



# Fluid Communities:

Examining the Cultural-Economic Processes Behind Craft Beer

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## **Abstract**

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The drastic increase of craft breweries globally in recent decades has given birth to a community of beer drinkers who bring with them new values, rituals, and practices. This thesis will explore the development of craft beer communities based on primary research from fieldwork undertaken in 2016 with two case study breweries, Saint Arnold in Houston, Texas and Mikkeller in Copenhagen, Denmark. Using qualitative methods like interviews, observations, and netnography, my aim was to examine the cultural and economic processes involved in creating craft beer communities. The theoretical framework for analysis is two-fold, employing both social and cultural economic theories. Drawing on Bourdieu's theory on cultural capital and Goffman's social theory on dramaturgy, craft beer communities' socio-cultural practices are unpacked, such as the places and spaces community members inhabit, and how they present themselves through personal aesthetics. Community boundary maintenance is also addressed through the lens of gender and knowledge attainment. Meanwhile, cultural economic theory is employed to answer more practical questions like why has craft beer become popular now? Positioning craft beer as a cultural-economic phenomenon also provides a bridge between how craft beer communities exchange cultural capital for economic capital and vice versa, suggesting that a clear distinction between the two has become blurred in contemporary food consumption practices. Differences between manifestations and uses of cultural economic processes between the two cities, ultimately, point to glocalization's influence in shaping craft beer communities.

Keywords: craft beer; cultural economy; experience economy; cultural capital; Pierre Bourdieu; Erving Goffman; gender and beer; food culture studies; community building; craft beer revolution; Saint Arnold Brewing Company; Mikeller; Copenhagen; Houston.

Renee Gonzalez

## Acknowledgments

I would first like to thank Saint Arnold Brewing Company and Mikkeller for their cooperation and help throughout this study. A particular thank you is necessary to Brock Wagner, who graciously let me run around his brewery for an entire summer and drink a lot of Santo. This thesis would not have come to fruition had it not been for the guidance and help of my supervisor Håkan Jönsson, whom I admire as a researcher and feel incredibly fortunate to have worked with. Thank you also to Jessica Enevold for giving me the academic and emotional support I needed throughout a majority of my masters. I would also like to thank my Swedish family Silja Wendt, Ingeborg de Vries and Malva Bark, whose supportive friendships have carried me throughout my time in Sweden and made Swedish grocery stores a little less scary to visit. Lastly, I would like to thank my actual family back in Texas for their unwavering love and support throughout the last 24 years. Ray, thank you for constantly filling our kitchen in that one bedroom apartment with weird foods, coffee, beer, and leather scraps. Mom, you proofed this so I am both equally sorry and forever grateful for all you do at the drop of a hat for me (except answer my Facetime calls apparently). Finally Dad, this thesis is my love letter to you, although I know there will never be enough words to thank you for imparting all your interests and hobbies on me. Cheers!

Lund, 2017-05-02

Renee Gonzalez

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## Introduction

For me, beer has always revolved around family. I grew up with a father who, to this day, loves visiting breweries, and I spent a year after college living in Houston, Texas with my brother Ray, who constantly brought home new beers to try. While in Texas, I never fathomed calling myself a beer "geek," "nerd," "snob," or whatever current terminology was most hip at the time because, at the end of the day, I did not *really* know anything about what I was drinking. What I did know, however, is that the process of drinking beer was a way to bond with my male family members. Our close-knit family community would soon change abruptly, however, as my father and I walked into a small bar tucked into the Nørrebro neighborhood in Copenhagen, Denmark called Mikkeller & Friends in August 2015. While he would be flying back to Texas the next day, I, on the other hand, would be moving 45 minutes north to Lund, Sweden to start a masters program in Applied Cultural Analysis. Welcoming any distraction from our impending goodbyes, we started talking about craft beer and did not stop until the staff kicked us out at closing.

The craft beer conversation at Mikkeller & Friends opened a way to remain close to my father and, even, brother as the reality of physical distance between us set in over the following months. As our family's little transnational beer community grew closer, however, the differences between the craft beer cultures of my home base in Houston and my new home grew increasingly apparent. The case of Denmark was particularly striking. Craft beer was harder to find in Copenhagen, and the price difference between craft and mass-produced products like Carlsberg was more significant than in Texas. Furthermore, none of my newfound friends were remotely interested in craft beer, opting instead for whatever was convenient and cheap. To me, craft beer culture in Denmark appeared to be in its infancy and lacked the ability to bring people together, like it had with my father and me on that warm, memorable day back in August.

These observations brought on a critical eye to my growing personal interest in craft beer. In what ways was craft beer culture different in the United States and Denmark and why? Why was craft beer so expensive in Denmark, and what does that reveal about both cultural and economic values within the Danish craft beer community? Investigating craft beer community building through cultural analysis not only offers answers to these questions but also points to larger cultural as well as

economic processes occurring in the United States and Denmark today. American food historian Warren Belasco (2007) argues that people's relationship with food and beverage extends far beyond that of nourishment because "food is a metaphor for what we like most or least about our society" (pg. 15). If what Belasco says holds any truth, then what do craft beer communities value?

## Aim & Research Questions

The overall aim of this thesis is to study the development of craft beer communities and investigate the cultural-economic practices that influence this process. While a multitude of factors are involved in shaping these identities, the main focus in the thesis will be on the role that social values like cultural capital and economic value play in the shaping of craft beer communities. Exploring social values and behaviors helps to address questions about how people organize themselves around craft beer, while investigating economic processes answers more context based questions like: why has craft beer only become popular in recent decades? Furthermore, what does this popularization say about larger cultural and economic values in American and Danish societies? Exploring the perimeters of craft beer community membership via cultural capital and cultural economy ultimately begs the question— How do individuals construct their identities and establish distinction in a craft beer community?

#### *Importance of This Study*

With craft and microbreweries accounting for 12,2% and 5% of all beer sales in the United States and Denmark, respectively, seemingly every news source and media outlet (see Olmsted, 2016; Cave, 2016) has declared the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the epoch of the craft beer "revolution" (Brewers Association, 2015; Klesjgaard, 2011, 18). While I will address my thoughts on using the term "revolution" to describe craft beer's recent rise in popularity more in depth later, there is no denying that the 21<sup>st</sup> century has ushered in the most significant change in beer consumption habits across the globe since the Industrial Revolution and subsequent rise of mass-produced beer consumption post World War II. Such changes bring about questions of timing: *why now*? What cultural, social, and economic factors have allowed such a revolution to flourish during this time?

In many respects, craft beer functions as a material manifestation of "cultural capital," described by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986) as learned or ingrained social assets that can be exchanged for other forms of capital. Cultural capital in craft beer communities is used to create social distinction and access to membership. Yet, cultural notions like capital and distinction alone cannot fully account for the recent craft beer phenomenon. Economic changes in consumption patterns have also played a pivotal role in craft beer's rise to popularity. In particular, the 21<sup>st</sup> century phenomenon of "culturalized" economies, as described by Paul du Gay and Michael Pryke (2002) and Orvar Löfgren and Robert Willim (2005), has seen cultural processes enact economic processes and vice versa. This merger of culture and economy has subsequently produced new communities of craft consumers that value craft beer as something more than a conduit for alcohol or refreshment. If consumption habits under the cultural economy suggest that beer is now more than just a beverage, what new meaning has it taken on in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

#### Disposition

This thesis focuses on craft beer community building using two breweries as case studies: Saint Arnold Brewing Company in Houston, Texas and Mikkeller in Copenhagen, Denmark. First, I will situate the craft beer phenomenon in each city through a historical background before moving on to a discussion of my material and methodology for this study. Next, I will discuss the theoretical framework used for analysis, which is largely informed by social theories from Pierre Bourdieu and Erving Goffman as well as cultural economic theory inspired by Paul du Gay and Michael Pryke. The empirical discussion begins with brewery ethnographies before delving into Part 1, which tackles the social aspects of craft beer community construction like cultural capital and impression management. In Part 2, I address more cultural economic processes like entrepreneurship and pricing schemes. Finally, I will draw conclusions and address the applicability of this study for craft beer professionals and larger food network communities.

## **Background**

## A "Revolution" Brewing

Beer has been around for centuries, so its development and history is lengthy and nuanced. For the most part, the post-modern narrative of craft beer in society can be summed up with one buzzword: "revolution" (see Acitelli, 2013; Hindy 2014; Hodgson, 2017; Day, 2015); however, I believe this to be a misleading term, as "revolution" suggests that craft beer is completely new when, in fact, it is produced more or less by the same technology and machinery as mass-produced beer. If craft beer itself is not a new product, then why has it been deemed revolutionary? Does use of this terminology actually point to broader changes in food and consumer culture? In order to identify exactly *what* is being revolutionized by craft beer's growing popularity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a good starting point is to identify what craft beer means to people by examining how they define it.

## Defining Craft Beer

Finding a working definition for craft beer is nearly impossible. In the United States, the American Brewer's Association claims, "an American craft brewer is small, independent, and traditional" (American Brewer's Association, 2017) but offers vague or, even, contradictory perimeters as to what these qualities actually entail. For example, the quality "traditional" is described as "a brewer that has a majority of its total beverage alcohol volume in beers whose flavor derives from traditional or innovative brewing ingredients and their fermentation" (American Brewer's Association, 2017). "Traditional" and "innovative" brewing ingredients are inherently contradictory qualities, as tradition connotes respect to old or established customs; whereas, innovation implies newness. Thus, while the American Brewer's Association has attempted to define craft beer, their definition creates more confusion than clarity, bringing up questions of what authenticity means in the craft beer culture. Bryggeriforeningen or the Danish Brewer's Association does not even attempt to define beer, let alone craft beer, claiming on their website that, "there is no product standard in food law that defines what beer is" (Bryggeriforeningen, 2017, translation my own).

Since no general consensus over what exactly constitutes craft beer seems to exist, the best indication of a craft beer definition may come from identifying what it is not, i.e. the cheap, mass-produced, heavily-marketed product of large beverage conglomerates such as Anheuser-Busch In-Bev or the Carlsberg Group. The need to distinguish themselves as "craft brewers" rather than simply "brewers" inherently implies an antagonistic and often tense relationship between craft breweries and their conglomerate counterparts. Where did rivalry between craft and mass-produced arise, and how can it offer insight into why the craft beer phenomenon has been deemed "revolutionary?"

#### *Industrializing Beer*

The Industrial Revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had a lasting impact on Western consumer culture, and beer proved no exemption from these changes, as what people drank and how it was prepared changed radically. During this time, beer production transformed from being made in small batches in various styles depending on local brewing traditions and resources to the mass-produced, largely uniform bottomfermented lager that is the standard norm today. Central to this movement toward mass-produced beer both inside and outside of Denmark was the Carlsberg Brewery. Carlsberg research scientist Emil Christian Hansen developed a method to isolate pure yeast that allowed for "far more control over the yeast process and enabled the brewer to produce a better-tasting beer and minimise production losses" (Klejsgaard, 2011, pg. 15). While this type of innovation brought progress to brewing science and techniques, it also saw the decimation of "top-fermented beers [ales]...from small brewhouses and pubs in post-war Europe and the USA" (Bjergsø & Pang, 2015, pg. 29). As mass-production normalized throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, consumer beer values fell out of touch with craftsmanship, instead favoring the standardized consistency that new technologies promoted. But, as food and beverage culture is one rooted in the changing, evolving, and/or recycling of trends, the era of massproduction of beer was soon to be challenged.

#### Shaping Contemporary Foodways: Industrial Backlash and New Economics

As formidable as industrialization was to shaping 20<sup>th</sup> century Western capitalist consumer culture, backlash to industrialization was equally influential in shaping the post-modern consumerism of today that is constructed from a mix of

industrialized and post-industrialized values. Although it can be argued that industrial backlash began with the Arts and Crafts movement of the late 1800s, I would like to focus on the counterculture movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which had a significant impact on food and beverage consumption habits (Rice, 2016). In Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry, Warren Belasco (2007) argues that the social and political dissidence of the counterculture movement also translated to unrest at the daily life routine level. Growing distrust of governing bodies prompted people to examine their quality of life more closely, including the food they ate and its production. As a consequence, a culinary counterculture grew in opposition of food norms like "cheap and convenient" to favor "craft" foods instead that possessed traits like "organic," "free of preservatives," "locally sourced," "artisanal," and "handmade." Although Belasco's writings use American examples of food counterculture, similar social movements were taking place in Denmark around the same time, as evidenced by the establishment of Free Town Christiania in 1971, a squatter community in the center of Copenhagen influenced and inspired by the cultural revolution in America (Vanolo, 2012). The counterculture movements challenged cultural preconceptions about the integrity of food production, helping to give values like "tradition" in foodways a platform in Western capitalist culture.

Another crucial change to consumer daily life arose in the 1990s with the advent of the Internet and new economy, which birthed a series of economic changes that increasingly "culturalized" economic processes. Taken from a 1983 Time Magazine cover article, the nicknamed "new economy" marked an economic shift from manufacturing to services, catalyzed by new advances in technology like the Internet and personal computers. In Magic, Culture and the New Economy, Swedish ethnologist Orvar Löfgren (2005) details the particular effects of the new economy on postmodern business practices and consumption culture as trends that were heavily affected by new digital technology that changed the way people cultivated, used, stored, and shared information leading into the 21st century. As technology allowed for more efficiency, the economy took on what Löfgren (2005) described as "a new kind of thermodynamic economic growth" where periods of "heat," i.e. rapid economic growth or prosperity, were followed by "cooling" or economic slowdown (pg. 3). Löfgren (2005) goes on to argue that said "heat" not only referred to how "technology, production, and investment" ebbed and flowed in the new economy but also "patterns of consumption and the development of new desires, habits, and

interests" arose as well during this time" (pg.4). American anthropologist Richard Wilk applies this idea of economic "heat" specially to food practices in *Slow Food/Fast Food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System* (2006), which explores how fast or slow moving economic trends were mirrored in food movements like fast food chains or the reinvigorated popularity of artisanal, hand crafted products like cheese. In the subsequent decades following the turn of the century, the new economy permanently "cooled," giving way to what writers James Pine and Joseph Gilmore (1999) termed the experience economy, where experiences were now valued as economic products like goods and services as a consequence of increasingly time crunched Americans who sought convenient experiences that minimized time commitment but maximized memory making:

No longer do customers purchase goods merely for their functional use but also for the experiences created during purchase and use. Similarly, clients do not buy services merely for the sake of having a function delivered by another party but for the memorable events surrounding those services. (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, pg. 100).

Apparently, the experience economy now necessitated a new kind of product that not only functioned but also performed.

So, how are these economic changes and the food counterculture movements of the 1960s and 1970s related to the craft beer phenomenon? Essentially, they helped create an entirely new kind of consumer culture in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century that reflected an amalgam of values from mass-production like "convenience" and "efficiency" coupled with a return to "traditional" and "authentic." Such changes to food cultural practices at large trickled down to beer culture so that beer could no longer just be beer. The atmosphere of the bar it was served in, the music playing in the background, the bartenders uniforms (or personal style), the bar food offered—every single detail surrounding beer now needed to be carefully cultivated to cater to a certain aesthetic to create experiences: specifically, the craft experience. Thus, the stage was set for a craft revolution in beer culture.

#### Growing Craft Grassroots

The counterculture movement served as the impetus for the craft beer revolution as "pale insipid lager beers gave way to darker, frequently homemade ales, bitters, and sours" particularly in California and the United Kingdom (Belasco, 2007,

49). In 1965, Fritz Maytag, often regarded as the craft beer pioneer, purchased Anchor Steam Brewery in San Francisco, and others like Jack McAuliffe of New Albion in Sonoma and Ken Grossman of Sierra Nevada in Chico followed suit in the 1970s and 1980s (Hindy, 2014). Across the Atlantic, craft beer revolution grassroots started in England with the establishment of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) in the early 1970s, which set out to advocate for quality beer and protect small breweries and pubs against English brewing giants like Whitbread and Guinness (Bjergsø & Pang, 2015). Following the example of the above-mentioned Californian breweries and CAMRA, craft brewing slowly started to expand across the United States and Europe. Mikkeller founder Mikkel Borg Bjergsø adds in Mikkeller's Book of Beer that other important players in laying the foundation for the craft beer revolution were small traditional Belgian Trappist breweries, who had been brewing "versatile top-fermented ales" far before the culinary counterculture catalyst came along, but only came into international attention with the establishment of craft beer grassroot movements in California and the United Kingdom (Bjergsø & Pang, 2015). Bjergsø's acknowledgement of Belgian Trappist brewers points to the growing global influence of late 20<sup>th</sup> century economic shifts attributed to the new and experience economies. By the turn of the century, the number of American craft breweries had exploded, growing from to 537 in 1994 to 1,509 by 2000, confirming the idea that consumers were eagerly seeking experiences rooted in "tradition" or "innovation" (American Brewers Association, 2017).

While Denmark lagged behind the United States' craft beer development by about a decade, the country was not immune to the changing foodways processes of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Craft beer's popularization in Denmark coincided with significant changes in larger Danish food practices, particularly with the advent of New Nordic, a gastro-political ideology championed by Danish chef Claus Meyer that opposed French and Mediterranean cuisines in favor of locally sourced food products that reflected Nordic *terroir* or taste of a place (Leer, 2016). As New Nordic culturalized Danish eating and food business practices in the early 2000s, Denmark's gastronomic landscape changed dramatically, which impacted craft beer as the number of breweries grew from 19 in 2000 to 120 by 2010 (Klejsgaard, 2011). Apparently, the craft beer "revolution" had finally arrived in Denmark

#### Previous Research

While much has been written about alcohol's role in shaping cultures (see Hames, 2012), cultural studies on craft beer are significantly more limited. A spark of interest in understanding American craft beer culture has produced texts dissecting and chronicling the United States' craft beer revolution in recent years (see Acitelli, 2013; Hindy 2014; Day, 2015; Rice, 2016), but similar English-language accounts from Denmark remain elusive. In fact, Danish craft beer is often talked about in conjunction with its mass-produced counterpart in both academia and the media (see Klejsgaard, 2011; Nielsen, 2008) undoubtedly attributed to the fact that the craft beer phenomenon is still very much in its infancy compared to the United States. To remedy the lack of craft beer specific cultural studies texts, I framed this thesis in the broader scheme of intersections between social, cultural, and economic processes that contribute to foodways as inspired by Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann in *Foodies: Democracy and Distinction in the Gourmet Foodscape* (2010).

Food historian Warren Belasco, who has written extensively about American food culture in works such as Meals to Come: A History of The Future of Food (2006) and Food (2008), argues in Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry that food serves a role beyond nourishment as "a strong 'edible dynamic' binding past and present, individual and society, private household and world economy, palate and power" (2007, pg. 5). Swedish ethnologist Håkan Jönsson has also produced a variety of texts exploring contemporary food practices in various capacities such as New Nordic (2013), the economics of added value in food (2005), and foodways redux (2014). Central to the food practices Belasco and Jönsson address are the consumers themselves, and how they use food to establish social identity and distinction. While not every consumer subgroup is relevant when examining craft beer community culture, those structured with shared or similar values in appreciation for taste, process, and ingredients are useful for comparative analysis including the Slow Food movement (see Petrini, 2003; Andrews 2008), "foodies" (see Johnston & Baumann, 2010; Neccarato & LeBesco, 2012), and hipsters (see Schiermer, 2013; Michael, 2015; Rasmussen et al, 2012). Supporters of Slow Food inherently value crafted products, so craft beer is likely to fall within their consumption domain, as is also the case with "foodies" or individuals passionate about food and beverage. Johnston and Baumann (2010) point out the role foodies play in creating distinction within a foodscape, often in a contradictory manner: "We

try to eat organic and local food as frequently as possible, but we are not above tucking into food court fries" (pg. 1-2). Contradictions in consumption habits and social distinction are also commonly seen in hipster culture. While previous counter culture movements, like that of the 1960s and 1970s detailed by Warren Belasco, united people under political or ideological causes, Danish sociologist Bjørn Schiermer (2013) argues that hipster culture is one predicated on the "uniformity of the 'individualized,'" in which the consumption of material objects aid in identity management (pg. 170). Therefore, hipsters' use of consumption in the construction of their identity is important to craft beer because it points to the social value in products.

## Methodology

Crafting the Material: Methods

The material for this study was collected using the tools and methods of Applied Cultural Analysis, which blends traditional anthropologic and ethnographic methods with the flexible adaptability often required in a contemporary field or fields. Research at Saint Arnold took place over eight weeks between June and August of 2016 in various Houston locations, including the Saint Arnold brewery, Saint Arnold bar in Minute Maid Park (home of the Houston Astros baseball team), and grocery stores. Research methods centered largely around observations and interviews that focused on the interactions that occur in meeting points between producers and consumers. Observations were largely non-participatory, although spontaneous interactions arose from patrons' or employees' curiosity about my long or frequent presence at bars. In addition to these spontaneous interviews, I conducted four in-depth individual interviews and two focus group interviews ranging from 2-5 people that were recorded and transcribed. Most informants were native Houstonians or people who had been living in Houston for several years. Informants of particular importance to this thesis were Alyssa the schoolteacher married to a Saint Arnold bartender and her 13 year old son Bryce, Paty the road planner, Sarah the professional brewer and Maggie the bar manager; all names were changed to protect informants' identities.

A similar research strategy was enacted for the Copenhagen side of the project, which took place over eight weeks between September and November of 2016 at Mikkeller establishments throughout the city including the Viktoriagade and Stefansgade bars, the bottle shop in Torvehallerne food hall, and restaurants like Warpigs and Ramen to Biiru. Since I was commuting from Lund to Copenhagen (roughly 1 hour train ride) for research, fieldwork occured mostly on weekends, when the field sites would be most crowded. Again, interviews and observations served as the main methods of data collection. A total of three in-depth, individual interviews with consumers, two focus groups with 2-5 consumer participants, and numerous short, spontaneous interviews with employees were conducted and transcribed. All informants were Danish except for two Americans. Notable informants who will be mentioned in the analysis were Jeppe the student, Asker the university worker, Karen the student, Søren the tech industry worker, Anna the American living in Denmark for three years who spoke Danish fluently, and her Danish boyfriend Jakob, a university student. As my research in Copenhagen developed, I relied increasingly on netnography, or ethnography over the Internet (see Kozinets, 2015) as a form of observation of Mikkeller's company persona, values, and interactions with consumers in cyberspace. Netnographic research focused largely on lectures, presentations, documentaries, and interviews with Mikkeller founder Mikkel Borg Bjergsø, in addition to closely following the companies' numerous social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram.

## Following Craft Beer: A Multi-Sited Approach

The choice to use breweries as case studies was largely inspired by George Marcus' notion of multi-sited ethnography, where one follows the "thing" of interest throughout multiple field sites (Marcus, 1995). With the "thing" of interest being craft beer, there were seemingly infinite places and spaces I could follow; thus, narrowing craft beer to two particular breweries, Saint Arnold and Mikkeller, allowed me to follow the products and how they moved throughout their respective cities in a manageable manner. While these choices were admittedly random as two points of comparison, interestingly, during the time of writing, Sierra Nevada, often regarded as the godfather of craft breweries, announced the line up for their third annual "Beer Camp," a limited edition twelve pack of beer featuring collaborations with twelve different breweries (Smith, 2017). Included in this line up were beers from both Saint

Arnold and Mikkeller, which confirms that both breweries serve as excellent representations of their respective city's craft beer communities.

Multi-sitedness in this study not only refers to the multiplicity of field sites in Houston and Copenhagen, but also the space of study itself. Since producers were as important research subjects as consumers, online presence was vital to understanding the public persona of each brewery. Field sites included the physical spaces of the bars, shops, and restaurants craft beer inhabited as well as the cyberspace constructed around craft beer through breweries' social media accounts as well as online beer communities like Ratebeer.com. While this research was technically comprised of two projects conducted in different times and countries, I treated all the material as one collective, multi-sited study that focused on following craft beer. This approach allowed me to use the two drinking cultures as contrastive points of reference, making for easy and apparent comparisons during research and later in analysis. Thus, the material collected focuses on the most stark similarities and differences between craft beer communities in Houston and Copenhagen.

## Craft Conversations: Interviewing

Interviewing techniques were largely inspired by Welsh anthropologist Charlotte Aull Davies' notion of "ethnographic interviewing" in Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others (1999). Serving as negotiation between unstructured and structured interviews, "semi-structured" or "ethnographic interviewing" treats the interview conversation as a "process in which interviewer and interviewee are both involved in developing understanding, that is in the construction their knowledge of the social world" (Davies, 1999, pg. 97-98). One of the main shortcomings of this method is that the interviewer should remain as neutral as possible, a task that was difficult to avoid with respect to two particular types of bias: being a native, in the case of Houston, and being a craft beer enthusiast. Davies (1999) argues that while many researchers conduct studies in societies that are not their own, which comes with cultural learning curves, the danger of researching in one's own society is "the difficulty...to guard against assuming that [the researcher's] particular perspective is shared by their informant" (pg. 108). Thus, it was important to be careful to establish myself as a craft beer researcher not enthusiast while working in Texas to avoid projecting personal beer preferences into the interview process and skewing the shared knowledge developed between myself and the

informants during the interview process. Consequently, the empirical material collected from interviews in Houston and Copenhagen clearly are not representative of all American and Danish craft beer consumers or producers, but, rather, serve as small glimpses of "social and cultural realities" of craft beer culture in both countries (Davies, 1999, pg. 96).

## Drinking Responsibly: Ethics

Alcohol is a contentious subject in society and equally so in academia; thus, conducting research around craft beer in a responsible and ethical manner was essential. Davies (1999) addresses ethical research practices centered around three concepts: consent, confidentiality, and covert material. Regarding consent, both breweries knew the details of my project and how the material would be used before signing a work placement contract.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, consumer informants were also briefed on the details of my study, how any material collected from them would be used, and asked to verbally consent to being recorded before interviews began. Beyond ethical and logistical purposes, being transparent about my research with informants also aided in establishing rapport to make them more engaged with the interview.

The concept of transparency also applies to Davies' second ethical consideration, confidentiality, in an interesting manner. While preserving the identities of consumer informants posed no issue, working with two businesses when collecting producer material was a delicate ethical balance. Academic analysis of any business can be problematic even if consent is obtained because insights can be interpreted as critical. For example, Danish food culture researcher Jonatan Leer (2016) addresses an incident in 2013 when food sociologist Arun Michelsen stated that Claus Meyer and Arne Astrup attempted to make him tone down his critique of New Nordic in his doctoral dissertation, which included results suggesting there was "significant resistance to the diet" (pg. 7). While material involving Saint Arnold and Mikkeller employees is used in a way that cannot be traced back to specific individuals, online resources from netnography were used to further negate issues of confidentiality since the Internet is a public domain.

Davies' final ethical concept centers around covert material, or collecting data from informants without their knowledge, generally in the form of observation. This was not an issue during a majority of research with fellow bar/brewery patrons; however, my presence did alarm bartenders in a way that likely altered their normal

work behavior. All bartenders were aware of my research project, which affected their behavior in two specific ways: some were suspicious and more guarded around me; whereas, others proved to be helpful and resourceful, with some even going out of their way to find me informants to interview. The latter category was particularly true of female workers, which will be addressed more in the "Gender Role" section.

Collecting material covertly brings up the most contentious ethical issue for this study: Should I drink during research? Since sobriety seems like an obvious necessity when conducting any research, I did not drink initially during fieldwork; however, bartenders quickly pointed out that it was "weird" that I did not drink, which made me realize that consuming alcohol actually contributed to my credibility as a researcher. This is not to say I drank excessively, but I often ordered a "prop" beer when I arrived at a field site that legitimized me as a patron if I was doing covert research or credible craft beer researcher if I was interviewing. Likewise, interview informants were allowed to drink during interviews as they were conducted in bars, but I did not encourage them personally.

## Limitations & Learning Outcomes

As previously mentioned, netnography became crucial during the Danish side of research which undoubtedly affected the learning outcomes of this study. Significant logistical issues took form in scheduling problems and lack of cooperation with Mikkeller's headquarter employees. My point of contact within the company changed several times throughout fieldwork, and I was eventually pawned off on a female intern, who, although was eager and helpful, did not hold a powerful enough position to accommodate some of my requests, such as interviews with company employees. Gaining access to the company was important for performing a "double cultural analysis," a methodology advocated by Billy Ehn, Orvar Löfgren, and Richard Wilk in Exploring Everyday Life: Strategies for Ethnography and Cultural Analysis (2016) in which learning the company culture one works with is as relevant as learning the culture surrounding a subject of study. Since this "double cultural analysis" was impossible to accomplish in person with Mikkeller, I re-focused observation of company culture and values to the persona they have crafted around their active online presence, including a multitude of Facebook and Instagram accounts in addition to their frequently updated website. I argue such shifting of methodological approach is common, if not essential, to the research process because

cultural studies are "inherently anticipatory" and data cannot (or should not) be "collected in an instrumental manner," as argued by Danish anthropologist Frida Hastrup's (2011) in her reading of British anthropologist Marylin Sathern's writings on the relationship between researcher, subject, and the field (pg. 437). Thus, the lack of interaction or observation within the Mikkeller company headquarter environment did not hinder the ability to perform research, but, rather, simply altered the trajectory and subsequent outcome of this study to include the Internet as equally valid observation space.

Another significant influence on research outcomes was language barriers. My lack of Danish language skills affected all aspects of research, including interviews, which had to be conducted in English. While my Danish informants were proficient English speakers, there is no denying that having to answer questions in their non-native language altered the content and meaning of their responses, as Davies (1999) argues that "different interpretations and understandings may hide behind shared vocabularies" (pg. 113). Language barriers also pointed to a lack of cultural competence that Professor Barbara Czarniawska, who specializes in fieldwork methodology, addresses as insider/outsider perspectives in *Shadowing and Other Techniques for Doing Fieldwork in Modern Societies* (2007):

An observer can never know *better* than an actor; a stranger cannot say *more* about any culture than a native, but observers and strangers can see *different* things than actors and natives can (pg. 20).

Given that I was neither living in Denmark nor could understand Danish, I was both an observer, particularly of craft beer drinking rituals and habits in Copenhagen, as well as a stranger, to how craft beer was being spoken about. This "double outsider" perspective may have hindered some of my in-person research capabilities, particularly in the case of interviews. Beyond language, my outsider-ness was also reinforced when discussing concepts like *Janteloven* (Law of Jante), which is not an actual law so much as a social code that rejects the backwards, small town mindset inspired by Askel Sandemoe's book *En flyktning kryssers sitt spor* (A Refugee Crosses His Tracks) (Robinowitz & Carr, 2001, pg. 82). Many native informants were skeptical of an American asking them about a concept they considered to be inherently Danish, questioning my knowledge of *Janteloven*. Ironically, many of the informants were also unaware that *Janteloven* also existed in Norway and Sweden

(spelled as *Jantelagen*), which points to what Czarniawksia deems an advantage of outsiderness: being able to see things natives may overlook due to familiarity.

In contrast to my outsider-ness in Copenhagen was, of course, my insider-ness in Houston, which also likely affected the outcome of the material. Interviewing with native English speakers came with an ease that was aided by the fact that most informants were raised in Texas like myself, contributing to a shared culture that facilitated the interview process; however, the navigation of language required in interviewing, albeit familiar ease in the case of Houston or impossibility in the case of Copenhagen, mandated that other methods focusing on non-verbal or non-physical behavior like observations and netnography be used to support or contradict if individuals actually *did* what they *said*. In this sense, my insider-ness in Houston did not necessarily translate to more productive or insightful material than what was produced in Copenhagen.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

This section outlines the theoretical framework used for analyzing the material collected throughout fieldwork. Using Warren Belasco's notion that food is indicative of larger cultural phenomenon at play, craft beer serves as material manifestation of what people value: is it worthy or unworthy enough to physically put inside their bodies and for what reasons? Thus, craft beer culture clearly serves as more than a form of consumption but is, in fact, an expression of how individuals organize themselves to create a community around a common material object: craft beer. While many social and economic theories will be considered throughout analysis of craft beer culture, there are two foundation theoretical themes: the social aspects of community building and cultural economy. The social theory component is rooted largely in Pierre Bourdieu's work on social distinction and cultural capital, and Erving Goffman's theory on impression management. Meanwhile, cultural economic theory is inspired by Paul du Gay and Michael Pryke's edited works but also borrows heavily from Orvar Löfgren and Robert Willim's writings on the new economy.

Beginning with social theory, Bourdieu (1986) describes the social traits and characteristics, such as the way people dress or the foods they buy and consume, as "cultural capital," which is influenced and shaped by their physical environment and social upbringing. Bourdieu's works with middle class French school children (see

Bourdieu 1984; Bourdieu 1986) show that individuals with similar upbringings not only share a habitus— a system of dispositions that influence how individuals perceive and react to their environment—but also possess similar cultural capital. For example, school children's relation to art is affected by how they are introduced to it, either "belatedly, in the quasi-scholastic atmosphere of the museum" which differs greatly from those "born into a world filled with art objects, familiar family property, amassed by successive generations, testifying to their wealth and good taste" (Bourdieu, 1984, pg. 75). I believe it is important to first qualify why I chose Bourdieu and cultural capital, a seemingly tired and predictable theory in food cultural studies, to unpack craft beer communities. Although mass-produced beer is traditionally championed as the alcoholic beverage of the lower or working class (see: SIRC, 1998, pg. 23), craft beer has achieved some kind of elevated status in society, reflected in its higher price point and, often, limited availability compared to its massproduced counterpart. While not as expensive or reputable in status as other alcoholic beverages like wine or spirits, craft beer has become the beverage of the middle class, who uses cultural capital to compensate for lack of economic capital (Bourdieu, 1984). Thus, cultural capital is not only relevant for understanding the value system of craft beer communities but also the social class (i.e. the middle class) in which they are situated.

Inspired by the concept of cultural capital, Peter Naccarato and Kathleen LeBesco (2012) have applied Bourdieu's theory to examine contemporary middle class food consumption habits, using the term "culinary capital" in a book by the same name, which explores the idea that "certain food practices give people a sense of distinction within their communities" beyond factors like price (pg. 1). Given the perpetually changing landscape of food and beverage trends, however, Naccarato and LeBesco emphasize their argument around the fluid nature of culinary capital, which can either be used to conform to food practices or rebel against them. Furthermore, they acknowledge that culinary capital contributes only a partial component of an individual's identity construction and possession of other forms of capital and affluence give one an advantage:

What makes one path to culinary capital any more legitimate than another is completely arbitrary, but those with symbolic capital have the capacity to establish their route to culinary capital as privileged insofar as they are

authorized to make their claims about reality stick. (Naccarato & LeBesco, 2012, 114).

Equally important in determining the identity of a community is evaluating how members conduct themselves, both internally with other community members and externally with non-members. Erving Goffman's writings on social interactions in Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life (1959) provide a working theoretical frame, which I have used for examining the behavior of craft beer community members. Goffman explains social interaction through analogies and comparisons to theatre performance, in that individuals will tailor their roles to fit a certain setting or scene. Such performances, albeit consciously done or not, help to manage the impression an individual gives to others as well as how the individual themselves believe they are being perceived. Goffman goes on to explain that performances are sectioned into front stage and back stage personas. Front stage refers to the "part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance" and serves as "the expressive equipment of a standard kind intentionally or unwittingly employed by the individual during his performance" (Goffman, 1959, pg. 13). While front stage activities are used to accentuate personality characteristics or behaviors, qualities "which might discredit the fostered impression, are suppressed" to the back stage, "where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course" (Goffman, 1959, pg. 69).

The theory of cultural and culinary capital is a relevant starting point for identifying who is and is not allowed into a craft beer community and, more importantly, why. Goffman's theory on social interaction allows analysis to go a step further by examining group members at an individual level. Thus, the combined theories of cultural/culinary capital and impression management provide a solid theoretical framework for this thesis by examining the value system used to bring individuals together in a craft beer community as well as how said individuals utilize or hide personal attributes to gain access to a group.

While Bourdieu and Goffman's social theory allow for understanding the social aspects of the craft beer phenomenon, they do not account for an explanation as to why craft beer has popularized in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as opposed to previous food epochs like the counterculture movement of the 1960s and 1970s. To address this, I will employ cultural economic theory, or the convergence of cultural and economic

practices in the new and experience economies previously discussed in the Background section. Du Gay and Pryke (2002) argue that the traditional relationship of cultural studies and political economy— i.e. one of strife and tension— has given way to "an era in which economic and organizational life has become increasingly 'culturalized'" (pg. 6). A significant consequence of this "culturalized" economy is the expectations consumers have of products they purchase and how they are marketed:

They [cultural goods] maintain that there is a growing aestheticization or 'fashioning' of seemingly banal products whereby these are marketed to consumers in terms of particular clusters of meaning, often linked to 'lifestyles', and this is taken as an indication of the increased importance of 'culture' to the production and circulation of a multitude of goods and services. (du Gay & Pryke, 2002, pg. 7).

Culturalizing economic products is also the basis for Pine and Gilmore's *The* Experience Economy (1999), in which they argue that business in the cultural economy is a performance, applying Goffman's theory on dramaturgy. The performative nature of cultural economic business practices contributes to added meaning associated with products beyond their function. Examples of added meaning specifically in food products is addressed in Håkan Jönsson's (2005) essay in Magic, Culture, and The New Economy about added-value in dairy products, where the illusory qualities of milk, like packing, marketing, and, even, political messages are "just as important as the milk itself" (pg. 113). Jönsson's application of cultural economic theory in examining food processes is important because the ushering in of the new economy was driven largely by the progression of "high tech" products like personal computers and mobile devices, not common, "low tech" products like food; yet, Jönsson (2005) argues that the notion of the food industry as simply a "late imitator of other businesses" (i.e. "high tech" ones) is "too simplistic, because in many respects it could even be seen as a pioneer, just as it might have been when the industrial production system was developed" (pg. 105-106). Thus, modern day food phenomena like craft beer no longer only reflect social or cultural values like cultural/culinary capital but also economic values and patterns as well.

#### A Tale of Two Breweries

The aim of this section is to examine the way craft beer communities are constructed in two different geographical and cultural contexts, Houston and Copenhagen. As community building is a large and complex social process with many moving parts, I will begin with a general ethnography of Saint Arnold and Mikkeller before further exploring these craft beer communities through two parts, cultural capital and cultural economy, with the ultimate intention of demonstrating that the two processes are now inseparable. The first part illuminates the various forms of cultural capital prevalent in craft beer communities like space, place, and time, craft aesthetics, and gender. The second part then addresses economic processes like pricing and "home town pride" intertwined with the cultural processes established in the first part to illustrate craft beer consumption patterns. Analysis through these themes will ultimately provide insights to important questions surrounding craft beer culture.

#### Saint Arnold: Patron Saint of Houston

Founded in 1994 in Houston, Saint Arnold Brewing Company is the oldest craft brewery in Texas, although it bears this title by default (any Texas breweries established before it have since gone out of business). They were named after Saint Arnold, a 7<sup>th</sup> century Bishop in France who encouraged townspeople to drink beer instead of contaminated local water (Helman, 2011). They produce all of their beer and a non-alcoholic root beer soda in house at their brewery, a converted school system food storage facility on the outskirts of downtown Houston that also houses their corporate office. The company employs roughly 50 people and produces 9,5 million liters annually (Gonzalez, email correspondence, April 19, 2017). The brewery is open to the public six days a week, with tours twice a day and an open space beer hall that looks into the production plant through large windows. Outside the brewery, Saint Arnold's presence in Houston is virtually omnipresent. Their products can be found in gas station bodegas, grocery store chains, restaurants and, even, professional sports arenas. In fact, there is a Saint Arnold bar, designed to replicate the beer hall inside the brewery, behind third base at Minute Maid Park, which houses the Houston Astros baseball team. Beyond Houston, Saint Arnold also distributes throughout Texas and in parts of Louisiana and Florida.

#### Mikkeller: The Cool Kids Of Copenhagen

Mikkeller burst onto the Danish beer scene abruptly in 2005 when "Beer Geek Breakfast," their now infamous oatmeal stout, was voted the best stout in the world by Ratebeer.com (Bjergsø & Pang, 2015, pg. 21). While company founders Mikkel Borg Bjergsø and Kristian Keller, for whom the company's name is a portmanteau, started home brewing in 2003, Mikkeller was not commercially founded in Copenhagen until after its overnight success in 2006, although Keller left the company in 2007 (Bjergsø & Pang, 2015, pg. 24). Regarding production, Mikkeller relies heavily on a process called "nomad" brewing, where they do not own a brewery themselves but, rather, subcontract production space from other breweries; thus, a majority of Mikkeller's commercial beers are actually brewed at De Proefbrouwerij in Belgium. At the time of writing, I could not find or obtain any credible source relaying Mikkeller's annual production. According to Ratebeer.com's log, however, they released 111 new beers in 2016 alone (Ratebeer, 2017).

Since Mikkeller does not own a brewery in Copenhagen, its presence is spread throughout the city, concentrated in two particularly "hip" boroughs, Vesterbro and Nørrebro. In Vesterbro is their Viktoriagade bar, the first Mikkeller bar built in 2010, along with Warpigs, a Texas barbeque inspired restaurant and brewpub in Kødbyen (meat packing district), Ramen to Biiiru, a Japanese ramen restaurant, and the Mikkeller HQ offices. In Nørrebro, there is another Ramen to Bíiru, the Mikkeller and Friends bar, and the official bottle shop located inside the trendy Torvehallerne food hall. Additionally, there are two newer Mikkeller developments outside of the Vesterbro-Nørrebro cluster, the barrel room in Refshaleøen and Haven bar in Nyhayn.<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that while these Mikkeller owned bars or restaurants may feature beers from other craft breweries, Danish or otherwise, none carry Carlsberg products. Furthermore, the company is adamant about not being sold in grocery or convenience store chains like Irma, Netto, Fakta, or 7-11, so consumers seeking Mikkeller products must trek to specialty grocery shops like Kihøskh in Vesterbro. Similarly, finding Mikeller on tap is reserved for specialty beer bars like Ølbar in Nørrebro or Fermentoren in Vesterbro, as traditional Danish bars, often called "værtshuse" or "bodegas" in English, don't normally stock their products.

## Part 1: Amassing Cultural Capital

To understand the ways in which craft beer is used as cultural capital (via consumption) and identify the craft beer consumers who possess it, I have mapped out where and how craft beer is consumed, and what that experience looks like. Narrowing focus, I will then examine the role of craft aesthetics within these places and spaces, from how the breweries are decorated to the design of the bottle labels. Lastly, I explore how these aesthetics choices point to conflicting gender roles within craft beer places, spaces, and the greater community.

## Place & Space: The Saint Arnold Brewery

So, in what places and spaces do craft beer and the communities built around it arise? It is important to first clarify that the definitions of space and place as I use them are inspired by Merleau-Ponty's (1945) phenomenological definitions of *space* as a socially produced experience and *place* as a definite, arranged location. In the case of Saint Arnold, their brewery served a significant and singular merger of place and space. The brewery consists of a production plant that occupies the ground floor, while there is a large, open beer hall complete with a bar and long communal picnic benches for seating. The beer hall is adjoined to the production plant through huge windows, allowing for consumers to imbibe in the beer hall while looking directly into the top floor of the production plant.



Image 1: Saint Arnold brewery beer hall

Patrons' ability to physically see the beer that they were drinking being produced had a huge impact on their experience, as described by one bartender's wife Alyssa while visiting the brewery with her 13 year old son Bryce: "You come here and you literally see the brewery. You see the end product in your cup but then you also see faces and you can kind of, in a way, humanize what you're consuming" (Gonzalez, personal communication, July 1, 2016). This "humanizing" nature of the brewery space that Alyssa refers to can be best understood through Goffman's notion on front stage and back stage. According to Goffman (1959), impressions are managed through various contexts, like a bar setting, and personal fronts, which are divided into a front stage and backstage. Much like in theatre, the front stage serves as an arena where impressions must be managed publically to an audience, whereas the back stage serves as the area the audience cannot see, so performances can be adjusted, scrutinized or dropped all together (Goffman, 1959, pg. 70). Traditionally, the production plant serves as a brewery's backstage, wherein the final products are made and/or tweaked before being packaged and presented to consumers in the beer hall; however, the glass windows at Saint Arnold that literally created transparency into the brewery's production plant backstage also fostered a sense of social transparency as described by Alyssa.

The flipping of a brewery's backstage space of production into a front stage arena has become popular in many American breweries via the practice of brewery tours, in which patrons are given access to the production plant, albeit usually limited and monitored due to health and safety reasons. In particular, a Saint Arnold beer tour consisted of an enthusiastic tour guide providing information about the brewery's history in addition to the actual brewing method through a mix of whimsy, jokes, trivia, and plenty of "cheers!" (patrons are encouraged to take a beer with them for the tour). Applying Goffman's front stage-backstage theory again, the tour guide can be considered a performer, using the production plant as a stage to manage certain images or values that Saint Arnold wants to convey to its audience (i.e. the patrons). While a patron's motivation for going on the beer tour was subjective and dependent on the individual, the aforementioned 13 year old Bryce touched upon one possible common motivator: knowledge attainment. To be clear, I did not interview children for ethical reasons; however, as Bryce was accompanying his mother Alyssa, he piped into our conversation frequently, to which she consented. He was particularly excited to explain why the beer tour was his favorite part of the brewery, not because he was

interested in the taste of beer but, rather, wanted to learn more about the science behind making it. In this respect, the brewery tour offered him the ability to access new knowledge about a scientific process in a highly engaging manner via the tour guide's performance. Thus, by turning the production space into a front stage that hosted performances intended to educate patrons about craft beer, Saint Arnold uses the brewery space to create a sense of closeness and familiarity with their products.

The presence of children, much like Bryce with his mother Alyssa, also significantly shaped the Saint Arnold brewery space. Children are allowed into the brewery, and a non-alcoholic root beer soda is served for free at the bar next to the beer taps. During research, I observed many children go up to the bar to ask for root beer unaccompanied by their parents in a small but openly prideful act of independence, suggesting that the root beer played an important role in allowing children to "participate" in the performance of drinking. Since they were legally not allowed to drink, the root beer functioned as what Goffman (1959) would consider a "stage prop" that allowed children to perform alongside their parents, helping them to feel included and blend into the collective front stage performance patrons assume by drinking inside the brewery (pg. 13). In fact, many native Houstonian patrons I spoke with remembered drinking Saint Arnold root beer as kids long before they turned 21 (legal drinking age in the United States) and, therefore, associated the space of the brewery with the sugary soda rather than actual beer. As these patrons eventually came of age, it was clear that the brewery transformed into a new kind of space that they could now enjoy with families of their own, yet the practice of the drinking performance from childhood stuck with them. In this sense, the Saint Arnold brewery served as both a place and space for adults and children alike to commune together over beer or, in the latter's case, root beer.

## Place & Space: Mikkeller Here, Mikkeller There

Following Mikkeller around Copenhagen presented an interesting dichotomy between omnipresent and elusive. Given the numerous aforementioned bars, shops, and restaurants they have throughout Copenhagen, in some respects, one could say Mikkeller has cemented itself, quite literally, into the city. A closer examination of the physical places Mikkeller owns in Copenhagen reveals that craft beer takes on roles of varying importance depending on which location one visits. For example, the Viktoriagade bar was built to serve as a place for interested patrons, whether tourists

or locals, to visit and interact with the Mikkeller brand; however, Mikkel Borg Bjergsø also acknowledges that he wanted to challenge normal Danish conventions of what a bar could be to "show people that you can actually drink beer in a different environment" (CreativeMornings HQ, 2015). The "different environment" Bjergsø refers to is the traditional Danish værtshuse or "bodegas," which were described by Anna, an American living in Denmark for several years, as poorly lit bars where the "beer is quite cheap and usually people are smoking inside and there are a lot of older people" (Gonzalez, email correspondence, April 13, 2017). 4 Evidently, the Viktoriagade bar serves as a de-facto flagship for Mikkeller since they don't have a brewery, and the design of the bar aims to facilitate focus around craft beer. In contrast, their restaurants Ramen to Bíiru (in Nørrebro and Vesterbro) aim for an authentic Japanese ramen bar experience where craft beer takes a backseat to food, although Mikkeller has developed a beer specifically to accompany (or be poured straight into) the ramen. Their newest bar Haven is a result of a collaboration with famous chef and New Nordic diet advocate Claus Meyer and The National guitarist Aaron Dessner to create a music festival near the bar grounds in August, which aims to engage all the senses by paring music (hearing) with equally good food, beer (taste, smell), and art (sight). In this case, craft beer does not take a front or back seat to any of the other festival offerings, but, rather, functions as one of the many moving parts to create a new kind of entertainment experience. The varying roles of craft beer in these different Mikkeller establishments suggest that there are, in fact, various incarnations of Mikkeller throughout Copenhagen. While these different places serve different purposes – albeit a place to eat, bar to drink and socialize or be entertained – they help reinforce Mikkeller's omnipresent collective space throughout Copenhagen as something that extends beyond beverage as a full-rounded gastronomic experience predicated on craft beer.

Outside of official Mikkeller-sanctioned places, however, the company's products become much more elusive. Part of this elusiveness is self-imposed by the company, as evidenced by their refusal to distribute to grocery store chains. Much of Copenhageners' food/beverage purchasing habits are dictated not necessarily by what consumers want so much as what is most convenient. Internationally renowned for their high use of bicycles, Copenhageners don't often drive to the grocery store but, rather, cycle or walk to whatever is closest. This necessity for proximity translates to a grocery chain on seemingly every block. So, consumers seeking to buy beer for

private consumption, albeit in their own home or elsewhere, are likely to purchase from whatever store is closest, and, therefore, their selection is completely dependent on whatever said store has in stock at the time. While there are specialty shops that carry craft beer like the Mikkeller Bottle Shop or Kihøskh, consumers are less likely to go out of their way to visit them, as confirmed by three Danish males at the Viktoriagade bar, who were there specifically to be interviewed by me and noted how they never visited that part of town (Vesterbro) normally. The case of Kihøskh also provides a striking difference as to how Mikkeller products are treated outside of company owned places. While there exists a large selection of Mikkeller beers in the basement of Kihøskh, a testament to the close friendship between the two businesses that has resulted in several collaboration beers, they ultimately get lost in the store's overwhelming selection, which features beers from all over the world. Unless one lives nearby, Kihøskh and other specialty beer shops are reserved for the craft beer enthusiasts who are willing to trek for products, though they may not necessarily be Mikkeller's.

## Cyberspace: Creating Distinction & Democracy

Mikkeller's presence in Copenhagen definitely tows the line of being readily available for those seeking them and seemingly invisible to those who are not. As evidenced by the case of Saint Arnold, having a physical brewery serves a vital role in creating a singular place and space for consumers, so how does Mikkeller remedy their lack of a brewery? With dozens of Instagram and Facebook accounts, a well maintained website, and a Youtube channel, clearly Mikkeller has used the Internet to create a craft beer cyber space that functions similar to the Saint Arnold brewery space yet with the added advantage of global access. While there are literally thousands of comments that can be used to exemplify how consumers create space for craft beer communities online, I will use one online review of Mikkeller's "Beer Geek Breakfast" stout on the popular site Ratebeer.com to demonstrate how consumers use cyberspace in craft beer communities.



**4.1** AROMA 8/10 APPEARANCE 5/5 TASTE 8/10 PALATE 5/5 OVERALL 15/20 Spab (3662) - Toronto, Ontario, CANADA - APR 2, 2017

650 ml bottle from Canada Craft Club. Pours a nearly black colour with moderate-sized, creamy mochacoloured head. Aroma is quite smoky with coffee, dark chocolate and a mellow citric character. Flavour is big and roasty, verging on smoky with coffee, dark chocolate, licorice and citric hops. Big body. Impressive.

#### Image 2: Ratebeer.com review

The review is fairly standard as far as reviews on Ratebeer.com go, documenting important qualities like color, aroma, and flavor in addition to indicating where the beer was purchased from, as evidenced by the "from Canada Craft Club" comment in the beginning. Although seemingly straightforward and trivial, this review represents the practically pedagogic purpose of online craft communities as information providers. In this respect, craft cyberspaces like Ratebeer.com have become community spaces for craft beer gastronomes. In Of Gastronomes and Guides (2005), English sociologist Stephen Mennell addresses the role of the gastronome in food culture as a distinct figure who promotes the "correct tastes" of the elite yet has also "performed a democratizing function in the shaping of taste" through the publishing of guides or reviews, such as those seen from Ratebeer.com, which are then circulated outside of elite circles (pg. 239). The dual function of Mennell's gastronome illustrates how craft beer cyber spaces serve to both create distinction among more established community members, but also helps to attract or educate those who are new to craft beer. Although anyone with an account can leave reviews like the one shown above, the Ratebeer.com website has a community oriented rating system that ranks reviewers in a similar manner to how it ranks beers.

## **Top Beer Raters**

The following beer raters have demonstrated excellence in the pursuit of experiencing the widest possible range of flavors, aromas and settings in the world of beer. Congratulations!

	name	location	beer ratings	place ratings
1	fonefan	=	48040	47
2	yespr	=	44055	43
3	Ungstrup	=	36902	363

Image 3: Ratebeer.com beer raters ranking

This user ranking system creates distinction within the Ratebeer.com community because the higher user ratings are, the more trustworthy or credible their reviews are

perceived to be by other community members. Such distinction among reviewers plays well into Mennell's notion of the gastrome as the standard bearer for "correct taste" in that if someone with a high beer rating on Ratebeer leaves a positive review for a certain beer, many other users are bound to accept that review as true or correct. This is exactly how Mikkeller got its start, after Ratebeer.com declared their "Beer Geek Breakfast" stout the best stout in the world in 2006 (Bjergsø & Pang, 2015, pg. 21). At the time of writing, five of the top ten beer raters on Ratebeer.com came from Denmark, suggesting that demonstrating "correct taste" through the ability to access and review beers is of particular importance to the Danish craft beer community members' cultural capital (Ratebeer.com, 2017).

While user ratings help create an elitist distinction within the Ratebeer.com and larger craft beer community, the accessibility of Internet also facilitates the democratization of tastes to members and non-members alike. Mennell (2005) writes that a "gastronome is more than a gourmet – he is also a theorist and propagandist about culinary taste" given their ability to not only cultivate their own standards of taste but also that of other people's too through the act of writing reviews or guides (pg. 240). The "propaganda" that craft beer gastronomes like Ratebeer.com reviewers spread is that of selective knowledge, such as which elements in beer tasting that should be considered important as evidenced by the aroma, appearance, taste, palate categories in the example review. While the Internet aids in democratizing taste via easy accessibility to information about craft beer, Mennell (2005) acknowledges that gastronomes usually constitute an "expert" minority whose behaviors and expectations rarely match "how the majority of people...actually behave" (pg. 245), which calls into question the authenticity of craft beer community members' online behavior. Lesser-educated members or those lacking cultural capital may adopt the opinions (i.e. tastes) of those who have taken on gastronome roles in the community, such as top raters.

#### Timing: Generational Differences

Saint Arnold and Mikkeller's approach to place and space are obviously starkly different, which is not only a reflection of their geographical differences – Houston has massive urban sprawl that supports large building structures whereas Copenhagen is condensed and notoriously lacking in space, as reflected in their housing shortage—but also in the timing of their foundation (The Local, 2016). While

I have previously discussed the popularization of craft beer as a singular phenomenon dating back to the 1970s and peaking in the mid-2000s, there have actually been two "waves" of popularity within the phenomenon, which I will categorize as "old school" and "new wave" from here on out. The first generation of craft brewers arose largely in the early 1990s, building off the momentum created by pioneers like Sierra Nevada's Ken Grossman and the United Kingdom's CAMRA. Having been founded in 1992, Saint Arnold definitely falls into the "old school" category. The term "old school" does not refer so much to the brewery's age but, rather, the respect they receive among their craft brewery contemporaries. An excellent illustration of "old school" brewery reverence can be seen through Saint Arnold's relationship with one of Houston's more nascent breweries, Brash Brewing Company. Brash undoubtedly lives up to their name, with an aggressive company public persona that does not hesitate in trash-talking other breweries. For instance, when fellow Houston brewery Karbach was acquired by the conglomerate Anhueser-Busch InBev on November 3, 2016, Brash was quick to condemn them for "selling out" on their Facebook page (Crocker, 2016). Despite their complete lack of reservation in publically criticizing other breweries, Brash remains respectful of Saint Arnold and Brock Wagner, who they affectionately call the "granddaddy of Texas craft beer" in their own uniquely Brash way, as evidenced by one of their more censored and reserved Facebook posts about Saint Arnold:





Happy 22nd Anniversary to our pal Brock and everyone at Saint Arnold. Raise a glass to a true pioneer in the Texas craft beer landscape. Without Brock taking the risk to start a craft brewery in a time when there was no craft beer scene, we would not be here today. Our philosophies might be different but we hope we embody that same independent spirit that lead Brock and Saint Arnold to carry the Houston beer torch for so long by themselves. Here's to the granddaddy of Texas craft beer. This is the most hilarious picture we could find. Cheers

Image 4: Brash Facebook post about Saint Arnold

Brash's acknowledgement that their "philosophies might be different" than Saint Arnold's points to the generational differences in values between "old school" breweries and more nascent "new wavers."

Much like Brash, which was founded in 2015, Mikkeller embodies this "new

wave" generation's less conventional approach to brewing beer. This is best exemplified by their nomad brewing method, which questions a value seemingly fundamental to "old school" breweries: what is a craft brewer without a brewery? Mikkeller's use of place and space, both physical and cyber, not only helps compensate for their lack of a traditional brewery space, but also allows them more freedom and experimentation to branch out into other fields, like creating festivals and restaurants. The differences in how an "old schooler" like Saint Arnold and "new waver" like Mikkeller have used place and space actually provides some clarity in the confusion caused by the American Brewer's Association's contradictory definition of a craft brewery being both "traditional" and "innovative" as previously discussed. "Old school" breweries like Saint Arnold embody "traditional" qualities, like owning a brewery, giving beer tours, and catering to their local community via place and space. On the other hand, Mikkeller represents the "new wave" generation of brewers who choose to focus on more "innovative" approaches to craft brewing that push the boundaries of what craft beer and craft breweries can be, whether that is by making beer with Civet coffee or not having a brewery at all. The generational timing of Saint Arnold and Mikkeller have not only affected each brewery's use of place and space but also the aesthetic qualities that are integrated into them. As will be explored in the next section, aesthetics provide an interesting dynamic between what place and space bring to consumers, and what consumers bring into said places and spaces.

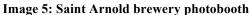
#### Craft Aesthetics: Brewery Décor

What do craft beer places and spaces look like? How does their aesthetic value translate into craft beer cultural capital? According to Bourdieu (1984) aesthetics contribute to cultural capital as physical expressions of tastes that help to create distinction: "Nothing is more distinctive, more distinguished than the capacity to confer aesthetic status on objects that are banal or even 'common'" (pg. 5). By this logic, the aesthetic value of objects such as interior decorations allow individuals the opportunity to "experience or assert one's position in social space, as a rank to be upheld" if one is middle class or "a distance to be kept" if one is upper class (Bourdieu, 1984, pg. 57). Aesthetic expression through material objects thus help position one's cultural capital.

Starting with Saint Arnold, the company uses the aesthetic décor of its brewery to both pay respects to old world beer history as well as its own history in

Texas. The interior is designed as a nod to the classic German beer hall, with long communal picnic table benches and red tiling. This old world influence is the product of brewery founder Brock Wagner's upbringing, as he spent part of his childhood in Brussels (Gonzalez, email correspondence, April 19, 2017). While Saint Arnold uses the brewery aesthetics to pay homage to the European brewing traditions that came before it, this is not to say that they are out of touch with their Texas roots. There are painted murals depicting Houston city life throughout the beer hall and, most notably, a photo booth next to the bar that allows patrons to document their time at Saint Arnold, for which a popular "We heart Houston" sign from downtown and the Houston skyline serve as the background. The blend of old and new in the Saint Arnold aesthetic is best embodied in their company logo, which depicts a Saint Arnold caricature looking up to a star in the shape of Texas with the Houston skyline in the background.





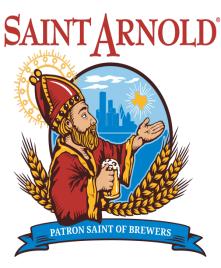


Image 6: Saint Arnold logo

These tributes to both Old Europe and Texas throughout the brewery support the notion that Saint Arnold uses décor aesthetics to reinforce the legitimacy and authenticity of their products' quality. Historically, American beer has had a poor reputation in the global beer community, which beer writer Tom Acitelli (2014) elaborates on: "I knew enough about the topic to know...America had never been anyone's influence on beer...unless it was to mimic the engineering behind the watery lagers of what I'll call Big Beer: Budweiser, Coors, Miller, and others" (pg. 148). Yet, in an turn of events, America has become a standard bearer in the craft beer "revolution," something Acitelli (2014) first noticed in 2010 while in Turin, Italy for a

food trade shown regarded as the "tribal gathering" of the Slow Food movement, the Salone Del Gusto (pg. 134). America's transition from producer of "poor quality" Big Beer to craft beer "influencer" in the global beer community highlights the role of aesthetics in creating distinction. Bourdieu (1984) argues that aesthetics serve as "distinctive expressions" of taste that groups individuals together or acts to keep them separated: "It [aesthetic disposition] unites all those who are the product of similar conditions while distinguishing them from all others"; in other words, aesthetics function to both unite those with similar habitus or social spaces while, at the same time, creates distance from other with dissimilar tastes (pg. 56). In this regard, the mixing of Old World and New World aesthetics allows Saint Arnold to distance themselves from the negative, poor quality image associated with American mass produced beer while, at the same time, aligning the company with other reputable craft breweries in America through the incorporation of a Texan and, therefore, inherently American aesthetic disposition.

In contrast to Saint Arnold's blended décor, Mikkeller uses aesthetics to distinguish themselves from typically "Danish" bars and restaurants. For example, Ramen to Bíiru is decorated to reflect an authentic Japanese ramen bar, complete with a vending machine commonly used to order food in Japan.



Image 7: Ramen to Biiru vending machine

The vending machine, which is not common in Denmark, often created confusion with customers and, consequently, there was usually a staff member near the machine to assist patrons. Even the Mikkeller bars (Viktorigade and Stefansgade locations) were designed with the intention to challenge patrons' notion of what a bar should look like in Denmark, according to Bjergsø:

In 2010 a beer bar that looked like this [Viktoriagade bar] was unheard of. First of all, I wanted it to be light because I wanted people to be able to see each other, I wanted people to be able to see the beer and to be able to talk about it. (CreativeMornings HQ, 2015).

Mikkeller uses aesthetics to distances themselves from other Danish establishments, whether that is through unique food ordering systems or anti-bodega bar designs. Thus, the aesthetic choices behind brewery décor functions to create distinction that either help align themselves with certain groups, as is the case with Saint Arnold, or establish distance from traditional ideas, as evidenced by Mikkeller.

### The Craft Beer "Look"

Equally important to the material decorations inside craft beer places and spaces are the people who inhabited them, and how they physically presented themselves. Bourdieu (1984) addresses the importance of personal style in creating distinction and hierarches among social classes in how they ascribe aesthetic value to everyday objects:

If a group's whole life-style can be read off from the style it adopts in furnishing or clothing, this is not only because these properties are the objectification of the economic and cultural necessity which determined their selection but also because the social relations objectified in familiar objects in their luxury or poverty, their 'distinction' or 'vulgarity,' their 'beauty' or 'ugliness,' impress themselves through bodily experiences. (pg. 77).

The everyday objects Bourdieu refers to includes obvious items like clothing, but can easily be extended to craft beer, which is tangible in bottles, cans, or bar glasses. The importance of craft beer receptacle aesthetics became apparent during a conversation between Jeppe the student and Søren the tech industry worker:

**Jeppe**: "I think it's [Mikkeller's beer] alright, pretty expensive, nice designs on the bottles. I'd buy it for the pictures, honestly."

**Søren**: Can you separate the two? Would that beer taste better to you if you had it in a bottle with a nice picture on it?

**Jeppe**: This one [the glass] has a nice picture on it. (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 10, 2016).

Søren and Jeppe's conversation suggests that craft beer receptacles, albeit cans, bottles, or glasses, function much like accessories or pieces of clothing that reveal

something about a consumer's lifestyle. If a bottle or glass has a nice picture on it, as was the case for Jeppe, then consumers are inclined to show off what they are drinking as it contributes to their overall personal "look," from which others can gauge insights into their lifestyle.

What can be said about the lifestyle of consumers who use craft beer in the cultivation of their personal aesthetic? A common "look" found at Saint Arnold was brewery merchandise, used by patrons to demonstrate loyalty or legitimacy. The donning of brewery paraphernalia by patrons could be viewed as a performance in the Goffman dramaturgical sense because it functioned to legitimize, confirm, or reinforce their presence in the brewery as craft beer consumers. This is not to say that brewery merchandise was the only personal style found among Saint Arnold patrons, however. Aesthetic disposition was difficult to pinpoint, as all types of "looks" could be found in the brewery at any given time, from business professionals on their lunch break to group of girls in sundresses celebrating a friend's 21st birthday and seemingly everything in between. Thus, while certain aesthetic dispositions, like brewery merchandise, aided in a patron's credibility as legitimate craft beer consumers, one uniform "look" does not exist among Saint Arnold community members.

Lifestyle as a reflection of personal aesthetics was easier to identify with Mikkeller patrons. The word "hipster" was thrown around in nearly every interview I did in Copenhagen in association with craft beer, which was not the case in Houston. It should be noted that the disconnect of American craft beer consumers from hipsters is also likely attributed to the association of Pabst Blue Ribbon and Old Style as the "beer brands of choice for community members [hipster community] in the USA" over brands like Saint Arnold (Cronin, McCarthy & Collins, 2012, pg. 18). If Danish craft beer consumers "look" like hipsters, then what can the hipster culture and lifestyle reveal further about Danish craft beer aesthetics?

To start, the city of Copenhagen itself as a place and space serves as what Danish sociologist Bjørn Schiermer describes as an ideal "scene" for hipsters in *Late Modern Hipsters: New Tendencies in Popular Culture* (2013). Taking inspiration from American sociologist John Irwin, Schiermer (2013) employs the term "scene" as a function of Goffman's stage that "situates the hipsters where they belong; at the urban 'scene'" (pg. 177). He specifically cites the neighborhoods of Nørrebro and Vestebro to be places in Copenhagen where "hipsters gather," and where a majority of Mikkeller's establishments are also located (pg. 170). As the Danish capital renowned

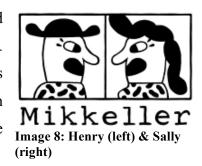
for its eco-friendly bike culture, edgy, minimalistic design, and an overall "coolness," Copenhagen appeals to counter or subcultural movements because it serves as the antithesis of stereotypical backwards or unprogressive mindset commonly associated with small towns, like Nykøbing, which served as inspiration for Jante, the fictional small town in Askel Sandemose's story that provided the basis for Janteloven (Robinowitz & Carr, 2001, pg. 82-83). Doctoral students from Roskilde University chronicle the relationship of these previous subcultural movements (i.e. the beatniks, hippies, punks, yuppies) with hipsters in *Investigation of the Hipster* (2012): "As it has been seen with former subcultural groups, they [hipsters] have been the offspring of prior subcultural groups. Punk sprung from the hippies and the hippies sprung from the beats" (pg. 52). Thus, in some sense, Danish hipsters have been primed to favor cultural goods and objects that authenticate their image as progressive and urban long before their own cultural movement arose, building off the groundwork laid by previous subcultures. Much like these subcultural predecessors, the hipsters' aversion of the "mainstream" translates well to craft beer because it serves as an alternative to drinking mass-produced Carlsberg.

Albeit choice in drink or dress, Schiermer (2013) hypothesizes that these "carefully selected objects entitle the hipster to a certain amount of 'subcultural capital'" (pg. 177). German arts & culture researcher Janna Michael confirms Schiermer's notion of hipster 'subcultural capital' by examining the relationship between authenticity and material objects in the construction of the hipster identity in *It's Really Not Hip to Be a Hipster* (2015):

It is hence not so much the taste in itself (what is liked) that matters [to hipsters], but being part of a discourse that is perceived as authentic (how it is liked). Therefore, the choice of cultural goods itself appears to be less relevant than the narrative that is attached to it. (pg. 29-30).

The narratives attached to goods and services are no longer only important to hipsters but general consumers in the experience economy: "the theme [i.e. narrative] must drive all the design elements and staged events of the experience toward a unified story line that wholly captivates the customer" (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Mikkeller has done an excellent job of incorporating a captivating narrative into their business model, particularly through their brand artwork. The brainchild of American artist Keith Shore, Mikkeller's brand artwork has quickly become highly recognizable and iconic within the global craft beer community. The design centers largely around one

character Henry, featured on nearly every Mikkeller branded product, although there is a second female character, Sally. Shore's artwork is particularly important for bottle/can labels, as it not only helps to catch the eye of the consumer but also often functions as the convincing factor in the decision to purchase Mikkeller beers, as described by Karen the student:



I remember looking at the [Mikkeller] sticker [label]...and thinking, 'Wow, that looks awesome.' The bigger brands usually have these "on-sale" looking stickers [label]. You automatically get drawn toward it because you're like 'It's cheap.' (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 3, 2016).

Aesthetics not only contribute to the image of the Danish craft beer consumer but also serve as a significant selling point for Mikkeller. In many respects, the bottles or glasses at Mikkeller bars, adorned with Shore's eye catching artwork function as accessories or added value to consumers' overall personal style.

The extent of Shore's artwork popularity is best exemplified by the fact that Mikkeller's annual beer festival, Copenhagen Beer Celebration 2016 (formerly CBC, now called Mikkeller Beer Celebration Copenhagen), had a tattooing booth, where people could get flash tattoos (pre-drawn stencils) of Shore's designs in between sampling beers. The tattoo station at CBC perfectly encapsulates the value of aesthetics to the Danish craft beer community, and how said values have been incorporated into Mikkeller's business approach to create a "visual identity that's as nimble as their brewing style" (Deboschnek, 2014). Whether its permanent ink or a brewery tee shirt that individuals can take off at the end of the day, aesthetics play a vital role in shaping the craft beer consumer identity, as they provide visual evidence of proper cultural capital. Similarly, craft beer producers use aesthetics to stand out amongst their competitors and attract consumers. In particular, the visual identity of Mikkeller's brand artwork has undoubtedly become iconic; however, the use of Shore's caricatures, particularly the female Sally, brings up an important element in creating craft beer community membership: gender.

## Gender roles

There is no denying that beer has a complex history with gender, likely attributed to decades of marketing efforts largely directed at men. South African historian Anne Mager addresses advertising's role in constructing genderness in beer

communities in 'One Beer, One Goal, One Nation, One Soul': South African Breweries, Heritage, Masculinity and Nationalism 1960-1999 (2005), where she argues that both masculinity and femininity were stereotypically portrayed by the conglomerate South African Breweries (SAB) and, subsequently, reinforced in South African society:

Advertisements did not show women drinking in the company of men. To overcome ideological barriers and introduce the idea that female drinking was acceptable, the SAB produced a series of 'educational' advertisements whose aim was to turn social anxiety about female drinking into desire. (Mager, 2005, pg. 172).

Mager points out a crucial element in understanding gender roles and expectations in craft beer, which is the historical reinforcement of beer as a "manly" drink through advertising. Consequently, females drinking craft beer are generally not accepted as normal but, instead, are viewed as rarities or exceptions. As a female craft beer enthusiast and researcher myself, the inspiration to include a gender perspective in this thesis stemmed from my own experiences and those of other females I encountered during fieldwork who had also relayed similar instances of "knowing a lot about craft beer...for a girl" (Gonzalez, field notes, September 20, 2016). Problematic female roles were present in every level of the craft beer community, from production to consumption to seemingly small details, like the use of the Sally caricature in some of Mikkeller's bottle labels.

Starting with production, gender inequality was likely attributed from hierarchies that arise in workplace organizations due to the female body. American sociologist Joan Acker argues in *Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations* (1990) that "class relations as well as gender relations are reproduced in organizations" that often result in "gender segregation" of the two sexes that affects women in both low and high ranking positions (pg. 154). Regarding the former, Acker (1990) explains that the female body's "sexuality, procreation, and emotions all intrude upon and disrupt the ideal function of the organization," and, consequently, women are often kept from higher-ranking roles (pg. 152). Yet, even females who managed to obtain higher positions still encountered instances of "gender segregation" related to the physical capability of their bodies. The physical demands of brewing, such as being able to lift heavy objects coupled with the aforementioned perceived weaknesses of the female body led to questions of capability with Sarah, a

female brewer I spoke with, who noted how her gender affected her hiring and subsequent work process:

The first [job] interview I had they were like, 'Okay if we invite you back, it will be with the owner, and then we'll make our final decision. That's what they said, right? In a few days, they call me and they're like can you come in and like shadow for a little bit? I was like, 'Was this an extra step that they didn't tell me about?' I kind of wonder if it was like a test to see if I could like do stuff. (Gonzalez, personal communication, July 8, 2016).

Whether a miscommunication or not, the extra step Sarah encountered during her hiring process ultimately affected how she proceeded with her new job, as it made her hyper-aware of the perceived limitation her gender may have imposed on her work performance:

I mean I love it, but sometimes I definitely feel like I have to go the extra mile, like I have something to prove a little bit. And I have a few times felt like I wanted to stop doing something. I can't because if I whine about something then I'll be 'the whiner.' This is a worry of mine. I won't be whining for a legitimate reason, I'll be whining because I'm a girl and I can't handle it. I don't know if the guys that I work with would actually think that, but it's something that I don't want to find out. (Gonzalez, personal communication, July 8, 2016).

Sarah's encounters with "gender segregation" suggest that hierarchies are established as a way to control women's sexuality in the workplace. Acker (1990) acknowledges that some roles "includes sexualization of the woman worker as part of the job," which proved true for females in lower ranking positions, such as bartenders (pg. 152). During the time of fieldwork at Saint Arnold, there were no female bartenders, something the male bartenders complained about because, according to them, females would bring in more tips, which were split equally by all bartenders. To these male employees, women in the craft beer industry functioned as tools that could be used in a way to help them make more money. Similarly, Mikkel Borg Bjergsø has also addressed the value of women for Mikkeller in a CreativeMorning lecture:

I think if you went to a beer bar in 2009, 95% were men and I wanted at least 50% females because if you have females, well you know you get more men as well (pauses for laughter). No that's not the reason. So, we made it [design of the bar] kind of 'feminine.' (CreativeMornings HQ, 2015).

Joking or not, Bjergsø's comment points to a very real, problematic idea about women in low ranking roles in craft beer places and spaces as mere accessories in the overall interior design.

Regardless of women's position or rank, the instances of gender segregation in fieldwork points to the idea that beer drinking is a masculine practice, which American gender studies researcher Helana Darwin explores in *You Are What You Drink: The Masculinization of Cultural Legitimacy Within the New York Craft Beer Scene* (2015) by establishing that there are "feminine" beers, which correlate to taste profiles like "light, fruity, and sweet," while "masculine" beers are more heavy, hoppy, or high in alcohol content (pg. 16). The notion of "feminine" versus "masculine" beers is significant according to Darwin (2015) because:

Beer that is initially abrasive is culturally elevated as an acquired taste, compared to sweeter lighter beers that are easy to enjoy. The poles that demarcate this continuum of beer legitimacy are gendered, conflating complex tastes with masculinity and simple tastes with femininity. As a result, "gateway beers" become interchangeable with "chick beers," a semantic conflation which marginalizes women within the craft beer scene as illegitimate connoisseurs with inferior palates. (pg. 6).

The idea that there are superior and inferior beer styles ultimately affects women's ability to garner craft beer cultural capital. Darwin (2015) hypothesizes that "cultural capital is positively correlated with a preference for "masculine beers," an idea confirmed by Sarah (pg. 3).

I remember I went to another brewery in Houston. They had a double IPA, I love really hoppy, really strong beers. So I went up and I asked them, 'Oh, I want this one [double IPA]' and the guy goes, 'Are you sure, it's pretty strong?' Like seriously, you're going to say no? I'm a paying customer. (Gonzalez, personal communication, July 8, 2016).

By ordering or consuming a typically "masculine beer," Sarah helped enhance her craft beer cultural capital, though not without suspicion from the male bartender, in a practice I will refer to as "mansplaining" (portmanteau of "man" and "explaining"). The term "mansplaining" originates from feminist author Rebecca Solnit's collection of essays *Men Explain Things To Me* in which she discusses instances of condescending interactions with men (Valenti, 2014); however, as Solnit herself did not use the term in her writings, defining "mansplaining" has become a highly

personalized process. For example, the term "mansplaining" was unbeknownst to me until Maggie, a female bar manager in Texas used it when describing her experiences working in the craft beer industry for several years: "It's like 'You're a woman, you probably don't know about beer. I [perspective of male bartender] know a lot about beers, let me explain it to you in a way that like you're a 5 year old" (Gonzalez, personal communication, June 23, 2016).

Mansplaining behavior creates issues for female craft beer consumers and producers alike because it reinforces Acker's notion of "gender segregation" in craft beer communities, whether in regards to physical capability or knowledge capacity. Although Maggie and Sarah had both experienced "mansplaining" in the American craft beer industry, a notable instance "womansplaining" arose in Copenhagen when my informant Anna relayed to me an "embarrassing" experience she had at the Mikkeller Bottle Shop with a female employee:

I just chose the one that I thought looked nice I guess because I don't really know so much about beer... when I went to pay, I was just saying [to the female employee working at the bottle shop], 'Oh can you also tell us something about this beer because it was really impressive what you said about the other beer [that Anna's boyfriend Jakob had purchased] and then she was like 'I just want to know why you would even choose a beer if you don't even know what it's all about or you don't even know what kind of beer it is?' (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 10, 2016).

The female employee talking down to a fellow female customer provides a striking caveat to mainsplaining and gender roles in craft beer communities: knowledge performativity. This female on female discrimination brought on by Anna's apparent lack of craft beer knowledge ultimately suggests that gender is merely one factor in the process of determining whether someone is worthy of inclusion in the craft beer community or not. Evidently, other factors like the ability to blend into craft places and spaces via personal aesthetic style or demonstration of beer knowledge are equally important qualities when projecting oneself as a legitimate craft beer consumer and avoiding "mansplaining" or "womansplaining." In this sense, talking down to others or similar judgmental behavior akin to "man/woman- splaining" is not necessarily only a gender-biased phenomenon but, rather, a reflection of boundary making and enforcement by community members, which I address more in the next section.

Unbalanced gender representation even arose in the small details of craft beer, namely the depictions of Henry and Sally in Mikkeller's bottle artwork. While Keith Shore's artwork is inarguably iconic (enough for some people to have it permanently tattooed on them) and has helped elevate Mikkeller's popularity over the years, the female caricature Sally is portrayed in a more sexualized manner that her male counterpart Henry at times. For example, Mikkeller's popular low alcohol beer "Drink'In the Sun" shows Sally sunbathing on her stomach with her bikini strings undone and the top of her butt exposed. In another label for Mikkeller's "Show Me Cuvee" sour ale, Sally is depicted in the act of "flashing" or exposing one's private parts, usually in a public setting, an odd choice considering males are typically associated with the image of "flashers." Conceivably, the most explicit label to exploit Sally's sexuality is that of Mikkeller and Kihøskh's collaboration cream ale with orange and lemon peel, which depicts her posing nude.







Image 9: Drink'In the Sun, Show Me Cuvee, & Mikkeller x Kihøskh Cream Ale labels

It is not my intention to demonize or condemn Mikkeller or Shore for these bottle labels as the complex relationship between sexuality, gender, and advertising tactics makes it difficult to assess exactly how the company is using Sally (i.e. in a positive or negative manner). In *Sexuality and Ethics in Advertising: A Research Agenda and Policy Guideline Perspective* (1994) American marketing professor Stephen J. Gould addresses how the "complex subjective and socially/culturally constructed roots and values" surrounding the topic of sexuality in advertising makes it difficult to deem whether the use of sexual appeal is harmful or beneficial (pg. 73). Thus, the purpose of the bottle label examples is not to determine whether Mikkeller's use of Sally's sexuality is ethical or not, but, rather, to illustrate some inequalities between gendered representation in craft beer aesthetics. Assuming nothing is inherently wrong with depicting Sally as a sexual caricature, especially in Denmark, where nudity is a far more casual and common occurrence compared to the United States' strict censor

laws, I still could not find an example involving the Henry caricature that played with male sexuality in a comparable manner. In this regard, sexuality and gender not being used in equal capacities between the two sexes in Mikkeller's bottle artwork is, in my opinion, more problematic than depicting Sally nude or in some other sexualized manner. However, I do not believe Mikkeller is completely to blame for this inequality in representation between women and men in their bottle artwork. Erving Goffman concludes in *Gender Advertisements* (1979) that:

Natural expressions are commercials performed to sell a version of the world under conditions no less questionable and treacherous than the ones advertisers face. By and large, advertisers do not create the ritualized expressions they employ; they seem to draw upon the same corpus of displays, the same ritual idiom, that is the resource of all of us who participate in social situations" (pg. 84).

If gender inequality in advertising is indeed a reflection of social practices, then gender inequality in Mikkeller's advertising material reflect women's status in the craft beer community as subordinate members. Given this social positioning, women are reduced to objects that can be used to attract consumers into buying a bottle or luring more male consumers into bars or giving bigger tips, reinforcing the idea that the current female role in craft beer communities is largely relinquished to that of an economic incentivizer rather than equal peer.

### Creating Boundaries: Managing Impressions and Cultural Capital

Having now outlined common practices and exercises of cultural capital in craft beer culture, I would like to theorize how they specifically contribute to the creation of craft beer communities. To begin, there is no significant distinction between craft consumers and producer as both are expected to uphold the same impressions and cultural capital standards. From Bjergsø's preoccupation with having a cool, "feminine" looking bar to Sarah the female brewer's concern about being perceived as a "whiner," craft beer producers clearly feel obligated to perform to legitimize their status as craft beer community members to their peers as well as themselves (Goffman, 1959). Furthermore, the performative element of production as seen with brewery tours suggests that Goffman's backstage is almost completely eradicated in craft beer spaces and places. To community members, every place and space is a frontstage, where individuals must constantly perform to reinforce the

authenticity of their membership, albeit through the use of material cultural capital like the clothing one wears or more symbolic forms of capital, such as females ordering typically "masculine beers." The constant demand of performance as a membership requirement into the craft beer community dictates that there can be no periphery members or "hang-arounds," who flow in and out of the community. Anna and her boyfriend Jakob touched on this in or out nature of the craft beer community when talking about how they felt intimidated walking into Mikkeller bars:

**Anna**: It seems like there's a knowledge threshold that you need to have before you can enter.

**Jakob**: I agree that usually those places where you can get, where Mikkeller is, it's almost like a different world of Denmark. When you go to Stefansgade [Mikkeller & Friends location], you feel there are so many young, hipster-ish people always hanging out there and you feel like you're always in the way because it feels so natural to them, right? (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 10, 2016).

While Anna and Jakob, who did not identify themselves as craft beer consumers, felt that the setting of Mikkeller necessitated some kind of "unnatural" (i.e. carefully managed) front stage behavior they could not maintain, this does not mean those who felt natural in the same environment were not performing; rather, the individuals who felt comfortable in craft beer spaces and places simply have practiced their impression management as convincing craft beer consumers via demonstration of the appropriate types of cultural capital.

Although the intolerance for "hang-arounds" in craft beer community membership may come across as harsh, judgmental, or disinviting, which likely accounts for the popular term "craft beer snobs," such rigorous requirements of social and cultural capital are established to guard the boundaries of the community. Bourdieu (1984) addresses boundary making and how it relates to capital and the formation of groups, such a social class: "The laying down of boundaries between the classes is inspired by the strategic aim of 'counting in' or 'being counted in'" (pg. 476). Applying this logic to craft beer communities, individuals' demonstration of proper cultural capital ultimately creates highly exclusive distinction by 'counting in' members while 'keeping out' non-members. Individuals use their cultural capital to aid in impression management when engaging with craft beer communities, so demonstration of the proper aesthetics, knowledge basis, or simply being in the

correct place/space all aid in giving a convincing performance to the craft beer audience. Those who can authenticate their membership through demonstration of proper cultural capital are allowed into the craft beer community; whereas, those who cannot, like Anna and Jakob, are seen as unwelcomed "posers." While gaining access to craft beer communities requires cultural capital, membership itself functions as a form of cultural capital, which individuals can use to further police non-members and reinforce the exclusivity of the community.

# Part 2: Craft Beer in the Cultural Economy

The use of cultural capital and impression management in creating and maintaining craft beer communities helps to explain *how* the craft beer craze phenomenon took hold in the 21<sup>st</sup> century but fails to fully address the question of *why now*? Given that craft beer is as much an economic process as it is a cultural process, a better understanding of contemporary economic conditions and processes is necessary in understanding why craft beer has become popular in recent decades. The purpose of this section is two-fold: first, to demonstrate how the conditions of the cultural economy have allowed for craft beer to take root in both the United States and Denmark, and second, to discuss potential links between cultural capital and cultural economy in the craft beer phenomenon. This connection begins of course with the craft beer entrepreneurs themselves, and how they use cultural capital to influence their business approach.

### Reinforcing the Middle Class: Craft Entrepreneurs

As previously mentioned, Bourdieu's cultural capital was used to explain ways in which the middle class compensated for their lack of economic capital. Naccarato & LeBesco (2012) elaborate on this argument that certain contemporary food cultural practices, like that of the "foodies" or craft beer cultures are indeed "conflated with pure economic status," in that they require some economic capital in the form of disposable income (pg. 7). However, they also acknowledge "beyond its complicated connection to economic status, culinary [and cultural] capital also serves as a bellwether for a range of prevailing values and ideologies" (Naccarato & LeBesco, 2012, pg. 7). These values and ideologies clearly differed on many fronts between Saint Arnold and Mikkeller, as evidence by their founders. Personality wise,

Brock Wagner and Mikkel Borg Bjergsø could not be more different. Wagner is pragmatic, outgoing, and runs his company by fairly conventional American business practices; whereas, Bjergsø acknowledges that he is not a great public figure: "I hear a lot that people think I'm arrogant, which I think is completely wrong, and I understand why they say that. It's because I'm not very outgoing and I like to keep things to myself" (The Architect, 2014, transcription my own).

Although Wagner and Bjergsø seemingly have nothing in common beyond both owning a craft brewing company, a closer examination of their backgrounds reveal that they share a similar habitus or the combination of social, cultural, and economic capital one carries with them at all times (Bourdieu, 1984). They are both white, educated males from Western countries who have been exposed to other cultures via travelling at relatively young ages. Wagner lived in Belgium for three years as a child, and Biergsø attended Kansas State University in the United States on a track scholarship but left after a year (Gonzalez, email correspondence, April 19, 2017; Bjergsø & Pang, 2015, pg. 9). Personality differences aside, the shared social, cultural, and economic conditions that shape Wagner and Bjergsø's habitus have, undoubtedly, aided their entrepreneurial efforts, as it allows them to demonstrate that they have the appropriate cultural capital to be playmakers in the craft beer industry. The use of their cultural and social networks in starting and, more importantly, popularizing, their business ultimately points to a conversion of cultural capital into economic capital. Du Gay and Pryke (2012) address this constant, fluid conversion of cultural capital into economic capital and vice versa when discussing Arjun Appadurai's take on the cultural economy:

The emphasis [of Appadurai's writing] was placed on how commodities are used and appropriated and are imbued with or accrue additional meanings, uses, sign values, and how in turn, this dynamic contributes to the social value of things and is therefore significant for their continuing circulation and exchange. (pg. 116-117).

As much of the discussion has centered around cultural capital thus far, I would like to expand on some of the more economic aspects of craft beer, and how they relate to cultural economy, specifically pricing.

### Pricing: Building Credibility

Although price is seemingly an expression of purely economic capital, craft beer pricing schemes, particularly in Copenhagen, reinforce the influence of cultural capital in the cultural economy. Every Danish informant I interviewed listed price as the single biggest deterrent for not buying craft beer, as best summed up by Asker the university employee: "For me, craft beer is usually just the more expensive option, where I'm not sure what I'm going to get" (Gonzalez, personal communication, September 21, 2016). Asker's uncertainty about the quality of craft beer products in relationship to price points to a significant discrepancy between how Mikkeller values their product and consumers value their product. As previously mentioned, Mikkeller does not sell its products in Danish supermarket chains but, rather, relies on specialty food stores like its own bottle shop or Kihøskh. Justifiably or not, this translates to significantly higher prices for their products than that found in Danish supermarkets. For reference, a bottle of one of Mikkeller's cheaper beers, the American Dream Lager costs 35 Danish krone, which is roughly the equivalent price of a six-pack of Carlsberg (Gonzalez, fieldnotes, September 15, 2016). However, living just across the border in Sweden, I noticed during fieldwork that Mikkeller's same American Dream Lager cost only 16 Danish krone (price has been converted from Swedish krona) at Systembolaget, the Swedish alcohol monopoly (Gonzalez, field notes, September 20, 2016). Since Systembolaget is the sole market for alcohol over 3,5% ABV (Alcohol By Volume), Mikkeller is forced to sell their products at competitive prices, something they clearly do not do in Denmark, where alcohol distribution laws are far more relaxed.

Mikkeller's pricing scheme in Denmark brings up a significant question about cultural economy related to how companies build up credibility through tactics of exclusivity. In *Transformers: Hip Hotels and the Cultural Economy* (2005) Maria Christersdotter likens these tactics to a "cool front stage," both a nod to Goffman's dramaturgy and Pine and Gilmore's experience economy performance, using the Swedish publishing firm Pan Interactive as an example (pg. 77). Rather than selling their products at regular trade fairs, Pan would host buyers in swanky hotel rooms, which in turn helped to associate their products "with positive qualities such as high standards, style, and exclusiveness" (Christersdotter, 2005, pg. 77). Whether Mikkeller intentionally does not want their products to be sold in supermarkets or, inversely, the supermarkets refused to stock Mikkeller products because the company

does not price competitively, their pricing scheme reflects a blatant exercise of cultural value and capital to build up their credibility, similar to Pan's strategy to seduce potential buyers

Unlike many of Pan's buyers, who were impressed by their cool performance, Mikkeller's pricing scheme caused tension or fallout with Danish consumers. According to Danish marketing researcher Torben Hansen, Danish consumers' increasing preoccupation with price is the result of the growing number and popularity of discount supermarkets in Denmark since the 1970s, which has partially affected how they rationalize beer purchases (Hansen, 2003). However, age is also a factor, as Søren pointed out "I think people start drinking to get drunk when they start drinking initially, so you don't really care about the selection, you just care about the price when you're 15" (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 10, 2016). Søren's notion of economizing the process of getting drunk points to the influence of discount or fair market prices in Danish grocery consumption habits. Thus, disposable income plays an important role in the Copenhagen craft beer trend, as products are significantly more expensive. Some informants like Jakob did recognize that their growing disposable income had, indeed, increased their craft beer consumption:

I feel like I have more occasions where it has been relevant to have a good, nice beer. When I lived at home or I had less space to live and smaller disposable income, it was only on occasions and stuff that I had the opportunity to drink a nice [craft] beer. (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 10, 2016).

Others like Karen, however, felt that buying craft beer was an infrequent purchase that needed to be highly justified:

I guess you can compare it [craft beer versus mass produced] to H&M versus high fashion. You'll most likely go to H&M all the time because it's great clothes for the price and you know it's right there...But, every once in awhile, you're kind of like "I'm buying a nice pair of winter boots, I'm going to go to a nice shoe store. (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 3, 2016).

Regardless of how Danish informants felt about allocating their disposable income specifically to craft beer, price was always discussed in conjunction with specific occasion or experience in mind, pointing to the inseparability of culture and economy. This apparent link between occasion and experience seemed to influence how much

money could or should be spent on beer, as Asker explained, "If I just want to get drunk or have fun with my friends, it's not the beer that needs to be in focus. I would rather pay less for the beer and have more focus on the social part" (Gonzalez, personal communication, September 21, 2016). When it comes to craft beer purchases and consumption, Copenhageners obviously expect some form of a unique culinary, social, or environmental experience that goes beyond simply getting drunk.

Such preoccupation with price was not as prevalent among American informants. When asked about their beer spending habits, Paty the road planner said, "Price I don't think is a factor. I somehow end up with a lot of local breweries' six packs in my fridge," which points to three crucial differences in how Americans perceived Saint Arnold prices compared to how Danes perceived Mikkeller prices (Gonzalez, personal communication, July 4, 2016). The first difference is that craft beer, including Saint Arnold can be readily bought in six packs virtually anywhere in Houston, whether a formal alcohol store like Specs or a gas station store. In contrast, packaged forms of Mikkeller, as previously discussed, can only be found in specialty food/beer shops and are sold individually. The second difference is that Americans perceived the price difference between local craft beer and mass-produced to be virtually negligible. While there does exist a price difference between mass-produced beer like Budlight and Saint Arnold, it is significantly smaller than Carlsberg and Mikkeller. Moreover, Saint Arnold's availability throughout Houston is virtually on par with its mass-produced counterparts, which likely contributes to American's disregard for price when purchasing Saint Arnold beer. The third and final difference is perhaps the most important when examining how the cultural economy has manifested in both country's craft beer communities, that is the influence of "local" or hometown pride.

#### Hometown Pride

Hometown pride epitomizes the increasingly culturalized economic processes that define the cultural economy. For consumers, it translates to brand loyalty, which craft beer entrepreneurs/producers could then take advantage of when expanding their business. Market researchers Terence Shimp and Subhash Sharma (1987) developed the concept of "consumer ethnocentrism," a more formal term for hometown pride with respects to consumption, in the late 1980s to address the increasing popularity and importance of buying domestic over foreign goods among American consumers.

Adapted from William G. Sumner's traditional notion of ethnocentrism as a "purely sociological concept to distinguish between in-groups (those groups with which an individual identifies) and outgroups (those regarded as antithetical to the group)," Shimp and Sharma (1987) describe "consumer ethnocentrism" as a representation of "beliefs held by American consumers about the appropriateness, indeed morality, of purchasing foreign-made products" (pg. 280). It is likely worth pointing out that this notion of "consumer ethnocentrism" was introduced around the same time as the advent of the New Economy.

So, what does hometown pride mean in the American and Danish craft beer communities? Essentially, incorporation into the city's "conversation." A city's "conversation" is the term I used often in fieldwork when questioning informants about the concept of hometown pride, referring to any inherently local attractions, products, or customs that inhabitants feel embodies or defines their city. In this sense, "conversation" can be likened to a city's image, which plays an influential role in tourism as pointed out by researchers Greg Richards and Julie Wilson in *The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001* (2004): "Images could be described as the 'currency of cultures'...reflecting and reinforcing particular shared meanings and beliefs and particular value systems" (pg. 1933). Thus, city "conversation" topics not only helped informants in defining their city's personality but also highlighted elements locals were most proud of about their hometown.

Using the idea of a city's "conversation" actually proved to be most useful in Copenhagen, as I discovered many informants grew uncomfortable when asked about "hometown pride." This was likely attributed to the fact that "national pride" (and by default "hometown pride") has garnered problematic connotations in Denmark in recent decades, as explained by Karen: "I think national pride in Denmark is very much linked to racism...historically, if you're a nationalist, then you're probably racist" (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 3, 2016). Like most of my informants, Karen was in her 20s, so her concept of "national pride" was likely influenced by a "recent wave of racism and xenophobia that has swept over continental Europe...since the early 1980s" (Wren, 2001, pg. 142); therefore, using "conversation" instead of "hometown pride" negated any issues related to political affiliation. While informants may have been quick to dismiss having "hometown pride," I argue that loyalty to products from Copenhagen or Denmark did exist among

my Danish informants, manifesting in more subtle ways than in the United States. For example, Karen, still talked about preference for beers from her hometown:

Maybe there's a hometown bias in the fact that I would very often rather drink Albani than Carlsberg or Tuborg. Albani is from my hometown [Odense]. In that sense maybe there is a bit, but maybe that's also just because I grew up with it. (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 3, 2016).

Associations with hometown also extended on the national level, as exemplified by Jeppe, who mentioned being annoyed when seeing Mikkeller beer mislabeled as German while abroad: "I saw them sold in Germany as local craft beer and I complained about it. It's weird to bottle them in with German beer" (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 10, 2016). The most striking example of subtle national pride, however, came from Søren when I asked him whether he considered Mikkeller to be Danish although it was produced in Belgium to better gauge nomad brewing's implications on *terroir*: "I feel like it belongs in this [Denmark], this is a Danish guy who did this kind of thing, right?" (Gonzalez, personal communication, October 10, 2016). Not only did Søren suggest that Mikkeller's nomad brewing approach had little affect on consumers' perception of them as a Danish brewery but also that they do, indeed, belong in the "Copenhagen conversation." They may seem less involved with the local Copenhagen community compared to Saint Arnold, but Mikkeller is still relatively nascent, and recent openings of bars, restaurants, and other ventures around the city suggest that their presence in Copenhagen is growing.

On the other hand, Saint Arnold's incorporation into the "Houston conversation" proved to be the result of long standing grassroots efforts to be involved in the local community. For example, they sell "Ale Wagger Brown" and "Elissa IPA" year-round, two charity beers that donate significant portions of profits to various local animal welfare organizations and the Galveston Historic Foundation. respectively. 6 Charitable projects coupled with the omnipresent availability and accessibility of Saint Arnold throughout Houston cater to "consumer ethnocentrism" through "habituation" or the notion that "ethnocentric feelings can be triggered from habit, familiarity, and intergenerational inheritance of consumption patterns" as described by marketing professors Nikoletta-Theofania Siamagka and George (2015)in Consumer Ethnocentrism: Balabanis Revisiting Review, Reconceptualization, and Empirical Testing (pg. 78). Essentially, local Houstonians encounter Saint Arnold product with enough frequency that loyalty is established in a

very naturalized process.

# Making the Cultural-Economic Mash

So, what does craft beer entrepreneurship, pricing, and advertising tactics reveal about cultural economy? More importantly, how are these economic practices related to the socio-cultural ones outlined in Part 1? Du Gay and Pryke's Cultural Economy (2002) mostly aims to establish or prove a link between cultural and economic processes, a notion I believe can indeed be supported using the craft beer industries in the United States and Denmark as case studies. Craft beer as cultural capital serves as a currency for consuming (both financially and physically) oneself into a certain community. Yet, by definition, this act of consumption is also an inherently economic process. So, the incorporation of cultural capital into both craft beer production and consumption via factors like place and space, craft aesthetics, and gender affects how economic capital is exercised, albeit by the types of entrepreneurs that prevail in the craft beer industry, how craft beer is priced, or, even how it is talked about. In turn, these traditionally economic processes have come to embody socio-cultural qualities like Goffman's front stage performance. Taking inspiration from Goffman's application of dramaturgy in examining social behavior, Pine and Gilmore (1999) liken economic activities and work in the experience economy to theatre performance:

Calling one's work theatre, treating it accordingly, and developing the capability to influence perceptions through performance separate the magical from the mundane. It is the *act of acting* that, in the end, differentiates memorable experiences from ordinary human activity (pg. 108).

The similarities in performance rituals in economic and cultural processes are not coincidental, but rather a testament to the influence of the cultural economy. In fact, the necessity of craft beer cultural capital from economic entities like entrepreneurs and brewing companies suggests that economy and culture are no longer merely linked but actually inseparable. Businesses like Saint Arnold and Mikkeller are held to the same performance standards as their consumers, suggesting that breweries actually shape the type of "person" they are through cultural-economic tactics. Orvar Löfgren (2005) acknowledges that "cultural forms also become economic tools or a productive force, which is what happens when recognized boundaries between production and consumption become less relevant, such as in the experience economy

(pg. 13). In this sense, there is no clear distinction between craft beer producers and consumers, as they are held to the same standards of both cultural and economic capital. While economic capital is an obvious necessity for successful business, consumption patterns among craft beer producers and consumers alike suggest that cultural capital is now too a virtual necessity for businesses in the cultural economy. Thus, the two processes of culturalized capital and economy have become impossible to distinguish from one another.

### Conclusion

In this thesis, I intended to understand how craft beer communities assembled themselves using Saint Arnold Brewing Company in Houston and Mikkeller in Copenhagen as case studies. Using Bourdieu's notion on cultural capital enabled me to map out the cultural values and standards required of community membership, like how individuals dress or the places they inhabit. The possession of this cultural capital or lack thereof was demonstrated through front stage performance rituals highlighted by Goffman's theory on dramaturgy. This examination of the socio-cultural practices by craft beer community members revealed that both producers and consumers are held to the same standards of cultural capital, blurring any distinction between the two groups. Craft breweries like Saint Arnold and Mikkeller are expected to "perform" to maintain a certain business persona to their audience (i.e. consumers and fellow breweries) through tactics like the aesthetic decór of their places and spaces or Internet presence. Lack of distinction between consumers and producers helped position craft beer in the experience economy, which treats business practices as theatre performance (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). These demands and expectations of front stage performance on all craft beer community members also resulted in exclusivity, with little tolerance for periphery members or "posers."

The concept of exclusivity in craft beer also played out in regards to gender roles in the community. Whether the result of years of advertising beer as a male beverage or simply another example of gender hierarchies in the workplace, female producers and consumers alike share an inferior status to that of their male craft beer counterparts. Consequently, women within the industry are often relegated to lower ranking roles, such as bartenders, which, perpetuates the notion that female sexuality can be exploited for economic gain via tips in the United States. In Denmark, the use

of female sexuality for profit manifested more in advertising approaches, using the female body on bottle labels to attract customer attention. Even women in higher-ranking positions like brewers encountered questions of physical capability, reinforcing the idea that the female body warrants prejudice in the craft beer industry at all levels of employment.

In complement to the social practices enacted by craft beer communities to establish and maintain boundaries were economic processes that reinforced craft beer's exclusivity. Craft beer entrepreneurs shared similar socio-cultural environments (i.e. habitus) that reflected the middle class backgrounds – male, white, educated— that Bourdieu targeted in his writing on cultural capital. The most indicative practice of boundary maintenance by craft beer communities, however, was that of pricing schemes, particularly in Copenhagen. Since craft beer is more expensive than its mass-produced counterpart, over pricing is not only about economic capital but also builds up cultural capital through a "coolness" credibility that has become a prevalent practice in the cultural economy. To justify their higher price tag, craft breweries employ tactics to sell their beer that play to "consumer ethnocentrism" or consumers' affinity for supporting local businesses in the globalized economy.

Although craft beer is a global phenomenon, using two specific cities as case studies allowed for scrutiny, as not all craft beer communities are identical. Returning to Warren Belasco's (2007) quote "food is a metaphor for what we like most or least about our society," what does the material from this thesis say about Copenhagen and Houston, specifically? In Copenhagen, craft beer was consumed for its added value to an overall lifestyle predicated on being young, international, and image conscious. In many ways, craft beer consumers in Copenhagen share the same core values and motivators as hipster culture, where consumption is used as a tool to form identity and lifestyle. This is not to say that all Copenhagen craft beer consumers are necessarily hipsters, but, rather, that their consumption habits are on par with hipsters' use of material objects and their surroundings in shaping public image. While I do not believe that craft beer consumption alone can be considered a lifestyle, the insights from this study support the notion that Copenhagen craft beer communities use consumption to facilitate cultivation of a progressive, cultured lifestyle.

Meanwhile, craft beer consumption habits in Houston pointed to the importance of quality and the increasing role and influence of the experience

economy on contemporary American capitalism. The material from thesis suggests that craft beer consumption in Houston was more normalized than was the case in Copenhagen, as Saint Arnold patrons were a more diversified group that included children. Although this is likely attributed to the fact that Saint Arnold is more than a decade older than Mikkeller, it is impossible to ignore the difference between economic systems in the United States and Denmark. Since Americans average longer working hours then Danes (see CNN Money), the experience economy potentially resonates more in the United States than it does in Denmark. With less free time to expend, Americans are more likely to seek time subsidized experiences, which breweries like Saint Arnold cater well to with beer tours and child-friendly policies. Thus, in this regard, the craft beer phenomenon may actually be better suited for the American capitalism system than Denmark's Nordic model.

To conclude, this study has shown blurring of cultural and economic processes in the building of craft beer communities in Houston and Copenhagen. Given that craft beer is a relatively nascent phenomenon to contemporary food practices, this thesis contributes new information to the food culture studies canon by demonstrating the inseparability of cultural capital from economic capital in the cultural economy. Furthermore, as most previous research on craft beer focuses solely on consumers or treat them separately from producers, this study suggests that the two operate under the same socio-cultural expectations, which can be taken into consideration in future research. The distinctive differences in cultural and economic capital found between the Saint Arnold and Mikkeller craft beer communities also serve as a testament to the "glocalization" of the craft beer phenomenon. Although the overall popularity of craft beer seems to grow in tandem at a global scale, the communities that arise as a consequence evolve to reflect the local value systems and rituals of the cities in which they are situated; thus, the glocalized process of creating craft beer communities suggests that a "revolution" is not taking place but, rather, an "evolution."

# **Applications**

The applicability of this thesis is targeted largely to craft beer professionals but is also relevant to the development of larger food community networks. Discrepancies found between producers and consumers throughout research can benefit craft beer professionals by serving as inspiration for more effective future

business strategies. Furthermore, as the craft beer phenomenon continues to grow and the markets in both the United States and Denmark become increasingly saturated, issues of sustainability come into play: how can breweries stay relevant with craft beer consumers among overwhelmingly similar competitors?

Mikkeller has tapped into what is perhaps the best solution to these problems through the diversification of its business ventures to include areas that involve but not necessarily revolve around craft beer. The variety in Mikkeller's business proves to be both a strong and weak point for the company. Catering to consumer groups that parallel or intersect with craft beer enthusiasts, such as foodies or hipsters, through restaurants like Ramen to Bíiru and entertainment like the Haven music festival extend Mikeller's reach and presence in Copenhagen beyond only those seeking craft beer. However, in fieldwork it quickly became apparent that Danish craft beer consumers comprise a small, niche market, as a majority of Danes still prefer to drink mass-produced products like Carlsberg. Mikkeller's inability to resonate strongly with its home base consumers poses potential problems in its extensive expansion plans both in and outside of Denmark. In a 2016 *Paste Magazine* interview, Mikkel Borg Bjergsø elaborated on his ambitious future plans for the company:

Right now, my focus is spreading craft beer to places that don't know about it yet. There are places where there is little known about craft beer, and I think that is very interesting. For example, we are focusing on Asia right now because there are so many things both from a business standpoint as well as ingredients that are unique to Asia and have not been used yet in the beer world. (Stein, 2016).

Focusing on new markets such as Asia rather than gaining a better understanding and relationship with one's home country seems like an odd business choice for Mikkeller. Their failed Mikkeller bar launches in Toyko and Stockholm point to the necessity of cultural awareness of the meanings and implications of craft beer in a given environment, albeit Denmark, Sweden, or Japan, in order to have an effective and, more importantly, sustainable craft beer business.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the insights from this study can prove useful to Mikkeller in better understanding its hometown consumers.

Sustainability also presents issues for Saint Arnold, as the number of craft breweries continues to grow. Although they solicit some level of respect and loyalty through their status as Texas' oldest craft brewery, Saint Arnold faces issues regarding staying relevant as the craft beer phenomenon grows. This is where the

generational differences between Saint Arnold and Mikkeller can be most useful, as both breweries are excellent representations of their respective generations. Known for standard but consistently good German-style beers, Saint Arnold could stand to diversify its beer portfolio with more experimental beers or engage in more collaborations with local Houston breweries. Conversely, Mikkeller could benefit from establishing better ties to its local community in Copenhagen the way Saint Arnold has in Houston.

In a broader application, examining how craft beer communities are built up can serve as an example when developing larger networks of food-oriented communities. In the contemporary "glocalized" economy, food networks involving all aspects of food production and consumption have grown increasingly prevalent. An example of these networks is Smaka på Skåne (Taste of Skåne), who promotes Sweden's southern most province Skåne as a "culinary front region" through food tourism with events like Skånes Matfestival (Skåne Food Festival) as well as innovation by giving support to local food entrepreneurs. Since both economic and cultural capital are needed to build up these types of burgeoning food communities, networks like Smaka på Skåne can use the example of craft beer for new perspectives on business approaches.

Since Saint Arnold and Mikkeller were built up out of nothing over a relatively short amount of time, the material in this thesis is perhaps most applicable to grassroots food movements such as Slow Food. Neither brewery engages actively in traditional marketing tactics such as TV commercials or print ads, relying instead on more contemporary "guerilla" style advertising through their own social media networks or placing their products in strategic areas. For example, deals with SAS Airlines and Citi Field (home of the New York Metropolitans baseball team) help Mikkeller products reach a relatively large audience with zero marketing effort, highlighting the benefits of collaboration in the cultural economy. As the craft beer revolution was very much born out of and continues to sustain itself through grassroots efforts, other food movements can take inspiration from the craft beer community in developing their own culture.

### **Endnotes**

- <sup>2</sup> I also performed a small cultural analysis for each brewery's own internal use based on questions or problems they were interested in exploring.
- 3 The barrel room was only open once, and the Haven bar was still under construction during fieldwork; so these sites contributed minimally in analysis.
- <sup>4</sup> Under Danish Law, it is forbidden to smoke in public buildings and businesses unless the area is less than 40 square meters, hence why *værtshuse* tend to be small and associated with smokers.
- <sup>5</sup> *Kopi Luwak* or Civet coffee that is eaten, partially digested, then defecated by a small animal known as the Asian palm civet or *Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*.
- <sup>6</sup> Elissa is the name of one of the oldest remaining tall ships, currently moored in Galveston, Texas, less than an hour from Houston.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> During the time of research, there were border controls between Sweden and Denmark that increased travel journey times between Lund and Copenhagen significantly.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Mikkeller has relaunched new bars in Toyko and Stockholm in 2017.

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- Image 2 Retrieved from https://www.ratebeer.com/.
- Image 3 Retrieved from https://www.ratebeer.com/.
- Image 4 Retrieved from <a href="https://www.facebook.com/alesatanhouston/">https://www.facebook.com/alesatanhouston/</a>.
- Image 5 Photograph taken during fieldwork
- Image 6 Retrieved from https://www.saintarnold.com/.
- Image 7 Retrieved from http://www.mikkeller.dk/.

Image 8:Retrieved from <a href="http://www.mikkeller.dk/">http://www.mikkeller.dk/</a>. Image 9 Retrieved from <a href="http://www.mikkeller.dk/">http://www.mikkeller.dk/</a>.

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