful, then demand would be strong and criticism from those living elsewhere about inappropriate consumption inevitable. The Puritan merchants of the West Country ports levelled such criticism at their Newfoundland-based competitor Sir David Kirke in the 1640s and 1650s.⁸¹ These merchants managed to insert a ban on tipling houses into the Western Charters of 1634, 1661, and 1671, which established ground rules for the administration of Newfoundland, at least to the extent that it was in fact administered in this period.⁸²

Continual complaints, such as that of the Dartmouth master quoted earlier, indicate that these regulations had little effect. What precisely was it that the merchants of Devon and Dorset failed to enforce? They had not attempted to ban tobacco, wine, or even spirits from the English Shore. Any such ban would have flown in the face of common sense.⁸³ Despite repeated protestations of an aim only to eliminate the "debauching" of "poor ungoverned men", one cannot escape a suspicion that West Country insistence on the banning of taverns may have had as much to do with control of a market as with control of drink and tobacco. Nothing about the behaviour of these merchants, least of all their cargoes on the westward voyage to Newfound-

p. 121; and "Conclusion" in R. E. Homer, ed., *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies in Historical Perspective* (Fredericton, N.B.: Acadiensis Press, 1990), pp. 360-373.

78 McCusker, "The Rum Trade", p. 552. In Newfoundland fish itself usually played this role; see Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (1776; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), p. 127.

79 PRO, CO 1/44 (50), f. 383, Robert Robinson, Letter [to W. Balthway?], April 5, 1680.

80 Heath, "A Decade of Development", p. 33; Black, "The Anthropology of Tobacco", p. 486; Collman, "Social Order"; Mars, "Longshore Drinking".

81 Gybbes *et al.*, Petition (1640); cf. Exeter, Petition (c.1650), discussed in Pope, "Historical Archaeology and Demand".

82 K. M. Matthews, ed., *Collection and Commentary on the Constitutional Laws of Seventeenth Century Newfoundland* (St. John's: Maritime History Group, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1975).

83 Captain Wheler thought a ban would not work. See Wheler, "Answers" (1684), 240v.

land, suggests that they would have eliminated supplies of the little luxuries to the English Shore. What they wanted, it would seem, was a legal monopoly of supply to their own crews, like that enjoyed by eighteenth-century proprietors in the French fishing colony of Isle Royale.⁸⁴ Valuables like alcohol and tobacco had two aspects: to the consumer, whether planter or servant, they represented culturally useful goods; to the supplying merchant, they were economically efficient returns for fish. These little luxuries were, in some sense, the cultural face of local systems of credit and clientele. In the absence of more regular forms of commerce and government, these goods were more significant and thus perhaps relatively more common on the English Shore than in England itself.

The supply of little luxuries to fishing crews raises issues that are easily overlooked if we consider middle-class, puritanical limitation of working-class conviviality as the only possible form of social control related to drink. We should consider the possibility that employers at Newfoundland, particularly planters, recovered their wage costs through the sale of tobacco and alcohol. We should ask whether supply of alcohol and tobacco at the fishing periphery was a form of labour control used by employers to encourage their crews to fall into debt and thus to remain in service. The demand for alcohol was elastic: if prices fell or incomes rose, demand was such that consumption would expand. (This does not seem to have been true of tobacco, which was price-inelastic.⁸⁵) Elasticity of demand was once less common than it is today. Labour had a tendency to choose increased leisure over consumption, or at least this was a common perception of employers.⁸⁶ The middle class often exaggerated their employees' preference for leisure and, with blithe lack of logic, combined moral condemnation of such "laziness" with complaints about indulgence in extravagances like drink and tobacco.⁸⁷ In fact, any good with an elastic demand, "luxurious" or not, short-circuited the preference for leisure and therefore benefited the employer where labour was scarce, as it chronically was at resource peripheries. Alcohol frequently fulfilled this function. The Hudson's Bay Company, for example, used brandy in this way in its fur trade with the Indians.⁸⁸

84 B. A. Balcom, *The Cod Fishery of Isle Royale, 1713-58* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, Studies in Archaeology, Architecture and History, 1984), p. 63.

85 R. C. Nash, "The English and Scottish Tobacco Trades in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Legal and Illegal Trade", *Economic History Review* (2nd series), vol. 35 (1982), pp. 354-372.

86 D. C. Coleman, "Labour in the English Economy of the Seventeenth Century", *Economic History Review* (2nd series), vol. 8 (1956), pp. 280-295; E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism", *Past and Present*, vol. 38 (1967), pp. 56-97.

87 Peter Mathias, "Leisure and Wages in Theory and Practice", in *The Transformation of England: Essays in the Economic and Social History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1979), pp. 148-167. For other doubts, see Carole Shammas, "Consumer Behaviour in Colonial America", *Social Science History*, vol. 6, no. 1 (1982), pp. 67-86.

88 Arthur J. Ray and Donald B. Freeman, "Give Us Good Measure": *An Economic Analysis of Relations Between the Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company Before 1763* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), pp. 128ff.

In 1700 Captain Stafford Fairborne argued that consumption patterns kept Newfoundland crews in service: "Considerable Quantity's of Rumm & Molasses are brought hither from New-England, with which the Fishers grow Debauch't and Run in Debt, so that they are oblig'd to hire themselves to the Planters, For Payment thereof."⁸⁹ Captain George Larkin expressed similar views in 1701, as had the judicious Captain Wheler in 1684.⁹⁰ This is the economic world Josselyn reported in mid-century Maine:

[Shares] doth some of them little good, for the Merchant ... comes in with a walking Tavern, a Bark laden with the Legitimate bloud of the rich grape ... from *Phial, Madera, Canaries*, with *Brandy, Rhum*, the *Barbadoes strong-water*, and *Tobacco*, coming ashore he gives them a Taster or two, which so charms them, that for no perswasions that their imployers can use will they go out to Sea. ... When the day of payment comes ... their shares will do no more than pay the reckoning; if they save a Kental or two to buy shooes and stockins, shirts and wastcoats with, 'tis well, other-wayes they must enter into the Merchants books for such things as they stand in need off, becoming thereby the Merchants slaves.⁹¹

Josselyn was not describing the fate of fishing servants, however, but of "shore men". These were the New England equivalent of small planters. Josselyn says that they often ended up mortgaging their own plantations. Visitors to Newfoundland, like Wheler in 1684, were likewise more concerned that "Planters & Boate Keepers drink out all they are Worth" than that servants drank on credit.⁹²

Captain Charles Talbot denied in 1679 that servants were "debauched by the Colony" or "forced to hire themselves for satisfaction of theyr debts", and Sir John Berry found the same in 1675.⁹³ Captain Wheler admitted that sale of alcohol was a means for planters to balance their books despite the high wages they paid servants, but he emphasized that this was merely a potential: "The liquor they sell at a very Deare Rate does something help them — But it is very uncertaine, for that most of the Servants they hire Comes from England, and having famielys there, some of them are nott very prodigal."⁹⁴ Although views like Fairborne's and Larkin's had evidently already been voiced before 1700, chronic indebtedness for advances of drink was not generally perceived as a predominant behaviour pattern among Newfoundland fishing servants in the preceding century.

89 PRO, CO 194/2 (16), ff. 54–57, Stafford Fairborne, "Answers...", September 11, 1700.

90 PRO, CO 194/2 (44), George Larkin, Report to Committee for Trade and Plantations, August 20, 1701; Weler, "Answers" and "Observations".

91 Josselyn, *Account of Two Voyages*, pp. 211ff.

92 Wheler, "Answers".

93 PRO, CO 1/43 (121), ff. 216–217, Charles Talbot, "Answers...", September 15, 1679; PRO, CO 1/35 (81), ff. 325–326, John Berry, "Observations...", August 18, 1676.

94 Wheler, "Answers", ff. 239, 241.

In the seventeenth century there was nothing very unusual about the consumer behaviour of Newfoundland fishing crews except that they drank wine and brandy rather than beer — a pattern of demand determined, even over-determined, by the range of factors discussed above. Newfoundland fishermen lived and worked thousands of cold sea miles away from the bonfire of consumption that had been kindled in Europe. They had cash or credit, and it is not surprising that they expected a share of that warmth. Credit sales of the little luxuries may have become an integral part of the social control of labour in the eighteenth-century fishery, but there is little objective seventeenth-century evidence that servants' habits normally left them in debt.⁹⁵ This does not mean they drank less than their successors. Drink may still have been predominantly a perquisite, like the £6 "Given away for encouragement: in Liquor" by Wheler's intelligible planter or part of the generalized exchange that characterized patron-client relationships.⁹⁶

Assessment of the economic implications of such consumption patterns depends on the scale of analysis. Eric Hobsbawm sees the expansion of demand as a prerequisite of development.⁹⁷ Melville Watkins and others see demand for certain goods, particularly imported "luxuries", as obstacles to development.⁹⁸ Are these interpretations reconcilable? Perhaps, since staple theorists like Watkins are considering the economy of a single periphery, while Hobsbawm, in effect, considers the European world-system. If a greater proportion of incomes earned by planters and crews had been spent on a locally produced good, for example housing, would Newfoundland's development have been advanced? Possibly, but only in the world without context of the *Gedanken Experiment*. In the real world of the seventeenth century as it seems to have existed, fisher-folk exhibited an irreducible demand for alcohol and tobacco and appear to have had limited ambitions for better housing. They were a significant part of the market for wine, the export of which permitted regions like the Mediterranean and the Atlantic islands to import salt fish, among other goods. This exchange furthered development of the European world economy and, perhaps by the same token, dependence on a single staple in peripheries like Newfoundland and on a major staple in semi-peripheries like southern Europe.

95 For the later period, see J. E. Crowley, "Empire Versus Truck: The Official Interpretation of Debt and Labour in the Eighteenth-Century Newfoundland Fishery", *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 70, no. 3 (1989), pp. 311-336.

96 Wheler, "Charge for two Boats"; cf. Heal, "The Idea of Hospitality". On patron-client relationships, see Stephen Innes, *Labor in a New Land, Economy and Society in Seventeenth-Century Springfield* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); and Pope, "The South Avalon Planters", pp. 289-294.

97 Eric Hobsbawm, "The General Crisis of the European Economy in the 17th Century", *Past and Present*, vol. 5 (1954), pp. 33-53.

98 R. E. Baldwin, "Patterns of Development in Newly Settled Regions", *Manchester School of Economics and Social Studies*, vol. 29 (1956), pp. 161-179; M. H. Watkins, "A Staple Theory of Economic Growth", *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, vol. 29, no. 2 (1963), pp. 141-158.