

In national academy of sciences of the united

Nutrition



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In “ Emerging 3. 0: Highlight on Sandra Allen, Barclay does a good job at summarizing Allen’s article. He says that, “ Allen is writing about global climate change—a pressing issue for students to consider—but through the lens of one unexpected and potentially devastating impact: the loss of the world’s great wine-growing regions.” (Barclay). She uses wine as the vehicle in which to offer the reader a serious issue like climate change for a very specific reason: Wine is relatable. Her approach is to engage the reader on a complex and foreign topic through something enjoyable, leisurely, and most importantly to the prompt, she uses something significant to our society. Not everyone will be quick to jump straight into discussion on global warming but everybody, for the most part, would have no problem serving themselves a fine glass of wine.

? Early in “ A World Without Wine”, Allen quotes Shaw, a co-author on the PNAS (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States) paper, arguing that, “ Wine is food to many countries” (Qtd. in Allen 35). She says that wine can attain the same significance in society that certain foods can, relating wine to rice or corn explaining that it, like these foods, can have cultural significance. This is an interesting take on why wine maintains significance in our society. Allen uses Shaw’s argument in conjunction with her own idea that wine’s significance in society stems from people’s opinion and judgements on wine.

That is to say that according to Allen, “ people care where their wine originates” (Allen 35), and that it is this personal connection between an individual and their choice of wine, rather than the connection between the person and the wine itself, which gives wine its significance. This paper

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offers a different take. Wine is consumed by millions worldwide and is a staple of many diverse cultures. One thing that seems evident across all cultures is its historic use as medicine. Wine's medicinal value has been documented across countless ancient cultures from as early as 6, 000 BCE and has contributed tremendously to wine's relatability, and most importantly, its cultural significance.

¶There is little public knowledge about Wine's medicinal usage throughout history but I believe that its medicinal usage has played an instrumental part creating Wine's cultural significance across cultures. Wine's use as medicine is explained in "Alcohol Throughout the Ages", "Apart from the stress relieving, relaxing nature that alcohol has on the body and mind, alcohol is also an antiseptic and in higher doses has anesthetizing effects. But it is a combination of alcohol and natural botanicals, which creates a far more effective medicine and has been used as such for thousands of years. It is the origin of the most famous toast, "Let's drink to health", which exists in many languages around the world.

" (Holloway 1). Even today Wine is considered by many people to be good for your health. It is loaded with healthy antioxidants that protect your immune system by preventing cell damage. The antioxidants inside of wine are also anti cancer agents. The historical use of wine as medicine seems to be a common trend across cultures as well. The earliest known brewery was discovered to be in Nekhen Egypt. "Osiris, the god of life and of the dead, was also the god of wine, which was considered a potion of renewal that was mostly imported for the wealthier classes. Both beer and wine were integral to ritualistic life, tied to health and religion.

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The consumption of alcohol was widespread and generally moderate for “pleasure, nutrition, medicine, religious ritual, remuneration, and funereal purposes” (Rourke). In ancient Greece, wine was prescribed as a therapeutic agent by doctors. “It played an active role in pathology and treatment (for internal and external use), with Greek physicians exercising their judgment regarding its appropriate uses. Their therapies were sensitive to the wine’s color, provenance, taste or consistency, smell, and age, and were targeted to the patient’s age, sex, and lifestyle as well as the illness” (Rourke).

“The Romans adopted a mixture of wine and frankincense or myrrh to numb the senses before surgery, a practice thought to derive from Talmudic medicine” (qtd in Rourke). As you can see there are plenty of instances of ancient cultures using wine for medicinal purposes. For this reason we can conclude that its history as medication has, at the very least, played some role in cementing wine’s place society across history. Ibuprofen is a non-steroid anti-inflammatory drug with a chemical formula $C_{13}H_{18}O_2$. Many of you might not recognize it immediately, but what I am talking about is Advil.

The reason we are so familiar with $C_{13}H_{18}O_2$ is because it is used to heal. Most everyone experiences headaches therefore most everyone in a society seeks, at one point or another, their respective society’s cure. In the case of our society our solution is Advil and as a result everyone in American society is familiar with it. By that logic, Wine, which we have proved has been used throughout history medicinally, must have gained an astounding familiarity due to its use in so many different societies to cure certain common ailments. Human vulnerability, in many ways lies at the heart of Wine’s significance to society due to its universality. Though wine’s use as medicine

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has ended, its popularity is still growing. The dangers of wine are now common knowledge to most individuals. Even by the 19th Century people were becoming aware of the dangers of wine.

“ By the 18th century, there were growing concerns about the more harmful effects of alcohol, including drunkenness, crime, alcoholism and poverty. In 1725, the first documented petition by the Royal College of Physicians expresses fellows’ concerns about “ pernicious and growing use of spirituous liquors”(Holloway 2) A counter argument can be made that wine’s popularity has nothing to do with its medicinal usage throughout history because despite the fact that its harmful effects when overdone are now clearly understood its popularity is still on the rise. This argument does not take into account the fact that wine’s use as medicine is not the only platform for which wine has achieved cultural significance, it was an important one and has had a lasting effect on how people treat wine and its effects on health, but it was not the only one. Its linkage to religion and celebration have contributed to wine’s significance as well.

Since the discovery of wine, man has indulged in the sweet and savory alcohol and it seems like its popularity is only rising by the year. Drinking wine is as ancient a part of the human story as bread. What is interesting is how wine has retained such an important place in society.

It is not the only mind altering liquid man has discovered and yet it seems to be the one consumed across virtually every culture. Its usage as a medicinal property is documented across many different cultures and has catapulted wine into its place in society due to human vulnerability and its equalizing

property across cultures and people. We all get sick. It only makes sense that something that can ease that suffering rightly takes a place in society. Wine cultural significant benefited as a result.