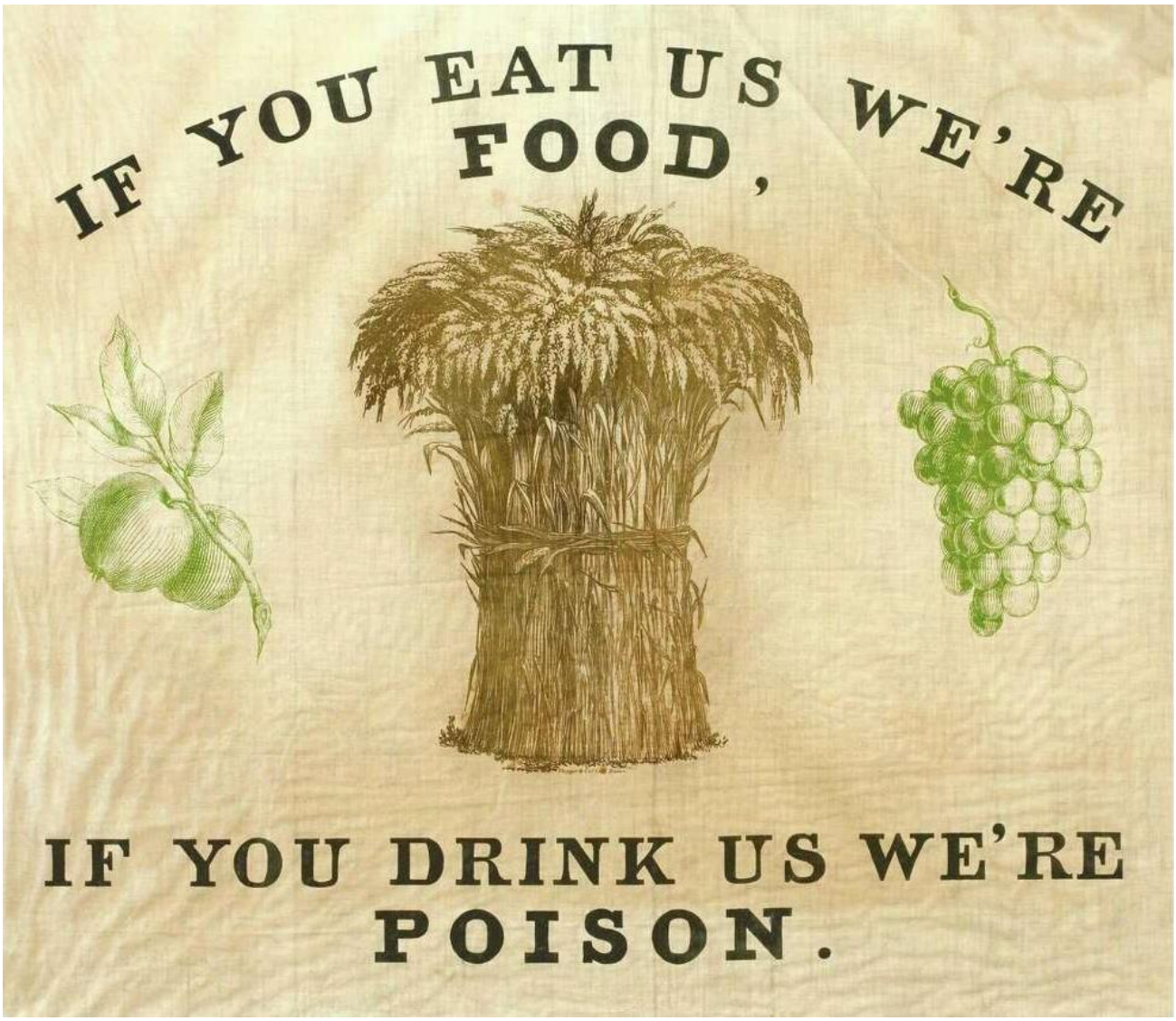
Beyond the "Fundamentalist Crusade"

A Reconsideration of Temperance Ideology in Its Historical Context



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Abstract

Historians and popular thought alike have traditionally considered the temperance movement to be an expression of moral zealotry and the puritanical American tradition. In doing so, this narrative minimises the importance and influence of many late nineteenth and early twentieth century ideas in shaping the ideology of temperance. This dissertation challenges this model and argues that temperance was not simply or primarily motivated by morals but by a complicated web of ideals, beliefs and anxieties from around 1870-1920. Divided into three chapters, this dissertation will consider the impact of ideas around culture and identity (primarily through class and ethnicity), beliefs about health and the body, and lastly the influence of other contemporary political movements and their ideologies. To understand this side of the movement, primary source material has been chosen to focus on rhetoric, such as speeches, books, posters and cartoons. Collectively, these chapters will reveal how temperance was not an ideological island but heavily influenced by a matrix of American ideas during this period. Additionally, the complex motivations for temperance activists' involvement in the movement, often divorced from the issue of alcohol entirely, will be revealed and dissected. In doing so, this dissertation offers a model for studying other movements, through tracing the influence of contemporary ideas and the multitude of motivations behind the movement's explicit goal.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Introduction

Prohibition is often considered a failure in popular thought, representative of the dangers of enshrining personal morality and reflecting the "nation's puritanical roots" in attempting to destroy all forms of pleasure.[1] One historian has recognised how Prohibition has often been described as the "Prohibition experiment" in order to emphasise the ultimate failure of the "experiment" and suggests that the most important lesson that can be learnt from Prohibition is on the futility of certain laws.[2] Although the Eighteenth Amendment, passed in 1919 and forbidding the "manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors", was ultimately repealed, emphasising Prohibition as a failure downplays the fact that an activist movement managed to place the banning of a widely used consumer product into the Constitution. With little to no precedent for using the Constitution to restrict individual behaviour, this achievement was a momentous success in 1919. Most importantly, by emphasising Prohibition's failure, through lax enforcement and eventual repeal, many historians have belied the power of temperance movement (which opposed alcohol and achieved Prohibition) and the various ideological forces that coalesced into this successful movement.

[1] For example, Annika Neklason, "Prohibition Was a Failed Experiment in Moral Governance," *The Atlantic,* January 16, 2020, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/01/prohibition-was-failed-experiment-moral-governance/604972/.; Jane O'Brien, "The Time When Americans Drank All Day Long," *BBC News,* March 9, 2015, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-31741615.

[2] J. C. Burnham, "New Perspectives on the Prohibition "Experiment" of the 1920's," *Journal of Social History* 2, no. 1 (Autumn 1968): 52.

This dissertation will investigate the ideas and appeal of the temperance movement in order to provide a greater understanding of American society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the concerns, anxieties and beliefs of Americans during this period. We will analyse and assess the various ideological motives for supporting the temperance movement and how temperance advocates used and expressed these ideas to appeal to the public. The focus will be on the factors that contributed to the success of the movement and motivated the participants. Because of this, the experience of Prohibition in the 1920s and its repeal are of little relevance. The emphasis will instead be on the movement leading up to Prohibition, focusing on how ideas around temperance inspired activists and were oriented to appeal to the American public. Thus, this dissertation takes a "history of ideas" approach rather than a more traditional social or political history of the movement. In order to understand temperance's ideology, primary source material will focus on the use of rhetoric in speeches, cartoons and books by temperance activists. In order to ascertain consistency in this ideology, this work will focus primarily on two organisations: the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), most notably led by Frances Willard, and the Anti-Saloon League (ASL), with Wayne Wheeler as its most prominent leader. Furthermore, this work will focus on the white middle-class leadership of the movement, because, as they dominated the movement (especially the WCTU and ASL), their ideas are more representative of temperance ideology. Additionally, regional ideological distinctions in the

movement, especially in the South, are beyond the scope of this dissertation. Similarly, the movement from around 1870-1920 will be the core of this work. The early antebellum phase of the movement typically had different objectives, focusing on personal conversion and thus does not reflect how temperance ideology was used to achieve Prohibition.

The traditional model of temperance that this work challenges originated in the 1950s, arguing that the temperance movement was motivated by religious moralistic fervour. For instance, Richard Hofstadter described the movement as "moral overstrain", "mere peevishness" and "a memento of the strange power of crusades for absolute morality".[3] Similarly, Andrew Sinclair claimed the movement was a "fundamentalist crusade" with "holy prejudice" focused on stamping out vice.[4] These historians depict the movements as an emotional reactionary movement motivated by, and exploiting, moralist anxieties and fear. In this way, they minimise the historical and ideological significance of the movement and, in many ways, depict the movement as unworthy of historical attention.

To challenge this traditional perspective on temperance, this dissertation will focus on three influential ideas that shaped the rhetoric of the movement, reflecting its ideology and appeal to the public. In this way, temperance rhetoric both reflects the views of the participants but also the views of the American public as a whole which temperance advocates tapped into. Firstly, we will discuss how temperance activists and their

[3] Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F. D. R.* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), 292.
[4] Andrew Sinclair, *Prohibition: The Era of Excess* (London: Faber, 1962), 16, 22.

rhetoric was influenced by their white middle-class identity. Intemperance was understood as foreign and lower class and therefore, in order to reinforce the idea that white middle-class values and customs should dominate American society, temperance was depicted as a way of restoring the white middle-classes to a position of cultural power in America. Secondly, we will see how temperance activists and rhetoric was influenced by this period's ideas about health and genetics. New technological and scientific advancement had made the American public more anxious about bodily and genetic contamination, which temperance activists tapped into by depicting intemperance as "poisonous" and degenerating the nation. Lastly, temperance rhetoric was influenced by the political climate of the period, primarily through two movements: women's suffrage and Progressivism. These two political movements supported and reinforced temperance and influenced and inspired temperance ideology. An important theme throughout this work is considering the temperance movement as a part of the Progressive Era (a period of social reform in the early twentieth century). Temperance was part of a general trend in this period in which reformers attempted to use broad legislation to combat social problems and temperance shared many of the ideological underpinnings of Progressivism, as will be discussed.

Ultimately, this dissertation will attempt to show that temperance was a much more rational movement than historians who emphasise the "mania" of the movement have accounted for. They were not solely or even primarily motivated by a concern with vice and morality and instead,

temperance advocates were motivated by more practical concerns and were able to garner support, not by appealing to American hearts, but through appealing to American minds. In constructing a temperance ideology, the ideas, beliefs and anxieties of Americans in this period will be illuminated.

Temperance as a Cultural Conflict

In the late nineteenth century, as temperance began to blossom into a powerful force in American society, the United States was transforming. The notion of a homogenous American culture was crumbling as urbanisation solidified class difference and mass immigration heightened American multiculturalism. In this environment, it was becoming less and less clear what "American culture" represented. In this way, Progressive reformers were motivated by a desire to unite Americans under one system and national experience that shared common core values. Daniel Rodgers has astutely recognised that Progressive reformers deployed "the rhetoric of the moral whole" which emphasised collective values and unity and argued "the dream [of middle-class Progressivism] of reknitting the social body into wholeness blossomed".[5] Progressives desired for the elimination of social difference and "to reinvent a society in which class had no enduring place".[6] Similarly, Higham recognised that Progressive reforms, such as temperance "came back time and again to the great issue: the polarization of American society" and that they were united by a feeling that the "homogenous culture" of the nation was threatened.[7] White Anglo-Saxon Protestants dominated the Progressive movement and therefore, Progressivism aimed to establish uniformity in accordance with

[5] Daniel Rodgers, *Contested Truths: Keywords in American Politics Since Independence* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 179, 182.
[6] Shelton Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People": The Progressive Movement, The Class Problem, and the Origins of Modern Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 4.
[7] John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1963) 38.

their values. In this way, temperance, as part of the Progressive movement, sought to remould the United States in the middle-class reformers' image. It should be noted that the motivation in temperance to standardise American culture could be interpreted as part of the moralist model of temperance. The rhetoric often mimicked a moralist outrage at pleasure. However, whereas a puritanical motivation for temperance is incited by moral outrage and discomfort with vice, White Anglo-Saxon Protestants in the temperance movement were more significantly motivated by discomfort with cultural difference and were focused on standardising American culture. As we will see, the people temperance targeted (and the way they targeted them) reflects that the primary concern was not immorality, which was present in middle-class society, but on expression of ethnic and working-class identity and culture.

Firstly, in order to understand the cultural significance of temperance, alcohol must be understood as more than a consumer product. For instance, Gusfield has understood alcohol as a "cultural object" and it is through this lens that the temperance movement's expression of identity politics and cultural conflict can be elucidated.[8] Temperance, to the white middle-class reformer, reflected the respectable values of middle-class society and emphasised their manners, work ethic and frugality. In an era when urbanisation was both increasing and solidifying the working-class and mass immigration was shaping the ethnic composition of the nation,

[8] Joseph Gusfield, *Contested Meanings: The Construction of Alcohol Problems* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996).

Prohibition served as a way of enforcing middle-class values and customs and therefore reinforcing to Americans that the middle-classes were the dominant force in American society. Thus, reform (including temperance) served as a tool for cultural domination. Some historians have recognised the importance of Progressive reform to middle-class culture and national identity. Boyer has argued that the reformist impulse of American middle-classes "might reflect less the wish to control others than an impulse toward self-definition, a need to avow publicly one's own class aspirations".[9] Gusfield's *Symbolic Crusade takes* a similar approach and considers temperance as a symbolic instrument of class expression and a display of middle-class power. Significantly, in Gusfield's model, the actual enforcement of Prohibition becomes a non-issue because it was making alcohol illegal, rather than preventing alcohol consumption, that served as the symbol of middle-class dominance. Although these insights are valuable, they undervalue the real-life significance of temperance and Prohibition by focusing on symbolic issues. This ignores the significant efforts temperance groups made during Prohibition to enforce the Amendment, the ways in which temperance advocates were greatly offended by the explicit and visible affront to middle-class culture that alcohol represented and the involvement of temperance advocates in other practical reforms intent on dismantling the heterogenous culture of

[9] Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 61.

America. The temperance movement's dismantling focused on two key areas of difference in American society: ethnicity and class.

The Influence of Ethnicity

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the United States experienced a surge in immigration, particularly from more culturally diverse regions such as Southern and Eastern Europe and Asia. This radically changed the ethnic demographics of the United States. In 1860, over 50% of foreign-born Americans were British (the ethnic group with the most familiar values and customs to White Anglo-Saxon Protestants) compared to 15% in 1920.[10] In response, "native" Americans (those born in the nation) felt threatened by the influx of immigrants. This was partly economic, as these immigrants made job competition and urban overcrowding more severe issues, but as seen in the rhetoric (and legislative action) of anti-immigrationists, this was primarily a social and cultural issue. For example, rhetoric against Chinese immigration in the late nineteenth century positioned the threat as stemming from Chinese immigrants' non-conformity to "American" social values. Representative McClure described Chinese immigrants as "alien in manners, servile in labor, pagan in religion, they are fundamentally un-American".[11] Similarly, the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act limited immigration from less culturally similar regions such as Southern Europe, Asia and Africa.

[10] Daniel Rodgers, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American* Life, 2nd edn. (New York: Perennial, 2002), 25.
[11] Quoted in Andrew Gyory, *Closing The Gate; Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1998), 5.

This reflects that not only how many people but *who* was immigrating was a significant concern. Thus, culture was an extremely important factor in the nativist movement, which amplifies the cultural significance of nativism in the temperance movement, which will be discussed below.

Nativism was primarily expressed through two forms of political activity: Americanization and immigration restriction. Immigration restriction was used against what historians have called "new immigrants", those emigrating from outside Northern Europe. The 1924 Immigration Restriction Act mentioned above is a prime example of this. However, for older immigrants, such as Irish and German immigrants, who were firmly established in America, nativists focused on Americanizing their customs. It was in this area that temperance activism served to standardise American culture and values. Americanization campaigns have often been interpreted by historians as a form of cultural conflict. For instance, Carlson has argued that Progressive Era education reform was about Americanization and "cultural genocide".[12] Americanization programmes ranged from promoting the English language, religious conversion and diet reform. Diet was of a particular concern for Americanizers as, alongside alcohol, food is a cultural object that ties immigrants to their ethnic identity and suggested a lack of assimilation, representing a hindrance to cultural uniformity. Progressive reformers attempted "to define a single national cuisine" reminiscent of "the simple, abstemious

[12] Robert Carlson, *The Quest For Conformity: Americanization Through Education* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975), 15.

fare of Puritan New England", and thus encouraged dietary changes such as a greater use of meat in Mediterranean diets and more dairy products in Asian diets.[13] Clearly, debates around diet were sites of cultural conflict reminiscent of the more political domains of the Americanization movement.

Therefore, it was through Americanization that temperance advocates worked to homogenise American culture. The WCTU was deeply embedded in the Americanization movement, even outside the purview of alcohol. For instance, between 1900 and 1920, the WCTU established a centre at Ellis Island to assist in the Americanization of incoming immigrants and in 1919, it allocated $40,000 for Americanization programmes, which was "the second largest single appropriation in its history".[14] Additionally, Americanization and assimilation were prominent themes in WCTU rhetoric. The President of the Minnesota chapter of the WCTU argued that their primary goal was "to meet the foreigners early on" then to "give them our customs before they have established theirs of the old world upon us".[15] Similarly, Willard demanded Congress "enact a stringent immigration law prohibiting the influx into our land of more of the scum of the Old World, until we have educated those who are here".[16]

[13] Donna Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 122-124.
[14] Joseph Gusfield, "Social Structure and Moral Reform: A Study of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union," *The American Journal of Sociology* 61, no. 3. (November 1955): 225.
[15] Bessie Laythe Scovell, "Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting of the WCTU of the State of Minnesota," in *The Gilded Age,* ed. Judith Freeman Clark (New York: Facts On File, 2009), 199.
[16] Quoted in Kenneth Rose, *American Women and the Repeal of Prohibition* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 26.

In this context, educated means Americanized. Clearly, the WCTU were particularly concerned about the cultural shape of the nation. Thus, temperance advocates used the spectre of cultural heterogeny to inspire action. The *Union Signal* (the WCTU's journal) frequently published articles that warned of the dangers of foreign drinkers, claiming 90% of saloonkeepers were foreign-born and that sixteen states allowed immigrant men to vote prior to naturalization, which had made the foreign vote powerful enough to protect alcohol interests.[17] Additionally, the WCTU's Anna Gordon claimed the liquor traffic had always been "of alien and autocratic origin". This type of rhetoric made alcohol seem antithetical to American values through an emphasis on ethnic alcohol culture.

It was the fact that alcohol was important in the customs and culture of ethnic Americans, rather than simply its consumption, that was so offensive. As Murdock argues, "alcohol provided recent immigrants…a form of ethnic identity" which had been shaken by the loss of nationhood.[18] For example, German immigrants imported the beer garden into America, which not only included public drinking but also involved drinking on Sundays, providing a flaunting of non-Protestant values.[19] Similarly, the Irish brought the shebeen in which women sold alcohol out

[17] Steven Piott, *Americans in Dissent: Thirteen Influential Social Critics of the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), 134.
[18] Catherine Murdock, *Domesticating Drink: Women, Men, and Alcohol in American, 1870-1940* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 15.
[19] Amy Mittelman, *Brewing Battles: A History of American Beer* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2008), 40.

of their homes, which violated middle-class domestic values.[20] Similarly, Alamillo has argued that for Mexican immigrants in early twentieth-century California, alcohol was central to their culture as it provided "a means to meet male and female companions and to recoup and reclaim their bodies from alienating workplaces and racially charged climates", but constituted a sexual transgression for middle-class society.[21] In this way, temperance rhetoric was responding to the threat of ethnic cultural identity.

Nevertheless, some historians have claimed the WCTU was an egalitarian group against ethnic and racial prejudice. Bordin argues that the WCTU "widely embraced diverse ethnic, sectional, and racial groups" whilst Fletcher argues that Frances Willard had worked hard to make the WCTU "more racially inclusive" and that the WCTU "actively tried to include immigrants in their work and to counter stereotypes about them."[22] However, it was through the inclusion of *some* ethnic minorities that the cultural-ethnic significance of the movement was amplified. This allowed them to display how temperance could remould ethnic minorities into conforming cultural Americans. The full exclusion of minorities would have made temperance as a method of cultural homogeny appear an impossibility. Thus, the movement is littered with "conversion narratives"

[20] Catherine Murdock, *Domesticating Drink,* 75.
[21] Jose Alamillo, *Making Lemonade Out Of Lemons: Mexican American Labor and Leisure in a California Town, 1880-1960* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 64-65.
[22] Ruth Bordin, *Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900* (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1981), 159.; Holly Fletcher, *Gender and the American Temperance Movement of the Nineteenth Century* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2007), 120.

in which temperance is depicted as the method of uplift for squalid, heterogeneous ethnic peoples. For example, the Cleveland WCTU reported that at their "Mothers' Meetings" which particularly targeted ethnic regions, five women who "were formerly Catholics now trust in Christ for salvation" due to the WCTU.[23] Catholicism was seen as part of ethnic culture that restricted immigrants' embrace of American values and therefore, it was through conversion narratives that the possibility of homogenising America was expressed.

Ultimately, temperance advocates harnessed (and were inspired by) a narrative that depicted ethnic culture as a threat to American values and cultural homogeny to portray alcohol as culturally dangerous and therefore nativism can be seen as a significant influence on the temperance movement.

The Influence of Class

Alongside an attempt to dismantle ethnic distinction, the temperance movement can be seen as a part of the Progressive Era's project to "elevate" working-class culture to middle-class standards. This was most explicitly expressed in temperance movement's fierce opposition to the saloon. Historians, such as Madelon Powers, have long recognised the significance of the saloon in working-class culture, which has often been described as a "social institution", because it provided a variety of functions for a community outside of alcohol. However, Powers, despite

[23] Rose, *American Women,* 26-27.

recognising the cultural significance of the saloon providing communal values in working-class society, has continued to regurgitate traditional arguments that middle-class opposition to the saloon was because they saw it as "little more than vice-ridden liquor dispensaries where people just went to get drunk".[24] However, it was *because* the middle-class reformers recognised the cultural significance of the saloon that they so aggressively targeted the institution. In the 1890s, middle-class social investigators "directly observed saloon culture", including workers cashing their cheques; storing valuables; hiring workers; accessing a telephone, newspaper and toilet; playing games and sports and even providing free lunches.[25] Thus, the middle-class were aware of the social and cultural significance of the saloon and its importance to the working-class. In fact, Roy Rosenzweig has acutely recognised the significance by arguing that opposition to the saloon "often took on aspects of a 'class war' over the recreational world of the industrial working class".[26]

Thus, the temperance movement targeted the saloon as the centre of the alcohol problem. As early as the 1870s, the Women's Crusade (the precursor to the WCTU) focused on saloons through gathering outside in prayer.[27] The emphasis on the saloon became the central focus of the movement by the early twentieth century, when the ASL was formed.

[24] Madelon Powers, *Faces Along The Bar: Lore and Order in the Working Man's Saloon, 1870-1920* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1998), 24.
[25] Thomas Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America, 1800-1933* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1998), 103-104.
[26] Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours For What We Will*: *Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 95.
[27] Murdock, *Domesticating Drink,* 18.

Considering alcohol consumption and drunkenness were not limited to the confines of the saloon, this tirade against the saloon appears to be a minimisation of the alcohol issue. However, the saloon as the target of temperance reflected the ever-increasing importance of culture and identity on the movement. The saloon was so offensive to middle-class reformers because it served as the antithesis of middle-class culture. The saloon was known for being a loud and public social nuisance, representing a lack of manners and respectability.[28] The saloon, as a place where working men spent their time, suggested a disinterest with elevating one's social status through hard work and frugality, as it implied an acceptance and embrace of one's social class. The middle-class need for working-class people to aspire to their position was central to their identity. The saloon also challenged the domestic values of the middle-class. Barleen has analysed how the common practice of "can-rushing", in which alcohol from saloons was delivered (primarily by children) to the home of working-class families, "rejected the age and gender segregation of the saloon" by making women and children saloon customers.[29] The saloon also offended middle-class economic values of frugality. In fact, Purley Barker of the ASL argued that "the allegation that the saloon is the poor man's club ought to be resented by wage-earners" because "men are likely to be kept poor so long as they share largely of their daily wage

[28] Perry Duis, *The Saloon: Public Drinking in Chicago and Boston, 1880-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 235-236.
[29] Steven Barleen, "'Rushing the Growler': Can Rushing and Working-Class Politicization in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era," *Labour History* 55, no. 4 (August 2014): 520-521.

with the saloon". In this way, the saloon was both blamed for and seen as representative of, the working classes lack of value placed on frugality. Additionally, it reflects how disgusted middle-class reformers were by working-class people's embracing of their own culture (by claiming the concept of the saloon as a "poor man's club) should be rejected and thus reflects how temperance was opposed to working-class cultural identity.

To heighten the threat of working-class saloon culture, and thus attract support for temperance, the saloon was rhetorically depicted as a threat to the nation and un-American. Referring to the saloon, the ASL claimed "some of our cities are well-nigh submerged with this unpatriotic element, which is manipulated by [those] engaged in the un-American drink traffic".[30] Similarly, combing ethnicity and class, the Presbyterian Church of America claimed that if you remove immigrants from saloons "you will soon find him and his children among the stalwart sons and daughters of America, ready to fight her battles, enter her churches, and maintain and guard her holy traditions".[31] The use of the word "stalwart" to represent the redeemed drunkard reflects how temperance activists viewed the saloon as representing the antithesis of middle-class values of loyalty, hard-work and dedication. Furthermore, the emphasis on the saloon as a dangerous institution and a threat to traditional American culture also complicates the idea that Prohibition was a failure. After Prohibition,

[30] Purley Baker, "The Next and Final Step," in *Anti-Saloon League Year Book, 1914,* ed. Ernest Cherrington (Westerville: The American Issue Press, 1914), 16.
[31] "Presbyterian General Assembly," *The American Issue* 5, no. 30 (October 1910): 5.

although alcohol consumption returned, the saloon, and its culture, had disappeared from America's landscape due to Prohibition, causing drinking to be more private and respectable.[32] Prohibition successfully destroyed the saloon as an institution, reflecting how, for those concerned with "uplifting" the working-class, the temperance movement was somewhat successful despite the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.

Additionally, the saloon was a representation of urban life and the urban working-class. Although many middle-class temperance advocates were themselves urban-dwellers, rural America was seen as the epitome of national identity and culture. This is because the United States has historically understood itself as an agrarian and rural nation. In fact, Hofstadter has identified an "agrarian myth" in American identity throughout its history. This myth claimed that American values (and therefore culture) stemmed from its agrarian origins and therefore the countryside was more "American" than the city. Hofstadter recognised the agrarian myth influenced Populism in the late nineteenth century and thus helped trigger the reformist impulse of the era. [33] Therefore, opposition to the dominance of the city in American life was central to the temperance movement. The ASL's General Superintendent argued in 1914 that "the vices of the cities have been the undoing of past empires and civilizations. It has been at the point where the urban population outnumbers the rural

[32] Norman Clark, *Deliver Us From Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition* (New York: Norton, 1976), 178.
[33] Hofstadter, *Age of Reform,* 23-59.

people that wrecked Republics have gone down".[34] Although this uses the language of morality, it was primarily an attack on urbanisation and the "urban population" (meaning, in this context, the urban working-class). Additionally, the ASL claimed in 1915 that America could only be saved by using "the pure stream of country sentiment and township morals to flush out the cesspools of cities".[35] This is an explicit statement of culture war, as it reflects how the temperance movement was concerned with ensuring rural culture represented American society.

Ultimately, temperance was ideologically influenced by cultural conflict and cultural rhetoric was used to appeal to white middle-class Americans. Alcohol was, and is today, a cultural object and is associated with class and ethnicity. Thus, temperance was use by the white middle-classes to justify their role as an aspirational position and moral backbone for Americans by dismantling their culture and tarnishing it as illegitimate. Nevertheless, this depiction of temperance could be criticised as ignoring the contributions of non-white, non-middle class temperance activists. White, middle-class members of the movement have been focused on because they dominated the movement, but, in fact, temperance as cultural conflict was not limited to this group. For instance, temperance was used by working-class railroad brotherhoods to express masculinity (and condemn those who didn't conform) through a distinctively working-

[34] Baker, "The Next and Final Step," 16.
[35] Quoted in Boyer, *Urban Masses,* 212.

class notion of masculinity.[36] Additionally, Lappas has shown, through an analysis of two Haudensaunee women, that Native American temperance activists used temperance as a way to preserve Native cultural traditions that were under attack, such as women's participations in the political sphere.[37] Therefore, although the white middle-class cultural conflict in the temperance movement has been the focus as they dominated the movement and therefore are more representative of its ideology and rhetoric, temperance was used by other groups to assert cultural dominance and influence American culture. Thus, the temperance movement can be understood as a cultural conflict, which has often been misconstrued as a reactionary moralist movement, due to its criticism of behaviour. However, this was part of a criticism of cultural customs and not rooted in a moral panic.

[36] Paul Taillon, "'What We Want Is Good, Sober Men:' Masculinity, Respectability, and Temperance in the Railroad Brotherhoods, c. 1870-1910," *Journal of Social History* 36, no. 2. (Winter 2002): 319-338.
[37] Thomas Lappas, "'For God and Home and Native Land': The Haudenosaunee and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, 1884-1921," *Journal of Women's History* 29, no. 2. (June 2017): 63.

Temperance as a Health Movement

Contemporary and historiographical depictions of the temperance movement that depict it is a puritanical, moralist endeavour do a disservice to the significance of health in the movement. In many ways, the temperance movement can be understood as a public health movement, and part of the many public health and alternative medical reforms of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From the 1880s onward, the federal government became increasingly involved in the health of its citizens, which was part of the ideology of Progressivism in which the government increasingly exercised protective control over its citizenry.[38] Temperance was influenced by, and capitalised on, this public mood of support for the idea that the state could intervene in its citizenry's lives for the purposes of health. Thus, the appeal of temperance was strongly linked with its association with health and its ideology mirrored and reinforced the ideology of health reform.

The Influence of Bodily Purity

Temperance supporters were deeply embedded in the health reform activities of the period, reflecting the ideological interconnectedness of the movements. In fact, Ruth Engs has described this late nineteenth and early twentieth century as the Second Clean Living Movement, because of this period's immense number of health reformist ideas that emerged.[39]

[38] James Cassedy, *Medicine in America: A Short History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 113.
[39] Ruth Engs, *Clean Living Movements: American Cycles of Health Reform* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2001), 101-178.

There was a great deal of overlap between the temperance movement and other health and dietary reform movements of the period, which reflects how ideas of health influenced the movement. Frances Willard was a prime example of this coalescence. She was actively involved in vegetarianism, the physical culture (exercise) movement, opposed the use of internal medicines and believed that white bread "heats the blood and paves the way for all diseased appetites".[40] Similarly, many other temperance advocates were alternative medical practitioners such as the homeopath Lydia Fowler and John Harvey Kellogg, who ran a hydropathic hospital in Battle Creek, which suggests a corresponding ideology between the movements.[41] What connected these health reform movements was the idea of bodily purity. Alternative therapies such as hydropathy and homeopathy held the fundamental principle of *vis medicatrix naturae* as core to their philosophy.[42] V*is medicatrix naturae* is the idea that the body is naturally perfect, equipped with the tools to heal itself and, most importantly, that the introduction of foreign unnatural substances only inhibits the natural healing process. Many of these alternative health movements were a response to orthodox nineteenth-century "heroic medicine", which involved treating patients with toxic

[40] Ibid*,* 124.; Quoted in Bordin, *Women and Temperance*. 108.
[41] Kristine Swenson, "Temperance, Feminism, and Phrenology in Lydia Fowler's Nora: The Lost and Redeemed," *Literature and Medicine* 39, no. 1 (2021): 89-107.; Brian Wilson, *Dr John Harvey Kellogg and the Religion of Biological Living* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 30.; Anne Kirschmann, *A Vital Force: Women in American Homeopathy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 2004), 44, 48, 52.
[42] James Whorton, *Crusaders For Fitness: The History of American Health Reformers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 24.

substances such as calomel to trigger purging.[43] The significant cross-over between these health movements and temperance suggest that both reforms were tapping into the same core ideas and anxieties. Therefore, this suggests that bodily purity was a major concern for temperance advocates. Notably, bodily purity is distinct from the idea that temperance was motivated by moral purity. Whereas the moralist model of temperance depicts activists as desiring to quell or control the behaviour of others, a concern for bodily purity reflects a reverence for the body, and a concern with its literal contamination. In this way, although temperance concerns about the body are centred on purity, this is a material and physical form of purity.

To capitalise on people's anxieties of bodily purity, temperance activism often highlighted the purity of their sober lifestyle. For instance, water was a key rhetorical image in temperance campaigns, which Parsons attributes to the reformers' "obsession with purity" in the body.[44] However, the concept of bodily purity most powerfully shaped temperance rhetoric through the metaphor of poison. Bodily purity meant foreign substance contamination was a major concern for maintaining a healthy body (which contributed to health reformers opposition to internal medicine). Poison represents the most explicit form of contamination and is the antithesis of purity and therefore, temperance advocates were

[43] James Whorton, *Nature Cures: The History of Alternative Medicine in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 3-7.
[44] Elaine Parsons, *Manhood Lost: Fallen Drunkards and Redeeming Women in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 2003), 131.

particularly concerned about the poisonous nature of alcohol and exploited this idea to appeal to others. Poison metaphors were ever-present in temperance literature and was instilled as an idea through "constant repetition".[45] A 1903 report found descriptions of alcohol as a "poison" littered throughout many WCTU-sponsored textbooks, reflecting how important this idea was to their rhetoric and propaganda.[46] This use of poison as a rhetorical tool can be seen in other progressive movements of the era, reflecting the power of this concept. For instance, the American anti-vaccination movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries used similar poison rhetoric and was inspired by the same notions of bodily purity. While some historians have depicted the anti-vaccination movement as primarily a debate about individual rights, this ignores how opposition to vaccination was not a symbolic crusade for its participants: they felt genuinely endangered by vaccination.[47] Anti-vaccinationist J. M. Peebles described vaccines as "calf-pox poison" while in a Supreme Court case, the defendant, Henning Jacobson argued no law should force "a man to offer up his body to pollution and filth and disease; that compels him to submit to a barbarous ceremonial of blood-poisoning".[48] Thus, fear of vaccination stemmed from the idea that a

[45] James Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement*, *1900-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 49.
[46] John Billings, ed., *Physiological Aspects of the Liquor Problem* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1903), 28-31.
[47] Michael Willrich, "'The Least Vaccinated of Any Civilised Country': Personal Liberty and Public Health in the Progressive Era," *Journal of Policy History* 20, no. 1 (January 2008): 76-93.
[48] James Martin Peebles, *Vaccination A Curse and a Menace to Personal* Liberty, 10th edition (Battle Creek: Peebles Publishing Company, 1913), 138.; Jacobson quoted in Michael Willrich, *Pox: An American History* (New York: Penguin Publishing, 2011), 9.

foreign substance could only be a threat to the body's natural purity and were therefore influenced by reformist ideas about bodily purity. In fact, the Anti-Vaccination Society of America's leadership was dominated by alternative medical practitioners including homeopaths and osteopaths, reflecting the medical ideological overlap.[49] In this way, it becomes clear that, for many Americans, bodily purity was a particular concern which temperance activists were both influenced by and attempted to tap into to appeal to others through their rhetoric.

Poison was such a powerful rhetorical tool for the temperance movement because the obsession with purity and contamination was present throughout American cultural. Alongside the bodily purity concept discussed above, this obsession stemmed from an increased awareness of, and exposure to, impurities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Firstly, and most explicitly, the discovery of germ theory and other scientific discoveries made people more aware of the dangers outside sources could have on their body. Nancy Tomes has described the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a period in which a "gospel of germs" was spread through the nation, informing (but also scaring) Americans into understanding the dangers of contamination.[50] Additionally, and especially significant in regard to poison rhetoric, this period witnessed the combination of an increased exposure to harmful

[49] Kim Tolley, "School Vaccination Wars: The Rise of Anti-Science in the American Anti-Vaccination Societies, 1879-1929," *History of Education Quarterly* 59, no. 2 (May 2019): 171.
[50] Nancy Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

domestic substances and an increased awareness of the danger. New products in an increasingly consumerist society were changing the nation's concept of consumer safety. For example, the sale of "drug, toilet and household preparations" for domestic use increased from $40 million in 1879 to over $765 million by 1920, which meant a significant increase in the presence of potentially dangerous chemicals within the home.[51] In response to this, the media attempted to warn Americans of these dangers, and particularly targeted women. Through an analysis of the *Ladies Home Journal* in one single year, from 1904-1905, we can see the extent to which poison was depicted as a creeping, ever-present danger in women's lives. Adverts warning of the dangers of poison ranged from pots and pans emphasising "no metallic poisoning from copper"; a cereal for children that claimed "meat and coffee or tea are a kind of poison to children" and a Cream of Tartar company describing alum baking powder as a "mineral poison" (see Fig. 1).[52] Additionally, articles in the *Ladies' Home Journal* warned of poisons contained within domestic consumer

Figure 1: No "Pot Luck" Advertisement

[51] James Norris, *Advertising and the Transformation of American Society, 1865-1920* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1990), 68.
[52] "No 'Pot Luck'," *The Ladies' Home Journal* 22, no. 4 (March 1905): 40.; The Miller, "How to Grow Strong Children," *The Ladies' Home Journal* 22, no. 12 (November 1905): 64..; "Royal is a Pure Cream of Tatar Baking Powder," *The Ladies' Home Journal* 22, no. 12 (November 1905): 27.

products, ranging from patent medicines, make-up and fireworks.[53] Women in this period were made hyper-aware of the potentially poisonous nature of their homes and warned to protect the domestic sphere from outside contamination. In 1914, Christine Frederick summed up the importance of consumerism on contamination anxiety, arguing "health boards may think they are responsible for the aseptic attitude of the modern housekeeper, but Platt's Chlorides, vacuum cleaners, and dustless dusters did it" through their advertising emphasis on cleanliness.[54] Significantly, temperance advocates' use of poison rhetoric reflects how reforms of the Progressive Era, such as temperance, were often more influenced by individual concerns and consumerism than philanthropy, which further devalues the moralist model of temperance. This aspect of Progressive health ideology reflected in temperance is also apparent in the work of Upton Sinclair. Sinclair was a Progressive author who wrote *The Jungle*, which described the harrowing, unhygienic working conditions of Chicago's meatpackers and ultimately inspired the Pure Food and Drug Act. However, Sinclair was shocked that his work intended to arouse support for socialism caused middle-class people to respond with a solution to the contamination of their food. In this way, Sinclair lamented that "I aimed at the public's heart, and by accident I hit it in the

[53] Emma Walker, "Pretty Girl Papers," *The Ladies' Home Journal* 22, no. 5. (April 1905): 35.; Edward Bok, "Why 'Patent Medicines' Are Dangerous," *The Ladies' Home Journal* 22, no. 4 (March 1905): 18.; "Fourth of July Follies", *The Ladies' Home Journal* 22, no. 7 (June 1905): 17.
[54] Quoted in Nancy Tomes, "'Skeletons in the Medicine Closet': Women and 'Rational Consumption' in the Inter-War American Home", in *Health and the Modern Home,* ed. Mark Jackson (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 177.

stomach".[55] Temperance rhetoric recognised this, and, through the rhetoric of poison, precisely aimed at the nation's body over its heart and thus reflects a wider theme of Progressivism reform being more individualistic than typically thought.

Ultimately, poison was a rhetorical tool in the temperance movement because it harnessed anxieties about health in the period, specifically a concern with bodily purity. In this way, it reflects how anxieties about contamination influenced temperance ideology and rhetoric.

The Influence of Eugenics

Alongside the concept of poison, eugenics was an important "public health" movement in this period which shaped temperance ideology and their use of rhetoric to appeal for support. Eugenics was the belief that by excluding certain people from reproduction, the human race could be improved and thus, the contamination of degenerate people in the gene pool was a major concern. Fear of contamination was so central to eugenics as an ideology that Nazi Germans called the concept "racial hygiene". Although eugenics was a pseudoscientific pursuit (corrupted by racism, ableism and classism), it was also fundamentally a public health movement and eugenicists held a significant presence in American public health programmes in this period.[56] Eugenics was an intellectual craze that seeped into every aspect of life. In fact, historians have shown that

[55] Upton Sinclair, "What Life Means to Me," *Cosmopolitan* 41 (October 1906): 594.
[56] Martin Pernick, "Eugenics and Public Health in American History," *American Journal of Public Health* 87, no. 11 (November 1997): 1768.

eugenics had "an extraordinarily wide constituency" that was involved in many of the Progressive Era reforms of the period.[57] Eugenics was fundamentally tied to the ideology of Progressivism and therefore naturally appealed to temperance reformers. Hofstadter recognised the ideological connection between eugenics and Progressive reform, arguing the "eugenics craze had about it the air of 'a reform'" and shared many Progressive tenants such as "the principle of state action toward a common end and spoke in terms of the collective destiny of a group rather than individual success".[58] Eugenics' most valuable contribution to the temperance cause was the way in which it provided evidence of the danger of alcohol. Prior to 1860, there had been scant research into the bodily effects of alcohol, but after 1890, as eugenics was growing in popularity, there was a flood of research into this, including many studies that found alcohol created defective children.[59] For instance, "blastophthoria" was a new theory by eugenicists that suggested alcohol, especially excessive alcohol, damaged the cells and this weakness would be passed on to offspring.[60] These arguments often combine eugenic and poison rhetoric, with one eugenic researcher describing alcohol as a "race poison".[61] Therefore, eugenics was part of, and ideologically aligned with, temperance.

[57] Danielle Peck and William Schoenl, "Advertising Eugenics: Charles M. Goethe's Campaign to Improve the Race," *Endeavour* 34, no 2. (2010): 75.
[58] Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), 144, 167.
[59] Timberlake, *Prohibition*, 40.
[60] Steven Goldberg, "Putting Science in the Constitution: The Prohibition Experience," in *Law, Alcohol and Order: Perspectives on National Prohibition*, ed. David Kyvig (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), 23-24.
[61] J. E. Wallace Wallin, *Problems of Subnormality* (New York: Yonkers-on-Hudson, 1917), 445.

This eugenic research into alcohol reinforced the health arguments of temperance advocates and was therefore deployed to appeal to the public. Haydu argues that by the 1890s, "the WCTU leadership had come to view alcohol abuse as more disease than sin", which had significant implications for their campaign.[62] Thus, temperance advocates actively exploited the eugenic mindset of Progressive Era America. The WCTU created a Department of Heredity and a *Journal of Heredity* to investigate the science of heredity and its relationship to alcohol and sent delegates to Race Betterment Conferences to emphasise this connection.[63] The Department of Heredity explicitly blended health and eugenics, through advancing educational campaigns to teach people about sanitation and hygiene alongside eugenic principles, which Bedford argues reflects the WTCU's "fluid understanding of the nature of heredity" (which included health and hygiene) in their ideology.[64] Additionally, eugenic ideas were a powerful rhetorical tool for temperance. For instance, the ASL commissioned a poster in 1913 arguing alcohol was significantly increasing the number of "defective" newborns, which was a particular buzz-word of the eugenics movement (see Fig. 2).[65] Alongside eugenics' broad popularity, the temperance movement's alignment with eugenics was significant for the progress of the movement because it provided it

[62] Jeffrey Haydu, "Frame Brokerage in the Pure Food Movement, 1879-1906," *Social Movement Studies* 11, no. 1 (January 2012): 105.
[63] Bordin, *Women and Temperance,* 109.; Christine Rosen, *Preaching Eugenics: Religious Leaders and the American Eugenics Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press), 87.
[64] Riiko Bedford, "Heredity as Ideology: Ideas of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of the United States and Ontario on Heredity and Social Reform, 1880-1910," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 32, no. 1 (2015): 83.
[65] Seen in Sinclair, *Prohibition,* 61.

with urgency. Ideas about health and racial decline in a eugenic context were often accompanied by warnings of a degeneration of American society which fostered a sense of panic and urgency. For example, John Harvey Kellogg, a health reformer, eugenicist and temperance advocate, argued in 1897 that "the increasing use of tobacco and use of intoxicating liquors" would lead to "degeneration and ultimate extinction" of the white race.[66] In this way, Timberlake argued that "the rapid spread of new scientific data concerning the physiological effects of alcohol" gave the movement "unusual urgency".[67]

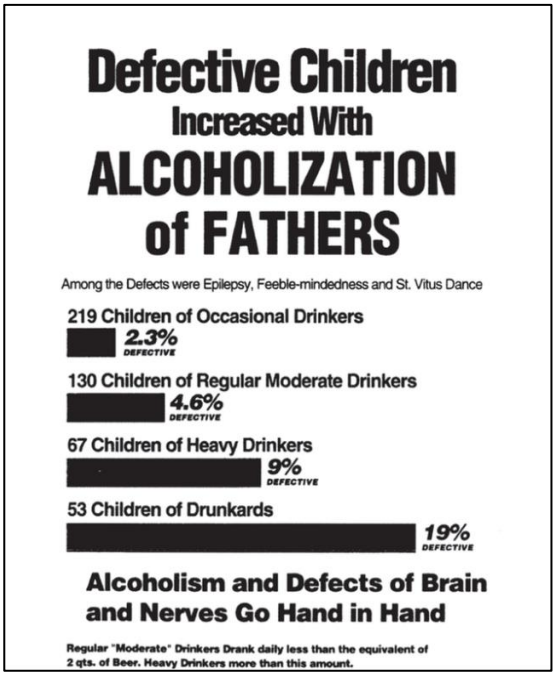

Figure 2: ASL Poster, 1907

Thus, as with poison, eugenics shaped the ideology of temperance and how they depicted alcohol, in their rhetoric, as a threat to genetic (and racial) health in order to garner support.

Thus, the temperance movement must be considered a health reform movement. Its supporters were significantly influenced and inspired by more explicit health movements of the period (such as hydropathy and vegetarianism) as well as eugenics, which can be considered a health

[66] John Harvey Kellogg, "Are We A Dying Race?," Disability History Museum, accessed January 20, 2022, https://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/lib/detail.html?id=797&&page=all.
[67] Timberlake, *Prohibition*, 40.

movement. Additionally, temperance advocates used health rhetoric and physical evidence as a central tool for their campaign, which had significant implications for the success of the movement. Temperance's status as a health movement elucidates a significant angle in temperance ideology and helps explain its appeal to the American public. In this way, it reduces the significance of morality, on the temperance movement, undermining the traditional moralist model, and recentres ideas and beliefs about the body and health in temperance ideology.

Temperance as a Political Movement

The ideology and appeal of the temperance movement can be further understood by positioning temperance within its political context. The temperance movement was influenced by, and was able to successfully tap into, the political climate of the period. Firstly, women constituted a significant proportion of the temperance movement, and dominated one of the leading temperance organisations: the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Women's temperance groups like WCTU both politicised women, through introducing them to political activism and solidifying the importance of political power to improving society and politicised the issue of temperance by positioning suffrage as important to securing temperance. In this way, women's suffrage had a symbiotic relationship with temperance that attracted supporters and shaped temperance rhetoric and ideology. Secondly, temperance had a similar relationship with Progressivism, which both inspired many to support temperance and also provided temperance with a widespread ideology to attach itself to in order to strengthen their legitimacy. In this way, temperance was highly politicised and, through this, elevated above the moralist model of temperance.

The Influence of Suffrage

The temperance movement held a particular political significance for women. Whilst the WCTU's role in the temperance movement was

traditionally downplayed in favour of the male-dominated ASL, in the last fifty years, scholars have refocused on the WCTU. This can partly be attributed to the rise of gender history and how historians have used the WCTU to understand gender relations. In this new historiographical focus, feminist scholars have found that the WCTU and women's suffrage were inextricably linked. Notably, Janet Zollinger Giele has argued the WCTU "emerged as the most powerful force for the enlargement of woman's sphere" in this period.[68] By the late 1870s, the WCTU was openly and actively supporting women's suffrage.[69] Additionally, the WCTU's "Do-Everything" approach to reform, which used the platform of temperance to approach a variety of reforms made it clear that the temperance advocates saw very little restriction on women's public and political activity. Therefore, for many women in the late nineteenth century, the WCTU offered the first avenue to political activity. In this way, the temperance and suffrage movements maintained a symbiotic relationship. The temperance movement supported suffrage by arguing that the vote was required to destroy the liquor traffic, whilst the suffrage movement was able to use the greater popularity and resources of the temperance movement to advance their mission. Thus, women's suffrage shaped the ideology of temperance (due to the interconnectedness of the two

[68] Janet Zollinger Giele, *Two Paths to Women's Equality: Temperance, Suffrage and the Origins of Modern Feminism* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 63.
[69] Fletcher, *Gender and the American Temperance Movement,* 104.

movements) and the rhetoric of temperance, as it attempted to appeal to suffragists and other politicised women.

Suffrage was central to the ideology of temperance, which strengthened this symbiotic relationship. Blocker argued that the WCTU and suffragists "travelled separate paths toward protecting the interests of women", but the two movements were fundamentally more interlinked that this suggests.[70] In fact, ideas about suffrage were often nurtured within temperance, as many leaders of the women's suffrage movement began their political careers in temperance, including Anna Howard Shaw, Harriet Taylor Upton and Alice Stone Blackwell.[71] Female temperance activists believed that succeeding in Prohibition would prove the political power and intelligence of women and therefore justify their activity. For instance, Willard argued "God has indicated woman, who is the born conservator of home, to be the Nemesis of home's arch enemy, King Alcohol" and that "this power of hers may be most effectively exercised by giving her a voice in the decision by which the rum-shop door shall be opened or closed".[72] In doing so, we can see that embedded in the idea of temperance was a belief that women had a unique political role to combat certain social problems. Therefore, it is significant that WCTU campaigned for suffrage and were instrumental in bringing women's suffrage to Iowa,

[70] James Blocker, "Separate Paths: Suffragists and the Women's Temperance Crusade," *Signs* 10, no. 3 (Spring 1985): 476.
[71] Aileen Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920* (London: Norton, 1981), 266-269.
[72] Frances Willard, "Temperance and Home Protection," Third Annual Convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Newark, New Jersey, January 1, 1876, accessed April 5, 2022. https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2020/11/04/temperance-and-home-protection-1876/.

Kansas, Colorado, California, South Dakota and West Virginia.[73] Additionally, temperance was so strongly associated with suffrage that Prohibition achievements were seen as representing the power and importance of women's suffrage. In Boulder, Colorado, after receiving the right to vote, women strongly supported and helped pass a Prohibition referendum in 1907, leading local papers to argue "Let the women of Boulder be praised" and "woman suffrage, if on trial, had proved itself as an institution".[74] This further reflects how suffrage and temperance activity represented the two movements as ideologically intertwined.

Additionally, the WCTU used suffrage rhetoric to appeal to the general public and to spread their ideology of women's suffrage in a way that was palatable to Americans. This was primarily achieved through the WCTU instigating a significant shift in the rhetoric of the suffrage movement. The depiction of temperance and suffrage as opposite philosophical movements reflects a Whiggish historical understanding of the suffrage rhetoric, which emphasises the modern concepts of gender equality and ignores the more conservative rhetoric of the suffragists. As Lori Ginzberg argued in her work on nineteenth-century feminisms, "the historical focus on the radical demand for the vote as women's only significant political act… has had the effect of both foreshortening and distorting the history of women's participation in the political process".[75] The WCTU was instead

[73] Zollinger Giele, *Two Paths*, 105.
[74] Quoted in Katherine Harris, "Feminism and Temperance Reform in the Boulder WCTU," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 4, no. 2 (Summer 1979): 20.
[75] Lori Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 29.

part of a rhetorical de-radicalisation of the women's suffrage movement. In 1973, June Sochen described a powerful faction in American women's suffrage, which she calls the "pragmatic feminists". These women, who were the majority of the suffrage movement by its final decades, saw suffrage as a means to an end, as a way to solve "specific grievances suffered by women… in a traditional way" and thus "got along better with the established powers".[76] Similarly, Aileen Kraditor, in her influential book *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement,* charted out a model of the progression of suffrage ideas, in which their argument shifted from one of justice (in which women deserved civil rights due to their natural equality) to one of expediency by the end of the movement, which argued that women deserved the vote because of their difference, such as their heightened morality, purity and piety, which meant that the vote would be strengthened through women's participation.[77] The rhetoric of temperance was vital to this shift and temperance rhetoric can be considered part of the "pragmatic-expediency" shift. Most notably and explicitly, temperance activists' argument that women should gain suffrage because they would support Prohibition was an "expediency" argument. For instance, in 1880, the Prohibition Party stated that women needed the right to vote "as a rightful means for a proper settlement of the liquor question".[78] Similarly, Willard argued that women's suffrage

[76] June Sochen, *Movers and Shakers: American Women Thinkers and Activists, 1900-1970* (New York: Quadrangle, 1973), 65.
[77] Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement,* 44-46.
[78] "Prohibition Party Platform of 1880," in *National Party Platforms,* vol. 1, ed. Donald Bruce Johnson and Kirk H. Porter (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1961), 60.

would make the Wets "doomed as was the slave power when you gave the ballot to the slaves".[79] The WCTU emphasised pragmatic and expediency arguments much more than other suffrage groups. In her research, Giele discovered that 61% of suffrage arguments in the *Union Signal* were pragmatic/expedient compared to 9% in the suffragist *Woman's Journal*.[80] Furthermore, women in this period were viewed as more charitable and naturally inclined to reformist causes (such as temperance) during the Progressive Era. This idea was actively exploited by suffragists to emphasise the moral fibre their vote would provide. For example, the chairwoman of the National American Woman Suffrage Association's Committee On Church Work argued that women's suffrage would "augment the power of the churches" by having women "carrying on the warfare against the liquor traffic, the white-slave traffic, child labour, impure food, and many other existing evils".[81] Similarly, Ronald Schaeffer has argued, using the example of Montana, that suffrage was able to succeed partly because it gained the support of reformist men through "suffrage arguments that stressed the connections between women's votes and social reform", and these women ultimately voted in favour during a state Prohibition Amendment in 1917.[82] In this way,

[79] Willard, "Temperance and Home Protection."
[80] Zollinger Giele, *Two Paths*, 104.
[81] Harriet Taylor Upton, ed., "Proceedings of the Forty-First Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association," Seattle, Washington, July 1-6, 1909, 40.
[82] Ronald Schaffer, "The Montana Woman Suffrage Campaign, 1911-1914," *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (January 1964): 12.

temperance gained support from suffragists and reformers by their emphasis on expediency arguments.

Alongside these practical arguments, temperance advocates contributed to a shift in suffrage rhetoric by emphasising traditional, conservative, gendered values in their arguments. Willard's assertion that women deserved the right to vote against alcohol because God had made women "conservator of the home" used the language of domesticity to shroud arguments for the expansion of the political sphere. Elsewhere, Willard argued the "mother-heart must be enthroned in all places of power" in order to defeat the liquor industry and "for this reason [WCTU members] have been educated up to the level of the equal suffrage movement" to believe in "prohibition by woman's ballot".[83] Similarly, Mary Willard (Frances' sister-in-law) argued, "the W. C. T. U. of Illinois seeks the ballot for no selfish ends. Asking it only in the interest of the home, which has been and is woman's divinely appointed province".[84] These arguments reflected the conservative suffrage ideology influencing temperance and reflects how temperance activists, whilst tapping into suffragism, also couched their language in traditional ideas to ensure their ideology appealed to the public. In doing so, they ensured that suffrage and temperance could be considered a way for women to maintain the domestic role whilst also having a political role.

[83] Frances Willard, "The Work of the WCTU," in *Woman's Work in America,* ed. Annie Nathan Meyer (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1891), 404.
[84] Mary Willard, "The Story of a Great Conviction," 1884, Northern Illinois University Digital Library, accessed March 3, 2022, https://digital.lib.niu.edu/islandora/object/niu-gildedage%3A23985.

Ultimately, temperance ideology was highly influenced by the suffrage movement, whilst simultaneously temperance activists exploited suffrage ideology to gain support and appeal to others. In fact, it appears that the WCTU offered conservative women supportive of suffrage an outlet for their support, and thus, the appeal of temperance for many women can be attributed partly to its suffrage ideology. Therefore, the role of suffrage on temperance ideology and appeal downplays the importance of puritanical morality and emphasises how temperance was a part of, not separate to, American political ideological discourse.

The Influence of Progressivism

Temperance was also influenced by, and utilised in its campaign, the ideology of Progressivism. Although temperance shared many of the ideological foundations and appeals of Progressivism, the connection between these movements was stronger than most historians have traditionally understood. For instance, Hofstadter attempted to sever the connection between the two movements, describing temperance as "pseudo-reform" and a "pinched, parochial substitute for reform", arguing that "to hold the Progressives responsible for Prohibition would be to do them an injustice".[85] In reconsidering this assumption, Lisa McGirr has revolutionised the way we understand the connection between Prohibition and Progressivism. She argues that the movements had a symbiotic relationship and that the temperance movement "rode a wave of

[85] Hofstadter, *Age of Reform,* 289

institution building, regulatory reform and constitutional activism" in order to appeal to the public and achieve its objective.[86] The Progressive movement legitimised the use of state-power to control people's behaviour for the wider public good, and in this way, made Prohibition a more palatable idea. Because of this, Progressivists were more aligned and sympathetic to the temperance movement than conservatives because it would help reinforce the importance of a strong government and the use of the Constitution to protect the public good, reinforcing the idea of a symbiotic ideological relationship. It is through McGirr's model that we can understand the temperance movement's ideological and methodical shift in the early twentieth century (the apex of Progressivism) to focus almost entirely on a federal and constitutional solution to the liquor problem. Progressivism believed in legislative and regulatory solutions for social problems (such as child labour and prostitution) and did not fear the deployment of government in personal issues. This created a habitable ideological environment for the idea of a constitutional amendment against alcohol to appeal to American people. In fact, Prohibitionists appear to have been aware of the potential power the reformist impulse had for their movement. Wayne Wheeler claimed a Prohibition Amendment was "the logical result of the tendency of the times toward a government under which the people may protect themselves from evil and wrong".[87] Thus, he harnessed the ideology of

[86] Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (London: W. W. Norton, 2016), xviii.
[87] Quoted in Ibid, 23.

Progressivism to depict Prohibition as a "logical result", rather than a radical departure. In this way, Progressivism shaped the ideology and appeal of temperance.

Alongside grand ideological underpinnings, the temperance movement tapped into specific Progressive issues in order to gain support for the cause. A key theme in Progressivism was an opposition to monopoly (and by extension "Big Business") as it contradicted with the middle-class ideal of economic competition.[88] The liquor industry was a prime example of a powerful, monopolising business. By 1915, the liquor industry had the 5th highest investment capital in all manufacturing in America and they often had significant control over alcohol distribution, as by 1908 brewers owned around 70% of American saloons.[89] Furthermore, the United States Brewers Association had been formed in 1862 and was extremely powerful around the turn of the twentieth century, despite the fact that most industries in America "did not develop such cohesiveness until the 1930s" which gave the impression that the brewing industry was a united and dangerously powerful behemoth.[90] Prohibitionists often emphasised that the liquor industry was the greatest threat to economic competition, tapping into this Progressivism anxiety. Prohibitionist Charles Stelzle claimed "the liquor industry is one of the great monopolies" and "the men in control of this industry are among the worst monopolists".[91]

[88] John Whiteclay Chambers, *The Tyranny of Change: America in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1992), 59.
[89] Timberlake, *Prohibition,* 102, 104.
[90] Mittelman, *Brewing Battles,* 2.
[91] Charles Stelzle, *Why Prohibition!* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1918), 104, 106.

Furthermore, temperance advocates often described the alcohol industry as the "liquor trust" (trusts were a form of monopoly particularly feared in this period) and therefore they rhetorically harnessed the Progressivist concern with monopoly in order to conjure an emotional response.[92] Additionally, the liquor industry was unique because, as one historian recognised, the high amount of taxes the industry paid meant "it had a special reason to engage in politics" and "it gave the government a vested interest in the business and hence a stake in its preservation".[93] Because of this, temperance rhetoric often depicted these businesses as "King Alcohol" and claimed its influence in government and politics was perverse. Reverend Mark Matthews claimed Congress "has been dominated by the liquor interests for the last forty-two years, and the two great political parties are rum-soaked, saloon-cursed, and without conscience".[94] In this way, temperance ideology was influenced by Progressivist anxieties about the power of "Big Business" and used this anxiety to appeal to other reformists.

Similarly, on a more local level, Progressivism was concerned with city corruption and political machines. Muckraking journalism, a staple of the Progressive Era, often investigated and reported on urban political corruption. For example, Lincoln Steffens' *The Shame of the Cities* detailed the corrupt workings of several city political machines.

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[92] K. Austin Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 12.
[93] Timberlake, *Prohibition,* 106.
[94] Quoted in Norman Clark, "The 'Hell-Soaked Institution' and the Washington Prohibition Initiative of 1914," *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 56, no. 1. (January 1965): 9.

Significantly, Steffens' argues "big business everywhere is the chief source of political corruption", further reinforcing how Progressivism was often rooted in an opposition to monopolistic power of big business.[95] Alcohol, specifically the saloons, were at the centre of the debate on urban corruption. Because of the influence a saloonkeeper could have as they came into contact with a large proportion of working-class men (and because the saloon, as discussed earlier, served a social function much greater than simply serving alcohol), this provided an ideal position for corruption. Additionally, saloonkeepers were often forced to be lawbreakers by legislation such as Sunday Laws which forced them to close on their busiest day, and therefore they were easily recruitable in political corruption. For example, a New York saloon paid $5 a month to a political machine in order to open on Sunday and would then in turn provide votes for the machine.[96] Around the turn of the twentieth century, 50% of Democratic captains in Chicago's First Ward were saloonkeepers whilst in New York in 1890, eleven out of twenty-four of the city aldermen in Tammany Hall (the most infamous political machine) were saloonkeepers.[97] Therefore, although hyperbolic and alarmist, temperance rhetoric highlighting saloon corruption struck a chord with the Progressive Era American public anxious about political corruption. Temperance cartoons most viscerally displayed how saloon corruption and

[95] Lincoln Steffens, *The Shame of the Cities* (New York: McClure, Phillips and Company, 1904), 204.
[96] Mark Lawrence Schrad, *Smashing the Liquor Machine: A Global History of Prohibition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 459.
[97] Powers, *Faces Along The Bar,* 69.

its threat to American values shaped the temperance movement's ideology. Cartoons such as *His Master's Voice*, *The Charmer* and *Respectable Vote* depicted "the saloon" as having massive influence over politics and used imagery such as a snake charmer to argue that "the saloon" was controlling mindless politicians through sinister tricks and lies (see Fig. 3, 4, 5).[98] Furthermore, the metaphor of the octopus was often deployed in criticisms of monopolistic power, as it was able to control many areas of American society through its tentacles. Frank Norris' novel *The Octopus* criticised railroad corruption and monopoly whilst many Progressivist cartoons used the metaphor of the octopus, including the famous cartoon *Next!* depicting Standard Oil as an octopus controlling the American government.[99] Therefore, it is significant that one temperance cartoon, *The Modern Devil Fish*, depicted the saloon as an octopus with many tentacles including "political corruption", "defiance of the law" and "partnership with thieves".[100] This visually emphasises how temperance connected corruption and the saloon to appeal to the Progressive Era's ideological concerns with monopolistic, centralised power, epitomised by the metaphor of the octopus. Furthermore, depicting "the saloon" rather

[98] "His Master's Voice," Prohibition (Party) Cartoons, The Ohio State University, accessed May 15, 2022, https://prohibition.osu.edu/sites/prohibition.osu.edu/files/cartoon-9.; "The Charmer," Prohibition (Party) Cartoons, The Ohio State University, accessed May 15, 2022, https://prohibition.osu.edu/prohibition-party-cartoons/cartoon-11.; "Respectable Vote," Prohibition (Party) Cartoons, The Ohio State University, accessed May 15, 2022, https://prohibition.osu.edu/prohibition-party-cartoons/cartoon-7.

[99] Frank Norris, *The Octopus: A Story of California* (New Yor: Doubleday, 1901).; "Next!," Digital Collections, Cornell University Library, accessed May 17, 2022, https://digital.library.cornell.edu/catalog/ss:19343487#:~:text=This%20cartoon%20map%20was%20published,to%20seize%20the%20White%20House.

[100] "The Modern Devil Fish," Prohibition (Party) Cartoons, The Ohio State University, accessed May 15, 2022, https://prohibition.osu.edu/prohibition-party-cartoons/cartoon-5.

than “the saloons” in these images emphasises the saloon as an institution and a monolith and thus further taps into Progressivist anxiety over monopolies and over-bearing power and influence. Collectively, temperance opposition to saloon corruption was influence by Progressivist ideology and was used to appeal to the reformist impulse in this period.

Ultimately, the temperance movement was able to appeal to many Americans in the early twentieth century by attaching itself to the ideology of other political movements in this period and by situating itself alongside other reform movements. Temperance activists exploited and harnessed the political climate in relation to women’s suffrage and Progressivism in order to increase their appeal. Additionally, the ideology of these movements influenced temperance activists’ understanding of the broad social importance of temperance. Although morality is influential on any political movement, especially Progressivism, it does not represent a puritanical-moralism and a desire to stamp down on individual vice, and thus, the influence of political ideologies further reduces the importance of puritanical morality on the temperance movement. Therefore, through Progressivism and women’s suffrage, the temperance movement can be considered a political movement due to the influence of political ideology, the political motivations behind temperance and the use of political appeals and rhetoric.

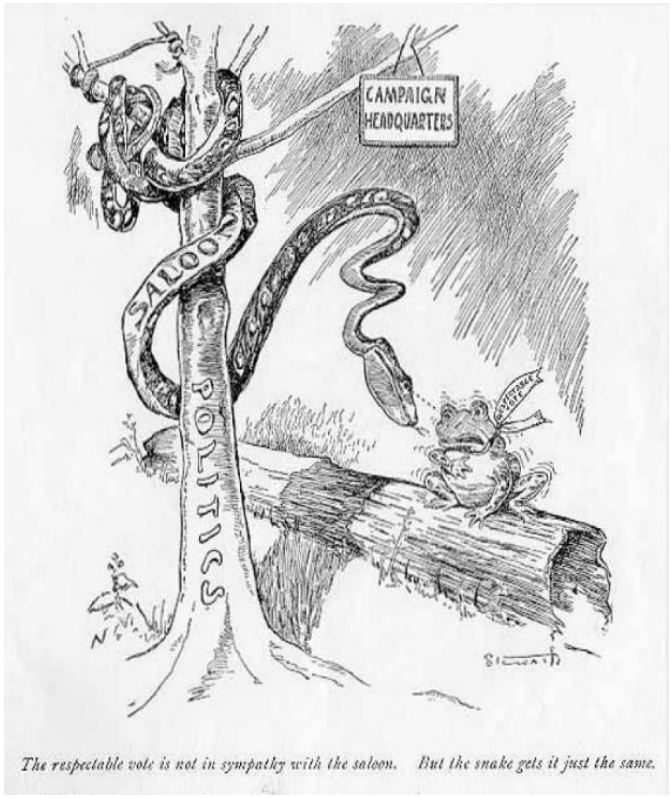

Figure 3: Respectable Vote

Figure 4: The Charmer

Figure 5: His Master's Voice

Figure 6: Next!

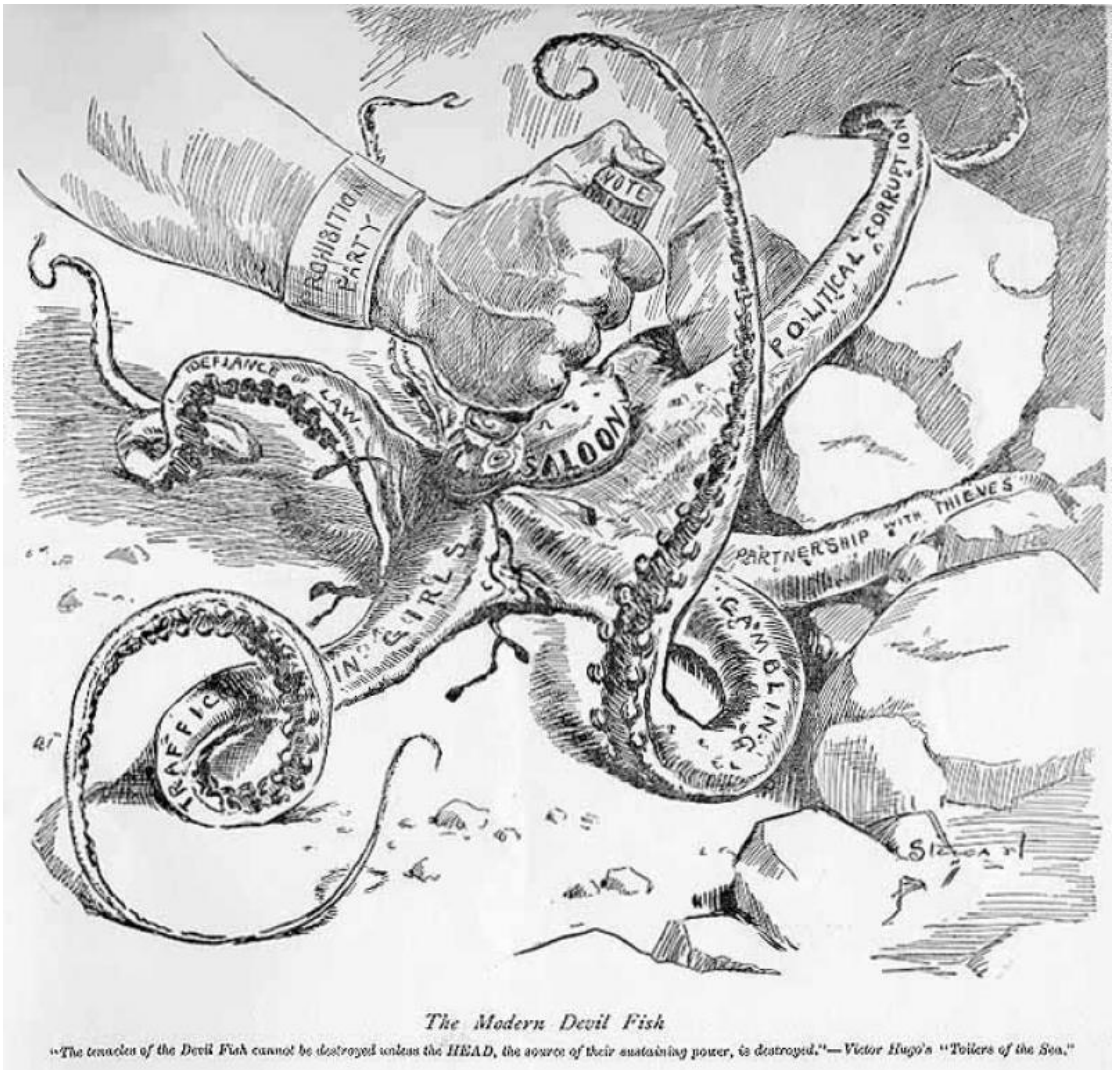

Figure 7: The Modern Devil Fish

Conclusion

Collectively, the influence of cultural, health and political ideas reveal that the temperance movement was not a moralist tirade devoid of ideological underpinnings. The "puritanical-moralist" model of the movement has given the impression that temperance was a wild, unpredictable expression of self-righteous and didactic morality and was simply a representation of the last murmurs of an archaic nineteenth century moral snobbery in America. By challenging this model of the temperance movement and focusing on the ideological influences on the movement, temperance as part of, not antithetical to, the ideas of the period become apparent. The temperance movement was a reflection of the ideas, anxieties and beliefs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which can be seen in this analysis of the social, cultural and political motivations for Prohibition. In this way, we can understand more about the beliefs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through the temperance movement. The temperance movement reflects how class and ethnicity were understood in cultural terms, how the period was characterised by cultural conflict and how reformers used their movements to enforce cultural uniformity. Furthermore, the movement reflects how American ideas about health and dangers to the body were changing in this period in response to technological improvements and scientific discoveries. Lastly, temperance reflects the pragmatic shift in female suffrage ideology and rhetoric and how Progressivism was

fundamentally united by a belief in state power being used to reduce individual freedom for the public good.

Historians who depict temperance as a moral panic minimise the complexity of temperance ideology and depict the temperance movement as an irrational blip in American history. In doing so, they miss how temperance exemplifies the reformist impulse of the period. A central theme in the temperance ideology is its connection with Progressivism. As seen in all three chapters, temperance was influenced and inspired by Progressive ideas and was concerned with many of the same issues that motivated Progressivism. In this way, the temperance movement is historically significant in the history of the Progressive movement. It complicates the traditional understanding of Progressivism as humanitarian by exemplifying how pragmatic and sometimes selfish concerns motivated many Progressive reforms, such as concerns over health and racial degeneration. Furthermore, understanding temperance as more than a moralist movement amplifies the way the movement can be considered a success. In the moralist model, the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment and alcohol consumption during Prohibition meant that American vice was unimpeded by the movement. However, through understanding the plethora of motivations for temperance outside of moralism, we can expand our understanding of its success and the success of movements generally. For instance, the decline of the saloon after Prohibition is indicative of how temperance altered the cultural landscape of America for the working-classes and therefore was

somewhat successful as part of a cultural conflict. This is significant in allowing historians to directly engage with "failed" movements and discuss their importance, by understanding how a movement's success can be quantified in a multitude of ways. Furthermore, this reinterpretation of temperance that positions rational, pragmatic ideology at the forefront of the movement, over puritanical-moralism, also holds significance for the future of the methodological approach of the history of ideas. It reflects how dangerous assumptions of personal morality are when engaging with historical actors or groups, as moral panic can often be assumed by impassioned rhetoric. Moral arguments have been used throughout history to present pragmatic, materialist arguments in ways that shield the speaker from accusations of self-interest. Collectively, therefore, challenging the "puritanical-moralist" model of temperance opens up avenues for future historical research into other movements that allow for a broader understanding of their significance and motivations.

Ultimately, temperance ideology defies simply quantifiable definition. However, we can see temperance was not primarily motivated by moralistic concerns. Temperance was a movement directly engaged with the contemporary debates and concerns and was not simply an emotional reactionary movement. In this way, this dissertation aims to restore the place of ideas and ideology in the history of temperance and, in doing so, show why the temperance movement should not be dismissed by historians. Future historians could expand the scope of this work by

discussing the Southern temperance movement and whether these ideological underpinnings are reflected in the Southern wing of the movement. Additionally, historians could introduce new ideas, beliefs and anxieties into the matrix of temperance ideology. Ultimately, however, this dissertation aims to expand and complicate the simplified, popular understanding of the temperance movement and reveal how interconnected the temperance movement was with the ideas of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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