

Crafting Legitimacy: Status Shifts, Critical Discourse, and Symbolic Boundaries in the Cultural
Field of Craft Beer in the United States from 2002 to 2017

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ABSTRACT

Over the last few decades, the production and consumption of craft beer in the United States has witnessed a spectacular increase. According to the Brewer's Association (2020), there were approximately 89 breweries operating in the United States in 1978 compared to 8,386 in 2019. Along with this rapid market expansion, the cultural status of beer also underwent significant changes. Despite the exponential rise in the number of craft breweries as well as the emergence of a craft beer culture, little empirical scholarship on the field of craft beer exists. In this study, I analyze the rapid status shift of craft beer by exploring its social history of changes that occurred both exogenously to the cultural field of craft beer as well as endogenous developments within the field. Further, I examine in detail the emergence and role of a critical discourse surrounding craft beer culture in relation to its involvement in the elevation of status as well as the construction of symbolic and social boundaries. The theoretical foundation for this study draws on insights from work on cultural fields (Bourdieu 1993), art worlds (Becker 1982), cultural and artistic legitimation (Baumann 2001; 2007a; 2007b; 2011), social and symbolic boundaries (Lamont and Molnar 2002), and the production of culture perspective (Peterson and Anand 2004). Data for this project come both from secondary and original sources including *All About Beer* magazine and semi-structured face-to-face interviews with craft beer industry professionals. My findings suggest that while the status elevation of the field of craft beer has closely followed those of other legitimized fields (e.g., film), unique discursive and institutional dynamics are also salient. Specifically, I find that through critical discourse, the status elevation of craft beer in the United States context was directly related to a.) the establishment of beer travel as a cultural good, b.) the linkage of craft beer to predominantly white, middle-class leisure activities, c.) the association of beer to other high status gastronomic fields, and d.) the historicization of the field craft beer particularly via the mythologization of early pioneers.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

Over the last few decades, the production and consumption of craft beer in the United States has witnessed a spectacular increase. According to the Brewer's Association (2020), there were approximately 89 breweries operating in the United States in 1978 compared to 8,386 in 2019. Along with this rapid market expansion, the public perception of craft beer also underwent significant changes. Despite the exponential rise in the number of craft breweries, craft beer's changing status, and the blossoming of American craft beer culture, little empirical scholarship on craft beer exists that explores the sociological aspects of the field. Drawing on multiple sociological theoretical frameworks I employ a multi-method research design to analyze both secondary and original data to explore questions surrounding the upward status elevation of craft beer from 2002 to 2017 in the United States context. My main findings suggest that through critical discourse, the status elevation of craft beer in the United States context was directly related to a.) the establishment of beer travel as a cultural good, b.) the linkage of craft beer to predominantly white, middle-class leisure activities, c.) the association of beer to other high status gastronomic fields such as wine, and d.) the historicization of the field craft beer particularly via the mythologization of early pioneers.

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CHAPTER ONE: BREWING UP CHANGE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SHIFTING STATUS OF CRAFT BEER IN THE UNITED STATES

“...in a given society at a given moment, not all cultural meanings, theatrical presentations, sporting events, recitals of songs, poetry or chamber music, operettas or operas, are equivalent in dignity and value, and they do not all call for the same approach with the same urgency.”

Pierre Bourdieu, *Photography: a Middlebrow Art*

“Beer's intellectual. What a shame so many idiots drink it.”

Ray Bradbury, *The October Country*

Introduction

While beer has always been at the center of much human social activity, empirical social scientific research has been quite scarce up until only very recently. It truly is impossible to overstate the dramatic rise in craft beer production and consumption over the last few decades in the United States. According to the Brewer's Association (2020), there were approximately 89 breweries operating in the United States in 1978 compared to 8,386 in 2019 - a dramatic 9,422% increase over some 40 years (See Figure 1.1). Statistics on the industry growth of beer in the U.S., such as brewery openings, employment numbers, and volume of production are truly staggering. While historical and economic accounts of the craft beer revolution in the United States have been provided by such scholars as Acitelli (2017), Beckham (2017), Hindy (2014), and Tremblay and Tremblay (2004), very little explicitly sociological scholarship has been devoted to understanding the explosion of craft beer save for a handful of works. For example,

drawing on the Production of Culture perspective (Peterson and Anand 2004), Chapman (2015) examined how changes in law, industry structure, organizational structure, markets, technology, and occupational careers lead to the emergence of craft beer in the U.S. context in the 1970s. A small, but growing body of work has only begun to incorporate critical perspectives on craft beer production and consumption regarding issues surrounding race and ethnicity (Withers 2017; Chapman and Brunnsma forthcoming), social class (Maciel 2017), and gender (Chapman et al. 2018; Darwin 2017).



Figure 1.1 Historical U.S. Brewery Count (figure recreated using data from Brewer’s Association 2020)

On November 3, 2014 the cover of the culturally-influential *New Yorker* magazine depicts an interesting scene (see Figure 1.2). Here we see a casually-dressed (i.e., t-shirts, hoody, jeans) couple dining on a cheeseburger and fries in what appears to be a New York City dive bar filled with diverse and lively patrons. On paper, there is nothing extraordinary about this

imagery. That is, until you realize that the story being told (satirically) is the ritual of wine presentation and tasting in fine dining contexts. The presentation of wine customarily includes an entire process and system of expectations beginning with the arrival of the bottle. It is at this point in the ritual that the waiter or sommelier presents the bottle to the diners and they are expected to observe the label confirming that the winemaker, style, and vintage match what has been ordered. Upon confirmation, the server then presents the host with a small pour for the first taste where you, if you are the host, examine the appearance, swirl the wine in your glass to aerate the wine, bring the wine quickly to your nose where you then focus deeply on the aroma and fragrance of the wine. Next, you take a small sip and swish - do you taste anything off or unpleasant? Is this the wine you desire to drink with your fellow diners? This portentous and solemn ritual is a staple in nearly all fine dining situations - one in which individuals publicly perform respect for the wine itself, but also acknowledging the sanctity of the custom and the cultural context within which they are interacting.

Returning to the scene depicted on the cover of the November issue of the *New Yorker*, we notice the waiter standing by the picnic table at which the diners are seated, presenting the twelve ounce bottle of beer, white cloth draped over one forearm. Eyebrows raised, he appears attentive to the “host” of the party - the heavily tattooed bohemian who is presumably swirling the beer in his mouth as he gazes upward clearly intently focused on tasting the craft beer being presented to him. While the waiter appears mindful of his patrons, he also emotes an expression of tiredness indicating that this sort of sacred treatment toward beer, for him, is exhausting.

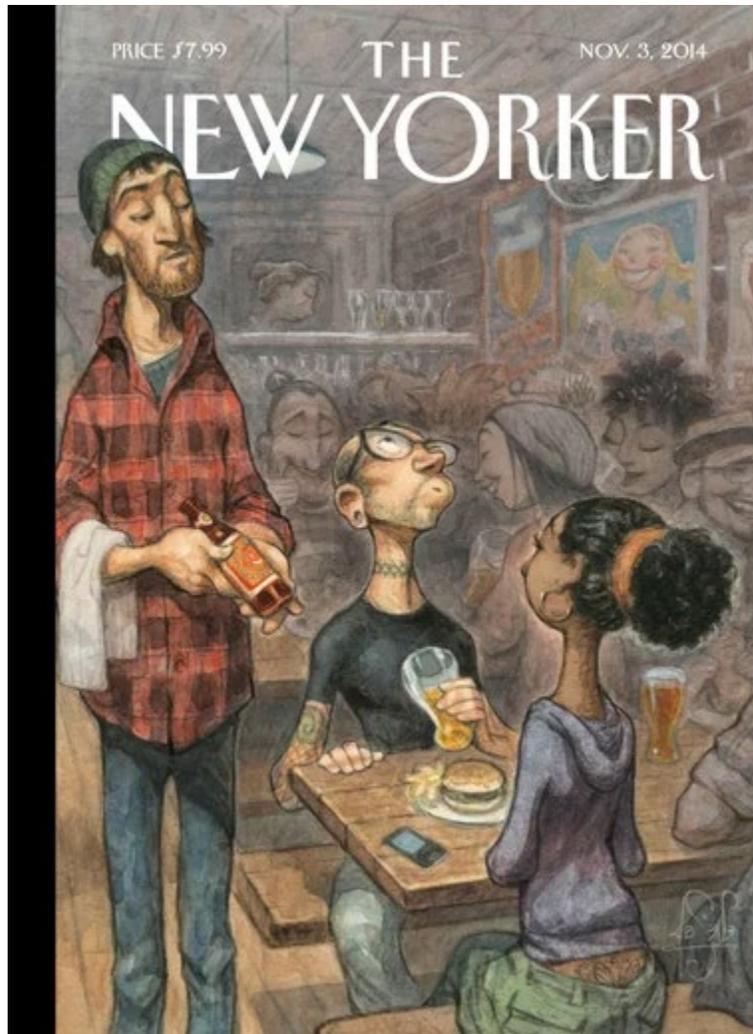


Figure 1.2 Cover of The New Yorker from November 3, 2014

The cover of the *New Yorker* represents, albeit in a tongue in cheek way, a remarkable shift in societal attitudes toward a cultural object that was long considered within the purview of working-class masculinity. Along with the rapid market expansion, the cultural status of beer has also seemed to undergo significant changes. While beer in the U.S. context was, at one time, linked concretely with lower/working-class white male consumers, these associations are beginning to dissolve. For example, while women only comprise about 31.5% of craft beer consumption (Brewer's Association 2018), craft beer has replaced wine as the preferred

alcoholic beverage for women aged 25-34 (Flanagan 2013). In the Danish context, Järvinen et. al (2014) have established through multiple correspondence analysis that particular drinking *styles* and alcohol preferences were associated with specific status positions within the case study. The rapidly growing market of beer consumption has ushered in a shift in the symbolic understandings of beer as a cultural object. As Thurnell-Read (2018:553) concludes, “Beer consumption has undergone a notable shift, meaning one group of consumers, those who successfully engage with reconfigurations in the meaning, materiality and competencies involved in the practice, have been elevated in the hierarchy of cultural prestige and legitimacy identified by Bourdieu (1984).” This process refers to what Thurnell-Read has coined “the embourgeoisement of beer” which involves the reworking of the cultural meanings and practices of beer consumption as ones that more readily communicate social status to others and are subjected to upward social mobility. In short, the field of beer production and consumption has seemingly undergone an upward shift in cultural status occurring over the last several decades. However, how are sociologists to understand this shift both empirically and theoretically? Craft beer is now widely recognized as worthy of aesthetic appreciation, imbued with intrinsic social value, and as an object that can bring social status to consumers engaged in elite consumption.

Craft beer consumption has become entrenched in daily consumption practices and solidified as part of the American collective imaginary. In this study, I examine the shifts in status that craft beer has undergone over the previous two decades. To do this, I draw on secondary and original sources to map the contours of this shift focusing on changes exogenous to the cultural field of craft beer as well as shifts occurring within the field of beer. Further, I examine in detail the emergence and role of a critical discourse surrounding craft beer culture in

relation to its involvement in the elevation of status as well as the construction of symbolic and social boundaries.

Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical foundation for the present study draws on insights from work on cultural fields, cultural capital, and distinction (Bourdieu 1984; 1993), art worlds (Becker 1982), cultural and artistic legitimation (Baumann 2001; 2007a; 2007b; 2010), as well as social and symbolic boundaries (Lamont and Molnar 2002). I identify and analyze key contributing factors to not only the dramatic increase of production and consumption of craft beer in the United States, but, more crucially, the discursive mechanisms and institutional processes that lead to the rapid status elevation of the cultural field of craft beer itself. This project further refines sociological understandings of cultural legitimation and symbolic boundaries by examining an emergent cultural field - craft beer.

In examining the art world development of the cultural field of film in the United States, Baumann (2001) points to several key factors that served to legitimize film as art. For Baumann, the consecration of film occurred through both institutional and discursive mechanisms of legitimation. Specifically, Baumann pointed to the importance of film's growing connections to universities, its festivalization, the development of formal organizations, the shift from studio to director production, and, finally, the emergence of a legitimating and intellectualizing discourse. In Chapter 2, I more fully engage with Baumann's theoretical contribution to our understanding of legitimation as a social process, but here I provide a condensed overview of the parallels between the film world and the cultural field of beer.

The sociological study of changes in the status and symbolic meanings embedded in craft beer culture may expand previous theoretical understandings of processes of legitimation. For instance, much previous work on legitimation and artworld development focuses specifically on how cultural goods within fields obtain “art” status. Sociological work, such as Johnston and Baumann’s (2010) analysis of gourmet food culture, has provided keen insights into the ways in which elite consumption connotes class status to its elite consumers. In this project, I aim to complicate this body of theoretical work by illuminating the social processes, particularly discursive phenomena, involved in the status elevation of non-art objects to ones capable of generating status to people through everyday consumption. The central issue of this study is that of cultural legitimacy and, in particular, the *processes* of legitimation. As Bourdieu points out in the quote above, not all cultural meanings are equivalent in value or dignity. But why is this so? What are the determinants for such a seemingly rigid status hierarchy – one that privileges some cultural objects and dismisses others?

Research Questions

This project aims to explore several interrelated research questions: First, which factors both endogenous and exogenous to the cultural field of craft beer contributed to the rapid market expansion and status elevation? How did these factors create changes to the opportunity space within which craft beer could flourish? Additionally, how was the cultural status of craft beer impacted by intellectualized and critical discourse? How has this discourse shifted over time and to what extent did craft beer “borrow” from the field of wine and other gastronomic fields in this process? Which other cultural fields were influential in legitimating the field of craft beer? To what extent has a distinctly “craft beer” evaluative discourse emerged? What issues arise regarding social exclusion given the rapid upward status shift of the cultural field of craft beer?

What can the case of beer in the United States teach cultural scholarship about wider processes of social/symbolic boundary construction, maintenance, and, importantly, disruption?

Summary of Methodology

In this project, I draw on two sources of data (both primary and secondary) and a multi-method approach in order to address the research questions listed above. The first source of data comes from *All About Beer Magazine*, which up until its bankruptcy in 2019 was the longest running American craft beer publication in the United States. Founded in 1979, *All About Beer* was a publication made specifically for craft beer enthusiasts who were deeply interested in following developments in the craft beer industry, but also those who wanted to learn more about various styles, brewing innovations, beer history, tasting notes, pairing beer with certain cuisines, etc. Many notable beer writers and journalists regularly contributed to the magazine such as Fred Eckhardt, Michael Jackson, Charlie Papazian, and Tom Acitelli. I sampled 47 publicly available issues of the magazine between the years 2002 and 2017 (roughly 3 issues per year, when available). To analyze these data, I carry out an iterative content analysis informed by grounded theory methodologies examining the contents of each issue's main features.

The second source of data consists of transcripts gathered from semi-structured interviews with craft beer industry professionals. The occupations of my participants include brewers, distributors, and craft beer/beverage retailers. I carried out a total eight interviews with each lasting between one and two hours. Interviews were carried out in 2019 and 2020. The interview questions were guided both by sensitizing concepts I discovered in the literature review and theoretical background but also by the findings of my grounded content analysis. The interviews were transcribed and coded again following grounded theory methods approaches.

Codes were then organized into emergent categories. Throughout the process, I utilized the constant comparative method and also completed reflexive and theoretical memoing. I elaborate the methodological approach and analytic strategy in greater detail in Chapter 3.

(Re)Defining “Craft Beer”

Given the central importance of the notion of “craft” for this project, it is imperative to delineate exactly what is meant by the term. The definition of craft beer has changed significantly over the last several years in part due to industry pressure as well as new innovations in brewing. At least in the United States, the Brewers Association, the trade organization of the craft beer industry, has exercised exclusive control over the very definition of “craft beer.” In this section, I provide a brief history of how the definition of craft beer has evolved over time.

The Brewers Association was formed in January 2005 when the Brewers’ Association of America and the Association of Brewers merged. The first definition of craft beer was put into practice in 2006 shortly after the official formation of the organization. At this time, according to the Brewers Association, for an American brewery to be recognized as craft, it must be (1) “small”, (2) “independent”, and (3) “traditional”. Up until 2010, small meant that breweries could produce no more than 2 million barrels of beer annually. To put this number into perspective, AB InBev, the multinational beverage conglomerate whose global brands include Budweiser, Corona, Stella Artois, Beck’s, and too many more to enumerate here, produced 478 million barrels of beer in 2019 alone (Infante 2020a). To be independent, less than 25% of the brewery must be owned or controlled by a beverage industry member that is not itself a craft brewer. The traditional requirement specified that the brewer must have a “majority of its total

beverage alcohol volume in beers whose flavors derive from traditional or innovative brewing ingredients and their fermentation. Flavored Malt Beverages (FMBs) are not considered beers. The most recent redefining of craft beer came about in 2018 when the third qualifying factor, “traditional,” was removed as a requirement. It was replaced with the requirement that for a brewery to be considered “craft” it must not only be small, independent, but also have an Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) Brewer’s notice.

As mentioned above, the designation of craft was notably redefined in 2010 when the Brewers Association increased the annual barrelage limit from 2 million to 6 million. Many craft beer drinkers viewed this increase as potentially controversial, raising many questions about the influence of larger craft companies such as Boston Beer Company, Sierra Nevada, and New Belgium on the institutional and market landscape of craft beer. In short, the argument is that as the largest of large craft beer producers increase their production, they also exert undue influence on the Brewers Association to redefine what “craft” means in order to protect the status of their products. For breweries to be members of the Brewers Association and enjoy the myriad benefits that are attached to membership such as representation at the Craft Brewers Conference, access to industry data, financial planning and assistance, and even legislative resources, they must pay annual dues. Brewers Association membership dues for breweries are scaled based on the total output of barrels (bbl) of beer per year. Specifically, for 1-500 bbls the membership cost is \$195, for 501-2500 it is \$295 and *for every barrel above 2501 it is 10 cents added onto the \$295.*

In 2019, the three largest “craft” breweries, at least according to the definition provided by the Brewers Association were D.G. Yuengling & Son, Inc., Boston Beer Company, and Sierra Nevada (Infante 2020b). If we just look at Boston Beer Company, for example, who produced and shipped roughly 5.31 million barrels in 2019 their membership dues to the Brewers

Association would be \$15,000 which is a significant revenue stream for the organization. In other words, the Brewers Association has a clearly vested financial interest in redefining craft as its major members continue to ramp up production. Considered this way, the boundaries of “craft” appear to slide along seemingly arbitrary notions of “who’s in” vs. “who’s out” and the largest producers exert the most influence on these boundaries. While it makes sense that the officially sanctioned definition of craft should change over time as the industry evolves, it is important to consider the economic, cultural, and social factors that construct these boundaries.

While the Brewers Association’s official (and influx) definition of craft is an important designation, this does not speak to how craft consumers, brewers, and other industry professionals understand the *cultural* meanings of what craft is. As such, many craft consumers do not consider Yuengling and Sam Adams, for instance, to *be* craft beer. Instead, the meanings of what makes something craft are more tied up in issues of locality, production processes, innovation, etc. It is beyond the scope of this short introduction to fully analyze the contours of these definitional issues; however it is important to bear in mind that the notion of “craft” is itself tied up in social, cultural, and institutional forces and that the “field” is contentious and unsettled.

Structure of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the problem under investigation by providing the context for the study, an overview of the relevant literature and theoretical foundation, key research questions, a summary of methodology, as well as a statement of the significance of the problem. In Chapter 2, I provide a detailed literature review, analysis of the theoretical foundations of the study, as well as provide a brief social history of

beer in the United States. Specifically, the literature review aims to integrate two seemingly disparate strands of inquiry: social scientific scholarship on beer and alcohol and work on cultural legitimation/consecration, status elevation, and social/symbolic boundaries. In Chapter 3, I discuss the nature of the data and its collection, methodological approaches, and analytic strategies. In Chapter 4, I present, synthesize, and discuss the key findings from the grounded content analysis of *All About Beer* and my interviews with craft beer industry professionals. Last, in Chapter 5, I discuss the findings and draw conclusions as to how my work illuminates both empirical and theoretical considerations of cultural legitimation as it relates specifically to the field of craft beer, but also the wider connections it has to cultural sociology in general. In this concluding chapter, I also provide predictions about the future of the status of craft beer. Finally, I discuss the limitations and assumptions of my study as well as make recommendations for future research in this area.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

“Beer culture is a part of the world of food and drink. It is not just a commodity in cans and bottles, but has value as an agricultural product with good ingredients.”

Michael Jackson as quoted in Acitelli (2017:299)

Theoretical Orientations

Cultural Consecration, The Creation of Symbolic Value, and Canon Formation

The enactment of durable, symbolic classificatory schemes is a social process underlined by power. Symbolic classification, "...categorizes, divides, and separates individuals, and through this, constructs social collectivities" (Weininger 2005). Or, as Bourdieu (1991 [cited in Weininger 2005:117]) puts it, "...social magic always manages to produce ‘discontinuity out of continuity.’” Bourdieu’s (1996) work on fields of cultural production further theorizes the processes through which symbolic value is conferred to social actors and cultural goods. Cultural goods are not inherently imbued with social status, but rather “...symbolic value is created through the collective actions of groups and institutions that possess the requisite cultural authority” (Allen and Germov 2011:36). Cultural consecration occurs when certain cultural objects are understood as not only symbolically separate from others, but also more highly valued by social actors who possess cultural authority such as critics, judges, and scholars. Cultural consecration is part of a more general process referred to as “cultural valorization” which is, essentially, the strategic use of “aesthetic judgment to assign cultural value to specific producers and products” (Allen and Lincoln 2004: 873). As Allen and Parsons (2006: 808) argue, cultural consecration is typically defined as a process that involves social groups or

organizations vying to establish a “...durable symbolic distinction between those objects and individuals worthy of veneration as exemplars of excellence within a field of cultural production and those that are not.” The imposition of symbolic boundaries and product differentiation, especially if those distinctions are understood in terms of differences in quality are central parts of the process of cultural consecration.

Childress, Rawlings, and Moeran (2017) argue that the body of sociological research on consecration has generally focused on two main areas of investigation. First, sociologists ask *who* imposes the boundaries between cultural goods of high worth versus all else. In the cultural field of film, for example, Allen and Lincoln (2004: 871) find the retroactive consecration of specific films is largely dependent upon the *discourse* created by “...film critics and scholars who function, in effect, as reputational entrepreneurs.” More generally, DiMaggio (1982; 1992) suggests that certain cultural institutions and organizations that are viewed as legitimate are key players in staking claims regarding the most significant distinctions and classifications. For DiMaggio (1982: 33), the high/popular culture distinction was the direct result of the “...efforts of urban elites to build organizational forms that, first, isolated high culture and, second, differentiated it from popular culture.”

The second line of research questions focus on *what* is consecrated and through which metrics or evaluative criteria. When certain cultural products are recognized through the formal rites of consecration processes, such as through award ceremonies, organizations also elevate the legitimacy of the field itself such as in the field and profession of journalism with the establishment of the Pulitzer Prize (Allen and Lincoln 2004). Sociologists and others have thoroughly examined the social dynamics involved in the creation and perpetuation of *reputations*, especially those of cultural producers (DeNora 1997; Dowd et al. 2002; Fine 2001;

Lang and Lang 1988). Empirical analyses of consecration processes have focused on a wide range of cultural realms. Specifically, the sociological study of cultural consecration and canon formation has engaged with the fields of music (Dowd et al. 2002; Bennett 2009), film (Allen and Lincoln 2004; Baumann 2001, 2007), art (English 2008), literature (Corse and Griffin 1997), cuisine (Ferguson 2004), wine (Allen and Germov 2011), sport (Allen and Parsons 2006).

Cultural Legitimation as a Social Process

While it is important to understand the processes involved in the *consecration* of certain cultural products, that is, the symbolic distinction and celebration of particular works of art as culturally superior versus all others, it is also fundamentally important to explore how entire fields are legitimated as worthy of artistic appreciation. Baumann's (2001; 2007a; 2007b) work on intellectualization, art world development, and artistic legitimation provides important theoretical foundations for the study of status mobility within and across cultural fields. In this section, I provide an overview of Baumann's key arguments and discuss the ways that his theoretical foundation applies to the sociological study of craft beer.

Baumann (2001; 2007b) examines the social history of film in the United States to explore shifts in the valuation of the medium. In short, Baumann argues that organizational, institutional, and ideological changes occurred both within and outside the field of film that prompted the subsequent cultural valorization of film. In this work, it is important to note that when Baumann discusses valorization he is specifically referring to the processes through which film moved from a form of entertainment that was largely associated with working-class audiences and reputational difficulties to a cultural form that can be appreciated as art (Baumann 2001). As Baumann (2001: 404) writes, "It is now widely recognized that a film can be appreciated and evaluated as a serious artistic endeavor and that filmmakers can be full-fledged artists." I now

turn to Baumann's multifaceted theoretical and empirical explanations of the legitimation of film as an art form in order to later draw analogues to the cultural field of beer in the U.S. context.

Changing Opportunity Space

The first main factor of this explanation is what is referred to as the changing opportunity space brought about by changes *outside* the art world. Opportunity space is defined by, "...the existence of competing or substitute cultural products and the availability of patrons who can bolster a cultural product's prestige" (Baumann 2001: 407). DiMaggio (1992) argues that competitors, substitutes, and high-status patrons, and the association of the cultural form with a high-status audience all enhance the artistic value of a particular cultural genre - each of which are situated *outside* the artworld. DiMaggio (1982) has also demonstrated how Boston elites in the 19th century were able to successfully sacralize (i.e., to imbue with sacred qualities) particular aspects of culture. Baumann (2001) identified two major developments that contributed to the changing opportunity space of film: the advent of television and the increase of post-secondary education. To understand how the advent of television impacted the artistic status of film in the United States, it is crucial to delineate the conceptual differences between what Bourdieu (1993) referred to as "fields of restricted production" and "fields of large-scale production." For Bourdieu (1993), there exist key distinctions between these two types of fields of cultural production. He writes,

The field of production per se owes its own structure to the opposition between the field of restricted production as a system producing cultural goods (and the instruments for appropriating these goods) objectively destined for a public of producers of cultural goods, and the field of large-scale cultural production, specifically organized

with a view to the production of cultural goods destined for non-producers of cultural goods, 'the public at large'. (Bourdieu 1993: 4)

Fields of restricted production, then, are those in which cultural goods are primarily produced for audiences who possess significant amounts of cultural capital (i.e., the knowledge and skills required to fully appreciate and appropriate those cultural goods). Fields of large-scale production are characterized by their central aim to create cultural goods that appeal to as wide of an audience as possible. As Anand and Jones (2008: 1036) argue, the theoretical notion of field is becoming more central for organizational theorists and, by extension, "...a convenient arena in which to observe the many manifestations of institutional forces, practices, forms, and other arrangements." In the case of film, Baumann (2001) argues that the advent of television instigated a shift (primarily by impacting the financial success of film) in the cultural field of film to one more characterized by restricted production. As a result, concerns about the economic capital potential of film gave way to the centrality of symbolic capital which paved the way for increasing artistic claims of film as art.

As noted above, Baumann also argues that the expansion of post-secondary education was a crucial development *outside* the film world that influenced its status elevation. Early on the audience for film was predominantly composed of cinema-goers from working-class backgrounds. However, as television grew in popularity for low- and middle-income households, the working-class audience for film also shrunk. Baumann (2001: 408) writes, "...in the 1940s, educational attainment was positively correlated with cinema attendance, and 1960s film

audiences, which included large numbers of college students who were ‘primed for artistic rebellion,’ became known as the ‘film generation.’”

For Baumann, there are two main mechanisms through which social class and education impact the positioning of film within a wider artistic hierarchy. First, the perceived status of cultural objects is largely connected to the status of the audience who consumes those objects. As Levine (1988) demonstrates in his work on the changing status of Shakespeare, the categories of highbrow and lowbrow were intimately tied to the socioeconomic composition of theatergoers. In her work on musical preferences, Bryson (1996) suggests that many music genres are consistently disliked (e.g., heavy metal) due to their connection with socially-marginalized audiences (e.g., the working-class and/or racial/ethnic minorities).

Second, the expansion of post-secondary education also meant that film audiences became better cognitively equipped to appreciate film *as* art. As Bourdieu (1984) argues, those with higher levels of educational attainment, and, by extension cultural capital are more likely to possess an “aesthetic disposition.” According to this theory, socially dominant groups define what constitutes good taste and which cultural objects *ought* to be highly regarded versus which are not. Put another way, “The ability to impose judgments of symbolic legitimacy, or the power to consecrate, in cultural fields allows participants to reproduce their positions - thus influencing the choice of (and return to) different aesthetic strategies” (Cattani et al. 2014: 258). Class-based “taste cultures” begin to form as highly educated reviewers, critics, and cultural producers developed specialized and often esoteric language to converse about film (Gans 1999).

Guided by the theoretical insights by sociologists whose work spans across cultural fields, I speculate that the increase of post-secondary education likely played an important role in the upward status shift of craft beer and craft beer consumption. Increases in educational attainment typically correspond to more pronounced cultural omnivorousness (Peterson and Kern 1969). In other words, as those from lower social classes become more upwardly mobile they may bring along with them their working-class tastes and, as a result, appreciate a wider range of cultural goods and genres. Related to this, wider access to a larger breadth of cultural goods (such as different brands and styles of beer) as well as having greater access to information about beer (via the Internet and print publications, for example) may play an important role in repositioning the status associations of craft beer consumption.

For Baumann (2007), the success of legitimation processes depends on the extent to which social conditions constrain or prompt collective action (i.e., the opportunity structures). With this in mind, an additional exogenous factor to consider is the cultural climate that initially played a role in the expansion of beer in the 1970s. Specifically, the 1970s counterculture spread to many aspects of everyday life which fueled a do-it-yourself aesthetic and a growing demand for local, organic foods and beverages. This countercultural movement was spurred by the rapid rise of homebrewing which later led to the proliferation of craft beer and styles in the U.S. (Acitelli 2017). The rise of homebrewing was, at least to some extent, a backlash against the monopolistic corporate beer field as well as post-Prohibition regulations on home-brewing and brewpubs. The deregulation of many industries in the 1970s and 1980s and, specifically, the legal recognition of homebrewing (The Homebrew Act of 1978) and brewpubs established the platform for the explosion of craft beer.

Institutionalization of Resources and Modes of Consumption and Production

According to Baumann (2001), another important conceptual factor involved in the elevation of cultural products to artistic status is the institutionalization of resources and practices of consumption and production *within* the cultural field. This insight draws on Becker's (1982) artworlds approach by emphasizing the role of not only artists, but also the vast networks of suppliers, dealers, critics, consumers, etc. who are all involved in "creating" works of art. In Becker's (1982:1) own words,

All artistic work, like all human activity, involves the joint activity of a number, often a large number of people. Through their cooperation, the art work we eventually see or hear comes to be and continues to be. The work always shows signs of cooperation. The forms of cooperation may be ephemeral, but often become more or less routine, producing patterns of collective activity we can call an art world.

Baumann (2001) demonstrates that concerted efforts from within the film artworld contributed immensely to its status elevation as a medium. In the case of film, Baumann (2001) identifies four major developments that institutionalized resources and practices of consumption and production which are discussed below: 1) formal associations; 2) festivals; 3) ties to universities; and 4) a shift from studio system to director-centered production.

Formal Associations

First, the foundation of formal associations and organizations that serve to promote and protect the film industry (e.g., the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Motion Picture Association of American, etc.) are crucial in the legitimation of cultural fields. For instance, the recognition of folk and outsider art as legitimate in the U.S. in the 1970s was heavily shaped by the foundation of formal organizations such as the Museum of American Folk Art (Ardery 1997). Ardery (1997) argues that the dramatic increase in membership of the Museum of American Folk Art as well as the dramatic proliferation of twentieth-century folk art exhibitions coincided with the solidification of the artistic category of American folk art. While, in this dissertation, I do not center the role of formal associations (e.g., the Brewers Association, the Beer Institute, and the American Brewers Guild, etc.) in the cultural legitimation of craft beer, I recognize they likely played a significant role in the strategic status elevation of craft beer. These formal associations engage in a wide range of activities including but not limited to: the exchange of knowledge through research, education, conference organization, professional development, as well as representing the beer industry in Congress and state legislatures.

Festivalization

As Baumann (2001) argues, the exponential rise of film festivals in the United States coincided with the status elevation of film as an artistic medium. Festivals are competitive contexts in which expert juries award prizes and confer symbolic value to highly regarded cultural objects. Baumann (2001: 409) suggests, "...festivals emerged as part of a formally organized effort to celebrate the artistic potential of film in a public manner." The expansion of film festivals not only institutionalized production and consumption practices of the film medium but also enhanced its prestige. The field of craft beer has likewise witnessed a dramatic rise in

festivals in terms of number of unique festivals across the country, but also in terms of attendance, size, and variety. Just as in the wine world (Allen and Germov 2011), beer festivals are key sites where symbolic value is created and negotiated by cultural authorities such as expert critics. The consecration of craft beer stems in part from the adjudication and bestowal of competitive awards. The emergence and widespread proliferation of beer festivals also contributes to and is a result of the field's growing cultural autonomy and status.

Ties to Academia

Symbolic value and artistic worth can also be conferred to cultural objects when they become the subject of academic study. "As centers of cultural authority, universities helped redefine a range of cultural products of high art" (Baumann 2000: 410). Referring again to the case of American folk art, Ardery (1997) shows that as the cultural field of American folk art began to emerge, U.S. universities began offering courses with folk and outsider art as the objects of study which further legitimized the field. The cultural realm of beer has undergone a similar trajectory as film. Specifically, there has been a considerable increase in the number of Fermentation Sciences programs, non-degree certificate-offering brewing programs, and stand-alone courses in U.S. higher education (McMillan 2016). Many programs now offer graduate-level degrees in brewing science such as the University of California Davis' Masters in Brewing Science. The growing association with craft beer production and higher education and, more generally, a connection with previously established scientific disciplines (e.g., chemistry) is likely an important source of cultural legitimation for craft beer in the United States. By examining the role of linking brewing to scientific discourse and University-centered

professional training, we can understand more fully the mechanisms through which cultural objects gain status.



The USC School of Cinematic Arts was the earliest film school formed in 1929 in the context of the Hollywood studio system of production. It was not until the 1960s, however, that 4-year degree programs began to proliferate around the United States. These programs not only taught students the technical aspects of production such as camera operation, editing, sound recording and mixing, and lighting, but instruction also began to more prominently emphasize the importance of *theory*. Film theory, as an intellectualized discourse legitimated by ties to Universities through film departments, appeared to elevate that cultural significance of the filmic medium. When it comes to beer, the rise of fermentation science programs reflect not only a shift in occupational careers, and, by extension, a perceived shift status of beer production and beer itself. Historically, the trajectory for people to become professional brewers involved curious experimentation with homebrewing and then a traditional apprenticeship in which the budding professional brewer would study under a brewmaster directly as an assistant for several years whilst learning the craft. Lippard and Cohen (2016) found thirty-one universities and community colleges offering various degree programs in fermentation science in the United States in 2016. In their study, they note, interestingly, that sixty-six percent of fermentation science programs were established in 2012 or later. As the demand for skilled brewers rises with the dramatic expansion of craft breweries it seems highly probable that the number of degree offering programs has also increased significantly.

While this is still a viable career path today for professional brewers, there appears to be an increasing need to obtain institutionally-legitimized credentials (e.g., B.S., M.S., A.A.S., and even Ph.D.) Students majoring in fermentation science study a broad range of subjects including both science as well as interdisciplinary content. On the scientific side of the curriculum, fermentation students typically study subjects including organic chemistry, microbiology, calculus, statistics, research methods, data analysis, human nutrition, sanitation processes, and sensory evaluation, and, of course, fermentation processes. For the interdisciplinary subjects, students partake in courses that are specifically in-line with their desired career orientations. For example, students may study accounting, technical writing, resource management, marketing, law courses, tourism, and so on (Lippard and Cohen 2016). Despite the growing popularity and presence of University-affiliated degree programs in the U.S., it is important to reiterate that, unlike other fields, no formal education or particular credentials are needed to work and excel in the professional brewing industry. As Lippard and Cohen (2016) found in their survey of North Carolina brewmasters, the overwhelming majority held college degrees; however, very few held degrees directly related to fermentation science. Further, they noted that eighty-five percent of the interviewed brewmasters offered that formal education in brewing would be helpful not only for jobseekers but also for the overall health of the brewing industry. From the article, “One brewmaster stated, ‘having a degree will make you competitive and stand out from all the other yahoos out [sic] who want to get involved’” (Lippard and Cohen 2016).

Studio System to Director-Centered Production

Returning once more to the case of film, a final shift that occurred within the cultural field was the reorganization of the primary system of production. Prior to the 1950s, the

production of films in the United States was characterized by what is often referred to as the studio system. A handful of major companies completely controlled the entire process of film production and distribution (Epstein 2006). Within this system, directors had very little creative control over the films they were creating. As the studio system began to lose its tight grasp on the system of production (due, in part, to a 1948 Supreme Court ruling regarding monopolistic control), *auteur* approaches to film criticism began to emerge (Baumann 2001). In short, auteur theory advances the idea that directors alone should be considered responsible for the artistic and aesthetic achievements of a given film. The promotion and widespread acceptance of auteur theory lead to two main outcomes. First, it helped to reposition the status of film to be more in alignment with popular and critical beliefs about art and artists. In other words, auteur theory permitted both critics and audiences new lenses through which to understand film as less of a product of an industrial system, and more as a strictly artistic endeavor. Second, the auteur approach to film became the catalyst for the rapid expansion of film criticism and laid the groundwork for future film theory, criticism, and journalism (Baumann 2007a).

There seems to have been a parallel shift in the cultural field of beer. While large, industrial, domestic macro breweries continue to dominate the total market share of the beer industry, smaller, specialized breweries are claiming more and more of the total market share (Brewer's Association 2018). As the beer market diversifies, it seems that larger sections of consumers are experimenting more with locally-produced and stylistically diverse craft beers. The shift from mass-produced beer to smaller, restricted production gives brewers more creative control over their production as well as greater variety for beer consumers. Brewing, then, can be understood more in terms of the craft and artistry, and by extension brewers as craftsmen, rather

than simply beer itself being a commodity resulting solely from industrial processes. I intend to examine the validity of this analog by exploring the extent to which both the process of brewing as well as beers themselves are understood by producers and consumers in terms of critical beliefs about art and artists.

Legitimizing Ideology and Social/Symbolic Boundaries

A third aspect of importance in the development of a cultural field is the solidification and recognition of artistic worth through what Baumann (2001) refers to as a *legitimizing ideology*. As Bourdieu (1993) suggests, cultural fields are constituted by ongoing competitive relations between producers and consumers for various types of capital (cultural, symbolic, economic, etc.). According to Baumann (2001: 405), “a cultural field (also applicable to intellectual endeavors outside the boundaries of art), comes into being when cultural production begins to enjoy autonomy from other existing fields in the types of capital available to cultural producers. [...] To the extent that there is a distinct form of symbolic capital available to consecrate cultural goods of a particular genre, the field is more autonomous.”

Symbolic capital understood this way includes the existence of prestigious prizes, field-specific critical evaluative criteria, and institutionalized, routine adjudication of cultural products. Each of these forms of symbolic capital are implicated in the construction of social and symbolic boundaries which reinforces cultural distinctions and sustains social hierarchies (DiMaggio 1982; Gans 1974; Lamont and Molnar 2002; Lavine 1988). Scholarly work on symbolic boundaries has often emphasized the importance of critical discourse as a key mechanism through which boundaries are constructed and maintained. For example, Ferguson

(1998) provides a thorough account of the emergence and development of the gastronomic cultural field in France in the 19th Century. As she argues, “Gastronomy constructed its modernity through an expansive culinary discourse and, more specifically, through texts. Gastronomic texts were key agents in the socialization of individual desire and the redefinition of appetite in collective terms” (Ferguson 1998: 600). She continues, “...it is the discourse of criticism and chronicle that must bear most of the weight of the cultural field” (Ferguson 1998: 600).

Baumann’s (2001) approach to studying the changing nature of film reviews is, again, pertinent to the present study. Baumann (2001) keyed into the ways in which film reviewers used language that resembled other high status/artistic genres as well as how reviewers/critics drew upon critical and interpretive devices that facilitate analytical discourse rather than entertainment-oriented discourse. Further, the approach took into consideration review lengths, high art terms, references to other directors, etc. The main point for consideration is the attention to the increased use of a specialized vocabulary and the growing tendency to treat film as something more than simple entertainment. Specifically, Baumann (2001) notes that reviewers often borrowed the language of other, higher status cultural genres such as painting in order to legitimate film. As Benjamin and Podolny (1999) demonstrate in their study of the California wine industry, perceptions of quality and status are dependent, at least to some extent, on wineries’ affiliations with other wine producers. Similarly, in the sociology of science, Latour (1987) and Camic (1992) found that evaluations of the quality of scientific work was significantly shaped by the extent to which scientists were able to affiliate their work with higher-status others.

Applerouth (2011) draws on the theoretical notions of boundary work and critical discourse to analyze how competing forces drew on varied discursive repertoires to stake claims about the aesthetic meanings, authenticity, and position of jazz music in society. In Applerouth's (2011: 238) study, high-art musicians and critics, for example, attempted to monopolize authority in the field of music by "...adopting a discourse that disparaged the creativity and skill of jazz musicians and thus the authenticity of jazz as a form of musical expression." Popular musicians and writers, often attempted to deliberately situate certain characteristics of jazz music with musical practices and forms that were already recognized as legitimate.

This study seeks to examine the ways in which social actors and organizations within the cultural field of craft beer deploy discursive strategies intended to legitimate the field. In this study I address the following questions as they relate to the emergence and strategic deployment of critical evaluative discourse in the craft beer field. How was the "artistic worth" / status of craft beer impacted by intellectualized and critical discourse? How has this discourse shifted over time and to what extent did craft beer "borrow" from the field of wine in this process? Which other cultural fields were influential in legitimating the field of craft beer? To what extent has a distinctly "craft beer" evaluative discourse emerged? To investigate these research questions, I present a multi-method research design to analyze both secondary and original data. An overview of the proposed research design, data, and analytic procedures is provided below.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research methodology employed in the present qualitative study regarding the cultural legitimation and status elevation of craft beer in the United States context from 2002 to 2017. In this dissertation, I analyze both primary and secondary sources of data employing a dual-phase, multi-method inductive research design drawing extensively on grounded theory methods. In this chapter, I first provide an overview of my research design by identifying crucial methodological concepts as they relate to the present study. I then provide a detailed discussion of the research design by describing the specific methodologies, data, and analytic procedures for each of the distinct phases of the project. I begin the chapter with a brief reflection on researcher positionality.

Researcher Positionality and Reflexive Statement

I am a 34-year old white, married, heterosexual man from a rural Pennsylvania working-class background. My working-class roots shaped my understanding of beer from a young age. For the older men in my family, beer was not something to “fuss” over. Beer was beer: an alcoholic beverage to relax oneself after a long day of work or something to drink during social occasions and nothing more. The status of beer was seen as a mundane everyday beverage not worthy of any critical thought. My status as a white, heterosexual man from a working-class background positions me in such a way that unmarks me in the white, male-dominated craft beer industry. My status significantly eased the process of participant recruitment as well as rapport-building and the co-construction of knowledge during interviews. With this in mind, I recognize that my positionality also presents potentially critical blindspots and hides analytic factors from me. In other words, my position in the social hierarchy has given me many advantages while

working on this project. However, there are many things I cannot see because of my positionality. I acknowledge this and remain vigilant to always step outside of it and recognize these limitations. I perpetually fight against my taken-for-granted position to understand that there are different, and more crucially, critical perspectives. With these considerations in place, I now turn my attention to the specifics of my research methodology.

Research Design

Phase I: Grounded Content Analysis of All About Beer Magazine, 2002-2017

Data and Collection

For the first phase of this study, I carried out a grounded content analysis of the trade publication All About Beer (AAB), one of the longest-running craft beer trade publications in the U.S. All About Beer is, "...America's leading beer magazine dedicated to covering the people, places, news, trends, and events that define the beer community. For 35 years, it's been our mission to celebrate the world of beer culture and enrich the lives of beer lovers through education, enjoyment and events like the World Beer Festivals" (All About Beer Magazine 2018). AAB was founded in 1979 and was published bi-monthly by Chautauqua, Inc. based in Durham, NC. Each issue of AAB features various articles on beers, beer reviews, tasting notes, and style guides aimed at its readership. Issues are released in January, March, May, July, September, and November. AAB introduced its companion website, <https://www.allaboutbeer.com>, in 1997 which includes articles and blog posts on beer news, reviews, and an extensive print article archive. Each issue of AAB contains a combination of features, columns, "beer talk" (extended beer reviews), and also a potpourri of shorter articles from both staff writers and guest columnists.

AAB has featured the work of esteemed beer journalists such as Michael Jackson, Fred Eckhardt, Charlie Papazian, and Byron Burch who would even often appear together, especially in early issues (Acitelli 2017). Early in AAB’s press, each of these prominent writers would often appear in the same issues. For over twenty years, AAB has hosted the World Beer Festival in Durham, NC and subsequently in other American cities such as Tampa, Richmond, and Cleveland and is recognized as one of the top American beer festivals. Lastly, AAB has received numerous industry awards and recognitions. Each issue of AAB contains a combination of features, columns, “beer talk” (extended beer reviews), and also a potpourri of shorter articles from both staff writers and guest columnists. Given AAB’s long history of publication dating back to 1979, its regular contributions by highly-respected professional beer journalists, its connection to the World Beer Festival, and the numerous awards received all make AAB widely considered by the beer community to be a leading authority in beer culture. For these reasons, AAB is a rich source of data for this project. AAB maintains a publicly accessible database of all issues from 2002 through 2018. I randomly sampled three issues per year from 2002 to 2017 for a total of forty-seven issues.¹ Randomization was achieved using Random.org’s random integer generation algorithm.

The main goal of this chapter is primarily exploratory. I am particularly interested in discovering the key themes, patterns, and changes in the intellectualizing discourse of *All About Beer* and how these features have changed over the period 2002-2017. I pay attention to previous research questions such as which exogenous factors contributed to a changing opportunity space of craft beer in the US? Which endogenous factors helped to elevate the status of craft beer? And, in what ways has the “language” of beer discourse significantly shifted across these years.

¹ Only two issues were publicly available in 2002. They were both included in this sample.

The selected period is purposeful as many crucial changes were beginning to take place in the world of beer beginning around the turn of the twenty-first century. As Acitelli (2017) notes, beginning around 2000, prominent beer journalists were keying into shifts in the American workforce as well as the market for beer. As Michael Jackson wrote, “The natural dynamic is to drink less, but drink better. There are no longer masses of workers exiting steel factories in Pennsylvania and coal mines in Northern England, ready to wash away the day’s work with cases of Pabst Blue Ribbon and the like. Most workers sit at computer screens. They still get thirsty, but not for Pabst Blue Ribbon. They want something better-tasting” (Acitelli 2017: 298). Thus, the beginning of the twenty-first century marked the beginning of the association of craft beer and its drinkers to the field of fine food and also the broader Slow Food Movement (Eckhardt 2003). Craft beer also “logged on” around the turn of the century meaning that it was witnessing a greater and greater presence on the Internet (Acitelli 2017). Online publications and beer communities began to surge around this time which meant a dramatic shift in both the quantity and quality of craft beer discourse.

As discussed in the introductory chapter, this specific time frame is particularly relevant for this project given this was around the time that the craft beer revolution in the United States was beginning to enter its “third wave” -- a period characterized by rapid industry growth and the expanse and proliferation of craft beer culture. From the forty-seven sampled issues, I collected and archived the cover, text, and photos for each issue and then imported the data into NVivo for organization, coding, and analysis. This process generated roughly 395 textual elements consisting of a combination of article features, sidebars, columns, and interviews each ranging in length from a few sentences to several paragraphs. The methodological procedure and coding processes are described in more detail below.

Methods

Though the research design is exploratory, initial and focused coding along with the analysis will be guided by what grounded theory researchers refer to as “sensitizing concepts” (Bowen 2006). According to Charmaz (2014), sensitizing concepts provide a theoretical basis and experiential backdrop that inform research designs. Sensitizing concepts lay the foundation that may be useful to the research in the gathering, interpretation, and understanding of their data within the particular research context. For example, I bear in mind the concepts of “serious leisure” (Stebbins 2007), “embourgeoisement” (Thurnell-Read 2018), and “intellectualizing discourse” (Baumann 2001) as described in the introductory section of this chapter. I draw extensively on grounded content analysis to explore these data. I use the term “grounded” to emphasize the inductive nature of the analytic design. I adhere to the coding procedures suggested by Corbin and Strauss (1990) and Charmaz (2014). In line with grounded theory methods, I employed the constant comparative method which Charmaz (2014: 324) describes as a “...method of analysis that generates successively more abstract concepts and theories through inductive processes of comparing data with data, data with code, code with code, code with category, category with category, and category with concept.” In sum, the general methodological procedure involved two phases of coding of the data (initial/open and focused), the construction of analytic categories, and ultimately the refinement of core concepts all the while using the constant comparative method while also writing reflexive, theoretical, and analytic memos.

Coding Procedures

Coding was done on a line-by-line basis. I initially coded the *AAB* issues by systematically labeling words, phrases, and sentences that represent meaningful expressions to

get a sense of what is ‘happening’ in the data. As Charmaz (2014:116) suggests, during the initial coding process, researchers must ask: “What is this data a study of? What do these data suggest? Pronounce? Leave unsaid? From whose point of view? What theoretical category does this specific datum indicate?” Put another way, initial coding involves selecting, separating, and organizing words and phrases identified as analytically salient for the phenomena under consideration. The first phase of open coding the corpus of text provides a “birds-eye-view” which is especially useful given my interest in exploring the *processes* through which craft beer becomes legitimized. I then carried out focused coding to thematically cluster and create categories and subcategories by reorganizing and refining the coding scheme throughout the analysis. Again, drawing on the constant comparative method, I analyzed the relationships between my data, codes, categories, and concepts. Throughout this process, I wrote analytical, theoretical, and reflexive memos which are included in my analysis. NVivo was used to manage these data throughout the coding process.

Phase II: Interviews with Craft Beer Industry Professionals

In addition to the grounded content analysis, I also carried out semi-structured face to face interviews with craft beer professionals currently working in the industry. After the repeal of Prohibition in the United States, the “three-tier system of alcohol distribution” was put into place. This system is characterized by producers (e.g., brewers), distributors, and retailers. To gain a wider, more in-depth understanding of how the critical discourse of beer has changed as well as the concurrent shift of the status of beer, I interviewed participants from each of these three tiers. Most interviews were carried out physically, in person while a couple were done via Zoom when face-to-face interviewing was not feasible.

Study Participants

Relying primarily on both convenience and snowball sampling, I recruited eight participants each representing a specific tranche within the three-tier distribution system. Specific occupations included head brewers, a shift brewer, a brewery owner, a craft specialist, a craft brand strategist, beer buyers, and bottle shop store managers. Individuals were eligible for recruitment in the present study if they were: a) twenty-one years of age or older, b) employed in the craft beer industry, and c) have *at least* five years' experience in the craft beer industry. Professionals could be either working full or part-time. In my sample, English was the primarily language for each participant. See Table 3.1 for more demographic information about each participant.

Table 3.1 Demographics of Study Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Race	Education	Occupation	Tier
Benjamin	37	Man	White	B.A.	Head Brewer	Production
Bobby	34	Man	White	B.S.	Shift Brewer	Production
Brian	67	Man	White	B.S.	Craft Brewery Owner	Production

Bruno	43	Man	White	B.S.	Head Brewer	Production
Daniel	38	Man	White	B.S.	Craft Specialist	Distribution
Dimitri	30	Man	White	M.S.	Craft Brand Strategist	Distribution
Rayna	29	Woman	White	B.S.	Bottle Shop Beer Buyer and Store Manager	Retail
Reinhardt	36	Man	White	B.S.	Bottle Shop Beer Buyer and Department Manager	Retail

Data and Collection

As Brinkmann (2015: 286) argues, “Compared to structured interviews, semi-structured interviews can make better use of the knowledge-producing potentials of dialogues by allowing

much more leeway for following up on whatever angles are deemed important by the interviewee.” For this phase of the research design, I conducted eight semi-structured, audio-recorded interviews, each interview lasting between one and two hours (average length being an hour and twenty-three minutes.) The interview guide that was used for these interviews can be found in Appendix A.

As a first step in the analytic procedure, I used a computer-assisted transcription service to provide a first pass at transcribing the recorded interview dialogues. This process yielded roughly three hundred pages of transcribed data. Relying on this foundation, I refined the automatically-generated transcripts by using both a password-protected personal computer to playback the recorded interview files and a word processor to verify (and correct when needed) what said verbatim in the interview transcripts. In addition to recording what was said I also included notes on how talk was expressed in the interview. In particular, I took into account indications of pauses or shifts in speech, emphases on particular words or phrases, and other nonverbal communications (i.e., laughing, sighing, etc.).

Once transcribed, all identifying information was removed from the text and pseudonyms were assigned. For ease, the first initial of each participant corresponds to their representative tier of the three-tier distribution system. For example, the B’s in Benjamin, Bobby, Brian, and Bruno all indicate production/brewing; D’s in Daniel and Dimitri indicate distribution, and the R’s in Rayna and Reinhardt indicate retail. After transcription, all audio files were destroyed and the data was loaded into NVivo for management and analysis. I carefully reviewed the entire transcripts numerous times over several weeks to acclimate myself to the data, and also to identify particular pieces of the transcript that may be considered germane to the study of the cultural legitimation of craft beer.

Data Analysis

I employed data analysis methods originally developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and later elaborated upon by Corbin and Strauss (2008) known as “whole text analysis”. Whole text analysis, closely related to grounded theory method, is an analytical process that involves transcribing verbal utterances into text, identifying relevant excerpts of text, coding the excerpts, then organizing the patterns of codes into categories. I describe this process in detail below.

Using a “line-by-line approach,” I selected excerpts from the transcription text that pertained either intrinsically or extrinsically to the phenomenon of the cultural legitimation of craft beer. The excerpts I selected ranged from one sentence in length up to entire paragraphs of text. I delineated excerpts from one another by identifying instances in the text where clear changes in meaning occur. Excerpts were defined as any meaningfully self-contained strings of texts that were either directly or indirectly relevant to the phenomenon under investigation.

I coded words, phrases, and sentences within each excerpt that represented meaningful expressions by labeling them in the margins of the transcripts. As I coded, I kept in mind the aim of the study: to investigate processes of status elevation and cultural legitimation of craft beer. However, I also remained open to allowing unanticipated patterns in the text to emerge. I examined the codes’ relationships to one another to begin making sense of their similarities and differences. After closely comparing each code, I grouped the codes into categories. I developed detailed labels for each category according to, what I concluded to be, the meaning represented by each code grouping. In addition, I compared each code and category to develop meaningful subcategories - again following the guidelines laid out by the constant comparative method. During the analytic procedure, I produced numerous memos at several stages in the process. My

memos served the purpose of permitting me to record and critically reflect upon issues and concerns discovered in the process of analyzing the data.

Ethical Concerns

Research ethics were a prime concern throughout the duration of the project and particularly during Phase II which included human participants. This dissertation was reviewed and approved by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB NUMBER: 18-489, Appendix SSS). The risks associated with participation in this study were considered minimal; however, institutional guidelines protecting participants were followed closely.

In order to ensure informed consent, I provided in writing a detailed explanation of the study, an overview of the types of questions to be asked of them in the data gathering interview, the expected time commitment, and a brief description of what their informed consent entails. I communicated verbally and in a written document (Appendix B) that informed consent includes the willingness to participate voluntarily, ability to withdraw from any part of the study with no negative consequences, the right to ask any questions during the research project, and the right for their responses to remain confidential and their identities pseudonymous. At this stage, I asked for both verbal and written consent. Signed written consent forms are currently held in a locked file and will remain in-tact for three years following the completion of the project upon which they will be promptly destroyed.

Summary

The aim of this chapter was to provide a detailed overview of the data, data collection process, analytic procedures, researcher's positionality, and methodologies used to address the research questions of the present study. Utilizing constructivist grounded theory methods within

a dual phase, multi-method qualitative research design, this dissertation project aims to elaborate theoretical and empirical understandings of the status elevation of craft beer in the United States in particular but also wider processes of cultural legitimation as well. In the next chapter, I provide the results of the study as generated by the research design outlined above.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Crafting Legitimacy

In this chapter, I draw on grounded theory methods to analyze secondary data collected from *All About Beer* magazine from 2002 to 2017 as well primary data gathered from face to face interviews with craft beer industry professionals. I attempt to synthesize the findings from both data sources by analyzing the ways they are complementary as well as where they diverge. In general, I find several interconnected, recurring themes that, in their own unique ways, are crucial in understanding the legitimation and status elevation of the field of craft beer in the U.S. context.

Specifically, I argue that a) beer tourism, b) the connections between white middle-class leisure, health discourse, and craft beer consumption, c) explicit discursive ties to other high-status gastronomic fields (e.g., European culinary traditions), and d) the historicization of craft beer were all deeply influential in providing a basis for the status elevation of beer as a cultural good. In other words, something that is a worthy subject for what Bourdieu (1984) calls the “aesthetic disposition.” This is precisely in line with Thurnell-Read’s (2018) concept of the “embourgeoisement of beer.” Thurnell-Read’s (2018:539) argument specifies that, “...a more ‘intellectualised’ form of beer appreciation has emerged over recent years” by borrowing practices from prominent proximate fields such as fine wine and gourmet food consumption.”

Additionally, I analyze the ways social boundaries are constructed and reinforced and also explore the implications for issues of social exclusion. My findings expand previous theoretical notions of intellectualization, consecration, and legitimation by showing ways that

under examined spheres of critical discourse all contribute uniquely to the status elevation of a cultural field. Lastly, I provide a discussion of the limitations of the chapter and recommendations for further analysis.

Findings

Hop the World: Beer Travelers and the “Sacred Journey”

The first major theme that emerged from the data was the centrality of regional and international beer travel and tourism. This theme is defined as traveling, touring, and/or vacationing for leisure with the main purpose of discovering and consuming beer from a wide range of geo-cultural places worldwide. This includes, but is not limited to, searching out off-the-beaten path breweries or local rarities, developing a sense of a city, state, or region’s beer scene, following a traveling festival, and so on. Beer travel and tourism articles are a recurring feature of *AAB* magazine and there were, on average, at least two complete articles per issue in my sample. While these articles ranged in length, they account for a significant proportion of content in *AAB* magazine.

This thematic category consists of a wide range of articles that explicitly deal with local, regional, domestic, and international travel. Articles ranged from city-specific beer travel itineraries (e.g., “48 Hours in Brooklyn” and “Touring Amsterdam”) to U.S. state guides (e.g., “Pennsylvania: Off the Beaten Path”) to regional/thematic guides (e.g., “Flying North for the Winter” and “It’s the Beaches”), to international vacationing (e.g., “Birra Paradiso” and “Beer in the Land Down Under”). There were several articles that discussed consuming beer via specific modes of transportation (e.g., “Bavaria by Bus,” “Beer on the Rails: The Simple Pleasure of

Train Travel,” and “Cruising the Hoppy Highway”). Finally, there were more generic articles such as “How to Be a Happy Traveler” and “Beer Nomads.”

The *AAB* contributing authors who write about beer travel and tourism often treat the topic with seriousness and reverence. They view beer travel as a quintessential part of beer culture and, by extension, necessary for educated craft beer consumption. For many, globetrotting the world in search of quality beer is a “serious leisure” pursuit, one akin to other types of quintessential human exploration. In other words, being a beer explorer requires a type of cosmopolitan curiosity that sets you apart from other drinkers, but also ties you to other, “greater human endeavors.” For instance, one author writes:

As a species it’s in our nature to explore. From the early nomadic tribes traversing continents to the first astronomers who stared into the night sky, we have the yearning to know more imprinted in our DNA. There are the adventurers and scientists who climb peaks, travel to depths of the ocean and explore the stars. In our own beer world, things might not be that grand, but many of us still try to seek out the offbeat, the rare, the genuine local drinking experience both at home and while traveling. (“Explore the Culture of Beer,” *AAB*, July 2015)

While some beer travel articles were utilitarian in the sense that they gave basic but useful information about what to drink and where, for example, city-specific brewery recommendations, others framed beer travel in more grandiose terms by referring to beer-oriented travels as more than *just vacationing*. For example, beer traveler’s experiences are described in these terms (emphasis mine):

When Don was laid off from his job at McGraw-Hill earlier this year, he decided to use some of his severance to take a beer *odyssey*. He first headed across the northern states, then south to Chicago and over to Cleveland before working his way southwest. He then traveled north from Arizona to complete the *journey* at the Oregon Brewers Festival in Portland at the end of July. (“How to be a Happy Beer Traveler,” *AAB*, November 2002)

It’s a curious *quest*, looking for places whose strength isn’t catering to tourists while being tourists ourselves. (“Beer Tourists Among the Regulars,” *AAB*, July 2003)

International and regional beer tourism has been a central part of craft beer culture in the U.S. for at least the last decade; however, their importance seems to be growing for “serious” beer enthusiasts despite the cultural celebration of local-ness within craft beer culture. For, as Shoup (2017) writes, “An estimated 10 million people visit craft breweries every year, signalling that beer tourism is no longer just a trendy hobby but a lifestyle choice more on par with the long-standing popularity of wine tourism.”

In my data, authors tended to clearly distinguish beer tourism from run-of-the-mill sight-seeing by likening it to a pilgrimage of sorts. For some authors, beer travel could be a quasi-spiritual, possibly transcendental experience in which the beer traveler achieves personal fulfillment and supposedly gains cultural and social capital. So, for the beer travelers and writers of *All About Beer*, globetrotting for craft beer connects its journeyers to a wider discourse of cosmopolitan consumption. The framing of beer travel as a valuable cultural good, and not just an economic one, seems to provide legitimacy to the cultural field of beer as one worthy of international and regional travel.

Several of the craft beer industry professionals that I interviewed also spoke about the beer travel phenomenon. However, they described their travel experiences less in terms of pilgrimages and more so in the way of mundane, everyday consumption. Daniel, a craft beer distributor, explains that the average craft beer drinker or enthusiast is not traveling for the sole purpose of experiencing a city's beer scene *per se*. However, when in new cities, they actively seek out what the local scene has to offer. He puts it this way:

If I'm in a new place I like to go catch at least a brewery or if I'm in a bar, I will ask what the local IPA is and if it's any good. ... Maybe I didn't go to Philly to check out the beer scene in Philly. But if I'm in Philly, I'm gonna check out the beer scene in Philly. [laughs]

Even though Daniel is not traveling solely *for* craft beer, his time on the road appears to be, at least in part, structured by exploring what the local breweries have to offer. Similarly, Bobby, a craft brewer noted:

When I go to a city, the first thing I want to do is go check out some of the breweries. I get online and I try to find the good ones.

This orientation to craft beer exploration and travel seemed to resonate with nearly all of the professionals that I interviewed. They described their own beer travels as significantly important for not only personal enjoyment but also professional development. A few respondents spoke more broadly about the significance of international travel in the years when craft beer was first emerging in the United States. Dimitri, a regional craft beer distributor, put it this way:

You read most of the founding stories of these great breweries that have been around for a while the story almost seems to be the same: "We traveled over to Europe. We tried

some different beer styles. We really liked them. We came back home, we couldn't find them. So we figured we make them ourselves.”

Bruno, another craft brewer, elaborates on the connections between travel abroad and its role in the emergence of craft beer in the United States. He pointed out that while the American craft beer revolution was spurred by its founding fathers’ appreciation of European styles and their lack of availability state side, brewers put their own spin on what they experienced overseas in order to differentiate themselves. In his own words:

We got to the point in this country where there wasn't a whole lot other than pale light lagers. People began traveling abroad and sampling these wonderful varieties of flavors, mostly in Europe and wanting that when they came back. [...] I think people were trying new things and at that point we adopt those European styles. And then as we are Americans, we decided it's America. If it wasn't bigger, bolder, beautiful, more beautiful, then it wasn't worth our time.

As Bruno touches upon, the story of craft beer in the United States is often one of American exceptionalism. As I will discuss further in this section about the historicization of American craft beer, a common narrative emerged that sacralized the early pioneers and their “frontier spirit”. As these data suggest, the close linkage between travel and beer is a salient factor constituting the changing status of craft beer in the American context. My findings suggest that at the individual or interactional level, orientations toward travel itself are structured in large part, at least for craft beer industry professionals, by desires to try new local beers and to get a “taste” of the local beer scene. However, more broadly conceived, it is also possible to see the

ways that the cultural and economic values of travel also serve to legitimize and structure the field of craft beer.

While modern craft beer “meccas” such as Portland, Seattle, Boston, San Diego, Chicago, and Denver exist, the craft beer revolution appears to be touching nearly every corner of the world. However, in *All About Beer*, tourism articles tend to only focus on Western (i.e., the United States and Western Europe) craft beer consumption destinations. Articles about non-Western beer destinations were relatively scarce. In my data, there were only a small number of articles about non-Western beer destinations such as craft beer places in Tokyo. This discourse seems to demarcate the “important” places to go thereby situating North American and European beer culture at the top of a global status hierarchy and centralizes their importance while marginalizing others.

The theme of beer travel and tourism is important to consider when analyzing the status elevation of craft beer. The ability to travel in general and travel *specifically* for beer tourism is an immense privilege that requires ample disposable income and vacation time. As such, traveling for pleasure is strongly linked to middle-class leisure pursuits. This notion firmly links beer exploration with social class background in an economic capital sense, but also in a cultural capital sense. Tying beer consumption to world travel heightens its ability to confer cultural capital to elite consumers because to *know* about craft beer today requires cosmopolitan capital acquired through beer tourism and pilgrimages. Connecting the cultural field of craft beer to regional and international travel in general further elevated the status of beer by making it a *worldly* endeavor. My findings suggest that travel and beer tourism now appear to be firmly situated within the white American middle-class collective consciousness; however, other key aspects of middle class leisure seem to be salient as well. In the next section, I discuss how the

discourse of craft beer along with its attendant practices became entangled with cultural attitudes toward healthy living.

“Check Out My Six-Pack”: Social, Active, and Healthy (...and White & Middle-Class)

Related to, yet analytically distinct from, the theme of craft beer tourism is the next major category that emerged in the data: the increasing connections between beer and overwhelmingly white, middle-class leisure activities reinforced by a prescriptive discourse on what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. While beer has always been tied to leisure time activities in the U.S., the observable trend, at least as it appears in *AAB*, is the move away from consuming as part of an entertainment experience (e.g., drinking while spectating sports, drinking while concert-going, drinking while at amusement parks, etc.) to craft beer consumption tied to more active, participatory, healthy leisure-time activities (e.g., running, cycling, rock climbing, mountain biking, skiing, hiking, yoga, golf, gardening, etc.) This shift reflects not only a change in wider health discourses, but also specifically a reconfiguration of class and race-structured logics of consumption.

Beer drinkers, long associated with the stereotype of the beer belly or the character Norm on the television show “Cheers,” are more active than ever. This is thanks, in part, to the lifestyle activities—biking, skiing, disc golf—that are a regular part of brewery employees’ lives...Increasingly, drinkers are running, practicing yoga or tracking caloric intake to make sure a love of beer doesn’t mean a bloated waistline and time lost filling their lives up with passions, just like their pint glass. (“The Corner of Hops and Healthy” *AAB* January 2016)

While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the complex discourse on the relationships between beer and health, it is important to understand that the discourse has varied tremendously over time and depends crucially on socio-cultural context. Throughout history, beer, and its constitutive ingredients, have been regarded in various ways such as an object of ritual, medicine, as nourishing for the mind and body but, in contrast, also as a poison, as a destructive force for the individual and collective body (e.g., Prohibition). Even today, medical professionals and researchers do not share a consensus on the health effects of beer. From a sociological perspective, the health status of beer appears to be dependent upon how it is consumed by members of the dominant class.

Guided by my data, I focus in this section solely on findings situated at the dawn of the microbrew revolution in the U.S. In the 1970s and 80s, at least in the U.S. context, fitness culture became commercialized and mainstream (Sassatelli 2010). As such, the concomitant development and widespread proliferation of “light beer” such as Miller Lite and Bud Lite paralleled the fitness craze of the time. In this period, light beer was presented as a desirable option for individuals who were tuned into the health-conscious zeitgeist. Light beer was an attempt to connect the markets of people who were exercise and health aware with those who also loved beer. Advertising campaigns enlisted the notoriety of well-known athletes as spokespeople for these campaigns. In this sense, beer consumption became linked to athletic interests, but only insofar as they were part of the spectating experience such as watching football, NASCAR, or professional baseball.

Today, domestic light beer brands such as Miller Lite or Bud Light remain connected with mainstream spectator sports in the U.S. like when the beer producers tout themselves as the “official sponsor of [insert professional sports league or team here.]” The advertising rhetoric

behind light beers was not so much that they are healthy per se. Rather, they were and still are portrayed as less bad options than other beers. However, the relationship between beer consumption and active leisure seems to have undergone sociologically interesting changes beginning roughly in the early-mid 2000s.

Historically, Michelob Ultra sponsorship focused on professional athletes and pro sports, but we learned recently that drinkers don't think of working out in order to win championships; they want to work out to be social, active and healthy. (Edison Yu, former vice president marketing, value, and premium light brands at AB InBev quoted in "Earn Your Beer: Drinking Beer in a Post-Beer-Belly World" AAB March 2016)

As suggested above, craft beer was beginning to enter its "third wave" in this time period. There was an exponential growth of breweries, deeper mainstream market penetration, and the emergence of a more widespread craft beer culture. During this period, the connections between leisure, beer, and "health" were also undergoing significant changes. As my data suggest, craft beer specifically, became linked to middle-class, predominantly white active leisure time activities. For example, running clubs, yoga collectives, and cycling tours and so on began developing partnerships with breweries across the nation. If "appropriate" drinking contexts are situational, then the craft beer discourse, culture, and industry have successfully redefined appropriate contexts through its marriage of alcohol consumption and high intensity leisure time participation.

This marked an interesting turn for craft beer culture because the connection between sociality, physical exertion, and craft beer was here to stay. Athlete beer lovers were no longer constrained to the 2.6g carb Michelob Ultras. Instead, they were together drinking high calorie,

high percent alcohol by volume (%ABV) beers. However, a value system seemed to emerge that promoted “earning your beer” through a balanced and healthy lifestyle that meant careful moderation of consumption and only rewarding yourself after exercise or physical exertion. For these groups, beer became part of a healthy lifestyle. It really is a fascinating trend to observe a cultural shift in which high intensity physical leisure activities are so closely linked to beer consumption. Interestingly, we do not see an analogue to other alcoholic beverages such as wine or spirits in the same way. Although, “lifestyle” beverages² such as hard seltzers are beginning to boom in the U.S. - one report suggests a 270% increase in sales of hard seltzers between 2019 and 2020 (Morton 2020). While twenty years ago, most people were drinking beer for enjoyment, it seems as though craft beer consumption today crosses over into many other aspects of “healthy” social life.

Several of the craft beer participants in my study discussed the connection of craft beer to white, middle-class leisure activities. In my data, participants tended to focus on the ways that craft breweries market themselves to their perceived audiences. Rayna described it like this;

Craft beer, it is a level up, especially in price. So, I think that [breweries] have to target the correct market that can afford their beer. And that's what they're doing. And so I think that's part of it. And then the public has kind of followed along with a, you know, people that enjoy hiking and mountain biking and all that stuff. Enjoy craft beer now, because that's what's been marketed to them. You have to have a certain income level to be able to afford it recently.

² “Lifestyle beverages” refer to alcoholic drinks that are low in alcohol content, low in calories, and generally “lighter” to consume. They are typically marketed to consumers who have active lifestyles.

Bobby noted:

[Breweries] are trying to cater to those kinds of people. Because that's usually the type of people who are doing yoga, mountain biking, running, and hiking. They are usually affluent white people.

Daniel expanded on this observation by providing an account about a local brewery that leaned into the idea of catering to their white, middle class clientele. He derisively and sarcastically explained:

A local brewery started at a yoga studio and they did hot yoga and then, like, they're supposed to go for a run to like the rock climbing place and then ride the ride sharing bikes to the bar and then drink beers and it was like, yeah, of course this brewery just launched a lifestyle beer as well. You know, low cal, low alcohol, low carb. It's a target audience. The people that like to do yoga and own Peloton bikes.

Reinhardt, a craft beer retail manager, put it this way:

Bud Light, Miller Lite Coors Light, you know, just rule all the beer production and consumption in America. They market that towards sporting events, NASCAR any of these things that used to draw in a lot of male viewership, anything on TV, they're advertising toward those sorts of things. Craft beer doesn't really have the same demographic as that. So, the people who are doing craft beer are outdoorsy, they are going to yoga, they are tuned into the local. They're all of that stuff.

The specific types of activities linked to craft beer in my data are typically hobbies that require significant disposable income, ability to travel, and are activities occurring in

predominantly white spaces. Craft beer's connection to white, middle-class leisure activities vis a vis a prescriptive discourse on healthy living implies emerging notions of "deservingness," "personal and social responsibility," and contested "moral geographies" – each of which I interrogate further in the discussion section. For now, I turn to the next major emergent theme: the linkages between the field of craft beer and other gastronomic fields.

Fine Dining, Elitism, Beer Snobbery, and the "Wine-ification" of Beer

Another theme that emerged from this data was the explicit tying of craft beer to other gastronomical fields. This theme was identified in every issue of *AAB* in the sample and appeared in a variety of ways. Most commonly, craft beer was directly associated with coffee, chocolate, cheese, and wine. However, there were also other foods and beverages as well including, but not limited to, distilled spirits (e.g., tequila, sake, bourbon, and rum, etc.), gourmet meats, and even baked goods like cookies. This theme was characterized by the inclusion of recipes, pairing guides, fine dining tips, tasting strategies, and articles providing general overviews over other culinary cultural spaces providing connections to the world of craft beer. This theme was so pervasive that, at times, during open coding, I nearly forgot that I was analyzing a magazine dedicated specifically to beer. For example, one recipe in January 2016 was a preparation guide for, "Scallop Crudo with Charred Pineapple, Cayenne-lime Cucumber and Herb Ju."

Just as Baumann (2001) found that film tended to borrow the critical language from a higher status form of visual art (i.e., painting), a similar finding is observed here. Many of these articles and pieces drew upon sets of specialized vocabulary from other culinary fields (most notably the field of wine) in their writing on beer. Other elements of the gourmet foodscape were

often emphasized in *AAB* such as sourcing of local, organic ingredients, proper use of glassware, notions of terroir and provenance, seasonal beer selections, and ethnic or “exotic flavors,” as well as general columns on restaurantering which closely parallels the findings of Johnston and Baumann’s (2010) work on “foodies”. Across many issues of *AAB*, craft beer was situated within a “fine dining” discourse particularly as it relates to European culinary traditions. American style “bar” food like burgers, wings, fried foods, etc., would be starkly contrasted with more refined cuisine. For example, in an article about gastropubs in, one author writes:

We are not talking steak and kidney pie, ploughman’s lunch, or fish and chips. At Upstairs this means white tablecloth. Beer is served from nice wine glasses, not in pints. Each dish on the menu has both beer and wine recommendations. For example, with organic leek and Colston-Basset blue Stilton soup, you can choose Anchor Steam or dry Aurora Manzanilla sherry from southern Spain. (*All About Beer* Sept. 2005).

In *All About Beer* (Jul. 1 2003), Garrett Oliver wrote:

First, let’s have a round of applause for the wine guys—we have to admit they’ve done a really great job. The average American is fairly convinced that wine is the best beverage for food and that beer is best suited to washing down hot dogs and potato chips. Of course, the readers of this magazine know better, but how much thought do we give to matching our beer with our food. The fact is that real beer is a far more versatile beverage than wine, bringing a wider range of flavors and aromas to the table. [...] The craft brewing revolution is part of a larger revolution in our food culture. Traditional beer is now available almost everywhere, and it is the best complement to the new American cuisine.

The physical spaces and also the activities that occur within the production and consumption (breweries, brewpubs, etc.) of beer also appear to be taking from those of wineries.

Organizationally, brewery facilities are shifting their business models to prioritize local revenue generation via on-site sales, guided tours, food pairings, special events, and beers to go. For example, consider the long-standing tradition of holding weddings at wineries. Even just a few years ago, it would have been incredibly uncommon to hear of couples exchanging their vows in a local brewery. Today, not so much. New brewery installations often take into careful consideration their capacity to host these sorts of special events. In one article in *AAB* (Volume 38, Issue 1), Ray Daniels writes:

In short: The local brewery has become for most of America what the winery has long been in California at places like Napa and Sonoma.

Reinhardt, a professional alcoholic beverage retail manager explicitly made clear the modern class differences in beer by noting:

I think a lot more people are up to speed with beer. It's no longer your granddad's drink. It's not just a lower income beverage. Not just a way to get drunk anymore.

Brian likened the field of craft beer to European fine dining explicitly when he told me (emphasis mine):

The American craft beer industry is much like that of Europe where it's not just going out to dinner. It's a whole *cultural experience*. So now you've got the food, then you've got the wine. Or instead of having wine with your dinner, you're gonna have this really great craft beer or maybe we'll get a flight and we'll all try these different beers.

The craft beer professionals that I interviewed also commented extensively about craft beer's relationship to wine. The increasing popularity of Californian wines from famous regions such as Napa, Sonoma, Monterey put the United States in global conversation with elite international wine production. Americans became more willing to branch out and try a wider selection of Bordeauxs, Riojas, and other European varietal staples. Through this intermingling, craft beer has borrowed or taken from the ways in which people talk about wine. Daniel, a distributor, puts it this way:

I think that the way that people talk about beer and the way it smells, its bouquet and the way it tastes, you know, soft on the palate, the finish versus the approach, you know? Oh, it's really fruity up front, but dry on the back. That all came from wine lingo.

Benjamin, a successful craft brewer, indicated:

I definitely think, you know, before the craft beer boom I think it was much more basic descriptors, "Yeah, it has a nice aftertaste" or something.

Bobby went on to further elaborate on beer's "borrowing" from the world of wine:

It's kind of funny because beer has sort of not *stolen* things, but they've definitely taken leads from wine. Like, you know, back in the 90s, you couldn't find a beer that wasn't in a 12 ounce bottle or in a can. And now you get 750s in a cork and cage bottle. And they were aged for one, two and three years, blended together in wine barrels. It's funny because the wine industry is now stealing from the craft beer industry and putting wine in cans, dry hopping wines, weird stuff like that. [Craft beer] definitely has entered into the wine arena. Mostly in people wanting it to add value to their beer and the best way to do

it is to make it seem like something else that already has a lot of value, which is usually wine, especially in affluent circles.

Other similar aspects of this cross-field borrowing was pointed out by Benjamin:

Another one would be terroir with wine. We haven't really jumped on it yet, but there's definitely a lot of breweries out there that are pushing local ingredients. And, you know, you can get local malt that doesn't taste the same as malt from the west or, or Germany or whatever.

Drawing on her extensive experience with both wine and beer, Rayna talked substantially about craft beer's relationship to the world of wine. She explained:

I believe craft beer has become wine-like in many ways. There is this, in the industry especially, specialized language now and, you know, tasting techniques, and sensory things about beer just like with wine. You have aging processes: you have beer being aged in wine barrels to affect the flavor. So, you see all these comparisons and I would say that they are very similar. I guess wine is always thought of as a higher quality beverage. You know, you pair your wine with your dinner and all that stuff, but you see beer pairing dinners now. You have brewery tours and all this stuff. All of that borrowed from the wine world. The wineries were doing that first and wine already has that sense of elevated experience in my mind. So, I think that because breweries are doing that now, they are cashing in on that perception.

During coding, I observed a unique discursive tension between craft beer and the gourmet foodscape. On the one hand, as shown above, my data suggests direct connections of beer to the

fine dining discourse by incorporating elements from high-status European culinary traditions. Plugging craft beer into this discourse has the potential to elevate the field of craft beer by making craft beer culture's practices, values, and, and aesthetic standards legible to the wider, high status consumption field. However, on the other hand, I also observed a sort of "rejection" of what is often perceived as upper-class snobbery. From this perspective, craft beer need not emulate and neatly fit in with European dining traditions. Rather, craft beer consumers were scrappy, innovative, from all walks of life who see craft beer and consumption as fundamentally low-stakes, democratic, and anti-elitist. While the former was much more prevalent in my data (i.e., linking craft beer consumption practices to European fine dining traditions), this tension reveals the uniqueness of the field of craft beer.

Brewing Mythologies: The Historicization of the Field

The final recurring theme that emerged from the data was the historicization of the field of beer and the mythologization of early craft beer pioneers, breweries, and even entire regions. Beer, as one of humanity's oldest beverages produced, has been brewed since antiquity with its appearance some speculate around 7,000 years ago (Mark 2011). Given beer's development beginning in ancient times, it is no wonder that people have been concerned with chronicling its story while finding their own place within it. While historical narratives of beer may be traced back to early European history (i.e., 14th and 15th centuries), it was not until much later that historians and other scholars began taking seriously the task of providing detailed, empirical accounts of how brewing techniques, ingredients, styles, technologies, economic relationships, cultural meanings, and laws have all evolved over time. Coinciding with the microbrew revolution beginning in the 1970s, there is now a glut of perspectives on the history and

economics of beer production and consumption in the contemporary era. For instance, a Google Scholar search for “history of beer” yields over 2,000 books, articles, and other content.

It also comes as no surprise that *AAB* magazine would partake in this tradition, but my data suggest that the authors in *AAB* historicize the field of craft beer in particular and sociologically meaningful ways especially as they relate the status elevation of the field. Authors writing about the history of craft beer in *AAB* may be viewed as expert authorities who have a legitimate stake to claim in historically situating the trajectory of craft beer. While I deeply suspect that there are generalities between the kind of historicization carried out in *AAB* and other sources, I focus here on some of the most salient aspects found strictly in the data of my sample. I also attempt to illuminate the interconnections between the historicization of craft beer and other findings in this chapter.

Past, present, and future: Who's to say?

Several *AAB* columnists appear to be infatuated with locating the historical trajectory of beer. These authors attempt to make sense of the past, provide insights to the present, and most commonly, at least in my data, to predict the future of beer. In doing so, these writers often discuss the major eras, revolutions, heritage, traditions, and “disasters” throughout the history of craft beer. A commonality across these accounts is the attention paid to the disastrous effects of “big beer” (i.e., AB InBev). A predominant narrative found in this historicization is the framing of craft beer as morally superior to, but continually threatened by the evil, industrial “big beer.” For example, authors in my *AAB* data often romanticize “Old-World” styles and lament their hypothetical destruction brought about by the ever-monopolizing industrial conglomerates like AB InBev. For example, in an article titled, “The Future of Craft Beer”, esteemed beer journalist Fred Eckhardt wrote:

By the second half of the 20th century, American commercial beer became the epitome of colorless tastelessness, with only one purpose: to enable one to reach drunkenness without having to bother with the taste of the stuff. We were, in fact, “out of beer.” Civilization had lost one of its most revered beverages. The very name “beer,” an alcoholic beverage with a long and honorable history, came to exemplify the new trash alcohol beverage.

This framing lays the foundation for the creation of a certain type of hero narrative, a David vs. Goliath story which becomes particularly salient when considering the mythology of craft beer. These writings also seem to play an important role in distinguishing craft beer from big beer by positioning it at the top of the beer world status hierarchy. This type of framing process allows for the discursive distancing of craft beer and facilitates craft beer’s connection to other, more legitimate cultural fields like fine dining, tourism, academia, and so on. By constructing narratives that resonate with consumers through expert authority, respected craft beer journalists breathe a higher level of meaning in the cultural field. Additionally, the hero narrative resonates with the ideas of American Exceptionalism and individualism as noted above. Further, the hero narrative appears to be one that excludes representations of people of color - a narrative of whiteness.

Men of Mythological Status

Another common aspect of the historicization of the field has to do with mythologizing prominent early figures, breweries, and even entire regions in the craft beer revolution. This process involves not only a celebration of the pioneers’ achievements, but the specific creation of larger than life personas such as Adolphus Busch, Frederick Pabst, George Ehret, Jake Ruppert,

Jack McAuliffe, Fritz Maytag and so on.³ Similar mythologizing has occurred in other cultural fields in the U.S. such as with Robert Mondavi for the American wine landscape or Larry Forgione as the “Godfather” of American cuisine. Mythologization of the “greats” serves many functions, but in the *AAB* data, it appears to provide the foundation for the hero’s story complete with an origin myth as well as his journey. Early craft beer “heroes” were portrayed as overcoming extreme adversity and pulling themselves up by their bootstraps.

When craft beer emerged as a rejection *of* and alternative *to* big beer, the story of the lone man with his back up against the wall against a huge industry evokes an immense sense of heroism – an icon that relates to common people. Through these myths, brewers and, by extension, their breweries gain not only clout in the industry, but also are imbued with authenticity. As I will elaborate in the discussion below, I argue that mythology plays an important and often overlooked role in processes of consecration and cultural legitimation. Mythology, in this sense, provides a latticework for embodied cultural capital where producers and consumers alike share understandings, attitudes, and beliefs about the origins of the industry. This mythological latticework concretizes the cultural field of craft beer by rendering it legible across contexts and aids in its status elevation.

³ It is widely acknowledged in historical and ethnographic scholarly work that women played a central role in early home brewing and that the first commercial brewer in the U.S. was a woman. Most women were excluded from brewing after its industrialization in the 1960s and 1970s. As a result, most brewing mythologies are the storied traditions of the craft beer revolution’s founding “fathers.” The published record of brewing history is also problematic concerning issues of race and ethnicity. See Brunsmas and Chapman (forthcoming) for a sociological analysis of racial representation in the craft beer industry.

Summary

The social history of craft beer in the United States is rich and involves a complex web of interconnections with other cultural fields. Beer journalists are working on many cultural registers -- lifestyle, travel, history, etc. -- each of which contributes to a reformation of the public perception of what beer *is* and what beer *can be*. For the field of craft beer, meaning is constructed by plugging beer into other areas of social life, such as middle-class leisure. Craft beer is widening its reach, being embedded in other areas, and also, through specialized discourse making it at once more complex, but also more legitimate and perceived as a higher status good.

Findings from this chapter suggest that, at least since the early 2000s and onward (but probably earlier), beer journalism has sought to legitimize beer as something valuable. Beer journalists assist in the status elevation of beer by connecting its production and consumption to world travel along with white, middle-class leisure activities. These associations are reinforced through a complicated discourse surrounding health (individual and social). Another important aspect of the status elevation of beer is the deliberate interfacing of its production and consumption to other prominent and higher status gastronomic fields and their practices.

Through these various connections, the field of beer borrowed from the practices, discourse, and values of white, middle-class consumer culture. Further, the field of craft beer gained legitimacy through its increasing linkages to educational institutions and the adoption of institutionalized credentialism. Lastly, through an ongoing historicization of the field of craft beer, prominent writers are able to construct a mythology about beer that gives it significant cultural weight. Tying craft beer consumption to world travel, healthy lifestyle discourses, other gastronomic fields, an increasingly complex system of education, and also the historicization /

mythologization have all served in their own ways to legitimate craft beer as a field and also as a cultural product.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, FUTURE RESEARCH, CONCLUSIONS

In this final section, I provide a summary of my findings, a discussion of the implications and interpretation of the major themes that emerged in this study, some considerations regarding the limitations of the methodology, as well as recommendations for future research. I finish the manuscript with my overall conclusions as well as a speculative component regarding what I perceive to be the future of craft beer in the United States especially amidst the global pandemic of COVID-19 which will surely have lasting implications for the production and consumption of craft beer.

Summary of Findings and Discussion

In this study, I sought to explore the institutional and discursive mechanisms involved in the status elevation and cultural legitimation of craft beer in the United States. I began by laying the theoretical foundations of this research by drawing on insights from cultural fields theory, cultural capital, and distinction (Bourdieu 1984; 1993), art worlds (Becker 1982), cultural and artistic legitimation (Baumann 2001; 2007a; 2007b; 2010), as well as social and symbolic boundaries (Lamont and Molnar 2002). I was particularly interested in applying Baumann's (2001) approach to the art world development of film to tease out the similarities and differences between that of the cultural arena of craft beer.

To revisit, this research was guided by several sets of interrelated research questions. Of particular importance were the following research questions: First, which factors were involved in the rapid market expansion and status elevation of craft beer? How was the cultural status of craft beer impacted by intellectualized and critical discourse? How did this discourse shift over time and to what extent did craft beer "borrow" from the field of wine and other gastronomic

fields in this process? Which other cultural fields were influential in legitimating the field of craft beer? What issues arise regarding social exclusion given the rapid upward status shift of the cultural field of craft beer? What can the case of beer in the United States teach cultural scholarship about wider processes of social/symbolic boundary construction, maintenance, and, importantly, disruption? While it became somewhat apparent that the trajectories of cultural legitimation between film and beer shared many institutional overlaps (e.g., ties to higher education, festivalization, growing salience of formal associations, etc.), the status elevation of beer and its myriad implications appear to be unique. These differences may provide sociologists novel ways of understanding how status hierarchies develop and change over time and the role of cultural objects and their production, distribution, and consumption in such processes.

My findings are categorized around four major themes. First, the theme of beer travel, tourism, and what I refer to as the “sacred journey” of beer is explored. This theme reflected the linkage between local, regional, and international travel and craft beer consumption. The cultural “good” of travel relates to the enrichment of the individual and the pursuit of a higher level, cosmopolitan understanding of beer. While interview participants in this study often described the ways that beer would structure their travel (i.e., trips to new cities necessarily involving sampling the local craft beer scene), my content analysis of *All About Beer* revealed that beer journalists were more likely to portray beer-oriented travel and tourism as more than simply travel for leisure. These sorts of excursions were portrayed as sacred journeys, akin to religious pilgrimage or odyssey.

As I discuss below, I believe this phenomenon developed in parallel to the increasing importance of the development of local craft beer identities and the “mecca”-ization of craft beer cities and regions such as Portland, San Diego, San Francisco, Boston, Denver, and Asheville.

Stemming at least partially from the Slow Food Movement, consumers became increasingly attentive to the *terroir* of craft beer – or, the impact of the uniqueness of the natural and social environment on the production of beer such as local ingredients, water, and cultural geography of the locale. For craft beer enthusiasts and everyday consumers alike, it appears that the cultural meaning of “local” does not necessarily connote a proximal quality; rather, “local” beer is something worthy of traveling great distances for.

The second major theme that emerged from my data involved the connection between white, middle-class lifestyles and leisure activities and craft beer consumption. For the status of beer to undergo such rapid upward status mobility, it needed to shed its association with lower, working-class consumers. Bryson (1996) found in her study of patterns of musical exclusiveness that musical genres associated with less educated audiences were most likely to be rejected by otherwise musically-tolerant, culturally omnivorous consumers. This finding is in line with what I observe in my data: when beer (especially industrial, domestic adjunct lagers) was primarily associated with working-class consumption, it was similarly relegated to lower status regard and dismissed by middle-upper class consumers as not a beverage worthwhile of contemplation or appreciation.

While the fitness craze of the late 1970s and 1980s laid the groundwork for the emergence of “light beer”, it was not until at least the mid-2000s that craft beer consumption and culture became interwoven with white, middle class lifestyle activities. Prior to this, I argue, based on my grounded content analysis of *All About Beer* magazine, that beer consumption in general was strongly linked to low class, spectator sports and entertainment such as baseball, football, NASCAR, and concert-going, for example. Later, through increased post-secondary education as well as discursive maneuvering on the part of beer journalists, the “audience” for

craft beer transformed. Today, white, middle-class consumers make up the majority of the craft beer market and, as such, craft beer become closely tied to participatory, active leisure-time pursuits consistent with its members such as hiking, yoga, running, mountain biking, skiing, etc. The melding of craft beer consumption and white, middle-class lifestyles further elevated the status of craft beer. The implications of this association will be discussed in greater detail below.

Third, I argue that the cultural field of craft beer was able to experience its rapid upward status transformation through its various and increasing ties to fine dining and other established gastronomic fields. In particular, I find through both my grounded content analysis of *All About Beer* magazine as well as my interviews with craft beer industry professionals that craft beer has borrowed extensively from the practices, competencies, rituals, processes of production, as well as the critical evaluative language from the world of wine and European fine dining. Through this, the “embourgeoisement” of beer gained traction by taking cues from already established, high status practices and cultural fields. From tastings and tasting notes, to beer cellaring, to barrel aging, to the terroir of beer, to the brewery space itself as one suitable for formal events such as weddings, the cultural landscape of craft beer has developed in such a way as to make it not only worthy of aesthetic appreciation in and of itself, but also able to be considered as an entire *culinary experience* and not just something to imbibe for its psychotropic effects. Through my interviews and content analysis, I did find an interesting tension between perceptions of the status of wine and beer. Specifically, while it seemed to be acknowledged that craft beer has borrowed substantially from the field of wine, there also appears to be a rejection of wine that many participants cited as importing a snobbishness and elitism within craft beer culture. For them, beer remained low stakes, democratic, and anti-elitist. This was a peculiar notion given the

fact that regular access to craft beer is moderated by one's disposable income as well as one's comfort engaging with spaces of craft beer consumption.

The fourth theme that emerged from my data, particularly from articles in *All About Beer*, was the historicization of the field of craft beer as well as the mythologization of the “founding fathers” typically through hero-type narratives. The historicization of the field perhaps comes as no surprise given that beer represents one of humanity's oldest beverages. Given this, tomes of beer histories abound particularly from the 1900s on. However, based on analyses of the *All About Beer* data, I find that beer journalists worked to historicize the field of craft beer in sociologically meaningful ways particularly as they relate its subsequent status elevation. In my analysis I conclude that prominent beer journalists appear to be somewhat consumed by waxing about historical development of craft beer. Their numerous articles attempt to provide legitimate renderings of its past, provide insights into its present, and most commonly, at least in my data, to predict the future of beer. In doing so, these writers often discuss the major eras, revolutions, heritage, traditions, and “disasters” throughout the history of craft beer. These types of historicizing, from my perspective, lay the rhetorical groundwork for the establishment of a shared social imaginary. This collective understanding is, I argue, bolstered by the mythologization of early craft beer pioneers. Early craft beer pioneers were constructed by historians and professional beer journalists as *heroes*. They were portrayed as overcoming extreme adversity and pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, taking on the evil and soulless “big beer” conglomerates.

Limitations

In this section, I identify and discuss several methodological and theoretical limitations for the present study. I attempt to organize this section beginning with limitations surrounding Phase I, the *All About Beer* content analysis and then move to Phase II, semi-structured interviews with craft beer industry professionals. Within each phase, I traverse from the concrete and practical to the more conceptual, theoretical, and abstract. While I cannot address in depth all the substantive limitations in this research, I will focus on what I recognize to potentially have the largest impact on the quality of my findings as well as my ability to address the research questions laid out at the beginning of the project. In addition to identifying and discussing the potential impact of these limitations, I also attempt to provide a rationale to explain why, in some cases, I made the decisions that I did.

Beginning with Phase I, I feel strongly justified in choosing *All About Beer* as a window into the discursive and rhetorical arena of craft beer. Given its long history, esteemed contributors, connections to world class beer festivals, etc., it is a logical choice. Further, its public availability made the process of data collection straightforward, accessible, and not overly costly or time consuming. However, it is entirely reasonable to call into question the extent to which *AAB* reflects the on-the-ground attitudes and behaviors of “real” craft beer enthusiasts. Choosing *AAB* takes as an assumption the legitimate authority of the prominent writers and contributors. Such authority could exist elsewhere in other online contexts such as social media or digital journalism. Concerning *AAB*, one must ask: To what extent are craft beer drinkers, industry professionals, and the wider craft beer culture influenced by this publication? Who is the audience of *AAB*? Who is this discourse for? What does it *do* exactly?

After nearly 40 years in publication, *AAB* has chronicled the development of craft beer culture in the U.S., but as was noted in Chapter 3, it filed for bankruptcy in 2019. Does this signify its loss of the pulse of the field of craft beer - that enthusiasts were no longer taking it seriously as a source of professional information? Or, was its demise simply another casualty of the prevalence of online journalism and social media? Some argue that its bankruptcy was simply due to poor management (Nurin 2018). Either way, the question remains: what other potential sources of data could have potentially given different insights to the development and status elevation of craft beer in the U.S. during this time?

Related to this is the issue of sampling. My study examined forty-seven issues of *All About Beer* in detail drawing on a line-by-line coding procedure. Coding, categorizing, and analyzing *only* these issues was a time-consuming and analytically challenging process. However, my findings may have been strengthened by including more issues in the sample. The forty-seven issues included in my sample only make up about half of the total issues that were printed. By examining more issues, it is possible that other insights could have been gleaned. Further, it is important to note again that more themes presented themselves than were discussed in my findings section. I chose, based on my sensitizing concepts and theoretical foundations guiding the work, which analytic categories were the most salient for discussion here. For example, some other noteworthy findings that emerged included: the role of credentialism and education (e.g., the proliferation of fermentation sciences programs in higher education), beer's increasing connection to social movements (e.g., environmentalism), the emergence of beer trading and collecting (e.g., breweriana communities), as well as a host of other economic themes (e.g., local economic development). These themes are likely tied to my findings, but it was simply beyond the scope of this project to fully examine their interconnections.

In considering the limitations of the Phase II methodology, a few key points are important to bear in mind. The first and perhaps most striking limitation of the interviews with craft beer industry professionals relates to the lack of diversity in the sample. While the production and consumption of craft beer remain predominantly white and male, my sample was entirely white and included only a single woman. Certainly, my aim was not to construct a representative sample for purposes of generalizability; however, the inclusion of racial, sexual, and gender minorities would certainly bring to light topics not immediately experienced and/or known by my white male participants that may further increase our understanding of the status elevation and legitimacy of the cultural field of craft beer. For this study, but also for wider studies of cultural legitimation, a more intersectional approach is not only desirable, but necessary. A lack of intersectional understanding of these processes translates to a minefield of critical blind spots, but it also has the potential to perpetuate cis-white-male normativity in theorizing about status hierarchies which is deeply problematic. This limitation could easily be addressed by not only interviewing more people from more diverse backgrounds, but also by carrying out follow-up interviews and carrying out a more iterative approach to the co-construction of knowledge. Further, the research would be bolstered by engaging in participant observation of the cultural spaces within which craft beer enthusiasts engage with one another. It would be helpful to observe the grounded ways that people *actually* use language and interact within the cultural field of craft beer and regarding its core cultural object: craft beer. As the sociological adage goes, “People don’t always do what they say they do.”

Recommendations for Future Research

Future scholarship on the processes of legitimation and status elevation should strive to be at once more holistic, more intersectional, and emphasize explanatory coherence and

conceptual clarity. In line with DiMaggio (1997), I would recommend that explanatory interpretive work on cultural processes strive to build upon one another rather than continuing to be a “virtuoso affair.” I argue that it is entirely possible and necessary to bridge theoretical and empirical work in the areas of not only cultural sociology, but social movements, leisure studies, cognitive and social psychology, history, critical race and ethnic studies, women’s and gender studies, and science and technology studies in order to offer more complicated yet more refined understandings of cultural legitimation. This is clearly no small task and would require scholars to step outside their disciplinary backyards.

More concretely, I would suggest that scholars interested in tracing the development of legitimating discourses and ideologies of cultural fields draw on more sophisticated, computer-assisted methodologies to process large data sources using natural language processing. While severely under-utilized within the social sciences, methods such as Latent Dirichlet Allocation topic modeling prove to be fertile grounds for understanding the linguistic contexts of cultural phenomena and social institutions (DiMaggio et al. 2013). Further, a focus on change over time would provide a greater understanding of *processes* of legitimation and not simply snapshots along the way. Future research should also be engaged in disentangling the structural, institutional, and discursive overlaps between various cultural fields as they experience shifts in status over time. As my research has shown in this project, the cultural field of beer has not developed in isolation; rather, tendrils from myriad other fields are intertwined, twisted, and raveled throughout. Analyzing the status of beer in the United States, for example, inherently requires the study of several other fields and institutions. Further research should also consider the role and impact of social media and the Internet in the construction of economic, cultural, and symbolic value of craft beer.

Ale's Well that Ends Well

Conclusions

Throughout this project, I aimed to understand which discursive and institutional factors were at play in the cultural legitimation of craft beer. Guided by sociological theory on artworld development and cultural fields, I explored the rise of craft beer and considered it as a field having undergone similar trajectories as other fields such as film. These theoretical orientations provided a foundational understanding and proved to be a useful analogue; however, I also discovered that craft beer in the United States underwent some meaningful divergences in trajectories along the way.

While previous theories of artworld development (e.g., Baumann 2001) help us to understand how certain cultural objects, genres, mediums, etc., come to be sacralized and converted into entities worthy of an “aesthetic disposition” (Bourdieu 1984), they do not adequately explain non-art elevation. In other words, how can we understand how a seemingly mundane, everyday material cultural object such as beer can experience such rapid upward status mobility *without* it being collectively reconceptualized as having art status. If craft beer has been elevated in such a way as to command respect, require cultural capital to decode, and create social and symbolic boundaries, yet not be considered an “art” like other culinary modalities such as “cuisine”, then what exactly has it been elevated *as* and/or what exactly has been elevated?

I conclude that the story of craft beer and its swift ascent up the status hierarchy is a complicated one that cannot be fully appreciated without taking into consideration several intertwined and seemingly inextricable sets of institutional and discursive relations. While this

was, at its heart, a study of the rise of craft beer in the United States, it was also an exploration of how in just the span of a decade or so, a cultural object could completely be transformed in its societal understandings. I am left wondering when or if we will collectively witness another such transformation. I also wonder if something can rise to the top so quickly, what prevents the destabilization of objects from de-legitimation.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Demographic Questions

1. How old are you?
2. How would you describe your gender identity?
3. How would you describe your race and/or ethnicity?
4. What is your highest level of education?

Substantive Questions

1. Describe your current occupation. How does one become a [current occupation]? How did you become interested in your occupation?
2. Describe your background in the craft beer industry. Include how you came to work in your profession and for how many years you have been employed in the craft beer industry.
3. From your perspective, what have been the most significant changes to occur within the craft beer industry? Which of these changes do you perceive as positive? As negative (i.e., changes that have hurt the industry and/or culture?)
4. How have these changes presented new challenges and/or opportunities?
5. What makes a good beer? What do people look for in a beer? What do you look for in a beer?
6. How have the ways that people discuss beer changed over time?
7. Have your tastes for beer changed over time? How have they changed? Have your changing tastes affected how you do or make sense of your job?
8. In your job, you have to talk about the qualities, tastes, production processes, etc. I'm sure you have to talk to people who have very different experiences in talking about beer.

Can you relay some of the experiences? How do you convince beer drinkers to try something new? How do these strategies change depending on who you are talking to? How can these situations go “off the rails”? What irks you about the way people talk about beer?

9. How has the public perception of beer changed over the last twenty years or so? Do you think people tend to value beer differently today than they have in the past? Is there anything you would like to change about the way people perceive and discuss beer publicly?
10. From your perspective, which factors lead to the rapid market expansion of craft beer in the United States? Why do you think this shift happened when it did and not earlier or later?
11. I am aware that there are a wide variety of formal organizations in the craft beer industry (e.g., Brewer’s Association). What are some others that you are aware of? Which roles do formal craft beer organizations, such as the Brewers Association, play in the field of craft beer? For example, the Brewers Association has changed the legal definition of craft beer multiple times over the years.
12. In what ways can knowing about craft beer provide social benefits to its drinkers? Do you believe that people can gain social status through their knowledge of beer? How so? Can people “cash in” their expertise about craft beer for benefits? Have you ever been in a situation where a lack of knowledge about craft beer leads to exclusion?
13. My research suggests that craft beer has become “wine-like” in many ways (e.g., the development of a specialized, critical language, aging processes, etc.). Do you feel as though this is an apt comparison? Why or why not? In what ways is it important for beer

professionals to be aware of wine and other fine food language?

14. Do you feel as though craft beer culture has become more inclusive or exclusive over time? How so? Is there a sense of elitism in the production and consumption of craft beer? Could you describe that elitism? What makes a beer snob a beer snob?
15. What are your thoughts on the rise of craft beer festivals? Who attends beer festivals? What do festivals do? Are beer award systems meaningful?
16. What are your thoughts on the increasing number of fermentation sciences programs in the United States? Do you think craft brewing is more of an art or a science? Are breweries looking more for credentials from its brewers?
17. Do you use beer-related social media apps or online communities? Why? How do you use them? Why do you think they have become so popular? What is the role of beer review websites such as Beer Advocate, Rate Beer, and Untappd?
18. My research seems to suggest that beer travel and tourism is an increasingly important part of craft beer culture, do you have any thoughts on this?
19. In looking at *All About Beer Magazine* over the years, it appears that craft beer has been increasingly connected to participatory middle class leisure activities (e.g., yoga, mountain biking, running, hiking, etc.) rather than spectator based activities like watching sports or concerts. Do you see this happening in your day to day life? Any thoughts on this association?
20. It seems to me that craft beer is increasingly tied to other gastronomic fields, like fine dining, cheese, local cuisine, spirits, wine, and even olive oil. Do you have any thoughts on this phenomenon?
21. Some of my research suggests that an important part of craft beer culture is the

celebration and mythologization of early craft beer pioneers. Does this ring true for you?

Do you have any thoughts on how early craft beer pioneers are celebrated and what the role of this is for craft beer culture?

22. Could you describe the relationship between “big beer” and craft production?
23. Do you feel that diversity (age, race, gender, sexuality, etc.) is valued within the craft beer community? How so? How are minorities represented in craft beer culture?
24. What predictions, if any, do you have for the future of craft beer production and consumption in the United States? What do you think needs to happen?
25. Given the conversation that we just had, are there any other experiences that you would like to share?

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent for Participants in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Title of Research Project

“Crafting Legitimacy: Status Shifts, Critical Discourse, and Symbolic Boundaries in the Cultural Field of Craft Beer in the United States between 2002 and 2017”

Principal Investigator

David L. Brunsmad, Department of Sociology, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, brunsmad@vt.edu

Co-Investigator

J. Slade Lellock, Department of Sociology, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, jsl@vt.edu, (814)952-1290

I. Purpose of this Research/Project

This study involves research, and its purpose is to investigate craft beer in the United States. This study analyzes the rapid upward status shift of craft beer by exploring its social history of changes that occurred both within the field of craft beer and from outside the field. The research will examine the role of language surrounding craft beer culture in relation to its involvement in the elevation of status. Participants will engage in a one-on-one, face-to-face orientation session (~30 minutes) as well as a data gathering interview (~1-1.5 hour). The purpose of this research is for publishing in a dissertation.

II. Procedures

Your participation in the above-mentioned interview will involve sharing with the interviewer your experiences as a craft beer industry professional. The interviewer will ask questions related to your perception of changes within the craft beer culture. The interview will also include questions about your demographics and will be audio recorded. This interview will take no more than two hours in total and will take place at the Virginia Tech campus or at another mutually agreed upon place.

III. Risks

There are no anticipated risks in participation in this research study.

IV. Benefits

No promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage me to participate. The data collected from me during this study will be used for purposes of dissertation research.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

Your identity, and that of any individuals who you mention, will always be kept confidential and will be known only to the principal investigator. The above-mentioned interview will be audio recorded and later transcribed by the principal investigator. When the audio recording is transcribed, pseudonyms (i.e., false names) will be used for your name and for the names of any other individuals who you mention. Pseudonyms will also be used in preparing a written report of the study. Any details in the audio recording that could potentially identify you or anyone who you mention will also be altered during the transcription process. After the transcribing is complete, the audio recording will be destroyed by the principal investigator. This audio recording, all paper and electronic copies of the interview transcript, and this consent form will be erased or shredded promptly after the above-mentioned research has been completed.

It is possible that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Virginia Tech will view this study's collected data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for overseeing the protection of human subjects who are involved in research.

VI. Compensation

You will not receive any form of compensation for participating in this study.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to withdraw from the study, any information about you and any data that you have provided will be destroyed. You are also free to choose to not answer any question, or to not complete any activity, and this choice will result in no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VIII. Participant's Responsibilities

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have the following responsibilities: to participate in a one-on-one interview of no more than two hour, as described in Section II above.

IX. Questions or Concerns

Should you have any questions about this study, you may contact one of the research investigators whose contact information is included below.

J. Slade Lellock , Co-Investigator	jsl@vt.edu , (814) 952-1290
Dr. David L. Brunsmad, Primary Investigator	brunsmad@vt.edu

Dr. James Hawdon, Interim Departmental Unit
Chair

jhawdon@vt.edu

Should you have any questions or concerns about the study's conduct or your rights as a research subject, or need to report a research-related injury or event, you may contact the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board at irb@vt.edu or (540) 231-3732.

X. Subjects Consent

I have read and understand the *Informed Consent* and the conditions of this study. I have also had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent:

_____ Date _____

Signature of Participant

Printed Name

_____ Date _____

Signature of Principal Investigator

Printed Name