

ETHNICITY AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

ADRIAN PRAETZELLIS

DISENTANGLING THE INFLUENCES?

San Francisco's South of Market district was a stew of nationalities, rich and poor and those in between. Our archaeological collections were used and discarded by people from Canada, England, Scotland, France, Ireland, Norway, Germany, Poland, and Australia, as well as native-born Americans from the northeast to the Deep South. The wealthy Peel family's home on Folsom Street was not far from low-rent Baldwin Court where the Murphys made their home behind the iron foundries.

How were these peoples' lives affected by their social position, their wealth, and their ethnicity? Was a family's social class or their ethnic background the more important factor in their material wellbeing? To what degree did people retain traditional mores and how did families integrate them with the era's popular culture? One goal of this chapter is to see if we can disentangle the influences of ethnicity from those of socioeconomic status; to make independent assessments of the relative power of these forces in peoples' lives and in creating neighborhoods and cities. It is only possible to make this attempt through statistical analyses conducted by Bruce Owen, whose work constitutes Appendix F. This chapter incorporates some of Owen's conclusions and statistically derived confidence levels (where 5% is the highest level of confidence), although he may not agree with some of what I suggest are implications of these data.

WHAT ARE ETHNICITY AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS?

Part of the archaeologist's job is to describe and explain peoples' behavior in the past: why they did what they did. This task is made more interesting—and complicated—by the heterogeneity of past societies. Ethnicity and social status are two categories that social scientists use to tackle the problem of how to divide people up in order to study them. Sometimes people divide themselves up into these categories by their actions, such as choosing to live in ethnically uniform neighborhoods. Sometimes social scientists place them into constructed categories when, for example, they decide that a family is 'lower-middle class.' Either way, our goal is arrive at useful distinctions that reflect peoples' lived experience as well as the larger patterns that we call culture and society.

Ethnicity

One's ethnicity is not a fixed characteristic. Rather it is a dynamic combination of place of nativity, religion, cultural mores, sometimes phenotype (one's outward appearance), and a host of other attitudes and behaviors, each of which may assume more or less significance in a given social situation. Since all the subjects of our study are dead, there's no asking them to self-identify their ethnicity. Instead we must rely on what others said of them. Each decade enumerators for

the U.S. population census asked people their place of birth and recorded their 'race,' providing a wealth of data if we are prepared to accept these and other facts as proxies for ethnicity.

Socioeconomic Status

Karl Marx assigned individuals to social classes by their ownership and control over the means of production. This approach was useful for his purpose of encouraging revolutionary change. Our goal, being more analytical than radical, requires a different concept: socioeconomic status. A group of people with similar income, educational level, and occupation (and occupational prestige) are said to have a similar socioeconomic status ('status'). As these individuals tend to associate and identify with each other, we might say that people experience their class through their status. Like ethnicity, status is a dynamic process that may change over one's life course. Its robustness and usefulness to social scientists is largely a function of this complexity. And as in their studies of ethnicity, historical archaeologists assign the people whom we study to various status categories through proxies derived from official records. Here we use occupation and relative wealth as proxies for status.

ETHNICITY: THE IRISH AND THE JEWS

IRISH AND JEWS

This section continues the Irish/Jewish comparison begun in Anne Yentsch's essay "Tracing Immigrant Women" in Chapter 4. Of our 43 archaeological collections, 18 are from Irish and 4 from Jewish households. On their faces, the two groups are not strictly parallel: 'Irish' is a nationality whereas nativity is irrelevant to one's status as a Jew. The categories are linked by the concept of ethnicity, that is, a sense of shared group identity. Of course, these categories are broadly drawn and undoubtedly mask many subtle intergroup distinctions. The Jews in our sample, for example, would have identified as either Ashkenazim (Eastern European) or Sephardim (Mediterranean) depending on the regional origin of their ancestors; Sephardim like the Martins may have looked down on the Polish Aarons.

Although Irish immigrants' first identification was also to region within the mother country, like Jews they were seen as members of a monolithic group by outsiders. Jews and Irish were both looked down upon by many white native born Americans. Brett Harte pointed out a subtle emic distinction "'Twixt Ebrew and Jew" in an 1877 poem. The former, he asserts in "That Ebrew Jew," are businessmen who are socially acknowledged by gentiles out of self-interest. The latter group, being poor, is always despised—including being denied accommodation at the Grand Union Hotel that Harte satirizes for the policy:

*Never a Jew
Who's not an Ebrew
Shall take up his lodgings
Here at the Grand U.*

Bret Harte, 1877

[cited in Michael 2005:111].

While the practice of "No Irish Need Apply" has been found to be more apocryphal than demonstrable (Jensen 2002), anti-Irish sentiment was high among certain groups especially in the northeast after the influx of immigrants following *An Gorta Mór* (the Irish Potato Famine) of the 1840s (see Figure 8.1). Irishmen were sometimes called *beystsimer* ('egg-men') in Yiddish

EDUCATION: A NARRATIVE*Erica S. Gibson*

Mary Shore's earthenware plaque

Mary Shore put down the small earthenware plaque she used for quick calculations when she didn't have any paper handy. She rubbed her tired eyes.

It had been a long day for her and for her adopted daughter, Ida. They had spent the better portion of the past week ripping out seams and fashioning new garments for some of the Silver Street neighborhood's more affluent residents in preparation for the upcoming dance. Her back was sore from bending over the worktable and her fingers were stiff from sewing the small neat stitches that she was known for. Sitting up and stretching, she leaned over and picked up the McGuffey Reader her 12-year old niece was reading in school and perused its contents. The second reading selection caught her eye. She turned to the page and read.

The gay belles of fashion may boast of excelling
 In waltz or cotillion, at whist or quadrille;
 And seek admiration by vauntingly telling
 Of drawing, and painting, and musical skill:
 But give me the fair one, in country or city,
 Whose home and its duties are dear to her heart,
 Who cheerfully warbles some rustical ditty,
 While plying the needle with exquisite art;
 The bright little needle, the swift-flying needle,
 The needle directed by beauty and art.

If Love have a potent, a magical token,
 A talisman, ever resistless and true,
 A charm that is never evaded or broken,
 A witchery certain the heart to subdue,
 'Tis this; and his armory never has furnished
 So keen and unerring, or polished a dart;
 Let beauty direct it, so polished and burnished,

And oh! It is certain of touching the heart;
 The bright little needle, the swift-flying needle,
 The needle directed by beauty and art.

Be wise, then, ye maidens, nor seek admiration,
 By dressing for conquest, and flirting with all;
 You never, whate'er be your fortune or station,
 Appear half so lovely at rout or at ball,
 As gaily convened at the work-covered table,
 Each cheerfully active, playing her part,
 Beguiling the task with a song or a fable,
 And plying the needle with exquisite art:
 The bright little needle, the swift-flying needle,
 The needle directed by beauty and art.

Samuel Woodworth, "The Needle"
 (in McGuffey 1879:67)

Well, if that wasn't apropos!

Mary Shore had moved in with her sister and brother-in-law a few years ago. Her sister, Mary L., had three children: two sons in their mid to late twenties and a daughter. The girl child had been something of a surprise, born more than a decade after the boys. When Mary moved in, she had of course brought Ida, and since then they had helped with the family's expenses by working out of the house as dressmakers.

It made Mary smile to think of what her niece (the third Mary in the house) was learning at the grammar school around the corner. In addition to the four R's—reading, writing, arithmetic, and recitation—she was being taught the values of hard work, thrift, and piety and, unlike the earlier versions of McGuffey's readers (the ones that she herself had used some 25 years ago), the new editions were less critical of other peoples and

their religions. And to Mary's mind this Christian tolerance was a good thing.

While her nephews worked, her young niece attended the Rincon Grammar School just down the street. At one time it had been co-educational but was now an all girl school with more than five hundred students (Feroben 2001). The Principal was Miss E.A. Cleveland. She was from New England, had been principal since 1875, and was active in teachers' meetings and conventions (Anonymous 1892). Many thought that Miss Cleveland was a perfect fit for the school, just the right mixture of sternness and fun.

Mary put the book back on the table and picked up a broken fragment of a slate writing tablet. This must have come from one of the younger girls at the grammar school, one practicing their letters perhaps. She could just make out the cursive name of Don (or might it be Donna?) in one corner above a series of initials scratched into the slate, one on top of the other. Below was a drawing of a house and on the back were what looked like railroad tracks. The child probably had been bored in class and whiled away their



Mary Shore's slate tablet

time with random doodles. Mary was proud of her niece, a good student who loved her studies and planned to move on to the intermediate school next year.

With a sigh, Mary returned the tablet to the table, stretched her arms and returned to her work. With perseverance, she would finish this last dress tonight.

because the 'Ir...'-sounds rather like *ayer*, the Yiddish for egg; the pun also contains a sexual double entendre. Irish and Jews both experienced worldwide diaspora. Although 'old country' memories may have been mixed, as Yentsch has noted, immigrant families retained or discarded cultural patterns in a complex dance to retain a sense of stability while taking advantage of the opportunities offered by this unique time and place.

THE IRISH

Any study of the Irish in San Francisco must begin with Burchell's (1980) work that deals with the period 1848 to 1880. By 1880, he reports, one in three San Franciscans was first- or second-generation Irish (Burchell 1980:3-4). Working from archival data, Burchell comes to some important conclusions about this group's experience of life in the city that we can examine and test using archaeological data. These suppositions concern, among other things, the issues of living standards and cultural change. We examine these issues by comparing the group of collections associated with Irish and Irish-American households with that of other groups and with the population at large.

Cultural Change

"The San Francisco environment," states Burchell, "permitted the Irish family to flourish... Only a minority on either side felt the dangers to accommodation and demanded the extreme of culture purity;" as a result, Irish assimilation was "a generation ahead" of the rest of the United States (1980: 183-184). Contemporary historian John Francis Maguire wrote that "There is not a State in the Union in which the Irish have taken deeper and stronger root, or thriven

more successfully, than California” (1868:262). At the same time, one in six San Francisco Irish was a member of one or other Irish social organization (see short essay, this chapter).

Archaeologist Stephen Brighton has written extensively about the Irish experience in America and the use of material symbols to convey Irish ethnicity (Brighton 2004). Working on data from the northeast and relating to the second half of the 19th century, Brighton postulates a relationship between certain artifact types and the “Irish experience of alienation” (Brighton 2008). Like Burchell, Brighton’s interest is in how Irish immigrants and their children gradually both sought and achieved acceptance into predominantly Anglo-Saxon Protestant society. However, while Burchell examined outcomes through historical data, Brighton the archaeologist works out how the processes operated at the household level by looking at individual families’ purchasing patterns.

Figure 8.1. “No Irish Need Apply.” Although anti-Irish sentiment was strong in the northeastern states, this clipping from the *New York Times* from 18 July 1855 is the only documented example of an advertisement that uses the phrase. It has been suggested that in San Francisco discrimination was not so pronounced, leading to faster cultural assimilation.

Did Irish households eat different types of meat than other households?

Yes. Irish households tended to consume more pork, and correspondingly less beef, than other national groups. Statistical analysis confirmed this pattern at the lower 10 percent confidence level. There was no evidence for the commonly asserted Irish preference for mutton; Irish households fell in the mid-range for this type of meat. Irish households clearly consumed the most low-priced meat of all the national groups; 35 percent of their meat cuts were low cost versus 30 percent for native-born, white Americans (5% confidence).

Did Irish households use any distinctive types of artifacts?

Yes. Irish households’ ceramic inventory contained proportionally far more earthenwares in comparison to the mean of all other national groups (5% confidence). Irish families’ food preparation and serving ceramics consists of a mean 3.6 percent earthenware items; the next highest group were German households with 2.5 percent. The pattern also holds when one calculates the contribution of earthenware to all items in the collections: 1.3 percent for Irish households compared with 0.6 percent for German families, the next highest group. Although earthenwares were the least expensive ceramic type and Irish tended to be the least well-off, this pattern does not appear to be a function of economics as no simple, linear relationship could be discerned between all households’ occupational rank and their use of earthenware; that is, earthenware is not a predictor of occupational rank while it does correlate with Irish ethnicity.

How did Irish households’ use of alcohol compare with other national groups?

Several indices show that Irish households’ refuse contained more alcohol containers in comparison to other nationalities. After the numbers were standardized, over 20 percent of all items in Irish households were found to be alcohol containers; the next highest group was native-born, white Americans who scored 9.9 percent. Irish households also contained the greatest percentage of hard liquor containers measured as a percentage of all items in the households’ collections: 1.4 percent compared with 0.9 percent for English-Scots, the next highest group. Similarly, when one looks at the proportion of alcohol containers in Irish collections in relation to all items that relate to food preparation and consumption we find that 79.3 percent of the latter

CONTRASTING TYPICAL DINING EXPERIENCES: A NARRATIVE*Michael Stoyka***Pig's Head**

Soak in water and clean it well; take all the bones and flesh out; then cut the flesh and about one pound of salt pork in strips, which you put inside of the head, well mixed with salt, pepper, half a dozen middling-sized onions chopped, two teaspoonfuls of chopped parsley, half a saltspoonful of allspice, two bay-leaves, two sprigs of thyme, a little sage, and the juice of half a lemon; lay it in a crockery vessel for from four to six days. Envelop the head in a towel, place it in a kettle with eight small onions, two carrots cut in pieces, salt, pepper, four springs of parsley, four of thyme, four bay-leaves, two cloves, and a pint of white wine; cover with water, set on the fire, and simmer from six to eight hours; take from the fire and drain, take the towel off and drain again till dry and cold. Serve it with sprigs of green parsley around [Blot 1868:233–234].

Privy 1307 – 13 Baldwin Court

Early evening was fast approaching in San Francisco. Margaret Brown had been hard at work in the kitchen making sure dinner was ready for John and the children when he got home from work. John was a laborer on various jobs in the city. The pay wasn't great but through hard work and saving, where they were able, their real estate and personal property now amounted to a respectable sum.

While Margaret was busy in the kitchen, five of her children played with the dolls and marbles that always seemed to be scattered about the house. Her 16-year-old daughter, Margaret, and 14-year-old son, James, would soon be back from their jobs at the junk store. And everyone would have quite an appetite. The kids of course were always hungry and John burned so many calories on his job. It was a good thing that her oldest three were already out of the house and on their

own. Feeding the household on a laborer's pay was already difficult enough.

It was important to Margaret to make sure her husband was comfortable and nourished when he got home. She pictured him sitting down in his work clothes, pipe in-hand, trying to forget the day he had just finished. The bottles of beer she had chilled in the ice box would surely help him with that. The work John had been doing for quite a few years now had taken their toll on his body. On many a night some liniment was required on his sore muscles and just a drop or two of painkiller to ease his aches and pains.

The stew was almost ready. Not only was this an economical way to keep the family fed but it was reminiscent of the Browns' homeland in Ireland, though here meat appeared more regularly. On special occasions Margaret was able to get a nice duck or a rabbit to roast. Sometimes they were able to splurge on some beef shoulder steaks. But more often than not a soup or stew was the most practical way of feeding everyone. Margaret had tried to keep some variety in stew meat, as long as the price was right. She had already made numerous pots of food with beef brisket, or mutton fore or hind shank and neck bones could be quite flavorful. Lately she had been making good use of pig head or jowl in her meals. Some people didn't really care for swine but she found she was able to make a perfectly tasty dinner out of the meat, and it was cheap enough.

It was done and everyone was home and settled, and finally time to eat. Many of the English china plates and soup bowls the Browns owned were 10 or 15 years old by now and well out of style. The tureen that held the night's stew was probably also too old fashioned to use for company but, as Margaret reminded herself, it was the nourishing food within that counted. After they'd eaten everything but the bones, the children helped clean up, while she and John took time to catch up over a glass of schnapps in the paneled cordial glasses she had bought at the junk store. The stylish glassware and the meaty stew made her feel quite luxurious!

Steaks

The best piece of beef for a steak is the tenderloin.

A steak should never be less than three-quarters of an inch in thickness.

It should always be broiled; it is inferior in taste and flavor when cooked in a pan (*sauté*), or other utensil . . .

To make tender.—When cut, trimmed, salted, and peppered, put them in a bowl, and sprinkle some sweet-oil or melted butter over them; turn them over in the bowl every two or three hours for from six to twelve hours.

To cut and prepare.—Cut the meat in round or oval slices, as even as possible, of any size, about one inch in thickness, and trim of the fibres and thin skin that may be around. Do not cut off the fat, but flatten a little each slice with a chopper.

To broil.—When the steaks are cut and prepared as directed, they are slightly greased on both sides with lard or butter (if they have not been in a bowl with oil or butter before cooking them), placed on a warmed gridiron, set before or on a sharp fire, turned over once or twice, and taken off when rather underdone. Salt and pepper them, dish, spread a *maitre d'hôtel* over them, and serve very warm [Blot 1868:171–172].

Privy 851 – 114 Silver Street

The *Salinas* was in port. So Catherine Metcalf's husband, Captain Alfred Metcalf, would be home soon and looking forward to one of her home-cooked meals. Alfred had been captain of the *Salinas* for almost 10 years now, having worked his way up from ship's mate. His salary and some sound property investments had placed the couple in a comfortable financial situation. Alfred was a successful man in a position of some importance, and expected a dining experience suited to his standing. Catherine would have to find out just how long he would be home this time to make sure the larder was well stocked.

Although the household's finances were stable, it was helpful to have a couple of boarders in the house. Their contribution certainly benefited the family and it was nice to have some people in the house while Alfred was at sea. Mr. Shaw (a mechanic) and Mr. McLaughlin (a boilermaker) had steady work and could afford the rent. Things had also gotten easier now that her daughters, Katy and Hattie, had become teenagers. With luck, the girls would soon find husbands.

Catherine knew what meals made her husband happy. Chicken, turkey and the occasional duck sometimes graced their dining room table, but only when Alfred was in the mood for something different or for a special occasion. Even so, his liking for fowl was pretty far down the list. And there was also the matter of her favorite butcher shop only a few blocks away. Catherine had been considering switching to a different butcher since she purchased a ham of questionable quality there (see Faunal Studies: Rats and Pathologies in Chapter 3). Roasts of mutton loin or rump, and a pork rump roast or ham were in the rotation for meals, but brought far less pleasure to Alfred than his favorite.

Captain Metcalf's preferred meal could be summed up in one word: steak! But not just any steak would do. The captain was particularly fond of any cut of beef from the loin, a sirloin or porterhouse, and cut to a nice thickness. The butcher was often agreeable enough to have a larger piece of meat reduced to steaks that would meet Catherine's specifications. Sometimes this was already taken care of if she got to the butcher early enough in the day.

Tonight the steaks came out particularly well, and were stacked on one of Catherine's oval platters. The pattern of her English china was decidedly out of date—it was 10 or 20 years old—but she could still set a perfectly presentable table for her family and boarders. Alfred was fond of Worcestershire sauce on his steak, so she had made sure the bottle was within easy reach of his seat at the head of the table. Her husband also enjoyed wine with his meal, and there was locally bottled mineral water for everyone else to drink. Following his usual routine after coming home from a voyage, after dinner Alfred sat in his parlor with a full stomach, pipe in hand, snuff within reach, and a tumbler of whiskey as a nightcap.



Figure 8.2. Soda water bottles from the McSheffrey family. Baldwin Court was a densely occupied backstreet behind the iron foundries and paint factory. This collection of soda water bottles was from the household refuse of Patrick and Nancy McSheffrey who lived at 9 Baldwin Court from the 1860s through the 1890s. (Privy 1310)

are alcohol containers compared with 44.9 percent for the next highest group, native-born, white Americans; statistical analysis confirms this pattern at the lower 10 percent confidence level.

What other bottled beverages did the Irish drink?

Soda water—and in a big way. Bruce Owen analyzed soda water bottles were classed under ‘miscellaneous’ items in his statistical studies. Two measures that compare the occurrence of various miscellaneous items between households of five different nativities both indicate heavy Irish use of soda water (see Figure 8.2). When calculated as a percentage of all items, 7.3 percent of Irish collections found to consist of soda water bottles; this contrasts with 3.4 percent among English-Scots households. An even more striking pattern emerges when soda water bottles are calculated as a percentage of all food preparation and consumption items: 41.9 percent of the latter consist of these bottles, in comparison with 12.5 percent among English-Scots, the next highest group. This pattern is confirmed with a high 5 percent probability although, once again, other analyses also link the consumption of soda water with the lower occupational group in which the Irish are disproportionately represented.

To what degree did Irish households self-medicate?

Many of the collections contain patent medicine bottles and other druggist items. However, the quantitative data indicate that these goods were not purchased in higher quantities by Irish households than others. Although collections from households of lower occupational rank tend to have more patent medicine containers and apothecary items (and most of these were Irish), no measures indicate that this pattern was particular to the Irish.

What evidence is there of beautification of the self or of the home?

Not much. Measuring self beautification by the presence of items in the perfume-primping category, Irish households score low—they discarded few of these items compared with their neighbors of other nationalities. This pattern is evident at the high 5 percent confidence level whether we standardize the figures in relation to food preparation/consumption items or in

relation to all artifacts in the grooming/health category. Similarly, Irish collections are the least likely to contain the kind of curios (such as coral, decorative shells, mineral samples, etc.) with which many Victorians decorated their parlors, a finding also supported at the high 5 percent confidence level.

What is the relationship between Irish ethnicity and household purchasing patterns?

Quantitative analysis shows some correlations between Irish national origin and consumption patterns in some areas. However, the influence of relative wealth cannot be disentangled from cultural preferences as the sample households disproportionately represented lower status occupations. Did people forego making certain purchases because they couldn't afford them (although they desired them) or because they simply didn't want them? Our quantitative studies have been of limited help in teasing out unequivocally ethnic behaviors which, if they are in evidence at all, are likely to be expressed through symbolically significant objects. As the latter may consist of unusual objects, they cannot be identified through quantitative analysis whose purpose is to identify patterns in mass data. These results show the importance of obtaining more samples that reflect a wider economic range of Irish households.

Do these patterns tend to support Burchell's assimilation model or Brighton's observations about the maintenance of ethnically Irish ways of life?

The results are mixed in an interesting way. We can neither say that Irish ethnicity sank without a trace in the Far West nor that it was vigorously maintained in all areas of life.

Irish households' tended to eschew conventional symbols of status in the areas of decoration and foodways. The data indicate that in contrast to the norms of the era, Irish homes were marked by a certain austerity with regard to both personal adornment and household decoration. While other groups purchased quantities of perfumes and parlor ornamentation, Irish households tended not to spend their money in this conspicuous way. A similar pattern is evident in Irish households' meat consumption. Their reliance on cheaper and non-beef meat cuts would seem to be a 'common sense' conclusion as most Irish households in this sample were in the lower occupational rank. However, it is interesting to note that among households of similar rank (but of more ethnic diversity) in West Oakland more expensive cuts of beef were actually better represented in collections from lower occupational ranks.

If (as we have suggested elsewhere) poorer households purchased beef as much for its symbolic value as for its taste and nutrition, then the Irish sample may have made a conscious choice not to use this idiom to express their values or enhance their social status. The cultural tendency among Irish-Americans to eschew the sin of pride by limiting personal ambition—and by extension, display—has been noted by Jensen (2002:417). The lack of conspicuous consumer goods associated with higher status on the part of San Francisco's Irish is consistent with the most cultural conservative values espoused by the Roman Catholic religious ideology. This deemphasized appearance over behavior, was wary of social pretensions as lacking humility, and tended to egalitarianism, awarding higher status to characteristics such as having a relative in priesthood, or being a member of certain religious, charitable, or political groups.

In his studies of Irish immigrants, Brighton (2004, 2008) suggests that the level of self-medication is a rough index to the group's acceptance by or alienation from mainstream America. Where physicians are unwilling to treat Irish patients, the use of patent/traditional medicines is high, declining as the group becomes more accepted. If we accept Brighton's approach, Burchell's assertion that the group's newly found freedom in the San Francisco caused them to rapidly

CHRISTIANITY AT HOME

Erica S. Gibson

The Victorian ideals of independence, industry, frugality, and hard work reflected the rapid changes of society during the mid to late 19th century. As the century progressed, more and more men worked outside the home in industrial and commercial jobs that often required additional job specialization. While men traveled further and further for employment, women were increasingly responsible for the everyday workings of the home. The outside world, or the men's world, was seen as rough, full of temptation and evil. Women, who were envisioned as symbols of purity, goodness and domesticity, were increasingly confined to the domestic sphere, and were expected to provide a safe haven for their husbands and a shelter from outside evils for their children. As this "Cult of Domesticity" took hold, women became responsible for not only raising the children but also setting a good moral example for them (McDannell 1986).

During the first half of the 19th century, men had typically led family worship with morning and evening devotions. As they began working further from home, men had less time for these daily rituals. It was at about this same time that women began to take a more active role in their children's religious education. This trend was true across Christian denominations (Stevenson 1991). Protestants were taught that women were "especially pious because of their tender hearts" and that, coupled with "their innate ability to communicate with children," made women more successful teachers (Stevenson 1991:9). The status of women was boosted even higher among Roman Catholics when, in 1854, Pope Pius IX announced the Doctrine of Immaculate Conception.

The religious artifacts recovered during the West Approach project, span the late 1860s through the 1890s. All were from analytical units with Irish associations, most probably Roman Catholic. Unlike other ethnic groups, the Irish tended to immigrate as families rather than individuals (Burchell 1980:49). This strong sense of identity was maintained by the tradition of marrying within the Irish community, a practice encouraged by the church (Burchell 1980:85). Unlike some other ethnic groups, most Irish immigrants could read and write English

(McDannell 1986:12) and many were employed in skilled professions. Even those who worked as laborers found employment as the city of San Francisco rapidly expanded in the 1860s and 1870s.

Religion in the homes of the West Approach residents was exemplified in figurines, motto mugs, medals, rosaries, and crosses. At least two motto mugs attest to the religious education of children. One of them (see photo inset) bears letters from a scripture alphabet and their associated axioms:



K is for KORAH;
God's wrath he defied.
And lo? To devour him
the pit opened wide.
L is for LYDIA:
God opened her hear[t];
What He had bestowed,
[tw]as her joy to impart.

This type of motto mug taught children the alphabet and scripture at the same time. The second mug shows a child kneeling in prayer above the name Samuel. It is probably based on an event in the book of Samuel in the Hebrew Bible, in which the child Samuel is called by God. Children everyday would have used both of these mugs, furthering their religious training.

A single Roman Catholic religious medal, The Miraculous Medal, was found in the same feature as the Samuel motto mug. This feature, deposited in the late 1860's was associated with an Irish porter, his wife, and their four children, all of whom attended Sacred Heart Church. The

Miraculous Medal, also known as The Medal of the Immaculate Conception, was manifested to Sister (Saint) Catherine Laboure in the chapel of the Motherhouse of Daughters of Charity in Paris in 1830. The following words accompanied the vision: “O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee, and for those who do not have recourse to thee, especially the enemies of the Church and those recommended to thee. Amen.” This devotional medal was very popular in the 19th century and continues in use today.

A bisque porcelain figurine of a praying angel (see photo inset) is part of an 1890s collection associated with an Irish longshoreman and his family. This small figure would have graced the family parlor, perhaps serving as an open reminder of a lost loved one. For daily devotions, a family member would have used the mother-of-pearl rosary, found in the same archaeological feature. A less expensive bone bead rosary was part of an 1880s collection associated with an Irish blacksmith and his family.

It is not surprising that few religious trappings were recovered from the West Approach project; these items would have not been casually discarded. The artifacts were, without exception, broken in one way or another and may have been surreptitiously discarded. The more impersonal items—the motto mugs and perhaps the figurine—are examples of the numerous,



inexpensive, mass-produced religious objects available to the Victorian consumer. The presence of items for both display and personal use (such as rosaries and medals) demonstrate the continued importance of religion and religious teachings in the lives of these Irish San Franciscans.

assimilate is supported. Why these Irish families were so attracted to bottled soda water is unclear, although it may have been for reasons of health. Well water—the principal source for most poor families in the South of Market—was frequently contaminated and likely unpalatable. When local industries could not pipe their liquid wastes out to the bay as was the practice of the local gas works (Shumate 1988:21–23), some tainted the groundwater by letting liquid wastes percolate into the ground. Installing privies immediately adjacent to one’s well was a common practice that surely made the water less appetizing. Meredith Linn (2008) suggests another reason: how objects look, smell, taste, feel, and sound may be important factors in the decision to buy a product. It may be that the very blue-green color of the soda water bottles—a color representing health and wholesomeness in traditional Irish culture—encouraged residents to take the concoction as a tonic for its supposed health benefits.

Brighton (pers. comm. 2007) also notes that embossed ball clay smoking pipes frequently occur at Irish-associated sites, particularly Five Points, New York City (6–10) and Patterson, New Jersey (8). These artifacts may bear any of several patriotic motifs connected with the Irish independence movement championed by British Prime Minister Ernest Gladstone from the late 1860s onward. The present collection has five Irish patriotic pipes, all of which are associated with Irish or Irish-American families, or other households with Irish residents (see Figure 6.21). The

pipes' motifs include the words 'O'BRIEN/MAVOST/DUBLIN' (1), 'HOME RULE' with shamrock (3), and ERIN GO BRAGH' with shamrock and harp (1). An additional pipe, found in association with an Irish household that also had a 'HOME RULE' pipe, bears the name 'GARIBALDI.' This suggests that the Dougherty family supported this Italian patriot whose popularity among Irish Catholics was mixed.

In summary, it may be that Irish consumer patterns were influenced by elements of traditional, religio-ideological culture (and possibly folk beliefs) that were at odds with the conspicuous, status-driven values of much of San Francisco society. Consequently, Irish collections may be somewhat plainer in comparison with others, avoiding the appearance of the kind of display that might have been considered frivolous or even irreligious.

THE JEWS

There are four Jewish families in the study group; three Ashkenazi and one (the Martins) Sephardi. The analysis compared Jews with members of other religious groups, a sample universe of 24 collections, but not with other categories such as occupational rank. Because there were so few collections, there are correspondingly fewer quantitative results than the well-represented Irish. As Bruce Owen has noted, of households with known religions Protestants tended to occupy higher status positions, Jews slightly lower, followed by Catholics. Many of those who fill the "unknown" category left the least documentary evidence as they were most mobile and had fewest items of taxable value (see Table 8.1). (Some categories of artifacts aren't represented in all the collections.)

Table 8.1. Distribution of Samples by Religion and Occupational Rank

	Protestant	Catholic	Jewish	Unknown
Wealthy professional	2	-	-	-
Professional	1	2	-	5
Skilled	1	3	3	7
Semi-skilled	1	5	1	3
Unskilled	1	3	-	2
Widow	1	-	-	1
Total	7	13	4	18

Were the Jewish families' purchasing patterns significantly different from other religious/ethnic groups?

While Catholic families seem to have preferred beer or ale, Jewish families purchased the most wine or champagne of any of the religious groups in spite of the fact that these products were among the most expensive (see Figure 8.3). This pattern contrasts somewhat with expectations based on occupational rank, which indicate that wine and champagne was favored more by professional households. Four measures—variously at both 5 and 10 percent confidence levels—indicate that the Jewish households purchased more grooming-health and perfume-primping items than others in the sample. Importantly, this pattern does not correspond to expectations



Figure 8.3. The Samuel family alcohol bottles and pipes. The family of Polish-Jewish tailor Wolf Samuel lived at 416 Folsom Street. They deposited this collection of artifacts—among other objects—in the early 1880s, providing evidence of their preference for wine over beer. (Privy 1300)

based on the samples' occupational ranking that would have placed Jewish households in the unremarkable middle.

What evidence is there of cultural change or conservatism? Overall, did Jews conform to traditional foodways?

The presence of a great deal of refuse from *treyfe* (ritually unsuitable) species of meat and other foods (e.g., oyster) in the three Jewish families' collections that contained food bone is clear evidence that none conformed to the rules of *kashrus*. Although in comparison to their neighbors Jews ate slightly less pork, they did not do so at a statically significant level. The presence of any quantity of *treyfe* meat is, however, culturally significant. That Jews tended to eat meat cuts in the middle cost range in comparison with others (confirmed at the 10% confidence level) is consistent with their overall economic position between the higher ranking Protestants and the Catholics who dominated the unskilled occupations.

Are the differences between these collections simply a matter of economics?

The nature of our sample may mask the cultural distinctiveness of certain national or ethnic groups. Because Irish Catholic households tend to cluster in the lower occupational ranks, Jews in the middle, and Protestants in the middle and upper ranks, there is a natural tendency to account for all characteristics that fit this general ordering by reference to the families' economic condition. Although relative wealth doubtless played an important role in decision making, there is enough variation from a purely wealth-based model to indicate that other factors were at work.

THE FENIAN BROTHERHOOD AND SAN FRANCISCO'S IRISH

Annita Waghorn and Elaine-Maryse Solari

*There is not a State in the Union
in which the Irish have taken deeper and stronger root,
or thriven more successfully, than California.*

John Francis Maguire (1868:262)

By 1880 over one-third of San Francisco's population could be said to be part of the Irish community, with 30,000 first generation and more than 43,000 belonging to the second generation (Burchell 1980:3-4). The life of an Irish family in the South of Market might revolve around the workplace, the church, and membership in various political and benevolent associations. These institutions defined Irish immigrant life and provided a practical means of expressing a continuing Irish identity.

Associations were a common thread knitting together community life in many ethnic groups at this time. The Irish in San Francisco were enthusiastic founders and members of associations, and the numbers of these groups increased rapidly between 1852 and 1860. Their causes included charity, self improvement, immigrant assistance, temperance, sports, and education, as well as patriotic and political movements. Associations were a way of promoting Irish community and individual advancement in a period of extreme social upheaval and, for the average Irish immigrant, few established avenues for social and financial improvement. The appeal of associations to the Irish immigrants may also be related to their history of repression: British rulers of Ireland had long denied Irish Catholics the right of assembly. The associations favored by Irish immigrants were often economic, fraternal, religious or political in nature. They laid the basis for the Irish ascendancy in San Francisco politics by providing ready avenues for mobilizing supporters and financial donations. They also encouraged a strong ethnic Irish identity that continued for generations.

Irish immigrants to America retained an intense concern for the political future of their homeland, at that time still under British rule. This concern, fueled by a perceived English indifference during the Famine years, encouraged the development of Irish-American nationalistic associations. These groups actively supported Ireland's freedom, sending a river of money

flowing across the Atlantic to underwrite the Republican cause. Donations from the large Irish populations in San Francisco, New York, and Boston fed Ireland's growing Republican movement in the 1850s and 1860s, at a time when the Irish population itself was struggling to recover from the devastation of the Famine years. The fervor of pro-Irish Republican feeling among America's immigrant Irish communities was such that in 1885 London's *The Times* newspaper could state that "The Irish Question is mainly an Irish-American question" (Brown 1956:327).

It was largely American immigrants who injected the strong note of Anglophobia that came to be characteristic of Irish Republicanism. To the Irish immigrants struggling to make their way in the U.S., nationalism was a means of unifying diverse Irish groups across the country and identifying themselves with the noble causes of political freedom and political representation that resonated so strongly in American civic discourse (Brown 1956). As a result, the American Irish promoted an image of their home country that "contrasted the land of the free with an island groaning, as they saw it, under English tyranny" (Murphy 1980:111).

One of the primary avenues for American influence on Irish nationalism during the 1860s was Fenianism, which included the belief that force was the means by which Irish freedom from British rule could be achieved (Murphy 1980:111). The Fenian Brotherhood was one of the most widespread and powerful expressions of Fenian thought. The organization was founded simultaneously in both Dublin and New York in 1858 by leaders of the failed 1848 Irish Rebellion (Ó Broin 1980:118). The Fenian organization tapped into the deep well of bitterness amongst Irish immigrants regarding the perceived British inaction during the Famine crisis, and the sense that British rule in Ireland would only ever be relinquished through violence. Although the movement advocated and helped fund numerous violent insurgent acts in Ireland itself, it also directly led to the founding



The bark *Catalpa*. The escape of Fenian prisoners from British hands on the New Bedford whaling bark *Catalpa* was a cause célèbre among Irish patriots—and a matter of great embarrassment to the government in London. (Illustration courtesy of Prints & Photographs Division, Library of Congress. Reproduction Number: LC-USZ62-12755)

of several political movements including the Irish Land League that successfully agitated against the British for land reform.

The *Catalpa* escape, one of the most famous incidents associated with the Fenian movement, was enormously influential in galvanizing the Irish expatriate population in America. Irish nationalists in the U.S. funded the clandestine rescue in 1876 of six Fenians imprisoned by the British in Fremantle Prison, Western Australia. The men were spirited away amidst a dramatic sea chase on a whaling bark, the *Catalpa*, originally from New Bedford. News of the rescue sparked celebrations in Irish communities across the U.S. and widespread fundraising followed to help the escaped prisoners in their new lives. Although the popular image of the Fenians was one of “roughs” or “rowdies” in fact, contemporary observers of the Fenian movement in America confirmed that the organization drew support from across the social spectrum including “the very cream of the Irish population” (Maguire 1868:592).

Several families within our San Francisco project area were associated with Fenian causes. John D. Tobin, the New York-born bookkeeper who lived at 112 Silver Street, was second generation Irish, born of a native Irish father. In 1876 he

served on the General Committee (to Aid Escaped Fenians), helping to raise money to provide for the escapees of the *Catalpa* rescue.

Michael Dolan, an Irish native, and a shipping clerk, lived with his Irish wife at 109 Perry Street from 1864 to 1888. He was an active member of the Fenian Brotherhood, from the 1860s arranging local picnic excursions for members and families, and sponsoring testimonials for political activists. Typical of many Irish immigrants, he also participated in other less overtly political Irish associations including the St. Joseph’s Benevolent Society and the Ancient Order of the Hibernians. The Dolan children were also politically involved: three of Michael’s sons contributed to the Davitt Testimonial Fund in 1881, organized to aid Michael Davitt the noted Irish land reform activist and founder of the Irish Land League. The Dolan sons also performed recitations at meetings of the local branch of the Irish Land League. However, they seem to have been less active than their father in nationalistic associations. This possibly reflected a common circumstance in immigrant groups, whereby the first generation retained a strong interest in political issues of the homeland, while their children tended to derive their identity from the immediate immigrant community.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

It seems intuitively reasonable that there is a fairly uniform relationship between the ability to purchase expensive and non-essential items and the actual practice of doing so. All else being equal, where things that are ‘good to think’ are available and affordable, consumers will, presumably, try to obtain them. In their interpretation of archaeological remains, archaeologists have historically assumed (and reasonably so) that the possession of valued material culture is an indicator of wealth while its absence suggests the reverse. The control that we have over the data being examined here gives us the opportunity to examine this assumption in some depth. We can investigate the degree to which their relative social status (measured through its proxy of occupational rank) was a factor in consumers’ decisions as well as indentifying instances that do not fit to expected pattern.

Did households of higher occupational ranks consume more expensive items and more non-essentials than lower ones?

In general, the answer is yes. The data from several categories of artifacts—including meat cuts, ceramics, personal items, and alcohol—support this pattern. However, variations in the pattern show that consumption was not a direct and uniform function of wealth.



Figure 8.4. The Sutter Street Synagogue. This 1866 building was home to Congregation Emanu-El. The building is an interesting marriage of church-like architecture and subtle Jewish symbols. The *Magan Dovid* (Star of David) is displayed significantly above the line of sight, while the twin domes evoke the crowns (*keterim*) used to decorate the *etz chaim*, the wooden handles of the Torah scroll. (Photo courtesy of the California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California)

Meat cut data show that a household’s occupational ranking was a generally good predictor of the quality of meat it consumed. If one compares the collection from the professional group with that of skilled, semi-skilled, and all others (both respectively and collectively) the former has the most high cost cuts and the fewest low cost ones at 5 and 10 percent confidence levels, respectively. The converse is also true: semi-skilled and skilled households consumed relatively more of the cheaper cuts, also at the 5 and 10 percent confidence levels.

Similarly, the use of porcelain is higher among wealthy professionals than the other groups at the 10 percent confidence level. The pattern is borne out by calculating the mean MNI of porcelain items (that tend to be costly) as a percentage of the collection: wealthy professionals weigh in with a hefty 36 percent versus the unskilled group with only 13.5 percent. The same measurement shows that the difference was made up by various less expensive earthenwares types, which appear in higher proportions in lower ranked households as a group.

While the quantity of durable items in the health category—such as wash basins—was similar between occupational groups, there was substantial variation in the quantities of perfume/primping items and medication containers. Households of the professional rank disposed of far more of the former, particularly when the perfume/

GAMES

Erica S. Gibson

Once the game is over, the king and the pawn go back in the same box.

-Italian Proverb

The late 19th century easily may have been the Golden Age of parlor games.

At a time when Victorian values espoused respectability, duty, hard work and thriftiness, a need for relaxation in the safety of the home, away from the evils of the outside world, was tantamount. Parlor games, the variety limited by only imagination, were an easy way to relax and enjoy oneself. Small social groups and families would have mingled together and played party games such as Blind Man's Bluff, Charades, Musical Chairs, or various guessing games like Twenty Questions and Who am I? Other games might have included card games such as Snap, Fish, and Old Maid or pencil and paper games like Hangman, Tic-Tac-Toe, or The Maze. Unfortunately, most of these types of games leave little if any archaeological evidence. Board games such as dominoes, chess, and checkers with their various individual pieces are much more likely to be found in archaeological deposits; almost two-dozen game pieces, not including marbles, were recovered from the West Approach Project.

Among South of Market residents, dominoes and chess were the most popular followed by cribbage, checkers, tiddlywinks, and games with dice. Block and draw domino games were typically played by two to four players and could accommodate a variety of skill levels, while children could have played other domino games, like concentration. One favorite pastime of dominos was simply arranging them on end in lines and pushing them over so that they toppled each other down. Cribbage, played by two to six players, is essentially a card counting game and would have been a good game for teaching math. Tiddlywinks, played by two or four players in two pairs, was very popular in the late 19th century.

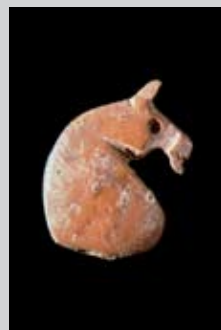
Chess is a very old game with its origins in what was once Persia. Played by two players, this strategic game could have whiled away hours of an evening. Early European chess sets ranged from the very elaborate or very minimal. The wealthy could afford intricately decorated pieces that were so highly ornamented they were often top-heavy and unstable on the board. The rest of the population often played with undecorated

Game Pieces from West Bay Approach

Block	Feature	Association	Date (ca.)	MNI	Artifact Description
4	Privy 1301	Taylor family	1870	2	glass game piece, hard-rubber poker check/card counter
4	Privy 1318	Murphy family	1880	1	ivory domino
4	Privy 1326	Scales and boarders	1875	2	ivory die
5	Privy 516	Mary Peel	1880	4	bone checker piece, ivory domino (3)
9	Privy 2	Johnson family	1880	2	bone chess piece base, bone cribbage peg
9	Privy 9	Usher household	1880	3	bone chess piece (bishop), bone cribbage peg, wood game piece
9	Well 6	Dent/Hannan household	1895	2	bone chess piece base, bone chess piece (knight)
10	Privy 807	Gee family	1869	2	ivory domino
10	Privy 808	Schreiner, Johnson, Degnan, and McIntyre families	1880	2	bone die, bone tiddlywinks
10	Privy 813	Moynihan household	1880	1	ivory domino
10	Privy 851	Metcalf family	1880	1	bone game piece
10	Privy 857+	Dolan and Michelson families	1880	1	ivory domino



This bone chess piece, a mitred bishop, was recovered from the Usher household deposit on Block 9. The extended family lived at 35 Perry Street between 1879 and 1881.



Missing its base, this knight was recovered from the Dent/Hannan household on Block 9. John Hannon worked as a clerk for the California Notion and Toy Company and this delicate piece may have been part of a pre-1890 Staunton set that he brought home when the newer addition came in.

wooden sets in which pieces were differentiated by height. It was not until 1849 that the more familiar set was designed. In 1847, John Jaques and Nathaniel Cook designed and manufactured a new chess set, which combined the height differential of the common set with the piece individuality of the more expensive set (see photo inset). The resulting pieces were easily recognizable and well balanced, affording play that was both pleasing to the eye and practical. Howard Staunton, a renowned chess player at the time, endorsed the

new set, which was promptly called the Staunton set (see photo inset). In 1890, the Staunton design was altered to make it more squat and robust. Current chess sets are based on this design with slight variations.

Parlor games were a relaxing end to a long day for South of Market residents. Regardless of wealth, status, religion, or ethnicity families and households sought out a variety of at home entertainments with which to unwind.

priming items are viewed as a fraction of all significant items; these materials are associated with professional households at the 10 percent confidence level by two measurements when this group is compared with unskilled and all other groups. Professional households also had significantly more collectable items (i.e., exotic objects, such as coral, used for display) than the other groups at the 10 percent confidence level. This pattern holds where collectables are measured as a fraction of all significant items: collectable items are 6.2 percent of professional households' artifacts but only 0.2 percent of unskilled collections.

Are there any material indicators of higher or lower occupational status?

Yes. Certain types and quantities of artifacts tend to be associated either positively or negatively to groups on the higher or lower ends of the status scale.

There is a surprisingly strong connection between lower household rank and more frequent use of bottled soda water; three measurements indicate a 10 percent confidence level. While the relationship is not uniform across the groups, the trend is evident where soda water bottles are measured in relation to mean MNIs within the grooming and health category: soda bottles are 8.9 percent of the category among unskilled households decreasing to 0.3 percent in wealthy professional households. This pattern also holds in relation to neighborhood, which tend to reflect relative wealth, and nativity—Irish families constituted most of the lower ranked group. One measurement of use of perfume/priming items correlates negatively with unskilled workers at the 5 percent confidence level when compared with professional households: the former group used significantly less of these commodities than professionals, though the small sample size leaves doubt as to whether this pattern has wider applicability.

Collections from a group consisting of semi-skilled and skilled households also contained relatively more patent medicines and druggist items than the higher ranked households at the higher 5 percent confidence level. This pattern does not, however, hold for the unskilled households who, as a group, had fewest of these items as a fraction of all significant items in the collections.

Professional households consumed more beef and less pork than households in the unskilled group at the 10 and 5 percent confidence levels, respectively. In fact the avoidance of pork by the professional group reached the 5 percent confidence level in two measures.

The quantity of alcohol bottles discarded clearly varied by occupational rank. In general, lower ranked households discarded more alcohol containers and the higher ranks discarded fewer. This is particularly noticeable when the mean alcohol bottle MNIs are divided by all food preparation/consumption artifacts: wealthy professional and professional households have 31.1 and 34.9 percent, respectively, versus 69.1, 73.8 and 66.9 percent for the skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled groups. The types of alcohol containers discarded also show that the higher occupationally ranked households preferred wine or champagne while those at the lower end (the semi-skilled and unskilled) discarded proportionally more beer and ale containers. The patterns can be seen clearly where the mean MNIs of each type of alcohol container are calculated as a percentage of all social drug items and compared across the occupational groups.

What does this say about the “emulation” model in which taste filters down?

The unskilled household group also had the fewest collectable (exotic display) items, while professional households had the most. The wealthy professional households, however, had the fewest collectables items of all—a counter intuitive result for which we cannot account. The fashion of the day valued Chinese porcelain as a sophisticated addition to the parlors of the aspiring and upper middle class (see Figure 8.5). These ceramics and other exotic wares were found in higher proportions in the group of higher status households by several measures at 5 and 10 percent confidence levels. However, other measures show that the unskilled group had more of this category than semi-skilled and skilled households at the 5 and 10 percent confidence levels. This indicates that there is not a uniform relationship between the possession of this type of material and occupational status; other factors are at work here. Lower ranked households may have obtain this material secondhand through one of many South of Market used-goods (aka ‘junk’) stores that operated vigorously, although with increasing social stigma, throughout



Figure 8.5. A Chinese porcelain bowl cover (Privy 1326). Made in southern China, this item is painted over glaze in enamels; the red manufacturer's mark is a highly stylized version of a Chinese reign mark. There is some irony in the fact that Chinese porcelain was valued for display in the parlors of the same group whose racist attitudes demonized Chinese immigrants.

the 19th century. Statistical data show that the highest ranked households' collections contained a lower proportion of ceramics than the other groups. It may be that these households sold still-desirable ceramics to local junk dealers.

Archaeologists and other material cultural specialists have recognized for years that continual innovations in the presentation and use of artifacts constantly renew the meanings of objects (e.g., Douglas and Isherwood 1979, Shackel 1993). The item that today indicates worldliness, tomorrow announces that one is on the second level of cultural knowledge. Replacing last year's (or last decade's) decorative ceramics was an easy way for the wealthy to show their sophistication. By the time these materials appeared in the parlor of the unskilled their meaning had been entirely transformed.

What was the relationship between consumer decisions and status?

In a word: complex. We have not been altogether successful in our attempt to disentangle the influences of ethnicity and status in San Francisco due to the composition of our sample. We have shown that differences between social status groups (or at least occupational ranks) are visible in the archaeological record by general patterns as well as specific indicators, and that the expression of status can be seen in differences in the proportional possession of classes of objects vis-à-vis other groups. However, there was no entirely uniform relationship between the means to obtain expensive goods and the possession of them.

It is in this variability that archaeology can contribute to understanding life on the small scale by comparing individual households to the populations of which they are a part.