
Mac Marshall
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A summary of the IASER Conference on Alcohol Use and Abuse in Papua New Guinea, 23–27 March 1981, Waigani

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Introduction and Acknowledgments

The Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research (IASER) hosted an international conference on Alcohol Use and Abuse in Papua New Guinea from 23 to 27 March 1981 at the Administrative College Assembly Hall in Waigani. Thirty formal papers were presented during the morning sessions of the first four days, with each afternoon given over to general discussion of that day's papers and to presentations by representatives of provincial liquor licensing commissions. The fifth day of the conference was devoted to a series of five topical workshops during the morning and to closing speeches in the afternoon. Attendance at the conference varied throughout the week from a low of 50 persons to more than 250; average attendance was around 100.

The conference was an integral part of the two-year study of alcohol in Papua New Guinea being undertaken by an IASER research team. This study is funded under the National Public Expenditure Plan and was initiated by the Ministry of Justice. The project researchers are charged with pulling together existing information and undertaking original research on alcohol use and abuse to come up with specific policy recommendations to national and provincial governments. The project commenced in January 1980 and will conclude in November 1981. IASER's alcohol research team -- Andonia Piau-Lynch, Francis H. Sumanop and Mac Marshall -- is conducting field research in East New Britain and Simbu Provinces and the National Capital District. In addition, they are briefly visiting several other parts of the country to obtain first-hand information otherwise unavailable.

IASER had two major goals in sponsoring the alcohol conference. The first was to generate a body of scientifically valid information about alcohol use and abuse in widely different parts of the country to which the IASER alcohol research team would otherwise not have access. To achieve this, the conference stimulated foreign and national social scientists who have conducted studies in Papua New Guinea and gathered data on alcohol use to prepare formal papers. The scholars selected to participate all have an intimate acquaintance with the area of their
field-work; most lived in area villages for well over a year and all speak Pidgin or tok ples fluently. As such, they were in an excellent position to gain a good understanding of the place of alcohol in the society and culture and were able to produce much richer material than those undertaking short-term research in the area could hope to obtain. In addition, a number of them had visited the same field site over many years and thus were able to chronicle both the introduction of alcoholic beverages and changes in their use over time.

IASER expected these papers to provide a wealth of descriptive information on which the alcohol research team might draw in formulating policy recommendations. Authors also were encouraged to consider policy implications when writing up their data. The results have more than met our hopes; the papers are of very high quality and offer a rich lode of material on alcohol that IASER researchers will be able to mine in the coming months. The papers also demonstrate a number of common patterns of alcohol use and abuse in Papua New Guinea that transcend local and regional differences, even as they point to distinctive emerging regional patterns. Finally, the papers illustrate nicely how social science research harnessed to important national issues can be useful to government.¹

The second major purpose of the alcohol conference was to provide an environment in which provincial and national public servants who administer alcohol laws and liquor licensing, foreign researchers, academicians from institutions within Papua New Guinea, representatives from concerned government departments, members of the various church and women's groups and interested members of the lay public could all assemble for an open interchange of information and ideas on the dual subject of alcohol use and alcohol abuse in this country. The conference was structured to look dispassionately at the overall place of alcohol in Papua New Guinea today and we tried not to dwell on a few cases of severe abuse or to moralize about 'Demon Rum.' IASER researchers wanted solid, factual information about how alcohol is used,

¹ The full text of these papers will appear in an edited volume in the IASER Monograph series in early 1982.
who uses it, when and where it is consumed; and why, for as many different parts of this diverse nation as possible. This desire was predicated on the belief that only when the hard, unemotional facts are at hand will we be in a position to make rational policy recommendations concerning alcohol in Papua New Guinea.

Representatives from a remarkably wide range of groups and interests attended the alcohol conference, including official delegates from two thirds of the provinces and many national government departments. Discussion throughout the five days was open and lively, airing divergent views on a broad range of issues and concerns. Many views were most forcefully and skillfully presented during the topical workshops on the last day of the conference.

The conference itself was made possible through the generous financial assistance of a number of branches of the Papua New Guinea government as well as foundations and businesses. From within Papua New Guinea, funds in support of the conference were provided by the Office of the Prime Minister, the National Planning Office, the Department of Finance, Air Niugini and the Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research. Additionally, San Miguel Brewery Pty. Ltd. provided a much appreciated sum to help underwrite conference activities. From abroad, the New Zealand High Commission, the Commonwealth Foundation of London and the South Pacific Commission of Noumea all contributed funds towards the conference. This strong show of interest and concern on the part of all these parties is gratefully acknowledged and deeply appreciated.

A number of persons within LASER performed yeoman duty in helping prepare for and conduct the alcohol conference. I would like to acknowledge their cheerful help here with warm thanks: Agnes Anisin, Lawila Bari, Susan Berman, Gomi Gipey, Mary Koupa, Aiva Kutson, Judy Nad, Jennifer Parina, Aidah Paulias, Andonia Piau-Lynch, Naum Pongap, Anna Simet, Francis H. Sumanop, Lulu Turner, Kwari Walo and Dr. Michael A.H.B. Walter. Thanks also to the following individuals for ably chairing the daily sessions and coordinating workshops: Dr. B.G. Burton-Bradley, Gomi Gipey, Rose Kekedo, Dr. Ruth Latukefu, Dr. Wilfred Moi,
Dr. Louise Morauta, Rev. Robert Nordvall, Thomas Pasang, Dr. Luis Quiros, James A. Ross and Dr. William Wormsley. Finally, the strong support of the Minister for Correctional Services and Liquor Licensing, the Hon. Akepa Miakwe, M.P., and of the chief licensing commissioner for the National Liquor Licensing Commission, Willie Taugau, deserves special mention.
Daily Summary, Day 1

Willie Taugau, chief licensing commissioner, officially opened the conference and read the opening address on behalf of the Minister. Seven papers dealing with the New Guinea Islands and offshore islands on the New Guinea side were then presented and are abstracted here.

* * *

The Catholic ethic and the spirit of alcohol use in an East Sepik Province village

Michael F. Smith, c/o Department of Anthropology, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, USA 22030

Based on observations made in Koragur village, Kairiru Island, East Sepik Province from 1975 to 1976, the author explores the relationship between religious ideas and institutions and ideas and behavior relevant to alcohol use. Like Weber's Protestants in The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Koragur Catholics cannot consider religious issues without becoming deeply enmeshed in economic issues and, in Koragur, religion and economics sometimes meet over bottles of beer.

Koragur villagers are peaceful and convivial when they drink and they attribute this both to their traditional harmony and hospitality and to the norms of Catholicism. Outbursts of anger or belligerence were rare in all drinking events Smith observed. Drinking is almost exclusively a male pastime. Drinking occasions are infrequent, on average less than once a month, and the amounts consumed are not large. Alcohol use is always part of some larger event such as a party or a feast. People have comparatively little cash to spend on alcoholic beverages and alcohol is not readily accessible. Though some men know how to prepare palm wine, they did not make any during the research period.

The contradictions of alcohol with regard to morality and social progress underlie one set of constraints on alcohol use in Koragur. The fact that alcohol must be purchased with money adds to its value
in many contexts of reciprocal giving at the same time that it lends a special opprobrium to any giving that might be considered excessive. Capacity to purchase goods is evidence of or a claim to prowess in the postcontact social world.

Alcohol fits in well with and enhances the traditional pattern of feasting and distribution, for it is an extravagance and a luxury, calculated to impress and indebted. But alcohol use is also clearly a modern innovation and providing alcohol is a claim to a degree of success in the new social arena. Alcohol thus has the unique quality of making events simultaneously more modern and more archaic.

The conflict is not simply between those who prefer traditional routes to traditional styles of success and those who embrace the mores of the new money economy. The discordance is in emotionally laden systems of ideas as well as in relationships among people. Villagers realize they cannot accumulate funds for a boat if they disperse them in traditional giving, which now often includes buying alcohol, and that commercial ventures often founder because obligations to kinsmen eat up capital and profits. Such generosity may be good in terms of indigenous canons, but it is not good if it leads to failure to achieve the kind of material well-being that constitutes success in the new social world. Unfortunately, while failure in relation to the standards of the wider postcontact world inspires feelings of individual and collective moral deficiency, villagers persist in judging themselves and others in terms of indigenous notions of individual and collective moral adequacy as well. Not surprisingly there is still public disagreement and private perplexity on these issues. Issues of moral worth and economic action are intertwined, for villagers identify positively with their indigenous traditions not simply in spirited performance of indigenous song and dance, but also in the accompanying extravagant expenditures of time, energy and costly alcohol that fly in the face of market prudence.

Drinking bouts may be as peaceful as they are on Koragur because young men are underrepresented in the de facto population, many having migrated in search of wage employment. Within the resident population,
however, age correlates with only minor differences in drunken comportment.

Were Koragur's relationship to the market economy to improve significantly, this would have repercussions for villagers' interpretations of the morality of various aspects of alcohol use: an increase in cash incomes might diminish the symbolic significance of alcohol use. As the older generations pass on, the moral and religious significance of alcohol use also may change or diminish, keeping pace with larger moral and religious alterations.

Alcohol consumption on the western half of Umboi Island, Sissi Sub-District, Morobe Province

Anton Ploeg, Sociological Institute, Centre for Comparative Social & Economic Studies, State University of Utrecht, Heidelberglaan 2, Utrecht, 2506, THE NETHERLANDS

During research among the Kovai people of West Umboi from 1978 to 1979, liquor was in short supply on the island. Drinking might well become a problem were alcohol more readily available. Two major bottlenecks hindered a regular supply of alcoholic beverages: infrequent transport between Umboi and Lae and Madang, and the single licensed liquor outlet on West Umboi, a club at Semo.

The Kovai view selling beer as bisnis and planned to submit at least five more applications for liquor licenses. Most drinkers at the club were young public servants and salaried workers living at Semo station. Drinking usually occurred in rounds after the Australian fashion. Meetings at the club were often noisy and sometimes rowdy but did not lead to serious fights. Availability of cash did not seem to prevent Kovai from drinking: village people could have spent more money on alcohol than they actually did.

Local government councils are under substantial pressure not to reject applications for liquor licenses. It may be preferable to place licensing responsibility in the hands of an administering body less sensitive to local political pressures.
will naturally argue for granting liquor licenses when they receive fees from such licenses. While it may be adopted as a principle that public revenues from the sale of liquor are spent in the area where that liquor is sold, it is undesirable for an agency to add to its own revenues by boosting alcohol consumption. Ploeg recommends a more indirect method, for example letting the Licensing Commission run liquor stores and clubs and redistribute the profits to the areas that generated them. He also recommends that liquor licenses of whatever sort stipulate a maximum turnover to put a ceiling on local alcohol consumption.

Properly enforced club (on-premises) sales are preferred to off-premises sales. The possibility of buying liquor from a store makes it much more likely to be part of challenging gifts or of prestations. Thus the range of occasions in which liquor can be used and consumed is broadened.

Village drinking clubs on the Gazelle Peninsula, East New Britain Province

Francis H. Sumamop, Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, P.O. Box 5854, Boroko, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

A two-week questionnaire and interview survey of Tolai villagers with clubs operating in their village communities covered approximately a third of the licensed clubs operating on the Gazelle Peninsula and 114 persons.

In establishing village clubs the East New Britain Provincial Liquor Licensing Commission sought to accomplish three objectives: (1) to reduce the number of drinkers from rural areas coming into Rabaul town to drink in taverns, hotels, etc. and, consequently, to reduce the number of associated fights, vehicular accidents and crimes; (2) to control alcohol-related disturbances at the local community level; and (3) to make alcoholic beverages more easily available so that people would learn gradually to drink in moderation.

Three fourths of the clubs sold only beer and the remainder also sold distilled spirits. Nearly all of the clubs surveyed had cement
floors and corrugated iron buildings with picnic tables, chairs, benches and bar stools. Most also had dart boards and snooker tables, water tanks, security fence around the club premises and electrical power from town or from a generator. About three fourths of the clubs had refrigeration and toilet facilities.

Clubs on the Gazelle are generally in very attractive surroundings, often commanding spectacular views of the ocean or countryside. Premises are enhanced with nice plantings and kept very clean.

Eighty percent of the interview respondents said they have benefited from having a club in their village. The clubs frequently donate money to support local village projects and activities, sponsor sporting teams, etc. They also provide entertainment in the form of dances, parties and films, as well as a pleasant place to drink.

Clubs are viewed mainly as men's areas and women seldom frequent them. While most men interviewed were drinkers, only one of the nineteen women interviewed drank. Village clubs do not seem to have led to serious problems in Gazelle communities. Fights among club patrons were rare.

A majority of respondents drank once a week or more frequently with beer far and away the preferred beverage. The majority of drinkers consumed between five and ten bottles/cans/glasses of beer or other drinks in one drinking session.

To a large extent the village clubs have met the three main objectives of the East New Britain Provincial Government. The presence of village clubs has encouraged rural drinkers to remain in their villages when imbibing and the number of vehicular accidents involving alcohol is said to have been reduced. Lawlessness and overindulgence in alcohol do not appear to be much of a problem; most Tolai men are moderate and quiet drinkers. Two major factors seem to have contributed to the success of village clubs on the Gazelle Peninsula. First is the long period of time in which Tolai people have been in contact with alcoholic beverages (well over a century), during which they have accommodated themselves well to the use of alcohol. Second is the
fact that the East New Britain Provincial Liquor Licensing Act is well-conceived, well-enforced and people are willing to comply gracefully with its provisions.

Alcohol use in a West New Britain community

Marty Zelenietz and Jill Grant, c/o Department of Environmental Planning, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 5163 Duke Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, CANADA B3J 3J6

Data gathered in the Kilenge villages of West New Britain during 1977 to 1978 did not show alcohol as socially disruptive on a regular basis. However, there were intermittent problems associated with alcohol use. The frequency of such problems in the village was low mainly due to the limited availability of alcohol.

Kilenge expect that drunks will act in a violent, garrulous and licentious manner and relax normal constraints on the expression of aggression. Kilenge drink alcohol just like they drink traditional thirst-quenching liquids like coconut milk: they quaff it rapidly or guzzle it. Only men drink in Kilenge; women and children abstain.

The town model of drinking has influenced Kilenge use of alcoholic beverages. Expatriates and other Papua New Guineans have provided a hard-drinking model that simply reinforced indigenous patterns of imbibing liquids. Kilenge men drink fast and loosen up quickly. One might say that Kilenge expect to become inebriated as soon as they begin drinking, and they do. Unfortunately they also anticipate violence or aggression sometimes will result from drinking, and it does. Violence and aggression are not frequent problems more due to the limited availability of alcohol in the village than to any indigenous or borrowed coping mechanism. The closest licensed premises at the time of research was 30 km away. Cash scarcity also limits alcohol use and most men are unwilling to expend their scarce cash resources on beer or rum, preferring to spend it on 'essential luxuries' such as rice, tinned fish and meat, tobacco, tea and sugar, or to sponsor a ceremonial cycle or a marriage payment.
As of early 1978, alcohol had not become an accepted element of ceremonial redistribution although it had begun to make some inroads. Beer or rum were rarely featured in the ceremonial events the authors observed. What at first superficially appeared to be an association between drinking and church events turned out on closer inspection to be a relationship between drinking and urban experience. In fact, village people associate religious conviction with moderate drinking behaviour. The Kilenge link the town setting with the use of alcoholic beverages and link alcohol use with violence and crime in the cities. Even so, village people have ambiguous attitudes toward alcohol and its use. They see the behavior of drunks as both amusing and frightening. They condemn the expense of drinking, yet they themselves drink if given the opportunity.

The contextual distinction between village and town pervades the Kilenge use of and attitudes towards alcohol. People see alcohol use and abuse as a recurrent feature of town life: people who live in towns drink; young men who work in town waste their money on alcohol. The towns also provide a legitimate outlet for older men who wish to experiment with alcohol. Drinking alcohol means participating in the lifestyle of the modern urban center, away from the prying eyes and relatively staid mores of village life. Although alcohol might be disruptive, it is part and parcel of urban existence. Villagers see alcohol indulgence as a threat to society only when it moves from the town to the village.

At present the Kilenge have no adequate form of control over alcohol use in their society. Alcohol has yet to be incorporated into their society in a culturally acceptable manner. Were access to alcohol to increase dramatically, so too would the problems accompanying its use.

Provincial governments hoping to prevent intensified problems of alcohol use and abuse have several options: they can experimentally ban liquor for short periods; they can begin an education program designed to inform people of the potential problems of alcohol abuse, complete with suggestions about how to deal with them; and they can limit the availability of liquor by restricting the number of licensed premises.
Self-esteem and drinking in Kove, West New Britain Province

Ann Chowning, Department of Anthropology and Maori Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, Private Bag, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND

Members of different societies in Papua New Guinea react to goods and practices of foreign origin in very different ways. This generalization holds for introduced alcoholic beverages as much as for foreign currency, card playing or Christianity. The author observed the situation between 1966 and 1978 among the Kove, who live along the north coast of West New Britain just west of the Willaumez Peninsula.

Kove society traditionally was characterized by fierce competition among individuals, lineages and villages. Men worked hard not to be despised by others and to show that they were superior to most other Kove. The main vehicle for this competition consisted of sponsoring a series of ceremonial feasts and displays for a man's first-born child; those seeking reputations as 'rich men' sponsored bigger ceremonies and distributed more pigs and shell money than their rivals. Today, alcohol plays an increasingly conspicuous part in these contests.

In 1966, Kove viewed drinking as a competition between individuals and groups, in which the hosts tried to give the guests enough liquor to incapacitate them, while remaining sober themselves. Most liquor consumed was distilled spirits drunk undiluted obtained from Iboki or Talasea at considerable effort and expense. The Kove stressed capacity—not getting sick or passing out in public—rather than acting sober. Few women apparently drank in 1966, but drinking was coming to be expected at any occasion viewed as a party. Providing alcoholic beverages was a way of increasing one's prestige, but it was not yet a necessity.

By the 1970s, drinking in Kove had altered noticeably. The town of Kimbe had been built, incomes had risen, and the first outboard motors were bought so it was both physically and financially easier to obtain liquor. The first change was that the pride in holding one's liquor—in consuming it without acting drunk—had vanished; men no longer showed embarrassment at acting drunk. Second, alcohol (usually beer) had now
become a necessity for economic exchanges. As a consequence of these new attitudes, drinking became common in the 1970s and drunken behavior by men of all ages was often seen or reported. A few men had stopped drinking, one complaining of a painful liver. Women had begun to drink more frequently, though generally apart from men.

Kove associate outbursts of singing, drumming at inappropriate times and places, yells and loud laughter, nontraditional solo dancing and clowning with drunkenness. Wild or loud talk, explicit sexual references and boasting also are identified as drunken behavior. Quarrels and various forms of physical violence such as wife beating are common among Kove when they are sober, and they did not automatically attribute such acts to drunkenness. Even so, drunkenness is seen as at least partially excusing some behavior, and the offender may offer it as an excuse. Nevertheless, most villagers simply regard much drunken behavior with amusement.

In the 1960s, when the Kove took particular pride in holding their liquor, drunken behavior was not likely to become socially disruptive. It could, however, be argued that competitive drinking, with its emphasis on downing large amounts of hard liquor, was more dangerous to health than the later pattern, in which beer was the usual drink and many men received only a bottle or two.

Kove use of alcohol has become firmly tied to the system of ceremonial exchange. The incidence of drinking has increased steadily and opportunities for obtaining beer have become much more frequent. Nowadays most men seem to feel that they must supply it to others at least occasionally. From 1975 to 1978, even men who drank little or not at all, and who condemned drunken behavior, planned to buy liquor to supply others.

Alcohol use within the villages, as of 1978, was not much of a social problem. Money spent on liquor was at the expense of other luxuries and did not affect diet, though it might have affected school fees. Kove village drinking was mild in terms of amounts consumed and of ensuing behavior. However, when Kove visit towns like Rabaul they follow a different and potentially more harmful pattern. By 1978, travel was
much easier and further economic opportunities had developed, hence alcoholic beverages were easier to obtain and transport. A tavern was being built in one Kove village, which had not yet been granted a license, and may stimulate the Kove to adopt urban drinking patterns—drinking in the absence of ceremonial occasions.

The present attitude is that drinking is enjoyable even when carried to the point of losing consciousness and that getting drunk is no disgrace. Drinking is firmly entrenched in Kove culture and it is doubtful if drinkers can be persuaded to cut down or abstain unless they develop ailments perceived to derive from overindulgence in alcohol. The pressures to provide drinks for others may become an increasing economic burden for many individuals and families, for what matters to a Kove is his self-esteem which demands that he be a donor, if not a drinker, of alcohol.

Kove drinking is similar to some West New Britain societies but contrasts with others, which cannot easily be explained either in terms of traditional culture or the history of contact with outsiders. Attitudes toward alcohol vary in unexpected ways in neighboring societies. Any alcohol control policy needs to take this variation into account rather than assuming a uniformity that does not exist.

Some observations on alcohol use in villages in Manus, Papua New Guinea

Theodore Schwartz, Department of Anthropology, University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, California, USA 92093

The apparent problems with alcohol abuse in Papua New Guinea are not nearly as serious yet as in other countries, for example, the United States or Mexico. In order to formulate a rhetoric of moderation effective in the Papua New Guinean culture, we must know what alcohol symbolizes to the drinker in his culture.

Most alcohol use on Manus is ceremonial except in town. Alcohol is interwoven into traditional competitive exchanges between affinal groups. Drinking causes little social disruption, such as fighting.
From the Manus, village perspective the problem is largely economic. Money is literally pissed away in beer. Men drink but women do not.

People gain prestige in ceremonial exchanges through providing ever-larger amounts of alcoholic beverages.

The economic problems associated with village ceremonial drinking are part of a larger problem of transitional economics and consumption shared by many developing countries that goes far beyond alcohol use. The opportunity costs of drinking are high: money spent on beer might otherwise be invested in housing improvements, for example, or saved for capital for development projects or businesses. Villagers perhaps do not perceive this but even if they do, the institution of ceremonial exchange is so deeply rooted in Manus culture that it provides the central focus of life and enhancement of self. One motive for the large-scale consumption of alcohol is to participate in the institutionalized ceremonial exchange for the thrill of sharing in the coalescence and consumption of unusual quantities of wealth. There is a constant challenge to increase the magnitude of exchanges above those in the past and alcohol use grows to the limit of mobilizable resources.

Assuming prohibition is not a viable alternative, what can decrease or moderate the use of alcohol in Papua New Guinea? The government might consider taxing the profits of businesses that deal in alcohol, while at the same time controlling prices at a fair level of profit, so that these additional taxes giving the government part of the profit will not simply be passed on to the consumer. Educational campaigns may be effective if they tap directly the symbolism of alcohol use. A campaign that vividly displays the opportunity costs of alcohol as well as other forms of noneconomic consumption may encourage people to conserve income rather than dissipate it. Opportunity costs could be emphasized by showing, for example, stacks of cartons of beer in the balance against other things that might be done with that income. Some not crude or offensive way to convey the idea that alcohol quickly converts money to urine may be one of the most powerful messages. This would not be news to anyone but would reinforce some of the doubts that already exist. An argument of considerable symbolic force would emphasize the amount of profit for others involved in each unit
of alcohol consumed. Further, clearly making the point of how much people are paying in tax every time a bottle of beer or unit of liquor is consumed, may tap some of the great unpopularity of paying taxes—especially to some nonlocal superordinate unit.

These suggestions merely indicate how an understanding of local and national culture might be used to select values and symbols to counter-balance the strong situational, cultural and personal motives that lie behind excessive alcohol use.

Alcohol use on Ponam Island, Manus Province

Achsa H. Carrier, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Papua New Guinea, Waigani, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The circumstances, expectations and ethical values of the people of Ponam Island, Manus Province, demonstrate how they combine to create a community of moderate, peaceful drinkers. Virtually all men drink at least occasionally but women almost never drink. Men drink only during times classified as 'leisure' and never during times classified as 'work', including traditional ritual and exchange. Thus drinking is associated with nontraditional festivities, parties and games. In doing this, Ponams separate the pleasures of drink and relaxation from the tension, competition and seriousness of exchange and ritual.

Drinkers do not race to finish their beverages and small amounts of alcohol often are made to last through an entire evening's party. For most men drinking is not the most important part of the party. Ponans are usually quiet and peaceful drinkers. When men drink they sit together, talk, tell stories and laugh. A few men may clown about, making fun of themselves and others and making people laugh, but most men simply sit and talk until they get sleepy, at which point they go home to bed. Unruly drunkenness is extremely rare; drinking seldom leads to noisiness, boisterousness, licentiousness, violation of respect rules, destruction of property, brawling or wife beating. Even so, Ponans recognize that alcohol consumption introduces the potential for trouble. Although they have ambivalent expectations about what will happen when men drink, they are not ambivalent about what should happen. They recognize
that drinking will alter people's behavior but think it should do so only slightly. They allow drinkers only slightly more freedom of behavior than sober persons. Drinkers are allowed somewhat more freedom to joke and make noise but others quickly intervene if someone exceeds these very narrow limits—particularly if he becomes angry. Ponams do not assume a drunk is beyond the reach of reason and they do not see drunkenness as an excuse for otherwise unacceptable behavior.

Ponams have three basic tactics for controlling the rare unruly drunk: exhortation, withdrawal and medicalization. Exhortation consists simply of publicly warning the drinker to behave. In withdrawal, people move away from and ignore a person who is acting unreasonably and this tactic almost always works. Medicalization involves classifying out of control behavior as spirit loss and treating it accordingly. This denies the drunk legitimacy and allows or requires others to stay out of any arguments or fights he may try to start. Because Ponams require considerable self-control from sober persons, and because they allow only slightly greater freedom to drinkers, they bring these control mechanisms into play before the drinker is too drunk to respond.

Although Ponam ethics are of great importance in controlling alcohol use, other factors also are important. It is difficult to buy alcohol because people have relatively little disposable income to spend on luxuries and also because there are no licensed premises on the island. The nearest likely source of alcohol is Lorengau, a four-hour journey by motorized canoe.

Many anthropologists have sought to explain violent or disruptive drinking in terms of the cultural and social framework in which the drinking takes place and Ponam’s moderate drinking is explained here in these same terms. In incorporating drinking as a leisure activity separated from activities classed as work, Ponams have institutionalized the expectation that drinking will be pleasurable, relaxed and respectful rather than tense, aggressive and competitive. Also they expect that drinkers will remain reasonable and that their behavior will not deviate greatly from the standards of moderation and self-control expected of sober men. Expecting moderation, Ponams act promptly to enforce it and
do not make excuses for the drunken deviant. Finally, because the island is small and isolated it is almost impossible to offend the ethic of moderation without being found out and equally impossible to escape censure when caught. Thus the current cultural, social and economic conditions on Ponam all militate against alcohol abuse.

**Daily Summary, Day 1: Discussion**

During the first afternoon’s discussion members of the audience raised a number of important themes that came up over and again through the remainder of the week. Briefly these were (1) the negative influence of town drinking on peri-urban villages or areas linked to the town by roads; (2) the deleterious economic impact on village development of money spent on alcoholic beverages; (3) regular (even daily) drinking is largely confined to the towns where wage earners have easy access to alcohol, the money to buy it and substantial job pressures (especially public servants); (4) drinking has become identified with modern, fashionable, upwardly mobile town life; (5) people in many parts of Papua New Guinea have learned to use drunkenness as an excuse for otherwise socially unacceptable behavior; and (6) alcohol use is associated nearly everywhere in Papua New Guinea with leisure activities.

Day 1 concluded with informative presentations by the liquor licensing commissioners from East New Britain and Manus Provinces, Messrs. Nason Paulias and Bernard Borok, followed by an enlightening discussion of company policy concerning alcohol use at Bougainville Copper Ltd. by Matthew Kapapal.
Daily Summary, Day 2

The second day of the conference was devoted to reports on the North Coast and highlands fringe areas, with the following eight papers presented.

* * *

Buang drinking and the extension of precontact rituals in Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea

Lorraine Zimmerman, 1712 Mathie Street, Wausau, Wisconsin, USA 54401

Alcohol use is an important part of Buang urban life today. The behavior surrounding consumption of alcohol is an extension of behavior surrounding consumption of yams in Buang past history. Only males participated in the mystique and ceremony involving yams and, generally, only males drink in Buang society today.

Traditionally, yam ceremonies included several types of 'out-of-control' behavior: wild, frenzied dancing and overeating to the point of vomiting. A man's wealth, power and prestige were measured by the size and number of yams he grew, the magnificence of feasts he gave and the quantity of yams he provided so that his guests could overeat, vomit and overeat again.

Today the days of male prestige displays are over for the Buang and traditional male occupations no longer exist. The men's houses are in disrepair and male initiation ceremonies no longer are carried out. Migration to the towns for wage labour is now the path by which a young Buang can become a man, achieve adult status and attract a wife. Most important among these new urban patterns of male prestige behavior is the display surrounding drinking in urban bars. A drinker must display the empty bottles and glasses in front of himself because these empty vessels prove him rich enough to buy many drinks. Moreover, by showing he has drunk all of these drinks a man displays his strength, power and prestige. Beer drinking provides a new ritual display of prestige for men, in place of past rituals surrounding ceremonial consumption of yams. In fact, alcohol offers an advantage over yams: altered awareness in
the past had to be self-induced but alcohol is itself a drug.

Buang often simulate drunken behavior for prestige. The wildest altered drunken comportment may or may not have its roots in consumption of too much alcohol. Since drunken behavior is highly desired among men, it is difficult to say whether abusive behavior exhibited while drunk is a pharmacological result of alcohol intake or a matter of self-induced altered awareness.

Not everyone in Buang society today admires drunkenness. Although Western influence, particularly that of the missions, is the major factor in this lack of respect for drunkenness, probably some old reservations have been preserved as well. Frenzied dancing, staggering around and vomiting in a remote mountain village does little harm to oneself or others, but drunken behavior in the city can lead to fights, drunken driving, abusive behavior towards family members and, ultimately, perhaps to alcoholism. Drinking also can mean spending the family income on beer. Most opposition to alcohol use in Buang society comes from women and those who are steadfast in the church.

Alcoholism is not found among the Buang for two reasons: (1) Buang do not have sufficient cash to buy enough alcohol to become addicted; and (2) Buang do not remain in the towns, where alcohol is available, long enough for alcoholism to develop. Nevertheless, Buang society sends its members a double message concerning alcohol that ultimately could result in serious problems of alcohol abuse. On the one hand, Buang males are admired for overindulgence and the altered behavior connected with alcohol; on the other, they are condemned if they endanger themselves or their families as a result of drunkenness. Buang drinking patterns suggest that cultural forces can be powerful enough to offset what might be a genetic problem of alcoholism in a population. Such factors as sex, age, migratory patterns and religious beliefs may influence persons not to drink at all; cultural worlds may continue to be separated with respect to alcohol: Buang make it possible to drink in the towns but not in the villages.
Comparisons between Buang drinking behavior and American life are tempting since so many parallels emerge. Both societies send an ambiguous message: drinking is admirable but drunkenness can be a problem. In both societies men believe they will become more masculine by heavy drinking and also believe they acquire prestige by heavy consumption of alcohol. Both societies permit and even encourage heavy drinking and drunken behavior, although Americans may be less conscious of this admiration. American society at present has more problems with alcohol abuse, but these problems are sure to grow among the Buang because of the nature and properties of the drug ethanol. If Papua New Guinea can use the rich vein of ethnographic data available about its people to understand alcohol use and abuse, it will no doubt solve the problems far more quickly than have other societies—especially Western societies—and help lead the way to international control of alcohol problems.

Drinking: a sign of things to come in Bogia District, Madang Province

Christopher Darrouzet, Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA 27514

Typical social events in which alcohol features prominently are described and the meanings of various comments made by people on the theme of alcohol are explored. The author focuses on the place alcohol occupies in the developing context of money and bismis.

In a rural, lowland Madang society, the Maiya speakers, a large majority of adult men and women drink, although there is tremendous variation between extremes. The most important variable is sex. Men do most of the drinking; women drink less frequently and in smaller amounts. The next most important variable is access to alcohol, both geographically and monetarily. There are no licensed premises in the hills, though there are some in the settlements down on the coast, and thus drinking in hill villages is rare. Few people have sufficient income to purchase alcohol regularly and big men entrepreneurs, who control substantial sums of money, manipulate alcohol within their social networks. These men, about 3 per cent of adult men, are also the heaviest drinkers. Alcohol is given in exchange for labor, political support, etc.
Three different events are described at length using the extended case study method: (1) a typical Saturday afternoon drinking session; (2) a drunken brawl with a subsequent feast of reconciliation; and (3) the first 'social' in the Maiya hills.

Maiya believe that Europeans deal with their physical, social and emotional environments more competently than Papua New Guineans. In this stereotype is the belief that Europeans are better at dealing with alcohol than Papua New Guineans. This reflects a lengthy cargoist tradition in the area that relies on biblical formulae of fundamentalist Christianity for most of its key concepts. Maiya believe that, unlike themselves, Europeans have been redeemed by Christianity, which includes self-control as a key idea. They see the ease with which the Christian-European handles alcohol as yet another example of the overall facility of living with which their acceptance of Christianity has endowed them. Papua New Guineans, say some Maiya, are still bugarup; they are still in the grasp of Satan whose endowment to them includes almost everything in traditional culture. Aggression unleashed by alcohol, like that unleashed by sorcery, is thought to mean that the people have not adopted Christianity to the degree necessary to free them from the immense complications of life from which Europeans already have been freed. The author's main concern is to point out that the Maiya's own evaluation of their problems stemming from alcohol use is part of a much broader and deeper issue. In some ways drinking behavior provides a barometer of progress toward the Christian society they envision for themselves.

What is this society they yearn after? It involves, first and foremost, a road to the hills from the coast. Following that, Maiya want materials for more permanent houses, an improved aid post, small factories, sewing machines, their own church structures and, not least, licensed village clubs. Alcohol was positively valued by most people and seen as a pleasurable and essentially benign component of leisure time activities. Just as people's different abilities to handle alcohol serve as a barometer which measures the community's moral disposition toward Christianity, the overall availability of alcohol and the presence of village drinking clubs is a measure of overall progress toward what has
always been a powerful goal. Only if alcohol were somehow to become defined as an impediment to development would a substantial proportion of the people turn against it in principle. As it stands now, alcohol must be counted among the more important things towards which the society strives. It would take something like a new cargo cult movement that opposes alcohol to dislodge it from the people's affection. Alcohol symbolizes the very thing the society wants to achieve in no uncertain terms: control of its own cultural destiny. Alcohol represents a key aspect of the revitalization of cultural life by providing a seed around which whole images of the future can crystallize. In these images people see themselves enjoying the fruits of the new way of life they desire to bring about.

The spirits of modernization: Maring concept and practice

Edward LiPuma, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA 60637

Maring people of the Simbai and Jimi Valley region in Western Highlands and Madang Provinces first obtained local access to alcoholic beverages in the mid-1960s. Yet liquor is difficult to come by in the Maring area mainly because of its isolation from licensed premises. At present, the Maring consume no appreciable amount of liquor. Only a fraction of the community uses alcohol, most people do not imbibe and those who do seem to do so sporadically. Alcoholism is not a social problem. The use of spirits has not penetrated any of the traditional ceremonies or institutions, nor is it integral to the construction of gender identity. It has no place in the exchange system, nor is it instrumental in the regeneration of bodily substances—the two dimensions along which the culture defines the value of foodstuffs. As an object of consumption, alcohol has a definite asocial aura, being set apart from ordinary practices and thus from day-to-day activity. The drawbacks Maring people find in drink stem not from an exaltation of the virtues of abstinence, but rather from the failure of alcohol to blend smoothly with current concepts and practices.
The author feels that the peripheral use of alcohol is as interesting as its abuse because it grants insights that analysts cannot otherwise gain. Given the availability of alcohol, its peripheral use represents a particular cultural attitude towards management of social and psychological relations. Understanding the indigenous constraints inhibiting the flow of alcohol is the author's goal.

Importation of colonial culture to the area led to an association of ideas—a concept of modernity—that tied Christianity, ascendancy of government, contract labor on coastal plantations, Pidgin and, to a lesser extent, alcohol use into a single package. The Europeans communicated their ambivalence toward alcoholic beverages to the Maring in various ways that ultimately shook the association between alcohol and modernization and gave rise to a new set of relations that linked drinking to foreign soil, urban life and the sense of license associated with travel. The relation of alcohol to modernization and to foreign settings provides the context for its understanding and use. By cultural standards, alcohol lacks both use and exchange value and so is confined to the margins of the political economy. It has only what the author calls an exogenous value derived almost entirely from association with the Western world and its purported wonders. The ideal setting for alcohol use according to Maring concepts is the coastal plantation. Trips to the coast have an aura of a pilgrimage that each young man must undertake in order to be officially modernized. Here he learns the 'new road' through daily contact with Europeans, business, urban life, Pidgin, other Papua New Guineans and beverage alcohol.

According to Maring men, the idea of a woman getting drunk is preposterous; alcohol has been identified as a male 'food'. The one Maring woman who does indulge, significantly, is atypical of her sex in that she consciously plays the role of a man, for example, she desires political office, is aggressive and outspoken in male company, ties her waistcloth like a man, etc. Users of alcohol among the Maring are generally young men who have been or are currently employed in a post-contact occupation, and who have travelled to foreign locations—especially coastal plantations. As spending time on a coastal plantation has replaced traditional forms of male initiation, and alcohol use is
associated with this period on the coast, this new format for initiation inhibits importation and use of spirits at home by associating them with 'plantation time'.

Maring drunken comportment is peaceful, jubilant and talkative, followed by somnolence. This is in keeping with the logic of modernization in which the modern man should groom his peaceful instincts and only vent his anger through legal channels. Drunkenness is not highly valued as an experience; it is thought to promote a misapprehension of reality, especially by distorting vision. The inebriated are thought akin to the deranged or the delirious and their words are not given serious audience at public meetings.

Liquor is a key symbol of the modern way and certain segments of the community use it to express their disaffection from tradition, thus making alcohol instrumental in the ongoing reorganization of the society. While traditional wisdom discourages the use of alcohol, the desire to climb aboard the modern bandwagon and assume the persona of colonial authority encourages its use.

Strength, autonomy and alcohol use in Bun

Nancy McDowell, Department of Anthropology, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, USA 17604

Bun village on the Yuat River, East Sepik Province, has recently adopted alcohol creatively into the ongoing sociocultural system. Alcohol has meaning because it participates in the patterns of society and experience that govern Bun people's lives.

The people of Bun perceive themselves to be poor because they have severely limited access to money and cannot afford to buy much liquor. In addition, alcohol is not readily available in Bun—there are no licensed premises there—and this absence restricts spontaneous drinking. So drinking in the village is infrequent: weeks or months may pass without a drinking bout. Young men occasionally make the 100 mile journey to Angoram to sell a large amount of produce and remain to drink and gamble until the money is gone. Although most adults disapprove of this
behavior, young men view it as fun and exciting. As their responsibilities increase, however, especially with marriage, this sort of behavior decreases.

Women chew betel nut and smoke tobacco as much as men but they do not drink alcoholic beverages. Men prefer distilled spirits, although they will drink any kind of alcohol available. Attitudes toward drinking are somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, most men want to drink and see it as a pleasurable, if sometimes risky, activity; on the other, they recognize that alcohol can be harmful if used excessively. Most men, however, are not dangerous drunks and people enjoy and laugh at their antics. Bun are a feisty and volatile people who quarrel and fight frequently but drinking makes men more out-going and sentimental; rarely do they become more violent. They may harm themselves but do not often harm others. Liquor consumption in the village occurs in only one context: that of traditional feasts, and usually between cross-cousins. No one drinks alone and no one drinks alcohol purchased for his own consumption. Men buy alcohol to give away and thus demonstrate their strength; they consume it to prove strength as well. Only by understanding Bun notions of person, strength and autonomy, and how these concepts operate in the context of traditional feasts, can the meaning of alcohol be made clear.

A testing and challenging of strength occurs between cross-cousins in all cross-cousin feasts, whatever their purpose. In this sparring alcohol consumption becomes significant. Whenever people drink in the village, it is almost always in the social context of a contest of strength between cross-cousins. Cross-cousins will be presented with a large amount of liquor at a ceremony at dawn after they have been singing and dancing throughout the night. The recipients must try to consume it all and remain conscious. The giver in effect challenges the receivers and asserts possession of the strength to buy more alcohol than they can consume. If the drinkers remain conscious and the alcohol is gone, they 'win;' if they pass out before the supply runs out, the giver 'wins.'

Normally, people show positive affection for others with words and emotional displays, whereas they channel anger and rage into a hostile exchange of goods—particularly alcohol. This switch allows them to express affection and grief verbally and release repressed emotion. It also
provides a safe and acceptable structure for expressing potentially dangerous emotions. Use of alcohol is especially important in facilitating these processes: People can be hostile without harming relatives and can exhibit their strength and autonomy despite their close emotional ties to others. Drinking to demonstrate strength is also a way of asserting equality with Europeans as a dominant class.

Men can no longer prove their worth through traditional warfare and experience severe demoralization caused by colonialism. Drinking is a way to assert the self, to demonstrate autonomy and strength and to prove that one is 'in control'.

The future of drinking in Bun is uncertain. If income increases moderately, and other contexts for proving one’s worth and strength do not appear, then men may choose to drink outside the special feasts and challenges. This could disrupt the society and drinking might become a problem in Bun.

Cultural significance of 'drunken comportment' in a nondrinking society: the case of the Bimin-Kuskusmin of Papua New Guinea

Fitz J.P. Poole, Department of Anthropology, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York, USA 14627

The author explored the cultural construction and social significance of European 'drunken comportment' and traditional images of masculinity among the Bimin-Kuskusmin of Oksapmin Sub-District, Telefomin District, West Sepik Province. The Bimin-Kuskusmin have developed a 'myth' of European drinking and drunkenness from which they conclude that the consumption of alcoholic beverages often leads to demeaning, dangerous, bizarre and entirely inappropriate behavior for adult men. Such drunken behavior contrasts markedly with their traditional forms of induced trance, possession and ritual use of hallucinogenic substances. This perceived contrast, shaped by more general notions of person and manhood, creates the Bimin-Kuskusmin views of European drinking customs and inebriate behavior and helps explain why—as of 1973 at least—the Bimin-Kuskusmin rejected alcoholic beverages.
In brief, the Bimin-Kuskusmin see European drunken comportment as the utter disarray of self-control, judgment, moral and jural responsibility, ritual sanctity and mystical power as ideally manifested in the adult, initiated male. They hold aberrant behavior of drunkenness to be decidedly unmasculine, view it with both contempt and fear, and evidence a pronounced lack of respect for some categories of foreigners. They see such behavior as a sign of some fundamental character weakness not encompassed by manly restraint. It violates the basic principles of adult male ethos and public image—extraordinary emphasis on strength, assertiveness, bravery, stoicism, prowess in battle, endurance, pride and self-control. It transforms the image of the adult man as a proud warrior and insightful ritual expert into that of a woman, child or a barbarian without proper socialization. This myth of European drinking behavior is bound up with an adamant avoidance of alcohol among all Bimin-Kuskusmin.

At first the Bimin-Kuskusmin identified European alcohol, tobacco and mysterious red foods with exclusively male, hallucinogenic, traditional ritual substances which reinforced the growing association between alcohol and occult power. They believed that Europeans as well as foreign indigenes who drank had secret access to the hidden sources of the powerful alcoholic substances and would not divulge these to local men. This idea took root because of the traditional importance of hallucinogenic substances in Bimin-Kuskusmin male initiation and other rituals. As they observed European drunkenness more closely, however, they came to despise the drinkers as weak and unmanly because their drunken comportment violated basic tenets of the Bimin-Kuskusmin view of masculinity.

It might have been predicted that alcohol would appeal to Bimin-Kuskusmin as a medium for expressing masculinity and they would incorporate it readily among traditional hallucinogenic substances. But the history of alcohol's introduction and of its relationship to reported and later observed behavior led to quite different consequences.

The Bimin-Kuskusmin cultural model of European drunken comportment is of considerable comparative interest, especially in its rejection of alcohol—at least in its non-ritual forms—and divorcing alcohol use from masculine behavior. However, the Bimin-Kuskusmin had experienced
very little of the behavior of either Europeans or nonlocal Papua New Guineans and knew even less of the outside world beyond their immediate domain up to 1973. Their encounters with plantation labor had been disastrous and they were not yet drawn to urban centers. Furthermore, in word and deed, local missions had effectively prevented access to alcoholic beverages. In turn, the traditional values and virtues of ritual authority and masculinity remained little changed by the new circumstances of the modern era. As the pace of social change quickens and schools and emigration become more prominent in social life, the Bimin-Kuskusmin must confront a new sense of identity and new kinds of opportunities beyond their present traditional understandings. Their model for the moderate and socially controlled use of ritual drug substances may prove far more useful in coping with new stresses and dealing with alcohol than any Western models, which may provide more problems than promise.

A baseline study of the introduction of alcohol among the Wonenara Anga

Kerry J. Pataki-Schweizer, Department of Community Medicine, University of Papua New Guinea, Boroko, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Papua New Guinea offers exciting possibilities for studying people's initial reactions to the introduction of alcoholic beverages. The author is conducting such a study with the Wonenara Anga of Eastern Highlands Province. This area does not yet have regular road access to other parts of the country, nor is alcohol for sale in the vicinity.

One drinking party was held in 1978 when some beer was brought in by a local entrepreneur. Fighting broke out at the party among several younger men who had worked outside Anga territory. Their fighting stirred up existing rivalries, plus a number of older warriors, and in the ensuing melee the entrepreneur's new tradestore was burned down. Both the Anga and the administration viewed this whole event negatively afterward and this sort of party has not yet been held again.

When Anga males travel outside their own area to Kainantu, Goroka, Lae or Port Moresby, they drink. Those who have had this experience appear to consider alcohol neither a disaster nor a sacrament; rather, they
look upon it as something very new and different and self-consciously admit experimenting. To them alcoholic beverages offer disconcerting but amazing new experiences. In short, the situation in the Womensara area is nascent, drawing on its traditions and waiting for the inevitable encroachment of the outside world. The author plans to continue to monitor alcohol use in this area over the next several years.

Learning to drink alcohol: models for use and drunkenness among the Awa, Eastern Highlands Province

David M. Hayano, Department of Anthropology, California State University at Northridge, Northridge, California, USA 91330

The author describes the initial contacts of the Awa, Eastern Highlands, with alcoholic beverages within the context of changes in Papua New Guinea during the colonial and postcolonial period. Awa were among the last people in the Eastern Highlands to be exposed to alcohol—only beginning in the mid-1960s.

The cost of alcohol relative to the Awa's meagre cash income has kept consumption low. This also contributed to their own negative self-image of themselves as 'bush kanakas' who were not as advanced as other Papua New Guineans or even as their immediate neighbors. By the late 1960s, alcohol had taken on the characteristics of a 'prestige intoxicant' and was preferred as a symbol of modernity by wealthier 'new men' of the village. Awa learned to imbibe alcohol on European holidays and other days of European-influenced significance. Alcohol is relatively expensive and difficult to transport into the village so is far from being a product consumed daily. Its use has expanded recently from European-organized celebrations to several other activities involving the exchange and display of wealth. Men use alcohol but women do not, mimicking ritual use of traditional hallucinogens.

When Awa drink they invariably cause mischief to others and then fall into a drunken stupor. In some respects, losing psychological and social control in these drinking episodes resembles experiences with traditional hallucinogenic plants. In both instances men 'lose their thoughts' and engage in common disorders found throughout the highlands and sometimes
called 'wild-man' or longlong behavior. But these parallels between longlong behavior and drunkenness should not be drawn too closely for their entire etiology, performance and termination are different.

The uses and abuses of alcohol and the urban adjustment of Sambia masculine identity

Gilbert H. Herdt, Department of Anthropology, Stanford University, Stanford, California, USA 94305

After the mid-1960s, when the Sambia of Eastern Highlands Province were pacified, their traditional village life changed. Young men migrated to work on coastal plantations and on their return, spun adventure stories for the untravelled. These stories offered the lure of an alternate lifestyle: strange people and intriguing sights, fast food, beautiful women, money and booze. The towns seemed an appealing image of exciting initiation into what increasingly was seen as a better life—rich and modern—compared to the homely village that has been robbed of certain traditional excitements. Sambia closely associate the migrant lifestyle with drinking alcoholic beverages.

Sambia used three major kinds of stimulants traditionally—tobacco, betel nut and hallucinogenic tree leaves and tree fruit—which were believed to be involved in every man's efficacy. Sambia believed traditional stimulants embodied 'strength' which, along with other substances, men could ingest to maintain their masculine power; alcohol has come to be viewed within this paradigm. Alcohol still is not locally available in Sambia villages, although by the late 1970s it could be purchased at the nearest patrol post. Even so, few Sambia villagers had the cash resources to buy it.

Quite a number of Sambia now reside in the Port Moresby metropolitan area. Although some have worked in the wage-economy for ten to fifteen years, the majority are itinerant laborers whose stay lasts only two to four years. The living conditions and earnings of these men range from steady and fair to irregular and poor. Alcohol has become a major focus of Sambia urban life. Even though some Sambia labourers are clearly marginal and are 'just making ends meet,' all consume alcohol to some
degree. Two-thirds of the men appear to drink twice or more a week and prefer beer. Men guzzle their beers to get high as quickly as possible. Provisioning and consuming alcohol have become modes of prestige consumption.

Alcohol is one of the prime inducements leading men to the towns; money and adventure go along with it. Three types of urban Sambia behavior and alcohol dependence can be discerned: (1) new migrants with a year or less of drinking experience (about 20 per cent); (2) more experienced, steady drinkers with two to four years of drinking history (about 60 per cent of the population); and (3) heavy drinkers who have frequently been drunk over four or more years (about 20 per cent). The first group, mostly adolescents and young men, are least adapted economically to urban life, have unsteady jobs and the least disposable income. They are the most volatile, shiftless, argumentative and troublesome when drunk. The second group have more income, drink more and use alcohol as a social stimulant—a means of feeling euphoric and coping with stresses—on a daily basis. The final group hold steady jobs and drink to get drunk, often in clubs and are the most prone to alcohol abuse. This group contains three or four men who may be alcohol-dependent: they are unmarried, have little social status or prospect of a traditional marriage in the village, evince despair and underlying depression.

Several broad trends in alcohol dependency among urban Sambia men are discernible: (1) Sambia traditionally had drug dependencies on tobacco and betelnut; (2) they had no experience with alcohol until quite recently; (3) they drink to get drunk; (4) it is prestigious to have enough money to get drunk; (5) drinking provides a cheap high that becomes a form of self and group entertainment similar to traditional men's clubhouse activities; (6) Sambia prefer drinking among themselves because their primary identity is as Sambia, not as urban Papua New Guineans; and (7) drinking provides a means of asserting personal power in both traditional and nontraditional ways.
Daily Summary, Day 2: Discussion

Major points which emerged in the second day's discussion were:
(1) village drinking always occurs as part of some party, ceremony or function, unlike much town drinking; (2) Papua New Guinea drinking is overwhelmingly a male activity and men seldom, if ever, drink with women; (3) there is a real dearth of good information on urban drinking patterns in Papua New Guinea which needs to be rectified; and (4) alcohol use by young men often sets up a generational conflict between them and older men of the community.

Very useful summaries of their province's alcohol policies were provided by Gabriel Buanam for Madang Province, Joe Maliaki and Ainea Sengero for Morobe Province and Blasius Vaninara for East Sepik Province, at which point the conference adjourned for the day.
The third day of the conference focused on the highlands region. Papers were presented dealing with all highlands provinces except Enga.

Beer drinking and subsistence production in a highland village

Larry Grossman, Department of Geography, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, USA 24061

The relationship between the purchase and consumption of alcoholic beverages (an integral aspect of the cash economy) and the decline in subsistence production is examined in Kapanara, a village near Kainantu, Eastern Highlands Province. Villagers spent an estimated 33 per cent of the total village income on alcoholic beverages. Most drinking occurred during the coffee flush and there was a general relationship between the sale of coffee and the purchase of beer.

In about the last ten years alcohol consumption has become an integral part of village life. Both men and women drink, though men do so more heavily and more frequently. Alcoholic beverages have become interwoven with the traditional exchange system and thus people rarely consume their own beer. Those who do not share alcohol acquire bad reputations. A party without beer is no party at all. Though people greatly enjoy drinking and the state of drunkenness, a party rarely lasts the night without a fight. All the most serious intravillage fights resulting in major physical injuries in 1976 to 1977 occurred during times of drunkenness. Antagonism between the sexes—a traditional feature of social life—increases with drinking as do personal injuries from accidents. Kapanarans give several reasons for drinking: they enjoy the feeling and the humor of being drunk; drinking enables them to cry more easily at funerals; alcohol expresses and reinforces traditional values of sharing and reciprocity; competition may be expressed in alcohol use. Certainly, drinking fills a great void in social life left by cessation of warfare and the decline of many traditional rituals and customs.
Although extensive alcohol consumption is not the sole cause of the decline in both subsistence food gardens and pig husbandry, data indicate it is a major contributing factor. The seasonality of time spent on beer-related activities parallels that of coffee production. Inputs into clearing, burning, drainage ditch construction, soil tilling and planting follow a seasonal pattern opposite those of beer-related activities and coffee production.

Time spent on subsistence gardening is lowest during the coffee flush, partly because people spend a substantial amount of time on coffee production to earn cash but also because alcohol use detracts from subsistence production during the flush in several ways. First, people spend time on alcohol-related activities and on recovering from lengthy drinking bouts rather than gardening. Second, the powerful lure of beer creates a greater demand for money and a strong commitment to cash-earning activities at the expense of subsistence gardening. Third, because most drinking takes place within the nucleated settlement, and many subsistence gardens are far from the hamlets, people often prefer to purchase food in village trade stores after drinking, rather than make the long trip to their gardens. Fourth, the quality of pig husbandry also declines because women feed their animals less frequently and give them less food during the coffee flush than at other times of the year. Fifth, the hungry pigs are thus more likely to break into cultivated areas and damage gardens during the coffee season, particularly since men—who are supposed to maintain garden fences—ignore this task during the coffee-beer season.

Kapanarans spend money on alcohol for traditional exchanges to reinforce reciprocal relationships that provide security. In addition, their enthusiastic commitment to alcohol partly results from the perceived limited alternative uses of their money (opportunity costs). Their incomes grew dramatically as a result of the 1976-1977 coffee boom, but social and economic pressures limited the attractiveness of commercial investment opportunities. Commercial activities accentuate individualistic behavior and contribute to a decline in the reciprocal exchange system. Spending a large amount of village income on beer tends to reduce such differentiation and, paradoxically, helps preserve the reciprocal exchange system.
Despite the benefits of the spread of the commercial economy, increasing rural income is likely to mean increasing alcohol consumption with negative implications for subsistence systems. A viable, productive subsistence system is essential because it is the major form of livelihood for most of Papua New Guinea's population.

New beer in old bottles: the innovation of a community club and politics as usual in the Daulo region, Eastern Highlands Province

Lorraine Dusak Sexton, Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, P.O. Box 5854, Boroko, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The author details the establishment of the first licensed community club in Eastern Highlands Province in May 1979. Political competition among men and among different tribes and/or traditional communities has always characterized the Daulo region. The provincial government's establishment of area communities in recent years has presented yet another arena for such political competition. Yamayo and Korepa Area Communities have been locked in a competitive struggle for quite some time and the Yamayo Community Club is one outcome.

Drinking is usually either casual, leisure drinking or ceremonial, exchange drinking. Casual drinking occurs most often on weekends during coffee season when people earn most of their annual income. Beer is used as a prestige commodity in formalized ceremonial transactions throughout the year, but these, too, are concentrated during the coffee flush. The after-effects of casual and ceremonial drinking are the same: commonly fights between men and between spouses.

In 1977 the Eastern Highlands Provincial Government decided to promote village clubs as an experiment in managing alcohol consumption in rural areas. The incidence of disruptive behavior by rural men drinking in town hotels and of alcohol-related highway accidents were two concerns motivating this action. It was hoped that rural drinking places would decrease the number of drunken drivers on the road and that traditional social controls—presence of family members and community leaders—would operate in a village setting to lessen the probability of violence. This hypothesis did not take into account the fact that casual and
ceremonial drinking in villages often ends in fighting despite the presence of family members and elders. The clubs also were seen as a means to educate people to drink in a manner based on an idealized version of expatriate drinking habits. The final desired effect of the clubs was to keep at least the retail profit from beer sales in the community instead of having it siphoned off to operators of retail outlets in town.

There was strong early support by local people for the Yamayo Community Club. Men were pleased at the prospect of having ready access to cold beer. Also, women as well as men saw the club as a business enterprise that would turn a profit and as a development project to improve community life. Second, they believed that the club would enhance Yamayo's reputation at the expense of other communities (notably Korepa) which did not have clubs.

Women express annoyance with the amounts of money spent on casual drinking, relatively modest for most men, but fully endorse the purchase of many cartons of beer for public presentations or hospitality to guests on ceremonial occasions. This distinction between buying beer for personal consumption and for ceremonial exchanges reflecting favourably on the group accounts for women's support of the Yamayo Community Club. Although the club would provide a setting for casual drinking, its ownership would also increase Yamayo's prestige.

The club cost K10,000 to build and was launched with an elaborate and expensive singsing and feast—the first of several ill-considered financial moves that contributed to the club's demise by Christmas 1980. By May 1980 the club showed no profit and community opposition began to surface in the form of internal factional squabbling. Charges of misappropriation of funds were made, a new club manager was elected and the club was transferred to him as a private business. But internal political tensions surrounding the club continued to mount, culminating in a brawl involving the younger men from all four Yamiyufa villages.

In its year and a half of operation, the Yamayo Community Club was neither a panacea for alcohol abuse in the Daulo region nor did it radically change patterns of alcohol consumption, except perhaps in
expanding the drinking population to include more women (a trend which bears watching). The primary impact of the club has been political. It has served as a vehicle for continuing political competition on several levels. Because of its identification with the area community, the management problems of the Yamayo Community Club led to the demise of both institutions.

Bia and biais: the use of beer in Chuave ceremonies

Wayne Warry, Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, P.O. Box 4, Canberra, ACT 2600, AUSTRALIA

In the Chuave District of Simbu Province beer is found in all types of ceremonies, although the quantities involved fluctuate considerably according to the status of the principal sponsor and the time of year—in or out of coffee season. As many as 240 cartons of beer were provided at one groom’s feast and large numbers of cartons are common in interclan exchanges.

One reason for beer’s success as an item of wealth in Chuave ceremonies is that it has, or has been endowed with, characteristics linking it to what once was the most coveted valuable—pork. Ceremonies today usually are judged by the amount of beer and pork at the feast. In Chuave, at present, beer clearly dominates exchanges and surpasses pork. Where once pork was presented formally to kinsmen, it is now relegated to a secondary position both in terms of display and ceremonial presentation. The quantity of beer involved now determines the success of the party. Beer has been incorporated thoroughly into preexisting patterns of distribution and is preferred over other forms of alcoholic beverages because it is easily divisible. Beer is an attractive consumable not only because it promotes camaraderie and goodwill, but also because it has been bestowed with a social and symbolic value similar to pork, including the power to create relationships or slight a rival.

However, one fundamental difference exists: while pigs remain tied to traditional methods of production, beer is linked to the modern economy and this has allowed young men with excess cash to enter
exchanges, create obligations and found reputations as political leaders or 'men of wealth'. In Chuave ceremonies, individuals convert cash into prestige through buying beer.

Drinking and drunkeness in Chuave are inseparable. Both men and women drink, although men drink more frequently and more to excess. Chuave ceremonies generally are lively affairs at which laughter, singing and good-natured conversation dominate despite Simbu's reputation for violence. Everyone involved in these affairs, quite simply, enjoys a good drunk — the most serious consequences of which are very bad hangovers.

People, however, are acutely aware that with drinking, the potential for quarrels, disputes and violence is great. Nevertheless, only about 15 per cent of all disputes recorded over one year were alcohol-related. As might be expected, these rose sharply during the coffee season when most ceremonies are held. Informants see alcohol as causing both minor quarrels and a high percentage of disputes. In many cases, though, there clearly were underlying tensions, suggesting that alcohol is not the cause of these disputes. Finally, the incidence of violence in alcohol-related disputes is very high — on the order of 67 per cent.

Chuave people have developed several behavior patterns to deal with aggressive drunks and to reduce the likelihood of violence. First, people are extremely tolerant of drunks and will attempt to pacify or restrain those who become violent. Second, men may simply encourage people to withdraw from the scene where a violent drunk is holding forth. Third, beer itself may be used to pacify individuals by having someone hold it for the aggrieved party to drink from, much like a baby bottle. Finally, another common tactic is for people to begin singing whenever someone tries to voice a complaint, above which din the drunk cannot make himself heard.

Drunkeness is 'time out' in Chuave during which people are not held responsible for their actions. Therefore, people bearing grudges use the cover of alcohol to directly voice their complaint and later claim that they were not responsible for their actions — which is why this type of
behavior is so common. This aspect of drunken comportment is accepted even in informal and formal courts in Chuave. Thus, both the risk of immediate sanctions and the degree of punishment are decreased for antisocial acts committed by drunken individuals.

Detractors of beer in Chuave argue that the large amounts of money spent on beer for ceremonies might be better used to pay school fees, to improve the nutrition of children or to start small businesses or development projects. Most people, however, continue to consciously choose to buy beer for use in ceremonies, in preference to other possible uses of their cash incomes. Their reasons are both clear and rational. The use of valuables—be they cash, beer, pork or bird-of-paradise plumes—in ceremonies and exchange lies at the heart of systems of wealth, status, prestige and power that order and give meaning to people's everyday lives.

The Simbu liquor ban of 1980-1981

Andonia Piau-Lynch, Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, P.O. Box 5854, Boroko, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

On 10 November 1980 a three-month total ban on liquor sales throughout Simbu Province began. Since national prohibition was lifted in 1962, Simbu people have incorporated beer into their life-styles and use it in a number of social, economic, personal and political ways. The number of licensed premises in the province grew from 4 in 1964 to 307 in November 1980. Most of this increase occurred during 1980, following full provincial government recognition and the Provincial Liquor Licensing Commission's assumption of the responsibility for granting liquor licenses.

No regulation specifies a minimum distance between licensed outlets in Simbu, so many are very close to each other. The author recommends that the provincial government consider enacting a minimum allowable distance similar to that in East New Britain Province.

Analysis of data on licensed premises for Simbu Province also shows predominance of outlets in the northern section of the province which is serviced well by roads, notably the Highlands Highway. Districts through which the Highlands Highway runs account for 82 per cent of all liquor
licenses in the province.

Members of the provincial government see beer as the foremost cause of law and order problems in the province and for this reason imposed the three-month ban. But this is a simplistic view of the complex matter of tribal fighting in the highlands today. Tribal fighting has multiple causes, of which beer consumption is only one. Others include population pressure on resources, insecurity about self-government, national independence, rise of a modern cash economy, mass education, political decolonization, fighting over women, pigs and land and the competitiveness over business enterprises. The provincial government should have taken these other factors into consideration before imposing the ban.

Reactions to the ban were mixed. Liquor traders, in particular, were outspoken in their opposition to it, citing the lack of consultation as perhaps the most upsetting aspect of the action. There also appears to have been little consultation with various other provincial and national government bodies—such as the police force.

The restriction on sales of alcohol did not mean that alcoholic beverages became totally unavailable in the province. Alcohol was obtainable from smugglers and black marketers and some people went to great trouble and expense to get it. Nevertheless, the ban greatly reduced the overall accessibility and visibility of alcohol.

The ban cost the provincial government approximately K60,000 in lost revenue from the retail sales tax on liquor and, possibly, considerable political capital as well. Whether the ban actually curtailed the incidence of crime and tribal fighting in the province is arguable.

Abstinence, excess and opportunity: Minj 1963-1980

Marie Reay, Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, P.O. Box 4, Canberra, ACT 2600, AUSTRALIA

The author observed alcohol use and abuse in Minj from 1963 to 1980. Both men and women drink, but women do so rarely and only at the sufferance of men. Men up to their early thirties are under considerable
peer pressure not only to drink but also to indulge in periodic hard
drinking. There is a compulsion to drink when one's group drinks, just as
one fights when one's group fights. This same importance of doing what
the group does showed up in several self-help projects in Minj in which
leaders enjoined their followers from drinking and smoking commercial
tobacco in order to save money for vaguely specified development projects.
Thus to drink or not to drink in Minj is a decision a man makes mostly
as a member of some group.

Certain aspects of traditional life contribute to the ease with which
men are able to stop drinking, even after habitually spree drinking to
excess. One is the proliferation of taboos in traditional life, for
example, giving up enjoyable foods and activities, sometimes for long
periods. Another is a special aptitude for role-playing that enables
Minj people on occasion to switch from being one person at one moment to
being quite another person the next. It therefore is quite easy for
Minj drinkers to assume the identity of a nondrinker.

The customary pattern of drinking is to drink the entire supply of
alcohol in a single session: groups of drinkers kill cartons rather than
bottles. Village men often drink in a special men's clubhouse erected
solely for this purpose. If licensed village clubs are established for
drinking liquor they will simply be men's houses and increase drunken-
ness. Women may not enter these men's houses without communicating the
message that they are sexually available. Interclan fights are likely to
be more serious in village clubs than in the public drinking places in the
townships to which the police can readily be called. There would be less
risk of such trouble if the 'village' of the village club were limited
to the clan-community.

A problem in trying to reduce drunkenness is that liquor outlets
depend for their viability on the sale of liquor. The barman's job is
to sell as much liquor as possible, not to solve the problem of drunken-
ness. It would be desirable for a village to finance its club in such
a way that it does not depend absolutely on the sale of liquor to stay
in business.
Traditional power competition as a deterrent to alcohol abuse

Hal Nelson, Office of Research - OB-32F, Department of Social and Health Services, State of Washington, Olympia, Washington, USA 98504

The concept of personal control, manifested both as self-control and as control over others, is crucial in maintaining power and status in two Mt. Hagen area communities of Western Highlands Province. One community is located two miles west of Mt. Hagen itself and the other twelve miles south of the town in the Nebilyer Valley. In the late 1960s when the research was conducted, drinking was confined largely to the town and had little impact on village life. Beer was the preferred beverage.

Most men claimed to disapprove of drinking because drinkers often 'lost control'. Loss of control was likely to cost one severely in the respect of kinsmen and could also damage the image and credibility of one's kin group. Almost everyone regarded being drunk as being 'out of control'.

Status, power and prestige were allocated to men through competitive exchange transactions involving pigs, pork, ceremonial axes, shells, etc. Presentation of an exchange gift of a specific value entitled the giver to add another link to a necklace of bamboo links called an aumagl. Strong, wealthy, powerful men wore aumagl dangling almost to their waists.

Introduction of cash into the ceremonial exchange system began to erode the value of traditional exchange items and allowed some men to compete on a different footing than before. The indigenous status competition system could be viewed as a counter-force to cultural change. Alcohol abuse can be viewed as a side effect of urbanization because it lacks an indigenous analogue. Because men who drink alcohol and become inebriated lose ground in the power competition because they lose control, a strategy for alcohol abuse prevention might take advantage of the male status system.

Assuming that since 1968 a syncretization of traditional and Westernized status symbolism has continued, prevention programs should encourage investment of surplus cash in business ventures that maximize
individual and group prestige consistent with clan-based traditional exchange. Unique forms of entitlement would be needed to show evidence of entrepreneurship. Borrowing from the idea of the traditional badge of status—the *sumagl*—small, distinctive medallions indicating units of investment might be issued. These could link together to be worn on the person, numbered to represent a particular investment and produced to represent different values. Such a system might absorb some of the loose cash now spent on alcoholic beverages for want of meaningful alternatives.

**The scraping gift: alcohol consumption in Mount Hagen**

Andrew Strathern, Department of Anthropology, University College London, Gower Street, London, ENGLAND WC1E 6BT

The author argues that highlands attitudes towards beer drinking are basically ambivalent due to the contradiction between 'strength' and 'equivalence.'

Ordinary women do not drink; drinking for women is associated with sexual licentiousness and is the hallmark of the urban prostitute. Men, by contrast, are expected to drink as part of their ordinary pattern of activities and to become obstreperously aggressive when doing so, provided they are young and not community leaders.

Senior men have introduced alcoholic beverages into moka exchanges as solicitory gifts, but only partly successfully.

Big men are expected to control their anger and avoid shame. Young men are in an anomalous position in this system because they are effectively blocked from meaningful participation in moka exchanges, which remain the main avenue to male status, prestige and power.

The tavern idea has proved extremely popular recently in the Hagen area. Young men of many different groups as well as labourers on nearby plantations from other parts of the highlands are drawn to the tavern. This tavern mode of beer consumption has begun to take over from the ceremonial presentations characteristic of the mid-1970s and which to some extent integrated beer drinking into general exchange practices.
Taverns, however, are becoming centers of staged brawls in which young men seek out enemy groups with whom they have a grudge and, under cover of drunkenness, challenge them to fight. Thus the taverns have brought an urban-style drinking into rural areas but typically rural forms of status competition are played out in the new taverns. These drunken status competitions, while tolerated and even seen as meaningful, only reflect performance scales which have to be separately played out if true status is sought. Drink tends to equalize status at the same time as it regenerates and pinpoints the contradictory idea of 'competitive strength' expressed through aggression.

Drinking has become a part of Hagen society and culture, reflecting ambivalence and distortion as the society changes. Drinking is 'normal' in the sense that it is an ingrained part of what men do and it undoubtedly allows certain tensions to be expressed that otherwise might not be. What is said and done when drunk is partially exempt from blame, but not wholly so; nor is inebriation exactly like madness. Drinking therefore occupies a curious position in the society. It is clearly very popular—especially with young men—but it is neither regarded as a true 'divine madness' nor as a true source of prestige.

The author recommends that taverns not be replicated or expanded too greatly and that restrictions on off-premise sales continue. The promising experiment of integrating beer into moka has not succeeded in controlling consumption, and therefore control needs to be exercised primarily over where people drink. If tavern drinking is not expanded too much, the amount of money and time spent on drinking may be kept to a reasonable level. Further, home settlements will not be dominated by young men bent on long drinking bouts, with resultant danger to everyone in the settlement.

The author sees drinking to be a drain on income that could be used to improve diets and he urges that unlimited access to alcohol not be permitted. The simplest way to prevent such access would be (1) a common alcohol policy throughout the highlands provinces; (2) restricted tavern hours and police surveillance of taverns especially at closing times; and (3) severe restrictions on off-premises sales.
Such restrictions are unlikely to prevent young men from engaging in their competitive bouts of drinking and aggression, but they will shield the communities at large from their more extreme manifestations, while confining the bouts to specific areas.

Beer and other luxuries: abstinence in village and plantation by Sugus, Southern Highlands Province

Lisette Josephides and Marc Schiltz, Department of Anthropology, University College London, Gower Street, London, ENGLAND WC1E 6BT, and Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Papua New Guinea, Waigani, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The Sugus of the Southern Highlands Province have access to liquor and the cash to buy it but nevertheless most people practice abstinence. Beer is one of a whole range of imported commodities that have become available to Sugus recently. Sugus have a high rate of labour migration to plantations, about one-third of adult males are absent at any given time, and therefore the authors examine drinking patterns on the plantations as well as in the village.

Drinking is irregular and infrequent in both village and plantation. There is no alcohol dependency and no social pressure to drink or to buy drinks for others. In contrast to the frequent Western association of alcohol consumption and poverty, those Sugus who drink are those who have the greatest access to cash. Most migrant labourers do not drink, mainly because they do not feel comfortable in the drinking settings available to them. Alcohol consumption has not become incorporated into villagers' lifestyle either.

The authors present a lengthy description of one man's drunken comportment to show that he was not as drunk as he pretended and that other Sugus looked upon his threatened aggression as amusing rather than frightful. There is no respect for drunkenness and no prestige attaches to drinking. Drunks are considered to be mad, without judgment or control of their speech and limbs; these are unadmirable qualities and quite the opposite of those associated with big men.
For Sugus beer, unlike many other consumer goods such as tinned fish, rice, soap and commercial tobacco, has remained a luxury. It has not been incorporated into ceremonial exchange, even though it is available for purchase. There is no ideology that alcohol is a good thing or that to consume it makes one more masculine, a better fighter or a more astute politician.

Although they generally do not consume beer, Sugus neglect their subsistence gardens during the coffee flush because buying tradestore goods with cash is easier than working the garden. This calls attention to the danger in postulating that beer drinking causes a decline in subsistence gardening activity. Neglected subsistence gardens, cash incomes frittered away and petty fights proliferating all can be witnessed in Sugu villages but do not coincide with alcohol consumption there. This negative case does not suggest that excessive drinking lacks deleterious effects, but that there is a danger in holding alcohol responsible for all of Papua New Guinea's ills and, as a consequence, to consider bans on drinking as a panacea.

**Daily Summary, Day 3: Discussion**

New elements arose in the third day's discussion session, the more important of which were: (1) selling beer is viewed as a way of making quick money; (2) beer has been substituted for a number of formerly central items in traditional exchanges (for example, pigs and coconuts); (3) there is an urgent need for studies of local village economies and how purchases of alcoholic beverages fit into them; (4) many rural villagers in Papua New Guinea have few things in which to invest their money, view cash as a short-term windfall and thus are not reluctant to spend their cash on beer; and (5) it is very difficult to demonstrate that alcohol use directly causes tribal fighting in the highlands.

Representatives from Eastern Highlands Province (Yaunggao Uyassi), Simbu Province (Mark Yere), Enga Province (Wolfgang Berger) and Western Highlands Province (James Kupul) wrapped up the day's event with fine discussions of provincial policy and attitudes toward alcoholic beverages.
Daily Summary, Day 4

The fourth day of the conference included a mixed group of papers dealing with the Papuan region, with the nation as a whole and with two other Melanesian societies—Fiji and Vanuatu.

* * *
A comparison of alcohol and betel-nut use on Vanatinai (Sudest Island), Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea

Maria Lepowsky, Department of Anthropology, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, California, USA 94704

People on Vanatinai, in the Louisiade Archipelago, have known of alcoholic beverages for over a century, but they do not know how to make their own and have limited access to commercially produced beverages at present. Most people on the island have never drunk alcohol, but despite this they have a well-developed set of ideas about what alcohol is and how it makes people behave.

Only one category of Vanatinai residents have a strong desire for beverage alcohol: young males between the ages of 18 and 35 years. For these young men, consumption is limited by supply, not by demand. When they do get beer, they consume the entire shipment within a short time. Such drinking results in very few incidents of violence or quarrels, perhaps because the quantity each individual consumes is relatively small. Young Vanatinai men who drink nowadays seem to identify not only with Europeans but also with sophisticated, wage-earning, urban-dwelling Papua New Guineans, whom they believe to be experienced and enthusiastic drinkers. Alcohol use is therefore associated with a 'higher' status in the vaguely perceived outside world. To young Vanatinai men drinking is a skill that must be acquired almost as a rite of passage if one becomes a wage-earner even for just a short time. The young men are attracted to alcohol use as a symbol of membership in the larger modern world in whose pleasurable rites they wish to participate.
Village people on Vanatinai learn a number of specific beliefs about alcohol use as children. Drinking is a metaphor for several kinds of uncontrolled behavior. If a person does something foolish, clumsy or bizarre others may comment jokingly that he or she has been drinking. People also say that drink makes one 'crazy' and that one who drinks is likely to behave in peculiar ways for which one might afterward feel ashamed. They also think that drinking leads to unrestrained sexual desire and sexual license and this is the main reason why island women are afraid to drink. Finally, drinking also is believed to lead to uncontrolled aggression. Although drunkenness provides some excuse for peculiar behavior, it does not necessarily negate completely the social impact of the inebriate's actions.

The people of Vanatinai perceive drinking behavior as socially disruptive, whereas they regard sharing betelnut as a symbol of peaceful and friendly social relations. Everyone over 8 to 10 years of age chews betel many times a day. While drinking is infrequent in nontraditional ceremonial contexts, people chew betel nearly all the time in a host of different social situations. Betel chewing is believed to alleviate hunger, thirst and fatigue, to enable one to work harder, to stimulate talkativeness and sociability, to sweeten the breath, strengthen the teeth and kill intestinal parasites. It also is thought to be an aphrodisiac and is used in love magic and in many other magical and healing rituals. Offering betel is an essential element of hospitality and a clear sign of mutual trust and friendship is to chew betelnut together. Finally, betelnut is integrally involved in both intra-island and inter-island exchange networks with Vanatinai being an exporter of Areca nuts. The habit of chewing betel has influenced Vanatinai perceptions of other substances to which they have been introduced, notably tobacco, the use of which is analogous to traditional uses of Areca nut.

Should the coming years bring an increase in cash income, one likely result would be a greater availability of alcohol in the area and in that case social disruption caused by alcohol abuse—particularly violence and threatened violence—may become a problem.
Trobiand attitudes toward alcohol use

Susan P. Montague, Department of Anthropology, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois, USA 60115

The meanings Trobrianders attach to alcohol use in light of their world-view (knowledge about the nature of the cosmos, people and human life) are the subject of the author's research during 1971-1972 and 1980. Data are presented for three different drinking settings: Kaduwaga village on Kaileuma Island, Losuia town on Kiriwina Island and the tourist hotels on Kiriwina.

Male and female informants hold different, yet related, ideas about alcohol. Women say that the sole effect of drinking is intoxication. Men say that drinking can produce either enhanced expressive ability or intoxication. Women say that a single beer produces intoxication. Men say that a few beers or their equivalent produce enhanced expressive ability and that many beers or their equivalent produce intoxication. Women say that intoxication is disgusting. Men agree, but also say that it is fun. Kaduwaga women seem physically afraid of alcohol. Losuia women are more comfortable in its presence, but still stay away from drinkers. Although hotel waitresses serve alcoholic beverages and interact with drinkers, they do not drink in public, if at all.

All informants agree on the signs of intoxication and all male informants agree on the signs of enhanced expressive ability. Intoxication is described as 'disorganization' and is manifested by staggering, rolling of the head and disjointed speech. Enhanced expressive abilities are shown by beautiful dancing and witty conversation.

All informants agree that each person has the right to drink but actually drinking is an exclusively masculine activity that takes place in a casual, relaxed, group setting.

Men vary their drinking behaviors depending on whether or not higher ranked or more powerful men are present in the group. The highest ranked and most powerful men are the ones who engage in the expressive behavioral pattern. Kaduwaga men do not drink when sailing or travelling in canoes.
All Trobrianders believe they are nonsubstantial spirits who inhabit substantial bodies. Men and women differ in their degree of bodily substance. Mass and solidity are associated with men while women are quasi-liquid beings. The Trobriand cosmos is a continuum from solid substance to liquid substance to no substance at all. Living people inhabit the solid realm but women, with their quasi-liquid bodies, are less securely attached to this realm than are men. Their liquidity suits them for roles in birth and death when nonsubstantial spirits move between the nonsubstantial and the substantial realms. Men's bodies are too solid to participate directly in these transitions, yet their bodies can withstand greater abuse. The spirits that inhabit male bodies are more protected because the shells surrounding them are harder to penetrate. Given these beliefs Trobriand women are naturally afraid of coming into contact with a liquid that all Trobrianders think produces bodily and spiritual disorganization.

Women mind men drinking because men are protectors of women. Women are always aware of their precarious attachment to the substantial order and are nervous when the men confront nonsubstantiality. It is bad enough that men must do this on some occasions in the normal course of life but it is worse when they do it for fun. In addition, women fail to appreciate the state of enhanced expressive ability that results when men consume moderate amounts of alcohol because this state also is one of decreased solidity.

Why do men value the expressive behavioral pattern so highly? The answer lies in Trobriand ideas about coercion, considered very dangerous. The core of each person is a nonsubstantial spirit, and each person's integrity is a facet of his spiritual core. Trobrianders conceptualize coercive attacks to an individual's integrity as the application of nonsubstantial force through mechanisms of spiritual knowledge—the same type of knowledge that men use to manipulate all nonsubstantial forces.

Powerful men confront a problem: their verbal knowledge of spirits is hidden away inside them and if others are to know their power they must somehow find a way to demonstrate it. Yet they cannot directly demonstrate it without depriving others of their independent integrity.
Trobianders solve this problem by finding indirect ways for men to parade their knowledge. The expressive behavioral pattern of drinking offers such an indirect means.

While in all probability Trobriand perceptions of alcohol use as play and fun grew out of observations of colonial drinkers, in most other respects the meanings they attach to alcohol use seem to owe little to foreign ideas.

Betelnut as the beer of the Orokaiva

Eric Schwimmer, Faculté des Sciences Sociales, Université Laval, Cite Universitaire, Québec, CANADA G1K 7P4

Alcohol use is a rather minor problem in Oro Province and among the Orokaiva. Therefore, the author deals primarily with how people think about alcohol in Oro Province rather than with alcohol as a social problem.

During coffee season in Orokaiva, coffee sales often engender a marathon gambling session from which one man eventually emerges with nearly all of the winnings. This man then travels with the losers to Popondetta where he treats them to beer until the impression is created that he has redistributed all the money accumulated at the card game in the form of beer. The problem of these beer sessions is not so much abuse of alcohol as converting much of the proceeds from cash cropping into beer. Many who participate in this coffee-to-cards-to-beer round would prefer to use their coffee money for more practical purchases but feel obliged to take part in the card games. Earning money at coffee does not confer much social prestige, whereas winning at cards is deemed a sign of ancestral favor.

People view card winnings as unearned wealth or 'cargo' and therefore treat it differently than earned wealth. Earned wealth is not squandered on things like beer but unearned wealth is. Alcohol is perceived to belong essentially to Europeans, but not as cargo. You can buy it only if you have cargo, that is, unearned wealth. Any other kind of wealth is used to obtain useful things, including social credits.
In Orokaiva drinking patterns there is an aesthetic relationship between the alcohol and betelnut complexes. Orokaiva informants say, 'Betelnut is the beer of the Orokaiva'. The similarity is found in the role these substances play in social relations and diets. Both substances usually are consumed between meals and have mind-altering qualities. They tend to be taken in groups that may include people who meet only occasionally and are only distantly related. Finally, both substances are essentially foods of leisure to which people turn when work is finished or interrupted.

Betelnut is not commonly overused but alcohol is drunk to excess at every available opportunity. Betelnut and alcohol offer two different models for the use of leisure and the management of social relations. The correct mixture of the betel quid ingredients brings balance and harmony, a model for group relations. Alcohol, on the other hand, signifies access to cargo and, as such, is a sign of the favor of the ancestors, whose return makes cargo possible. For this reason, alcohol is far more dangerous than betel—like any contact with the world of the ancestors. Betelnut is food for the integrative aspect of feasting, whereas alcohol serves its agonistic or fighting aspect. The agonistic aspect of group life is just as necessary as is its integrative aspect and both have certainly always existed among the Orokaiva.

If economic development is felt to be suffering in Oro Province from the paycheck-card game-beer sequence, then the author recommends payment to agricultural producers might be adjusted to discourage that sequence. Such producers might be paid in private at different times to discourage the public pressure on producers to play cards and then drink up the profits of cash cropping.
Alcohol production, alcohol imports, alcohol expenditure and licensed premises in Papua New Guinea, 1958-1980

Mac Marshall, Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, P.O. Box 5854, Boroko, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Taking a macro-sociological view, the author examines certain nation-wide trends in the production, availability and use of alcoholic beverages in Papua New Guinea from before prohibition was abolished in late 1962 through 1980. Commercial domestic production of alcohol is limited to beer. Since the end of prohibition, domestic beer production has doubled approximately every four or five years with no end yet in sight. The rapid increase is attributed mainly to the increased disposable income available to Papua New Guineans since 1974. However, since 1977, when the Organic Act No. 1 on provincial governments came into effect, the number of licensed premises in those provinces that took over the licensing function from the national government has risen dramatically. This increased availability of beer—particularly in rural areas—doubtless has increased overall consumption by enlarging the pool of drinkers. Also, since 1973/74 imported beer has been all but driven from the Papua New Guinea market.

Imports of wine and spirituous liquors increased until 1970/71 and then went into a general downward trend. Data do not exist for the period 1976/77 until the beginning of 1980, but 1980 estimates suggest that imports of wine and hard liquor have again risen.

Household expenditure data, notoriously suspect as regards expenditures on alcohol, nevertheless show that urban wage earners spend less than 10 per cent of their income on alcoholic beverages but that rural cash and subsistence farmers may spend up to a third of their cash income on drink.

The number of licensed premises in Papua New Guinea doubled from 1958 to 1963, more than doubled between 1963 and 1969, more than doubled once more from 1969 until 1978 and has nearly doubled again in the past two years. The most important single variable affecting this growth seems to be the Organic Act of 1977. The average increase from 1975 until
1980 of licensed premises in provinces that have passed their own liquor licensing acts is more than five times as large as in those provinces that have not taken over the licensing function.

Based on growth data in licensed premises for the country's four main regions and by province, the implications of different growth patterns for social problems associated with alcohol are discussed. Most of the recent growth in liquor licenses nation-wide has been in the club and storekeepers license categories, generally found in rural areas where easy access to alcohol has been restricted until very recently.

Serious social problems associated with alcohol are more likely to occur in provinces where the number of licensed premises has increased very rapidly, for example, Simbu and Enga, and such problems will rise in direct proportion to the 'ruralization' of drinking outlets in areas of the country with only brief historical experience with alcohol. It is recommended, therefore, that provincial governments review liquor license applications very stringently and not allow the number of such licenses to increase too quickly. Although there are financial drawbacks for provinces in restricting the number of licenses (and thus indirectly restricting total sales), policing, inspection and control problems are eased by limiting the number of licensed premises.

Provincial governments are caught in a double-bind because of the importance of liquor license fees and retail sales tax on liquor in provincial budgets. Further, the costs from alcohol abuse are borne more directly by the national government than the provincial governments, thus reducing the incentives for the provinces to discourage sales and the number of licenses.

Although provincial governments may be attracted to beverage alcohol as a potentially lucrative source of internal funding, they should avoid temptation to rely too heavily on this item. To do so is to encourage the proliferation of licensed premises and greater consumption and thereby to court social problems associated with drinking that ultimately may cost more than the income to be gained from sales tax and license fees.

Gomi Gipey, Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, P.O. Box 5854, Boroko, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

In a discussion of cost-benefit analysis the author mentions the difficulties in employing this method for certain kinds of problems. Some of the special difficulties in using this method on an interdependent industry such as the brewing industry in Papua New Guinea are: forward and backward integration; multiplier effects on subsequent periods and industries; identification of 'costs', and 'benefits'; externalities; life of project; path of rate of discount; shadow prices; and constraints.

The author next examines the particular problem at hand--costs and benefits to the Papua New Guinea government of the brewing industry--and explains how he dealt with each of these special difficulties.

He concludes that the assumptions and constraints under which he operates control the sorts of conclusions he reaches. Nonetheless, he feels that the exercise has yielded certain interesting and useful results. Benefits to the government were found to exceed costs in most years since 1960, although the author feels that certain 'hidden' costs may have been underestimated.

The author includes an extensive series of tables detailing the various economic measures used in the analysis.

Grog blong yumi: alcohol and kava on Tanna (Vanuatu)

Monty Lindstrom, Department of Anthropology, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, California, USA 94704

Alcohol first appeared on Tanna in August 1774 and over the succeeding 200 years has continued to flow into the island both illegally and legally. Thus the Tannese have had a long time to
devise ways to drink, interpret proper intoxicated behavior and make moral evaluations of both drink and drunks. Tannese use of alcoholic beverages is shaped by the fact that they have used kava traditionally as a liquid intoxicant.

In a detailed and well-documented history of alcohol's introduction and use on Tanna, the particular influence of the recruitment of Tannese for the Queensland labor trade is noted.

Men prepare and drink kava daily at dusk at special kava drinking grounds. Kava is tossed down in a long, fast, continuous gulp. Kava drinking is believed to put men in touch with their ancestors and drinkers demand silence of all present. Kava, like alcohol, induces different sorts of intoxicated comportment in different cultures: people must learn how to be drunk on kava as they learn how to be drunk on alcohol.

Kava use separates men from women; circumcised from uncircumcised; sexually active from the inactive; married from the unmarried; and high status from ordinary men. Women do not consume kava at all.

Men separate contextually their use of the two intoxicants, making a distinction between 'custom' feasts and modern ones. The former includes an exchange of goods defined as 'custom' (kava, pigs, mats, yam and taro puddings, etc.), a traditional nupu dance and kava drinking, and the ceremony occurs at a kava drinking ground. Modern feasts demand an exchange of commercial goods, modern 'disco' dancing and alcohol, and takes place in a village. The two types of ceremony must not be confused. Men demand that no alcohol be drunk at custom ritual or consumed at kava drinking grounds. On the other hand, they rarely drink kava at a modern feast.

Most men only drink alcohol once or twice a month in the context of modern feasts. Cash expenditure for alcoholic beverages by members of a sample of thirty-two households was very low: .015 percent of total annual cash expenditure. However, young men drink outside of ceremonial contexts if they have enough cash to buy alcohol.
People feel that kava makes a person quiet and calm, and puts them in touch with their ancestors in a friendly society of men without women or contention. Alcohol intoxication, by contrast, is noisy, disruptive and violent, and makes men fight. People expect drunks to fight and their expectations are often realized. Tannese mark two kinds of non-ordinary time with the two sorts of grog. The two substances are contrasting symbols within a larger conceptual opposition people make between things 'custom' and things modern.

So kava and alcohol, because of their culturally defined incompatibility, compete for time and space within Tannese society and within men's bodies. Young, unmarried men, not allowed to drink kava, have time for alcohol and, in fact, do most of the drinking. As these young men mature, marry, assume responsibility and begin to drink kava, however, they must choose between alcohol and kava. Most married men become drunk daily on kava and this intoxication structurally and physiologically limits their use of alcohol. A second bout of intoxication would be difficult to fit into the everyday schedule of activity and most older men drink alcohol only at the proper time and place—during periodic modern ceremonial feasts. On Tanna, 'serious' drinkers are kava drinkers.

Drink and be merry for tomorrow we preach: alcohol and the male menopause in Fiji

Michael A.H.B. Walter, Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, P.O. Box 5854, Boroko, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The author focuses upon the use, rather than the abuse, of alcoholic beverages in the Lau Islands, Fiji. Traditionally, there were no alcoholic beverages. Immediately after contact, distilled spirits became available but the chiefs appropriated them for their own use. Nowadays, the situation has come full circle: not only is it rare to come across a chief who openly drinks alcohol, but it has also become a criterion for any person who wishes to display authority or seniority that he does not do so.

Drinkers today are men aged early teens to late thirties or early forties. They consume a homebrew called 'Racing Jack,' made from sugar, baker's yeast and water or coconut milk.
Drinking parties begin quietly and secretly but as the party develops, the noise grows. Arguments and singing are common, though fights are rare and always are quickly stopped. Young boys may drink enough to pass out and sleep where they fall.

Historically, the status of young men in the village was never high. Today, the rigidly hierarchical society is still a reality for most young men, who occupy minor roles in any ritual activities. However, since the role of the warrior, with all its prestige accoutrements and excitements, has gone, it can no longer relieve the insignificance of young men as of old. Contemporary alcohol use in Lauan villages is not simply an escape from boredom but also an escape from social anonymity. It provides the individual a temporary promotion to a new identity of significance and importance, self-perceived though it may be. More than this, the catharsis of drunkenness does not disrupt the social structure. When drunken younger men are around, a chief, an elder or an older brother will avoid or retire from a scene in which his public esteem can only suffer. The morning after, authority is brought to bear, often indirectly through tongue-lashings from kin. The drunken revelry of young men in Lauan villages is, paradoxically enough, positively functional for the society and the calm way in which it is received and ignored by senior citizens almost suggests they are aware of the paradox.

If older men also drank, then confrontations would be unavoidable and the result a disaster for village living. But the older men do not drink. They preach in the church; they often pontificate in the kava circle; they take pride in the large yams they grow with great care; and they quarrel over land. The contrast between the formal kava circle of the older men, with its strict adherence to rules and social conventions, and the 'Racing Jack' drinking party, secretive and then boisterous, often blatantly flouting social conventions, perhaps epitomizes the differences between the two social worlds. As the young man grows older and accepts responsibilities, he alters his behavior and his drinking style as well, eventually becoming a pillar of the community and church.

The Papua New Guinea government is seriously concerned with the connection between youth and drinking and the law and order problems in
towns. The fact that it has recently set up an Office of Youth and Recreation and initiated a National Youth Movement Program seems a clear indication of its determination to tackle youth problems constructively. If so, then the author recommends to the planner the need to get a picture of the youth culture of Papua New Guinea's towns and from that to determine the functions of alcohol in the lives of its young men.

**Daily Summary, Day 4: Discussion**

Dr. Robin Room, the professional resource person for the conference, offered the following list of problems of alcohol in Papua New Guinea, based on the data presented both in papers and discussions during the first four days of the conference: (1) short-term physiological consequences of drinking, which appear to present little problem at this time; (2) long-term physiological consequences of drinking (for example, liver cirrhosis and chronic alcoholism), which seem negligible now but are sure to become increasingly important given Papua New Guineans' rates and patterns of alcohol consumption; (3) crime and social disruption, which is the problem commanding most attention at the present time; (4) accidents, which probably are underestimated in terms of the number caused by alcohol; (5) alcohol's impact on family and work roles seems to be a substantial problem in some areas and negligible elsewhere; (6) public drunkenness, which perhaps is largely a town problem; and (7) psychological and existential issues and problems, which are difficult to estimate and which develop over time.

Other important points that came out of the fourth day's discussion were (1) that men derive most of the benefits and suffer few of the costs of alcohol use and abuse in Papua New Guinea, while the situation is exactly reversed for women; (2) there is a need for educational programs such as films aimed at teaching people the consequences of excessive alcohol consumption; and (3) the reasons why village people drink seem to be quite different from the reasons why many town dwellers drink.
The day concluded with helpful presentations by the official representative from Oro Province, Elisabeth Christina, and by the suspended liquor licensing commissioner of Enga Province, Malipu Balakau, who outlined his vision of village clubs in Enga.
The final day of the conference was given over to five topical workshops, which attracted a large and enthusiastic group of participants. A short summary of the coordinators' reports from each of these workshops follows.

Alcohol, Health and Treatment Facilities in Papua New Guinea, coordinated by Rev. Robert Nordvall, Lutheran Campus Minister, University of Papua New Guinea, Waigani and Dr. Wilfred Moi, Director, Mental Health Services, Department of Health, Konedobu.

Concerning treatment facilities, workshop participants decided that Alcoholics Anonymous and similar agencies might be applicable in Papua New Guinea if properly adapted to local cultural realities. An alcohol detoxification center—Bel Isi—now operates near Sogeri and appears to be working quite well. Workshop members believed much can be done through education programs. Not only should school children receive instruction about alcohol between fourth and sixth grade, but it is critical to educate 'big men', both traditional and modern. Leaders at the national and provincial government levels and from the business community must take an active role in educating the populace to the possible dangers associated with alcohol abuse. Participants in the workshop recommended use of provincial radio station programs as a particularly apt vehicle for disseminating information about alcoholic beverages. They further recommended a special tax on beer to be used to underwrite an alcohol foundation in Papua New Guinea and to support a full-time staff for such an agency. They concluded by noting that advertising of alcoholic beverages should not be reintroduced.

The Economics of Alcohol in Papua New Guinea, coordinated by Gomi Gipey, Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, P.O. Box 5854, Boroko.

Among a number of ideas this group discussed was first the issue of whether liquor sales in a village really constituted _bismis_ (in the sense
of economic development of rural areas) or whether it simply represented
a loss of money from the village to some central collection point.
Second, the tension between government(s), which receive most of the
financial benefits of alcohol, and villagers, who pay most of the
monetary costs of alcohol, was discussed. Third, the group noted that
many politicians and public servants have a vested financial interest
in the alcohol business (especially through ownership of licensed
premises) and discussed conflict-of-interest laws in Papua New Guinea.
The close joining of economic and political power in the country presents
a problem for those who would bring about economic changes that might
negatively affect the elites. Fourth, participants discussed the possible
impacts of price controls, increased taxes on alcoholic beverages, etc.
as these might affect overall national consumption. Fifth, people have
few things on which to spend their money or in which to invest their
income in rural areas; one commentator stated that 'people know that they
are wasting money but they don't care'. Sixth, the group was warned
against assuming expenditures on alcohol are based on rational calcula-
tions when this was perhaps not warranted (alcohol's addictive properties
help create its own demand, just like tobacco). Finally, two interesting
recommendations emerged from this workshop: (1) that if tax on alcohol
is to be increased this be done in the form of a village tax on both
beverages and local licenses, with the funds to be retained at the village
level; and (2) that provincial governments should not encourage the
construction of village clubs and other licensed premises by making Village
Economic Development Fund (VEDF) loans available. The workshop concluded
with an unanswered question: how do we get alcoholic beverages out of
traditional exchanges?

Alcohol and Traffic Accidents in Papua New Guinea, coordinated by James A.
Rosa, Principal Legal Officer, Department of Justice, Waigani.

Comparatively few figures exist on the relationship between alcohol
use and accidents in Papua New Guinea and those that do exist are of
doubtful validity. Nonetheless, the Law Reform Commission assumes that
there is a strong connection and better records in the future (for example,
the police have begun computerizing traffic accident reports) should help
answer the question, 'What is the causal connection between alcohol and
accidents in Papua New Guinea? The participants did not think driver's education courses held much promise for alleviating drunk driving accidents, nor did they feel self-discipline at the individual level to be a likely solution.

Alcohol and Family Problems in Papua New Guinea, coordinated by Rose Kekeko, Secretary, Home Affairs and Director, Department of Community and Family Services, Hohola, and Dr. Ruth Latukefu, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Papua New Guinea, Waigani.

This workshop produced the following seven recommendations: (1) existing laws should be studied so that wives could take their husbands to court if the man abused them while inebriated (and support from the police is needed here); (2) legislation needs to be changed so that domestic problems and civil cases are clearly distinguished; (3) legislation should be passed to allow the wife some control over the amount of beverage alcohol brought into her home by her husband and his friends; (4) a crisis center for women and children abused by drunken husbands needs to be established; (5) family services need to be strengthened throughout the nation; (6) people in urban areas should be housed in ethnic neighborhoods (wantoks living together) so that they could help monitor and police their own areas; and (7) police officers need to be sensitized to the special problems of women seeking their assistance after being abused by a drunken husband.


Four major points emerged from this workshop. First, participants agreed that it is nearly impossible to demonstrate that alcohol abuse causes rape, family violence, tribal fights and the like but at the same time felt strongly that alcohol use increases the incidence, and sometimes the severity, of these offenses. Second, they stressed that licensed premises should be located well away from schools, churches,
sporting facilities, etc. Third, provincial police should be consulted before provincial governments issue new liquor licenses, so that the police could indicate whether or not they would be able to patrol the new premises and control problems that might arise. Finally, the police representatives present emphasized that tougher penalties for alcohol-related offenses may provide at least a partial answer for the current problems.

The conference ended with speeches by Willie Taugau and Dr. Robin Room presenting impressions of the conference's results from the insider's and the outsider's view respectively. The fully edited text of these two speeches will be included in the IASER Monograph to result from the conference.