

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: “LIQUEURS WITH THE LADIES AFTER DINNER”:
PUNCH RITUALS IN DOMESTIC PUBLICS DURING
THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY

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ABSTRACT: Throughout the eighteenth-century, punch drinking was incredibly popular among groups of men. Sharing a bowl of punch with one’s associates created a bond of fraternity. In fact the punch bowl itself, with its wide brim and elaborate decoration, symbolized conviviality. But while men were enjoying this drink in public, they also imbibed in the home where women partook in the ritual. Because of the communal and genial nature of the flowing bowl, these gatherings created domestic publics, a space which defied the traditional public and private spheres. There are several artifacts which may provide examples of domestic punch consumption in the eighteenth-century. Cookbooks, illustrations and prints, and punch bowls and punch pots can provide some insight into the ritual in the home. After examining these artifacts, one can clearly see that women participated in the punch ritual in the home. Martha Washington, for example, often served punch to guests at Mount Vernon. Punch had the ability to temporarily blur the traditional public and private spheres of men and women and create a space in which both groups were briefly bound by the convivial spirit of the drink.

“LIQUEURS WITH THE LADIES AFTER DINNER”: PUNCH RITUALS IN
DOMESTIC PUBLICS DURING THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY

Catherine Daniels, Master of Arts 2018

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
2018

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Introduction

When George Washington ran for the House of Burgesses in 1755, he refused on principle to serve free drinks at his campaign rallies and he lost the election. The following campaign, he served his crowds over fifty gallons of rum punch and won.¹ Alcohol in the eighteenth-century was more pervasive than any other beverage and punch in particular had a special convivial connotation. It was used in political campaigns to win favor with voters, served in taverns to groups of men, enjoyed in the meetings of the Freemasons and the Society of the Cincinnati, and consumed aboard English vessels amongst sailors and captains. Punch was, and still is, frequently considered a public, masculine drink. Its consumption in the so-called public arena has been widely examined. The purpose of drinking from the wide-brimmed, flowing bowl was to create a celebratory bond of fraternity between its participants. The bowl itself, a large and open vessel, signified hospitality. But this image of men gathered around a bowl in a tavern only illustrates one way in which punch was consumed. It was also served in domestic spaces, where its consumption was enjoyed by both men and women. Just as George Washington served punch during his political campaign, it was also served at his home. When Polish writer Julian Niemcewicz described his travels across North America between 1797 and 1799, he took special care to illustrate his experience at Mount Vernon. He arrived at the house in early June and was welcomed by Martha Washington. Niemcewicz wrote, “we entered into the house... Madame Washington appeared after a few minutes, welcomed us most graciously and had *punch* served.”² With the Virginia

¹ David Wondrich, *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl* (New York: Penguin, 2010), 56.

² Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, *Under Their Vine and Fig Tree: Travels Through America in 1797-1799, 1805 with some Further Account of Life in New Jersey*, ed. Metchie J.E. Budka, (Rahway, New Jersey: Quinn and Boden Company, 1965), 96; emphasis in original.

heat in mid-June, the glass of iced punch was probably greatly appreciated by Niemcewicz. Experiences such as his have gone largely unnoticed and unstudied.

The purpose of the punch ritual was not merely to get drunk. Rather, its primary purpose was the creation of a bond between those partaking. At the center of the connection was the punch bowl itself. It is not surprising that literature on the punch ritual attributes the practice to men in taverns or in clubs. Men were the primary imbibers of alcohol and it was more commonly accepted for men to drink publically and copiously. But secondary sources usually contain one or two lines about women as well; women did drink punch, but privately. Women simply did not consume as much punch as men and therefore the evidence of their consumption is limited to small anecdotes similar to Niemcewicz's. If one turns to an analysis of other forms of artifacts, cookbooks, illustrations, or material culture for example, one can find more evidence about domestic punch drinking. It is unlikely that imbibing in the home was as boisterous as it was in taverns, but the symbolic gesture of serving one's guests from the bowl was still apparent and therefore a connection still created. The punch ritual in the home created a space which was anomalous to traditional public and private divisions.

Punch had a unique ability to bring men of varying class and status together and its presence in the home and its role as a window into a domestic public has not been analyzed. Karen Harvey likened the punch ritual to Victor Turner's description of a liminal state, which "transgresses or dissolves the norms that govern structured... Relationships."³ Punch drinking as a liminal space can be extended into the home, where imbibing took place with both men and women. These events took place in what Jessica

³ Karen Harvey, "Ritual Encounters: Punch Parties and Masculinity in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 214, no. 1 (February 2012): 196; Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966.)

Kross described as a temporary public, a space in the home which did not fit under the guise of private. She explained that “the gentlemen’s dinner or the great house ball... were temporary in that they came together and dispersed.”⁴ It was within this temporary public, or a domestic public, in which punch drinking took place. And though only temporary, drinking punch in the home created public discourse between men and women which otherwise would not have occurred. The symbolic significance of the wide-brimmed, welcoming bowl extended its reach into homes in the eighteenth-century. Punch had the ability to temporarily blur the traditional public and private spheres of men and women and create a domestic public in which both groups were briefly bound by the convivial spirit of the drink.

Background

Punch was an incredibly popular drink in the eighteenth-century. It consisted of a type of spirit; usually brandy, but also gin or rum. It was mixed with citrus, such as lemons, limes, or oranges, and spices, such as nutmeg and sugar, then finished off with water or milk. Because water was often contaminated with waste, it was frequently combined with alcohol to kill off bacteria. Alcohol was believed to cure illnesses, was served at every meal, and was even sold by churches.⁵ Punch evolved from a spirit called aqua vitae, concentrated liquor used as medicine in the 1500s. Over time, the drink changed from medicinal uses to recreational uses. Because liquor was more concentrated than ale or wine, it did not spoil and took up less space on maritime voyages. The first mention of punch came from a letter by Robert Addams, written September 28, 1632 in

⁴ Jessica Kross, “Mansions, Men, Women, and the Creation of Multiple Publics in Eighteenth-Century British North America,” *Journal of Social History* 33, no. 2 (1999): 386.

⁵ Sarah Hand Meacham, *Every Home a Distillery: Alcohol, Gender, and Technology in the Colonial Chesapeake* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 8-13.

Armagaon, a colony of the East India Trading Company in southern India. Writing to a friend, he said “I am very glad you have so good compani to be with all as Mr. Cartwright. I hop you will keep good house together and drincke punch by no allowanc.”⁶ But it was not until 1638 that punch was defined. Johan Albert de Mendelslo, a German adventurer in Surat, West India, wrote of ““a kind of drink consisting of aqua vitae, rose-water, juice of citrons and sugar.” He called it “Palepuntz,” which loosely translates to “bowl o’ Punch.”⁷

Some believed that punch was adapted from the indigenous Indian population when the East India Trading Company was founded, as nutmeg and citruses were only found in the East. In 1676, John Fryer’s writings elevated this theory, as he stated that “the *English* on this coast make that enervating liquor called *Paunch* (which is Indostan for Five) from Five Ingredients.”⁸ But this origin story was questionable because punch was never mentioned in any indigenous writings. According to David Wondrich, it seemed likely that punch was adapted by sailors from the ingredients they obtained on their voyages. Spirits became popular on English expeditions after 1588, when spoiled ale caused an epidemic through the English fleets. Punch made its way onto ships travelling in the Caribbean and South America, as well. Konrad A. Antczak explores the consumption of punch at La Tortuga, a Venezuela island with a salt mine during the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries.⁹ Archaeology has uncovered over one hundred and forty punch bowls made from delftware and Chinese porcelain on the small island.

⁶ Wondrich, *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl*, 22.

⁷ *Ibid*; The spelling in period quotes has not been altered.

⁸ *Ibid*, 26.

⁹ Konrad Antczak, “Tavern by the Saltpan: New England Seafarers and the Politics of Punch on La Tortuga Island, Venezuela, 1682–1781,” *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 19, no. 1 (March 2015): 159–187.

According to Antczak, punch bowls became “key players in the social politics and material discourses of the New England captains.”¹⁰ Bowls were symbols of trade and globalization; a means of displaying wealth amongst crewmen. There was also evidence of temporary taverns being erected on the island during a ship’s stay. These taverns provided a liminal space in which captains and their crew briefly rubbed shoulders outside of their grueling work. Antczak explains that these taverns were a space in which “the social relations and the politics of material discourse—specifically punch bowls—were used for their purposes of sociability.”¹¹ Punch became a common occurrence in sea captains’ gatherings and Antczak describes the bowl itself as proof of the far reach of the growing British capitalist world.

But the Age of Punch began in England in the late seventeenth-century and the earliest mention of punch on English soil came from John Evelyn in 1662. Evelyn wrote that “Amongst the other spirituous drinks, as punch, &c., they gave us Canarie that had been carried to and brought from the Indies.”¹² The first published punch recipe came from Hannah Wooley’s cookbook *The Queen-Like Closet, or Rich Cabinet* from 1670.¹³ Punch travelled from England to the colonies in the 1700s because of the consumer revolution, an increased period of trade and consumerism which continued throughout the mid-eighteenth century. Luxury items were now easier to produce and obtain, leading Chinese porcelain to become a common household item in the 1730s.¹⁴ Barbel Czennia explains that “Chinese punch bowls bear witness to the international and intercultural

¹⁰ Antczak, “Tavern by the Saltpan, 160.

¹¹ Ibid, 167.

¹² Wondrich, *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl*, 44.

¹³ Ibid, 45.

¹⁴ “Chinese Porcelain,” George Washington’s Mount Vernon, last modified 2017, accessed February 13, 2018, <http://www.mountvernon.org/digital-encyclopedia/article/chinese-porcelain/>.

heritage of the new form of the eighteenth-century Western sociability; gathering around a large drinking vessel... in a convivial atmosphere.”¹⁵ Punch and its accompanying accoutrements quickly traveled through England and its colonies. It was enjoyed by both the rich and the poor, citizens of all classes, and even slaves. According to Czennia, sailors and captains would bring Chinese punch bowls home as gifts and souvenirs. Artists in the East would cater specifically to the western market, eventually integrating images of European landscapes into their artwork. The more exotic ingredients necessary for punch, such as lemons and spices, were becoming more readily available, as well.¹⁶ Czennia characterizes the intense growth of the trade of punch bowls as a “contribution to the collective memory of an international community constituted by world trade.”¹⁷ As the vessels for punch became easily available, its consumption in the colonies grew.

Most commonly punch was consumed by men in taverns. Taverns were popular destinations as stages of display and observation for gentlemen. Peter Thompson writes that “Taverngoers paid extremely close attention to both their own speech and behavior and that of their drinking partners. They did so because they believed the way a man spoke, behaved, and dressed presented vital clues as to his true character and worth.”¹⁸ And the wide-brimmed punch bowl encouraged group consumption, as men would usually pass the bowl around table. Taverns were meeting places for political groups and societal organizations, such as the Freemasons and the Society of Cincinnati. Men also

¹⁵ Barbel Czennia, "Wide-Open Hemispheres: Punch Bowls, Punch, and World Citizenship in Eighteenth-Century British Culture," in *Citizens of the World: Adapting in the Eighteenth Century*, eds. Kevin L. Cope and Samara Anne Cahill (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 43.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 44.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 45.

¹⁸ Peter Thompson, *Rum Punch & Revolution: Taverngoing & Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 144.

drank in court, in the militia, and during elections.¹⁹ Drinking within the premises of a tavern served as an equalizer amongst classes of men, if only for a brief period of time. Toasting was an integral part of imbibing and was often done around a punch bowl. A groups' purpose in drinking was not to get drunk, but rather to foster a sense of "unity, correspondence, and decorum."²⁰ There were a number of rules one had to abide by when partaking in a toast. One could not decline to drink to a toast, but in return the toaster must toast to something which would not offend anyone. And as a gentleman, one could not walk away from a conversation or toast which upsets him. Thompson shows that toasting was a way to "display breeding, knowledge, and wit."²¹ Men were putting themselves on display for judgment when exalting in a toast. These ceremonies over punch within a tavern or club meeting were "used to help find common ground."²² Punch brought groups of men together and helped garner favor during political events. Then, punch became domesticated around mid-century.

Punch bowls and accessories were brought into the household, the so-called woman's sphere, by the 1750s. According to Mary Beth Norton, the terms private, domestic, and household were already associated with women by the 1730s.²³ Men grew tired of the raucous environment of taverns and imbibing in mixed-class groups around the 1760s. They began to retreat into private clubhouses, as well as into their own homes. Women's gatherings at tea tables were thought to be the equivalent of men drinking in coffeehouses. But tea, after the Consumer Revolution, was not the only thing to be

¹⁹ Meacham, *Every Home a Distillery*, 15-17.

²⁰ Peter Thompson, "The Friendly Glass': Drink and Gentility in Colonial Philadelphia," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 113, no. 4 (October 1989): 557.

²¹ *Ibid*, 559.

²² *Ibid*, 562.

²³ Mary Beth Norton, *Separated By Their Sex: Women in Public and Private in the Colonial Atlantic World* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2011), 152.

domesticated. Bowls were easily incorporated into household china sets. According to Breen, the peak ownership of punch bowls in Virginia was between 1741 and 1760, and store data suggests that “merchants made available a range of punch products and capacities for purchase by individuals of differing social and economic levels.”²⁴ Types of bowls vary by size; smaller bowls being for intimate gatherings and heftier vessels for balls and large groups. George Washington, for example, bought a number of different sizes of bowls for his estate at Mount Vernon. One invoice even shows that he bought seventeen bowls in one order.²⁵ Punch pots, as well, became fashionable after 1750 and were used as a way to control the serving of punch, though bowls were undoubtedly still the preferred method. There are a number of cookbooks, prints, and artifacts from the mid- to-late eighteenth-century which illustrate the punch drinking ritual in the home.

After the turn of the century, punch drinking declined for a number of reasons. Though punch was still evident in the nineteenth-century, industrialization led Americans to turn to other forms of imbibing. By 1810, punch had lost favor in the North America and England. Industrialization also led to an increased interest in chemistry and alcohol production became a science rather than something associated with cooking, shifting it from a woman’s concern to a man’s. Second, while industrialization was definitely a part of punch’s decline, American individualism after the Revolution may have also played a role. Wondrich states that “industrialization and improved communication and the rise of the bourgeoisie all made claims on the individual that militated against partaking of the Lethan bowl.”²⁶ Individual cocktails became more popular. And finally, there was also

²⁴ Eleanor Breen, “‘One More Bowl and Then?’: A Material Culture Analysis of Punch Bowls,” *Journal of Middle Atlantic Archaeology* 28 (2012): 86.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 83.

²⁶ Wondrich, *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl*, 57.

the rise of the temperance movement which curtailed punch drinking, especially in the home. Though habitual drinking and toasting had once been a marker of male sociability, by the end of the century the dangers of excessive drinking had become more apparent. Drunkenness became associated with stupidity and sobriety was associated with rationality. Peter Thompson stated that “Alexander Graydon thought that the American Revolution ‘brought temperance into fashion.’”²⁷ Because of the Second Great Awakening in the 1790s, religion provided women with outlets for volunteer work and reform organizations. Women spearheaded the temperance movement into the 1820s.²⁸ Both men and women were drinking less. Punch was no longer being used as a bribery tool in elections or as a symbol of male fraternity in Freemason meetings. The wide brim of a punch bowl had previously encouraged copious drinking and since the excessive drunkenness was no longer desirable, punch and its symbolic ritual of geniality had mostly disappeared in the nineteenth-century.

Literature

Part of the catalyst for this research was Mary Beth Norton’s *Separated by Their Sex* (2011) and her discussion of public and private spheres in the eighteenth-century. Traditionally, we think of the public sphere as male and it consisted of the space outside of the home, opening men up to political and social activities. The private sphere was female and it consists of the space inside of the home, limiting women to domestic tasks only. But creating stringent binaries such as this is dangerous and limiting. I do not agree that the public and private divide was as cut and dry as Norton asserts. These spaces were easily blurred. If an event, a small meeting of friends or a grand ball, occurs in the house

²⁷ Thompson, “The Friendly Glass,” 566.

²⁸ Mary Beth Norton, “The Evolution of White Women’s Experience in Early America,” *The American Historical Review* 89, no. 3 (1984): 617.

that does not automatically mean it is a private affair. I agree with Lawrence Klein, who explains that “‘public’ matters were those that were exposed to the perceptions of some others or of people in general, while ‘private’ matters were generally imperceptible or kept from the perception of others.”²⁹ In this case, a domestic space can serve a dual purpose. It can be a private space, pertaining to matters only privy to those in the household; or it can be a public space, once friends and guests are welcomed inside for a social gathering. I call this phenomenon a domestic public, because while the event is still taking place in the home, its openness to others renders it public. In fact, this idea is not new. Jessica Kross explains how the home can be used to create a temporary public, in which they “created the sphere not only where interaction with others took place, but more importantly, where such discourse created knowledge of the world, indeed, the very reality of the world itself.”³⁰ The blurring of public and private spaces often took place around a punch bowl, which fostered relationships between men and women if only for a brief period of time.

Literature regarding alcohol and drinking in North America focuses primarily on men. This is understandable, as men were more likely to leave records and they were undoubtedly the main consumers of alcohol during this period. But despite the fact that many secondary sources reference women drinking punch, almost all of them fail to elaborate in any way. Erin Blakemore, in describing the distinguishing factors between tea and punch, states that “though some women did drink punch, literature more

²⁹ Lawrence E. Klein, "Gender and the Public/Private Distinction in the Eighteenth Century: Some Questions about Evidence and Analytic Procedure" *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29, no. 1 (1995): 104.

³⁰ Kross, "Mansions, Men, Women, and the Creation of Multiple Publics." 386.

frequently references male punch drinkers.”³¹ Sharon Salinger says that “An inebriated woman was a private affair... That every defendant in Virginia was male provides loud testimony to the separation of the cultures of women and men.”³² Sarah Hand Meacham explains that “Chesapeake women’s general illiteracy means that women left meager records of their drinking customs.”³³ In the course of her research, Meacham found four diaries, none of them from women, which remain from colonial Virginia.³⁴ Eleanor Breen states “though usually associated with men, punch was also consumed by women both domestically and public places.”³⁵ Peter Thompson says that “although some women used taverns, most of the surviving evidence... is written from a male perspective...I have not attempted to investigate the in depth relationship between the public house and the private home.”³⁶ And Karen Harvey explains that “written evidence might underestimate the numbers of women who drank punch at these public venues. It certainly seems likely that women drank punch with men at home.”³⁷ Women did take part in punch drinking, but there simply is not a lot of documentary evidence about such occasions.

Men were the primary consumers of alcohol. In fact in terms of hard liquor, one author states that “the ‘annual per capita consumption of hard liquor alone, mostly rum,

³¹ Erin Blakemore, "Punch vs. Tea in the 18th Century," *JSTOR Daily*, November 25, 2017, accessed February 12, 2018, <https://daily.jstor.org/punch-vs-tea-in-the-18th-century/>.

³² Sharon V. Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 127.

³³ Meacham, *Every Home a Distillery*, 17.

³⁴ Sarah Hand Meacham, “Keeping the Trade: The Persistence of Tavernkeeping among Middling Women in Colonial Virginia,” *Early American Studies* (Spring 2005): 144.

³⁵ Breen, “‘One More Bowl and Then?’ 81.

³⁶ Thompson, *Rum Punch & Revolution*, 15.

³⁷ Karen Harvey, “Barbarity in a Teacup? Punch, Domesticity and Gender in the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of Design History* 21, no. 3 (2008): 207.

approached four gallons a head.”³⁸ Another author estimates a bit higher, stating that “By 1770, the average adult white man drank the equivalent of seven shots of rum per day.”³⁹ To understand punch consumption in private, an examination of how it was consumed in public is imperative. Women in the public sphere had a direct link with punch serving as tavernkeepers. Sarah Meacham, both in her article “Keeping the Trade” (2005) and her book, *Every Home a Distillery* (2004), discusses how taverns in Virginia were run primarily by middling women and widows.⁴⁰ Despite the fact that tavern licenses were in the man’s name, their wives or daughters would run the business and would serve punch. Sharon V. Salinger, in *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* (2004), also shows that in Philadelphia and in Charleston, female tavernkeepers outnumbered male.⁴¹ This may have been indicative of the denser population and more single-woman households. Salinger explains that licensing a female tavernkeeper was more favorable to officials than having a single woman dependent on the city. Clearly, the women running these taverns were not partaking in the punch ritual with men.

In turning to punch specifically, literature on the topic shifts to almost exclusively male. Again, this is unsurprising as men were the dominant consumers of punch and they did so in public. To understand a history of the beverage, David Wondrich’s *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl* (2010) provides insight into the origins of the mixed concoction and how it spread from sailors on voyages in the East to England and the colonies.⁴² Wondrich explains how the drink became so popular, but also how it fell out of fashion at the turn of the century. In regards to the ritual of punch consumption

³⁸ Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America*, 2.

³⁹ Meacham, *Every Home a Distillery*, 1.

⁴⁰ Ibid; Meacham, “Keeping the Trade,” 140-163.

⁴¹ Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America*.

⁴² Wondrich, *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl*.

and its prevalence in taverns, *Rum Punch and Revolution* (1998) by Peter Thompson is the authority on the subject.⁴³ Thompson explores the distinct sociability and fraternity that occurred among men over a bowl of punch and how that fraternity led to distinct tavern talk. Taverns served as meeting places for political societies, business meetings and auctions. They were also stages on which men could display their intelligence and judge others based on societal values. Thompson provides insight on the distinct ritual associated with punch drinking, toasting, and how it evolved during the American Revolution. But while Thompson focuses on men in taverns, he fails to delve into the realm of public celebrations, at which both men and women would have imbibed. For example, in an article from the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1733, the author describes a celebration after the founding of the Georgia colony. He writes that “There was a great Resort of the Gentlemen of that Neighbourhood and their Families, and a plentiful Dinner provided for the Colony... [including] a Hogshead of Punch... and all was disposed in so regular a Manner, that no Person was drunk, nor any Disorder happen'd.”⁴⁴ Not only does this account describe men and their families enjoying a public feast at which punch was served, but it is also contrary to the typical image of men in taverns drinking punch and getting drunk.

To understand how punch might have been integrated into the home, it is necessary to look at the material culture. Karen Harvey provides insight into the bowl itself and its curious place in colonial society. Punch bowls themselves have been scarcely studied. Harvey explores how the bowl served as “a locus for examining male

⁴³ Thompson, *Rum Punch & Revolution*.

⁴⁴ “An ACCOUNT of the Progress of the first Colony sent to GEORGIA,” *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 31, 1733, accessed April 6, 2018, <https://www.accessible.com/accessible/print> [Accessible Archives].

sociability in the eighteenth-century.”⁴⁵ In most cases, there was a clear divide in the material of vessels in which certain drinks were served. Tea was usually served in fine porcelain china, reflecting its inherent refinement, while alcohol was served in delftware and stoneware. Punch, on the other hand, was somewhat of an irregularity, its bowls being made of porcelain or creamware. She shows that “these objects invite us to abandon distinctions between refined and rough sociability, and to understand the place between.”⁴⁶ While Harvey still focuses on punch and masculinity, her idea of the space in-between is imperative. Punch had the ability to straddle the divide not only in terms of its material assemblage, but its domestication also allowed for it to muddy the public and private distinctions which men and women had grown accustomed.

Harvey’s research is also significant in that she examined the juxtaposition of female refinement and tea, male barbarism and punch, and the curious but brief phenomenon of punch pots. Punch pots were oversized tea pots used to serve hot punch in the home.⁴⁷ These short-lived vessels helped domesticate punch, according to Harvey. She states that “these objects served to bring men and women together in a domestic ceremony that bore traces of older punch parties characterized by informal merriment.”⁴⁸ Harvey distinguishes punch bowls as exclusively male, tea accoutrements as exclusively female, and punch pots as inhabiting a nebulous middle ground. Much of Harvey’s research is focused on punch and masculinity. But with the domestication of punch and its ritual, I believe that the male and female distinction associated with bowls should fall away, as there are numerous examples of female influence on punch bowls and with the

⁴⁵ Harvey, “Ritual Encounters,” 170.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 189.

⁴⁷ Harvey, “Barbarity in a Teacup?”

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 217.

punch ceremony in the home. The dichotomy of punch bowls as male and tea pots as female is restrictive. The same can be said of the binary creation of public and private spheres. While men and women may have consumed punch in the home, traditionally considered the private sphere, their imbibing in the company of friends would have made it a public affair. What needs to be done is an analysis of the scant documents available on domestic punch drinking, as well as the material culture associated with it, to understand how the punch ritual may have taken place in the home with both men and women.

Chapters

The research for this project has spanned over two years and tapped into numerous disciplines. I began with an interest in material culture, examining the importance of objects produced out of the consumer revolution. This era provided a catalyst for increased production and, therefore, increased luxury goods. Robert Blair St. George explains that “material life... can be examined only in the context of the market economy and capitalism... Capitalism is a mechanism that encroached on all forms of lives.”⁴⁹ There was an increased availability of inexpensive manufactured goods and it became easier to import merchandise into the colonies, leading to increased production and consumption. Naturally rum and the accoutrements to make punch fall into this category. But I also explored how to examine material culture, taking particular interest in Jules David Prown, who believes that objects are vessels through which one can analyze societal beliefs.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Robert Blair St. George, Introduction to *Material Life in America 1600-1800*, ed. Robert Blair St. George (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 4.

⁵⁰ Jules David Prown, “Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 17, no. 1 (Spring, 1982): 1-19.

In addition to material culture, I also had an interest in female roles and how they evolved over the course of the eighteenth-century. Norton's *Separated by their Sex* (2011), which discusses how women's roles shifted from England to the colonies and before and after the Revolution, was the jumping off point for my interest in domestic life during the 1700s.⁵¹ With these two objectives in mind, I began researching material culture in the eighteenth-century. I stumbled across Karen Harvey's "Barbarity in a Teacup? Punch, Domesticity and Gender in the Eighteenth Century" (2008) in which she examined the juxtaposition of women and tea, men and punch, and non-gendered punch pots.⁵² The idea that some objects were associated with men and others with women, but that they both engaged in punch drinking, intrigued me and I began reading about punch rituals. Punch seemed to have a unique way of bringing together those who may not otherwise have shared a drink. Many authors allude to a liminal space, in which normal societal status melted away around a full bowl.⁵³ There was a communal spirit about the drink. But I began to wonder about Harvey's assessment of punch bowls as a wholly male artifact. Many bowls and accessories were found in household probate inventories and fragments found through archaeology in homes. Not to mention that the bowl was more common than the pot. Every source I read mentioned women drinking punch in the home, but failed to elaborate on the subject. Yet it seemed like the home was another example of where people, men and women alike, were brought together in a public space by the communal drink.

⁵¹ Norton, *Separated By Their Sex*.

⁵² Harvey, "Barbarity in a Teacup?"

⁵³ Thompson, *Rum Punch & Revolution*; Antczak, "Tavern by the Saltpan." Antczak directly refers to the saltpan taverns as liminal spaces.

Why hasn't domestic punch drinking been examined before? I quickly realized that the evidence of such affairs was incredibly sparse. There were no magic diaries which detailed how groups drank in the home. But the evidence was there, spread across various realms of study. Because of the variety in the types of evidence I have discovered, my chapters will be organized by medium. My first chapter will focus on documents and ephemera. This chapter shows not only that women had an active role in punch making in the home, but also that they helped foster a domestic public in which both men and women came together around a bowl of punch. When I began looking for traces of punch drinking in the home, the first place I started to look was within cookbooks. Many were written by women and with women as the intended audience, since they were the ones cooking or planning meals in their households. I discovered a number of books which not only had punch recipes, but also used punch bowls as units of measurement, which indicated that punch bowls were ubiquitous enough for the author to assume a woman had one. The cookbooks range from the 1670s to the 1790s, completely spanning the Age of Punch. Then, in an attempt to understand what these rituals may have looked like in the home, I turned to illustrations and prints from England and North America. These prints range from the 1730s to the 1790s, providing insight to societal norms of the day. Diary entries and commentaries from women were rare, much less those that detail punch drinking specifically, but there are handfuls which reference the practice in passing.

My second chapter shifts away from documents and examine what started my research in the first place, artifacts. I argue that punch bowls were not exclusively male artifacts, especially when they were found in the home. While artifacts found in

traditional public venues, such as taverns, have male insignia, punch artifacts used in a domestic public had both male and female connotations. Not only that, but they also illustrate men and women drinking in mixed-gendered groups, which is contrary to the traditional public and private barrier. I will look at a number of bowls and punch pots from various institutions, such as the Winterthur Museum and Colonial Williamsburg. While I agree with Harvey's description of punch pots as non-gendered, I do not agree that punch bowls are exclusively male. The bowls I have examined came from homes from the 1720s to the 1780s and their iconography links women with punch drinking. A number are inscribed with a husband and wife's names, while others were used at births and christenings, and two actually depict women gathered around a punch bowl. I will also take a look at the anomaly that is the punch pot and examine how it influenced drinking punch in the home.

My final chapter will be a case study which directly applies the cookbooks, documents, and artifacts from the previous two chapters to a specific household. A large portion of my research took place at the Mount Vernon estate and I argue that Martha Washington and her female descendants were more involved in the punch ritual in the home, than their male family members. I will look at the archaeology being done next to the house and the punch bowl fragments found at the dig. I also analyze a number of bowls and punch accessories from the Museum and Education Center using Prown's method of Description, Deduction, and Speculation.⁵⁴ Most of these artifacts actually belonged to Martha Washington, rather than George. And finally I will examine letters, diary entries, and accession materials from the Fred W. Smith National Library. Though certainly not a typical eighteenth-century family, the heightened preservation of

⁵⁴ Prown, "Mind in Matter."

Washington's effects has created a treasure trove of punch drinking artifacts and ephemera at the estate. While it is clear that women did not drink as much punch as men, previous research on punch has shown that it had the ability to create a space in which those who would not have otherwise shared a drink, gathered around a bowl to enjoy one another's company. Punch drinking in the home has also created this same convivial space.

Chapter One – Cookbooks, Prints, and other Documents

Cookbooks

In this chapter, I argue that cookbooks, prints, and some limited diary entries show that women had an active role in the punch ritual in the home. In doing so, they helped create a domestic public in which both men and women enjoyed a bowl of punch, a space anomalous to traditional public and private barriers. They not only prepared the drink, but they also served it to guests and even took part in toasting, previously believed to be a wholly male ritual. There are very few written documents related to women and punch consumption in the home. This is partly because women were less likely to be literate than men and also because few people wrote exact diary entries describing what they ate. To combat this issue, I turned to some documents that were almost exclusively written by and for women, cookbooks, and to documents which provided illustrations instead of descriptions, prints. Though punch was usually enjoyed in public, a space traditionally associated with men, the evidence provided in this chapter shows that in a domestic setting, punch was mainly prepared by women. Not only that, but punch was consumed by both men and women.

To begin to understand the punch ritual in the home, one must look at how punch was prepared and who was preparing it. Cookbooks are an interesting source. Though they were likely found in every woman's kitchen cupboard, it is impossible to know whether or not these recipes were actually used. But if a recipe came from a manuscript cookbook or a written source, it becomes a bit more likely that the dish was tested or made. Community cookbooks, as well, where the recipes were from housewives

contributing their secrets, makes it more plausible the recipe was made.⁵⁵ During the eighteenth-century, it was common for recipes to be exchanged and traded, and for cookbooks to borrow recipes from one another. Many of the cookbooks presented here were either manuscripts or compiled from community suggestions, meaning it is more likely that these recipes were actually used.⁵⁶

Cookbooks were written for women to be used in their homes and directly contribute to the domestic consumption of punch and its serving in domestic publics. These sources can provide insight not only into what may have appeared on dining room tables, but they can also illustrate an entire eighteenth-century scene. Adele Wessell explains that “cookbooks as history... are themselves sources of history as documents and blueprints for experiences that can be interpreted to represent the past.”⁵⁷ Wessell shows that cookbooks, written in the present tense, were conditioned by contemporary cultural values. By analyzing cookbooks, it quickly becomes apparent that women were involved in the preparation and the serving of punch in the home. There are numerous ways to discover the societal values underneath the printed recipes. Ken Albala explains that these documents can illustrate economic needs by displaying what were common ingredients at a given time. Cookbooks can also be used to examine material culture by looking into the tools used in the cooking process. But he says there are also ways to “read between the lines... to answer questions... [that] may deal with gender roles, issues of class, ethnicity, and race.”⁵⁸ He uses the term food ideologies, meaning “a way of

⁵⁵ Ken Albala, "Cookbooks as Historical Documents," in *The Oxford Handbook of Food History*, ed. Jeffrey M. Pilcher (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 230.

⁵⁶ To view all of the recipes from the following cookbooks, see Appendix I.

⁵⁷ Adele Wessell, "Cookbooks for Making History: As Sources for Historians and as Records of the Past," *M/C Journal: A Journal of Media and Culture* 16, no. 3 (June 2013): Online.

⁵⁸ Albala, "Cookbooks as Historical Documents," 231.

thinking about the world that is part of a larger esthetic, political, or social mindset.”⁵⁹ In other words, recipes can provide insight into what was important to a culture at a given time and into how readers wanted to present themselves to society. To examine the significance of cookbooks, Albala provides an easy to follow method of analysis by asking five major questions. He asks who wrote the book, who was the intended audience, when and where was it produced, and why was it written?⁶⁰ Albala believes that cookbooks “signal aspirational values. It will offer recipes that the target audience hopes to cook, using ingredients that will impress others, and often with the intention of rising beyond the audience’s class and values.”⁶¹ Albala’s point here is exceptionally poignant when considering punch; the beverage was often served to guests at gatherings, both intimate and large. Undoubtedly serving and partaking in punch had the ability to equalize imbibers enjoying the drink in a domestic public.

The oldest published punch recipe on record was written by a woman and for women to use in their homes for their guests. Although punch was not fully domesticated until the 1700s, a recipe for it was first published in the 1670s. Despite the fact that many of these cookbooks were printed in England, they easily found their way to the colonies. The first published punch recipe came from Hannah Wooley’s *The Queen-Like Closet, or Rich Cabinet* in 1670, printed in London.⁶² Wooley, according to author Wendy Wall, was “a domestic female celebrity who acted as the Martha Stewart of the seventeenth

⁵⁹ Albala, “Cookbooks as Historical Documents,” 231.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 228.

⁶¹ Ibid, 233.

⁶² Wondrich, *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl*, 45; for this paper I used Wooley’s 3rd edition, Hannah Wooley, *The Queen-like Closet, Or, Rich Cabinet* (London: Printed for Rich. Lownes, 1675). LSE Digital Library Online, accessed February 20, 2018, <https://digital.library.lse.ac.uk/objects/lse:mir865luj>.

century.”⁶³ Certainly not the average housewife, Wooley had already written a number of books before *Queen-Like Closet*. Her intended audience was clearly women, as her preface addresses “To all Ladies, Gentlewomen, and all other of the female sex who delight in, or be desirous of good Accomplishments.”⁶⁴ Her punch recipes states,

To make Punch.
Take one Quart of Clarret wine, half a Pint of Brandy, and a little
Nutmeg grated, a little sugar, and the Juice of a Limon, and so drink it.⁶⁵

She describes the recipes found in her book as “precious things” and explains that her purpose in writing the book was because a number of years had passed since her previous work and there were many new recipes to introduce to her readers.⁶⁶ Punch was one of these new recipes.

Though there was quite a gap between Hannah Wooley’s book and the next published punch recipe, manuscript cookbooks show that women were writing down punch recipes as well. This may be because it was not quite domesticated until the middle of the eighteenth-century; or, because the recipe for punch mainly involved putting all of the ingredients in a bowl and letting it steep, many did not feel the need to publish the recipe until it became more popular. According to David Wondrich, the “oldest extant recipe for Milk Punch” was “appropriately written by a woman.”⁶⁷ It was discovered in 1914 by Montague Summers, an early twentieth century English author, tucked inside of a manuscript from 1711. The manuscript itself was written by Mary Rockett. It is unclear who Rockett was and it is impossible to know who her intended audience was or what her

⁶³ Wendy Wall, *Recipes for Thought: Knowledge and Taste in the Early Modern English Kitchen* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 40.

⁶⁴ Wooley, *The Queen-like Closet*, iv.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 134. This is just one example of what the recipes would have looked like. This is the only full recipe I reference in-text. For the others, see the Appendix.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, vi-vii.

⁶⁷ Wondrich, *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl*, 167.

intended purposes were. Summers, however, references this book in his memoir about the critically acclaimed playwright Aphra Behn. He credits Behn with introducing Milk Punch to England in the late 1600s. He states that she “was the first person he ever knew or heard of who made the liquor called Milk Punch.”⁶⁸ Whether or not Behn was the first person to make milk punch is unclear. But Rockett was clearly making the drink in the early 1700s, as evidenced by her manuscript cookbook.

Another manuscript cookbook, which was added to over a period of eighty years, shows evidence of punch being consumed in a home in the colonies in the early eighteenth-century. The book is titled *The Anna Cromwell English Recipe Book, 1650, with Later American Additions*, cataloged and digitized at the American Antiquarian Society Library.⁶⁹ The book was divided into six different sections, each pertaining to a different style of cooking, with the second section being devoted to drinks. Cromwell inscribed her book “Anna Cromwell / my book of Receipts / December the 26th / 1650” but unfortunately nothing is known about the original author, according to the Manuscript Cookbooks Survey. A penciled note on the inside of the book states that Cromwell’s manuscript travelled to Massachusetts in the 1730s, where it was inherited by Sarah Sartell Prentice.⁷⁰ Prentice lived from 1716 to 1792 and while it is unclear when the punch recipe was added, the Cookbooks Survey states that additions were made to the

⁶⁸ Montague Summers, *A Memoir of Mrs. Behn*. CreateSpace (Independent Publishing Platform, 2016 (1914)), footnote 56.

⁶⁹ Anna Cromwell, *Anna Cromwell English Recipe Book, 1650, with Later American Additions, 1650-1730s* Manuscript. Unpublished, 1650-1730 (American Antiquarian Society Library, Manuscripts Online), accessed February 20, 2018, image #58, <https://catalog.mwa.org/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=271275>

⁷⁰ Project of the Pine Needles Foundation of New York, “Anna Cromwell English Recipe Book, 1650, with Later American Additions,” Manuscript Cookbooks Survey. Last Modified 2017, accessed February 24, 2018, <http://www.manuscriptcookbookssurvey.com/collection/index.php/Detail/manuscripts/244>.

book in the 1730s, when punch was becoming more popular after the consumer revolution.⁷¹

The next punch recipe in a published cookbook arrived around the 1750s, when punch was becoming a popular activity both in taverns and in the home. *The Lady's Assistant in the Oeconomy of the Table* was written by Anne Battam in 1759 and published in London.⁷² The book was compiled from manuscripts by those “of the most refin'd Taste and greatest Judgement” and intended audience was clearly women, as the title suggests.⁷³ The introduction also referenced women, stating “Since so many books... have been introduced to the closets of the fair sex, an addition... may be thought an imposition.”⁷⁴ Her purpose in writing was based on the fact that her compilation was from manuscript recipes. Battam explained that these recipes “are originals, not to be met with any former collection, and most of them written by Ladies of quality, whose principal study has been household oeconomy and elegance of taste.”⁷⁵ Her punch recipe was clearly meant for a large number of people, as most of these recipes were, since it calls for at least a quart of brandy and two quarts of water, though it was adaptable for even larger quantities. Her book actually contained four different punch recipes and at least one was referenced as being written by a woman, a Mrs. Brickle.⁷⁶ Her recipe totals around eleven quarts.

The goal of many cookbooks was not only to educate women in cooking, but also to help them impress guests in their homes. In 1785, Elizabeth Price's cookbook, *The*

⁷¹ Unfortunately the image for this recipe was too faded to accurately include the text in the Appendix.

⁷² Anne Battam, *The lady's assistant in the oeconomy of the table* (London, 1759) Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale. University of Maryland College Park, accessed February 20, 2018.

⁷³ Ibid, cover.

⁷⁴ Ibid, i.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 197-199.

New, Universal, and Complete Confectioner was published in London.⁷⁷ Again, her book was compiled from a manuscript “of a very old, experienced housekeeper... and from my own experience in this art.”⁷⁸ Her purpose in writing the book was that before this publication, there was not a complete and comprehensive guide to confections.⁷⁹ She listed her intended audience as the public in general, but hoped that when paired with her other book, *The New Book of Cookery* (1785), inexperienced and young women “in every branch of housekeeping” will find a complete and comprehensive guide to cooking.⁸⁰ Price’s book contains two milk punch recipes.⁸¹

Susannah Carter’s *The Frugal Housewife; or Complete Woman Cook*, went through numerous editions since its initial publication in 1772. Its 1796 edition was published in Philadelphia.⁸² Unfortunately, it is difficult to pinpoint a purpose in Carter’s publication, since it did not contain a preface or introduction, except a small note stating that this edition was revised. Even her first copy does not contain a statement of purpose, other than the full title. Her intended audience must be women, as “housewife” and “woman cook” were referenced on the cover. The hope in publishing the book must have been to provide women with lessons on “cleanliness, decency, and elegance” at a budget.⁸³ But Carter did still consider milk punch to be elegant, as she included a recipe for the drink toward the end of her book.⁸⁴

⁷⁷ Elizabeth Price, *The new, universal, and complete confectioner* (London, 1785?) Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale. University of Maryland College Park. University of Maryland College Park, accessed February 20, 2018.

⁷⁸ Ibid, i.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid, i.

⁸¹ Ibid, 118.

⁸² Susannah Carter, *The frugal housewife: or, Complete woman cook* (Philadelphia, 1796) Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale. University of Maryland College Park, accessed February 20, 2018.

⁸³ Ibid, cover.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 126.

In addition to the recipes of punch these cookbooks provide, they also provide insight into the types of tools that were used in the cooking process. Elizabeth Scott shows that cookbooks give enlightening information about the creative ways certain utensils were used. She states that “recipes assumed the cook’s knowledge of various items of food or material culture.”⁸⁵ This is another example of how the assumption that punch bowls were exclusively male is challenged. Aside from being used to serve punch by women, ladies in the home were also using bowls as units of measurement. Scott says these examples call “into question some interpretations of gender associations for particular groups of material culture.”⁸⁶ Mary Cole used punch bowls and punch itself in a variety of ways in her 1791 cookbook, *The Lady’s Compleat Guide; or Cookery in all its branches*, published in London.⁸⁷ Her book was also a compilation of recipes from others, but in addition to cookery she also provides recipes and remedies for various ailments. Cole did not explicitly state that the book was for women, except in her title and by focusing her efforts on housekeeping.⁸⁸ She used a punch bowl as a cooking instrument in a few of her recipes. For example, in her recipe for a Basque of Mutton, Cole calls for the cook to lay a leg of veal in a copper dish “the size of a small punch-bowl.”⁸⁹ She also used it in a recipe for a transparent soup, which gets strained into “a punch-bowl, let it settle for two hours.”⁹⁰ Cole uses punch itself as a treatment, as well, for the “Gravel and Stone.” She states “if the patient has been accustomed to generous

⁸⁵ Elizabeth M. Scott, "A Little Gravy in the Dish and Onions in a Tea Cup": What Cookbooks Reveal About Material Cultur." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 1, no. 2 (1997): 139.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 146.

⁸⁷ Mary Cole, *The lady's complete guide; or, cookery in all its branches* (London, 1791) Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale. University of Maryland College Park, accessed February 20, 2018.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, viii.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 102.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 196.

liquors, he may drink a small gin punch without acid.”⁹¹ The same remedy was recommended for “Suppression of Urine.”⁹²

The intention of many of these cookbooks was not simply to educate women on how to cook, but also how to be elegant, refined, and to impress guests who come into their homes. Women used these punch recipes to display a level of refinement and knowledge of cookery, creating a domestic public wherein their guests could partake in the drink. The punch recipes usually call for large quantities of alcohol, implying that these batches were intended for gatherings within the domestic public. The fact that many of these recipes and remedies were compiled from manuscripts is significant. As Albala stated, it was more likely that a recipe was actually used if it was handwritten or copied.⁹³ All of these books with women as the authors and as the intended audience, show that women were at least involved in punch production and most likely served the drink to their guests. If these punch recipes were used in the context that Albala suggested, to raise one’s self beyond one’s class and values, this would have contributed to creating a domestic public in which men and women partook in imbibing together.⁹⁴ But to understand what that scene would have looked like, it is necessary to examine images from the time period. Since photographs were nonexistent, prints and drawings can provide an idea of what the liminal punch ritual in the home would have looked like.

⁹¹ Cole, *The lady's complete guide*, 381.

⁹² *Ibid*, 403.

⁹³ Albala, "Cookbooks as Historical Documents," 230.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 233.

Prints

Prints and illustrations from the eighteenth-century show that punch drinking could blur the traditional public and private spheres and that women had an obvious interest in punch drinking in domestic publics.

The most famous print associated with punch



drinking is William Hogarth's "Midnight

Figure 1 - Hogarth, "Midnight Modern Conversation," 1733. Courtesy of the Campbell Blaffer Foundation, accessed through ArtStor.

Modern Conversation," printed in 1733 (Figure 1).⁹⁵ According to the Norman Rockwell Museum, Hogarth was responsible for "establishing the tradition of the mass-produced popular print that carried a moral or social message."⁹⁶ Many of his illustrations, as well as others produced during the period, were satirical or provided some sort of commentary on cultural values. Hogarth's infamous illustration is the primary image associated with punch drinking, and was even notorious even during its time, as it was printed on punch bowls themselves. Today, it still dominates our perceptions of eighteenth-century punch drinking, being used for exhibits and book covers.⁹⁷ The image depicts eleven men,

⁹⁵ William Hogarth, "A Midnight Modern Conversation (March 1732/1733)" (Houston, Texas: Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation), print, accessed February 25, 2018.

http://library.artstor.org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/asset/AMHOUSTONIG_10313876752.

⁹⁶ "Late 18th Century," Illustration History: An Educational Resource and Archive, Norman Rockwell Museum, last modified 2015, accessed February 25, 2018.

<https://www.illustrationhistory.org/history/time-periods/late-18th-century>.

⁹⁷ "Clubs, Friendship & Well-Wishing," Uncorked! Wine, Objects, and Tradition, Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library, last modified 2013, accessed February 25, 2018,

clearly drunk, gathered around a punch bowl in the center of a room. Many are smoking, one in the foreground has fallen down, and another is dipping a ladle into the bowl to get another glass. As this is our primary source for what punch drinking looked like in the eighteenth-century, it is unsurprising that the ritual has been primarily associated with men. Karen Harvey describes the image as “a criticism of the event it portrays: nothing less than a ‘sordid binge.’”⁹⁸ This picture is masculine in every sense. It is “not simply transgressing some important codes of manly civility... it is also performing a manner of behaviour long deemed central to a particular form of male sociability.”⁹⁹ Again, it is important to note that Hogarth’s image was more often the norm. But there are examples of drawings and prints which show punch being consumed in mixed-gendered groups, female-only groups, and some with women performing the punch ritual themselves.

The first print shows that women were taking part in the domestic punch ritual quite early on. Courtesy of the British Museum, this picture was dated 1737-1738 and drawn by George Bickham the Younger, an English etcher (Figure 2).¹⁰⁰



The image was Figure 2 - Bickham the Younger, "Music Sheet Cover," 1737-1738. Courtesy of the British Museum. produced when punch had recently taken hold in England, but was still relatively new to

<http://uncorked.winterthur.org/consumption-equipage/clubs-friendship-well-wishing/>; Wondrich, *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl*, cover.

⁹⁸ Harvey, "Ritual Encounters," 168.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 184.

¹⁰⁰ George Bickham the Younger, "1858,0417.612 (Music Sheet Cover, 1737-1738)" (British Museum), print, last modified 2017, online, accessed February 22, 2018. www.britishmuseum.org/collection.

the colonies. This picture was a music sheet cover, serving as an illustration to the score “The Musical Entertainer.” The image depicts seven people gathered around a table, four men and three women. This picture is significant in that the woman in the background is the one performing the toasting. She is raising her glass and clinking it with the man to her left, as she dips the ladle into the bowl. This is an example of a woman performing the toasting ritual and one of the only ones found over the course of this research. Toasting has primarily been considered a male activity, a gentlemanly way of not only forming friendships with one’s peers, but also a way of judging their intelligence. For a woman to be depicted conducting the toast is significant, as Thompson stated that toasts were meant to “display breeding, knowledge, and wit.”¹⁰¹ But in this image, both men and women have come together in a convivial toast, temporarily wiping their divisions and uniting them around the flowing bowl.

Political satire, despite intending to be humorous, provides a window into what societal norms may have looked like and some of these images illustrate women consuming punch. There is a significant leap in the dates of these images, perhaps because of the Industrial Revolution, which began around the 1760s and carried on until the 1840s. During this period there was an increasing demand of reading materials, such



Figure 3 - Rowlandson, "St. James/St. Giles," 1792. Courtesy of the British Museum.

¹⁰¹ Thompson, "The Friendly Glass," 559.

as newspapers and books, and as such an increasing demand for printing technology.¹⁰² Hogarth's work in the early 1700s was an inspiration for many other artists and in the late eighteenth-century printmaking truly took off in England and in North America. The next image, entitled "St. James's/St. Giles's" was drawn in 1792 by Thomas Rowlandson, an etcher who had made a name for himself in England by the early 1800s (Figure 3).¹⁰³ Rowlandson followed in the footsteps of William Hogarth as a political satirist, creating images which provided commentary on societal values. The print shows two women on top, characterized as courtesans of the highest class, sharing a bowl of punch. One with her back to the viewer holds a punch bowl out to the other woman, who is facing the viewer with a coy smile and holding a glass. These women are captioned, "St. James." On the bottom, there are two larger women, wearing tattered dresses, portrayed as lower-class prostitutes, and captioned "St. Giles." This print was a social commentary on two neighborhoods within London, St. James which was higher-class, and St. Giles which was lower-class. But aside from the neighborhood commentary, it is important to note that St. James was characterized by refinement and to portray that Rowlandson used two courtesans sharing a bowl of punch. This goes against the notion that punch in and of itself was representative of unruliness and barbarism. Also worthy of note in this illustration is that the woman in the foreground of the St. James image is holding the punch bowl out to her companion, instead of it sitting on the table in between them. This is evidence of a woman partaking in the punch ritual, as men in taverns would pass the bowl around the table to each occupant. The lady in pink is passing the bowl to her companion, just as a man would.

¹⁰² Norman Rockwell Museum, "Late 18th Century."

¹⁰³ Thomas Rowlandson, "1858,0511.1398 (St. James/St. Giles, 1792)" (British Museum), print, last modified 2017, online, accessed February 22, 2018. www.britishmuseum.org/collection.

The third image here was also by Rowlandson, obtained from the Yale Center for British Art (Figure 4).

Unfortunately it is undated, entitled “Women Drinking Punch” or “Three Ladies Drinking Punch.”¹⁰⁴ Though undated, this image was clearly a draft of Rowlandson’s “St. James/St. Giles.” The two



Figure 4 - Rowlandson, "Women Drinking Punch" or "Three Ladies Drinking Punch," undated. Courtesy of the Yale Center for British Art, accessed through ArtStor.

women on the left perfectly mirror the St. James women in the previous print. Here, however, there is a third woman on the right, laughing and enjoying herself as her companion passes around the bowl of punch. This example removes the political satire and turns the scene simply into a group of women enjoying a drink. The title is simple, perhaps Rowlandson sketched these women in the actual act of imbibing. But the draft version of this image illustrates again that not just men enjoyed the convivial spirit of the bowl. Women, as well, in their own groups, partook every now and then.

The next image is another example of punch drinking in a mixed-gendered group, with two men and a woman fixed around a bowl. The print is from artist James Gillray in 1799.¹⁰⁵ Gillray was an avid follower of Hogarth and was known for his political satire caricatures, particularly of King George III. This image is entitled “Punch cures the Gout,

¹⁰⁴ Thomas Rowlandson, “Women Drinking Punch” or “Three Ladies Drinking Punch (undated)” (Yale Center for British Art: Paul Mellon Collection), drawing and watercolor, accessed February 25, 2018. http://library.artstor.org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/asset/AYCBAIG_10313606703.

¹⁰⁵ James Gillray, “1851,1901.991 (Punch cures the Gout, -the Colic, -and the Tisick, 1799)” (British Museum), print, last modified 2017, online, accessed February 22, 2018. www.britishmuseum.org/collection; Colic is abdominal pain and tisick is a cough.

-the Colic, -and the Tisick” (Figure 5). The man on the left appears skinny and frail, squinting as though getting the words out is difficult. The woman sits in the center, raising her glass the highest and holding her stomach. The man on the right has enlarged limbs and lounges with his feet resting on two foot rests. The third man has a similar look to other Gillray prints which mock King George III, though it is unclear if that was Gillray’s intention with this piece. The three appear to be toasting the punch itself and is each exhibiting the symptoms to which they are toasting. Though the print was intended to be humorous, it is worth noting that again that this was a mixed-gendered group, each supplying a quip about the supposed health benefits of punch. As satirical images provide commentary on social norms,



Figure 5 - Gillray, "Punch cures the Gout, -the Colic, -and the Tisick," 1799. Courtesy of the British Museum.

this print implies that it was common for men and women to drink punch together.

These images are examples of domestic publics in homes during which men and women imbibed around a communal bowl. The fifth picture is another drawing and unfortunately is undated. Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society, this sketch was done by Robert Gilmore, an artist active around the turn of the century.¹⁰⁶ This work is entitled “Sketchbook of a European Holiday from the Collection of Robert Gilmore:

¹⁰⁶ Robert Gilmore, “Sketchbook of a European Holiday from the Collection of Robert Gilmore: Musical Evening, Punch Being Served at Left (undated)” (Baltimore, Maryland: Maryland Historical Society, Frick Art Reference Library), drawing, accessed February 25, 2018. http://library.artstor.org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/asset/FRICKIG_10311811791.

Musical Evening, Punch Being Served at Left” (Figure 6). Unlike Gillray and Rowlandson’s prints, here there was no political or satirical commentary being made. This was a sketch done by Gilmore depicting a scene that he witnessed. The image is of a ball, with music being played on a piano and a harp on the right, and, as the title suggests,



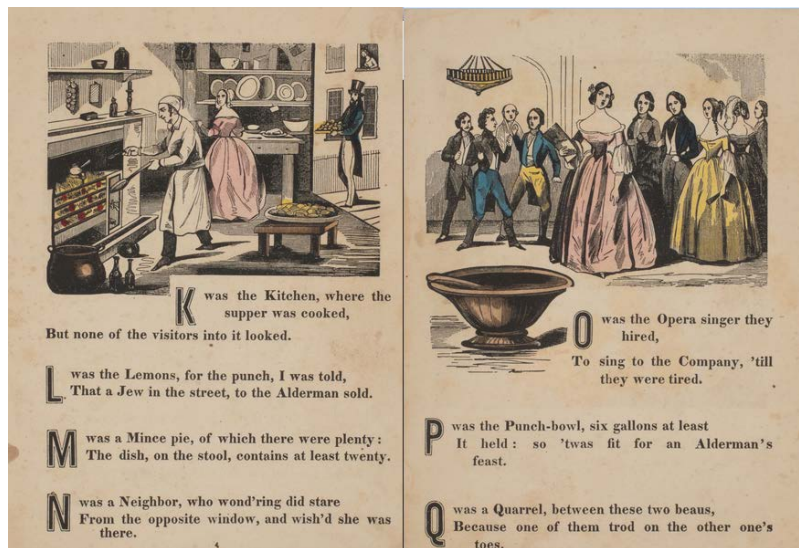
Figure 6 - Gilmore, "Sketchbook of a European Holiday," undated. Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society, accessed through ArtStor.

there is punch being served on the left. While there is a gentleman serving himself punch, the table is primarily occupied by women. This image is the pinnacle example of Kross’ depiction of a temporary public; “the gentlemen’s dinner or the

great house ball... were temporary in that they came together and dispersed.”¹⁰⁷ In this scene, men and women are partaking in punch and enjoying each other’s company before the occasion ends and they return to their societal spheres.

A sixth picture comes from Winterthur, from a children’s book, *Grandmamma Easy’s Alderman’s Feast: A New Alphabet*, printed in New York possibly in the 1830s (Figure 7). The date of this book exceeds the timeline for this project, but it is worth mentioning. The book is meant to teach the alphabet to children, pairing a familiar object or theme with a letter. For L, the entry reads “L was the Lemons, for the punch, I was

¹⁰⁷ Kross, “Mansions, Men, Women, and the Creation of Multiple Publics,” 386.



told” and the entry for P reads “P was the Punch-Bowl, six gallons at least it held.”¹⁰⁸ This book, intended for small children, assumed that punch was so familiar that it could be used to

Figure 7 - *Grandmamma Easy's Alderman's Feast: A New Alphabet*, 1834. teach kids the alphabet. Courtesy of the Winterthur Museum, Gardens, and Library.

Punch was so ubiquitous in the home that children may have grown up viewing their parents prepare punch for gatherings. Also, as the title refers to “Grandmamma,” it is possible that the author of the book did in fact live during the eighteenth-century, during the age of punch.

These prints and drawings, similar to the cookbooks, provide insight into what the punch ritual would have looked like inside the home and shows that punch had the ability to transcend traditional public and private divides. It was often consumed with guests in mixed-gendered groups in a domestic public, a public setting inside the home. The sheet music cover from the 1730s indicates that men and women may have been enjoying punch in each other's company very early on in the Age of Punch. Though some of the other images were meant to be satirical, they were also commentaries on societal life, reflecting behaviors of citizens in humorous ways. The drawings may also indicate that their author was actually witnessing a scene of women and men drinking punch together,

¹⁰⁸ “Grandmamma Easy's Alderman's Feast: A New Alphabet,” *Uncorked! Wine, Objects, and Tradition*, last modified 2013, accessed on November 27, 2017, <http://uncorked.winterthur.org/consumption-equipage/punch/>.

either sketching it from memory or drawing it in the moment. These images illustrate that both men and women took part not only in drinking punch, but also in toasting and passing the bowl from one person to the next, a practice customarily associated with men in taverns. While the experience was only temporary, taking place in a space where traditional societal norms are dispersed, the fact that they happened is significant.

Other Documents

It is necessary to turn to examples of cookbooks and prints because there is very little documentary evidence of punch drinking in the home. The examples are few and far between, and provide scant information, such as Niemcewicz's brief mention of the beverage. There are some instances, however, where punch drinking has been mentioned in the home in diary entries. In an issue of the *National Magazine*, printed in 1892, historian Alice Earle describes colonial drinks and drinkers, using quotes and anecdotes from various primary sources. Earle states that punch was a household commodity, "from the great mug of flip or bowl of punch that was nightly prepared for the grown members of the family."¹⁰⁹ Earle uses the 1744 diary of William Black to illustrate a scene that he experienced. Black stated that "he was given cider and punch for lunch; rum and brandy before dinner; punch, Madeira, port and sherry at dinner; 'bounce' and liqueurs with the ladies after dinner."¹¹⁰ Aside from the fact that Black drank copiously in this one recorded day, he also writes that he enjoyed punch in the home all day and drank with the women of the house in the evening. Black's example, while providing little information in the way of how the punch was served, provides some insight into the fact that it was commonly served in the household.

¹⁰⁹ Alice Morse Earle, "Old Colonial Drinks and Drinkers," *The National Magazine* 16, no. 2 (June 1892): 153.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 154.

One final source of punch drinking comes from a truly one of a kind diary. Martha Ballard was a midwife who lived from 1735 to 1812 in Massachusetts. In 1785, Ballard began keeping a diary of her day to day life. It provided amazing insight into a woman's daily routine in the eighteenth-century. The diary was passed down through her family, finally being donated to a library in the 1930s. Eventually, it came into the hands of historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, who transcribed the document. Ballard's diary does not explicitly mention punch, but there are thirty-two entries which are listed for rum and many of the entries also mention sugar or lemon. For example, on April 20, 1786, Mr. Ballard brought home "6 galns of Rhum, 2 lb coffee, 5 lb Sugar."¹¹¹ On June 4, 1792, her husband purchased "1 quart 3 gills Rhum Cost 1/6, 1 Comb 2/, 3 Lemmons."¹¹² As Martha was a midwife, it is not surprising she had gallons of rum in her home. Rum, and alcohol in general, was believed to have medicinal purposes. Women were often given a shot of it before childbirth, to ease the pain. But it is curious that Ballard was purchasing such quantities of rum, and large quantities of sugar and lemon, and often together. It is too presumptuous to say that she was definitely preparing punch; however as the ingredients are listed together more than once, the possibility should not be ignored. The entries from Martha Ballard's diary illustrate that it was not just the high-class that consumed punch in the home, but a wide-spread practice throughout society.¹¹³

The documents and ephemera within this chapter provide examples of how the punch ritual would have looked in the home, within the domestic public during which men and women were joined in a convivial bond created by the flowing bowl. The

¹¹¹ "April 20, 1786," Martha Ballard's Diary Online, accessed November 27, 2017, <http://dohistory.org/diary/>.

¹¹² Ibid, "June 4, 1792."

¹¹³ There will be more diary entries, letters, and written experience examples in Chapter 3, pertaining specifically to Mount Vernon.

cookbooks, all of which were written by women and for women, are blueprints of real life experiences which would have taken place at the dinner table. The fact that most of them were either manuscripts or compilations from manuscripts heightens the possibility that those recipes were actually made. For many of them, their aims were to educate women on matters of cookery in the hope that they would impress their families and guests, with the goal of transcending their traditional class and values. The prints, which spanned from the 1730s and ended in the 1800s, each depicted women participating in the punch ritual in some way. While William Hogarth's "Midnight Modern Conversation" is the primary example of punch drinking amongst men, there are numerous examples of women imbibing, as well. Finally, these two diary entries show that, despite the fact that there are so little written accounts of punch drinking, the ritual did in fact take place in the home. The evidence presented here has shown that women had an active role in the punch ritual in the home and often imbibed with men, an image contrary to traditional public and private spheres.

Chapter Two – Material Culture: Punch Bowls & Punch Pots

Punch Bowls

In this chapter, I argue that punch bowls were not exclusively male artifacts, especially when they were found in the home. When found in taverns or in club houses, punch bowls usually contained some kind of male insignia, Freemason imagery or a replication of “Midnight Modern Conversation.” But punch artifacts in the home have evidence of both female and male influences. The events for which these bowls were used are examples of domestic publics, situations during which both men and women imbibed, again blurring public and private spaces. Hunting down documentary evidence of punch drinking in the home proved to be a challenge. But I knew it would be possible, given the amount of evidence provided by extant punch drinking artifacts. What drew me to this topic in the first place was Karen Harvey’s material culture analysis of tea drinking, punch drinking, and punch pots and their roles in shaping refinement and domesticity versus masculinity and barbarism in the eighteenth-century.¹¹⁴ I realized that examining the material culture of punch drinking would provide some insight into how punch was consumed in domestic spaces.

While documents are traditionally the primary sources of evidence for historians, they can be limiting in their scope. They can be biased based on who wrote them and why, and only a select few were literate during this time period. Documents inherently have an elitist narrative based on the fact that a limited number of people could write them. Objects, on the other hand, were used by everyone. Archaeology and material culture analysis can provide insights into every day, utilitarian life, and by analyzing punch bowls we can begin to understand who was using them. This is not to say, of

¹¹⁴ Harvey, “Barbarity in a Teacup?”

course, that objects cannot be biased, but they were used by a broader cross section of society and can be more representative of the culture of a given time period. In trying to define culture, Arthur Berger stresses that culture is a “name for all the behavior patterns socially acquired and transmitted by means of symbols, hence a name for all the distinctive achievements of human groups, including... the material instruments or artifacts in which cultural achievements are embodied.”¹¹⁵ From this definition, Berger explains that culture is transmitted through language and that objects provide a means through which culture can be displayed. Richard Grassby states that “objects give material form to the rules and belief patterns of those who trade, purchase, or use them.”¹¹⁶ Similar to the cookbooks and their recipes described above, artifacts provide a means through which we can begin to envision an experience.

Until Karen Harvey’s articles about punch and material culture in 2008 and 2012, punch bowls had been virtually ignored by historians.¹¹⁷ In fact still, there is very little analysis about these artifacts.¹¹⁸ Punch has traditionally been studied in the context of taverns and the traditional public arena, focused more on the social and political conversations taking place around the flowing bowl, rather than the flowing bowl itself. Most documents and artifacts come from tavern settings and Harvey’s articles, as well, focus on punch and masculinity. In her article “Barbarity in a Teacup?” Harvey describes punch as a drink meant to be split up between a few men. The cultural significance of sharing a punch bowl is “noteworthy. In the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries, many

¹¹⁵ Arthur Asa Berger, *What Objects Mean, Second Edition: An Introduction to Material Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 17.

¹¹⁶ Richard Grassby, “Material Culture and Cultural History,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35 no. 4 (2005): 592.

¹¹⁷ Harvey, “Barbarity in a Teacup?” (2008) and Harvey, “Ritual Encounters” (2012).

¹¹⁸ Eleanor Breen’s “One More Bowl and Then?” was another major influence for my research and will be discussed more in-depth in Chapter 3.

ceramic products were produced for individual use, pandering to consumers' concerns about the need for personal hygiene and maintaining a distance from others."¹¹⁹ But punch bowls ignored this concern. In fact Harvey explains that there is even evidence that in North America men passed the bowls from one to the next and drank directly from the wide brim. Harvey states that during this period, "excessive drinking was regarded by many as 'manly and convivial, an aid to wit, good humour, and fellowship'... These men were bound by the challenge of meeting expectations."¹²⁰ But Harvey's research pertains primarily to punch and men.

Just as the public and private divide can be complex, traditional divisions of material culture such as this can be muddled. Bowls were domesticated by the middle of the eighteenth-century and in the home, they were used by both men and women. In examining the juxtaposition of tea and punch during this time, Harvey states that "punchbowls and teapots may have 'belonged' to men and women" respectively.¹²¹ On the whole, considering men were in fact that primary consumers of alcohol, that may



Figure 8 - Masonic Punch Bowl (1790-1810), courtesy of the Winterthur Museum Online Collections.

generally be true. But within the home, the gendered nature of the bowl was more complicated and they were used by both men and women. Harvey is certainly not wrong in saying that "there are numerous extant examples of punch bowls decorated with images of men

¹¹⁹ Harvey, "Barbarity in a Teacup?" 208.

¹²⁰ Harvey, "Ritual Encounters," 184.

¹²¹ Harvey, "Barbarity in a Teacup?" 217.

drinking” and with male club insignias, such bowls commemorating the Freemasons or the Society of the Cincinnati.¹²² This Masonic bowl, for example, (Figure 8) is from the collection at Mount Vernon and is dated from 1790-1810.¹²³ The exterior is flanked by various mathematical instruments, including a protractor, a level, and drafting tools, but also has an image of a Bible enclosed by a compass. In addition to commemorating these noted societal groups, punch bowls also celebrated well-known politicians. This bowl, also from the Winterthur, commemorates both George Washington and Benjamin Franklin (Figure 9).¹²⁴ Bowls such as this “chimes with critiques of punch bowls as



Figure 9 – George Washington Bowl (1806-1810), courtesy of the Winterthur Museum Online Collections.

objects of rough male sociability.”¹²⁵ This is just one example of how punch bowls were created to commemorate masculine fraternal groups. On the whole, masculine, political bowls were more common.

Bowls found in the domestic environment were also capable of connecting and bonding drinkers, just as they did in public settings. There are a handful of bowls, which commemorate births, christenings, and marriages, and at these gatherings men and women would have been imbibing together in a domestic public. Kross explains that when these publics emerged, “the behavioral codes required of both genders for mixed company... insure that men and

¹²² Harvey, “Ritual Encounters,” 187.

¹²³ Creator Unknown, “Masonic Punch Bowl M-4788,” Bowl (1790-1810). Museum and Education Center, George Washington’s Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

¹²⁴ Herculaneum Factory, “Bowl (Punch bowl) 1959.0583,” Bowl (1806-1810). Winterthur Museum Collections Online, Winterthur Museum, Garden, & Library, Winterthur, Delaware.

¹²⁵ Harvey, “Ritual Encounters,” 187.

women together would form different publics from men alone.”¹²⁶ And Harvey, as well, stated that “domesticity held a transformative power over men’s homosocial activities.”¹²⁷ The domestic space had a transformative power over punch, and vice versa. Harvey states that Victor Turner’s notion of liminality and communitas can be applied to the punch ritual in taverns, stressing the significance of the bowl. She states that “objects are central to the transformative power of ritual... circular and open bowls enable sharing and coming together... Punch bowls connected each man in turn.”¹²⁸ But bowls were used in the household, too. The hospitable and amiable symbolism of punch bowls did not disappear between the tavern and the home. The bowls presented here commemorate mixed-gendered which gatherings have not been studied and they do not fall into the stringent gender division of punch bowls as male. Despite the different types of conversations occurring around these bowls, the symbolic significance of the bowl is still there.

Bowls were used to commemorate important events in both women and men’s lives, such as marriages. Though peak ownership for punchbowls in the colonies occurred mid-century, these bowls shows that in London their domestication occurred a bit earlier during the consumer revolution. Figure 10 is dated 1733 and comes from the Winterthur Collection. Only five inches tall and ten inches in diameter, this bowl is relatively small. The outside is



Figure 10 - Punch Bowl (1733), courtesy of the Winterthur Museum Online Collections.

¹²⁶ Kross, “Mansions, Men, Women, and the Creation of Multiple Publics,” 396.

¹²⁷ Harvey, “Barbarity in a Teacup?” 213.

¹²⁸ Harvey, “Ritual Encounters,” 196-197.

white-glazed with blue painted flowers, a popular design. The inside has an inscription on the base which reads “John & Mary Pinick, 1733,” decorated with a flower.¹²⁹ This bowl commemorated John and Mary’s wedding and while nothing is known about the couple, if a punch bowl was a fitting tribute to their marriage, this shows that bowls were significant to both men and women. It is possible that they drank from this bowl at their wedding. It was clearly a trend in London for a punch bowl to be commissioned to celebrate a wedding. The second bowl, also from the Winterthur, commemorates the



Figure 11 - Punch Bowl (1742), courtesy of the Winterthur Museum Online Collections.

union of Henry and Sarah Loveday in 1742 (Figure 11).¹³⁰ The bowl is small, the same size as John and Mary’s, with a white glaze and blue border cross-stitch design around the top. Bold, capitalized

letters on the exterior read “Henry and Sarah Loveday, 1742.” As their names are on the

outside, it is possible that they meant for this bowl to be displayed in their home when not in use.

It is exceptionally rare to find an extant punch bowl which depicts women drinking punch; however the two following bowls depict not only women drinking, but doing so in mixed-gendered groups. This bowl, Figure 12, is from the Ashmolean

¹²⁹ Creator Unknown, “Bowl (Punch bowl) 2016.0034.003.007,” Bowl (1733). Winterthur Museum Collections Online, Winterthur Museum, Garden, & Library, Winterthur, Delaware.

¹³⁰ Creator Unknown, “Bowl (Punch bowl) 2016.0034.014,” Bowl (1742). Winterthur Museum Collections Online, Winterthur Museum, Garden, & Library, Winterthur, Delaware.

Museum in Oxford and is dated 1743.¹³¹ The exterior of the bowl is decorated with landscape scenes with a man and woman strolling. The interior shows three men, one of them a servant, and a woman situated around a punch bowl. The rim reads, “Joseph.Messer.Aprill, 1743.” Unfortunately there is very little information regarding this bowl. It is possible that it is commemorating a marriage or simply the birth of a



Figure 12 - Punch Bowl (1743), WA1963.136.70. With permission of Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

gentleman named Joseph in 1743. What is significant, however, is that this bowl displays another example of a woman drinking punch, presumably in a home, in mixed-gendered company.

Punch bowls were also used to commemorate christenings and births. The next bowl is truly unique from the previous examples in that it is footed, meaning it is raised on a base, and it is a christening bowl which doubled as a punch bowl. This is another exceptionally rare artifact in that it also shows women and men drinking punch. This artifact is dated 1752 and is in the Winterthur’s collection (Figure 13).¹³² The outside is painted with an intricate landscape scene, including men on horseback, women strolling, horse-drawn carriages, and buildings in a small town. But on the interior at the base, there is an image of men and women situated around a punch bowl. A gentleman holds out the ladle to scoop another glass, perhaps offering it to the women on his right to whom he is facing. There is a dog standing in the foreground on

¹³¹ Creator Unknown, “Punch Bowl WA1963.136.70,” Bowl (1743). Western Art Department, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, England; Louis L. Lipski, *Dated English Delftware: Tin-Glazed Earthenware 1600-1800*, ed. Michael Archer (Scranton, PA: Harper and Row Publishers, 1984), 255; Harvey, “Ritual Encounters,” 187 n. 69.

¹³² Creator Unknown, “Bowl (Punch bowl) 2011.0007.003,” Bowl (1752). Winterthur Museum Collections Online, Winterthur Museum, Garden, & Library, Winterthur, Delaware.

the floor and to the right a woman stands off to the side holding a baby. It is likely that the inclusion of this baby in the illustration may indicate that the bowl is commemorating a christening of “child born to the couple whose initials are on the base of the vessel.”¹³³

While it may seem odd that a christening bowl would double as a punch bowl, Lauren Winner explains that this was not an uncommon practice. She writes that “we can begin to see a form of religion and form of society in which baptizing and tipping were close kin. In the process we can begin to see that the sacred and the secular can both pray and



Figure 13 - Punch Bowl (1752), courtesy of the Winterthur Museum Online Collections.

party together.”¹³⁴ In some cases, punch bowls and christening bowls were interchangeable. Using punch bowls as baptismal bowls was common, for even George Washington’s in-laws had two bowls that served these dual functions.¹³⁵ But for this artifact, the image is curious in another way, aside from it depicting women drinking. Leslie B. Grigsby points out that this image actually resembles Hogarth’s “Midnight Modern Conversation” (Figure 1), though she says the “figures in this image are comparatively sedate and well mannered.”¹³⁶ It is interesting that an image which was so closely associated with the rough

¹³³ “Punch Bowl.” *Uncorked! Wine, Objects, and Tradition*, last modified 2013, accessed on November 27, 2017. <http://uncorked.winterthur.org/consumption-equipage/clubs-friendship-well-wishing/>.

¹³⁴ Lauren F. Winner, *A Cheerful and Comfortable Faith: Anglican Religious Practice in the Elite Households of Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 33.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 196 n.11.

¹³⁶ Leslie B. Grigsby, *The Longridge Collection of English Slipware and Delftware. Volume 2: Delftware* (London: Jonathan Horne Publications, 2000), 348.

masculinity of punch drinking was reinterpreted in a refined, genteel, mixed-gendered image on a christening bowl. This may have been a response to the raucousness of “Midnight Modern Conversation,” to show that punch could be enjoyed respectfully in a dignified, domestic setting. This bowl is truly one of a kind and while it was certainly not a standard design, its function as a dual christening and punch bowl was relatively common.

Punch bowls commemorated significant events for both men and women. The next bowl is from the British Museum, dated 1765-1767. It is very small, only six inches in diameter, and is another example of a marriage commemorative bowl (Figure 14).¹³⁷

Its design is unique in that the exterior is a molded design and its inscription is closer to poetry than a simple wedding commemoration. It reads “This comes from your heart's Delight,
Which thinks of you boath day & night, This
bowl is round it is for you, If you'l be Constanet
I'll be true, Wm Benney Yarmouth,
Elizth.Marshall.”



Figure 14 - Punch Bowl (1765-1767), courtesy of the British Museum.

I'll be true, Wm Benney Yarmouth, Elizth.Marshall.” The curator’s comments in the item’s record explain that it is unclear whether or not this was a slop bowl or a punch bowl, though it was categorized as a punch bowl. Given the fact that the first two examples were also commemorating weddings, it seems likely that this categorization is correct. This is another example of how a punch bowl was used to signify an event in a man’s and a woman’s life.

¹³⁷ James Pennington, “1920,0318.13 (1765-67),” (British Museum), bowl, last modified 2017, online, accessed February 22, 2018. www.britishmuseum.org/collection.

Bowls were also used to celebrate the births of daughters. The final bowl comes from the Williamsburg Collections and is dated 1770. Its underglaze is white and the exterior is painted with elaborate blue flowers (Figure 15).¹³⁸ The Williamsburg Collections Online describes the inside of this bowl as an image of a “woman standing in a paneled room on a checkered floor” with the inscription “Ann the Daughter of Anthony & Ann Couch, was born the 20 day of January, 1755. Ann Couch is my Name and England is my Nation, S. Ives is my Dwelling place, and Christ is my salvation.”¹³⁹ Interestingly enough,



Figure 15 - Punch Bowl (1770), The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Museum Purchase.

the image of the woman in the bowl, believed to be the daughter Ann whose birth this commemorates, depicts her twenty or so years after her birth. The 1755 date which the bowl refers to was her date of birth, though the bowl itself was produced in the 1770s. It is curious that either her parents, or Ann herself, had this bowl commissioned to celebrate Ann’s birth so long after it had occurred. Perhaps it was becoming more common to commemorate such milestones on punch bowls, that they wanted such a keepsake. The bowls presented here were not only used at events attended by both men and women, such as weddings and christenings, but many also commemorated wives and daughters, and two even depicted women drinking with men. These bowls were used in scenarios which were anomalous to traditional public and private divisions, at events which took

¹³⁸ Creator Unknown, “Punch Bowl 1963-194,” Bowl (1770). Colonial Williamsburg Online Collections, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia.

¹³⁹ “Punch Bowl,” *Williamsburg Collections Online*, last modified 2017, accessed March 1, 2018, <http://emuseum.history.org/view/objects/asitem/search@/0?t:state:flow=0168c3cc-998e-4e6c-94bc-0eeaba03704>.

place within domestic publics, where men and women were temporarily bound by the convivial spirit of the flowing bowl.

Punch Pots

Though these bowls date only through the 1770s, it is worth noting that punch bowls continued to be popular through the 1800s. In fact, the Winterthur Collection has over thirty bowls which are dated to the turn of the century. The other vessel in which punch was served, the punch pot, appears to have been less popular. The museum contains four in their collection and only three of them



Figure 16 - Punch Pot (1750-1770), courtesy of the Winterthur Museum Online Collections.

range from 1750-1800. Punch pots emerged around midcentury and had a relatively short-

lived lifespan. And written references to these containers are scant, according to Harvey. She makes reference to one sales report from 1786, which refers to “a ‘large blue japan punch pot and cover.’”¹⁴⁰ The pots were literally large teapots and were hard to distinguish from the latter, aside from their size (Figure 16).¹⁴¹ They were relatively easy to integrate into household table sets and Harvey believes that the resemblance of the punch pot to a teapot serves as a visual pun; tea and refinement on one side, punch and raucousness, and the punch pot bridging the gap between the two.¹⁴² The pot changed the way punch was served, making it more controlled and linking punch to restraint and polite behavior. One had to pour a glass from the large covered vessel, rather than ladle a

¹⁴⁰ Harvey, “Barbarity in a Teacup?” 214.

¹⁴¹ Creator Unknown. “Punch Pot (Teapot) 2000.0039.004 A, B,” Punch Pot (1750-1770). Winterthur Museum Collections Online, Winterthur Museum, Garden, & Library, Winterthur, Delaware.

¹⁴² Harvey, “Barbarity in a Teacup?” 216.

glass from an open bowl. The covered pot served “as a visual cue for a different kind of etiquette.”¹⁴³ Cole suggests that this may indicate that “later in the eighteenth century, punch had lost some of its riotous party connotations, and that more women were drinking punch amongst company in the home.”¹⁴⁴ It is also possible, since some punch was served hot, that there was also functionality of using large teapots. It is unclear if punch pots were used for brewing, in addition to serving, as there is next to no evidence pertaining to punch pots actually being used. These pots were only used for thirty years, from 1750 to about 1780.



Figure 17 - Punch Pot (1764-1770), courtesy of the British Museum.

Just as punch bowls commemorated male fraternal groups in traditional public settings (Figure 8), so did punch pots. And it is easy to see from Figure 16 how these punch pots could easily be confused with teapots. Even the Winterthur’s item record categorizes this vessel as a teapot in parentheses. If the only difference in

the punch pot and the tea pot is size, it is curious to consider how many other museums may hold punch pots but list them as their smaller companion because of the lack of written evidence. Just as with punch bowls, some punch pots were used to commemorate male fraternal societies. This punch pot from the British Museum dates from 1764-1770,

¹⁴³ Cole, “A Pot with Punch.”

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

just around the middle of peak pot production (Figure 17).¹⁴⁵ It was made for the Premier Grand Lodge of the Order of the Freemasons, according to its item record. Similar to Figure 8, this pot uses mathematical symbols such as a protractor and level, and contains the Latin phrase “Deum Time et Regem Honora” or “Fear God and Honour the King.” Speaking to the pot’s limited popularity, however, the British Museum only has three in its collection.

But punch pots were also found in domestic settings. Caroline Cole describes another punch pot example from the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, dated 1765 (Figure 18).¹⁴⁶ Similar to Harvey, Cole states that “remaining examples of fine punch pots such as Rienzi’s example are relatively rare, and there exists very little written or visual documentation as to their use.”¹⁴⁷ This pot was created by the Worcester Porcelain Manufactory and displays both Asian and European



Figure 18 - Punch Pot (1765), courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Online Collections.

influences. Cole explains that this pot “could easily have been integrated into a home environment. The ritual of tea was one governed by women, and by the mid-eighteenth century, had developed into a whole new way of socializing in the home.”¹⁴⁸ In other words, because women were the primary servers of tea, it is very likely that they were the

¹⁴⁵ Wedgwood Factory, “1905,0615.1 (1764-70),” (British Museum), punch pot, last modified 2017, online, accessed February 22, 2018. www.britishmuseum.org/collection.

¹⁴⁶ Worcester Porcelain Manufactory, “Punch Pot and Cover 87.94.A,.B.,” Punch Pot (1765). The Rienzi Collection Online, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas.

¹⁴⁷ Cole, “A Pot with Punch.”

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

primary servers of punch in homes which utilized punch pots. Pots are further evidence that women were consuming punch in the home.

It is clear that the artifacts associated with domestic punch drinking provided a means through which traditional public and private divides could be blurred. Punch artifacts celebrated both men and women and were used during events during which both would have been imbibing. The brief life of punch pots provides a further example of how punch was domesticated into the home, but the limited amount of evidence and few extant examples of pots suggests that bowls were still the preferred method of serving the social beverage. The openness of the brim symbolized friendliness, congeniality, and fostered bonds between the drinkers, as opposed to the controlled pots. Though it seems clear that the production of pots was an indication of efforts to further domesticate the drink, refine it, and make it more available to women. But the bowls listed in this chapter, celebrating marriages, births, and christenings, along with the evidence from chapter one, illustrates the importance of punch and bowls to the home environment. The significance of the material culture associated with punch has been little explored. If objects have the ability to provide insights into a society's values and beliefs, then the production of these artifacts shows that punch and its vessels were significant enough to both men and women to be used to commemorate important life events. Gathered around a punch bowl in the home, men and women would have come together, if only temporarily, to drink to one of these significant events. The marriages, births, and christenings commemorated on these bowls provide examples of situations during which men and women would have imbibed together, along with the parties illustrated by the prints in chapter one. Just as Harvey applied Victor Turner's idea of liminality to men in taverns, this notion can be

applied to groups in the home, as well. As the bowl was still the primary vessel for serving punch, its symbolic notion of conviviality would have created a temporary bond between those drinking from its wide brim.

In this chapter, I argued that punch bowls were not exclusively male artifacts, especially when they were found in the home. Punch bowls were commonly used at domestic events during which men and women imbibed. It was more preferable to drink from the open vessel than the controlled pot, as it was the wide-brim which signified hospitality and generated friendships. The significance of the bowl did not diminish in a domestic setting. Though Harvey sees the pot as “a way of domesticating men’s punch consumption,” it is clear that bowls had already been domesticated by the 1750s. This can be seen from the bowls listed above, especially the earlier two commemorating marriages, from the cookbooks with punch recipes meant for women to impress their guests with in the home, and from the prints which depict women imbibing around bowls, not pots. And bowls’ continued popularity over pots should not be ignored either. Harvey believes that the pot’s “short-lived and limited production suggests a meditation on gender stereotypes... This integrated... both men and women.”¹⁴⁹ But the bowl already integrated men and women. Contrary to Harvey’s notion that punch bowls were male, the evidence from the artifacts in this chapter shows that when they were used in domestic publics, punch bowls had both male and female influence, and were still the most popular choice for serving punch and bringing groups of people together.

¹⁴⁹ Harvey, “Barbarity in a Teacup?” 217.

Chapter Three – Punch Drinking at Mount Vernon: Archaeology, Artifacts, and Accession Files

In order to fully understand how the punch ritual took place in the home, I now turn to a case study examining artifacts from the estate at Mount Vernon. In this chapter, I argue that Martha Washington and her female descendants were more involved in the punch ritual in the home than their male family members. Because of the volume of travelers visiting Mount Vernon, the barrier between public and private was constantly being crossed. The country's first First Family provides a plethora of evidence regarding domestic punch drinking, as punch was commonly served to guests who visited the estate. Even a small gathering of friends and travelers visiting a home can be considered a domestic public. Though they were certainly not typical, the Washingtons' prominence and status has led to the increased preservation of their possessions. In order to analyze their artifacts, I used Jules David Prown's three step method of Description, Deduction, and Speculation. The research occurred over the course of a semester and took place in various areas around the estate. I was allowed to examine objects from the Museum and Education Center, as well as fragments of bowls from the Archaeology Lab. I also consulted books, documents, and accessions files from the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington. Finally, to view the objects which are currently on display, I toured the estate and the museum. It was a truly unique experience and the punch accoutrements and supporting documents I discovered left me without a doubt that Mount Vernon was the best possible area for my research to take place.

From the images in chapter one and the punch bowls in chapter two, it is clear that the punch ritual in the home took on a different tone than the boisterous ceremonies which caused cacophonies in taverns. But with limited documentation and a handful of

material evidence, it is difficult to understand what exactly the domestic punch ritual looked like. The evidence from Mount Vernon helps fill in this gap. Most of the artifacts belonged to Martha Washington, showing that, at least in the home, punch bowls could be both male and female objects. But the documentation, as well, described experiences of punch drinking when guests and travelers visited the estate. The punch ritual in the home appears to have been a way of welcoming visitors, with the open bowl symbolizing friendship and hospitality. Based on the archaeological evidence, punch artifacts, and their supporting documentation, it is clear that punch was commonly consumed at Mount Vernon.

Archaeology and Punch at Mount Vernon

A large, wide punch bowl was meant to encourage communal drinking and in the Washington household punch was most likely served when guests were present. The open bowl, signifying geniality and friendship, was a hospitable welcoming for travellers passing through the estate. They certainly entertained a copious number of guests. It was not uncommon for visitors, friends and strangers alike, to pop in unexpectedly at the Washingtons' home. After the Revolution, one traveler wrote that "The General's house is open to poor travelers as well as rich."¹⁵⁰ For example in 1774, of the 207 days that George was home, it was recorded that the house had dinner guests on 136 of those days. And according to diaries and letters from 1785, the estate had dinner guests 225 times and overnight guests 235 times.¹⁵¹ Washington himself lamented to a friend in 1797, "Unless some one pops in, unexpectedly, Mrs. Washington and myself will do what I

¹⁵⁰ Mary V. Thompson et al., *Dining with the Washingtons: Historic Recipes, Entertainment, and Hospitality from Mount Vernon*, ed. Stephen A. McLeod (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 11.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, 12.

believe has not been [done] within the last twenty years by us, that is to set down to dinner by ourselves.”¹⁵² George’s household and his guests would have been catered to by Mrs. Washington.

As a southern housewife, Martha Washington’s main responsibility was the coordination and preparation of meals. Because of her status she never had to cook, but Martha still supervised her kitchen, smokehouse, dairy, garden, and dining room. She was responsible for coordinating what meals would be served and for informing the kitchen of how many guests would be dining with them. Martha was a very hands-on housewife. Her grandson wrote, “Mrs. Washington... gave her constant attention to all matters of her domestic household, and by her skill and superior management greatly contributed to the comfortable reception and entertainment of the crowds of guests.”¹⁵³ There is some evidence that on special occasions Martha may have prepared some meals herself. A preserving kettle which was inherited by Martha’s second granddaughter, Martha Parke Custis Peter, is believed to have been “used by Mrs. Washington herself.”¹⁵⁴ Because of her active nature, Martha probably had some experience preparing meals for her guests. But according to Mary Thompson, “there are only scant records of significant details about the meals the Washingtons’ served their guests.”¹⁵⁵ Wine was George’s favorite drink, but he also enjoyed rum punch which was “offered regularly at Mount Vernon.”¹⁵⁶ Few documents describe punch at the estate, but it is easily found in the family’s artifacts.

¹⁵² Thompson et al., *Dining with the Washingtons*, 11.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, 29.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 28-29.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 40.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 99.

Eleanor Breen describes some of the archaeological evidence of punch drinking at Mount Vernon and its increasing ceremonial nature in the home. She explains that “punch drinking could be a social event requiring a set of tools to accomplish its most refined form, including cups, strainers, and ladles.”¹⁵⁷ Based on the amount of material evidence at Mount Vernon, the punch ritual undoubtedly took place in their home. Breen analyzes the South Grove Midden at Mount



Figure 19 - South Grove Midden, on the southern side of the main house. Personal photo.

Vernon, which is broken up into three phases (Figure 19). Phase 1 is 1735-1758, phase 2 is 1759-1775, and phase 3 is 1776-1800. Invoice data and the artifacts found at the Midden suggest that punch drinking was an important part of life at the estate. In 1758, George ordered a dozen salt-glazed stoneware punch bowls. In 1766, he ordered larger bowls, one which held a gallon and another which held two quarts. And in 1770, he ordered seventeen creamware punch bowls. Breen believes that these invoices “spoke to the growing importance of punch in the household.”¹⁵⁸ Washington’s growing orders of bowls, in a variety of sizes, also illustrates the importance of the increasing ceramics market and demand for punch vessels. Breen suggests that the sizes of the bowls were

¹⁵⁷ Breen, “One More Bowl and Then?,” 81.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 83.

significant; smaller, pint-sized bowls being for intimate gatherings, and larger gallon bowls for groups. The Washingtons, as wealthy plantation owners, “needed multiple punch bowls of differing capacities to be ready for any social situation that might arise.”¹⁵⁹ Given the amount of bowls he ordered and the number of guests frequenting Mount Vernon, George and Martha were prepared for any situation.



Figure 20 - Object #2591, punch bowl fragment (1735-1758). Led to the discovery of the South Grove Midden. Personal photo.

According to Breen’s analysis of invoices, Washington ordered over thirty-two punch bowls between 1758 and 1775. She explains that “what made the 40-year period before the American Revolution unique is that access to consumer goods appears to have opened larger segments of the colonial population to a more sophisticated and far-

reaching system of distribution for imported goods.”¹⁶⁰ Breen’s analysis of invoices can be corroborated with some of the punch bowls found in the South Grove Midden. Artifact #2591 is a collection of punch bowl fragments that led to the discovery of the Midden (Figure 20). It is dated to 1735-1758, meaning that it is from the first phase of the site.¹⁶¹ As George did not start living at Mount Vernon until 1754, it is more likely that this bowl belonged to his older brother Lawrence and his wife Ann Washington. According to the South Grove Midden website, “Bowls like this, when not in use, served as centerpieces in an elegant dining or living space and were just one element in constructing a genteel and

¹⁵⁹ Breen, “One More Bowl and Then?,” 86.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 94.

¹⁶¹ Creator Unknown, “2591,” Punch Bowl Fragment (1729-1793). Archaeology Lab. George Washington’s Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

fashionable home.”¹⁶² Ann may have used this bowl as an elegant centerpiece, once again showing that women had an interest in these artifacts. Another bowl, #2609, is from phase two and may have been one referenced in Breen’s analysis (Figure 21).¹⁶³ The site states that George Washington “ordered 17 Queen’s China punch bowls in 1770... perhaps this bowl arrived broken, a common fate of many imported ceramics.”¹⁶⁴ These bowls were not only used by George, but



“Martha Washington served punch from tin-glazed earthenware bowls” as well.¹⁶⁵ If anything, Breen’s analysis and the artifacts discovered at the South Grove Midden prove that punch drinking was incredibly popular at Mount Vernon. There are more bowls, however, directly related to Martha

Figure 21 - Object #2609, punch bowl fragment from phase 2 (1759-1775). Possibly from a punch bowl ordered by George Washington. Personal photo.

Washington in the estate’s Museum and Education Center. By analyzing these objects, and their records, we can gain a better understanding of domestic punch drinking and women’s roles in it.

Jules David Prown

I will be examining eight artifacts, four bowls and four accessories, from the Museum and Education at Mount Vernon. To analyze the objects in the museum’s

¹⁶² "Object #2591," South Grove Midden Project, last modified 2012, accessed November 27, 2017, <http://www.mountvernonmidden.org/data/objects2.html?rID=2591>.

¹⁶³ Creator Unknown, “2609,” Punch Bowl Fragment (1769-1820), Archaeology Lab. George Washington’s Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

¹⁶⁴ "Object #2609," South Grove Midden Project, last modified 2012, accessed November 27, 2017, <http://www.mountvernonmidden.org/data/objects2.html?rID=2609>.

¹⁶⁵ Thompson et al., *Dining with the Washingtons*, 73.

collection, I used Jules David Prown's method of Description, Deduction, and Speculation. According to Prown, "material culture is the study through artifacts of the beliefs- values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions- of a particular community or society at a given time."¹⁶⁶ Since historical documents inherently have a bias based on who wrote them, predominately the elite, objects can provide historians with information about a larger cross-section of society than documents. Prown's method is inherently structuralist, meaning that "the configurations or properties of an artifact correspond to patterns in the mind of the individual producer or producers and of society of which he or they were a part."¹⁶⁷ Prown's analysis is a human-based method, focusing not only on the beliefs of the individual who used an artifact, but also on the society in which that artifact was created.

In addition to structuralism, Prown also draws from linguistic theory, stating that language is man's attempt to implement structure on to his world. But "more special to man than language is the capacity to make implements and, more special yet, objects... There is a language of form as there is a language of words; a naming through making... Man expresses his human need to structure his world through forms as well as through language."¹⁶⁸ The creation of objects, as well as language, provides man's world with organization. Prown's method is also semiotic, in that he believes artifacts are "cultural releasers" which transmit signals to illustrate the mental patterns of a society.¹⁶⁹ Finally, Prown is deterministic in that his analysis of objects can be seen as a series of causes and effects. He explains that every "effect observable in or induced by the object has a cause.

¹⁶⁶ Prown, "Mind in Matter," 1.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 6.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*.

Therefore, the way to understand the cause (some aspect of culture) is the careful and imaginative study of the effect (the object).”¹⁷⁰ Cultural beliefs are the cause and the artifact is the effect.

His method is based on the relationship between the artifact and the person perceiving it. His first category, Description, is based on the object only. This category is purely aesthetic and factual, and is itself broken up into three steps. The first, Substantial Analysis, asks for basic information, such as physical dimensions, the creator, and the materials used. The second, Content, focuses on subject matter, such as decorations and iconography. The third, Formal Analysis, is a two-dimensional examination of the object’s lines and geometric areas, and a three-dimensional examination of how the object takes up the surrounding space. Prown’s second category is Deduction, which centers on the object and the perceiver, meaning myself as the researcher. This step is also broken into three stages. The first is Sensory Engagement, which concentrates on how the “analyst projects himself into the represented world.”¹⁷¹ This focuses on touch, weight, size, and texture. The second step is Intellectual Engagement, which looks into the function of the object. The final step in Prown’s Deduction is Emotional Response. He states that reactions “point the way to specific insights when the analyst identifies elements noted in the descriptive stage that may have precipitated them.”¹⁷² This step focuses on how I feel as I hold the object and what emotions it triggers. Prown’s final category is Speculation, which focuses only on the perceiver. Based on the information from the previous two steps, Prown asks what information has been learned and what hypothesis can be made. This step also goes into an examination of external evidence,

¹⁷⁰ Prown, “Mind in Matter,” 6.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 9.

which in this case will be the accession records associated with each artifact and some documentary evidence from the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington. By using Prown's method on the artifacts at Mount Vernon, we should be able to understand what these object are saying about domestic punch drinking in society during the eighteen-century.

Object Analysis

W-2100



Figure 22 - Punch Bowl (W-2100), 1735-1757, courtesy of George Washington's Mt. Vernon.

The artifacts presented here show that the punch ritual at the estate was commonly facilitated by women. Very few written records remain regarding what food was served at Mount

Vernon; however, “guests to Mount Vernon were frequently treated to punch, and Martha Washington’s estate inventory lists eight ‘China bowls’... that may have been used for serving punch.”¹⁷³ The first bowl in this collection is W-2100 (Figure 22), currently on display in the Museum and Education Center.¹⁷⁴ Dated from 1735-1757, this bowl was made out of porcelain with an enamel glaze. It is about six inches high and fifteen inches wide. In terms of content and iconography, the bowl,

¹⁷³ Carol Borchert Cadou, *The George Washington Collection: Fine and Decorative Arts at Mount Vernon* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 2006), 54.

¹⁷⁴ Creator Unknown, “W-2100,” Punch Bowl (1735-1757) Museum and Education Center. George Washington’s Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

like many in the collection, is decorated with famille rose colors. These are primarily pastel pinks, blues, yellows, and light greens. The rim of the bowl is bordered with blue and pink, interlaced with daisies and other flowers, painted with a definite Chinese influence. On the outside of the bowl “pheasants, hummingbirds, bluebirds, and peacocks with chrysanthemums and peonies are skillfully painted.”¹⁷⁵ On the inside are more chrysanthemums and peonies painted inside of a vase. The decorations on this piece are feminine. This bowl takes up a significant portion of its display case which it shares with a handful of other items. As most of the other items are made of silver, this elaborate, colorful bowl immediately attracts attention.

Unfortunately, because this bowl was on display, I was unable to experience its weight or texture for Prown’s second step, Deduction. Based on the other materials I did handle, however, and the sheer size of this bowl, I can undoubtedly say that it would have been incredibly heavy. Prown states that this step “involves empathic linking of the material... with the perceiver’s world of existence.”¹⁷⁶ In imagining trying to use this bowl, I can only hope that Martha had a servant carry it for her while it was full. This bowl could have easily held several gallons of punch at a time and was most likely used for large gatherings of guests. But in addition to its basic function as a punch bowl, its ornate decoration would have allowed this bowl to serve as a display piece as well. During this stage of Deduction, Prown also asks about the subject matter of the iconography, specifically if the images depict a certain time of day or season of the year. He states “in relation between the depicted world and our world, where are we

¹⁷⁵ Susan Gray Detweiler, *George Washington’s Chinaware* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc, 1982), 28.

¹⁷⁶ Prown, “Mind in Matter,” 8.

positioned, what might we be doing.”¹⁷⁷ The bright colors and flowers depicted on the bowl evoke either spring or summertime. It is quite easy to imagine the Washingtons, sitting on their porch during the muggy summer months, enjoying a glass of iced punch with their guests. My emotional response to this bowl may be different from the others since I could not hold it personally, though in viewing it on display, I was impressed not only with its size, but with its decorations as well. It is a truly beautiful piece and the figures here do not do it justice.

Based on the information garnered in the first two steps of Prown’s method, I hypothesize that this bowl, with its feminine décor and incredible size, may have been used to serve punch for special occasions in the Washington household. Or otherwise it was on display. Thankfully there are a number of documents that accompany this piece. According to its accession file, it entered the collection in April 2008. This bowl, “which is the oldest and finest piece of Chinese porcelain known to have been owned by the Washingtons, does not show the European influence of later wares intended for the West.”¹⁷⁸ Its file states that this artifact was owned by Martha that she brought it with her after her first marriage to Daniel Parke Custis (1711-1757). It was then left to her granddaughter, Martha Parke Custis Peter (1777-1854). Inside the file there is a note which says “the Washingtons were frequently served punch as they travelled and they often returned the favor to their many guests.”¹⁷⁹ There is also a scan from the manuscript cookbook of Frances Bland Tucker, dated 1801, of a rum punch recipe. Perhaps a variation of this recipe was served in this vessel by the young Martha Peter. This bowl

¹⁷⁷ Prown, “Mind in Matter,” 9.

¹⁷⁸ Detweiler, *George Washington’s Chinaware*, 28.

¹⁷⁹ Fred W. Smith National Library, *Accession File W-2100* (Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington), Object Accession File.

was not one of the many George Washington ordered, but instead belonged to Martha and her granddaughter.

W-1452

The second bowl in the collection is W-1452, which I was able to handle (Figure



Figure 23 - Punch Bowl (W-1452), 1750-1757, personal photo.

23).¹⁸⁰ This bowl is of the same materials as the first, porcelain with an enamel glaze. It is slightly smaller, measuring about six inches high and fourteen inches wide, and is dated from 1750-

1757. Though not as intricately decorated as the first bowl, it uses the same famille rose coloring. Decorated on the bowl are large, overlapping tobacco leaf patterns and peonies in various shades of pinks, blues, yellows, and browns. The leaves and flowers are wide and take up the majority of the outside, hiding the plain white glaze of the background. The inside is lightly decorated in the same way, with smaller versions of the flowers. The bowl has a large crack down the center and was clearly mended at some point. Though this artifact is beautifully decorated, its smaller size and less sophisticated design leaves it with a less-commanding presence than its predecessor.

This bowl is smooth, large, and very heavy. Despite its slightly smaller size, it could have still held a large amount of punch; but because of its less ornate decoration, perhaps the Washingtons' used this bowl with family, saving the previous ornate bowl for

¹⁸⁰ Creator Unknown, "W-1452," Punch Bowl (1750-1757), Museum and Education Center. George Washington's Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

distinguished guests. The images on the object itself suggest summertime, with its large yellow and blue tobacco leaves. Again, just as with W-2100, I find it more likely that Martha probably had a servant carry this for her when it was full of punch. The leaves and flowers, with their bulky, colorful, almost caricature design, evoke a feeling of warmth and happiness. The abundant use of yellow and the tobacco leaves make me think of sunshine beating down on crops, as they would have at Mount Vernon.

Based on the information above, I originally hypothesized that this bowl was owned by George. Tobacco was a staple crop at Mount Vernon when George took over the estate in 1754. He switched to wheat as his cash crop in 1766, but the dates of this bowl suggest that it was made during his interest in tobacco.¹⁸¹ Perhaps he used it as a display point for his love of husbandry. Thanks to the accession information for this object, however, it quickly became apparent that my hypothesis was incorrect. Bowl W-1452 actually belonged to Martha, again brought from her first marriage. It entered the collection at Mount Vernon in June of 2008 and the record states that it is “believed to belong to a Custis dinner set that was also likely in the Washington household.”¹⁸² After her first marriage, Martha “removed objects from the inventories of her first husband’s estate. Some entries in the inventories reveal a taste for ceramics beyond those intended exclusively for tea- and dinner-table use.”¹⁸³ Martha took about eight punch bowls with her from the Custis estate. She was clearly interested in chinawares that functioned outside of the traditional tea and dinner set. Unfortunately, the file does not indicate to

¹⁸¹ "George Washington the Farmer," George Washington, last modified 2017, accessed November 27, 2017, <http://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/farming/>.

¹⁸² Fred W. Smith National Library, *Accession File W-1452* (Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington), Object Accession File.

¹⁸³ Detweiler, *George Washington's Chinaware*, 42.

whom this bowl was bequeathed. But Martha's taste for these types of ceramics contradicts the assertion that punch bowls were exclusively male artifacts.

W-658

The third artifact, W-658, which is the last bowl in this analysis owned by the Washingtons, is also the largest (Figure 24).¹⁸⁴ It is a porcelain enameled bowl measuring six inches high and sixteen inches across. This bowl is dated between 1750 to 1800 and its decoration is more delicate than the previous two, with the majority of the bowl being white. The colors, pink, red, and green, fall into the famille rose family, but they are much less vibrant than the previous two. The rim is made up of a pink border, with small scales and the flowers surrounding the



Figure 24 - Punch Bowl (W-658), 1750-1800, personal photo.

outside, giving a more realistic look. For W-2100, Chinese abstract design was clearly prominent. For W-1452, the large tobacco leaves were exaggerated, colorful, and bold. Here on the other hand, the flowers are ordinary and delicate. Their stems are green and their petals are pink, just as they would be in nature. The inside of the bowl is the same, with the pink and red scaled rim, and delicate flowers.

Out of caution for its fragility, I did not fully pick this bowl up. Its massive size and weight made me nervous that I would damage it. W-658 could easily hold five gallons of punch and would have been used for a very large gathering. If I was nervous

¹⁸⁴ Creator Unknown, "W-658," Punch Bowl (1750-1800), Museum and Education Center. George Washington's Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

picking this bowl up while it was empty, when it was used at Mount Vernon I imagine it would have required great precision and grace on the part of the person carrying it while full of punch. Perhaps this bowl was only filled after it was already situated on the table. When I first saw this vessel, it evoked a feeling of grandeur. Its size is impressive and almost intimidating. If I was a guest in an eighteenth-century home and I was served from this massive bowl of fine porcelain, I would have no doubt that my hosts were people of means, important citizens, or members of high society. This is certainly a statement piece.

Because of its delicate and feminine design, I assumed this bowl was probably another one of Martha's and that it had to have been used at some large, formal gathering. According to its acquisition file, it was obtained by the museum in June 2008. Unfortunately its date of production is ambiguous; the "punch bowl could have been made and purchased as early as 1750 in preparation for the Custis' marriage or as late as Washington's death in 1799."¹⁸⁵ The file indicates, however, that based on its design, it is likely that this bowl was purchased and used during Martha's first marriage. Perhaps she used it at her actual wedding, as its size would have easily provided for a large crowd. This bowl was bought in an auction in 1890, held by the heirs of Lawrence Lewis and Eleanor Parke Custis (1779 –1852), one of Martha's granddaughters. It seems clear that this bowl, like the previous two, was brought by Martha to Mount Vernon and then bequeathed to another granddaughter.

¹⁸⁵ Fred W. Smith National Library, *Accession File W-658*(Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington), Object Accession File.

M-4536/A

The final bowl presented here is being included as an example of domestic punch drinking in another household, though it is believed that General Washington was served from this vessel. M-4536/A was actually not owned by the Washingtons (Figure 25).¹⁸⁶

This bowl is porcelain with enamel, dated from 1750. It is much smaller in size than the previous three, measuring only about 5 inches in height and ten inches in diameter. The content of the bowl is somewhat different, as well. Its coloring is based on an imari

palette, which uses bold cobalt and navy blues and darker reds and golds. Around the rim is a red stitch design broken up by red and blue flowers and the design on the main body



Figure 25 - Punch Bowl (M- 4536/A), 1750, courtesy of George Washington's Mt. Vernon.

of the bowl is made up of dark red and tan flowers with blue stems and leaves. There are several cracks and metal pins holding the bowl together, indicating that it is very fragile and has been mended numerous times.

As this bowl was on display, I was unable to handle it personally. Although because of its fragility, it is unlikely that I would have handled it personally anyway. Based on its glaze, being similar to the previous bowls, M-4536/A has a smooth finish. Its small size means it does not weigh nearly as much as the others and was probably

¹⁸⁶ Creator Unknown, "M-4536/A," Punch Bowl (1750), Museum and Education Center. George Washington's Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

used for smaller, intimate gatherings. I also wonder if it was handled more often, because of the cracks and pins holding it together. The colors are significantly different from the other bowls, though the floral designs are similar. The dark blues and reds make me think of late summer or early autumn. As it was the last bowl I saw, I have to admit that I was unimpressed with its size, especially after seeing W-658. But the colors on this artifact are much bolder and, because of the blues, cooler. While the previous bowls reminded me of spring, summer, boisterous large gatherings, perhaps outside, I can imagine this bowl, on the other hand, being set on a small table in a drawing room, inside, for an intimate meeting.

I hypothesize that this bowl was used for a smaller crowd and perhaps by a less prestigious family. According to the accession record, this bowl entered the collection in April 2010. It was owned by Sarah Bradlee Fulton (1740-1835), who served as a nurse at the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775. General Washington was said to have been so impressed by Fulton's patriotism that he visited her home. Her grandson, John Andrews Fulton, wrote "having heard of the many exploits of my grandmother, [General Washington] had a strong desire to see her... My grandmother made this bowl so full to its brim with that exciting elixir called punch, which was freely imbibed by Washington and his suite."¹⁸⁷ Unfortunately, there are no records of the encounter from Washington's point of view. This account, however, is an indication of the General being served punch in another's household and by a woman.

Each one of these bowls were owned by women and many of Martha's bowls were bequeathed down the female line in her family. As evidenced in W-1452, Martha

¹⁸⁷ Fred W. Smith National Library, *Accession File M-4536/A* (Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington), Object Accession File.

brought a number of punch bowls with her from her first husband's estate, having a vested interest in types of chinaware other than tea sets. Each of these bowls were also decorated in a traditionally feminine style, adorned with flowers, leaves, pastels, and pinks. Undoubtedly, these would have been easy to incorporate into a china set in the household and would, given their sizes, have been used often to serve punch to guests. As the presider over the dinner table and the domestic realm as a whole, it would have been Martha who served her guests punch, just as Sarah Bradlee Fulton served General Washington. More importantly, Martha's and Sarah's ownerships over these bowls and how they were bequeathed to female members of Martha's family shows that women were interested in ceramics other than tea wares. The bowls presented here were primarily female artifacts when considered in the context of the home. These bowls provide perfect insight into domestic punch drinking, but they also provide insight into women's role in punch consumption.

W-2688

The following four items are punch accessories, which would have been used while punch was being served.

The first item is small strainer (Figure 26), made of silver and dated 1750-1751.¹⁸⁸ The bowl and handles are about six inches wide and an inch deep. Despite its small size, it is inscribed with



Figure 26 - Punch Strainer (W-2688), 1750-1751, courtesy of George Washington's Mt. Vernon.

¹⁸⁸ Samuel Meriton, "W-2688," Punch Strainer (1750-1751), Museum and Education Center. George Washington's Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

a number of marks. On the well of the bowl there is an “M”, most likely a maker’s mark for Samuel Meriton I, its creator. There is also a date mark, “p,” which indicates 1750-1751, and a London city mark, a small lion. On one of the handles is another maker’s mark, “SM.” Next to that are the initials BWK and on the other handle is engraved G.W. Peter. The bowl is punctured with small holes to strain out liquid, drilled in pattern of a six-petal flower.

As this item was on display, I was unable to handle it. Its small size indicates that it probably did not weigh more than a pound and aside from its engravings, the silver was smooth. Punch was usually presented in a large bowl still with the citrus peels and spices floating in the rum and sugar. This strainer would have been used to discard any of these unwanted chunks. In terms of emotional response, this strainer appears very functional. The flower designs of the holes in the bowl are aesthetically pleasing, but more importantly they served a purpose. This strainer was displayed with ladle W-2450 and bowl W-2100. Perhaps these were used together by Martha to serve her guests.

According to the accession information, this strainer was also brought by Martha from her first marriage. It entered the collection in April 2008 and according to a scan found in the file, “the strainer likely served both the Custis and Washington household guests partaking of punch and was used at Mount Vernon throughout the Washingtons’ lifetimes.”¹⁸⁹ The file also suggests that this strainer was used at the wedding of John Parke Custis (1754-1781), Martha’s son from her first marriage, and his new wife Eleanor Calvert (1758-1811) in 1774. Martha bequeathed all of the family silver to her grandson, George Washington Parke Custis (1781–1857), but it was then given to his sister, Martha’s granddaughter, Martha Parke Custis Peter (1777–1854). Martha Peter

¹⁸⁹ Cadou, *The George Washington Collection*, 56.

then bequeathed the strainer to her daughter Britannia Wellington Peter Kennon (1815–1911), which explains the “BWK” engraving on the handle. The G.W. Peter on the other handle probably references Britannia’s brother, George Washington Peter (1801–1877). Despite being bequeathed to her grandson, the strainer seems to have found its way into Martha’s female descendants’ hands.¹⁹⁰

W-2554

The first ladle in this analysis is dated from 1774-1775 and is made of silver (Figure 27).¹⁹¹ It is twelve inches long, with its bowl three and a half inches wide and two inches deep. On the reverse side of the handle, near the base of the bowl is the letter “T” in a gothic script, most likely referring to its maker Thomas Tookey. There is also a small London city mark, a small lion, similar to the strainer.



On the front, at the top of the handle is an eagle head and neck. There is a fluted, feathered pattern running down the sides of the handle, as though it is an extension of the eagle’s wings.

Apart from the engravings, the ladle is smooth. It has a remarkable heft for its size, being made up of entirely silver. The eagle evokes a patriotic feeling, though still very formal. It is not surprising that this ladle was found in the first president’s home.

¹⁹⁰ Fred W. Smith National Library, *Accession File W-2688*(Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington), Object Accession File.

¹⁹¹Thomas Tookey, “W-2554,” Punch Ladle (1774-1775), Museum and Education Center. George Washington’s Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

Despite its decoration, it seems unlikely that this ladle was displayed or used for any other purpose than serving punch. And indeed, according to the accession file, John Parke Custis and his wife, Eleanor, “recognized the importance of surrounding themselves with fine goods that spoke of their fortune, taste, and gentility... in the eighteenth-century, drinking punch was a convivial social occasion... Long handled ladles were used to serve the blend of spirits, citrus juice, sugar and spices.”¹⁹² There is not a lot of other information about this object, aside from the fact that this ladle belonged to Martha’s son, John and it was bequeathed upon his death to his daughter, Eliza Parke Custis (1776–1831) and then to Eliza’s granddaughter, Charlotte Rogers. The ladle appears to have been bequeathed to mostly women.

W-718

The next artifact in this analysis is a nutmeg grater (Figure 28).¹⁹³ Not much is known about this grater, but it is included here because nutmeg was a common spice found in punch and it would have undoubtedly been used to spice up punch in the Washington household. The grater is a small, silver cone, dated from 1780-1820. It is about three inches long and one inch wide and has a small trumpeted base and a silver lid. Using the accession files description, the “lid lifts and the urn opens on a vertical seam, hinged at the base, to reveal the



Figure 28 - Nutmeg Grater (W-718), 1780-1820, personal photo.

¹⁹² Fred W. Smith National Library, *Accession File W-2554* (Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington), Object Accession File.

¹⁹³ Creator Unknown, “W-718,” Nutmeg Grater (1780-1820), Museum and Education Center. George Washington’s Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.

conforming iron grater held in place with half a ring of silver.”¹⁹⁴ The body of the grater is engraved with violets and a script “W.”

This grater is very small and fragile. The violet flowers could evoke summertime and I can only guess that the “W” stands for Washington. The inside of the grater actually smells vaguely of citrus, although that could easily have been my own imagination. Unlike the previous three silver objects, this grater was not inscribed with a maker’s mark, so pinning down a place of origin or date is more difficult. But based on the engraving of the “W,” I hypothesize that this was owned by a member of the Washington family and was used not only in cooking, but in the production of punch, as well. According to the accession file, “occasionally, these portable articles were given as gifts and tokens of affection. The Washingtons would have used a similar article when preparing a bowl of punch to welcome visitors.”¹⁹⁵ This grater, according to the file, was owned by George’s sister, Elizabeth “Betty” Washington Lewis (1733–1797). Unfortunately, there is only the word of Betty’s descendent, who donated this grater in April of 2008, to go on.

W-2450

The final artifact, W-2450, is a punch ladle, dated 1797-1799 (Figure 29).¹⁹⁶ It is fused silver on copper for the bowl and black ebony for the handle. It is thirteen inches long, but the bowl only measures about four inches wide and two inches deep, with a lip on one side. Unfortunately because of the way it was displayed, some elements were

¹⁹⁴ Fred W. Smith National Library, *Accession File W-718* (Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington), Object Accession File.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ Adam Lynn, “W-2450,” *Punch Ladle (1797-1799)*, Museum and Education Center. George Washington’s Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon, Virginia.



Figure 29 - Punch Ladle (W-2450), 1797-1799, courtesy of George Washington's Mt. Vernon.

difficult to see. For example, the bowl is inscribed with a winged griffin and the underside of the bowl is stamped with .LYNN, for its maker Adam Lynn.

As I was not able to handle this item, I was unable to examine its texture; although from side it appeared relatively smooth and its small size and ebony handle means it probably weighs very little. The lip on the bowl of the ladle would have been used to pour punch from the bowls into smaller tumbler glasses. Its appearance, aside from the inscribed griffin, is very functional. There are few designs on it and the ebony handle is plain, which leads me to believe that it was not a display piece. The griffin, however, indicates some level of elitism or status with the object. In terms of emotion, clearly the attention was meant to be on the punch bowl from which this ladle served, rather than the ladle itself. I hypothesize that this ladle was about function, rather than form. Unfortunately there is very little information about this ladle from its acquisition file. It entered into the collection in April 2008. George acquired it after his retirement from the presidency in 1797. Perhaps he envisioned leisurely afternoons spent with his guests, being served punch on his porch in the summer. He bequeathed the ladle to Martha following his death in 1799.¹⁹⁷

Each of these items, the bowls and the accessories, provide insight into how punch was consumed in the home and, more importantly, insight into how the punch

¹⁹⁷ Fred W. Smith National Library, *Accession File W-2450* (Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington), Object Accession File.

ritual impacted women, as well as men. Each of these bowls were owned by women, the first three by Martha and the final bowl by Sarah Fulton. Many of them were bequeathed to granddaughters or female relatives. Clearly, these punch bowls had some importance in women's lives. Perhaps they were bequeathed to Martha's granddaughters so that they could also serve punch to their guests in their homes, using domestic Washington heirlooms and continuing the tradition of Martha's hands-on style of hosting. The accession information for these artifacts provided ample amount of information for Prown's third step, Speculation, illustrating not only where these items came from, how they were used, and who they were given to, but also shedding light on domestic punch serving in the eighteenth-century in general. Though these objects, bowls and accessories included, were used in private gatherings by both men and women, their ownership and bequeathals show that the punch ceremony was an important component of women's domestic lives. Clearly, punch artifacts were not strictly male artifacts when used in the household. In addition to these objects, however, there are a handful of documents which also shed light on punch drinking at Mount Vernon.

Documentary Evidence

The following documents, letters, diary entries, and cookbooks, illustrate women's roles in domestic punch drinking at Mount Vernon. Though not many written records remain regarding the type of food served at Mount Vernon, and even fewer remain regarding punch, the collections at the Fred W. Smith National Library hold a few documents which can shed some light on this topic.¹⁹⁸ Though just as William Black's

¹⁹⁸ Two of these documents were found in accession files for W-2688 and W-2100. I did not include them in the Speculation analysis because they do not reference those specific artifacts. Rather, they are about punch drinking at the estate in general.

diary entry only provided a line about punch drinking in chapter one, these are also small snippets into the domestic ritual. One of these documents is a diary entry, written in June of 1797 by Amariah Frost. In the entry, he goes into great detail about his experience staying at Mount Vernon. Early in the day, while George Washington was out of the house, surveying his estate, Frost states that “we were desired to tarry until he should return... We had rum punch brought to us by a servant.”¹⁹⁹ This instance does not mention any women, Martha particularly, partaking in the punch, but this does provide an example of domestic punch imbibing by one of the Washingtons’ many guests. Later that evening for dinner, Frost described that “Mrs. Washington sat at the head [of the table], the president next to her at her right.”²⁰⁰ Martha was probably at the head of the table as she was responsible for all goings-on in the domestic realm. A second example of punch drinking at Mount Vernon, which again does not include women, comes from the Reverend John E. Latta in the summer of 1799. This account was found in a binder at the library, which was full of mid- to late-eighteenth century descriptions of the estate. After being greeted by Martha and invited to tour the property, Latta comes across George while wandering the grounds. Washington then “invites me to take a seat and orders a drink of ice punch.”²⁰¹ Latta was later invited to dinner. Again, while this instance does not involve Martha serving the punch, it is an excellent example of the beverage being served on the estate, in this case iced and served on a hot summer’s day.

A third account of punch drinking comes from Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz. Niemcewicz was a Polish writer, born in 1758, who described his numerous travels

¹⁹⁹ Amariah Frost, “*Diary of Amariah Frost, June 1797*,” in *Accession File W-2688* (Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington, 1797).

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ John E. Latta, “*Visit to Mt. Vernon in 1799*,” in *Black Binder: Descriptions of Mount Vernon prior to 1799* (Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington, 1799).

across North America in 1797 to 1799. The date of his visit is unclear, but in his account of his visit to Mount Vernon, Niemcewicz wrote, “we entered into the house... Madame Washington appeared after a few minutes, welcomed us most graciously and had *punch* served.”²⁰² This is a clear example of Martha being the person to serve punch in her home. Though Niemcewicz does not specify whether or not she partook, since she was serving it to her guests it seems probable that she did enjoy a glass. This example, as well as the previous two, illustrates that it was common for rum punch to be served at Mount Vernon and while alcohol in the public sphere is most commonly associated with men, Niemcewicz shows that women in a domestic setting actually became facilitators of imbibing in the punch ritual.

A final letter, written much after the Washingtons’ lifetimes in the 1800s, provides an example of Martha herself preparing punch for a group of guests. The letter was written by Dr. Cotton of Charleston, South Carolina in 1889. Cotton’s wife was the great-granddaughter of John Augustine Washington I (1736–1787), George’s younger brother, and Hannah Bushrod (1735-1801). Cotton tells a story that his wife enjoyed sharing, passed down in her family by her grandmother, George Washington’s niece, possibly John Augustine Washington’s daughter, Mildred or Jane. While Washington’s niece was playing at the estate under the supervision of Martha and some other family members, promptly at twelve o’clock Martha left the room and did not return for an hour. When she did, she was “followed by a servant carrying an immense bowl of punch, of which each person was expected to partake before dinner.”²⁰³ His description of his

²⁰² Niemcewicz, *Under Their Vine and Fig Tree*, 96; emphasis in original.

²⁰³ Cotton, “Dr. Cotton to Moncure Daniel Conway. May 21, 1889,” in *Accession File W-2100* (Mt. Vernon: Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington, 1889).

wife's tale turns into a mischievous adventure carried out by her grandmother and some friends. He wrote,

Now these young girls, curious to find out why her "Ladyship" invariably retired to her chamber at this hour, secretly slipped out while she was entertaining their mothers, crept up the stairs to her chamber, and hid under the bed. Presently, Lady W. entered, and took her seat beside a large table in the centre of the room. Then came a man-servant bringing a large empty bowl; with it also lemons, sugar, spices, and rum; with which her Ladyship immediately proceeded to prepare the delicious drink with her own hands.²⁰⁴

The young girls were then overcome with a fit of giggles and Martha hastened them from the room.²⁰⁵ Dr. Cotton's example is an account of Martha Washington preparing punch herself for her guests. Despite the fact that she had a plethora of servants who could have done it for her, this letter speaks to Martha's proactive nature. It also presents an account of how women played a role in punch drinking in the home. Not only did they serve it, but they also produced it.

As a woman of status, Martha certainly did not have to cook or prepare punch for her guests. Dr. Cotton's letter, however, shows that there may have been such occasions where she preferred to prepare food on her own. Another source which may provide some insight into domestic punch consumption at Mount Vernon comes from cookbooks. As indicated in chapter one, women were the intended audiences of these documents as they were usually the one preparing or coordinating meals in the household. Period cookbooks, particularly those known to have been used at the estate, "do provide valuable insights into the origins of the Virginia cuisine served at the Washingtons'

²⁰⁴ Cotton, "Dr. Cotton to Moncure Daniel Conway."

²⁰⁵ Just a fun anecdote, this letter later indicates that Martha was a harsh disciplinarian, while George loved playing with the kids. It is a shame that he and Martha did not have any children of their own.

table.”²⁰⁶ But cookbooks provide more than just insight into what may have appeared at the dinner table. Janet Theophano explains that “women have conserved a whole world, past and present, in the idiom of food.”²⁰⁷ It was common for family members and friends to exchange recipes with one another. For example, a manuscript cookbook, “said to have descended through a branch of the Jefferson family, contains twenty-five recipes attributed to Mrs. Washington.”²⁰⁸ As this kind of trading was common, it is likely that she shared recipes with her sisters, as well. Her sister-in-law, Betty, used the book *Compleat Housewife* by Eliza Smith. The fifteenth edition of this book, published in 1753, has a recipe for milk punch, which calls for water, milk, liberal amounts of brandy, sugar, and lemon.²⁰⁹ Martha’s younger sister, Anna Maria Dandridge Bassett, is known to have used *The Lady’s Companion* by an anonymous author. The sixth edition of this book has a recipe for a shrub, a similar drink to punch. It was made with the same ingredients, citrus, sugar or syrup, and spices. The main difference is that shrubs were usually bottled for later consumption, whereas punch was served immediately after production. A shrub could also be used as an ingredient in punch.²¹⁰ This recipe called for brandy, sugar, and oranges.²¹¹ Martha clearly had an assortment of recipes at her disposal.²¹²

²⁰⁶ Thompson et al., *Dining with the Washingtons*, 31.

²⁰⁷ Janet Theophano, *Eat My Words: Reading Women’s Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 49.

²⁰⁸ Thompson et al., *Dining with the Washingtons*, 31.

²⁰⁹ Eliza Smith, *The Compleat Housewife: or Accomplish’d Gentlewoman’s Companion* (London: Printed for R. Ware et al, 1753), 246.

²¹⁰ Tim Oakley, “Shrubs,” *Difford’s Guide for Discerning Drinkers*, August 9, 2011, accessed on November 27, 2017, <https://www.diffordsguide.com/encyclopedia/535/bws/shrubs>.

²¹¹ Anonymous, *The Lady’s Companion* (London: printed for J. Hodges et al, 1753), 383.

²¹² These two recipes, along with the shrub recipe from Martha’s manuscript cookbook, are included in the Appendix.

She also had her own family manuscript cookbook. Family cookbooks were common, as Theophano states that “the knowledge contained in cookbooks transcends generations. Grandmothers and mothers, sisters and aunts, friends and relatives of friends invest what tidbits and wisdom they can for the next generation.”²¹³ This manuscript was passed down to Martha from her mother-in-law from her first marriage, Frances Parke Custis (1687-1715), who inherited the book from her mother. Martha received the book and added to it in 1750, eventually passing it down to her youngest granddaughter, Eleanor Parke Custis Lewis. The manuscript was transcribed and published by culinary historian Karen Hess. In addition to a number of wine recipes, there is also a recipe for a shrub. Hess believes that this recipe was a later addition to the book because it uses brandy, which was not common until the mid-seventeenth century, since “the printed word lags decades behind usage... That said, the use of... *shrub*, and *brandy*, mark these last three recipes as ‘modern’ ones.”²¹⁴ The recipe calls for brandy, wine, water, sugar and lemon. Though it is impossible to tell whether or not Martha created this shrub recipe herself, it is clear that she had an abundance of punch recipes at her disposal, both from her sisters and from her own family manuscript cookbook.

In this chapter, I argued that Martha Washington and her female descendants were more involved in the punch ritual in their domestic public than their male family members. When their guests were served punch, the bowl itself was a symbol of hospitality presented by the Washingtons. Harvey stated that “objects are central to the transformative power of ritual,” and punch bowls were central to bringing men and women together in domestic publics. As guests gathered around the communal vessel,

²¹³ Theophano, *Eat My Words*, 49-50.

²¹⁴ Martha Washington, *Martha Washington's Book of Cookery and Book of Sweetmeats*, trans. Karen Hess (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 392.

they briefly entered into a liminal state brought on by imbibing. The Mount Vernon estate is an exceptional example of the temporary public described by Kross. With travelers constantly coming and going, the flowing bowl and hospitality by the Washingtons was a constant source of cordiality. Kross explains the balls, teas, and guest gatherings which took place in large homes, like Mount Vernon. But when punch was involved within these temporary publics women were usually the ones who owned the china, served the punch, and facilitated the ritual. The punch ritual and the punch bowl itself did not lose its convivial nature simply because it was being used in the home. If anything, it served as a welcoming symbol of hospitality within the Washington household. Because such little evidence remains about punch consumption in the home, I decided to turn to material culture at Mount Vernon, an estate where artifacts were preserved with exceptional care. Using Prown's method of analysis to examine four punch bowls and four punch accessories, it seems clear that the punch ceremony in the home was often presided over by a woman and usually occurred in the presence of guests.

The documentary evidence from Mount Vernon shows not only that punch was consumed on the property, but that Martha often served it to visitors. In some cases, she even prepared the drink herself. Almost all of the artifacts either belonged to Martha Washington or were passed down to a female descendent, contradicting the notion that punch bowls were a male artifact. As women were the coordinators of the household, it seems obvious that they should have such a role, preparing and serving their guests a refreshing punch upon their arrival. Very few authors have addressed this fact. Only recently, with the work of Karen Harvey, Eleanor Breen, and Peter Thompson, has the gendered nature of punch started to be explored. But it is clear that because of the lack of

documentary evidence pertaining to punch in the home, material culture must be examined from a wide variety of collections.

Conclusion

The research presented here shows that public and private spheres were not cut and dry, and that domestic space could be made public when men and women joined around a communal bowl. Chapter one argued that cookbooks, prints, and some limited diary entries show that women had an active role in the punch ritual in the home. In doing so, they helped create a domestic public in which both men and women enjoyed a bowl of punch. Almost all of the authors wrote with the goal of improving their readers' skills and the hope that their readers would impress guests in their homes with their new found talents. The "cookbook, like the diary and journal, evokes a universe inhabited by women both in harmony and in tension with their families, their communities, and the larger social world."²¹⁵ The books presented were each written by women and for women. Not only that, but most were compiled from manuscripts or community methods, increasing the probability that the dishes were actually prepared regularly. Cookbooks provide insights into the cultural and societal values of a certain period and each of the books presented here contained punch recipes which the authors wanted their readers to use in their homes.

The prints, as well, provide an illustration into how domestic punch drinking may have looked. The drawings and sketches of gatherings show that punch drinking in the home was done in mixed-gendered groups and in some cases, women were the ones facilitating the serving and the toasting. Even the satirical prints offer insight. Though they were meant to be humorous, they were also meant to provide commentary of practices which may have been standard. The two additional documents in chapter one, William Black and Martha Ballard's diaries, show how rare and how scant domestic

²¹⁵ Theophano, *Eat My Words*, 6.

punch references are. When they are found, they usually only refer to punch in passing and Ballard's diary only mentioned the ingredients. These documents clearly show that punch drinking was not only done in public taverns, but within the home as well.

Chapter two argued that punch bowls were not exclusively male artifacts, especially when they were found in the home. In domestic settings, these artifacts facilitated imbibing with both men and women. Harvey's research pertained primarily to punch and its association with men in taverns and the juxtaposition of tea and punch drinking to women and men in the eighteenth-century. She discerns that bowls were primarily a male artifact, while tea pots were primarily female, and punch pots were non-gendered. I disagree because just as the public and private sphere distinctions can be complicated, so can this artifact distinction. According to Robert Blair St. George "the study of American material life is grounded in the concrete, interwoven reality of men's and women's environmental, economic, and cultural circumstances."²¹⁶ By examining punch artifacts, the nature of the punch ritual can come to light. There are a number of bowls from home collections which were associated with both men and women. Bowls which commemorated marriages, births, and christenings had evidence of female interest, as well as male. It was also likely that at the events which these bowls celebrated, punch was consumed in mixed-gendered company. Punch pots, as well, were examples of efforts to further domesticate the drink, though the abundance of extant domestic bowls over pots shows that bowls were the preferred method of serving. This may be because of their friendlier and more hospitable nature.

The final chapter used the research from the previous two to examine punch drinking within a case study, the estate at Mount Vernon. I argued that Martha

²¹⁶ St. George, Introduction, 3.

Washington and her female descendants were heavily involved in the punch ritual in the home and that because of the constant flow of travelers visiting the estate, this space was often a domestic public. The archaeology at the estate shows that punch consumption was incredibly popular based on the number of bowls George Washington ordered. Breen states that “increased participation in the punch ceremony is evident in the early years of George Washington’s tenure at Mount Vernon.”²¹⁷ He asked for seventeen in one shipment, based on an invoice from 1770.²¹⁸ Not only that but based on the collections at the estate’s Museum and Education Center, most of the bowls had actually belonged to Martha, who had an interest in ceramics outside of traditional tea sets. Many of her bowls were bequeathed to her granddaughters, contradicting the notion that bowls were an exclusively male artifact. The example of Sarah Bradlee Fulton’s bowl also provided an example of women serving punch outside of the Washington family, as the General was served punch in her home. The punch accessories also show a female influence over the punch ritual. Despite the fact that Martha bequeathed her silver to her grandson, George Washington Parke Custis, many of the objects still found their way into his sisters’ hands. This may have been because they wanted to continue Martha’s hands-on hospitality and be prepared to welcome their own guests with a bowl of punch, just as Martha welcomed Julian Niemcewicz.

My goal in conducting this research was to explore the often-simplified notion of public and private spheres through material culture, and to show that punch drinking in domestic spaces was done by both men and women. But there is undoubtedly more work that can be done on these subjects. For one, the work presented here did not explicitly

²¹⁷ Breen, “One More Bowl and Then?” 82.

²¹⁸ *Ibid*, 83.

take class or societal status into account. It would be interesting to see how punch consumption differed in homes of lower-class citizens versus higher-class citizens. Availability and access to porcelain may be a factor. Punch drinking amongst slave communities was also left out of this research, though sources on that topic may be scarce. It is known that Washington supplied his slaves with a liquor allowance, whether or not they were making punch is unclear.²¹⁹ While this paper aimed to explore public space within the home, exploring women's role in the punch ritual in traditional public arenas, such as taverns or town celebrations, could become its own topic unto itself. As Sarah Meacham's research has shown, women were often involved as tavernkeepers and actually brewed alcohol in their homes throughout the eighteenth-century. But there were also public celebrations which women would have attended. A more in-depth examination of punch drinking at these events could further complicate the notions of public and private spheres. Finally, more exploration into the material culture of punch drinking is a must, as research on this topic has only just begun.

This paper will add to the research that has already been done on punch consumption in the eighteenth-century. Most of the previous scholarship on the topic pertains to men in taverns and focuses on spaces traditionally deemed public. Antczak describes how punch drinking on the island of La Tortuga created a liminal space in the form of the make-shift tavern the sailors and captains erected. He explains how the bowl and punch itself served as a "social lubricant around which strangers felt at ease."²²⁰ For captains sailing to the island from different ships, punch allowed them to form friendships, as well as beneficial social contacts. Peter Thompson also discusses the role

²¹⁹ "Rum," George Washington's Mount Vernon, last modified 2017, accessed February 13, 2018, <http://www.mountvernon.org/digital-encyclopedia/article/rum/>.

²²⁰ Antczak, "Tavern by the Saltpan," 177.

of tavern talk in creating bonds over a bowl. He states that “the act of drinking and conversing in shared premises implied a measure of equality between men... the city’s rank-based system did not determine... the uses to which Philadelphians put taverns.”²²¹ Though Thompson does not explicitly refer to taverns as a liminal space, the fact that men of differing statuses were drinking together, without any regard for the societal rank system, infers that the space was an area in which men ignored institutionalized relationships in favor of drinking together. It appears to have been a space that Turner referred to as “betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, convention, and ceremonial.”²²² Finally, Karen Harvey also likened the punch ritual in taverns to Turner’s liminality, specifically to his concept of rituals of *communitas*. She explains that “rituals of *communitas* create a powerful and new collective of comrades from individuals that elsewhere would be divided.”²²³ Objects are central to this ritual and the punch bowl itself enables friendship and welcoming. These three authors describe the punch ritual’s ability to bring people together in taverns.

The evidence provided here shows not only that punch served the same function in the home, but also that public and private spaces could easily be muddled. This research contributes to the growing literature which questions these binary divides and does so by examining nontraditional documents such as cookbooks and prints, and also material culture. Punch was consumed in mixed gendered groups in domestic publics and the bowl itself still had the same open and genial use. Punch rituals in these spaces were usually done in the presence of guests or during parties, creating a domestic public around the bowl during which everyone felt welcome. But as shown by Jessica Kross,

²²¹ Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 78.

²²² Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 95.

²²³ Harvey, “Ritual Encounters,” 96.

eighteenth-century mansions “permitted the formation of multiple publics” and while mixed-gendered groups formed around punch, they were only temporary.²²⁴ The impermanency of these spaces does not change the fact that punch had the ability to blur the private and public spheres which divided women and men. But these spaces have not been examined because of a lack of documentary evidence which explicitly describes the punch ritual in the home. There is definitely a need for more research, as these sources have only scratched the surface. A further examination of cookbooks, prints, and of course, material culture, is necessary to gain a broader picture. Hopefully this research will shed some light on a previously unexplored realm of women’s lives in the eighteenth-century.

²²⁴ Kross, “Mansions, Men, Women, and the Creation of Multiple Publics,” 385.

Appendix I - Punch Recipes

These are punch recipes from the cookbooks presented chronologically. It is clear that some borrowed from one another.

Wooley, Hannah. *The Queen-like Closet, Or, Rich Cabinet*. London, 1675.

To make Punch.

Take one Quart of Clarret wine, half a Pint of Brandy, and a little Nutmeg grated, a little sugar, and the Juice of a Limon, and so drink it. (p. 134)

Mrs. Rockett's Manuscript, 1711. (from Montague Summers, *The Memoir of Mrs. Behn*, 1914)

To make Milk Punch.

Infuse the rinds of 8 Lemons in a Gallon of Brandy 48 hours then add 5 Quarts of Water and 2 pounds of Loaf Sugar then Squeeze the Juices of all the Lemons to these Ingredients add 2 Quarts of new milk Scald hot stirring the whole till it curdles grate in 2 Nutmegs let the whole infuse 1 Hour then refine through a flannel Bag. (footnote #56)

Anonymous. *The lady's companion. Volume 2*. London 1753.

To make Shrub

Take five gallons of Brandy, five Quarts of Orange-juice, and four Pounds of double-refined Sugar, mix all well together, till the Sugar is dissolved, then put it into a Cask, and let it stand till it is fine; after which draw it off. (p. 383)

Another Way.

Take two Quarts of Brandy, and put it in a large Bottle, and put into it the Juice of five Lemons, the Peels of two, and Half a Nutmeg; stop it up, and let it stand for three Days; then add to it three Pints of White Wine, a Pound and a Half of Sugar; mix it, and strain it twice through a Flannel, and bottle it up; It is a pretty Wine, and a Cordial. (p. 383.)

Smith, Eliza. *Compleat housewife: or accomplish'd gentlewoman's companion*. London, 1753.

To make fine Milk Punch

Take two quarts of water, one quart of milk, half a pint of lemon-juice, and a quart of brandy, sugar to your taste; put the milk and water together a little warm, then add the sugar and lemon-juice, and stir it well together, then the brandy; stir it again, and run it through a slannel bag till it is very fine, then bottle it; it will keep a fortnight, or more. (p. 246)

Battam, Anne. *The lady's assistant in the oeconomy of the table*. London, 1759.

To make Punch

To every quart of brandy put two quarts of water, the juices of ten lemons, steep two of the peels in a glass of brandy, while the other is making, and dissolve four ounces of double refined sugar in the water, then mix it all together and strain it through a flannel cloth. (p. 197)

Punch royal. Mr. R----'s Receipt.

Take fifteen oranges and fifteen lemons, wipe them very clean, pare them, and put the parings into two gallons and a half of the best brandy, let them stand four days, then take four gallons and three pints of water, fifteen whites of eggs, and six points and half of loaf-sugar; put the water and sugar in a copper, and when it boils add the whites of eggs, having beaten them very well, let these boil about a quarter of an hour, and then let it stand to cool, then strain it through a sieve, and pour the brandy from the parings upon it, then add two quarts and a pint of orange-juice, and three pints of lemon-juice, which must be run through a flannel. Put all into a barrel, and in about six weeks it will be fine enough to bottle. (p. 198)

To make milk punch

Take one gallon of rum or brandy, eight quarts of water, two dozen of oranges or lemons, one pound and half of sugar; squeeze your lemons or oranges, pulp and all, into a pan, then mix all your ingredients, and add to it a pint of skim-milk, and stirring it all up together, strain it several times thro' a jelly bag till it becomes quite fine. (p. 199)

Milk punch or verde. Mrs. Bickle

Put five quarts of water to four quarts of brandy, dissolve one pound of double refined sugar in it, add the juices of three dozen of lemons and two quarts of skim-milk, then strain it through a flannel bag till it be very fine, and bottle it for use; put some nutmeg before you fine it. (p. 199)

Price, Elizabeth. *New, universal, and complete confectioner*. London, 1785

Milk punch.

Take two quarts of water, one quart of milk, half a pint of lemon juice, and a quart of brandy; sugar it to your taste, put the milk and water together a little warm, then add the sugar and lemon juice, and stir it together; put in the brandy, and run it through a flour bag till it is fine; you may bottle it and it will keep a fortnight or more. (p. 118)

Milk punch for present drinking.

To two quarts of water put two quarts of French brandy, a dozen and half of lemons, three quarters of a pound of double-refined sugar, and three pints of new milk; strain it frequently through a jelly-bag, till it is clear and fine; you must make it two or three days before you use it, and may bottle it off, but it will preserve its goodness for a time. (p. 118)

Carter, Susannah. *Frugal housewife: or, Complete woman cook*. Philadelphia, 1796.

To make a fine Milk Punch

Take two quarts of water, one quart of milk, half a pint of lemon-juice, and one quart brandy, with sugar to your taste; put the milk and water together a little warm, then the sugar and the lemon juice: stir it well together, then the brandy; stir it again, and run it through a flannel bag till it is very fine, then bottle it. It will keep a fortnight or more. (p. 126)

Washington, Martha (Karen Hess, trans.) *Martha Washington's Booke of Cookery*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995 (recipe undated).

To Make Shrub

Take one quart of brandy & a quart of white wine, & a quart of spring water. Mix them together then slice 3 lemons, & put in with a pound of sugar. Stir these very well, cover yr pot close, & let it stand 3 dayes, stiring it every day. Then strayne it, & bottle it, & crush ye lemons very well inside it. (p. 391)

Appendix II – A Few More Prints

These are a few prints which pertain to women and punch, but because of space and (for some) subject matter, I chose not to include in them in the primary text. All four come from the British Museum's Online Collections.



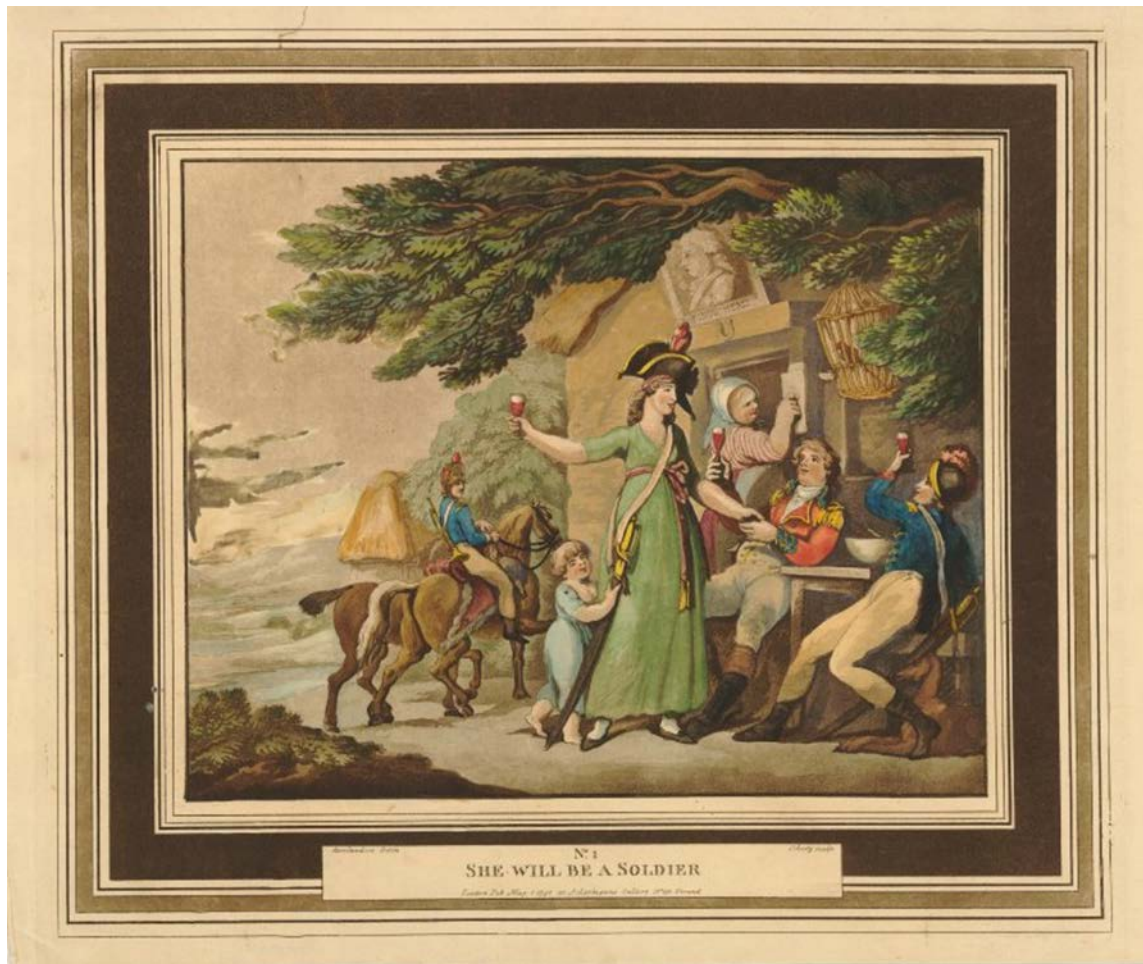
This is entitled “Madam Blubber on her canvass,” dated 1784 (object #1868.0808.5264). The two men on the left are drinking from a bowl and are approached by the very large Ms. Blubber. She says “Hood and Wray my dear Butcher” to which one of the butchers on the left responds, “Pho, give her a glass” and he passes a glass to her. The men on the right marvel at the woman’s size. It does contain a woman being offered punch, but the demeaning manner in which its offered, with the men ogling her, deterred me from including it in my research.



This print is called “Ban-yan day on board the Magnificent; or, pease porridge hot from the coppers!” It is dated 1789 (object #1851,0901.469). The image takes place on a ship, with three women and a number of men gathered around a punch bowl enjoying themselves. Unfortunately upon further inspection, it appears as though they are not partaking in punch at all. Banyan Day is a day on board a ship during which no meat is consumed. Based on the British Museum’s description, it appears that they are actually eating porridge out of the large bowl, though the object’s ability to bring people together is still on full display.



This third image is entitled “pretty barr maid” and is dated 1795. (object #1878,0511.1386). The print shows a woman serving punch to a handful of men in a tavern (as guessed by the title). Four men look on, eagerly waiting as she squeezes lemon into the large bowl.



The final image is called “She will be a soldier,” dated 1798 (object #1878,0713.2777). Outside of a tavern, a woman and two male soldiers consume punch. As my research focuses on domestic punch drinking, I chose not to include this image. But a woman imbibing with two men, while a child plays with a sword, at a tavern is undoubtedly interesting.

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