A History of Women and Alcohol

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Outline

- Historical highlights
- Perceptions of women via alcohol adverts
- Pregnancy
- GENACIS
Romans and Greeks

Cato “close relatives kissing the women to check they had not been drinking”

Domitius (a judge) brought in an interesting aspect found throughout history “a woman appeared to have drunk more wine than could be excused for medicinal purposes”

Greece Juvenal “ When she is drunk---- she cannot tell her groin from her head” Purcell 1994

Women were not allowed to take part in many of the rituals. Thus they had no public voice. They were controlled and invisible.
BRANDY AND SALT—THE UNIVERSAL MEDICINE.

Drink the Brandy, and clap your feet into the Salt Box. That’s the way to get rid of your corns!!!
Alcohol as Medicine

- Used to keep herbal remedies fresh
- Used to help anaesthetise people needing surgery
- Used as treatment for infections or other noxious things
  - Chasing out the devil 1890
  - Typhoid Fever – Chlora and alcohol 1892
  - Hysteria – Alcohol and valerian 1893
  - Premature Labour 1960s
Medicinal Alcohol

Accepted even by Temperance Societies

“We agree to abstain from all intoxicating liquors, except for medicinal purposes or religious ordinances”

Female Temperance Society Birmingham 1836
Woman's Holy War (sic)
The implication is clear.

No alcohol no fun.

Also no acknowledgement of the powerlessness of women to protect themselves and their children from their partner’s drinking.
British Women’s Temperance Association (BWTA) (1876)

“Temperance was a serious political movement that helped train women in the conventions of political lobbying, their contributions are generally overlooked.”

“BWTA were suffragists their activities were more subdued than the suffragettes—From their earliest days English temperance women urged women to fight for the right to vote because they believed only the ballot could persuade policy makers to change the rules governing alcohol consumption and protect women and children from men’s alcohol-fueled violence”.


Still active under The White Ribbon Association
Women Drinking in Tenement
“Stair Heid Club” 1890s
Suffragette Rally: Hyde Park June 1908
Crowd of over 300,000
French women combined the right to vote with: Temperance, Protection of mothers and children, and Anti-war effort.
Carry A. Nation

US Temperance Campaigner

Opposition to alcohol legitimised participation in national political life.

Travelled widely in her cause
Temperance Campaigner

Lydia Pinkham’s Tonic
20.6% alcohol

Anti-saloon Year Book 1909
We'll drink a drink a drink
To Lily the Pink the Pink the Pink
The saviour of the human race
For she invented medicinal compound
Most efficacious in every case.
Perceptions of Women and Alcohol through Adverts
Wincarnis

The World's Greatest Wine Tonic and Nerve Restorative
Society changes – becomes more affluent.

Beginning of a change from alcohol as a means to forget the poverty to something to be used as a means for fun.
Set out refreshments as Alice Tishdale Hobart does... with tall, cool glasses of WINE and soda.

To mix a wine and soda, just pour your favorite brands of your favorite California wines and soda together. Add ice cubes and sparkling water to taste. Then, to serve, mix and serve as soon as possible, with ice cubes or with no ice cubes. The result is a combination that you'll find it irresistible. Wine and soda.

A great gift to me... and Wine and soda, blending with life! You'll find them mighty refreshing companions on a warm day. When the sun beats down or the evening is "boisterous", bring out your favorite sandwiches and serve Wine and soda. Or use two different wines and sodas alongside afternoon appetizers. It perks up life. To the thirsty, there's nothing that tastes better. And there's real satisfaction, as well as flavor, in this combination of wine and food. Wine and soda is one of many delicious refreshments you can make at home with wine.

In fact, we California wine growers have a booklet of such recipes, see or more for almost every occasion. Wine for a fine stop to Wine Advisory Board, 517 Market Street, San Francisco 3 California.

1950s
Enjoy ham baked Sophie Kerr's marvelous way*

Bring out the goodness ...with Wine

Bake half a ham cut-side down to open up to the bone (1 hr.). Lifting the skin, add a slice of butter under the ham; add a 1/2 cup of dry sherry wine before baking. After 1 hr., remove ham from oven; add 2 cups more sherry wine. Return ham to oven; bake 1 hr., or until done. Serve with carrots and mashed potatoes, and a salad. For an elegant look, arrange dinner rolls, sliced ham, and vegetables on a platter. Garnish with fresh parsley:

Help yourself to ham that's been wine-braised during the baking. And, for what food lovers call "taste harmony," serve with it a fine California wine. When you serve the ham and wine together, considerables pleasures will come your way.

In fact the fun starts before you begin to eat — starts with the blending of the wine bouquet and the aroma of the meat. It seems to fulfill your taste for both wine and ham — and you discover the taste perfection of wine in company with food.

That is wine's purpose. The red table wines favour the hearty meats like beef or roast. The white table wines are most delicious with lighter main dishes such as chicken or fish. With the baked ham poured over you enjoy either a good red wine like California Burgundy or Chateau or a pleasant white wine at the Sunday or Wine Tasting types.

Many other ways to serve wine are suggested in our "How to Use the Wine Recipes." For a free copy, write Wine Advisory Board, 33 Broadway, San Francisco 3.
1960s
meet RED SATIN!

"Whisky created simply to please a man?"

—A man and his closest friends. You’ll enjoy Red Satin at first meeting. It’s an adventure in taste. And every meeting is as rewarding as the first. So make a date to meet Red Satin. Tonight!

RED SATIN—SATIN SMOOTH
SMART. SMOOTH, SPIRITED...

Very smart, very smooth and a delightfully spirited drinking companion... that’s Gilbey’s Vodka. People who started the vodka fad have made Gilbey’s their steady. You will, too! Because Gilbey’s Vodka is distilled from natural grain...absolutely undetectable...mixes great...sensibly priced!

GILBEY’S VODKA
by the makers of Gilbey’s Gin
I was the mainstay of the Public Library until I discovered Smirnoff.

The effect is shattering

SMIRNOFF

1980s
1980s

Caroline Cossey
Woman + Alcohol = Sex
Funny! - The more I drink the better you look...
Perfume
Alcohol
Perfume
Alcohol
Elegance 1903

L’INSTANT TAITTINGER

The New Elegance?
2014
So what changes? The technology --
What doesn’t change--women’s bodies sell products

2000s
Australia
2000s
Male attitudes: Advice in FHM - magazine aimed at 18-25 year olds

Question

“what do I do when my girlfriend drinks too much and behaves provocatively?”

Answer?

“----yank up her skirt, throw her over your knee and spank the shit out of her”

FHM Nov 2001-Jan 2002

(Lyons et al. 2006)
“If the girl you’ve taken for a drink won’t spread for your head, think about this mathematical statistic: 85 per cent of rape cases go unreported.”  Horvath et al 2012

Quotes from men’s mags and rapists
  “---the ways in which convicted rapists and men’s mags discuss female sexuality are similar enough to each be frequently confused and distinctions between them are blurred” Horvath et al 2012: 467
Pregnancy

ONE aspect which is particularly relevant for many women.
Facial Features of prenatal alcohol exposure
Maternal Impressions 1884
19th Century Fashion: Damage to the Baby
Queen Victoria and Prince Albert with the "Wet Nurse"
The majority of health education and other adverts about pregnant women show a naked belly.
Messages

- Don’t drink when your pregnant – too late
- If your drinking don’t get pregnant – more empowering

- BUT
  - It does take 2!!!
  - Men are responsible too
Sharon Wilsnack
Development of a Theme

- 1993-International Research Group on Gender and Alcohol (IRGGA) 13 people from 9 countries.
- 1996-1999 EU-BIOMET (1) only European Countries
- 2000-2004/5 EU-BIOMET (2) Expanded number of countries outside EU
- 1999- Gender Alcohol and Culture: An International Study GENACIS
What makes GENACIS Special?

- The aim of making it possible for countries to be included even if there was no infrastructure:
  - Three questionnaires
- Care in developing questionnaires
  - Translation – Backtranslation
- Supportive environment for researchers from countries with no tradition of epidemiological research
- Gender sensitive Questions/Analyses
3 Questionnaires

- **Core** (basic questionnaire including all central items)

- **Expanded Core** (based on the core questionnaire but including additional question aiming to provide a more detailed description of respondents' social environment and drinking circumstances)

- **Sampling Design Questionnaire** (questionnaire on survey design and sampling procedure, providing details on e.g. response rate, alcohol-related measures like usual drink size and alcohol content of beverages)
Translation/Back Translation and Interpretation

- Drunk in charge of a car?
- Drunk in charge of a skidoo?

- Anal Sex - common in countries where practising homosexuality is illegal. So why were so many men reporting anal sex in these countries?

- Birth control and the importance of a woman being a virgin when she gets married
Gender Sensitive Questions/Analyses

Questions “ever missed a day’s work?”

- Positive as well as negative consequences

Analyses by Life Stage rather than age mean more robust comparisons between countries
Achievements

- Development of a worldwide network of some of the best social science alcohol researchers in the world.
  - In terms of general knowledge of the subject but also in terms of methodologies, analyses, policy, public health

- Important support for researchers in countries where survey research is not the tradition.

- Enable individual country researchers to have access to robust data.

- Enable potentially powerful organisations eg WHO, PAHO and individual country governments to make decisions based on robust data.
The development of a permanent archive of GENACIS data sets for future analyses of global time trends in women’s and men’s drinking behaviour and drinking-related problems.

Inclusion of more countries (2018 now over 40 countries)

More complex analyses

Qualitative component – not either/or but one informing the other
Impact of GENACIS

- A major aspect of GENACIS is how it has informed policy in different countries and organisations;
  - WHO
    - Global Burden of Disease reports
    - New “Harm to Others” initiative
- Now if anyone carried out a survey without analysing the data by gender people would question it.
GENACIS’ Further Contribution: Cultural Differences in H20

- Combining 51 data sets would allow analyses of multiple predictors of H20...
  -- Characteristics of drinker
  -- Characteristics of victim
  -- Characteristics of setting in which drinking occurs (drinking contexts, cultural context)
Websites

http://www.genacis.org/index.php

http://www.med.und.edu/genacis