



# **RESEARCHING CRAFT BEER**

**UNDERSTANDING PRODUCTION,  
COMMUNITY AND CULTURE IN  
AN EVOLVING SECTOR**



**EDITED BY**

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## About the Editors

**Daniel Clarke** is a Senior Lecturer in Management and Marketing at the University of Dundee School of Business. He obtained his PhD on place making in small new business ventures in 2008 from the University of St Andrews. His scholarship operates at the intersection of organisational space and place and he has published work on teleworking, fair trade food consumption, the sensory retail environment, sport tourism and service work involving craft beer. In his teaching and research practices, Daniel uses participant-produced drawing and a range of experience-near methods including autoethnography, photography, video and poetry. He is passionate about introducing novel imaginative–creative, visual and experimental practices of pedagogy and research in to business management education. His work has been published in *Management Learning*, *Qualitative Inquiry*, *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *Leisure Sciences*, *The Design Journal* and *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*. His favourite beer is North Sea Stout by Pilot.

**Vaughan Ellis** is a Lecturer in Labour Relations and has been employed at Edinburgh Napier University since 2007. He specialises in the contemporary organisation and experience of work. His PhD examined changes in the labour process of clerical workers at British Gas (1970–2004) and in particular was concerned with the impact of privatisation and the introduction of call centres upon the organisation and experience of work. His present research interests include the nature of work within the Scottish micro-brewing sector, changing patterns of work organisation within the UK Higher Education sector and trade union responses to the changing nature of work. He has published in a number of top-rated international journals including *Work*, *Employment and Society* and *New Technology, Work and Employment*, of which he is a member of the Editorial Board. He is a member of the British Sociological Association, the Association of Business Historians and the British Universities Industrial Relations Association.

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**David Weir** is Professor of Enterprise at University of Huddersfield, Professor of Intercultural Management at York St John University and Visiting Professor at University of Lincoln. He has held professorial posts at several Universities in the UK and France, including Glasgow, Essex, Bradford, Northumbria, Liverpool Hope and CERAM, a Grande Ecole in France and Visiting Chairs at Lancaster, Hull, Bolton and Edge Hill and as Prof Affilié at ESC Rennes. He has held posts in Industry as a Director of Gulliver Foods, Chairman of Forever-Broadcasting (Yorkshire), Arbitrator for the Dairy Industry (Scotland) and was co-owner of Fragrance, a small retail business in the perfume sector in Scotland. He was a member of the Research Assessment Panel for Business and Management and of the Council for National Academic Awards and of committees of the Economic and Social Research Council and of the Science and Engineering Research Council. He was Professor of Whisky for a decade at the Universite des Eaux de Vie in Cognac. He has published over a wide range of topics including with Holly and Daniel on craft beer servers. He has a family connection with the brewing trade as his son as well as working in the City, has a proper job as owner of a micro-brewery who brews some lovely craft beers. His favourite pint is Timothy Taylor's Landlord.

## About the Contributors

**James Bowden** is a Lecturer in Finance at Strathclyde Business School, Scotland. He is currently a Course Director for the MSc Financial Technology and teaches Corporate Financing at undergraduate level. His research primarily focusses on the application of textual analysis techniques to the finance domain, and seeks to evaluate the extent to which the content, presentation and delivery of textual information influences financial markets. More recently, his research seeks to address the impact of sentiment, influence and misinformation within social media platforms on investor behaviour. His research has previously been published in the *European Journal of Finance* and *Journal of Comparative Economics*, and he has previously reviewed for journals such as *Qualitative Research in Financial Markets*. His favourite pint is Jarl by Fyne Ales.

**James Cunningham** is Academic Team Lead and Lecturer in Strategy and Entrepreneurship at Aberdeen Business School, Robert Gordon University. His research covers many areas of entrepreneurial behaviour, particularly in the context of artisan production and small family business. He has previously published studies on brewing in the *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, while his broader work has appeared in journals such as *Family Business Review*, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *Journal of Family Business Strategy* and the *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, among others. His favourite beer is Wanderlust by 6° North. Though this is best enjoyed in the evening, looking out over Stonehaven harbour.

**Keith Dinnie** is a Senior Lecturer in Marketing at the University of Dundee School of Business (UDSB), Scotland. He is the Head of the Management and Marketing discipline at UDSB. He has extensive experience of public engagement with food and drink producers as well as with public sector bodies such as the UK Government's Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and Brand Scotland. His Master's dissertation was funded by William Grant & Sons Ltd and focussed on the branding of Scotch whisky in the Greek market. His research has been published in leading journals such as *Marketing Theory*, *European Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Business Research* and *Tourism Management*. In addition to his academic work, he is also a Non-Executive Director on the Board of Visit Dundee Ltd. His favourite pint is Phoenix Pale by The Blunt Chisel.

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**Pavlina Jasovska** is a Lecturer in International Business and Strategy at UTS Business School. She earned her Doctoral degree in International Business from UTS Business School in 2019. Her research interests are in the internationalisation of both small and large firms with a specific focus on entrepreneurship, and institutional embeddedness and change across borders. Prior to joining academia, she gained professional experience in supply chain management including working in the brewing industry – a sector, which was also studied in her doctoral thesis exploring internationalisation of the craft beer industry from small open economies. Her research appears in journals such as *Journal of World Business* and *Journal of Knowledge Management* and she has recently co-edited a book titled *Contemporary Entrepreneurship Issues in International Business*. Her favourite beer is Young Henry's IPA.

**Jed Meers** is a Lecturer in Law at York Law School, University of York, UK. He has particular research interests in alcohol licencing and the Pubs Code, and manages the UK Pubs Observatory project. His favourite pint is Kernel's Export India Porter.

**Phil Mellows** is a Freelance Journalist who has written about brewing and pubs for more than 35 years, mostly for industry titles, and has been a regular judge for The Publican Awards and The Great British Pub Awards. He is a founder member of the British Guild of Beer Writers and serves on the committee of the Drinking Studies Network. He is also a Founder Director of British Beer Breaks, a new travel company offering bespoke experiences for beer lovers. He has many favourite beers, but has opted for a pint of Harvey's Best.

**Des Quinn** is a Professional Doctorate candidate at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh whose research focus has been the formal and informal strategies employed by new craft breweries and the secondary factors that contribute to their success. He has previously worked in the hospitality sector as a licenced victualler, restaurateur, hotelier and brewer. His favourite pint is Harvey's Best Bitter.

**James Richards** is an Associate Professor in Human Resource Management at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, and an Academic Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. He has published research in human resource management and employee relations journals, edited book collections and consultancy-based reports. His current research interests include hidden disability and the workplace, in-work poverty, sustainable working lives, Leaveism and the Trade Union Act 2016. His favourite pint is Citra T40 by Oakham Ales of Peterborough.

**Sergio Rivaroli** is an Adjunct Professor at the Department of Agricultural and Food Sciences, University of Bologna, Italy. His research focuses on consumer economics, food economics and prosocial behaviour. His preferred beer is the 'La IPA degli Obici', which comes from 'Obici', a fine micro-brewery located in Finale Emilia (Modena, Italy).

**Perttu Salovaara** is a University Lecturer at the Helsinki University, Finland. His research interests are collective and leaderless forms of leadership, self-managing organisations, democracy at workplace and community building. He had to share three favourite beers: Barbaforte Quadro from a very small brewery in Folgaria in the Italian Alps; Franziskaner Hefe-Weiss Beer from Germany; and from Finland his go-to favourite is MC Taakibörstä NEIPA by Olarin Panimo, a brewery that is closely associated with skateboarders and rap and graffiti artists.

**Roberta Spadoni**, who has a PhD in Economics of the Agrifood Systems, is Associate Professor at the Department of Agricultural and Food Sciences, University of Bologna, Italy. Her main fields of interest are economics of agricultural and food markets, certification systems, agricultural and industrial marketing and product quality issues. Her favourite beer is the 'Birra del Reno – Bianca' from a particular farm from Castel di Casio (BO), called 'Azienda agricola la Tartaruga'.

**Eli Revelle Yano Wilson** is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of New Mexico. He is author of *Front of the House, Back of the House: Race and Inequality in the Lives of Restaurant Workers* (NYU Press). Dr. Wilson is currently researching the intersection of culture, consumption and work careers in the US craft beer industry. His newest book, co-authored with Asako Stone, is *Beer and Society: How We Make Beer, And Beer Makes Us*. His favourite beers are West Coast IPAs.

**Steven Wright** is both Learning and Research Technologist for the Faculty of Health and Medicine at Lancaster University and an Independent Consultant on Qualitative Analysis Software. He is also a BJCP recognised beer judge and award-winning home brewer. His key interests are in qualitative methodologies and developing new approaches to working with complex datasets, in particular large text archives and multi-modal/multi-sensory data. His PhD in eResearch and Technology Enhanced Learning explored mobile learning by home brewers and the sensory assessment practices of craft beer judging. His favourite beer is Orval brewed by Abbaye d’Orval. He says you never know what it’s going to be like – but it’s always amazing.

# Foreword for Researching Craft Beer: Understanding Production, Community and Culture in an Evolving Sector

A brief but telling debate played itself out in 2017. Following a suggestion that alcoholic beverages, like cigarettes, ought to be sold under generic packaging, attention turned to the possible impact of such legislation on the flourishing craft beer sector. Perhaps, some argued, in a world of plain unbranded packaging craft beer would thrive as consumers focussed on the bold flavours and carefully select ingredients of the drink. Such a move could rebalance the uneven scales in the David and Goliath battle between the plucky micro-brewers, who prioritise quality and innovation, and the global conglomerates, whose mass-produced beers have for too long benefitted from market dominance propped by multi-million-pound advertising budgets and branding strategies this new breed of craft brewer are unable or unwilling to imitate. Or, others postulated, this would be a world where craft beer would struggle. For while the muted green label of the can or bottle might leave space for the brewery name and beer style, presumably in a small and non-offensive font, there would be no room for edgy or eye-catching logos and design work. Where, on such minimalist labelling, would the consumer read of hop varieties and flavour profiles? Most of all, there would be no space for narratives and ethos, and without value statements and origin stories the would-be consumer would know little about the world of passionate and skilled craft brewers that they are buying into when they purchase, serve and sup their chosen craft beverage.

While the advent of enforced plain packaging is unlikely, in the proposed thought experiment these two scenarios speak to the contradictions that fascinate many who, in recent years and in this volume, have found the production, sale and consumption of craft beer to be a fascinating, and some might say conveniently pleasurable, subject through which to explore a host of issues relating to contemporary ideas about work, labour, consumption, identity and community.

Part of the appeal of craft beer, for its advocates and for scholars looking to make intellectual sense of its emergence and endurance, is the premise that good beer, like good art or good music, is made by people with skill, passion and attitude. The leading craft breweries have gained devoted followers who, in a manner akin to the fans of iconic rock bands, pass many an hour discussing the latest releases, the evolution of signature styles, who has influenced who and who is

pushing boundaries and breaking rules while others merely perform crowd pleasing covers and greatest hits. Craft beer has captured the imaginations of many; in short, it is something that many people wish to align their identities with either through their work or their leisure. There are many who look to the sector for inspiration and for new ways of thinking about craft work, entrepreneurialism, localism and community. But there are also cracks, some might say foundational weaknesses, in the edifice of craft beer. Long celebrated for a culture of collaboration and a spirit of irreverence, as the craft beer sector matures from its rebellious adolescence it must reckon with cases of discrimination, charges of elitism and snobbery and accusations of selling out that threaten to fracture its relationship with long term participants and weaken its appeal with a new generation of potential craft drinks lovers.

The book that follows is testament to the scale of craft beer for it spans from the very local to the national and global levels and, importantly, covers the life course of craft beer from its production, its branding, distribution and sale to the beer being served, drunk and appreciated. It is also commendably interdisciplinary and, in its inclusion of practitioner perspectives, remarkably non-hierarchical in refusing to see an analysis of the wider social, cultural and economic significance of craft beer production and consumption as solely emanating from the ivory tower of academic research. Indeed, far more ardent debates about the meaning of craft beer have been had over the pub table or the beer festival serving counter than over the university auditorium lectern.

My own research journey began with a close friend, trusted drinking buddy and fellow recently minted Sociology PhD. Surveying the crowds at the closing stages of a local beer festival and musing that surely *someone* must try to make sense of this cultural phenomenon reshaping how people think about and relate to one of the oldest beverages known to humankind. The project I soon commenced began with a sole focus on the consumers of real ale and craft beer but, before long, I ventured hopeful emails to local brewers who, as it turned out, were more than willing to speak to me for research interviews, often perched on casks between mash tuns and fermentation vessels surrounded by the by then familiar smells of the brew house. Of course, I soon realised, the brewers were themselves consumers and passionately so. Sometime later, I spoke to others, writers, beer sommeliers and beer festival organisers. Again, passionate and committed consumers but also each participants in the dynamic and evolving craft beer community. It is a scene in which many people straddle the blur between production and consumption. It's a community where, particularly in recent years with blogs, Tweets and *RateBeer* reviews, a host of amateur cultural intermediaries hold forth on the minutia of brewing, style and taste.

Being asked to speak at the opening of the Craft Beer Research and Enterprise Workshop Symposium (CBREW) symposium in Edinburgh back in July 2019 and to prepare a foreword for *Researching Craft Beer* has been a welcome chance to reflect on the pleasures and perils of researching craft beer. The editors bring to bear on the topic their collective expertise in marketing, management and organisational studies. Further still, they exude both an appreciation of relevance of the fast-changing craft beer sector in Scotland, where they are based, and beyond.

They also, of course, share no small amount of their own enthusiasm for good beer, brewed, served and consumed the 'right way'. In each of the chapters, the contributing authors take aim at the moving target that is a rapidly changing craft beer sector – currently striving to adapt to the realities of the Covid pandemic and its impacts – and, as a whole, the book promises a timely contribution which both takes stock and sets agendas for the continued study of craft beer across academic disciplines and beyond.

*Dr Thomas Thurnell-Read  
Loughborough University  
May 2021*