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Temperance past and present – some introductory thoughts

Abstract

This introduction to the special issue "Temperance, Past and Present" identifies main themes of the articles and associated conference, gives a brief historiography of temperance, and surveys "new temperance."

Article

In 2018, 70 scholars and third-sector workers met at the home of the Livesey Temperance Archive, for a ground-breaking conference: "Radical Temperance: social change and drink, from teetotalism to Dry January," (June 28-9th, 2018 at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK). This volume brings together papers from that conference to form the first temperance-specific issue of SHAD, to offer a forum for discussion of historical and contemporary concepts of temperance. A term once considered outmoded in many circles, "temperance" is now experiencing something of a renaissance. The conference attracted historians, sociologists, literature specialists, and those working in the third sector to support those with alcohol-related issues, from Australia, Japan, Europe (including Scandinavia), around the US, Canada, and across the UK, and the international and disciplinary spread of papers, presentations, roundtables, and discussions by over 70 participants demonstrated the high degree of current interest in this field. The present collection presents, we hope, a representative selection. It also harks back to a key element of the original name of the present Alcohol and Drugs History Society, founded as The Alcohol and Temperance History Group in 1979, and the focus upon debate and variety of approach, as well as the interplay between past and present, reflect ongoing dialogues in the study of addiction to and regulation of substances. But, more significantly, the conference was an illustration of the

continued importance of temperance as an aspect of the historical and current social construction of alcohol.

Conference attendees were invited to consider several questions and the resulting special issue seeks to address these in the papers that follow. The conference's title both encouraged attendees to look back to the early days of the UK temperance movement, and suggested an enduring link between protest and radicalism, social change, and choosing not to drink. In debating this assertion, participants found many resonances between past and present radicalism. Indeed, it was suggested that to hold a two-day event solely focusing on "temperance" was fairly radical in itself, as temperance movements have not exactly had a good press in many studies, leading Joanne Woiak, for example, to claim that "The nineteenth-century British temperance movement has most frequently been characterized by both contemporary critics and modern-day historians as a moral reform crusade against the vice or sin of drunkenness, led by evangelical teetotal fanatics who preached about improving the lives and saving the souls of drunkards."¹ The papers at the conference demonstrated not only the radical aims of historical temperance campaigners and modern anti-drink activists but also the popular impetus behind such movements as seen in their work to normalise and protect moderate drinkers and abstainers from sometimes violent challenges to their way of life.

The six papers in this issue cover several aspects of the main themes of the conference, as well as ranging from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries. Professor Scott Martin of Bowling Green University, who surely needs no introduction to SHAD readers, explores the effect of the Civil War not only on the US temperance movement but also on international temperance activism, arguing that medical, social and political approaches were radically impacted. Victoria Afanasyeva, a graduate student at the

Université Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne, contributes a ground-breaking study of a little-known woman temperance activist, Maria Legrain. Steven Spencer, Director of the Salvation Army International Heritage Centre, examines the radical roots of the Army's temperance testimony and the strange marginalization of the organisation in many temperance histories. Edward Armston-Sheret, a graduate student at Royal Holloway, University of London, looks at health arguments for temperance in the wider social arena, in the debates about drinking on high-profile polar expeditions. Maggie Brady, Honorary Associate Professor at ANU, Canberra, reflects on the activism of aboriginal women against the Gothenburg model of moderate drinking, drawing out echoes between past and present as well as the radical, counter-cultural, nature of their protests. Emily Hogg, an early career scholar currently based at the University of Southern Denmark, brings the collection up to date, using two recent narratives focusing on individuals' dramatic relationships with alcohol, and its renunciation, to interrogate dominant cultural representations of drinking and sobriety. The varied backgrounds and career stages of the contributors represent the wide range of current interest in temperance, and their articles reflect this, drawing on history, social anthropology, geography, and literature as did the multi-disciplinary nature of the Preston conference.

The radicalism, or otherwise, of temperance was certainly not the only focus of discussion. The articles here contribute to answering one central portmanteau question: how has the development of temperance movements in the UK, US, Europe, and more widely around the world run parallel or diverged, and what factors have influenced this?

Additionally, in true Alcohol and Drugs History Society tradition, attention was often given to the ways in which the control of drinking has served diverse political and social purposes. All the papers in this edition either focus upon or allude to such a historical perspective. Because of the special nature of this particular conference, mixing past and present, many

representatives from the third sector, or taking “recovery” or “mindful drinking” perspectives, were fascinated by such historical studies. Some came with little or no prior knowledge, and conversation at the breaks and among the servers at the excellent dry bar focused upon the interest and relevance of temperance history – unusual, to say the least, but a delight to the conference organisers. Because of the conference demographic there were four main questions which formed the basis of debate, discussion and exchange.

The interrelationship of past and present suggested in the conference title became the focus for much discussion, looking at how past episodes and approaches identified in the historical study of particular temperance movements might be seen as relating to and informing similar present-day movements. Many of the current volume’s papers, such as that by Maggie Brady, explore such inheritances or resonances, and the public debates about the health of polar explorers cited by Armston-Sheret foreshadow similar debates about the ‘clean living’ of sporting teams and heroes, today. Some of the groups represented at the conference, such as the Salvation Army, The White Ribbon Association, and Hope UK, have their own histories of well over a hundred years campaigning, and presentations and round tables focused on how such groups with a tradition of working for temperance had adapted their message in varying periods and contexts. Of necessity, discussion of this was brief, and it was certainly revealed as a fruitful direction for further study; in the present collection Steven Spencer explores the central commitment of the Salvation Army to total abstinence, and how it has retained this through changed times and circumstances. Spencer draws attention to the omission of the Army from much recent writing on temperance, and considers reasons; we hope that his article will begin a re-evaluation of the organisation’s important place in temperance history. Turning to the individual subject rather than organisations or movements, consideration was given as to what extent modern attitudes, for example to

women drinking, might be influenced by historical tropes and patterns. Similarly, the modern “recovery” narratives also provided a location to explore what might be still reflected of past assumptions about alcohol-free living, and the shift in focus to the individual was widely mentioned; Emily Hogg’s article focuses on this turn, which might be seen as a re-turn, in a way, to the individual testimonies of the ‘reformed drunkards’ in the nineteenth century.

Such questions cannot be settled in a brief introduction but, just as the historical dimension of the conference illuminated perspectives with a more current focus, a brief historiographical review seems appropriate, to introduce this collection of essays. General surveys have appeared before and, more recently, the review essay by Ryosuke Yukoe “Alcohol and Politics in Twentieth-Century Britain” (2018) has proved invaluable to all working in this field.² However, the more specific focus of the present issue upon temperance and contemporary related movements does allow a more focused historiography.

A brief history of temperance history

In the nineteenth century, “Alcohol Studies” being as yet unthought-of, there is a clear line of work on temperance history, largely composed by and for adherents of the various temperance groups. For the UK, there is a comprehensive list to aid the scholar in Brian Harrison’s magisterial article “Drink and Sobriety in England, 1815-1872. A Critical Bibliography,” updated by David Gutzke in his wider alcohol bibliography in 1996.³ Harrison mentions, for example, Morris’s *History of the Temperance & Teetotal Societies in Glasgow* (1855) and Couling’s *History of the Temperance Movement in Great Britain and Ireland* (1862) showing the early desire to create comprehensive records of the extent and development of temperance activity. The myth-making of individual societies also arose relatively early, with the Reverend G.W. McCree reflecting on “The History, Design and Progress of the Band of Hope Union” in 1862, as did the focus on telling history through the

lives of individual workers with Logan's "Early Heroes of the Temperance Reformation" (1873).⁴ The giants of UK nineteenth-century temperance history, however, responsible for later conceptions (and sometimes mis-conceptions) of temperance, are (James) Dawson Burns (1828–1909) and Peter Turner Winskill (1834-1912). The extremely detailed study by Burns, usually abbreviated to "Temperance History" and published in two volumes in 1889-1891, was his main historical work, but Winskill produced several such, with *The Temperance Movement and its Workers* (4 vols., 1891-2) and *Temperance Standard Bearers of the Nineteenth Century* (2 vols., 1897-8) probably the best-known and most influential.⁵ These, and associated works, are monumental achievements and provide plentiful data. However, they reflect the authors' religious and cultural assumptions, giving little space or acknowledgement to women in the heroic litany of temperance workers, stressing respectability, and foregrounding, through selection and description, the link between religious faith and temperance conviction.⁶ Hence UK temperance history, mediated through these seemingly authoritative writers, became constructed as the triumph of a male-dominated, establishment-supporting, religiously-motivated, movement -which may have been largely true, but certainly did not reflect the diversity of gender, class, and belief which was seen in the various temperance groups such as the Women's Total Abstinence Union (founded 1893) with its drive for women's suffrage, or the thousands of working-class women volunteer "conductors" of the Band of Hope.⁷ With *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform* (1899), Rowntree and Sherwell set a historical survey of alcohol consumption and temperance developments in the British Isles as context for brief accounts of the local option, national initiatives, and related schemes in the US and Canada, Australasia, Russia, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway, including the Gothenburg System. The book, which contains plentiful comparative data and is an impressive production for its period, went through six editions in its first year, arguing for a moderate direction of policy rather than

imposing prohibition. However, it fundamentally followed earlier temperance histories in that the underlying assumption of both the historical and contemporary material was that alcohol consumption represented a problem to be solved.⁸

In North America, a similar pattern can be observed, with proselytising texts far outnumbering publications documenting the history of temperance, and a focus on temperance workers in studies such as *The Temperance Reform and Its Great Reformers* by Daniels (1879) and, of course, biographies of high-profile figures like Frances Willard.⁹ Due to the federal structure of the US, temperance histories written in the nineteenth century often focused on particular states, rather than taking a wider focus as did those in the UK.¹⁰ Exceptions were general temperance works which contained brief accounts of national history, such as Wakely's *American Temperance Cyclopaedia* of 1874, until the grand myth-making of the Woman's Christian Temperance Movement (WCTU) and its offshoot, the World Woman's Christian Temperance Union.¹¹ Even more so than in the UK, the increasing pressure for, and anticipation of, prohibition in both the US and Canada ensured that temperance history took on a rather triumphalist tone in those countries, such as Eaton's *Winning the Fight Against Drink* of 1912 and Cherrington's history of the Anti-Saloon League.¹² Temperance was projected as an aspect of social progress, and the histories in both countries focused on the twin aspects of the continuing need for temperance reform and what such movements had already achieved.

In the twentieth century, the UK temperance cause did not attract any further significant histories until the centenaries of organisations began to fall due, in the 1930s and 40s. This was, ironically, a particularly difficult period at which to write a traditionally celebratory history of temperance, as membership of all organisations had begun to fall. Henry Carter's *The English Temperance Movement* of 1933, which treats the period 1830 - 1899, declares itself the first volume of two. Carter (1874-1951), a Methodist minister,

stresses the moral and individual responsibility aspect of temperance; his version of history apparently “outraged prohibitionists” and the second projected volume, which would have been useful, never appeared.¹³ Robert Highet’s *Rehabite History* (1936) and Robert Tayler’s *The Hope of the Race* (1946) were written by the High Secretary and Secretary of their organisations, respectively, and so should be considered more as commemorative volumes than historical investigations. George Wilson’s *Alcohol and the Nation* (1940) presented a statistically-led history of the costs, personal, social and national, of alcohol consumption, which was informed by his role as general secretary of the UK Alliance.¹⁴ Temperance history might have seemed to be subsiding gently into an historical curiosity, in itself.

Brian Harrison’s research into the Victorian temperance movement, resulting in his DPhil thesis in 1965, published as *Drink and the Victorians* in 1971, can be seen as not only initiating the objective study of UK temperance history but beginning to redress some of the mistaken assumptions about the movement, notably stressing its radical origins.¹⁵ Following this, David Fahey’s study “Drink and the Meaning of Reform in Late Victorian and Edwardian England” (1974), *The Waterdrinkers*, by Norman Longmate (1968) and *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England* by Lilian Lewis Shiman (1988) seemed to signal that temperance was escaping its fate, as Harrison saw it in the 1960s, of being seen as politically, morally, and culturally unfashionable, and was finally being recognised as being “of the greatest historical interest.”¹⁶ A continuing strand of what might be described as “committed history” was demonstrated by the publication in 1980 of *Drink in Great Britain, 1900-1979* by two members of the Christian Economic and Social Research Foundation, giving a history of twentieth-century developments in the control of alcohol, supported by copious statistics. But a wider range of scholars from the UK and North America were increasingly recognising that the history of temperance not only formed a rich field of study, but was bound up in wider histories of politics, class, gender and identity. Furthermore, the variety of undertakings

and beliefs classed under the umbrella term of “temperance” was becoming evident, as John W. Frick emphasized,

Although historians routinely refer to nineteenth-century temperance reform as if it were a monolithic, unified and continuous movement, temperance agitation was, more precisely, a series of related, interlocking movements often with different motives and often radically different cultural missions.¹⁷

Alcohol history or temperance history?

However, investigation of movements advocating abstention from alcohol was also radically inflected by the influence of changes in the way alcohol was viewed, culturally and scientifically. Joseph Gusfield, a sociologist by avocation, presented the study of US temperance history from a social constructivist view as intrinsically linked with social and political conflicts between particular groups, in *Symbolic Crusade* (1963).¹⁸ Bill Rorabaugh, pondering upon “why so many young scholars, including historians, became interested in the history of alcohol in the 1970s,” identifies four main likely factors, including the fact that alcohol use was still rising, and that “the great abstinent workout and exercise regimens had yet to appear...” Showing his characteristic insight, Rorabaugh remarks “We, as a scholarly generation, could not change the present, but we could, and did, change the past by offering a new interpretation of alcohol that stressed use (and abuse) over temperance and Prohibition... This shift in emphasis marked a final rejection of the temperance motif that had played the dominant role in any discussion of alcohol since the 1820s.”¹⁹ As Thomas Pegram concludes, this group of scholars “revived the history of alcohol as a serious historical topic” for later historians, thus rescuing the field. He credits the work of fellow historians such as Rorabaugh and Ian Tyrrell for the insight that “Alcohol reform was at once forward-looking, dynamic and compassionate, yet also coercive, uncivil, even repressive.”²⁰ But Pegram places

the history of drinking and saloon culture next to temperance reform and prohibition in his list of topics, and this redressing of balance, in itself, shifted the focus from the study of temperance to the study of alcohol, or addiction generally – a tendency which continued and was to be enshrined, eventually, in the change of name reflecting a change of focus for the group, from Alcohol and Temperance History to Alcohol and Drugs, in 2004. Although an increasing number of studies looked at the history of temperance organisations such as the WCTU, temperance movements in particular countries, or specific aspects such as temperance identity construction, literature or songs, it was against a perspective which had radically changed.

Eighteenth-century physicians, such as Thomas Trotter and Benjamin Rush, were used to considering habitual drunkenness as a disease of the mind, and this led to associations with developing theories of insanity as a disorder of the nervous system, leading to the conception of “dipsomania” in the early nineteenth century. But this was often mixed with terms such as “moral insanity” which reflected not only current strands of thinking about insanity but current temperance perspectives, very much differing from the later theory of addiction.²¹ Meanwhile, temperance literature customarily presented temperance as moral weakness.²² “Inebriety” was a term, perhaps escaping these associations, initially more often used by scientists, doctors and social reformers but more widely used by the turn of the century. Berridge and Mold (2014), searching the medical journal *The Lancet*, have traced its appearance and that of “alcoholism” from the 1860s to 1930, with both terms peaking at the turn of the century and showing a sharp decline in use after 1914. Conversely, “addiction” came into greatly wider use during after this date, although Harry Levine, notably, has argued that this view of alcohol, if not the word, was widespread in nineteenth century temperance discourse.²³ Whilst informing many treatment initiatives and support systems, particularly in the twentieth century, such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), this concept, too, was to be

superseded. As Betsy Thom points out, almost as soon as the notion of alcoholism as “a ‘disease’ affecting a small minority of the population” was “popularised” in the 1950s, it was being challenged scientifically, and replaced by the public health model’s “concern with the consumption patterns of the population as a whole, and with the rates of individual and social harms associated with per capita consumption of alcohol.”²⁴ From the addiction model, however, alcohol had become firmly associated with other intoxicants, and drinking or abstinence became likely to be viewed in this context as sharing features with drug use.

The history of temperance activity, concepts, and influence experienced something of a renaissance in attention during the end of the twentieth century and beginning of the next, although often seen from within a framework of alcohol studies or addiction studies. This can lead to presenting temperance as a discrete way of life which can be studied from the outside but not really understood, or as merely a historical curiosity. Such an approach certainly redresses the balance from earlier, committed, histories, but runs the risk of positioning the millions who practiced, or practice, temperance as strange, unfamiliar creatures with odd, rigidly judgemental thought processes. Temperance seen as merely a driver of regulation or a shaper of treatment is a poor reflection of the variety and complexity of the alternative world of those who make a positive choice not to drink alcohol, and indeed shape their lives around this principle in some cases. – thankfully, many scholars have avoided this extreme position. As the cross-national membership of what was now the Alcohol and Drugs History Society indicated, researchers were working on the history of drink and temperance in a wide range of countries, and strong international links began to develop. Harry Levine’s seminal article “Temperance Cultures” (1993) built on the work of scholars such as Eriksen (1990) to develop a theory which still informs discussion today.²⁵ David Fahey’s work on the UK and US temperance movements has shown the many transatlantic similarities and links, notably looking at transnational organisations such as the Good Templars as well as the presence of

African Americans in the temperance crusade. Indeed, the transatlantic context has often seemed the most appropriate one for discussion, although some studies have shown the value of focusing on particular seminal events or political contexts, such as Tyrell on the WCTU, Martin's work exploring antebellum gender construction, and studies of literature, drama and songs.²⁶ Similarly, in the UK, Nicholls's influential survey *The Politics of Alcohol* (2009), Yeomans on influences on legislation, Dingle's study of the UK Alliance, Malcolm on Ireland, and Beckingham's work on Liverpool showed the continuing relevance of temperance to national and local history.²⁷ But the benefits of cross-national consideration of alcohol use, including temperance, did become evident, and gave rise to the two monumental collections which consider the history and use of alcohol around the world, *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History* (2003) and the *Sage Encyclopedia of Alcohol* (2015).²⁸ Scholarship on temperance movements beyond North America, UK, and Europe has enabled more nuanced discussion of Levine's theory as well as recuperation of important aspects of political, social, and cultural history, and this is a growing area. Temperance movements in South Africa and India, for example, have attracted the attention of scholars and it is to be hoped that study of this wider diaspora of temperance activity, re-mapping the history of temperance, will continue to flourish.²⁹ The "Radical Temperance" conference reflected this, with a participant from Japan and two papers on temperance in India, in addition to Maggie Brady's study of Aboriginal campaigning in 20th century Australia which appears in this collection. This paper is an excellent example of work which is alert to differences and similarities, showing how women's campaigns grew organically out of their own lived experience, yet revealing how many resonances that experience shared with what might be termed Euro-Anglo-American concepts of "Temperance." Indeed, Brady draws links to Liverpool and David Beckingham's work, in her study of the women's decision to target licenced bodies and premises (given more force by the history of colonialism). "Moral

suasion efforts are culturally inappropriate and particularly unproductive in a society with a strong belief in personal autonomy and the “right” to drink, and usually such efforts take place only within the AA-style groups that sometimes exist in communities.” Brady’s article draws links to English temperance movements, as well as the WCTU and Anti-Saloon League. As Armston-Sheret remarks, ‘domestic debates about temperance need to be linked to questions of travel, globalisation and empire.’ It would be good to see a future edition of SHAD on temperance and non-drinking movements with an even wider global range than the present one, although this has made a beginning by featuring articles on France, Germany, and Australia as well as the US and UK.

Mark L Shrad has declared that temperance matured into “one of the world’s first truly transnational advocacy networks” which he uses, in fact, as case study to base a book around in exploring the power of the transnational advocacy concept.³⁰ This field has become seen as a fruitful ground for the exploration of philosophical and political issues as well as cultural history, with notable work continuing to the present day.³¹ Yet around the turn of the twenty-first century, writers still felt that writing positively about temperance was to challenge accepted opinion: Joanne Woiak’s 1994 comment was mentioned above, and even Virginia Berridge, in her detailed report for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on *Temperance: its History and Impact on Current and Future Alcohol Policy* (2005) report widespread surprise by colleagues that she should undertake such a commission, “Temperance is a joke,” “temperance has the image of an outdated creed.” But she disposes of this briskly, shows informed appreciation of the practices and principles of the movement, especially its building of social and political capital, and the main section of the report is titled “How to change drinking culture: the lessons from temperance.”³² By doing this, Berridge indicated that there was more to temperance than the popular stereotype of prohibition and reformatories.³³

“New temperance” – similarities and discontinuities

Even twenty years into this century, it now seems absurd that Berridge's colleagues should say, as she suggests, "People would not now adopt a non-drinking way of life." Self-evidently, in their millions, they have, with the UK's per capita consumption having decreased since 2004 and, more significantly, an increase in those choosing not to drink being documented in official reports and the media.³⁴ This is largely driven by younger people, with the proportion of 16 to 24-year-olds who do not drink alcohol increasing from 18 per cent in 2005 to 29 per cent in 2015, and the proportion of "lifetime abstainers" rising from 9 per cent in 2005 to 17 per cent a decade later.³⁵ A similar movement is to be seen across the US and in countries such as Australia and Germany, for example, and much thought, and print, has been devoted to its analysis. *The Guardian* in 2018 reported Dr. James Nicholls, representing Alcohol Research UK, as suggesting that one factor might be rebelliousness against the norms and behaviour of previous generations, but whilst this is certainly likely, some of the comments reported sound remarkably like the arguments of the nineteenth-century teetotal campaigners,

"Alcohol is a strange concept," says Ben Gartside, 19, a politics student at Hull University who is originally from Manchester. "Here's a liquid you can drink and it can lead to you not remembering the night before and making bad decisions." Ben is typical of many young people I speak to, in that he prefers to spend his money on food and travel rather than pub sessions.³⁶

And the apparently obsolete "T" word has begun to be used with modern connotations; for example in February 2015, John Bingham suggested in *The Telegraph* that "Teetotalism has become a major force in British life for the first time since the industrial heyday of the temperance movement after a dramatic rise in the number of young people shunning

alcohol”.³⁷ Here Bingham finds resonances, not only of behaviour, but of affiliation to a movement for social change by referring to it as a “major force.” His use, and that of many other commentators, of “teetotalism” is in itself bringing the word into circulation, once more. As well as countless journalists, for whom the word may be used as catchy shorthand in titles, the UK Office of National Statistics, for example, uses it frequently in reports, “[s]ince 2005, teetotalism has increased for those aged 16 to 44 years and fallen for those aged 65 and over. In 2017, the proportion of adults who said that they did not drink alcohol at all – those claiming to be teetotal – was 20.4%.”³⁸ Use of the term has followed in the wake of behaviour; this organisation has been collecting statistics for “self-reported teetotalism” since 2005, and reported in 2018 that teetotalism had greatly increased among those aged 16-64 over this period, although had fallen significantly among the older section of the population.³⁹ This polarisation by age underlines one of the most interesting aspects of “new temperance,” its perceived association with youth, health, and even radicalism in its stress on change for the better.

This can be seen in the context of many initiatives related to controlling and reducing alcohol consumption, such as “Dry January” and “Go Sober for October.” The latter is a fundraising campaign by the Macmillan Cancer Support charity, and carries resonances of the causative links between alcohol and various cancers, which indeed is stressed on one of their other online pages.⁴⁰ Sign-ups to “Dry January,” organised by the charity and campaign group Alcohol Concern, increased from just over 4,000 to almost 60,000 between 2014 and 2016; 78% of drinkers were aware of the campaign by 2016.⁴¹ These non-governmental organisations reflect a change in mood in perception of alcohol as a danger, and in 2016 the UK’s chief medical officers amended official guidelines on alcohol consumption, reducing the recommended upper limit for men to 14 units from 21, and explicitly stating that “any level of alcohol increases the risk of a range of cancers”, something not “fully understood in

the original guidelines.”⁴² In the US, Federal, State and local laws and organisations make the situation much more complex, but “new Temperance” was already being used as a term in 1991, and has attracted a recent surge in adherents, particularly among the younger generation, as in the UK.⁴³ Henry Yeomans has notably examined the relationship between past and present temperance; in a 2009 article examining the 2005 debate about licensing reforms in England and Wales against a context of popular discourse, largely in the press, about “binge drinking,” he concluded that “Calvinist-inspired temperance attitudes, continue to structure thoughts, perceptions and, hence, secular views of drinking”.⁴⁴ Asking “What did the Temperance Movement Accomplish” in 2011, he extended his point that the persistence of moral regulation, an inheritance from temperance, underlies “the continued problematization of alcohol, the normative saturation of behavioural discourse and the focus on ethical self-formation,” which influences contemporary rhetoric.⁴⁵ But since then temperance has become much more of a positive choice, with alternative spaces such as Dry Bars and social event websites offering pages on “Things to do in London if you don’t drink.”⁴⁶ Although Yeomans stresses the continuity between the language and moral framework used by temperance campaigners and that employed by twenty-first century politicians, the voices of the increasing numbers who have made the choice not to drink do suggest that there are other dimensions to their abstinence.

“Mindful drinking” is the particular strand of contemporary alcohol consumption, featuring abstinence or moderation, which is experiencing a dramatic growth.⁴⁷ The conference was fortunate in not only attracting the founders of the main group which organise alcohol-free social events, Club Soda, but in having their assistance in organising and running the Dry Bar which was such a popular feature. To visit one of the many such events around the country, or to read the accounts on the Club Soda website, is to hear directly of the attractions and pleasures of not-drinking. Sober is becoming used as a proud

badge, with Twitter handles from “soberfishie” to “The Sober Hipster”, and a new online “sobriety school” called Tempest being profiled in *Vogue* magazine. Holly Whitaker, its founder, says “Most of us assume that we are supposed to make alcohol work in our lives. I think a lot of people are starting to understand that it doesn’t have to.”⁴⁸ Similarly, social media groups such as “Soberistas” and “Women on the Wagon” draw largely on the recovery movement, but such enthusiasm for alcohol-free life also reflects the mindful drinking and positive sobriety movements. The recovery movement is a term used not exclusively in relation to alcohol, but often associated with it through the work of AA and other self-help systems since the mid-twentieth century, and representatives of this approach were central to the Preston conference discussions and workshops. The approach has strong echoes of many aspect of temperance in its cultural framework, and has given rise to some compelling literary work about drink and sobriety, such as the extraordinary 1996 novel *Infinite Jest* by American writer David Foster Wallace.⁴⁹ The book explores various aspects of addiction, obsession, and repetition, and one of its main characters, Don Gately, is a recovering addict who now works as a live-in staff member in a halfway house. Gately’s many appearances in the book largely consist of reflection upon his experience of AA, particularly meetings, and his own recovery. AA is depicted as both extraordinary effective and dully repetitive. Gately sees the two elements as related: recovery works, for some, through simple structures and repeated narrative patterns which become ritualised. In the novel, these very narratives and terms (in contrast to the over-wrought and in some cases fatal excitement satirised in other sections) work to sustain and change lives, making something which once seemed impossible – sobriety – become miraculously possible. Gateley’s musings may give us something of an insight into recuperation of the apparently dull or negative concept of abstinence. Emily Hogg’s article in this collection takes such analysis further, building on the remark by Nielsen and Mai that “When a person is asked about drinking, the answer is often given as a

narrative.”⁵⁰ In her examination of two contemporary British novels which focus on female characters’ attempts to stop drinking alcohol, Hogg explores the complex attractions of both temperance and continuing drinking, and reveals the narratives and counter-narratives clustering around the figure of the alcoholic. Her insightful article may well introduce SHAD readers to new writers and approaches to alcohol narratives, as it did the editor. We are back with the individual, rather than in the world of temperance seen as public policy or social strategy, which recalls the roots of the total abstinence movement. The temperance arguments of the early nineteenth-century, focusing on individual choice and responsibility, echo down the years. One major difference is in the financial domain, however. Where pioneering non-drinkers nearly 200 years ago could exult in their savings, with propaganda showing graphic illustrations of improved weekly budgets, beaming families, impressive possessions, and of course houses, alcohol is now so readily affordable that only those on a considerably limited budget would see the economic argument as a main reason to avoid drinking. Similarly, the religious overtones to much traditional temperance literature would play badly with many, today. Ryosuke Yokoe has called for a “history from below” approach to alcohol studies, arguing that we have focused on the “elitist purview of policy-makers, interest groups, the media, and medical professionals,” rather than “the discourses, meanings, and practices that ordinary people have attached to drink.”⁵¹ The recent focus on drinking cultures has begun to explore some of these voices but, as well as valuing lived experiences from the pub and the bar, we need to recover the voices and tales of people who have chosen not to drink, ranging from contemporary visitors to mindful drinking festivals to the early nineteenth-century temperance autobiographers studied by Joyce Appleby.⁵² Hogg gives us some powerful voices from women in a complex and conflicted relationship to alcohol and sobriety.

The history of the “original” temperance movements continues to be revised and rewritten, and two of our contributors have provided outstanding examples of this, embarking

on the radical look at temperance which the conference brief encouraged. Though not calculated or intentional, the changes wrought by the Civil War constitute a good case for viewing it as a seminal moment in US alcohol and temperance history, Scott C. Martin argues. He shows that the war, coming at a key point in the history of the temperance movement, gave an impetus and direction to the temperance movement, as well as being a defining event for the country as a whole. And, in rescuing a French female temperance worker from obscurity, Victoria Afanasyeva revises the history of temperance movements in France (itself perhaps marginalised by the Levine theory of temperance cultures). The work of Maria Legrain reminds us not only of the enormous contribution made by women to the spread of temperance and wider social change, often forgotten in national histories other than that of the US, but of the importance accorded to transnational movements, and some of the associated problems. The themes of internationalism, of women's experiences, and of attitudes to alcohol as indicators of social change were all particularly strongly represented in the conference, and these strands are strongly woven into this special issue. Its title, however, "Temperance Past and Present" reminds us of the temporal dimension which offers such fascinating potential to historians.

Just as a simplistic opposition of moral suasion to prohibitionism seems an unduly polarised view of nineteenth-century temperance history, ascribing contemporary behaviour to either the public health model or the addiction model seems to limit understanding of the complexity and variety of thought and emotion informing the "new temperance." Earlier I have highlighted aspects of its public presentation as a radical and life-changing choice, and this takes us back to the early working-class advocates of teetotalism as an empowering escape from poverty and moral slavery. I have also briefly suggested aspects of traditional teetotal discourse which are likely to remain as historical curiosities. Even if modern movements are seen as reactive, part of a Hegelian dialectical process, or historic recurrence,

the original position is modified slightly as a pattern recurs.⁵³ New versions of temperance will, one hopes, learn from earlier movements but, to facilitate this, we need to share information about the varied histories and stories around not-drinking. Similarly, present-day experiences, attitudes, and histories offer much to inform our understanding of historical processes, relationships, and events. The concept of temperance is not only a live one, but still has the power to inspire debate as well as exciting new approaches to the study of history, as the articles in this collection show.

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¹ Joanne Woiak, "A Medical Cromwell to Depose King Alcohol": Medical Scientists, Temperance Reformers, and the Alcohol Problem in Britain,' *Histoire sociale/Social History* 27 (54) (1994) 337-365, 337.

² Ryosuke Yokoe, "Alcohol and Politics in Twentieth-Century Britain" *The Historical Journal*, Volume 62 (1) March 2019, 267-287 <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0018246X18000250>.

³ Brian Harrison, "Drink and Sobriety in England, 1815-1872. A Critical Bibliography," *International Review of Social History*, 12, part 2 (1967), 204-272; David W. Gutzke, *Alcohol in the British Isles from Roman Times to 1996: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1996).

⁴ George W. McCree, "The History, Design and Progress of the Band of Hope Union," *Proceedings of the International Prohibition and Temperance Convention* (London, 1862); William Logan, *Early Heroes of the Temperance Reformation* (Glasgow, 1873).

⁵ J. Dawson Burns, *Temperance History: A Consecutive Narrative of the Rise, Development, and Extension of the Temperance Reform*, 2 vols., (London: National Temperance Publication Depot, 1889-91); Peter Turner Winskill, *The Temperance Movement and its Workers. A record of social, moral, religious and political progress* (4 vols.) (London: Blackie & Son, 1891-2) and *Temperance Standard Bearers of the Nineteenth Century: A Biographical and Statistical Temperance Dictionary*. (Liverpool: the author, 2 vols., 1897-8)

⁶ For example, Clara Lucas Balfour, despite being probably the best-known writer of temperance fiction and prolific lecturer and contributor to temperance journals, does not appear in *Temperance Standard Bearers*. Dawson Burns was a Baptist Minister, and Winskill's "Brief Biography" in *Temperance Standard Bearers* reveals his own Christian commitment and father's Methodism (5-8).

⁷ See Gemma Outen, *The Women's Total Abstinence Union and periodical Wings, 1892-1910: A Study of Gender and Politics*. Doctoral thesis, Edge Hill University, 2007. For Band of Hope volunteers and secular content, see Annemarie McAllister, "Temperance battle songs: the musical

war against alcohol,” *Popular Music* Volume 35, Special Issue 2 (Music and Alcohol) May 2016 , pp. 191-206.

⁸ Joseph Rowntree and Arthur Sherwell, *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1899).

⁹ William H. Daniels, *The Temperance Reform and Its Great Reformers: an Illustrated History* (New York: Philips & Hunt; Cincinnati: Hitchcock & Walden, 1879); Anna A. Gordon, *The Beautiful Life of Frances E. Willard: A Memorial Volume by Anna A. Gordon ... Introduction by Lady Henry Somerset, with Character Sketches and Memorial Tributes by the General Officers of the World's and the National W. C. T. U., English Leaders ... and Other Distinguished Persons* (Chicago: Women's Temperance Publishing Association, 1898).

¹⁰ Winskill's 'Temperance Movement and its Workers' covers figures from all UK countries as well as some from the US, Canada, India, Africa, New Zealand and Australia, plus the international networks that promoted Gothenburg. The interest in international comparisons and transnational connections within and beyond the British Isles is striking. For more local examples from the US, see Lebbeus Armstrong, *The Temperance Reformation: its History from the Organization to the Law of Maine, 1851: and the Consequent Influence of the Promulgation of that Law on the Political Interest of the State of New York* (New York, 1853); Isaiah W. Quinby, *History of Local Option and Temperance Legislation in Ohio* (Columbus, Ohio, 1880).

¹¹ Frances E. Willard, *History of the Women's National Christian Temperance Union* (New York: The National Temperance Society and Publication House, 1876); Sarah Knowles Bolton, *The History of the Women's Crusade* (New York, 1877); women's Temperance Publication Association, *The World Woman's Christian Temperance Union, organized 1883* (Chicago, IL.: Woman's Temperance Publishing Association, 1893).

¹² Ephraim L. Eaton, *Winning the Fight Against Drink: the History, Development, Rational Basis, Moral, Financial, Economic, and Scientific Appeal of the Temperance Reform, in which every phase of the subject is fully considered* (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham; New York: Eaton and Mains, 1912); Ernest H. Cherrington, *History of the Anti-Saloon League* (Westerville, Ohio, American Issue Publishing Company, 1913), and also see *The evolution of Prohibition in the United States of America: a chronological history of the liquor problem and the temperance reform in the United States from the earliest settlements to the consummation of national prohibition* (Westerville, Ohio, American Issue Press, 1920).

¹³ Henry Carter, *The English Temperance Movement: A Study in Objectives* vol, 1 *The Formative Period* (London: The Epworth Press, 1933); Jack S. Blocker, Jr., David M. Fahey, and Ian R. Tyrrell (eds) *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History: An International Encyclopedia* (2 vols) (Oxford: ABC Clio, 2003) Vol. 1, 141.

¹⁴ George B. Wilson, *Alcohol and the Nation: A Contribution to the Study of the Liquor Problem of the United Kingdom from 1800 to 1935* (London: Nicholson and Watson, 1940). A reassessment of Wilson's data suggests that he actually undercalculated nineteenth-century beer consumption: R.G. Gorvish and T.R. Wilson, *The British Brewing Industry, 1830-1980* (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1994), 29-31.

¹⁵ Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: the Temperance Question in England, 1815-1872* (London: Faber & Faber, 1971)

¹⁶ David M. Fahey, "Drink and the Meaning of Reform in Late Victorian and Edwardian England" *Cithara*, 13 (2) May 1974), 46-56; Norman Longmate, *The Waterdrinkers: A History of Temperance* (London: Hamish Hamilton. 1968); Lilian Lewis Shiman, *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1988); Harrison, *Drink*, (2nd edition, Keele: Keele University Press, 1994), 11.

¹⁷ John W. Frick, *Theatre, Culture and Temperance Reform in Nineteenth-Century America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) "Notes", note 1, 202.

¹⁸ Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement*. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1963)

¹⁹ William J Rorabaugh, "On Discovering Alcohol History," part of "The Class of 1979: A Thirty-year Retrospective" *The Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* (Winter 2010) 39-58, 44.

- ²⁰ Thomas Pegram, "Bringing the State Back In (to the Tavern)," part of "The Class of 1979: A Thirty-year Retrospective" *The Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* (Winter 2010) 39-58, 54-5.
- ²¹ Virginia Berridge and Alex Mold, "From Inebriety to Addiction: Terminology and Concepts in the UK, 1860–1930" *The social history of alcohol and drugs* 28(1) (January 2014) 88-106; 89-90.
- ²² Carol Mattingly (ed), *Water Drops from Women Writers: A Temperance Reader* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 2001); Robyn R. Warhol "The Rhetoric of Addiction: From Victorian Novels to AA" in eds. Brodie, Janet F., and Marc Redfield, editors. *High Anxieties: Cultural Studies in Addiction*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 97- 108.
- ²³ Berridge and Mold, "From Inebriety," 99-100; Harry Levine (1978) "The discovery of addiction. Changing conceptions of habitual drunkenness in America," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 39 (1), 143-174.
- ²⁴ Betsy Thom, *Dealing with Drink: Alcohol and Social Policy from Treatment to Management* (London: Free Association Books, 1999), 8.
- ²⁵ Harry Levine, "Temperance Cultures: Concern About Alcohol as a Problem in Nordic and English-speaking Cultures," in Malcom Lader, Griffith Edwards, and D. Colin Drummon (eds) *The Nature of Alcohol and Drug-Related Problems*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, 16-36; Sidsel Eriksen, "Drunken Danes and sober Swedes? Religious revivalism and the Temperance Movements as Keys to Danish and Swedish folk cultures" in Bo Strath (ed) *Language and the construction of class identities* (Gothenburg: Gothenburg University Press, 1989) 55-94; Robin Room and Klaus Mäkelä, "Typologies of the Cultural Position of Drinking" *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 61 (2000):475-483; Margaretha Järvinen and Robin Room, *Youth Drinking Cultures: European Experiences* (London: Routledge, 2017).
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- ²⁹ Erica Wald, "Governing the Bottle: Alcohol, Race and Class in Nineteenth-Century India" *The journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 46 (3): 397-417; Paul Nugent, "The Temperance Movement and Wine Farmers at the Cape: Collective Action, Racial Discourse, and Legislative Reform, c.1890-1965" *Journal of African History* 52 (3) (Nov. 2011): 341-363;
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