



An Examination of Alcohol and Commensal Politics within Taverns and Saloons of Resource-Extraction Communities

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Abstract Research on periods prior to the early modern has examined alcohol production as well as the social implications of its consumption in ritual, feasting, and social negotiation; historical archaeological research, however, often focuses largely on the economic and dietary significance of alcohol consumption. Archaeological analyses of vessel assemblages from a tavern within the 17th- through 19th-century fishing village on Smuttynose Island in the Isles of Shoals, Maine, and from several of the saloons at the 19th-century mining town of Highland City, Montana, revealed evidence of imported alcohol drinks and drink paraphernalia. These artifacts vary in quality, quantity, and variety from the assemblages of domestic consumption at the site, which contain typical domestic wares. The ceramics and glassware containing expensive alcohols are found only in drinking spaces and not in the home. Commensal politics and the sociability associated with alcohol persisted through the early modern and modern periods within drinking spaces, namely taverns and saloons, and this is reflected within this artifact assemblage.

Resumen La investigación sobre períodos anteriores a la edad moderna temprana ha examinado la

producción de alcohol, así como las implicaciones sociales de su consumo en rituales, banquetes y negociaciones sociales. Sin embargo, la investigación arqueológica histórica a menudo se centra en gran medida en la importancia económica y dietética del consumo de alcohol. Los análisis arqueológicos de conjuntos de embarcaciones de una taberna dentro de la aldea de pescadores de los siglos XVII al XIX en la isla Smuttynose en las islas de Shoals, Maine, y de varias de las tabernas en la ciudad minera del siglo XIX de Highland City, Montana, han revelado evidencia de parafernalia de bebidas y bebidas alcohólicas importadas. Estos artefactos varían en calidad, cantidad y variedad de los conjuntos de consumo doméstico en el sitio, que contienen artículos domésticos típicos. La cerámica y la cristalería que contienen alcoholes costosos se encuentran solo en los espacios para beber y no en el hogar. La política comensal y la sociabilidad asociada con el alcohol persistieron durante los períodos moderno temprano y moderno dentro de los espacios para beber, es decir, tabernas y cantinas, y esto se refleja en este conjunto de artefactos.

Résumé La recherche sur des périodes antérieures au début de l'ère moderne s'est intéressée à la production d'alcool ainsi qu'aux implications sociales de sa consommation dans le cadre de rituels, de festins et d'interactions sociales. Cependant, la recherche archéologique historique s'attache souvent largement à la signification économique et alimentaire de la consommation d'alcool. Les analyses archéologiques

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d'assemblages de récipients provenant d'une taverne dans un village de pêcheurs entre le 17^{ème} et le 19^{ème} siècle sur l'Île de Smuttynose dans les Îles de Shoals, Maine et de plusieurs des saloons dans la ville minière du 19^{ème} siècle de Highland City, Montana, ont mis en évidence la présence de boissons alcoolisées importées et d'articles de boisson. Ces artefacts varient quant à leur qualité, leur quantité et leur variété pour ce qui relève des assemblages de consommation domestique sur le site, lesquels contiennent des objets domestiques typiques. Les céramiques et les récipients de verre contenant des alcools coûteux sont trouvés uniquement dans les débits de boissons et non dans les demeures. Les règles de commensalité et la sociabilité associées à l'alcool ont persisté tout au long des périodes des débuts de l'ère moderne et par la suite au sein des débits de boissons, à savoir les tavernes et les saloons et ceci se reflète dans cet assemblage d'artefacts.

Keywords taverns · saloons · alcohol · sociability · commensality

Introduction

The subject of alcohol has received, for the most part, a bimodal treatment in archaeological scholarship. Two distinct paradigms have emerged when discussing alcoholic beverages: researchers studying periods prior to the early modern era have explored alcohol's production and its influence as a medicine while examining the social implications of such consumption, whereas those examining later time periods have focused on the trade and dietary significance of alcoholic beverages. When viewed in the context of social settings, alcohol consumption before the early modern era is frequently associated with social interactions inherent in ritual, ceremony, and feasting. This approach, however, falls away in historical archaeological examinations, especially with regard to alcohol consumption in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Recent research has addressed ancient global alcohol consumption more broadly, especially within the context of social interaction (McGovern 2010; Liu et al. 2018). Within historical archaeology, especially in material outside of that published in cultural resource management (CRM) reports, often a more functional approach to studying alcohol has emerged, viewing it as a commodity for dietary

consumption—"part of the foodways subsystem" (F. Smith 2008:60)—or as an item for trade and regulation. Alcohol's effect on sociability and commensal politics, or the structured sharing of food and drink with the ultimate goal of social negotiation (after Dietler [1996]), has frequently been absent from the early modern and modern narratives of taverns and saloons, especially outside CRM site reports. This article seeks to contribute to the larger dialogue on the archaeology of alcohol by contributing an additional perspective to the archaeological treatment of alcohol. Through the use of two historical archaeology case studies, I examine the role that alcohol consumption played in the negotiation of social capital and in creating an atmosphere for sociability.

Specifically, I compare the assemblages from two sites' drinking spaces: an 18th-century tavern and a pair of 19th-century saloons. The data from these two case studies, the tavern at the Smuttynose Island, Maine, and the saloons at Highland City, Montana, provide evidence on the integral role that taverns and saloons played in the daily lives of individuals within the communities they served. The case studies chosen are both remote resource-extraction communities with drinking spaces, but they are distanced both geographically and temporally to demonstrate the cross-regional drinking culture that persisted in the 18th- and 19th-century United States. In addition, this approach seeks to reduce local and temporal biases. Rooted in anthropological and archaeological scholarship on commensal politics, along with perspectives on the role of drinking spaces in society drawn from history and alcohol studies, this article examines taverns and saloons to highlight the negotiation of social capital that occurs within these spaces during the early modern and modern periods.

With regard to terminology, the term "early modern period" refers here to the years between 1500 and 1800, and includes much of the colonial endeavors of Portugal, Spain, England, France, and the Netherlands, as well as Western Europe's 18th-century Enlightenment; the term "modern period" refers to the years between 1800 and ca. 1950, and includes the Industrial Revolution (de Vries 2010; Ferrone 2015). Additionally, within this study, taverns—also known as ordinaries and public houses—refer to buildings specially constructed for the refreshment of their patrons, which nearly always included the consumption of alcohol. Specifically,

the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines a tavern as “a public house or tap-room where wine was retailed; a dram shop” (OED: Oxford English Dictionary 2019a). Subsequently, it defines a public house as “a building whose principal business is the sale of alcoholic drinks to be consumed on the premises.”

Further below this initial definition, the OED defines the term “public house” as it was used in the early United States: “an inn or hostelry providing food and lodging for travellers or members of the public, and usually licensed for the sale of alcohol” (OED: Oxford English Dictionary 2019b). This acknowledges that, while taverns provided food and drink in English colonial North America, they also offered lodging and a secular space in which to conduct business, hold meetings, and discuss current events (for an excellent examination of 19th-century hotels, see Springate [2017]). Due to their large size, capacity for provisioning groups of individuals, and proximity to roadways, taverns were also favored places to billet troops (Rorabaugh 1979; Conroy 1995; Thorpe 1996; G. Smith 1998; Salinger 2002; F. Smith 2008; Sismondo 2011; Duensing 2014; Springate 2017; Scribner 2019). Finally, a saloon, like a tavern, is also a building specifically designed for the consumption of alcohol. The OED defines the term “saloon” as follows: “in the U.S., a place where intoxicating liquors are sold and consumed; a drinking bar” (OED: Oxford English Dictionary 2019c). Further, it notes the first printed usage of the term “saloons” as a phrase for “public drinking places” occurred in 1841, in the *Southern Literary Messenger* out of Richmond, Virginia (Dixon 2005:24; OED: Oxford English Dictionary 2019c).

Taverns and saloons, both buildings specifically built for interaction and alcohol consumption, served as settings for social, political, and economic transactions; as such, they were fundamental to local political economies. Given their popularity and centrality within the community (even when physically located at the edge of town) and their significance as “sites of social drinking” and places for hosting political discussions and conducting business transactions, these two institutions are ideal candidates for the study of social negotiations, which took place within their walls as often as everyday eating

(Conroy 1995; G. Smith 1998; Salinger 2002; F. Smith 2008:64; Duensing 2014; Scribner 2019).

Anthropology, Archaeology, and Alcohol

The term alcohol encompasses a vast number of substances produced in different countries and different time periods. What is common in these beverages, whether beer, bourbon, whiskey, or wine, is the presence of ethanol. Alcohol consumption has accompanied human settlement for at least 10,000 years, with ancient origins in the Middle East and China (McGovern 2010; Liu et al. 2018). Evidence for Indigenous alcoholic beverages has been found nearly worldwide, with very few exceptions (Hornsey 2002). For the majority of this deep past, alcohol was inseparable from sociability—through political structures, such as feasting, through religious rituals, or through consumption in specific venues, such as taverns or saloons. As Douglas (1987:23,36) argues: “[D]rinking is essentially a social act” in which alcohol “constructs an ideal world” that stands in stark contrast to “the painful chaos threatening all the time.”

Despite the fact that alcohol has been a constant companion to sociability through time, cultural anthropology and archaeology have approached the research topic quite differently over the past 30 years (Mandelbaum 1965; Heath 1987; Dietler 2006; F. Smith 2008). The cultural anthropological approach to the study of alcohol changed notably in the late 1980s, when Heath (1987), in his overview of scholarship on alcohol in sociocultural anthropology, observed that anthropologists had discussed alcohol consumption in biological, psychological, or medicinal ways and cast it in a negative light. In his summary, he discussed studies on cultural attitudes toward drunken comportment and the ways in which different cultures interacted with a substance largely perceived as a drug (Mandelbaum 1965). When not perceived as a mind-altering substance, the subject of alcohol was “examined in its natural context” without asking “why people (as a whole) drink, or why some people feel compelled to drink in ways that hurt themselves and others” (Heath 1987:105). Heath’s overview ultimately began a discussion on the scholarship of alcohol and advocated for a specialized, interdisciplinary examination of the substance. This

represented a crucial theoretical step toward today's research on alcohol. Just under 20 years later, Dietler (2006) reexamined the anthropological study of alcohol and observed that, by the early 2000s, archaeologists had begun to examine alcohol and to contribute to interdisciplinary discussions on consumption, as suggested by Heath.

In the decades since these two overviews, cultural anthropology and archaeological analyses of alcohol have encompassed a wide array of themes that continue to act as focal points for alcohol studies, including resistance (Reckner and Brighton 1999; Mrozowski 2006), political economy (Bryceson 2002), conceptions of identity (Wilson 2005), and feasting (Dietler and Hayden 2001; O'Conner 2015). For example, Reckner and Brighton (1999) examined the archaeological data from excavations at Block 2006 in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, and Five Points in Manhattan, New York, to compare the effect of temperance reform on the drinking habits of the residents of middle-class and working-class neighborhoods; in particular, temperance rhetoric had been used at the Five Points neighborhood because of the perceived threat that was represented by "the political power of immigrant voters, centered around the saloon" (Reckner and Brighton 1999:77). Reckner and Brighton found that the rhetoric did not seem to have much of an effect on the material culture—especially that related to alcohol consumption—within the working-class neighborhood of Five Points.

Bryceson's (2002) book takes a different approach, focusing instead on a sociocultural examination of alcohol's role in ritual and political economy. She explores the use of alcohol in sub-Saharan African societies and the ways in which alcohol has changed in value as both a ritual object and a commodity. She addresses political economy in examining the way that alcohol had traditionally functioned as part of both religious and political expression, which had been strictly controlled by the communities' male elders, but recently was losing its power in ritual life. Wilson's (2005) edited volume focuses on alcohol's role in the creation and reinforcing of both ethnic and national identities, and views consumption as both normative and crucial to the shaping of conceptions of identity on local and global scales. Without the legacy of studies such as these, the research within this article could not have taken place.

A Space for Drinking

An examination of the role of alcohol and commensal politics within drinking spaces, including Smutynose Island's tavern and Highland City's saloons, cannot take place without a working understanding of these institutions' history and social importance. As discussed above, both taverns and saloons were constructed as alcohol-purveying buildings. As a result of the presence of alcohol, drinking spaces reinforced feelings of commiseration and camaraderie, loyalty and loosened inhibitions, all of which contributed to their sociable atmosphere (Rorabaugh 1979; Conroy 1995; Thorpe 1996; G. Smith 1998; Salinger 2002; F. Smith 2008; Sismondo 2011; Duensing 2014; Scribner 2019). Within the walls of the tavern or the saloon, patrons experienced a lack of accountability due to the institution's inherent association with alcohol and could act in ways deemed unacceptable outside a drinking space due to the communities' "local pattern of rules about where, when, and what to drink, and in whose company" (Douglas 1987:24). After all, "in drink men might abandon the constraints that governed interaction in most public situations" (Conroy 1995:2).

Drinking spaces represented inherently liminal spaces because they permitted conduct that would otherwise be viewed as outside the established norms if enacted in other public or domestic spaces (Conroy 1995; G. Smith 1998; Tlusty 2001; F. Smith 2008; Scribner 2019). Liminal spaces allow for ambiguity because individuals that move within them can "elude or slip through the network of classifications" that operate on a daily basis to define social, expected norms (Turner 1969:95; F. Smith 2008). As liminal institutions, drinking spaces lie "betwixt and between" classifications set by a community's "law, custom, [and] convention" (Turner 1969:95). The fact that patrons drank within these spaces was not what made them inherently liminal. Rather, saloons and taverns represented liminal features on their respective social landscapes because they bore witness to actions and ideas that could not exist outside their walls. The association of these buildings with alcohol created an ambience characterized by a lack of accountability and credibility—a "blame it on the alcohol" potential—which, in turn, fostered a "fertile breeding ground for new possibilities in social and political relationships" (Conroy 1995:2; Tlusty 2001; Sismondo 2011; Scribner 2019).

Archaeologically, drinking spaces allow a glimpse into “much more than the drinking habits” of their patrons (Conroy 1995:11). While archaeological assemblages certainly speak to customers’ beverage preferences (and the availability of these drinks), they can also illuminate both broader quotidian activities and negotiations of elites and nonelites in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. As “specialized places for socializing,” taverns and saloons represented “centralized social anchors” for the community around them (Conroy 1995; Dixon 2005; F. Smith 2008:67; Duensing, 2014; Scribner 2019). More than mere alcohol consumption, drinking played a role in a “larger social performance,” be it negotiating a business transaction, creating a sense of familiarity and inclusion, reinforcing a social hierarchy—or disrupting it (F. Smith 2008:63).

Drinking spaces were crucial places of meeting: in 17th- and 18th-century North America, the tavern was “usually the first public structure” built, immediately making it “the center of town” and often the only sizable secular building (Cheever 2015:31). Both taverns and saloons hosted a wide array of activities, from public officials’ meetings to profession-based social-hall events to the purveying of warm meals and providing a place to stay—although in colonial taverns this did not necessarily mean a bed. Lighted and heated at the proprietors’ expense, they became locations for “groups of people to meet both formally and informally for secular purposes” (Rockman and Rothschild 1984:113; Conroy 1995; James 1998; Salinger 2002; Dixon 2005; Lucas 2008; F. Smith 2008; Sismondo 2011; Cheever 2015; Scribner 2019). Taverns and saloons were central to communities as places to converse, celebrate, and mourn, but also to rebel, negotiate, and forge alliances. Drinking spaces represented social institutions with the capacity to support or subvert the influence of state power largely due to their association with alcohol and reduced accountability (Conroy 1995; F. Smith 2008; Cheever 2015).

As liminal spaces that allowed atypical conduct, drinking spaces were public arenas wherein patrons, as Conroy (1995:11) notes: “resisted, initiated, and addressed changes in their society” (Tlusty 2001; Sismondo 2011; Scribner 2019). It follows, then, that 18th-century Virginian colonists “met and plotted against the king in the only safe place they could find in Williamsburg-Raleigh Tavern,” while Massachusetts Sons of Liberty met at the Green Dragon

(Sismondo 2011; Cheever 2015:32). Drinking spaces were “public spaces over which the ruling elite and the populace at large contested for control” of quotidian activities, business negotiations, and power relations (Conroy 1995:9). Drinking spaces—and those drinking within them—supported neither authority figures nor the general public exclusively, but rather “stood in support of both” (Tlusty 2001:16).

As places where power relations were negotiated and settled, especially in newly established settlements, drinking spaces would have held what Powers (2006) called a “cross-section of residents” (Conroy 1995; Rod Cofield 2019, pers. comm.). It should be noted that this “cross-section” often included women, particularly as tavern owners, as the strict gender roles of the Victorian era had not yet come into play (Meacham 2009; Sismondo 2011; Rod Cofield 2019, pers. comm.). As early as the mid-16th century, as towns grew larger, there emerged a hierarchy of drinking institutions that reflected both social stratification and increased specialization in the crowds to which they appealed. Drinking spaces distinguished themselves by catering to one crowd over another: elites over nonelites, or workmen over merchants. Mid-18th-century taverns, for example, often acted as meeting places for members of a certain profession; the Tontine, in New York City, hosted sailors, captains, shipbuilders, and merchants who would gather within to discuss and draft shipping contracts, aided in their negotiations by mugs of ale and porter (Rockman and Rothschild 1984; Dixon 2005; Duensing 2014; Scribner 2019). The 19th-century saloons of the American West, especially in boomtowns with populations that had disposable incomes, also reflected this “cross-section”; saloons soon “came to reflect the diversity” of the towns in which they were located “more than any other social institution” (Dixon 2005:26).

Beginning in the late 18th century and carrying on into the 19th century, drinking spaces in many cities no longer engaged in the “practice of [social] classes sharing space,” in favor of patrons “seeking separate venues” (James 1998; Dixon 2005; Powers 2006:147; Scribner 2019). This diversification soon appeared in small settlements once there were enough individuals to support such variety. Saloons, the main drinking institution of the 19th century, catered to ever-more specific crowds. In addition to advertising to a wide array of social classes and professions, saloon

owners sought to further separate their businesses from their competitors by catering to “occupation *and* ethnicity [emphasis added]” (James 1998; Dixon 2005, 2006; Powers 2006:147). This was particularly crucial during the 19th century, when saloonkeepers from different ethnic and cultural groups sought to make saloons “places of refuge and solidarity” from the otherwise “foreign and hostile environment” prevalent in many boomtowns and urban centers across the American West and along the East Coast (Dixon 2005:26).

The result on the social landscape was both an increase in the number of drinking spaces within a settlement and the formation of a social map of the classes, professions, and ethnicities represented therein. In particular, amidst the backdrop of social unease and turbulence of the 19th-century United States, the customized nature of saloons made them “places where people found refuge” from the distressing array of stimuli, including new technological innovations, changing physical and social landscapes, new divisions of time based on factory clocks, and an increasingly diverse population (Gusfield 1987; James 1998; Dixon 2005, 2006). Saloons soon “represented physical places” that stayed unmoved in an otherwise rapidly changing setting; within their walls, “people could socialize and relax” in an attempt to “soften the blow” of the “anxiety and hostility associated with the transition to a new life” (Dixon 2005:153). While the “strictly oral culture of taverns does not invite investigations” through historical documentary means alone, the archaeological record can provide additional data and has the potential to fill in lacunae left by the written record (Conroy 1995:2).

Additionally, this “cross-section” within the tavern would also have been notable for those *not* found within it, as this would represent those members of society that the community excluded from participation in (and even entering) the drinking spaces. The saloons mentioned earlier, which catered to specific ethnic groups, were sometimes open to outside customers and sometimes refused to serve them (James 1998; Dixon 2005). Further, as the number of taverns and saloons in a given city increased, their varied “assortment ... reflected the town’s diverse social, cultural, economic, and ethnic milieu” (Dixon 2005:154). As such, populations continued to discriminate against one another once there was the means to do so.

Additionally, many urban spaces in the 18th and 19th centuries were particularly unwelcoming of anyone who was not White. In the centers of 18th-century English colonial North America, taverns could be places where “others,” at least in theory, were “relegated to the fringes of public society” (Scribner 2019:15). The opulent boomtown drinking spaces frequented by the affluent in the 19th-century American West would not have been welcoming to American Indians, African Americans, or the overseas Chinese, reflecting the larger social opinions of the settlements’ populations (Dixon 2005, 2006). However, despite the many “efforts to bar blacks, Native Americans, servants and [sometimes] women from public life” in colonial North America, “many still found their way into their own tavern spaces,” sometimes through unlicensed properties and sometimes through the buying and selling of illicit goods (Scribner 2019:15). In large 19th-century Western towns, such as Virginia City, Nevada, there were enough people and there was enough going on in the town to support an establishment like the Boston Saloon, which catered to customers of African descent (Dixon 2005, 2006).

Finally, saloons in the rapid boom-and-bust life cycle of the American West’s mining frontiers often housed a wider variety of activities than those generally expected of a drinking space (see Spude [2011] for an excellent example). In mining towns with strikes rich enough to transcend the generally fleeting nature of boomtowns and become settlements with long-term occupations, saloon keepers often saw their establishments functioning as they would in other urban settlements rather than as in the ephemeral placer encampments dotting the creeks and mountainsides of the American West.

Commensal Politics: An Exploration of a Timeless Practice

The study of commensal politics has been an effective method of addressing power relations and the establishment of social capital, the key factors that allow a community or social group to function effectively, including shared norms, cooperation, a common sense of identity, and complex interpersonal relationships (Dietler 1996; Bray 2003; O’Conner 2015). As commensal politics generally involves

the use of alcohol, taverns and saloons, due to their ready drink supplies, are fitting stages for such social negotiations. As a practice centered on embodied—and literally consumed—material culture, commensal politics creates “a prime arena for the negotiation, projection, and contestation of power” (Dietler 2006:232). Commensal politics allows participants to play out both grand gestures of governmental policy and “micro-politics,” which are “negotiated in the arena of everyday life” (Bray 2003:2). While the role of alcohol in societal negotiations has been studied in the deep past, this article asserts that alcohol continued to ease the negotiation of social capital during the early modern and modern periods—within the walls of drinking spaces.

Alcohol is a “total social fact” (after Mauss), which is a charged form of material culture with religious, legal, political, domestic, and economic properties that concern both individuals and collective entities (Dietler 2006; Mauss 2012; O’Conner 2015). Further, the resources used to produce alcohol must be replenished often, making them conspicuous and linking them to concepts of personhood and political economy (Dietler and Hayden 2001; Bray 2003; O’Conner 2015). Given its weighty associations, alcohol is well suited to crafting partnerships, cementing business dealings, and forging friendships. Within the institution of the tavern and the saloon, the act of giving and receiving an alcoholic beverage acquired significance because of the loaded associations that alcohol carried, trailing threads of trade networks, commercial empires, social class, and ethnic, local, and personal tastes. Drinks, the heart of a drinking-space’s trade, were capable of both simply satisfying thirst and satisfying a sought-after conclusion to a negotiation. They were an investment of money and “invested with emotional and symbolic significance” (Conroy 1995:22). At its simplest, commensal politics requires at least two individuals and the shared consumption of drink for a specific, “special reason” (after Dietler and Hayden [2001:28]). Within a tavern or saloon, purchasing a drink for another individual acted as an important means of finalizing an agreement—and making it public—while intertwining business with the power-charged notion of hospitality.

The spaces that bear witness to commensal politics have several primary characteristics, whether negotiations date to the Neolithic or the 19th century. They

are as follows: (1) a demonstration or reinforcement of power, status, and hierarchy, in small, private, interpersonal interactions and in broad, public, governmental decisions that acts as a means to create, reinforce, or break alliances and patterns of loyalty; (2) an arena for conflict creation and resolution; (3) a means to demonstrate the acquisition of, competition for, and use of resources; (4) a space to forge shared feelings of identity and belonging within a community, often by the inclusion of certain members and the exclusion of others; and (5) a place for the creation and the regulation of cultural behaviors (Bray 2003; O’Conner 2015). Commensal politics results in a “highly condensed symbolic representation of social relations” that involves the consumption of alcohol “in a nondomestic pattern” that is crucial to proper archaeological interpretation of assemblages (Dietler 1996:89; Dietler and Hayden 2001:28). This use in nondomestic ways separates ordinary drinking at home from the commensal politics of the tavern.

Drinking spaces bear witness to a wide array of activities, including drinking, eating, and smoking; the archaeological signatures left behind by patrons’ activities often indicate the presence of a tavern as opposed to a domestic or other public structure. Generally, tavern and saloon assemblages contain a much larger proportion of material culture related to alcohol and, as such, tankards, tumblers, wineglasses, jugs, and bottles are found in greater abundance in drinking-space assemblages than in domestic assemblages. The assemblages of drinking spaces also contain artifacts associated with the preparation and serving of food on a large scale, as well as the material culture of both shared and individual eating. The material culture associated with taverns also helps to identify the commensal politics that took place within them due to the presence of large quantities of alcohol that were often of a finer quality than the buyers or the recipients could afford in their homes (Rockman and Rothschild 1984; Bragdon 1993; Dixon 2005; F. Smith 2008; Pearce 2016; Victor 2018; Rod Cofield 2019, pers. comm.).

Case Studies: Smuttynose Island and Highland City

This research on commensal politics and drinking spaces rests on two historical archaeological case

studies: the fishing station of Smuttynose Island in the Isles of Shoals, Maine, and the mining town of Highland City, Montana. These two sites were selected because they were distanced temporally and geographically, yet both represent seemingly isolated resource-extraction communities that were key nodes in a large web of global, domestic, and local interactions of trade and exchange. As points on a web of commercial exchange, these two sites and their drinking spaces bore witness to the social aspects of commerce: the incentivizing, competing, arguing, and other negotiations that take place between business partners, both prospective and well established. Additionally, both sites had active drinking spaces that catered to their respective populations. At the Isles of Shoals, one tavern stood on Smuttynose Island and catered to a largely White population of fishermen (whose wives eventually joined them) of predominantly English and Irish descent. At Highland City, there were 10 saloons that served a widely varied town of men and women, including Americans whose families had been in the country for several generations, Irish immigrants, and the overseas Chinese. The population included not only prospectors and miners, but also those many professions that served them: saloon keepers, dancing girls, a hardware-store owner, a blacksmith, and more.

The Isles of Shoals and Smuttynose Island

The Isles of Shoals comprise an archipelago of nine islands that lie roughly 10 mi. off the current Maine/New Hampshire border (Fig. 1). Between the 17th and 19th centuries, the Isles of Shoals were well positioned to host merchants and travelers coming across the Atlantic to New England and those leaving North America for Europe. This made the Shoals a busy trading post through which passed a wide variety of fish and goods, such as pipes, tobacco, wines and brandies, rum, and sugar. These goods traveled onward to both Northern Europe and the Mediterranean, as well as elsewhere in North America and the Caribbean (Jenness 1875; Hamilton 2010).

Most importantly, the ecosystem of the Shoals supported a bountiful population of codfish (*Gadus morhua*) that regularly weighed around 200 lb. each (far larger than modern 6–10 lb. cod). Further, the

climate of the Shoals was not only suited to fostering a thriving codfish population, but also to drying—and thus curing—the fish. The Shoalers developed a new process of fish drying that they called “dunning.” This made the dried fish thinner, which allowed for a greater number of fish in each shipped barrel and increased the transport stability of the codfish—especially important given that many of the Shoalers’ shipments went to the warm Mediterranean. As the cod was dried more than salted, the process required the use of less salt overall, which made Shoals fish far more edible. When boiled to restore some of the codfish’s plumpness, the Shoals exports tasted more like “green,” or fresh, fish. Contemporary commercial records reveal that the “world’s price” of codfish, already a valuable commodity, was gauged against that caught and cured by the Shoalers; further, Caribbean and European merchants used Isles of Shoals dunned cod as a sort of gold standard against which they set the prices for their own traded cod (Jenness 1875; Rutledge 1997; Hamilton 2010).

Established in 1623, the Isles of Shoals fishing community was one of the oldest in New England; within its first year of operations visitors noted the presence of enough fish to support six fishing ships, each with 50 men aboard. By the mid-1630s, roughly 600 men lived on the Isles of Shoals (Levett 1628; Jenness 1875; Harrington 1992). The dunning process contributed to the Isles of Shoals’s prosperity and granted the fishermen “almost unrestrained civil and religious liberty” (Jenness 1875:107). At the time, a vast number of fishing operations took place at fishing stations referred to as “fishing plantations,” which were settlements where low-wage fishermen labored under an agent who strictly regulated nearly every aspect of daily life in the name of an absentee landlord or wealth “planter” who owned both the boats and the waterfront land—the plantation—itsself (see Pope [2004] for a detailed examination). The fishermen at most fishing plantations were at constant risk of losing their jobs to the whims of the planter, who might close the plantation for financial reasons or less easily discernable motives. Fishing plantations also had very strict social and settlement organization, with the fishermen living in a large communal settlement structure known as a “Great House,” which was the domestic activity center for the entire fishing station.

Unlike the more structured contemporary fishing plantations, Smuttynose Island’s community ran as



Fig. 1 Map of the Isles of Shoals, Maine/New Hampshire, U.S.A. (Map by author, 2021.)

a loosely managed operation of very skilled master fishermen who worked with one another to build individual capital, and many of these men retired wealthy to the mainland. The fishing masters first lived as bachelors in solitary and insubstantial wooden structures scattered across the isles. Once their local economy became more financially established, these wooden dwellings became more substantial and soon accommodated wives and families. The fishermen

stayed on Smuttynose Island through the 1780s, with the highest population peak occurring between 1710 and 1750. This population trend varied from fishing plantations on the mainland that experienced land conflicts and uprisings that caused frequent patterns of population decline and resurgence because the Shoals were physically distanced from the scenes of these events; such separation likely further contributed to the Shoals's economic success (Rutledge 1997; Hamilton 2010).

Excavations on Smuttynose Island

The data from Smuttynose Island came from three years of excavation at the site, from 2009 through 2011, led by Dr. Nathan Hamilton in a joint partnership between the University of Southern Maine and the Shoals Marine Laboratory (University of New Hampshire and Cornell University). There were three phases of excavations on Smuttynose Island that used a combination of 50×50 cm sample test pits, 1×1 m test units, and 4×1 m slot trenches on a grid to first confirm the presence of an intact site on the island, the first phase, and then identify activity areas at the site, the second phase. The third and final phase at the site involved data recovery in the area where the tavern was thought to have stood; the tavern was indeed located through the presence of a significant number of artifacts and architectural material (Victor 2018, 2019). Smuttynose Island's site number is not provided here as an aid in protecting the site, which is on private land.

Activity Areas

Three main areas were identified on the site: a tavern area, a domestic area, and a fish-processing area (Fig. 2). The tavern feature, located on the western edge of the island near the old shoreline, measured approximately 7×4 m. The complete tavern footprint is hypothesized to be larger than this, based on the artifact assemblage and on knowledge of similar, contemporary taverns, but a thick covering of poison ivy, thorns, and dense brush lying across what is likely the tavern's southern end prohibited further testing. To the north and west of the tavern footprint is a rocky, bald shoreline, the result of declining sea levels and heavy erosion. The architectural data speak to what was likely a brick building with glass windows held in lead casements; peering through them, one would have found timber floorboards laid over a nonlocal stone floor.

In contrast to the tavern architecture, the domestic architecture of the community is ephemeral. Small, insubstantial wooden structures left few structural traces in the archaeological record, and their post-holes are difficult to see in the rocky soil and barren bedrock. As such, only the activities that took place within these houses left physical traces. Similarly, the fish-processing area yielded hundreds of fish

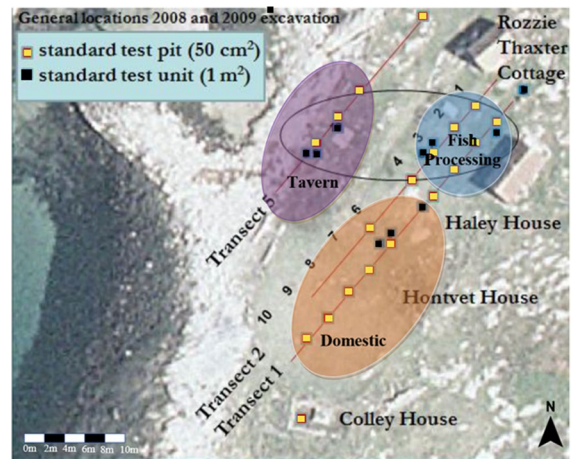


Fig. 2 Smuttynose Island excavation map showing activity areas. (Base map courtesy of Dr. Nathan Hamilton, activity areas added by author, 2019.)

remains—particularly articulated cod vertebrae—but very little in the way of architectural evidence. The fish-processing area would have consisted of wooden tables and drying racks that would have left very little archaeological information aside from the small post-holes, which were not identified.

Tavern and Domestic Assemblages

Overall, the ceramics at Smuttynose Island clustered in two of the site's three main activity areas, as the fish-processing area produced mostly faunal material; these two artifact clusters indicate distinct domestic and tavern assemblages (Victor 2018, 2019). The vessels found at Smuttynose Island not only identify the presence of a tavern on the island, they also speak to the institution's significance within the Shoaler community. There is a marked difference between the ceramic assemblages found within the tavern and the fishermen's homes. The most valuable and imported ceramics (e.g., Chinese export porcelain; a wide assortment of Dutch, English, Spanish, and Portuguese tin-glazed earthenwares; and Rhenish/Westerwald stoneware [both the uncommon white/light gray and more common dark gray with blue and/or purple] tankards and jugs) clustered within the tavern (Fig. 3). In addition to prestige ceramics, an assemblage of imported alcohol dominated the tavern assemblage. Much of the alcohol-related vessels found speaks to the importation of expensive

alcoholic drinks from Portugal and Spain, such as port, madeira, and wine, as well as liquors from the Netherlands and from England and English colonies, like gin and rum. This represents more than simple importing of goods from the mainland to an island community, as there were sources of alcohol in New England. The port at the Isles of Shoals, and the fishermen's ready money, gave the community access to a much wider array of goods.

In the domestic assemblage, most of the ceramic sherds are coarse lead-glazed earthenwares and redwares that were either produced in New England (no ceramics seem to come from the Shoals themselves) or imported from England. The variety of ware types found within the two assemblages differs, as is seen most clearly in the domestic assemblage. Most of the ceramic sherds in the domestic assemblage consisted of coarse lead-glazed cups, milk pans, pipkins, and other utilitarian household vessels, with very little evidence of expensive imports, particularly alcohol. Wealth, defined here in expensive wares and those wares carrying expensive drinks, was invested in the tavern rather than in the domestic sphere.

Few imported English and Chinese porcelains, one of the most expensive ware types of the period, were found; of the five vessels that were recovered, four of them came from the tavern and only one came from the domestic-activity area (Table 1). The tavern assemblage yielded three Chinese porcelain tea-ware vessels and one English soft-paste porcelain vessel, likely also tea ware. The fifth vessel was a Chinese

porcelain teacup from the domestic assemblage. Tin-glazed earthenwares, another prestige ceramic type for the period of the tavern's occupation, were also found in a much higher proportion within the tavern than in the house-related assemblage, with 34 vessels recovered, comprising roughly 71% (70.83%) of the total number ($n=48$) of tin-glazed earthenware vessels recovered at the site; in contrast, only 14 vessels, or approximately 29% of the total number of vessels, came from the domestic assemblage. Nearly all of the tavern's tin-glazed earthenware vessels were tablewares and included Dutch, Portuguese, English, and Spanish ware types. In contrast, the domestic assemblage of 14 vessels, while also tablewares, represented far less variety: only English and Dutch varieties were present.

English white salt-glazed stonewares, both scratch blue and the undecorated varieties, represent another fine imported ware found at the Shoals—and found at a much higher proportion at the tavern overall. A total of 41 vessels of English white salt-glazed stoneware came from the tavern, 5 of which were decorated with a scratch-blue pattern; this represented roughly 68% of the total vessels from the site (Table 1). The remaining 19 vessels, of which another 5 were also decorated with a scratch-blue pattern, came from the domestic assemblage (32% of the assemblage). Other stoneware found at the site also clustered more at the tavern, although none as dramatically. Eight of the site's fourteen Rhenish/Westerwald vessels (57%) (Fig. 3); five of the six total Rhenish Bellarmine/Bartmann vessels (83%); both of the North American stoneware vessels; one of the site's three English Fulham vessels (33%); and all eight unidentified stoneware vessels, one of which was possibly an early Bristol-glazed ginger bottle, were also found at the tavern, for a total of twenty-four additional stoneware vessels.

The largest category of ceramics found onsite—at both the tavern assemblage and the domestic assemblage—was that of earthenwares. Within the tavern assemblage, the vast majority of earthenwares were coarse, lead-glazed redwares, numbering 2,413 sherds. Whether they were English or locally made on the New England mainland is unknown. Most pertained to storage and serving of alcohol, such as tall pots and tankards, along with tableware and food-serving vessels. Specifically, 100 lead-glazed redware vessels, or 70.9%, were recovered from the



Fig. 3 Westerwald sherds, including a white/light gray sherd recovered from Smuttynose Island. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Nathan Hamilton and SeacoastNH.com, 2009.)

Table 1 Smuttynose Island ceramic categories and minimum vessel counts

Ware Type	Tavern	Percentage	Town	Percentage	Total MNV
Total	352	64.80%	191	35.20%	543
Coarse earthenware, unidentified	5	62.50%	3	37.50%	8
Redware, lead glazed, unidentified	100	70.92%	41	2908.00%	141
Redware, New England	2	100.00%	0	0.00%	2
North Devon, smooth	41	100.00%	0	0.00%	41
North Devon, gravel tempered	5	83.33%	1	16.67%	6
North Devon, sgraffito	8	88.89%	1	11.11%	9
North Italian slipware/sgraffito	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1
Staffordshire slipware	5	38.46%	8	61.54%	13
Merida	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1
Border ware	3	100.00%	0	0.00%	3
Totnes	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1
Iberian storage jar	3	100.00%	0	0.00%	3
Jackfield	1	25.00%	3	75.00%	4
Jackfield type	4	100.00%	0	0.00%	4
Stoneware, unidentified	7	100.00%	0	0.00%	7
Stoneware, English, early Bristol glaze?	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1
Stoneware, English, Fulham	1	33.34%	2	66.66%	3
Stoneware, English, Nottingham	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Stoneware, English, white salt glazed (5 scratch blue)	41	68.30%	19 (5 scratch blue)	31.70%	60
Stoneware, Rhenish, Bellarmine/ <i>Bartmann</i>	5	83.33%	1	16.67%	6
Stoneware, Rhenish, Westerwald	8	57.14%	6	42.86%	14
Stoneware, North American	2	100.00%	0	0.00%	2
Tin-glazed earthenwares	34	70.83%	14	29.17%	48
Whieldon ware	2	25.00%	6	75.00%	8
Rockingham	0	0.00%	2	100.00%	2
Creamware	18	94.73%	1	5.27%	19
Pearlware	23	71.88%	9	28.12%	32
Pearlware, hand painted	22	29.33%	53	70.67%	75
Whiteware, early	2	10.00%	18	90.00%	20
Yellowware	2	66.66%	1	33.34%	3
Porcelain, English soft paste	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1
Porcelain, Chinese export	3	75.00%	1	25.00%	4

tavern assemblage, while only 41 vessels, or 29.1%, were recovered from the domestic assemblage. The tavern also contained two mugs that were produced in New England, likely Massachusetts; the domestic assemblage did not contain any of these clearly identifiable sherds. Other earthenwares recovered included North Devon vessels, both coarse and smooth. When crafted into tall pots, these wares frequently held provisions, such as salted meat, and were also used as storage vessels for beers and ales

because of the fairly watertight glazing on the tall pots' interiors. A total of 41 North Devon smooth vessels (the entirety of the assemblage from the site), 5 North Devon gravel-tempered vessels (83% of the total assemblage), and 8 North Devon vessels with sgraffito decoration (nearly 89% of the assemblage) came from the tavern. Only one North Devon gravel-tempered vessel and one North Devon vessel with sgraffito decoration came from the domestic assemblage (Table 1).

Of much finer quality than North Devon slipware, North Italian sgraffito wares are characterized by their swirling marbled colors and thinner bodies. Only one North Italian sgraffito plate was recovered from Smuttynose Island, and it came from the tavern assemblage. The other slipware found on the site, Staffordshire slipwares, some of which had been comb decorated, were found at both the domestic and tavern assemblages, with 5 vessels (38.5% of the assemblage) present at the tavern and 8 (61.5%) of the 13 vessels present in the domestic assemblage.

Additional coarse earthenwares in the assemblage were also much more present in the tavern assemblage, including the single Merida and Totnes vessels at the site, all three of the site's Border-ware storage and tableware vessels, all three Iberian storage jars (at least one was for wine storage and one was for olives), and all four Jackfield-type vessels. Additionally, one Jackfield vessel (25% of the assemblage) and five unidentified coarse-earthenware vessels (62.5% of the total assemblage) came from the tavern (Table 1).

Finally, refined white-bodied earthenwares were also present at the site, their presence speaking to the serving of food and drink that took place within the tavern, as well as the purchasing of tablewares for the domestic sphere. Of the eight Whieldon-ware vessels recovered from the site, only two tableware vessels were found in the tavern assemblage (25%), while six (75%) were found in the domestic assemblage. In contrast, nearly all of the creamware vessels ($n=18$, 94.7%) were recovered from the tavern assemblage, while only one creamware vessel was found in the domestic assemblage. Speaking perhaps to the tavernkeeper's preference to put money into expensive liquors, foods, and other ceramics, there are far more decorated pearlwares present in the domestic assemblage than in the tavern assemblage. A total of 23 unpainted pearlware vessels were recovered from the tavern (72%) as compared to 9 unpainted pearlware vessels from the domestic assemblage (28%); in contrast, the domestic assemblage contains more than double the number of painted pearlware vessels than the tavern assemblage, with 53 vessels (71%) as compared to 22 vessels (29%).

Some later refined white-bodied earthenware vessels are also present in the assemblages. They represent at first a trend toward more middling-class wares, followed by what is likely the widespread access to these whitewares as the technology improved. Two

unidentified early whiteware vessels (10%) were found in the tavern assemblage as compared with 18 vessels in the domestic assemblage (90%); additionally, both Rockingham vessels recovered on the site were found in the domestic assemblage. Finally, two yellowware vessels were found in the upper contexts of the units associated with the tavern assemblage, but likely postdate it, as does the one yellowware vessel from the domestic assemblage.

As Table 1 shows, a total of 543 vessels were found on Smuttynose Island; the 352 vessels of the tavern assemblage, which comprise 64.8% of the total vessel assemblage, overwhelmingly speak not only to the presence of alcohol, which is to be expected, but to the presence of expensive imports. In addition to drinking mugs, jugs, flasks, and storage vessels, some of the tavern vessels, like the Westerwald jugs, were used to hold very specific liquors. Overall, the 191 vessels of the domestic assemblage (35.2%) represent far less variety, especially in terms of imports, and they have far less of an association with alcohol. The fishing resources of the Isles of Shoals contributed wealth to the independent fishermen who lived and worked there, but little material evidence of that wealth manifested in the ceramic assemblages of the domestic space. The contrast in vessel variety also seems to indicate that the tavern, rather than the domestic spaces, bore witness to the commensal politics of Smuttynose Island because it is within the tavern that the wide array of imported vessels and alcohols, especially expensive ones, appeared.

Highland City, Montana

Highland City was a gold-mining town located in the Highland Mountains of southwestern Montana, roughly 10 mi. southwest of the present-day city of Butte and crossing elevations of between 7,000 and 10,000 ft. above sea level (Fig. 4). On 25 July 1866, three prospectors, J. B. S. Coleman, E. B. Coleman, and William Crawford, found gold while panning on Fish Creek; news spread quickly, and a horde of miners poured into the Highland Mountains. The earliest arrivals were rewarded for their punctuality with wealthy claims, and soon the town of Highland City emerged. The earliest gold pulled from Fish Creek was exceptional in purity and sold for \$20 per ounce, compared to nearby Butte's gold, which sold for only \$16 per ounce (Wolle 1983; Fifer 2002; Victor 2018).

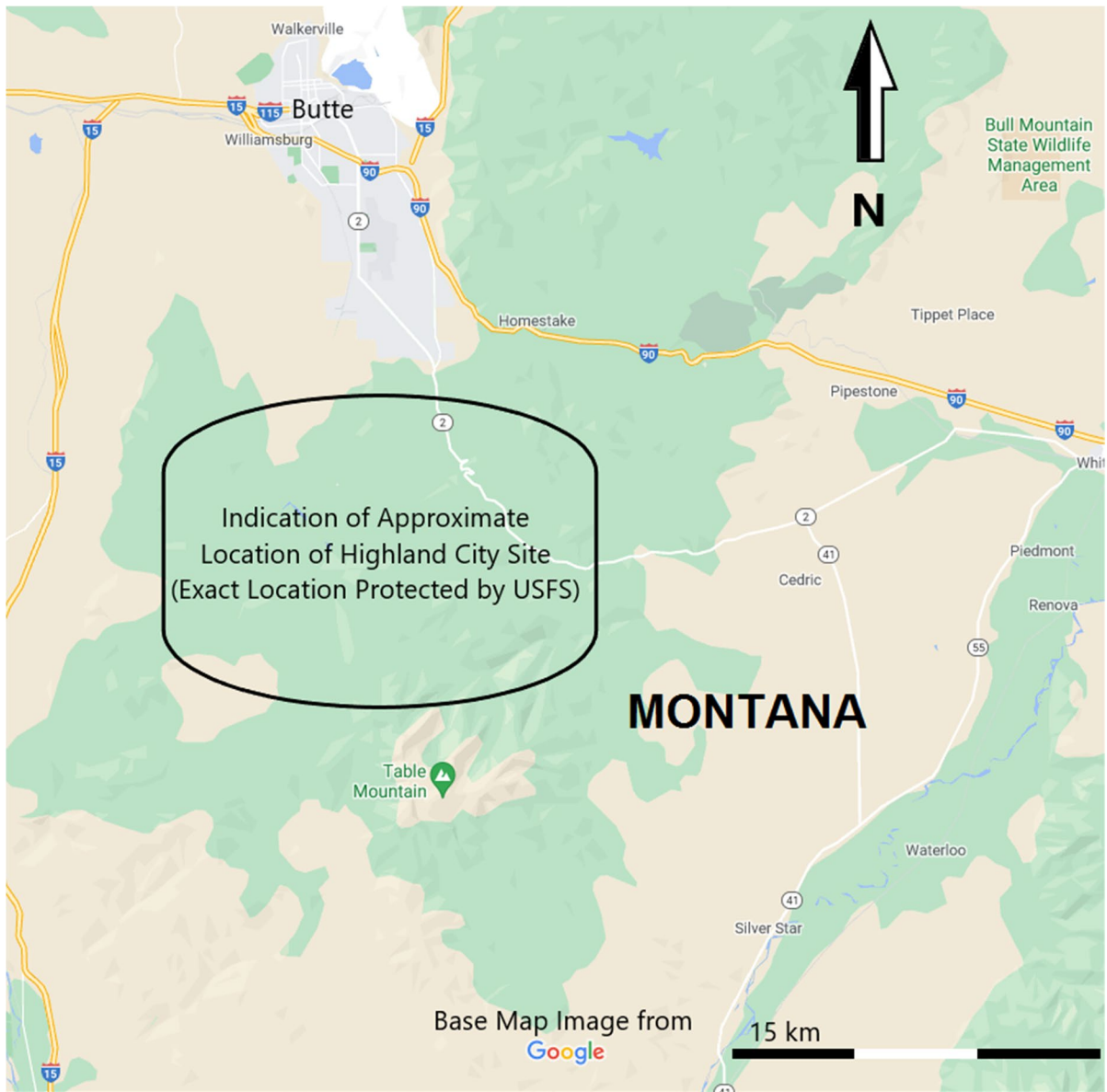


Fig. 4 U.S.G.S. topographical map showing the approximate location of Highland City, Montana. The exact location is protected by the U.S. Forest Service; the approximation circle was added by the author (U.S. Geological Survey 1990).

By the 1870s, thousands of dollars in gold had come from the mountains and creeks around Highland City, with one trio reportedly pulling up \$3,100 in gold in one day. Another miner, who worked with four others in the late 1860s, stole away one night with \$27,000 in gold dust and any record of his name. Just four years after the first gold claim at Highland City, the Highland Mining District was established—composed of Highland City and nearby Red Mountain.

Soon after locating placer gold, prospectors found gold-bearing lode deposits that were free milling and eliminated the need for the miners to build anything more powerful than mule-drawn *arrastras*. By 1869, three years after Highland City's founding, prospectors located at least 100 different hard-rock lodes (Wolle 1983; Fifer 2002; Victor 2018).

Two months after the first discovery of gold in the Highland District, the population of Highland City

numbered roughly 600 people. During the height of the town’s boom, 1868–1872, Highland City had 300 wooden houses and cabins, 5 dancehalls, 10 saloons, several general stores, and a cemetery. Highland and Red Mountain cities (often viewed as a two-town conglomeration) became the largest settlement(s) in southern Deer Lodge County, and their population numbered 2,000 individuals, which was roughly 1/10 of the population of Montana (Wolle 1983; United States Bureau of the Census 1901).

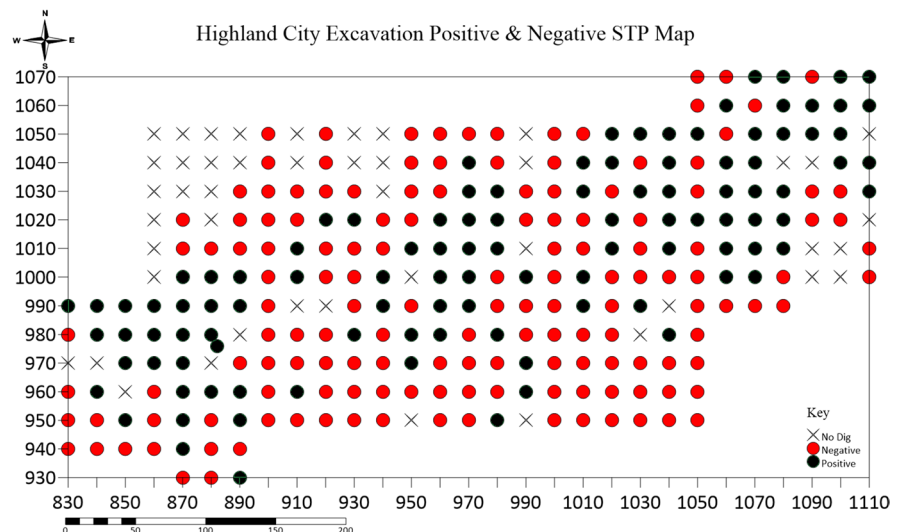
Both Highland City and Red Mountain appeared frequently in Virginia City’s *Montana Post* almost immediately after their founding. At least 1,000 prospectors from the Highlands voted in Deer Lodge County’s first election in 1867. The two-town conglomeration had nine smaller tent camps sprawled out between and around the cities. These “suburban camps,” as they were called, relied on both Highland and Red Mountain cities for supplies, services, and entertainment. Highland City also had a Chinese population, unmentioned in the archival records, but which archaeology has definitively confirmed. By 1882, Highland City and Red Mountain City were completely abandoned—with the exception of one miner: John Kern, who stayed until he passed away in 1925. In total, Highland City produced \$2.3 million in gold before its eventual bust (Wolle 1983; Fifer 2002).

Excavations at Highland City

The data from Highland City came from three years of excavation at the site in 2013, 2014, and 2016, which I conducted with volunteers from the United States Forest Service’s Passport in Time Project, Americorps Saint Louis, and the local community. Pedestrian survey was conducted on the site grid for all three years of excavation, and shovel test-pit excavations took place in 2013 and 2014. Through the use of a predictive model drawn from the pedestrian survey data and the shovel test-pit data, 1 × 1 m test-unit excavations were conducted in 2014 and 2016. All three methods allowed for the identification of three of the site’s four boundaries, which had been hitherto unknown: the western, northern, and southern boundaries.

At its longest—the distance from the northernmost point to the southernmost point—the site grid spanned 130 m; at its widest—running from the easternmost to the westernmost lines—the site spanned approximately 290 m (Fig. 5). The site’s two remaining standing structures and two fallen buildings, which have collapsed in on their foundations, are present at in the westernmost quarter of the site. Near the center of the northernmost quarter of the site is a stone-lined posthole, possibly from a flagpole. Highland City’s site number is not provided so as to protect the site, which is on U.S. federal land.

Fig. 5 Shovel test-pit excavation map from Highland City showing positive, negative, and refused STPs. (Image created by author using Golden Software’s Surfer Surface Mapping Software, 2019.)



Activity Areas

The artifacts recovered, and the negative test pits, indicated the presence of three to four separate activity areas and several roads (Fig. 6). At the far western end of the site, covering an area roughly 60×60 m at its widest, was a domestic-activity area filled with patent medicine bottles, English porcelain, an imported English tin of Colman's Mustard, a fragment of oyster shell, 26 clamshell fragments, and molded milk-glass shaving cups. The southeastern portion of the activity area also yielded Chinese “Winter Green” pattern porcelain (porcelaneous stoneware) bowls, Chinese brown-glazed stoneware bottles and jars, stoneware ginger-jar sherds, and porcelain decorated with the “Four Seasons” pattern.

In the middle of the site, in an area about 60×40 m at its largest, was a second artifact assemblage with artifacts associated with at least one saloon and possible dancing hall. It may also have had a hardware store attached. The assemblage yielded the largest amount of bone—and especially predominantly sawn bone—on the site, along with painted ceramics, whiskey-tumbler sherds and mirror fragments, biters-bottle glass, and beer-bottle glass. Uniquely, this second assemblage also yielded evidence of at least 12 champagne bottles—one of which was found with foil that read: REIMS (Fig. 7). Along with additional patent-medicine bottles, a large opium tin also came from excavations here, indicating that this was a place

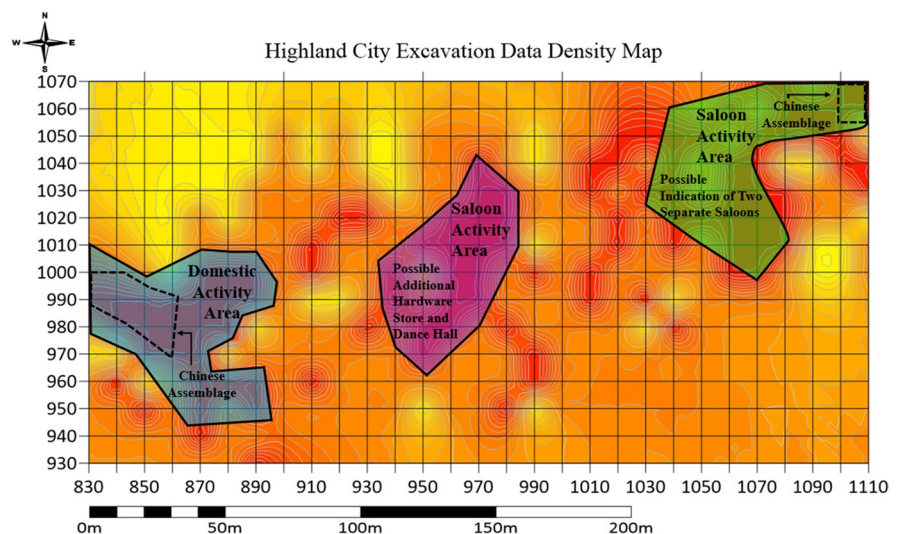
where Anglo-American and Chinese medicines were not only used, but also sold in quantity.

In the northeast corner of the site grid, the artifacts indicated a third activity area. The eastern site-grid boundary here does not mark the eastern edge of the town itself—which may extend as much as 100 m farther to the east—but marks the end of excavations conducted at Highland City thus far. The activity area measured roughly 65×70 m at its largest. The assemblage speaks to the presence of at least one—perhaps two—saloon assemblages. Glass from patent-medicine, beer, and liquor bottles, as well as mirror glass, came from this concentration. Cut and sawn bone was also recovered. In the northeast corner



Fig. 7 French champagne bottle and bottle fragments recovered from Highland City. (Photo by author, 2019.)

Fig. 6 Artifact density map showing activity areas. (Image created by author using Golden Software's Surfer Surface Mapping Software, 2019.)



of the concentration, in an area of about 15×10 m, there also appeared to be the beginnings of a second Chinese assemblage, seen in the form of Winter Green porcelain, Chinese brown-glazed stoneware, and ginger-jar fragments. This artifact concentration/activity area requires future excavations to separate the two saloon assemblages and define their borders more fully.

Saloon and Domestic Assemblages

Overall, the artifacts clustered in three main areas: a domestic area and two commercial areas. The vessels found at Highland City identify the presence of at least two separate saloon-activity areas, one in the center of the site grid and one at in the northeastern portion of the grid. The ceramics also reveal the shifting role of ceramic material culture, especially certain ware types, in domestic and commercial spaces by the 19th century. Stonewares, for example, become much more prevalent and lose their prestige status, fulfilling

the uses that coarse redwares and other earthenwares did in earlier centuries. Nearly the entirety of the ceramic assemblage recovered is associated with utilitarian purposes, and the majority of the ware types are inexpensive (Table 2). As with Smuttynose Island, heavy, utilitarian stonewares, coarse earthenwares, and cheap household tablewares cluster in the domestic area of Highland City. The domestic area also featured a large assemblage of inexpensive, utilitarian Chinese ceramics (Fig. 8). In contrast, the saloon assemblages contained no coarse earthenware vessels and far fewer stonewares. Additionally, while whitewares and ironstones were present at all three assemblages, as these were the predominant earthenwares in use in the late 19th century, there were far more of these utilitarian wares in the domestic assemblage than in the saloon assemblages—mostly in the form of saucers. Of note, the domestic area did contain the highest number of teacups on the site, especially in the area associated with the overseas Chinese assemblage.

Table 2 Highland City ceramic categories and minimum vessel counts

Ware Type	Domestic (%)	Middle/Saloon (%)	East/Saloon (%)	N/A(%)	Total
Total	128 (70.21%)	22 (12.80%)	28 (14.36%)	5 (2.63%)	183
Coarse earthenware, unidentified	2 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (50.00%)	4
Victorian majolica	1 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2
Refined earthenware, unidentified	0 (0.00%)	1 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1
Refined earthenware, China ware	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
Rockingham	0 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (100.00%)	1
Lusterware	1 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1
Whiteware	30 (57.69%)	11 (21.15%)	10 (19.23%)	1 (1.93%)	52
Ironstone	26 (72.22%)	4 (11.11%)	6 (16.67%)	0 (0.00%)	36
Bristol glaze	12 (80.00%)	2 (13.33%)	1 (6.67%)	0 (0.00%)	15
Stoneware, Chinese brown glazed	12 (80.00%)	2 (13.33%)	1 (6.67%)	0 (0.00%)	15
Stoneware, Chinese, ginger jar	1 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2
Stoneware, white, refined, unidentified	11 (78.57%)	2 (14.30%)	1 (1.73%)	0 (0.00%)	14
Stoneware, unidentified	3 (75.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (25.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4
Porcelain, Four Seasons pattern	6 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	6
Porcelain, Bamboo pattern	1 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2
Porcelain, Winter Green pattern	3 (75.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (25.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4
Porcelain, Chinese, undecorated	4 (66.67%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (33.33%)	0 (0.00%)	6
Porcelain, Japanese	3 (75.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (25.00%)	4
Porcelain, English	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
Porcelain, decorated, unidentified	3 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3
Porcelain, unidentified	3 (60.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (40.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5



Fig. 8 Four Winter Green/celadon sherds recovered from Highland City. (Photo by author, 2018.)

There was little evidence of fine, expensive porcelains at Highland City and most of the assemblage was dominated by an overseas Chinese assemblage, discussed below. The non-Chinese porcelains recovered include three Japanese tea-ware vessels (75% of the assemblage), which came from the domestic activity area, and a Japanese porcelain saucer (25% of the total vessels), which came from an area in between the domestic and middle saloon concentrations. Three English porcelain tea-ware vessels were recovered, which all came from the domestic area, along with three porcelain tea-ware vessels that were too weathered to fully determine place of manufacture. Finally, an additional three unknown porcelain vessels were found in the domestic area (60%) and two separate vessels (40%) were recovered from the eastern saloon-related activity area.

The majority of the 33 porcelain vessels ($n=18$, 54.5%) recovered from Highland City were Chinese wares, decorated with such patterns as Winter Green, Four Seasons, and “Bamboo” (Table 2). All six porcelain vessels decorated with the Four Seasons pattern came from the western half of the domestic assemblage. Additionally, one of the two bowls decorated with the Bamboo pattern came from the domestic assemblage, while the other one came from the activity area in the northeastern portion of the site. Similarly, three of the Winter Green rice bowls recovered from the site (75% of the assemblage) came from the domestic assemblage (Fig. 8), while the last bowl came from the easternmost activity

area. Finally, four unidentified vessels, which are likely Chinese porcelain but are too weathered identify further, came from the domestic assemblage (66.67%), while the remaining two vessels came from the easternmost activity area (33.33%). Most of the Chinese residents of Highland City would have used these porcelains for everyday activities, although not exclusively.

Utilitarian Chinese ceramics used for shipping and storage were also present within the 50 vessels that comprised Highland City’s stoneware assemblage, in the form of Chinese brown-glazed stoneware (CBGS) and ginger jars, which were glazed a bright blue green. A total of 15 CBGS vessels were recovered from the site, including wide-mouthed jars and liquor bottles. Of these, 12 (80%) came from the domestic assemblage in the western portion of the site, 2 came from the tavern assemblage in the center of the site (13.33%), and 1 came from tavern assemblage at the eastern end of the site (6.67%). The CBGS vessels accounted for just shy of a third (30%) of the total stoneware vessels recovered from Highland City. Two Chinese ginger jars were recovered as well—one from the domestic-activity area and one from the eastern saloon-activity area.

The remaining 33 non-Chinese stoneware vessels were also utilitarian storage and tableware vessels, with very few diagnostic characteristics with regard to manufacturing. Another roughly 1/3 of the stoneware assemblage ($n=15$, 30%) was composed of hollowware vessels decorated with a Bristol glaze on the exterior and interior, with the exception of four vessels that had different interior treatments. The domestic area yielded most of the Bristol-glaze vessels ($n=12$, 80%), three of which had Albany-slipped interiors. The saloon assemblage in the middle of the site contained two Bristol-glazed vessels (13.33%), one of which was a mineral-water bottle and one of which was a crock with a reddish brown slipped interior. The third activity area yielded the final Bristol-glazed vessel (6.67%) and also a mineral water bottle.

The final stoneware vessels recovered were the least identifiable. Fourteen refined white stoneware vessels, most of which were bowls, mugs, or unidentifiable hollowwares, came from the site. These were found predominantly in the domestic area ($n=11$, 78.57%), but also appeared in the middle saloon area ($n=2$, 14.3%) and highest number of which came ($n=1$, 1.73%). Finally, three thick, coarse, unidentified

hollowware stoneware vessels were recovered from the domestic assemblage (75%), and one (25%) unidentified hollowware vessel was recovered from the saloon assemblage at the eastern end of the site.

The largest category of ceramics found on the site, as with Smuttynose Island, was that of earthenwares. A total of 52 whiteware vessels were recovered from the site, the highest number of which came from the domestic area ($n=30$, 57.69%). The other two activity areas were fairly evenly split in numbers of vessels, with 11 vessels in the middle saloon area (21.15%) and 10 in the eastern saloon area (19.23%). One additional whiteware vessel (1.93%) was found outside of the three activity areas. Most of the whiteware vessels from the saloon assemblages took the form of plates, bowls, and platters, while the majority of the vessels from the domestic areas were teacups and saucers, with a few smaller plates. Similarly, a total of 36 ironstone/white-granite vessels were recovered from the site, with 26 of them (72.22%) coming from the domestic area. The numbers coming from the middle saloon ($n=4$, 11.11%) and eastern saloon ($n=6$, 16.67%) areas were roughly equivalent. One lusterware teacup was recovered from the domestic area, and sherds of a single Rockingham teapot were found in all three activity areas.

Finally, the domestic assemblage also speaks to the presence of three 20th-century “China Ware” divided plates, a large off-white Victorian majolica hollowware vessel (one of two found at the site), and two unidentified coarse-earthenware vessels. One unidentified refined-earthenware vessel came from the middle saloon assemblage, and the second off-white Victorian majolica hollowware vessel came from the easternmost saloon assemblage. Two unidentified coarse-earthenware vessels were also found outside the activity areas.

Drinking Spaces: Historical Archaeological Evidence of Commensal Politics

The ceramic comparison of the activity-area assemblages at Smuttynose Island speaks to a domestic assemblage of household activities and everyday eating, while the tavern speaks to the presence of large-scale eating and drinking. While this difference is unsurprising, the varying quality of material present within the two spaces is striking. The fishermen of

the Isles of Shoals were wealthy skilled fishermen who lived permanently at the Shoals after about a dozen years of long-term seasonal habitation there, with documentary evidence that they eventually brought their families there (although little evidence of 17th- or 18th-century women or children has been found). The ceramic assemblage indicates, however, that the master fishermen of the Isles of Shoals were investing their wealth not in their domestic spaces, but instead in the tavern, as evidenced by the presence, quantity, and variety of imported ceramics in the assemblage—especially those relating to expensive fortified wines and other alcohols. The domestic assemblage, in contrast, contained very little associated with costly imports or prestigious ceramics, such as Chinese export porcelains and tin-glazed earthenwares, and instead featured inexpensive, practical, and even coarse vessels.

The comparison of the activity-area ceramic assemblages at Highland City speaks to a similar domestic assemblage of everyday eating interspersed with household activities—and rather a lot of tea drinking. The other activity areas contain far fewer ceramics overall, although they have a comparatively similar number of vessels. Those present in the two saloon-related activity areas represent stoneware, whiteware, and ironstone serving platters, bowls, jugs, bottles, mugs, and dishes, with the occasional porcelain vessel. Once again, the trend, then, appears in the ceramics confirming the presence of household-scale and large-scale eating and drinking. The difference in prestige/status seen in the ceramics of Smuttynose Island is not present in the ceramics of Highland City; however, this does not mean that taverns alone were centers for commensal politics, nor does this difference reflect the difference between fishing and mining sites. Rather, the assemblage comparison highlights the change in material culture from the 17th through the 19th centuries.

By the last quarter of the 18th century, ceramics—especially earthenwares—lose much of their prestige value overall as they become mass manufactured and decorations become easier to replicate (see Miller [1980, 1991] for excellent examples). Refined earthenwares quickly became the predominant ware type available, replacing fine refined white stonewares and tin-glazed earthenwares. Even many porcelains lost their prestige status as they became increasingly easier to produce and sell to a growing consumer

population. The stonewares that remained were those that the burgeoning refined-earthenware market could not displace, due to their firmly entrenched status as utilitarian storage vessels, such as crocks, jugs, jars, and firkins (Miller 1980, 1991; Ewen 2003).

At Highland City, the domestic assemblage contained very little associated with costly imports or prestigious goods, and instead featured inexpensive, coarse, and practical vessels, as was seen at Smuttynose Island. Similarly, expensive imports—especially those associated with alcohol—do indeed continue to appear within the walls of the drinking spaces; however, they no longer appear in the ceramic assemblage. The glass assemblage from Highland City's saloons, for example, contains imported French liqueur and champagne bottles (indicated by their bottle shape and a helpful foil wrapping in situ, which read: REIMS) and "PHD & Co." Sazerac bitters (from Limoges, France, then imported into New Orleans, Louisiana, and shipped out of New York City). Also prevalent in the assemblage were American-made liquors that had to travel over 2,000 mi. across the Great Plains and up into the Highland Mountains, including Old Cabin and Kelly's Log Cabin bitters (New York City), alongside vast numbers of beer and ale bottles. Additionally, patent medicines, also notoriously high in alcohol content, such as Ayer's Sarsaparilla (Lowell, Massachusetts) and Frederick Brown's Essence of Jamaica Ginger (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), were present in the assemblage along with delicate pressed-glass vessels, including whiskey tumbrels and an aqua glass "Union" clasped-hands flask. The saloon assemblage even contained graphite electrode-powered electric-arc lamps, indicating a substantial financial investment in lighting that is also seen in the abundance of lamp glass recovered.

Like Smuttynose Island, Highland City was a node in a larger network of trade that extended far wider than its remote location would indicate. Just as there was a demand for fish in the 17th and 18th centuries, there was a demand for gold in the 19th-century resource-extraction economy. As a result, there was an impetus to export and ship to Highland City. The miners there had gold, both as a product and as capital, and they used this to bring English mustard; French champagne, liqueur, and bitters; as well as bitters (used in both drinks and medicinally) and alcohol-rich patent medicines from the East Coast;

and even clams and oysters into the seemingly inaccessible mountain town. Just as Smuttynose Island acted as a trading center for New England, the fact that Highland City was a stop on the U.S. postal route meant that many smaller towns would have had to come there to receive their own packages. The tavern on Smuttynose Island and the saloons at Highland City are key components in understanding the ways that commensal politics aided in the negotiation of economic and social capital within exchange networks and local regimes of value.

Commensal politics, regardless of the temporal period in which they take place, act to reinforce or establish status, hierarchy, and power on both small and large scales; in doing so, they also reinforce, break, or create new patterns of alliance and loyalty. Additionally, these negotiations frequently demonstrate their access to resources. Due to their association with alcohol and the often-specialized material culture used to enjoy it, commensal politics center on the use of resources in addition to their acquisition. Spaces in which commensal politics take place, such as taverns and saloons, function to create shared feelings of belonging and identity. In some instances, this can create an insider/outsider dichotomy of the included and invited vs. the excluded and uninvited. In other circumstances, drinking spaces create feelings of community inclusion, braiding together feelings of belonging, identity, and nostalgia, as is often seen among diasporic groups that are far from their places of origin and seek solace in the familiar. These aspects of commensal politics create an archaeological signature with evidence of the following: (1) a mutual, often large-scale drink consumption that varies from domestic consumption in quantity, quality, variety, and spatial placement; (2) prestige drinks (and sometimes accompanying foods) usually acquired through trade networks; and (3) specialized paraphernalia associated with these drinks (Dietler and Hayden 2001; O'Conner 2015).

The assemblages from Smuttynose Island and Highland City indicate the presence of a wide variety of imported alcoholic drinks and their consumption in the form of large numbers of wine, liquor, liqueur, and ale bottles of ceramic and glass. This signature varies strongly from the assemblages of domestic consumption in that they are of a higher quantity, finer quality, and broader variety than those found in dwellings or

households. The majority of the vessels recovered from drinking spaces pertain to the use of alcohol in nondomestic ways. The assemblage from Smuttynose Island's tavern varies in forms from stoneware jugs and mugs to porcelain teacups to earthenware tall pots, while the saloons of Highland City are replete with bottles, jugs, and tumblers. The expensive alcohols, used in commensal politics, are found in the drinking spaces, not in the home. Portuguese wines sat on the table of Smuttynose Island's tavern, and French champagne was on offer in the saloons at Highland City. Commensal politics did not disappear in the early modern and modern period; rather, it stepped into the bar.

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