Administrative surveillance of alcohol consumption in Ontario, Canada: pre-electronic technologies of control.*

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Abstract

This paper describes the development of a vast bureaucracy of surveillance by the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO), Canada, and the categories employed in a vast social sorting operation of drinkers undertaken from 1927 into the 1960s. The paper deals fundamentally with list-making and its social consequences. These social sorts could transform the most private interests into public matters, recategorizing individuals and redefining their material possessions and property. However the Ontario “drunk list” was also known as the “Indian list” and the story of the LCBO is also the story of how the politics of race become diabolical. This paper thus exposes the georacial profiling of First Nations populations of the northern region and the bureaucratic reinscription of identity by means of then new technologies that enabled specific forms of social sorting: the folding together of lists, supported by inter-institutional cooperation through data provision across sectors, toward the pre-elimination of populations from the ranks enjoying legal access to alcoholic products.

Introduction

This paper describes in detail the development of a vast bureaucracy of surveillance by provincial authorities in Ontario, Canada around alcohol control, and concerns itself with the categories employed in a vast social sorting operation of drinkers undertaken from 1927 into the 1960s when the system was finally discontinued. We are working at the contact points where categories are flush with material technologies, and data is gathered transactionally in order to be analyzed by categories developed and deployed by the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO). This is a history lesson in surveillance the theoretical relevance of which for today lies precisely in the extraordinary transformations

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it made possible in terms of social identity constructions and control over individuals and entire populations. Our interests are largely technographic in the sense that we will describe the technical details surrounding the emergence of the LCBO's "surveillance capacity" (Dandeker 1990). The social sorts accomplished by the LCBO, working in conjunction with local and national government agencies and police forces, could transform the most private interests into public matters, in the process recategorizing individuals and redefining their material possessions and property. Indeed, certain groups were defined as alcoholic as an effect of the LCBO's system of classification, regardless of whether they drank or not. Beyond technology is, then, the power that accrues to those and their cohorts who use the categorization of such personal information for varied and politically motivated purposes of social control. In short, we are concerned with an all-too-contemporary history – "list" making – and its social consequences. The figure of the "drunk list" was a popular version of several species of lists maintained by the LCBO for the purposes of controlling access to the privilege of purchasing alcohol from state agents who enjoyed a monopoly situation over liquor sales. It was also known as the "Indian list". To use the ominous words of Edwin Black (2001: 92) in his study of the informational equivalent of blitzkrieg, that is, the speed-processing of data by Hollerith machines by the Nazi government in WWII, when "lists were everywhere" the politics of race became diabolical. For us, the goal of this paper is to expose the georacial profiling of First Nations populations of the northern region and the bureaucratic reinscription of identity by means of then new technologies that enabled specific sorts that we link with core practices in surveillance theory: the folding together of lists, supported by inter-institutional cooperation through data provision across sectors, toward the pre-elimination of populations from the ranks enjoying legal access to alcoholic products.

Temperance Morality and the Business Model

In 1927 the Liquor Control Act (LCA) was not popular legislation. Temperate movements and anti-drinking morality in the 1920's actually controlled the bulk of the Ontario vote. Between 1902 and 1927 there had been four separate initiatives put forward by the government to decriminalize liquor sales and they had all been voted down by the highly temperate population. By 1926 the government of Premier George Howard Ferguson argued that Ontario was "moving towards public acceptance" of legalizing the sale of liquor and pushed forward the implementation of his already drafted Liquor Control Act (1926:1).² The bill faced extreme opposition in both the press and the house, narrowly passing its second reading; indeed, the third and final reading occurred without warning at 10pm on March 30th 1927 and due to the sudden nature of the vote only a "handful of members" were present, according to published newspaper reports ("Liquor Control Bill Passed by Committee with Few Revisions," *The Globe*, March 25th 1927; "Liquor Bill Gets Reading Without Opposition," *The Globe*, March 30th 1927).

In creating the LCBO the Ferguson government argued that they would be "handing the problem over to a business administration of capable men," giving these men authority over "the entire administration of the problem" and not having them "subject to review

² Ferguson, G.H. (1926) "To the people of Ontario." In *Papers Concerning the Temperance Question in Ontario*, F8 MU 1029 series. Toronto: The Archives of Ontario.

either by a court of th[e] land or the government of th[e] province” (Ferguson.1926:4; Liquor Control Act S.O.1927. c.70 s.25.2). In order to control liquor in Ontario, this business administration of capable men turned to forms of control that were known to them, namely, the “standardization, monitoring, record keeping and statistical analysis” that were “the cornerstones of bureaucratic surveillance and control of the labour process” (Gandy 1993:86). The connection of the LCBO with big business is not an element to be overlooked as many Chairmen of the Board were drawn from the business elite of the private sector (i.e., in later years from IBM Canada, for example). The LCBO, as this data shows, were not simply a business administration for the sale of liquor, but also an institution entrusted with a very serious moral mandate and social control function.

Through all this the temperance movement remained a strong political force in the province and to appease them the LCBO sold itself as the answer to the problems of bootlegging and over consumption; it even went so far as to portray itself as an anti-drinking organization. The LCBO continuously affirmed to its employees that “the key word is not ‘sale’ but ‘control’” and that it was essential to remember that sales and profits are secondary considerations, that the primary one is control; that volume of sales and profits may actually in some stores indicate laxity toward abuses of the permit privilege, and that satisfactory service in a store is best proved by prevalence of good social conditions in the surrounding community, absence of drunkenness and disorderliness, and freedom of complaints of neglected wives and families. (LCBO Circular 497, Oct.10th 1928)³

The LCBO took its temperance mandate very seriously and argued that it was “determined to deal ruthlessly with the people who w[ould] not obey this law” (Ferguson 1926:3) . Transgressors would lose their privilege to drink and “not be entitled to any sympathy” (Ibid). This vengeful approach coupled with the Board’s vast unquestionable powers resulted in the development of a complex bureaucratic program of licensing, classifying and policing individual liquor users based on the morality and prejudices of the temperance movement.

Control Through Surveillance

The LCBO’s control method was twofold. First, the discovery and elimination of those individuals who lacked the self-discipline necessary for “responsible” drinking, and secondly, maintaining panoptic control over those individuals who did maintain a sufficient degree of self-discipline. One can perhaps simplify these actions into the goals of risk avoidance and the creation of docile bodies. To achieve these goals the Board was required to identify, classify and assess prospective liquor users from across the province.

Oscar Gandy (1993: 17) argues that social sorts act as “primarily a defensive technology” designed to reduce risk through the identification and removal of “sure losers” from the general population. For the LCBO this meant the sorting out of people whose potential for

³ LCBO Circulars as well as the various Vendor handbooks were received through either a Freedom of Information Act request to the LCBO or from the Archives of Ontario RG-41-3 *Administrative Records of the General Manager of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario 1927-1986* or the RG-36 series.

intemperance posed too great a risk to their organization. During the early years the LCBO was hanging by a thread, the temperance movement was politically strong and the Board needed to show that state liquor control worked. The Board expressed strongly to its workers that they had the “success of the law in their hands” and that they were to be active in “preventing discredit falling upon the store system through immoderation or other wrongdoing by permit holders” (LCBO Circular 497, 382.1928; LCBO Instructions to Vendors Regarding the Issuing Permits.1928:5). This, coupled with intensive surveillance technologies, resulted in a system of pre-elimination for individuals deemed by the Board to be lacking the necessary self-control needed to be trusted with the privilege of drinking liquor.

In the case of non-pre-eliminated individuals, surveillance mechanisms embedded within the purchase process were used to instil the characteristic effects of panopticism that ultimately impacted both the permit holding public and the LCBO staff (the surveyors were themselves closely surveilled). In a circular on the topic of controlling abuses of liquor privileges sent to all vendors at both the LCBO stores and brewery warehouses, the Board emphasized that “of all kinds of control, the best is self-control” (Circular 497, October 10th 1928). With this in mind Board policy to control users with sufficient self-control focused on allowing the individual user to see the ills of their ways and was conceptualized as being achievable through heavy surveillance of individual purchases and consumption. The Board argued that technologies that made visible drinking behaviour were necessary in order “to directly bring home to those purchasing liquor the amount of money they are spending on luxuries, possibly to the expense of real necessities,” thus giving individuals the chance to control themselves with only minimal external force by the Board (Annual Report of the LCBO 1929-1930.1930:9).

The purchase process involved three main pieces of disciplinary technology: the individual liquor permit book, purchase form and vendor stamp. When a permit holder, or permittee, wanted to purchase liquor from a Board store all three technologies came into play. First, a purchase form was filled out containing the type and amount of liquor requested, date and the individual’s permit book number (LCA.1927.s.32.1,s.32.2). One’s permit book was then checked such that purchases had not reached an excessive level. If the level was deemed acceptable by the vendor, the new purchase would be added to the individual liquor permit book, the purchase form would be signed by the purchaser and finally both would be stamped by the LCBO vendor (LCBO Vendor Instructions, 1927:3). Since each of these technologies were embedded within all legal liquor interactions, and all were individually numbered, they acted as surveillance tools applied to both liquor permittees and LCBO store staff. This cluster of administrative technologies articulated LCBO staff at a distance for the sake of Head Office’s monitoring of its labour force, constituted a concrete historical archive of individuals within the subject population of drinkers, and made available in standard form data that could be analyzed and shared.

Permit Books

“The major effect of the Panopticon,” Michel Foucault (1977: 201) argued, was “to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power”. For individual liquor users the liquor permit book would play a central role in creating the conscious state of “permanent visibility” needed to induce self-discipline. The Liquor Permit Books were introduced by the LCBO in Ontario

in 1927 under the Liquor Control Act. The permit book resembled a passport in size and shape and was individually and geographically identifiable through a unique six digit number. The pages inside consisted of a small section related to the individual, including name, address and employment, and another for records of purchases. The liquor permit books were required to purchase liquor for home consumption and, upon purchase, the date, liquor type, volume and cost were recorded, allowing for surveillance and classification of all users along these parameters.

Individual Liquor Permit
No. 385001
LIQUOR CONTROL ACT (ONTARIO)
1944-1945
This Permit Expires March 31st, 1945

Liquor Control Act (Ontario)
APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL LIQUOR PERMIT

I, Anna
Residing at _____
Address in full _____
Married, Single or Widower _____
Occupation or that of Husband _____
Employer and Address _____

being of the full age of twenty-one years, and having been a resident in Ontario for the past month, hereby make application for a permit to purchase liquor in accordance with the provisions of the Liquor Control Act (Ontario) and the Regulations made thereunder. I am not the holder of an unexpired individual permit nor am I disqualified under the provisions of the said Act.

Dated at Anna Ontario this 22 day of Mar. 1944
385001

6 385001 1944-1945

DATE	QUANTITY						STORE NO.	INITIALS
	A	B	C	A	B	L		
9/3	1						68	B
14/4	1						68	D
14/5	1						88	B
14/5	1						12	B
12/6	1						66	B

385001

Figure 1: Liquor Permit Book 1927-1958

The Liquor Permit Books were acquired by application if one was twenty-one years of age, a resident of Ontario for one month or more (visitors applied under another category), and of “good” character; specifically, one could not be an “Indian” or already disqualified through the LCBO’s own sorts “by an order of cancellation or interdiction” (LCA.1927. s.37.4.,s.44,s.95-1; LCBO Manual of Instructions to Vendors.1952:20). Applicants were then required to obtain a permit application form, fill it out and then have an individual appointed by the Board verify their identity and character (Liquor Control Act. S.O. s.37.2; LCBO Form 85 Instructions to Vendors.1927). Two copies of the permit were created through the application process, one was sent to the Permit Department of the LCBO, to be known as “second copies”, and the other was given to the customer, to be presented upon each purchase (Sec.66. Regulations of the LCBO, 1927). A fee of two dollars was required. The Liquor Permit Book was valid for only twelve months, from November 1st of one year to October 31st of the next. After this time the permit had to be replaced at the same cost.

Since each purchase required the permittee’s Liquor Permit Book to be scrupulously reviewed for “over consumption,” and “mispending of income,” previous LCBO disciplinary action and more generally any “abuse of the permit privilege” by the local vendor, surveillance and regular review were core features of purchasing alcohol (LCBO Circular 333, April 18th 1928; LCBO Manual of Instructions to Vendors.1952:44-45; LCBO Vendors’ Instructions.1927:1). Not only could the data within the permit books be

reviewed by the Board, individuals were made aware that they might also be inspected upon request by police officers, courts, aid organizations or municipalities without a warrant (Regulations of the LCBO. Sec.101.1927). The Permit Book was an open document, not a private record of purchases. In some cases, Liquor Permit Books acted as evidence of character in criminal cases and civil proceedings leading to convictions and even imprisonment (LCBO Circular 1952.1938; LCBO Circular 3621.1945; Thompson v Thompson. 1933).² If this wasn't enough to instil self-discipline, the Board also issued disciplinary letters under a wide variety of conditions to inform permittees that their liquor use was under "serious investigation" and that they were to take this into consideration when exercising their purchasing privilege (LCBO Warning Letter, 1944). These letters underlined that a lack of self-control had been observed and the level of individual surveillance had been intensified.

Other Permit Books

The LCBO arranged its permit system so that no liquor consumption escaped its gaze or existed outside its exercise of power, that is, nothing existed outside the lines and boxes and categories of its standardized forms. Liquor Permit Books also existed for the specified categories of "Visitors," "Physicians," "Druggists," "Dentists and Veterinary Surgeons," "Manufacturers," "Mechanics and Scientifics," "Ministers of the Gospel," and "Hospitals." Each category had its own regulations regarding the possession and purchase of liquor, though like the individual permit books, all had to record the amount of alcohol purchased and in some cases to whom the alcohol was administered (Liquor Control Act S.O.1927. s.56-60).

As Foucault (1977:199) noted, panoptic "authorities exercising individual control function according to a double mode, that of binary division and branding." For the LCBO the permit book was initially a means of classifying the legal liquor-using population, since it was needed for purchasing liquor legally, but it was also developed to categorize populations that would have reduced access to liquor. When a permittee's drinking behaviour became suspect or "in the case of those who really require the closest supervision," the local vendor was to stamp the user's liquor permit with a "Regional Stamp"(LCBO Circular 829.1929). This Regional Stamp would then make the permittee's liquor permit only valid in a single store. That vendor would then be in a position of "knowing all about [the permittee] and their circumstances," thus increasing the visibility of the subject, the intensity of the instructional gaze, and magnifying the data produced by means of contact that did not have to reckon with variables of place. Vendors were instructed by Head Office to use the Regional Stamp liberally, "to stamp all permits under suspicion, but as yet uncollected, so as to make such permits good only...where the permittee is known"(Ibid); thus, rendering visible and fixing in geographic space the user's opportunities for contact with the LCBO.

² Thompson v. Thompson. (1933) "Liquor Control Board, Toronto: Thompson V Thompson - Divorce Action - As To Board's Officers Giving Information In Court About Amount Of Liquor Bought." *Attorney General Central Registry Criminal and Civil Files*, RG 4-32 series. Toronto: Archives of Ontario.

Form No. L 33.

Liquor Control Board of Ontario

Summary of purchases under Special Permits by
during the month of 19.....

NAME	ADDRESS	Permit Number	ALCOHOL			BEER		SPIRITS		WINE			PRES	
			Pts.	Qts.	Gals.	Pts.	Qts.	6 Oz.	Qts.	Pts.	Qts.	Gals.	6 Oz.	Qts.

Figure 2: LCBO L-33 Special Permit Purchase Record

Those who were deemed in need of “limited consumption” as well as those refused liquor outright were also included in the stamped category (LCBO 941.1930). If a vendor felt that a permittee was over-consuming liquor they were to stamp the permit with the Regional Stamp and “write on the permit the quantity of beer [or liquor] per week to which he considers such permittee should be restricted” (Ibid). Refusals were also included in the “stamped” category. A permittee could be refused and classified as regionally stamped for either attempting to purchase liquor while intoxicated or if the vendor felt that the permittee had made “excessive purchases or an unreasonable amount of money [was] being spent” (LCBO 403.1928). Further, page thirteen of the Liquor Permit Book would be marked by vendors with red capital letter “R”s (a somewhat literary flourish) in each column of the purchase section, and like the criminal masks once proposed by Bentham, it made their deviancy plain for all to see.

Permit Cards

Beginning in 1958 the LCBO altered its permits by removing the section for recording purchases. By this time the speed and accuracy of the Board’s IBM tabulating and sorting technology allowed for the physical separation of the individual from the collected database without a decline in the vividness of surveillance. The new Liquor Permit Card (see FIGURE 3) acted like contemporary documentary tokens, inasmuch as these are a means of connecting individuals and their purchases to the relevant databases (Rule *et al.*, 1983:222).

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO
INDIVIDUAL PERMIT

ONTARIO

No 862592

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

I hereby apply for an individual liquor permit and certify that I am the full age of 21 years and am not disqualified under the Liquor Control Act and Regulations.

SIGNATURE _____

The above-named individual is entitled to purchase liquor in accordance with the Liquor Control Act and Regulations.

INITIALS OF ISSUER _____ STORE NO. _____ CHIEF COMMISSIONER _____

Figure 3: Liquor Permit Card 1957-1962

This separation allowed the Board to eliminate its costly, multi-paged permit books and remove from sight their surveillance and classification methods. However, the consequence was that the LCBO's ability to induce a constant sense of surveillance in alcohol users was removed and the concept of the individual's self-disciplining role was eliminated from official policy. The separation also ushered in new social relations surrounding the document as the sophistication of the token/database relationship led to social control methods along more contemporary consumer formats such as age of majority and smart ID cards (Lyon 2001; Gandy 1987).

Purchase Form and Vendor Stamp

From 1927 until the late 1970's, a permittee purchasing liquor filled in a "Purchase Order Form". This form contained a formal declaration of a request for liquor that was signed by the permit holder; it included the type and amount of liquor requested, date and the individual's permit book number. These forms were reviewed by store vendors or permit endorsers along with the individual's liquor permit, and if approved, the order was filled. The original purchase order forms were filed at the LCBO Head Office in Toronto where they manually reviewed for purchase abnormalities by a staff, circa 1932, of over 200 employees (LCBO Vendors' Instructions 1927:14; LCBO Circular 851.1929; Annual Reports of the LCBO 1927-1933).

No Amounts to Appear at Top Except Made by Cash Register

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO

Date.....

Please Supply the Undermentioned Goods:

Brand No.	No. Bottles	KIND OF LIQUOR	PRICE	Total Amount

WRITE SEPARATE ORDER FOR EACH SIZE AND BRAND

ENDORSER'S USE ONLY

I am of the full age of twenty-one years and in accordance with the provisions of the LIQUOR CONTROL ACT OF ONTARIO, I am entitled to make this purchase.

.....
Signature

.....
Street and Number

.....
City, Town, Village, etc.

FOR USE OF CENSOR ONLY

Permit No.

Form No. S-25

Figure 4: LCBO S-25 Original Purchase Form 1927

The purchase order form served the main purpose of tracking consumption of particular liquor types but it also made possible the individual surveillance of vendors at the local level (LCBO Vendors' Instructions.1927:1-2). The original purchase order forms were filled out by staff at Liquor Control Board stores, signed by the permittee, and then stamped "ENDORSED" with an individually numbered stamp, traceable to the local

employee who filled the order. The Board issued individualized stamps to all staff and kept detailed records of who was “operating each stamp” as a means of vendor identification (LCBO Circular 557.1928). This was deemed necessary because individual stamps were the only means of identifying those involved in sale “irregularities” and therefore in need of disciplinary action. The need for the conscious and permanent visibility of liquor consumption made the misuse of vendor stamps or the mislabelling of individual liquor permits “the most reprehensible practice” in the eyes of the Board; indeed, it was one of the few instances that merited “immediate dismissal” from Board employment (LCBO Vendors’ Instructions.1927:1-2; LCBO Circular 333.1928). Like permit holders who “abused their permit privilege,” individual vendors were subject to disciplinary action and in some cases incarcerated based on the data collected through the purchase order forms (LCBO Circular 625.1929; LCBO Circular 653.1929; Rex V. Brown.1930, 55 C.C.C. 29). Even though purchase order forms were no longer sent to Head Office after 1934, they remained on file at the local store with the idea that they could be reviewed at any time by one of the Board’s many inspectors (LCBO Circular 1594.1934). The permit forms finally went out of use in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s when the LCBO stores became self-serve operations and the actual bottles of liquor were put on the shelves.

Punch Cards and Hollerith Technology

Some individuals, for reasons relating to income, race or reputation, were determined by the Board to be simply lacking the moral control necessary to combat the evils of drink and thus, needed to be identified and eliminated from the drinking population (Willison.1924; Ferguson.1926). To achieve this the Board engaged in an extensive province-wide social sort to identify, assess and classify individuals based on their perceived risk of intemperance. Those who were seen as too great a risk were not given an opportunity to “create prejudice against the law”. They were kept from acquiring liquor by being listed on the “drunk” or “Interdicted” list (LCBO Circular 497.1928).

Complex sorts in the pre-computer era were accomplished with Hollerith sorting and tabulating machines. Hollerith machines were cutting edge technology in the 1920's and accepted as a “prove[n] way of economically producing facts and figures vital to operating” a business (Railway Review 1926:354). The punch card and sorter were invented by Herman Hollerith as a means of having “a machine for doing the purely mechanical work of tabulating population and similar statistics” and “to count people like they had never been counted before” (Alterman.1969:5; Black.2001:24). This technology was first used in 1886 in Baltimore to generate public health statistics, though it is perhaps better known for its tabulation of the 1890 United States census or its sorting and subjugation of targeted populations in Nazi Germany (Norberg, 1990:761; Black. 2001). This technology was unique in that it was designed to “identify the victims” but it also provided data that could “project and rationalize the benefits of their destruction, organize their persecution, and even audit [its own] efficiency” (Black.2001:8). The LCBO incorporated this technology primarily to identify and track users, and as the technology delivered more vivid descriptions of populations it used its statistical analysis to socially justify the pre-elimination of potentially dangerous populations (Annual Report of the LCBO 1958-1959. 1959).

Although the Tabulating Machine Company (soon to become IBM), under the gaze of Hollerith, was the first to patent punch card technology, many companies developed variations on Hollerith's original design. By 1925 punch card technology had been standardized around a 12 row, 80 column design which remained unaltered until punch cards ceased being mass-produced (see Figure 5 below).

Figure 5: Standardised 80 Column Punch Card

These standardized cards allowed for both numeric and alphabetic data to be stored and sorted. The cards were fed into a sorting machine whose key components consisted of a brush, or card reader, and a mechanism to direct them into one of 13 pockets.

Figure 6: How the Sorter Sorts Punch Cards

The sorter pockets were arranged 9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1,0,11,12 and R, with the thirteenth or "R" pocket being for unreadable or reject cards. As the card passed through the machine a brush was used to detect that position that was punched in it. When the brush passed over the punched hole on the card a circuit was completed that forced the card upward along a metal path into the corresponding pocket. The alphabetic information required two punched holes in a single column, with two passes through the sorting machine. On

the second pass pockets 9-1 were turned off allowing the machine to read only the punched positions in either the 0, 11 or 12 position. This second pass finalized the alphabetical ordering of the cards. The IBM 80 sorter of 1925 could sort and tabulate between 250-2000 cards per minute (IBM 1961:28).

From 1927-64 the LCBO used punch card technology to ease tabulation at its Head Office. The Board relied on both Dominion Loose Leaf Company Limited and Remington Rand's Kardex Visible division for tabulation services from 1927-1943, but in 1944 they changed exclusively to IBM Hollerith tabulating machines to record purchases, tabulate consumption and sort individual permittees (Annual Report of the LCBO 1944-1945, 1945). Though the Board started using the IBM 60652 Card as their sole means of recording secondary permits in 1948, they had already been using the technology to perform permit tracking as early as 1944 (Circular 3940.1948: LCBO IBM 60652). The IBM 83700 card worked as a prototype for the IBM 60652 that was incorporated as the secondary permit in 1948.

Figure 7: LCBO IBM 83700 Secondary Permit 1946

The IBM 83700 contained the permittee's address, permit number, the store and vendor from whom the permit was purchased from but most importantly it included a punched section for the individual's name. This punched section allowed for simple classification of individuals as well as the expedient generation of lists - the LCBO's most valuable tool in controlling liquor sales. Like most of IBM's clients the LCBO's punch cards would "be sent to the service bureau of the International Business Machines to be punched" and then were returned to the Board's Permit Department "for machine sorting" (LCBO Circular 3940.1948). The Board sorted and tabulated products and users extensively and reported their more positive findings in their annual reports to the Ontario government.

The Board used IBM punch cards (see Figure 7) to play the role of the secondary permit that was held at Head Office. These secondary permits kept tabs on problem users so that previous restrictions such as "Limited Consumption" (described in an earlier section) would be retained by the permittee should they attempt to receive a new permit (LCBO Circular 859.1929). The Permit Department of the LCBO was adamant about the

“Second Copies” since were its sole means of tracking and classifying users (LCBO Circulars 226, 873, 1439, 1442, 1534, 1636, 3442, 3940. 1927-1948).

In 1944 the Board spent over \$141,000 implementing its new IBM technology and by 1952 split their tabulation and IBM rental costs so that each could pass under 2% of the LCBO’s gross profit (Annual Reports of the LCBO 1944-1945.1945; see Figure 8 below).

Figure 8: LCBO Annual Expenditures 1927-1970

The central role and scope that these technologies played can be seen from the increased use of tabulation machines and the vast operational costs incurred by the LCBO. By 1970 the Board had paid IBM over \$764,000 for equipment rental, \$1,083,00 in tabulation costs, \$1,061,000 in permit costs, \$190,000 for computerization making a grand total of \$3,099,300 dollars spent on surveillance technologies over 26 years.

The role of IBM in the development of sorting and tabulating technologies at the LCBO after 1944 was substantial. Not only technology was sourced from Big Blue; so too were personnel. Harry Sheppard became chief commissioner of the LCBO in 1963 after stepping down from his position as chairman of the board of IBM Canada. Sheppard immediately computerized the Board when he took his position at the LCBO. After the arrival of IBM technology at the LCBO, statistical sorting became central to the identification and investigation of risk populations as well as the key technology used for the generation of the board’s most powerful social control tool - the “drunk” lists.

Classification of “Problem Users” and the LCBO Lists

At first, LCBO regulations pre-selected three main groups for exclusion: First Nations and Inuit peoples defined as “Indians” under the *Indian Act*, minors and interdicted individuals (those to whom alcohol was barred due to judicial action). But with increased knowledge gathered through the permit books, purchase forms, statistical analysis and investigations, the “drunk list” quickly expanded.

As part of its temperance morality mandate the Board instructed its vendors to watch out for those who “abused liquor,” “those who from the amount of their purchases and from their standing and circumstances are likely to be supplying bootleggers,” and those whose financial standing “is such that the sales must be followed by a diminution of the comforts of life in the family” so that they could be barred from liquor use (LCBO Circular 1766, 1936; Liquor Control Act 1927 R.S.O. 17 George V c.257). Initially, the Board relied on an older “Interdiction List,” a remnant of British black-listing laws that eliminated drunkenness by circulating the name and likeness of listed individuals. By 1928 this method was considered too cumbersome a tool for social control given the magnitude of the task at hand. The justice system was simply not fast enough to process the LCBO’s average of 38,486 investigations per year (Annual Report of the LCBO 1929-1933). Placing someone on the Interdicted List was a lengthy process involving sentencing in open court, and few judges opted to include interdiction in the sentences they handed out. Between 1927 and 1976 only 23 judges actually chose to interdict offenders, and only 6 of them did so more than once in their careers (RG-36-13 Interdiction Records of the LLBO³). To bypass this time-consuming process the Board initiated what it called the “Cancellation List” to quickly and definitively deal with its problem users (Annual Reports of the LCBO 1927-1928, 1928).

Individuals listed on the Cancellation List had no conceptual or legal distinction from those who were formally interdicted. Their names and likenesses were sent to all vendors, police, and after 1934 to standard hotels, on the very same lists as those who were legally interdicted. These lists were updated through letters for each individual added to the list and were fully replaced monthly by the Board. As more vivid data on permit holders was collected by the LCBO, it became apparent that the Cancellation List was a limited means of keeping problem drinking populations from receiving permits and the “drunk” list was expanded yet again (LCBO Circular 904, 1930).

The Prohibited List was formally developed in 1929 to replace the Cancellation List because the Board decided to track and pre-eliminate those individuals who were reportedly receiving “relief” from their municipalities (Annual Report of the LCBO 1928-1929, 1929:3). File-sharing permitted the Board to target welfare recipients. Permit cancellation was not an acceptable solution, however, since intemperate actions had already occurred and damaged the validity of the law. Through surveillance and analysis the Board sought the means of predicting which individuals would prove intemperate and pre-eliminating them. The LCBO was sent lists of relief recipients through the offices of

³ Interdiction legislation moved under the control of the LLBO in 1976, which is why Interdiction orders and supporting documents that were the property of the LCBO are currently archived under the RG-36-13 series.

CABLE ADDRESS
"DISPENSANT"
TORONTO

FILE COPY

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO

55 LAKE SHORE BLVD. EAST
TORONTO 2, CANADA

July 13th, 19█.

NOTICE to all License Holders in: Armstrong, Savant Lake, Nakina, Longlac
LCBS: #332, 245 AGENCY STORES #10, 14
R. C. LEGIONS, BRANCHES #80, 116, 213

- RE:- (28) ~~Mr. [redacted]~~, ARMSTRONG, Ontario
(29) Mrs. ~~[redacted]~~, #~~332~~ Gull Bay Band, ARMSTRONG, Ontario
(30) Mrs. ~~[redacted]~~, #~~332~~ Gull Bay Band, ARMSTRONG, Ontario
(31) Mrs. ~~[redacted]~~, Gull Bay Band, GULL BAY, Ontario
(32) Mr. ~~[redacted]~~, #~~332~~ Gull Bay Band, GULL BAY, Ontario
(33) Mr. ~~[redacted]~~, ARMSTRONG, Ontario
(34) Mr. ~~[redacted]~~, #~~332~~ Whitesand Band, ARMSTRONG, Ontario
(35) Mr. ~~[redacted]~~, #~~332~~ Whitesand Band, WAGAMING, Ontario
(36) Mr. ~~[redacted]~~, #~~332~~ Whitesand Band, ARMSTRONG, Ontario
(37) Mrs. ~~[redacted]~~, ARMSTRONG, Ontario

Pursuant to the provisions of the Liquor Control Act and the Regulations, you are hereby prohibited to sell, serve or otherwise supply intoxicating liquor to the above named, for a period of TWELVE MONTHS FROM THE ABOVE DATE.

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO.

Chief Commissioner.

NAB:MR

Copy to Hotels in: Armstrong (1), Savant Lake (1), Nakina (1), Longlac (1)
Hotel Inspector
Chief Inspector, R. G. FRANCE, O.P.P.
R. C. Legions, Branches #80, 116, 213
Stores as above

Figure 10: Additions to Monthly Lists

CABLE ADDRESS
"DISPENSANT"
TORONTO

LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO

55 LAKE SHORE BLVD. EAST
TORONTO 2, CANADA

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ TELE. NO: _____

AGE: _____

MARRIED: _____ NO. OF YEARS: _____ FAMILY: _____ AGES: _____

NAME OF EMPLOYER: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TYPE OF LIQUOR: _____ WHERE CONSUMED: _____

HOTELS: _____

CONDUCT: _____

CONVICTIONS: _____

POLICE CALLED: _____ DATE: _____ TIME: _____

OFFICERS NAME & NUMBER: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION: _____

DESCRIPTION:

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ DAY: _____ MO: _____ YEAR: _____

HEIGHT: _____ FT: _____ IN: _____

WEIGHT: _____ LBS: _____

COLOUR OF HAIR: _____

COLOUR OF EYES: _____

IDENTIFYING MARKS: _____

SIGNED: _____

WITNESSED: _____

Figure 11: LCBO Individual Record Form

[illegible]

Individual files were also kept on listed individuals and contained detailed information gathered through LCBO investigations. Data within these files came from a wide variety of sources including letters and interviews with relatives, doctors, priests and neighbours

as well as judges' orders, photos, police, hospital and court records. Some files even contained confidential personal information like medical records or records of participation in Alcoholics Anonymous. These files were kept at Head Office and allocated an Investigation and Classification Card that allowed readers to quickly identify the materials present and previous actions taken with the aid of a prohibited persons classification system.

The Board had eight possible classifications; Full Board Order 1 year (FBO), Full Board Order Until Further Notice (FN), Limited (HC and LA), Premise Declared Public Place (PP and HCPP) and Judge's Order of Interdiction (J). Each of these classifications had different implications for the user with a wide range of severity. "Board Order" meant orders of prohibition, or orders to have individuals added to the prohibited list. Most orders of prohibition listed someone for one year, though the Board could place the order until further notice at its discretion. The Board also had two less consequential forms of classification under what it called "partial orders" or "limited permits" stipulating either no home consumption (HC) or no drinking in licensed establishments such as standard hotels or authorities such as Union or Legion Halls (LA). In instances where the Board had seized liquor from a private residence it could add to the order a stipulation that converted the individual's private property into a public place under the Liquor Control Act (R.S.O. 1927 17 Geo. V. c.257.s.42.(2)). On the LCBO's investigation and classification card this appeared as "PP" for a simple conversion and "HCPP" for the conversion of a residence.

Under section 42.2(2) of the LCA, the private residence of listed person could have their residence converted into a public place; the LCBO tracked this data as well, at least partially (SO 1927 c.70.s.42.(2), 17 Geo. V.). The section stipulates that a residence, defined as "any building or part of a building or tent where a person resides" can be converted into a public place, defined as "any place building or convenience to which the public has, or is permitted to have, access" (Ibid). These orders were designed to eliminate the need for the police or LCBO investigators to obtain a search warrant for a converted premise and also made it illegal for anyone to consume liquor on the premises. Conversion was limited to those who underwent a legal process, starting with their conviction for any breach of the Liquor Control Act within the residence for any "liquor kept therein" or "removed therefrom"(Ibid). Between 1939 and 1947 over 3,400 residences in Ontario were converted to public property and although this remained law from 1927 until the late 1960's, the Board only published data from 1939-1947.

The conversion of a residence to a public place would last a stipulated period, usually one year from the date of the conviction, unless removed by the Board. The residence, regardless of ownership, would remain a public place, even if the convicted person moved, until the Board was "satisfied of a bona fide change in ownership or occupation of such premise" (Ibid). Individuals on the Prohibited list would receive a supplementary postscript to their order stating "P.S. This action is taken pursuant to your conviction under section 43-1, L.C.A., and your premises having been declared a public place, rendering it illegal for anyone to hold a permit or keep or have possession of beverage liquor therein for [the stipulated period]" (LCBO Interdiction Order. RG-36-13).

Analysis of Prohibited Lists

Individuals classified under the rubric of “Prohibitory Orders” - recipients of full or partial Board orders - were of particular importance to the maintenance of morality as they held the statistical key to predicting the intemperate actions of future potential liquor users and thus were the subject of complex analysis by LCBO Head Office. Throughout the 30's, 40's and 50's the LCBO's various lists served as the exclusive means of keeping permanent "tabs" on all "problem" cases (LCBO Circular 1167,1930).

Gandy (1993:74) points out how lists and list matching are vitally importance to organizations seeking to avoid risk because of their value in predicting which individuals will be “engaged in activities related to waste, fraud and abuse of resources”. In the case of the LCBO, the goal of predicting who would engage in acts of intemperance lead to a complex system of analysis that sought to target and label “risky” populations. Externally, the LCBO ran list matching operations with city relief officials, aid organizations and several levels of police; while internally, the Board relied on a system of list matching that included geographical location, interdiction or order type, reason for interdiction (including race), as well as previous disciplinary action to identify potentially intemperate drinkers (see LCBO form L-44). An internally document explained that these matches were to play a key role in the sorting and predictive capabilities of the Board (LCBO Circular 1167,1930).

The form is titled "ANALYSIS OF PROHIBITORY ORDERS" and is labeled "TYPE". It contains a large grid for data entry, with columns for various categories. The categories include:

- State
- Order Number
- Sex
- Age
- Race
- Religion
- Education
- Occupation
- Previous Convictions
- Previous Disciplinary Action
- Previous Public Place

The form is designed for detailed statistical analysis of individuals under prohibitory orders.

Figure 13: LCBO L-44 Analysis of Prohibitory Orders.

Geographical Location

The LCBO's numbering of permit books, stores, listed individuals, standard hotels and authority holders allowed for a detailed geographical analysis of the province. Although it was possible, through the Board's various numbered systems, to track any individual, store or locality it carried out most of its geographical statistical analysis by separating the province into regions: Toronto (A), Hamilton (B), Niagara Falls (C), Northern Ontario (D), Western Ontario No.1 (E), Western Ontario No.2 (F) and Windsor District (G). These regions were used by the Board to analyse data on consumption as well as on listed individuals. Each section of the L44 form is separated by geographical region allowing for the assessment of each for category specific risk. Statistically, the northern district was

where the interdiction list served the greatest use and conversely posed the greatest risk (Annual Report of the LCBO 1958-1959.1959; Annual Report of the LCBO 1972-1973.1973). From an analysis of the final remaining complete interdiction lists, the northern region is greatly over-represented as well as almost exclusively made up of First Nations peoples, showing the specific type of risk associated with the north (Interdiction Lists.1927-1975⁴). Region and racially defined pre-eliminations collapsed into a georacial profile.

Past Disciplinary Action

Premises Declared Public Place								TOTAL	Prior Cancellations								TOTAL
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	

Figure 14: LCBO L-44 Prior Cancellations and Premise Declared a Public Place

Past disciplinary action was a heavily weighted risk factor. Specific technologies such as the Investigation and Classification Card tracked past disciplinary action while list matching identified risk populations. Of those individuals investigated for interdiction 61% had previous disciplinary action while 29% had previously been formally interdicted (Interdiction Records of the LLBO. RG-36-13). Heavy drinkers posed a serious threat as they were the physical manifestations of the “exploitation” of the liquor trade (Spence.1926). Vendors were continuously reminded that “the real addict should not have a permit at all” and they were to identify those habitual drinkers who “abused the liquor privilege” (LCBO 497.1928; LCBO Vendor Instructions.1927). The Board also list-matched those who had their private property converted to public space due to convictions under the Liquor Control Act (LCA).

Reason for Interdiction

Order Number	B. L. C. A.								TOTAL	B. L. C. A.								TOTAL	B. L. C. A.								TOTAL
	Sec. 87 (1)				1 a					Sec. 105 (a)				1-b					General				1-c				
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	

Figure 15: LCBO L-44 Breaches of the Liquor Control Act

The Board tracked persons who were convicted under the Liquor Control Act and placed them within three sub-categories: those who sold liquor, those who permitted drunkenness, and a general category. The Board, keeping within its temperance morality mandate, specifically tracked those who were found to be selling liquor within the province. Such individuals were convicted under section 87.(1) of the Liquor Control Act

⁴ The complete Interdiction list from 1927-1975 and the final distributed complete copy of the prohibited list exist within the Archives of Ontario RG-36-13 series.

(R.S.O. 1937. V Geo. VI. c.294) and had their private residences converted. The Board also specifically tracked those individuals who had permitted “drunkenness to take place in any house or on any premises of which he is the owner, tenant or occupant” in order to identify and control populations who promoted intemperance (R.S.O. 1937. V Geo. VI. c.294 s.105(a)). The remaining individuals tracked due to their convictions under the Liquor Control Act fell under the heading of “General” and posed less risk, though they ultimately made up 32% of all tracked Liquor Control Act convictions (Tabulated from Lang and McNeely.1963).

Indians and Minors								TOTAL
4 & 5								
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	

Figure 16: LCBO L-44 Indians and Minors

The alleged risk to the Board presented by so-called “Indians” was more than just a historical remnant dating from the 1700s when French Bishops preached against the sale of alcohol to First Nations (Riddle.1931). Allowing” Indians” to obtain liquor was in violation of the *Indian Act*, the Liquor Control Act, and would result in criminal conviction as well as public disdain. During the years that liquor was barred from “Indians” a number of LCBO vendors were subject to prosecution under this legislation (Rex v. Brown.1930; Rex v. Webb.1943). These racist laws rested upon the established legal precedent that “Indians” were “particularly susceptible to, and likely injured by, the use of intoxicants.” Though these laws were ultimately be found to have “caused inequality before the Law” and struck down, the perception of racial “weakness” nonetheless played a significant role in LCBO risk assessment (Rex v. Martin. 1917; Supreme Court of Canada.1970).⁵

From 1927 until First Nations acquired the legal right to drink in Canada in the mid-1950's, it was LCBO procedure to categorically reject all applicants that appeared to be of “Indian blood”(LCBO Circular 750.1929; LCBO Instructions’ to Vendors.1927). If these rejected individuals pressed their application and argued that they were not in fact “Indians,” the onus remained on the applicant to produce documented evidence signed by either the local Indian agent (of each Band) or the Deputy Attendant General of Indian Affairs to prove the contrary. The circulars then stated that if the applicant had such evidence, or held a card of enfranchisement, then s/he would be dealt with like any other applicant (LCBO 1923, 1937). However, these individuals, even with evidence of “white” (assimilated) status, were not granted the liquor sales, as the Board explained “that any person may be refused the privilege of purchasing liquor, if such person is considered by the vendor as being unfit to possess liquor by reason of his financial standing, the probability of his purchasing for resale; or his general behaviour as the result of drinking intoxicants” (Ibid). If any doubt remained in the mind of the vendors about how to

⁵ Supreme Court of Canada (1970) quoted in “OPP Crime and Liquor Circular 5-70, Liquor Offences Involving Indians.” *Ontario Provincial Police. Ontario Provincial Police Policing of Indian Reservations, Military Camps and Parks, Files RG 23 H-8a series.* Toronto: Archives of Ontario.

interpret that statement, the circular continues: “therefore, a person of part-Indian blood, living in, say, an urban community, could be refused for such reason” (Ibid). Even after 1954 when “Indians” acquired the right to drink, their classification as a high risk population persisted, in view of their over-representation on both the Interdicted List and in Interdiction-related convictions (Interdiction Records of the LLBO RG-36-13; Annual Reports of the Ontario Provincial Police. 1927-1970). Before 1949, interdiction-related convictions were literally 0 in Ontario, but increased substantially to over 800 individuals by the late 1960's, which was not merely “coincidental” with the right to purchase alcohol acquired by First Nations⁴.

Figure 17: Interdiction Related Convictions Reported by the Ontario Provincial Police 1927-1970

Minors under the age of 21 who managed to purchase a permit or had been convicted under the Liquor Control Act were also tracked by the LCBO. One of the key tenets of the temperance movement was that liquor sales preyed on the young. Since minors posed a great risk to the LCBO, it maintained an anti-youth appearance and even threatened permittees with permit cancellation if they provided minors with empty bottles (LCBO 881.1929). Minors themselves posed little problem to the LCBO until after the Second World War where liquor had been legally provided to them by the government while they

⁴ First Nations were granted the legal right to drink in public restaurants and bars under 1951 legislation, while the right to drink in their private residences came later and required Bands to apply to the LCBO for “wet” status. This began in 1954 and by 1957 many had done so. By 1962 most had applied (LCBO General Correspondence. 1954-1962). Heron (2003:292-3) contrasts the treatment of First Nations with Blacks and Asians, noting that the former were formally excluded (even after 1951) while the latter groups were informally included in beer parlour social spaces in the post-war years, despite the ever present dangers of racially motivated violence.

were in Europe and then provided illegally by their fellow officers upon their return to Canada. After the war the Board tracked these cases more diligently and there was a large increase in the number of convictions of minors by the Ontario Provincial Police for liquor-related offences (Annual Reports of the Ontario Provincial Police 1945-1955). During the 1940's and 1950's the number of minors convicted for drinking had more than tripled and by 1959 over 1,000 individuals per year were convicted and tracked (Ibid).

“Indians and Minors” were traditionally tracked separately by the LCBO, as one may see from the separate numbers of 4 and 5 allocated to each category respectively (see LCBO L-44). While these were separate categories, they do appear together on the L-44 form. Two reasons come to mind to explain this conjunction of categories: first, within the Canadian legal tradition, “Indians” have been treated as conceptual minors when it came to alcohol legislation; and secondly, in the post war years both “Indians” and Minors posed logistically similar threats as they both had legally obtained liquor in Europe during the WWII and were likely to be served at either the Legion Halls or by fellow officers. Underage drinkers, of course, had no recourse to civil rights complaints, unlike the “vocal Native organizations” cited by Heron (2003: 319) who often spoke but were not heard (i.e., First Nations servicemen received prejudicial treatment with regard to accessing veteran’s benefits, an issue that finally reached the national political stage in 2005). In this regard the LCBO reminded its vendors that while “an unenfranchised Indian is, or has been, a member of the Armed Forces [this] does not alter his status as an Indian. He is still prohibited” (LCBO Circular 3940, 1948).

Best Interests								TOTAL
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
								3

Figure 18: LCBO L-44 “Best Interests” / Board Decision

Finally, the remainder of tracked individuals were listed based on data mined from the LCBO’s various surveillance technologies. Exclusive sorting revealed the need to expand the “drunk” list to those who in all likelihood would “abuse the permit privilege” (LCBO 904, 1930). In 1930 the Board started to issue what it called “preventative cancellations” - these were “intended to prevent some unsuitable party [from] obtaining a permit”. The Board argued for the inevitability of the “collection and forwarding of [this party’s] permit” (LCBO 904, 1930). In the order delivered to an individual it was explained that: “this notice is sent as a preventative of your exercise of the permit privilege, because of non-confidence in your proper observance of the law” (Ibid). Non-confidence was generated by categorical comparison and collapse rather than evidence.

Although none of these individuals had actually committed acts that would have placed them on the prohibited list, they were nonetheless added by the Board because their intemperance had become a predictable part of a future already over. This has a science fictional feel about it and reminds us of the theory of ‘precrime’ (arrest of would-be criminals) imagined by Philip K. Dick (1956) in *Minority Report*, right down to the punch cards containing the prophecies of the ‘precogs’ divining the future. Less dramatically,

however, is the fact that advanced surveillance has as a core goal the mastery of time. As Bill Bogard has observed (1996: 34), the “essential temporal orientation” of surveillance under the sign of simulation is the future-past, a future already mastered. The absolute reduction of uncertainty means that the temporal spectrum of past-present-future may be manipulated based on “the social context of [its] utilization,” (Castells 2000:492) in this case the risks attributed to georacial “danger” We have developed this temporal issue elsewhere (Genosko and Thompson 2006).

The listing of these individuals can be understood as the direct result of the Board’s statistical analysis and sorting technologies. As sorting technology was embraced in the mid 1940’s there was also a marked increase in the number of individuals statistically pre-eliminated on the grounds that the Board felt it was in “the best interests of all involved” (LCBO Interdiction Order; Annual Reports of the LCBO 1935-1951 see graph below).

Figure 19: Reasons Provided for Interdiction by the LCBO 1935-1950

As one can see in the graph above, “Board Decision” played either an equal or lesser role with regards to interdicting individuals until 1944. From 1944, the year that the Board started incorporating IBM punch cards into their permit system, to 1951, the year it Board stopped publishing their interdiction numbers, the number of individuals eliminated based on predictive technologies, or “best interests,” increased a startling 144%, resulting in over 2,000 listings annually. Ultimately, 19,302 listings were made by the LCBO under the “Board Decision” classification between 1944-1951, making it by far the most common means for listing after 1944 (Annual Reports of the LCBO 1935-1951). We are not, then, dealing with small numbers.

Conclusion

The Province of Ontario was not alone in requiring drinkers to purchase a permit in order to acquire alcohol. There were exceptions, as Craig Heron notes in his study *Booze* (2003: 280), but even exceptional provinces had powerful liquor control boards that set limits on purchasing alcohol and where and when and by whom it could be consumed. Our choice of Ontario is not anomalous.

The richness of the archive permits us to track in some detail the manipulations of the list from interdiction, through cancellation, into prohibited and preventative pre-eliminations of targeted populations. In the process legal measures morphed into extra-legal powers, and evidence-based decision making gave way to a priori exclusion based on categorical suspicion supported by internally generated profiles.

Advances in sorting technology emboldened the LCBO to reconceptualize relations between Head Office and individual consumers. While pre-Hollerith LCBO surveillance required a string of subjective human assessments from the local vendor to the local police or liquor inspector, and then Head Office, tabulation and statistical analysis required only data collection, sharing and computation. One by-product was a severe reduction in the possible points of entry for empathy toward the predicaments of alcohol consumers and, more importantly, points of resistance within the LCBO by individual agents themselves subject to close observation and therefore with little latitude to act upon local knowledge and exercise discretion. It is not unusual for surveillance technologies to change the character of occupational knowledge (de-humanization toward automation) and the directionality of critical attention to the prospective (Ericson and Haggerty 1997: 58). Mariana Valverde (2003: 203) refers to the hybrid and fuzzy “epistemology” (knowledge practices) of vendors and judges in relation to questions of “Indianness” as they bear upon access to alcohol. However, Valverde shows little interest in the technologies of social sorting which radically changed the character of such “epistemological” labour from intuition and a mixed bag of so-called “facts” to a sweeping pre-eliminative projection. At the very least we believe that paying closer attention to the Hollerith-generated sorts will enrich our understanding of the LCBO’s attempt to control “epistemology” through modelling made possible by new technology.

The implementation of social sorting technologies also had a serious impact on category membership as statistical predictors such as income, in the case of the LCBO interdiction classification, rendered the categories of “wealthy” and “drunkard” mutually exclusive, while the boundaries of previously separate categories such as “Indian” and “interdicted” became blurred. This can be understood as a product of the blunt rationality of categorization; technological sorting tools are only as sophisticated as their pre-programmed assumptions and limited input data. To be sure, we are still in this study in the pre-electronic era before point-of-purchase technologies came of age as networked databases. The permits, purchase forms and lists are near precursors to our scanners, barcodes, loyalty cards and computerized customer profiling.

Moreover, the role that the justification for interdiction played in LCBO categorization shifted alongside new technologies. Originally, drunkenness, bootlegging and

misspending were in themselves the only criteria for interdiction, but as soon as we see the incorporation of a strategy of pre-elimination, the original justifications for interdiction took a backseat to statistical predictors that were justified on the ground of “best interests” by a paternalistic and technologically aggressive LCBO.

The racist social sorting and categorization of statistically determined populations by the LCBO suggests a much larger relationship between Hollerith sorting technologies and morally bankrupt social action. In invoking Black’s work at the beginning of this paper we are not surreptitiously importing fascist intent into the LCBO with regard to its focus on First Nations in Ontario. Still, because the sorting technologies have a history of such use, we want to make them available to activists so that the full effects can be evaluated not only in further academic contexts but by activists with an interest in whether or not the use of alcohol as a tool of social control against First Nations is in any way actionable.

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⁵ References to all archival sources including LCBO and Provincial documents are given in the body of the essay and notes.

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