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Fall 2019 DANJ Conference
Government Data: Everything Counts
October 25, 2019
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2018 Annual Conference

The 2018 DANJ Fall Conference “A Healthy Dose of Information: Health Resources for Personal and Public Research” was held on October 26 at Thomas Edison State University.


Conference materials including slides from Elaina Vitale’s presentation and a research guide on aging prepared by DANJ Past President Ma Lei Hsieh are available on the conference website.
2018 Awards

Kay Cassell, Professor Emerita at Rutgers University received the Outstanding Educator’s Award. Professor Cassell has taught in the School of Communication and Information at Rutgers, including Government Information, since 2006.

Wen Hua Ren received the DANJ lifetime achievement award for her many years of valued service to DANJ, including her work as Treasurer. She retired as Business and Documents Reference Librarian at Rutgers University Dana Library in 2018.

Best Paper: Catherine Berner, *Online Art and Craft Selling: Government Information*

Best New Jersey Website: *New Jersey Casino Control Commission*

Best New Jersey Document: *New Jersey Natural Lands Trust Annual Report*
Alcoholic Beverage Control Bulletins Reveal Social History of New Jersey

By Caitlyn Cook and Heather Husted

Caitlyn Cook, New Jersey Reference and Digital Librarian in the State Library Information Center, recently digitized the *Bulletins of the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) (1933-Current)*. Like other digitized New Jersey State documents, they are public domain and free to download in the New Jersey State Publications Digital Library.

When federal Prohibition laws were repealed in 1933, New Jersey and other states established commissions to regulate alcohol. The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control was tasked with supervising the manufacture, distribution, and sale of alcoholic beverages in the State “in such a manner as to promote temperance and eliminate the racketeer and bootlegger.” Bulletins summarize the results of undercover field investigations by ABC agents, document the testimony of licensees and witnesses, and establish legal precedence. They contain notices to licensees, statistics on Commission activities, and summaries of agency investigations.

From the beginning, the ABC was asked to fill both a regulatory and a moral mandate. They were tasked to monitor, investigate, and protect the public from fraudulent practices and criminal enterprises. The mandate also granted the ABC a wide degree of social control over licensees, regulating how licensees could run their businesses, who they could hire, and who they could serve. This authority evolved over time and the Bulletins are key to understanding that evolution.

*Bulletin 188* (dated June 22, 1937) illustrates one of ABC’s political positions. Bartenders at the time had the discretion to refuse service to any person except on the basis of “race, creed, or color.” Many bulletins contain decisions where the ABC upheld the rights of non-white citizens to open and operate licensed establishments and be protected from race-based discrimination. In Bulletin 231 (February 24, 1938), ABC affirmed that a bar could not legally serve non-white patrons in different glasses and at different prices than those offered to white patrons. Commissioner D. Frederick Burnett reminded the questioner of the provisions of the Civil Rights Act and the unlawfulness of bar’s actions, stating:

This means that it is unlawful in this state to refuse the service of liquor to a man merely because of his color. It means that it is unlawful to discriminate by serving beer in thin glasses to the white and in mugs to the colored folk. It means that a licensee cannot lawfully charge more to colored patrons than to those who happened to have been born white. The fact that no prices are posted is immaterial. Discrimination is demonstrated by what is done in the effort to keep the patronage white.
Yet the following year the Commissioner upheld an earlier ruling of a municipality’s right to enact ordinances prohibiting women from being served (see Bulletin 257).

It has been said that “a woman has as much legal and moral right to take a drink as a man”. Re Harris, Bulletin 16, Item 8. But, really, it is not a right but a privilege. She may lawfully be restricted in that privilege. So may a man. If social policy in a given municipality declares that it is better for the sake of others that she may not drink at the bar- there is nothing arbitrary in the exercise of police power to prevent her. Notwithstanding her modern emergence, the eternal verities remain. We find her at both ends of the human gamut. We prefer to idealize her in the higher register. But we may encounter her in the lower depths. She is the exemplar of refined living. Alas, she is also the more deadly of the species.

The ABC’s moral mandate impacted New Jersey society in a number of ways. Camp Nordland, a camp which hosted Nazi and KKK sympathizing events in Andover, NJ, had been the subject of public outcry, but the municipality had little legal recourse against the camp’s hateful behavior. When the municipality denied the renewal of the camp’s liquor license, the ABC upheld the municipality’s judgment stating, among other reasons, that “[l]icensed premises will not be tolerated as hot-beds in which to incubate hate and inculcate subversion. There is no room for the swastika. The appeal is denied.” (see 1939 Bulletin 344, the last in a series of ABC rulings regarding Camp Norland). Not long after the ABC ruling, additional violations were uncovered, the camp was raided by the Sussex County Sheriff’s office, the property seized, and camp leaders arrested for various crimes (See the NJ Herald’s article on Camp Nordland for a brief history).

Morality policing led the ABC to wage a destructive campaign against the LGBTQ community and licensees who created establishments to serve them. In its earliest regulations, the ABC named a prohibition against “female impersonators.” Examples appear throughout the Bulletins of bars having their licenses suspended or revoked based on investigators’ reports that a masculine appearing individual demonstrated stereotypically feminine mannerisms. During the 1950s and 1960s, investigations shifted toward identifying “apparent homosexuals,” people whose appearance and mannerisms seemed to defy societal gender norms; Bulletins 1656 and 1557 are two of many examples. This campaign of punishing licensees who allowed perceived LGBTQ persons to gather in their establishments would culminate in a 1967 NJ Supreme Court ruling against the agency (One Eleven Wines & Liquors, Inc. v. Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control, 50 N.J. 329). Though this ruling ended the blanket prohibition against LGBTQ persons assembling in and patronizing licensed establishments, Bulletin 1763 makes it clear that the agency would seek to police and prohibit any behavior deemed “offensive to public decency.” The One Eleven Wines and Liquors case would not end discrimination against LGBTQ persons, but it was a significant moment in advancing the rights of New Jersey’s LGBTQ community.

These are but a few examples of the work of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission and its impact on the social and moral history of New Jersey. The entire Bulletin collection is available to review.
In Memory of Susan Bennett White

We mourn the passing of our colleague Susan White, long time United Nations Documents Librarian and Sociology Librarian at Princeton University. Susan was active in DANJ for many years, serving as chair of the International Documents Interest Group and known for introducing the group to many notable United Nations documents through her Key Documents newsletter. She was the recipient of the 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award from DANJ.
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Our next Executive Board meeting is coming up on June 6 at Rider University! All are welcome to attend!