

**"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire**

# Tundra Times



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## Editorial—

# The Dry Village Status And the Bootlegging

The village drinking problem has plagued authorities as well as the solid village citizens for a long time now but the awareness of it alone hasn't done the problem any good. Problem drinking keeps existing and the cure of it, even partially, is not in sight. Our idea is that it has not been met realistically, nor have the authorities been positive enough in enforcing existing laws designed to lessen the evil—one of which is keeping a watchful eye on the fly-by-night profiteers—the bootleggers.

These off-color businessmen—the traders of misery for money—to a considerable extent are leeching on the poor of our native people. Money is their first objective and damn the consequences that may result in a most serious manner on the person or families as an aftermath of the illegal liquor sale.

The bootleggers know that there is a very little chance the villagers will stop drinking. We might as well face it—drinking among the native people is here to stay. The way to lessen its evil impact is to give it a direction for a wiser usage and consumption of it. Banning liquor in villages will never be the answer.

Some villages—Kotzebue is a good example—have tried to combat the drinking problem by voting "DRY." This has not been the answer to it. The dry status, instead, has tended to aggravate and deepen the problem however well meant the effort might have been. Kotzebue should know by now that to keep the village dry is to encourage illicit sales of liquor. Dry status is a great step toward lining the pockets of the bootleggers with fat wads of money, and this they get by charging exorbitant prices knowing full well they would get what they're after.

We are not advocating that every village do away with the dry status if it works for them. More power to them if they can make it stick. We are concerned with larger villages that are heading toward goals of no return considering the consumption of liquor.

Perhaps an experiment should be made to legalize sale of liquor in larger villages, taking care that the authorization is not too restrictive. If it says, "You can't drink too much," too forcefully, it may foster and encourage the reverse. It should be set up under the watchful eyes of the village authorities, the state and federal agencies, with liberal attitudes but who would be firm and unyielding if repetitious over-consumption is noted.

The overseers should play no favorites as far as natives and non-natives are concerned. The watered down enforcement with strong muscles behind it can perhaps create a leveling effect as time goes and as the native people begin to learn to live with it and tolerate it.

It certainly would be a far better setup than fostering bootlegging of liquor. Furthermore, much of the money would stay in the village.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

3001 Veazey Terrace, N.W.  
Apt. 317  
Washington, D.C. 20008  
April 14, 1969

Dear Sir:

In the March 28, 1969 issue of Tundra Times, you published an interesting story about a young Canadian Eskimo student, Joshua Sivuarapik from Povungnituk, who had learned of Alaskan educational opportunities in the arts (and is now enrolled in the University of Alaska) from an article in "The Beaver Book." I am sure that your readers would be interested to learn exactly what this particular publication is since it was not reviewed in Tundra Times when it was issued in Autumn 1967, yet deals with Eskimo art in a unique and sympathetic manner.

This publication was a special issue of The Beaver, a quarterly magazine of the Hudson's Bay Company, devoted to Canada's history, geography, and anthropology. Entitled simply, "Eskimo Art," this issue is the first summary and bird's eye view of contemporary Eskimo art from Alaska to Greenland to be printed anywhere, but also includes provocative discussions of archaeological art.

I believe the idea for this compilation was originally that of George Swinton, professor of art at the University of Manitoba (Winnipeg) and expert on Canadian Eskimo stone carving and graphics, although Malvina Bolus, editor of The Beaver, and William E. Taylor, Jr., Director, Museum of Human History of the National Museum of Canada, helped to complete the project. Professor Swinton's original plan was to organize an anthology from a number of articles already in print, but after surveying the published material he discovered he could not find the desired representation for a well-rounded book. In the course of his planning, he asked me if I would write a survey of Alaskan Eskimo arts and crafts with an emphasis on current developments, publish it, and then he would reprint it in his anthology. The enormously popular and emphatic Eskimo art of Canada during the past twenty years has overshadowed that of the Alaskan Eskimos, yet Professor Swinton was aware of contemporary production and wanted to include it in his survey.

However, before the original plan was carried out, Miss Bolus became interested in taking over the entire project as one of the Hudson's Bay Company's contributions to the celebration of the centenary of Canadian Confederation. The resulting publication is really a small book, and is probably the best bargain anywhere for only \$1.50. In addition to two articles devoted entirely to Alaskan Eskimo art, there are summaries about Greenland sculpture, Eskimo masks, Canadian pottery, Canadian stone sculpture, and an unusual two-part discussion of Dorset archaeological art by an artist (Swinton) and an archeologist (Taylor). The cover, a stunning three-page foldout of a painting in vivid colors originally done on a piece of old plywood by Nauja of Rankin Inlet, is alone worth the price. Besides the cover there are 17 more pages in color, and in all, almost 170 photographs and a number of drawings.

This beautiful publication, now in its second printing, is not only a fine tribute to Eskimo talent and craftsmanship, but to the impartiality of our neighboring country in devoting a large amount of space to the Eskimo art of Alaska.

Sincerely yours,  
Dorothy Jean Ray

# Native Delves Into Chronic Alcoholism

April 15, 1969  
Fairbanks, Alaska

Dear Mr. Rock:

It is said that Tundra Times is the "Voice of the Natives" in relating the issues of Alaskan natives to the public, so I would like to speak my piece on an important matter—that of alcoholism. The opinions stated herein are strictly my own viewpoints and does not necessarily reflect on any group or establishment.

The purpose that I have in mind in writing this letter would be in stirring an awareness to anyone who may listen and be interested in helping matters out. Much has been written on alcoholism. My story is one of thousands.

I have lived the life of an alcoholic and witnessed those also who have the same disease. This disease of alcoholism is international in size and has plagued man since earliest times.

Alcoholism affects three characters of man—that of the physical, mental, and spiritual planes. Alcohol, call it what you may, a drug, disease, fire-water, poison, stimulant; if taken in great amounts and over an extended period of time results in physical deterioration of certain internal organs of the body—for instance, cirrhosis of the liver. It affects the tissues of the motor brain, resulting in a change of pattern in thinking (concentrating).

One can witness alcoholism among our own natives by viewing the happenings on the main drag. Not only the people of Eskimo-Indian descent are affected by alcohol, but also the non-native. You can witness the effects of alcohol by visiting our hospitals and jails, the ones who have been stricken by alcohol. You may even witness alcoholism by the cemeteries, the ones alcohol had a firm grip on. To call alcohol a spirit is a pun.

Alcohol disguises itself in many forms and concoctions. One only has to look in magazines and other advertisements to see the varieties of beer, wine, scotch, bourbon, rye, vodka, champagne, cordials, and other brands. You can see the falsehood of advertising certain beverages that if you drink this product it improves your status of a drinker.

I know of no other bitter poison that has so many faces bottled up in a container that is bought openly without a prescription. There may be certain restrictions imposed on those who may buy alcohol, but unfortunately it is available to anyone.

As I stated before, what I have to say is my opinion and I cannot dry up the world, but only to seek an awareness of what is happening to our people. I have deeply concentrated on this subject of alcoholism and have reached two uncertain solutions as to the origin of alcohol in America.

To be available to anyone, it must be manipulated by a very strong underground force, out to seize those who fall into its trap. Could it be that some underground political body sees the advantages and potential of using alcohol as a seemingly harmless stimulant to undermine their opponents well-being?

Perhaps it is my imagination. Then again, there are those who unerringly see it as a means for capital gains. The pitfalls of a capitalistic system allow individuals to manufacture and distribute it freely as water runs, as a source of revenue or income.

Alcohol, to me is that certain agent out to destroy our very meaning of living, to create false pride. The time is ripe for Alaska natives to fall into this alcohol-trap because we are in a transition changing into a new world and unable to fully realize where we stand or how to cope with this changing of armor in an entirely different society.

How do we find an answer to this alcoholic problem? Is there a way out, you might ask? Fortunately, there is a group of people in Alaska to help cope with this problem.

If you are sincerely interested and have an honest desire to help your fellow man or wish to find out more on alcoholism, one can inquire about the Alcoholics Anonymous program, or other agencies concerned with alcoholism. Only the people as individuals can get together one by one, until it involves those concerned to work towards one common goal.

The pattern of unity between Alaska native groups suggests that the alcohol problem can be dealt with accordingly if taken seriously. One can only see the light, as it is said, until that source of light is steered in the right direction.

So it is with each individual the light of truth must be shone towards those afflicted with a bright intensity, to insure that what you see is not an illusion. Only then can the light of truth truly heal upon the body, mind, and soul.

So I might ask, how bright is your light? Do you flicker and waver, uncertain if it has reached its point?

Perhaps your system of truth needs boosting, or more fuel is needed to sustain a bright-level light. It is as a searchlight probing in the depths of darkness, one must concentrate that beam until it finds the good.

Sincerely,  
Roland Parish

## Poem—

## KOTZEBUE - 1969

A glimpse into age,  
Eskimo age,  
a mind filled  
with all the snows  
of the past winters  
and all the dogs  
of the past snows,  
and the sleds  
that were poised  
on a dog chain  
to run for the  
opposite shores  
to find and pick  
wood for early fires  
in the day  
and fires warm

in the cold nights  
under the cold lash  
of the Arctic lights.

—FRANK KEIM

**WANTED:** Chilkat Blankets; totem poles; ivory pipes and carvings; argillite carvings; pot-latch bowls; fish hooks; spoons and all N.W. items 50 years of age or older. Send photo or sketch and prices to: Albert T. Miller, 2235 West Live Oak Drive, Los Angeles, California 90028.