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A Look Down the Well: Exploring Co-educational Femininity through a Twentieth-century Dormitory Feature at William & Mary, 1926-1944

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William & Mary

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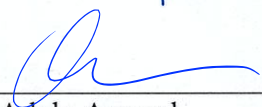
A Look Down the Well: Exploring Co-educational Femininity through a Twentieth-century
Dormitory Feature at William & Mary, 1926-1944

A thesis presented in Candidacy for Departmental Honors in
Anthropology
from
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

By
Charlotte May Russell
7 May 2024

Accepted for Highest Honors


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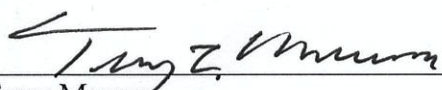

Terry Meyers

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Introduction

As women began enrolling in universities across the nation in the early twentieth century, traditionally masculine spheres became the site of an emerging femininity. Administrative rules and single-gendered spaces organized the lives of women and men to fit socially acceptable gender roles. One such space was the college dormitory. The Bray-Digges House, most notably studied as the site of Williamsburg's Bray School, served as an off-campus dormitory for women at The College of William & Mary between 1926 and 1930. Called Brown Hall, the building sat on the corner of Prince George Street and North Boundary Street and housed between twelve and fourteen women each academic year. The College moved the Bray-Digges House building down the street in 1930 and turned it into a multipurpose space. In its place on the corner, a larger dormitory was constructed by the Methodist South Women's Home Missions Board to house around eighty women until 1944. As some of the first women to attend The College, the women who lived in Brown Hall learned and socialized under the guidance of both the Methodist Church and the school administration. As a single-sexed space, the dorm created and nurtured particular identities while suppressing others in accordance with administrative and wider social expectations for women. The mundane lives of the women were structured by the physical space of the dorm, the materials they appropriated and consumed, and the social world they occupied.

Scholarship on the archaeology of college dormitories and discussions of gendered spaces in 1920s and 1930s college settings is a limited field. Of the few sources I found in my research, most publications are limited to university-sponsored magazines, blogs, and minor journals. Few authors explore the construction of masculinity and femininity within

living spaces alongside the organization and appearance of physical spaces in college dormitories in the early twentieth century (See Drucker 2017; Horowitz 1985). Interpretive work has been completed on other campuses in Virginia, though this scholarship examines antebellum-period materials and masculinity rather than twentieth-century femininity (Schwartz 2010). The most notable exploration of the topic is Laurie Wilkie's book, *The Lost Boys of Zeta Psi*, where she interrogates how fraternity men developed masculinity against an emerging femininity at the University of California in the early twentieth century (2010). Wilkie found that the masculine norms, practices, and self-identification among fraternity brothers shifted when women enrolled and threatened a historically masculine space. Similarly, I will address emerging femininity at William & Mary using the details of students' everyday lives found in documents and archaeological evidence, though I will focus more on how women reacted to and challenged imposed ideas through explicit and implicit messages.

William & Mary as an institution controls and encourages scholarship on its oldest histories, though this overlooks the important narratives of the last century. Only two publications exist about the women at William & Mary in the 1920s through 40s. Laura Parrish's thesis on the women at the College between 1918 and 1945 uses solely documentary evidence and provides a rudimentary summary of their social lives through alumni surveys (Parrish 1988). My research will complicate Parrish's findings using a wider range of sources about the women of the 1920s through 40s and will address their material and mundane lives outside of the documentary records. Margaret Freeman's dissertation discusses the construction of femininity and ideas of sisterhood in sorority life at Southern colleges including William & Mary, though her piece uses solely documentary

evidence and does not discuss the material record left by the women (Freeman 2011). Only one source using anthropological methods has been published about William & Mary's recent students. Scott Kiesling's study of fraternity brothers, though focused on language, examines how college men navigate masculinity and practice homosociality in the face of contradictory expectations of heterosexuality and closeness with other men (Kiesling 2005). The field of school archaeology often focuses on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In Williamsburg, archaeological and historical publications focus on the Bray school and early childhood education (See Meyers 2010; Scura Trovato 2016; Bly 2011). On other historic campuses like Harvard, archaeological publications focus on the education of indigenous children in Indian Schools (See Hodge, Capone, and Loren 2015). Of the publications found in research, all are either outside of the study period, focus on masculinity, do not address material evidence, or are geographically unrelated. My research will create new knowledge of William & Mary's educational and social history in the twentieth century and interpret the untouched twentieth-century materials associated with the Brown Hall dormitory. This research will contribute to discussions of how physical space and material culture reinforce or challenge the construction of gender in institutional settings.

In this project, I employ anthropological approaches in engendered archaeology, practice theory, and institutional discipline to explore a well feature at the site and to offer an engendered interpretation of a brief moment in the site's past. Drawing from the broad scholarship of engendered archaeology, I will explore the material and documentary traces of gender ideology present at the site and in the wider social context of recent co-education in the South. Rather than studying femininity in isolation, I will view it in conjunction with

masculinity as part of the discursive social relations developed and enforced on a co-ed college campus. Fitting nicely with the exploration of gender are theories of practice, agency, and discipline. This project draws from Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* and *hexis* and Michel Foucault's work on institutional discipline and punishment to explore how the women accepted or altered particular gendered dispositions as reinforced by administrative supervision, peer surveillance, and self-discipline in their corporeal practices. Other theories of Agency will underpin how material culture is analyzed as a potential negotiation of social positions and identities. Further, theories of purchase and consumption inspired by theories of Agency will underpin the interpretation of the site's artifacts as objects purchased intentionally and representative of social identity during a time of increased material consumption. Additionally, this project draws upon the scholarship of Mary Beaudry and other historical archaeologists who combine theories of gender with the techniques of household archaeology to examine engendered living situations. In Beaudry's study of brothels and Boott Mills boarding houses, she recognizes the resemblance of single-sexed, corporate spaces that not only function for the purpose of business or production but also serve as living spaces for laborers. She coined the term "alternative households" to describe these situations (Beaudry 1999; 121). The dorm functions as an alternative household since there is frequent turnover of occupants and it is a single-sex space, though it also functions as a social unit like a traditional household. Additionally, this project views a site of refuse, a well on the property, as insightful to understanding social and material relationships even after deposition.

This project relies primarily on documentary and archaeological evidence to reconstruct the mundane social world of the women who occupied Brown Hall between

1926 and 1944. This endeavor involves a qualitative analysis of the form, decoration, and provenance of alcohol bottles, pharmaceutical bottles, ceramic tableware, and other selected personal items from the site's catalog. Individual objects from the well feature are selected for qualitative analysis from the catalog rather than a quantitative analysis due to the nature of the research questions and the large number of disturbed strata from plowing at the site. Working within anthropological frameworks of gender, practice, discipline, and consumption, the objects' decorative, functional, and symbolic roles will be assessed within a highly specific historical context and analyzed for a plurality of meanings. Documents such as rule books, disciplinary records, images, and correspondence will be used to reconstruct the social world and contextualize the archaeological evidence. My analysis was guided by several questions. Does the documentary and archaeological record show evidence of regulation by the educational institution and self-discipline by the women in the dorm? How did the women use material culture to conform to or resist normative femininity? In what ways did students navigate institutional expectations and create identities?

In this thesis, I argue that the archaeological record demonstrates that the Brown Hall women partook in self-disciplinary behavior in bodily manipulation, hygiene practices, and institutionalized socialization that reinforced feminine norms and a particular vision of a virtuous, white, female college student. However, the women also forged identities outside of and subversive to institutional expectations through material consumption.

Historical Overview

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the development of a variety of public and private institutions that shaped society and individuals, including schools, hospitals, and prisons. Educational institutions trained individuals on how to behave and engage in self-disciplinary practices. Before the twentieth century, higher learning institutions were rare and dominated by men. Private academies to prepare young men for higher education dominated the landscape while public institutions lacked funding and quality instruction. Religious denominations established private colleges designed to prepare men for a future in ministry or law. Private education for women was popularized in the late 18th century in the form of finishing schools born from Enlightenment thinking and the ideals of “Republican Motherhood” (Gall and Veit 2017, 246). This ideology held that children would become the moral, productive citizens needed by The Republic if they were taught by well-educated, Christian mothers. The new role of teacher gave upper- and middle-class white women the opportunity to be educated. The curriculum maintained women’s role in the domestic sphere since female students were taught household-management skills, though some women used this newfound knowledge to engage in public social movements (Gall and Veit 2017, 247). Over time, the curriculum expanded to better resemble men’s education with courses in classical and liberal arts studies, and female academies began opening by the early nineteenth century. This was closely followed by the creation of female seminaries and colleges. Oberlin College became the first college to accept women in 1838. In the following years, more and more higher educational institutions opened their doors to women. The majority were sponsored by the church and located in the North and Midwest. Southern educational institutions lagged in their admittance of women, though

the aftermath of the Civil War brought several changes to women's education: seminaries and academies for women were revived, women displaced men as primary-level teachers, and social movements advocated for co-education (Mendenhall 1993, 100). Southern states still lacked quality public education, and Southern women had to move North to get a degree since the available "normal schools" only offered two years of curriculum training with no accreditation or diploma. Around 1910, Mary Munford founded the Coordinate College League to campaign for the establishment of a state-supported college for women in Virginia (Freeman 1970, 481). At the time, there were only four degree-granting public colleges for men, and none for women in the state. William & Mary's president, Lyon G. Tyler, belonged to the Coordinate College League despite alumni resistance to co-education. Munford would later become one of William & Mary's first female Visitors (Parrish 1988, 25).

William & Mary, like much of the South, suffered in the aftermath of the Civil War. The school struggled to stay open until 1906 when the Virginia State Legislature provided full financial support for the school's teacher training program. For the next ten years, William & Mary graduated the highest number of male teachers in the state (Parrish 1988, 4). However, by 1917 and the United States' entry into World War I, enrollment declined such that the College was once again in danger of closing. Through President Tyler's efforts with the Coordinate College League, the Virginia legislature made William & Mary a co-educational public institution. Efforts towards co-education at the University of Virginia had floundered, and William & Mary already had a suitable teaching program that would achieve the goal of educating women for future teaching. Supported by the Board of Visitors and later passed in the state legislature, the 1918 Strode Bill made William & Mary

the first co-ed public college in Virginia (Parrish 1988, 6-7). Despite widespread resistance by male alumni, the influx of women students brought higher enrollment that brought the College more state funding and an opportunity to expand curricula and campus infrastructure.

The first class of twenty-four women entered in the Fall of 1918. Those needing housing lived in Tyler Hall under the supervision of a housemother (Parrish 1988, 12). They took classes in English, mathematics, chemistry, biology, government, physics, foreign languages, history, and physical education in addition to teaching courses in home economics and grammar. Barred from joining most men's clubs, the first women started a women's student government, organized the Alpha Club to hold debates and social events, and founded a women's intramural sports program (Parrish 1988, 18). In 1919, the new college president, Julian Chandler, hired a Social Director for women's activities concerning health, hygiene, and socialization (Parrish 1988, 22). The College also hired other female faculty and staff including instructors and appointed women to the Board of Visitors beginning in 1920 (Parrish 1988). Enrollment of women continued to increase in the next decade, and women made up 45% of the student body by 1929 (Parrish 1988, 20). With continuously increasing enrollment came new faculty hires, course expansion, and further campus construction.

The 1920s saw women settle into college life and carve out a female-specific space at William & Mary. Women were encouraged to take courses to prepare them for careers in teaching, library science, or office administration, though they could branch out in subjects like Biblical literature, sociology, and journalism (Parrish 1988; 24). Since many men's organizations continued to ban women, all-female groups were started to provide

opportunities for service, academic and philosophical discussion, and social activity. The many social clubs included social sororities, dance clubs, and special interest organizations. Since Williamsburg was a small town and there were strict rules about out-of-town travel, most women participated in clubs such as these for entertainment during their time at the school. Additionally, the Women Students' Collective Government Association (WSCGA) remained an active part of the women's lives as all women were required to participate, and some even served on committees including the Honor Council, Judicial Committee, or Executive Committee. This organization allowed women to participate in legislating and judging student ongoing with partial autonomy. Along with studying and attending classes, the women crafted vibrant social lives and a new role for women in college life at William & Mary.

Women's enrollment also helped sustain the college in times of financial hardship. At the onset of the financial crisis of the 1930s, enrollment at The College dropped as families could no longer afford to send their children to school, though the school remained open and operable. Unlike other times of financial crisis, co-education allowed the College to stay open since it meant increased applicants, tuition revenue, and federal/state support. Further, the early 1930s in Williamsburg was a time of massive development due to Rockefeller's Restoration project of Colonial Williamsburg. The influx of tourists and general interest in the project helped attract prospective students and brought attention to William & Mary through media about Colonial Williamsburg. Overall, enrollment declined throughout the decade because of the Great Depression, and though both students and faculty felt the hardships, social and academic life remained mostly unchanged at The College. By the mid-1930s, women made up the majority of the student population. This

led to widespread outrage from students, professors, and alumni that there were too many women on campus (Parrish 1988; 51). In two decades, women went from a small minority to the majority at William & Mary, and they consistently outperformed the men in coursework (Parrish 1988; 53).

Despite the manufactured crisis of too many women, The College had to enroll even more female students when the United States entered World War II. As the draft age was lowered in 1942, The College admitted more women to keep classrooms and dormitories filled and revenue up when young men were drafted. Men who were not drafted filled the jobs left by servicemen. The War significantly changed social life on campus. Due to the decrease in male enrollment, women took over leadership positions in gender-inclusive organizations, and the women's and men's student government bodies were combined into one council (Parrish 1988, 59-61). Fewer men on campus made dating college men less common. The women turned to military men as there was an influx of military officers in Williamsburg from nearby Fort Eustis (Parrish 1988, 59-60). The shifting job market and war effort caused shortages in facility staff and difficult travel for students. Students joined in the war effort through the War Council and WAM Corps where they did Red Cross or USO work, sold war stamps, served as nurses' aides, and many other volunteer tasks to aid soldiers and the homefront (Parrish 1988, 57). The women still participated in parties, plays, and social activities in addition to their studies. Though this paper only covers eighteen years of history at William & Mary, this time proved to be a period of massive change for student social life as women solidified their place as proficient students and equally-proficient social beings. It is also important to note that during the period of study, William & Mary only widely admitted white students. Black

students would not be admitted until 1951, and no black residential student would be admitted until 1967 (The Lemon Project, n.d.). Only a handful of Asian or Asian-American students were admitted throughout the study period, including Hatsuye Yamasaki who served on the WSCGA Judicial Council and as Brown Hall President for one year between 1933 and 1937 (Special Collections Knowledgebase, n.d.).

The Bray Site & Brown Hall

Occupation History

Due to the large enrollment increase in the 1920s, housing demand was often met by local religious institutions. In January 1926, the Board of Home Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church South purchased the deed to a house on the corner of Prince George Street and North Boundary Street in Williamsburg, Virginia adjacent to Parish property owned by the organization (Ackerman 2009, 13). The Board of Home Mission acquired the house to serve as a dorm for women at William & Mary under the guidance of a deaconess from the Methodist Church. Unfortunately, a 1911 fire at the Williamsburg Courthouse burned many of the property records which leaves much of the history of the building unknown, though local newspaper articles in the 1920s hint that the house had a much older history (Ackermann 2009; 13). This same house still exists and is now known as the Bray-Digges House. The house was moved to William & Mary's campus in 1930 to make way for the new, larger Brown Hall building and then moved again a few blocks away on Nassau Street for restoration and interpretation in 2023. This thesis discusses the occupation of both versions of Brown Hall: the first dorm that operated out of the smaller Bray-Digges House and the larger dorm that replaced the house in 1930.

The site was first developed by Williamsburg residents in 1712 when William Craig acquired a lot from the city trustees on the condition that he build a house within two years (Ackermann 2009, 11). In 1719, he passed down his “front lott facing the Main Street” along with his “dwelling house” to his daughter Sarah in his will (Ackermann 2009, 11). The 1712 “dwelling house” was not the same structure that the Methodists would purchase over two centuries later. The property was sold to Hannah Shields in 1734. Under Shields’ ownership, the 1712 dwelling likely served as a rental house for Williamsburg families since Shields owned a much larger home on Nassau Street (Goodwin and Lounsbury 1980, 2). Though there is no documentary evidence of a new construction on the Prince George and North Boundary corner, dendrochronology performed on the standing Bray-Digges House indicates that the structure was built with wood cut down between 1759-1760. Shields’ sons sold the new house and property to Dudley Digges in 1763 (Ackerman 2009, 11). The property deed records between the Digges family’s ownership and a court-ordered sale in June 1896 were destroyed in the Courthouse fire. The record picks up again in the early twentieth century with three sales in a short period. The sale from Alice P. Stryker to the Board of Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church South marks the beginning of the structure’s use as a dorm and the site’s occupation by female college students attending William & Mary.

Though much of the rental occupation is unknown, one residency stands out through recent architectural discoveries. Confirmed by extensive documentary research, archaeological excavation, dendrochronology, and paint sample analysis, researchers found that the Williamsburg Bray School occupied the same structure purchased by the Methodists in 1926. For five years between 1770 and 1775, the Williamsburg Bray School

operated out of the Bray-Digges House. The Bray School existed for fourteen years in Williamsburg with the support of the Associates of Dr. Bray (Bly 2011, 446). Headmistress Anne Wager taught manners, reading, possibly writing, and domestic skills like sewing to upwards of 300 black children under the guidance of the Anglican Church (Scura Trovato 2016, 23, 52). For the five years that the school occupied the Bray-Digges House, Wager lived on the second floor and taught upwards of thirty students downstairs and outside during the day (Scura Trovato 2016, 19). Though it was revolutionary for educating enslaved and freed black children at all, The Bray School stuck to lessons that would prepare the children for better service to whites (Bly 2011, 454). This was not the last time religion, education, and domesticity intermingled in the house, though, as the Methodist dorm would occupy the space almost 175 years later.

The dorm, called Brown Hall, opened for the fall semester of 1926. It housed fourteen first-year female students from William & Mary and a Methodist bible matron named Miss Downing (*The Flat Hat* 1 Oct. 1926). The Woman's Missionary Society (WMS) named the building after a prominent Methodist family that donated to the project. By September 1927, WMS had added a two-story wing to the building (Lounsbury 2021, 4; See Figure 1). The interior of the house had a living room, dining room, sun parlor, and reception room in addition to bedrooms for the students and bible teacher (Ackerman 2009, 28). WMS had plans to build a larger brick dorm to accommodate "seventy-five to eighty-five girls" (*Fifteenth Annual Report* 1928). In 1930, The College of William & Mary purchased the building from WMS and moved it one block northwest on Prince George Street where it sat until 2023.



Figure 1. Brown Hall c. 1928. Image courtesy of Special Collections Research Center University Archive, William & Mary.

After the first Brown Hall building was moved, WMS broke ground on the new brick dorm in May 1930, and construction was complete as of October 17, 1930 (*The Flat Hat* 26 Sept. 1930; *The Flat Hat* 17 Oct. 1930; See Figure 2). Also named Brown Hall, WMS continued to run the dorm until William & Mary purchased the building in 1939. The new dorm contained two living rooms, a kitchenette, a room for the matron, a porch, and rooms for seventy-eight students. Brown Hall switched between a men's, women's, and eventually a co-ed dorm until 2022 with a brief period of occupation by the Army Special Training Corps and military families between 1943 and 1946 (Special Collections Knowledgebase, n.d.). The Bray-Digges House served as a small dorm, faculty housing, and administrative offices intermittently until 2021. As of February 2023, the Bray-Digges House building was reinforced, lifted onto a truck, and moved next to the First Baptist Church archaeological site on Nassau Street in Williamsburg, Virginia for restoration and future interpretation of its Bray School occupation.



Figure 2. Brown Hall c. 1949. Image courtesy of Special Collections Research Center University Archive, William & Mary.

Archaeology at The Bray Site

The Bray School Archaeological Site (23BD, 23BE, 23BF, 23BG), located on the corner of Prince George Street and North Boundary Street in Williamsburg, Virginia, has been excavated in three field schools between 2012-2014 and one professional season by archaeologists at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in 2022. The field schools were conducted as a part of a joint effort between the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and William & Mary called the Bray School Archaeological Project. The project intended to confirm and support the claim that the Bray School once occupied the same corner property.

In the 2012 field school season, archaeologists and students uncovered a sealed well 105 centimeters in diameter. They were able to excavate about seven feet down from the surface, though the well likely continues downward another thirty feet or more before hitting the water table. The well is approximately half a meter from a waist-level brick wall

framing the property along Prince George Street and about four meters from the current Brown Hall structure. As visible in Figure 3, the well was lined with bricks and surrounded by a brick path or platform. Nine distinct contexts made up the excavated well (See Table 1 for full context information.)



Figure 3. Photograph of Well Feature at the Bray Site (23BD). Image courtesy of CWF.

Context Number	Context Name	TPQ	Soil Type
23BD-00261	Well Fill Layer 1	1941	Sandy clay loam
23BD-00264	Well Feature Layer 2	2000	Sandy clay loam
23BD-00272	Well Feature Fill Layer 3	1940	Silty clay
23BD-00276	Well Feature Fill Layer 4	1892	Sandy clay
23BD-00297	Well Layer 5	1892	Sandy loam
23BD-00304	Well Layer 6	1915	Sandy loam
23BD-00317	Well Layer 7	1869	Sandy clay loam
23BD-00327	Mixed Well Layer Above Bricks	1885	Not recorded
23BD-00350	Well Layer 8	1762	Sandy clay

Table 1. Bray Site (23BD) Well Contexts

Based on an analysis of the field school paperwork, *terminus post quem* (TPQ) dates in the artifact catalog, and investigator notes, the well's likely timeline is as follows: The well was first dug between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century for use by occupants of the rental house, and it was in active use until the late nineteenth century. I posit that the well went sour at the end of the nineteenth century and was partially filled with construction material and fill from a nearby site containing artifacts dating to an earlier period. The lowest two layers of the well fill contain construction debris possibly from a nearby trench, and the artifacts in these layers date to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The well was then covered through the early twentieth century until it was disturbed by construction at the site between 1930 and 1940. In addition to a large gap in TPQ dates between layers three and four that are situated around the early twentieth century, there is also photographic evidence that the well was covered until the Brown Hall construction since the well's cover is visible in a picture of the house from 1929 (See Figure 4). It was then reopened by construction activity around 1930-1940 with the building of Brown Hall and subsequent repair and landscaping. While the well was open, students living in the dorm and other passers-by tossed refuse into the well until it was closed. Excavation notes claim the well was sealed by a 1930s clay cap that was disturbed in construction and later covered by a deteriorated board. The gravel layer to its side and the soil horizon above have TPQs of 1935, so women in the dorm likely had access to the well while it was open. One bottle in the top fill layer was manufactured in 1944 according to the manufacturing inscription which likely indicates it was open until at least that year. The well was then covered by wood boards and lightly covered with soil until archaeologists discovered it in 2012. No documentation has been found to prove this

timeline, though one architectural drawing from 1929 indicates that the architects knew about the well during construction. Due to the unconfirmed dates on the well artifacts and the wide range of people who had access to the well, this paper does not make definitive claims. Instead, theoretical frameworks will help imagine the possible uses and meanings of the materials deposited in the well in the context of co-education at William & Mary and the wider social moment revealed by the documentary record. Theories from the disciplines of engendered archaeology and household archaeology allow us to explore the implications of particular well artifacts as a part of a single-gendered dwelling on a co-educational campus. Social theories about institutional discipline and practice offer a framework for working through how the women may have used the artifacts as part of their daily activities in both intentional and unintentional ways with respect to the institutional regulation revealed by the documentary record. Theories of agentic consumption will further tie the women as subjects to the deposition of consumer goods found in the well. The following section will discuss key theoretical developments and their applicable concepts.



Figure 4. Bray-Digges House in 1929 with Visible Well Cover. Image courtesy of CWF.

Theoretical Background

For most of the discipline's history, archaeologists paid little attention to women. Their studies focused on the past cultures, experiences, and achievements of men. Engendered archaeology first emerged with a feminist critique of a sexless, yet androcentric archaeology in the 1980s, and is generally attributed to Conkey and Spector's publication, "Archaeology and the Study of Gender" (1984). Key to this publication is the introduction of "gender ideology," a system of meaning that includes the "prescriptions and proscriptions" for the acceptable behavior of people according to their biological sex (Conkey and Spector 1984, 15). Over the next decade, interest grew in using material culture to understand a culturally-produced gender. Special volumes like *Engendering Archaeology* and special issues like the 1991 issue of *Historical Archaeology* explored the application of feminist theory to archaeological evidence to create an engendered interpretation of the past (Voss 2006, 108). Tied firmly to second-wave feminism, many of the studies in the 1990s focused on asserting women's oppression and finding women through the study of women's hairstyles and clothing (Meskell 2001, 195). Archaeologists focused on assigning gender to types of artifacts or using gender to classify activity areas (Wilkie and Hayes 2006, 246). These studies fundamentally ignored the complexities of gender and its possible intersections with sexuality, economic status, ethnicity, race, and age, and viewed women as a homogenous group. Though slowly, archaeologists began to recognize gender as an embedded aspect of social identity that could place people or households within larger historical processes (Gilchrist 1991; Scott 1994; Wilkie and Hayes 2006, 247). Towards the end of the 1990s, third-wave feminist ideas began to make their way into engendered archaeology as archaeologists recognized the dynamic and

inextricable links between gender, race, ethnicity, and class. As stated by archaeologist Lynn Meskell, “gender identity should be seen as a complex assortment of networks of signifying practices, varying for individuals over time, as it intersects with other networks of signifying practices located in concepts such as class and race” (2001, 195-96).

Archaeologists began to incorporate theoretical frameworks of queer theory, subaltern identities, personhood, and embodiment (Wilkie and Hayes 2006, 249). Though their studies addressed a negotiated and intersectional gender identity, the majority focused on the experiences of middle-class white women and left out women of color. The early twenty-first century saw the emergence of Black feminist archaeology as African diaspora scholars engaged with engendered archaeologies and Black feminist theory (See Battle-Baptiste 2011). Scholars studied the ways in which Black women negotiated a particular identity and practice in the face of slavery and systemic racism (Voss 2006, 115). The Black feminist field became the strongest voice pushing for intersectional studies. In the last two decades, more scholars have engaged with studies of sexuality in relation to gender identities, and the discipline continually seeks to move beyond the rut of strict gender binaries through the study of transexual and transgender identities.

As it stands today, engendered archaeology does not just draw from feminist theories but instead takes from a wide range of theoretical frameworks, including practice theories, critical race theory, performance theory, Marxism, queer theory, and others. Overall, the engendered agenda is three-pronged. The first goal is to understand the dynamic negotiation and transformation of gender roles from past to present. The second is to challenge normative family and household structures and to demonstrate the fluidity of gender. The third is an attempt to make the discipline and archaeological interpretations

more accessible to the public, other disciplines, and marginalized voices (Wilkie and Hayes 2006, 243-44).

In her 2006 review of engendered historical archaeology, Laurie Wilkie views the future of archaeology as an expansion of feminist topics applied to theory and methodology in niche archaeological disciplines and a feminist archaeological engagement in politics. She sees archaeology as an opportunity to address masculinity and femininity in “discursive social relations” as well as intersectionality, personhood, and gendered inequality (Wilkie and Hayes 2006, 253-54). She also hopes for more political engagement in feminist issues by archaeologists to prevent the recasting of history in issues related to reproductive freedom, marriage, and child-rearing (Wilkie and Hayes 2006, 255). Since the time of publication, more archaeologists have engaged in political issues of abortion in historic contexts (See Kozub 2018; Muir 2022). Voss also notes that though men have been the focus of most archaeological investigations, masculinity and the dynamic, material construction of men’s gender are understudied (2006, 119-20). Archaeologists are now applying feminist theories to a wider range of studies, including institutional archaeology and the archaeology of poverty (See Spencer-Wood 2010, Espersen 2018). Publications critiquing the discipline itself using feminist theory have increased as well (See Abadia 2013; Bardolph 2014; Cobb and Croucher 2016).

Often discussed by those writing about gender in a post-processualist framework, agency and practice theories provide an opportunity to explore human behavior in the context of and as a response to social systems. Born out of dissatisfaction with the deterministic limitations of structuralist/functionalist theories and systems theory, agency theory acknowledges that people act purposefully to alter the external world. Though there

are many uses of agency in literature, the common stance is that people do not simply react to changes in their lives, but that they actively play a role in forming their social world through practice. The foundational works of agency theory come from Pierre Bourdieu's practice theory and Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration. Bourdieu popularized practice theory as he explored how social practice shapes society beyond conscious awareness (Dobres and Robb 2000, 5). Much of agency theory rests on Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, a unique schema of unconsciously internalized dispositions that determine how an individual perceives and acts in the world (Bourdieu 1977, 72). The schema structures and is structured by the external world. However, Bourdieu still takes a deterministic stance as he views *habitus* as a "conductorless orchestration" where human action is performed without "conscious reflection" (Bourdieu 1977, 70; Dornan 2002, 306). Giddens provides a framework with more room for intentionality when he argues that people create the conditions in which they live as a result of their actions, whether intentional or not (1979). He locates human practice in "tacit knowledge... skilfully applied in the enactment of courses of conduct" (Giddens 1979, 57). Individuals, somewhere between passive agents and free subjects, access, reflect, and act on the "meaning and content of habituated actions" within a structure of reproduced practices (Dornan 2002, 307). Still, both thinkers deny their subjects the irrational, emotive character of human intention. In this paper, I view social actors as active agents that act both with explicit intent and in non-discursive ways that structure their daily lives.

The concept of agency and its surrounding disciplinary discourse have expanded archaeologists' analytical toolbox. Archaeologists, like social theorists, approach agency variably. These approaches include the study of collective agency, individual intentionality,

a rational actor approach, and the consequences and practical rationality of social struggle (Dornan 2002, 309). Dornan outlines three central issues that lead to varying approaches in archaeology: questions about an applicable unit of analysis, the focus on resistance and rationality, and intentionality vs consequence (2002, 314-15). Archaeologists themselves do not agree on one definition of agency and instead choose to recognize that “agency operates in many ways at once” that contradict one another (Dobres and Robb 2000, 10). It is unlikely that one definition or theory of agency and practice will emerge, so instead, theory must account for action produced by both social structure and agency as well as the contexts of production and consumption (Dietler and Herbich 1998, 245). Of particular interest to this paper is the application of agency to studies of material culture. Agency offers a level of creativity to interpreting behavior visible in material remains as it understands that people appropriate materials in various combinations to negotiate their social positions and identities daily (Silliman 2001, 195). Whether intentional or not, people act on material culture in such a way that they rework, reaffirm, or reappropriate their social identities and positions.

To better understand consumption and deposition in the context of the Brown Hall women’s social identities and world, I will draw from recent approaches in consumption studies that view consumers as active agents who purchase goods intentionally. Rather than studying consumption itself or objects as separate entities, recent applications of consumption in historical archaeology have focused on why subjects acquire goods and how these goods are employed for cultural or social ends (Cook, Yamin, and McCarthey 1996, 57). This project views material culture as an active participant in the construction and maintenance of social relations and identities. This emphasis on agency in consumption

allows us to imagine multiple meanings in object purchase, use, and deposition since purchasers are viewed as agents that actively manipulate social symbols in acts of self-creation. Methodologies in consumption studied through agency theories center around qualitative interpretations of consumption as a cultural phenomenon with contextual meaning (Cook, Yamin, and McCarthey 1996, 59). These approaches allow us to understand both the commodities and the consumers as a part of a local, social world.

Crucial to my understanding of the social world of the Brown Hall women is the work of Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*. According to Foucault, institutions produce the types of “docile” bodies that society requires through disciplining, surveilling, and punishing the body to maintain political order (Foucault 1980, 139). These institutions include schools, prisons, hospitals, and family units. Discipline is defined as the methods that make possible “the meticulous control of the operation of the body” in a society with internalized rules and regulations (Foucault 1995; 137). The body becomes a site of subjugation by power systems, and subjects participate in their oppression as they practice habitual bodily routines that are culturally driven and reproduce norms (Foucault 1995, 191). In practices of self-discipline and self-surveillance, individuals voluntarily control themselves to conform with social and cultural norms that are born from institutionally created knowledge and serve to uphold state power. This monitoring occurs in both the practice of self-discipline and the discursive act of talking about what should and should not be done to conform (Pylypa 1998, 24). Though Foucault’s analysis of power and discipline was gender-neutral, it can be easily adapted to discuss gender and the discipline of gendered bodies. Top-down medical knowledge orders different activities and physiological standards for men and women, and gendered norms for health and bodily

appearance follow (Pylypa 1998, 22). Particular ways of dressing, adornment, and bodily manipulation become the standard for each gender, and women and men self-discipline accordingly. To meet these standards and conform to gender ideology, objects must be purchased and used, and are later discarded. Archaeologists then can use the material remains to study the activities of people as evidence of self-discipline and surveillance within a particular socio-historical context. This paper will explore how educational institutions impose normative, gendered behavior and how the resulting disciplinary practices manifest themselves in the archaeological record.

Lastly, I use approaches from the field of household archaeology to discern the dormitory as an alternative household in order to better understand the social relationships within the dorm and the role material culture plays in alternative domesticity. Mary Beaudry's work on engendered landscapes and living situations offers the opportunity to explore how living situations outside of the traditional household function similarly as fundamental social units (Beaudry 1999). In her work on nineteenth-century brothels and mill boarding houses, Beaudry coined the term "alternative household" to describe living situations that are single-sexed and often also have business purposes. She also adds that alternative households are also a site of leisure and domestic activity even though they appear business-like on the surface (Beaudry 1999; 121). Particularly, her theory on alternative household consumption is relevant to this project. In her work at the Boott Mills boarding houses, she developed the concept of corporate vs individual consumption that distinguishes between meaning in the act of purchase and consumption since the Mill staff controlled what materials were purchased for the boarding house including dishware and furniture though the primary users of those materials were the Mill workers (Beaudry 1999,

121). This distinction allows us to imagine the multiple meanings for both the purchasers and users of the objects. Though these objects do not tell us much about the consumption behavior of occupants, we can learn about the symbolic engagement by both the people who run boarding houses and the people who live inside. Together, these anthropological theories in gender, agency, practice theory, consumption, and household archaeology work together to provide a subject-centered and archaeologically-informed interpretation of the Brown Hall well and the social world its users occupied.

Methods & Results

Methods

This project employs documentary and archaeological artifact analysis to reconstruct the hyperlocal context of this period of occupation and reimagine the mundane lives of the women who lived in Brown Hall. Documentary research was conducted in the Summer of 2023 primarily in Williamsburg, Virginia at William & Mary's Swem Library Special Collections Research Center. The university papers archive of President J.A.C. Chandler and President Stuart Bryan contained records relating to the process of co-education, social rules and regulations set by the administration, and details concerning the construction and acquisition of Brown Hall. This project uses microfilm and original copies of architectural drawings, floor plans, correspondence between the administration and the Missionary Society president, administrative reports, college handbooks for students, disciplinary records, women's student government minutes, oral histories conducted in 1975, and articles from the student newspaper, *The Flat Hat*. I also conducted documentary research in the Fall of 2023 at Ferrum College's Stanley Library using the United Methodist Women Archive materials relating to Brown Hall and Home Mission

projects at the time of the dormitory. These materials included booklets advertising Methodist boarding houses, boarding house handbooks, and annual conference reports. Additionally, Sanborn fire insurance maps and local newspaper notices were used to contextualize the dorm in the local scene. I analyzed documents thematically for notions of normative gender, social surveillance and regulation, and various responses from students, as well as details on Brown Hall and the wider social context.

The artifact analysis relies on an archaeological collection housed and cared for by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's team of archaeologists and conservators in Williamsburg, Virginia. The materials analyzed in this paper come from the Bray Site 2012 season (23BD) and specifically, the well fill layers dating between 1915 and approximately 1950. Dates for artifacts were assigned according to analysis performed by CWF lab technicians. Using the site catalog, artifacts of interest were identified based on date, context, form, and style for further inspection. One assumption I make in my analysis and interpretation is that the artifacts in the well were once used by the women who lived in Brown Hall since the TPQ dates for the top three contexts show that the well was open at the time the women occupied the dorm, and the well is located within the walls of the property. However, there is no documentary evidence that proves the women used the well so my connection between the women and the well remains an assumption. Artifact analysis for this project remains primarily qualitative due to the small dataset of well artifacts and a wide range of artifact types. Qualitative analysis of form and decor better answers the research questions since it allows for a plurality of meaning. This project focuses on soda bottles and caps, alcohol containers, pharmaceutical bottles, personal items, and tableware since they offer the opportunity to imagine the various users and

meanings in use and deposition. Together with the documentary results that contextualize the symbology behind the archaeological remains, I use the analysis to imagine how the women of Brown Hall used the artifacts in their mundane lives as a part of and a response to their social world.

Artifact Analysis

Overall, the well assemblage contained all sorts of artifacts including architectural materials, ceramics, different kinds of glass, bottle caps, and other miscellaneous, personal finds. Since the well was filled before it was reopened during Brown Hall's construction, the artifacts did not fall far when disposed of, so many are mostly complete. The artifacts discussed in this project were excavated within a meter below the surface. Some artifacts including most ceramics seemed to have been broken before deposition since few were cross-mended, though it appeared that most of the glass was tossed into the well since there were many small fragments of bases, bodies, necks, and caps. Of particular interest to me were the various forms of glass bottles and tableware in addition to miscellaneous artifacts. As stated previously, the analysis of artifacts was mostly qualitative due to the nature of my research questions.

The well collection held 453 fragments of glass and 11 complete bottles. The glass assemblage was made up primarily of soda bottles as well as alcohol bottles, pharmaceutical bottles, glass containers with unknown contents, tableware, miscellaneous glass objects like stirrers and syringes, and flat glass from windows and mirrors (See Table 2 for full categorical counts). Glass bottles that once held soda, liquor, beer, wine, and other substances proved useful to understanding the timing of consumption and deposition due to their known manufacture dates. All the glass was contained in the top two layers of well

fill. There were 317 fragments of green soda or beer bottles and 3 complete bottles. There were 44 fragments of liquor bottles and 2 complete bottles, as well as a combined 82 fragments and 6 complete bottles or containers of an indeterminate purpose. The bottle fragments ranged from small pieces of the body to almost complete bottles with the base, body, and partial neck remaining. Archaeologists also found approximately 2,761 crown bottle caps in the top two well fill layers. Most were clumped together with architectural materials and dirt. Glass bottles with dateable forms or embossed manufacturing information were dated by lab technicians at Colonial Williamsburg's archaeology laboratory. Bottles with a single, known manufacture date ranged between 1940 and 1944. Those with less concrete dates were given ranges based on style or an estimation of a 1940s manufacture date. The ranges varied slightly, though when the earliest and latest date data were averaged, the overall average range for manufacturing date was between 1934 and 1952. Taken together, these dates pointed to manufacture, purchase, consumption, and deposition in the early 1940s. Even when the time lag between manufacture and consumption was taken into consideration, these data evidenced consumption and deposition around or before 1945. These data also revealed that the well was likely left open past 1944 since some bottles likely dated to the late 1940s and early 1950s, though no bottle fragment with a concrete manufacturing date post-1944 existed in the collection. These data highlight the kinds of consumption practiced at the site. The women and later occupants of the dorm were drinking soda, beer, liquor, and wine, and using various glass containers for storage and tableware. The high number of bottle caps and bottle fragments illustrated the prolific consumption of soda and beer at the site since over 2,700 individual

caps were found. This high level of consumption will be discussed later in the context of the surrounding cultural and social environment of the time.

Glass Type	Fragments	Complete
Liquor	44	2
Beer/Pop Bottle*	317	3
Pharmaceutical	2	2
Tableware	4	0
Indeterminate container or jar	53	4
Indeterminate bottle	29	2

Table 2. Categorical Glass Counts for Contexts 23BD-00261, -00264, -00272
*278 known Coca-Cola bottle fragments

The ceramic assemblage of the well was sparse in the top fill layers. The topmost layer had eighteen fragments, the second had eight, and the third had two. Though there were ceramics dated to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the lower layers of the well fill, these represented the initial filling. I paid the most attention to the top three fill layers since they were created during the study period. The top layers contained hexagonal porcelain bathroom tiles and unidentifiable container fragments of pearlware, creamware, whiteware, yellow ware, English delftware, American blue and gray stoneware, Westerwald stoneware, English bone china, English white salt-glazed stoneware, and red-bodied slipware. Of the twenty-eight total fragments in the top three layers, eleven were decorated with either colorful slip, transfer print designs, painted, annular slipped bands, or molded designs. Interestingly, all the colorful decorations used blue slip or blue paint in the designs which included landscape scenes, clouds, flowers, and leaves. Most interesting to this study were the platters, plates, and bowls since they point to eating and

socializing in dining settings. The assemblage contained fragments of a porcelain serving dish, an ironstone platter, an ironstone or white granite bowl, a porcelaneous plate, and a pearlware plate with a transfer print landscape. There was also a fragment from a whiteware basin with transfer-printed blue flowers and leaves on the interior. Of the dining objects of interest, four out of the five fragments were undecorated. Fragments ranged from 1.3 cm to 5 cm in length, and there were only two pairs that mended. Due to the singular and small nature of the ceramic fragments, it is possible that some of the ceramics came from another site as the well may have been filled a second time using external fill with older ceramics already deposited. Though the whiteware, bone china, ironstone china, yellow ware, and blue and gray American stoneware were manufactured and circulated during the 1930s and into the 1940s, the top layers of the well fill contained fragments of pearlware, creamware, delftware, white salt-glazed stoneware, and Westerwald stoneware that were manufactured between the early and mid-nineteenth century. The fact that these fragments are dated earlier than the dorm but are included in contexts mostly dating to the 1940s could support the conclusion that this is not their original context. Instead, these fragments might represent a secondary deposition episode where the ceramics were deposited outside of the well around the manufacturing period and then taken to be used as fill when the well was covered for the last time around 1945. However, it is also possible that these ceramics were used past their manufacturing range and were objects of primary deposition. The discussion will address the implications of decorated and plain ceramics as well as dining objects in the context of the dorm occupation.

Various miscellaneous artifacts that were once personal items also made up the well's assemblage. Smaller, personal items were made of all different kinds of materials.

The collection included glass pharmaceutical stirrers, a glass car model once containing candy, pyralin plastic comb fragments, vinyl record fragments, mother-of-pearl buttons, and coins. School-related items such as a fragment from a polychrome ruler, graphite pencil fragments, and part of a plastic notebook ring were found in the well. All the objects were found in the well's top two fill layers, so they likely date to the time of the women's occupation of the dorm and could even be the personal objects of the Brown Hall residents due to their closer proximity to the well. Later discussion will consider the plurality of meanings and uses of these personal items.

Documentary & Architectural Analysis

Archival research revealed new insights into the construction of Brown Hall and an environment of regulation and surveillance. This section will discuss the greatest finds, though many documents aided in reconstructing the social environment. William & Mary's university archives provided extensive documentary evidence of differences in social expectations and regulations between male and female students at The College during the study period. Since the women and men had separate student government associations until 1940, they also had separate student handbooks issued by the separate organizations. These handbooks contained the student government constitution, a directory of buildings and staff, social and academic club offerings, social rules, and house rules. Of interest to me was the section on social rules and house rules since they differed significantly from those in the men's handbook. These social rules governed where women could be, what they could wear, who they could talk to, and what they could do every day of the week at every hour. Women had to ask for permission from the Social Director to go anywhere but class and church, and the house mother or dorm matron had to know where girls were going

anytime they left. The women had to get approval to go on dates and had to follow strict dating rules about time, place, and conduct. The rules were extremely specific and differed by day of the week. For instance, this excerpt from the 1928-29 rulebook revealed the differences in rules by day, class, and time.

II.—Engagements:

Seniors:

1. A Senior may have engagements any night during the week except Monday.
2. Between 4 P. M. and supper a Senior may go for a walk with a man either on the Duke of Gloucester Street or to the Lake.

Juniors:

1. A Junior may have engagements on Saturday and Sunday nights, and two nights a week exclusive of Monday night.

Sophomores:

1. A Sophomore may have engagements on Saturday and Sunday nights and one night a week exclusive of Monday.

Freshmen:

1. A Freshman may have engagements only on Saturday and Sunday nights.

Figure 5. Social Rules Excerpt from the 1928-29 WSCGA Rulebook

In addition to the campus rules, house rules, standards, and other pages of the social rules that outlined specific permissions, one can imagine that it would be difficult to memorize and strictly follow all the rules since they are highly situational and vary by time of day, day of the week, social class, and time of the year. A review of the minutes from WSCGA meetings supported this conclusion as there were constant reminders of specific rules, especially around the time and place for dates which demonstrates that the women broke the rules often enough to require mass reminders. The school required freshmen girls to take a test on the rules at the beginning of the year (College Rules Collection). A review of a sample of disciplinary trials between 1936 and 1949 revealed that girls were punished for offenses such as leaving campus without permission overnight, dating outside of social hours, shooting a B.B. gun, not signing out when leaving campus, dating on days not permitted, and breaking the terms of punishment for committed offenses (Women Students'

Cooperative Student Government Records). Punishments included being “campused” for anywhere from three days to four weeks and as severe as eight weeks as discussed in one trial of a girl riding back from Richmond in a car with an out-of-town boy. “Campusing” was a reduction of social privileges. While “campused,” the women were not allowed to attend social events, go on dates, or leave campus, and they had to stay in their dorm during social hours. Social rules for women would not loosen until the 1953-54 academic year, and even then, the rules governed all aspects of their social life. To understand the full regulatory picture, I also looked at the rules for men at the time. Though they also had to follow general campus and dormitory rules, men had no specific social rules. They had no strict guidelines for dating, though they did need permission from the Men’s Dean to go out-of-town. Separate social rule books for women would continue through 1953 despite the merging of the men’s and women’s student governments in 1940.

My analysis of how alcohol policies changed over the period revealed that restrictions loosened over time. These changing regulations provided a backdrop for interpreting alcohol-related artifacts found on campus. Early rules on alcohol before the school admitted women prohibited drinking on campus and going to town to drink without permission. In the 1923-24 school year, the rules forbade “the use of intoxicating liquors” (College Rules Collection). A 1932 signed rule card stated that students must “refrain from the use of intoxicating liquor and not to keep liquor in room or elsewhere” (College Rules Collection). According to a disciplinary trial about a girl becoming drunk and disorderly at a football game, in 1941 the college did not forbid drinking but asked students to control how much they drank and maintain the standards of conduct (Women Students’ Cooperative Student Government Records). The official rule from the 1939-40 school year

stated that “the College regards any evidence of misuse of alcohol as a serious breach of accepted standards of department” (College Rules Collection). However, this did not permit students to drink or to keep alcohol in the dormitories. In 1953, the administration conducted a study of how other colleges were regulating alcohol consumption to improve their policies. This study resulted in a reversal of the drinking policy. The school once again prohibited the “possession or consumption by William and Mary students of alcohol, spirits, or wine anywhere on the campus or in any college building” (College Rules Collection). Despite the initial loosening of restrictions, the College tightly regulated alcohol consumption on paper, and later discussion will consider alcohol-related material remains in the context of its prohibition on campus throughout the study period.

Lastly, my analysis of architectural drawings and correspondence between the school’s administration revealed the relationship between the Methodist Church and William & Mary and their intention behind the structure’s. A study of the 1930 floor plan illuminated key details about life in the dorm. Firstly, the new dorm contained no kitchen and no dining room in favor of a small kitchenette on the first floor. In a 1938 letter from the Virginia President of WMS, Mrs. Lee Britt to the Bursar, Charles Duke, Mrs. Britt stated that in a personal conversation with President Chandler a few years prior, he asked her to build the new Brown Hall for the college (Office of the President John Stewart Bryan Records, 1938). He also requested that she have it built without a dining room to integrate it with the rest of campus since women would have to eat meals in the dining hall instead of the dorm. The fact that President Chandler asked the Methodists to build a dorm raised questions about the financial health of the college at the time, though it also revealed that the Methodists were operating the dorm in close collaboration with the school’s

administration. It also provided an interesting consideration when examining artifacts since the lack of formal dining space might reduce the amount of tableware present in the artifact assemblage. The floorplan also revealed the placement of the house mother's living space in relation to the girls' living space. As shown in Figure 6, the matron's room sat right between the two entrances and right next to the two living rooms. This would have allowed her to easily observe who entered and exited the building and the activities taking place in the common spaces. When considering the requirements to sign in and out of the dorm for any activity besides class, it becomes apparent that the housemother was in a good position to surveil the women's behavior. Much more could be said about the results of the documentary research and analysis, though I will discuss other important findings in conversation with theoretical perspectives in the next section.

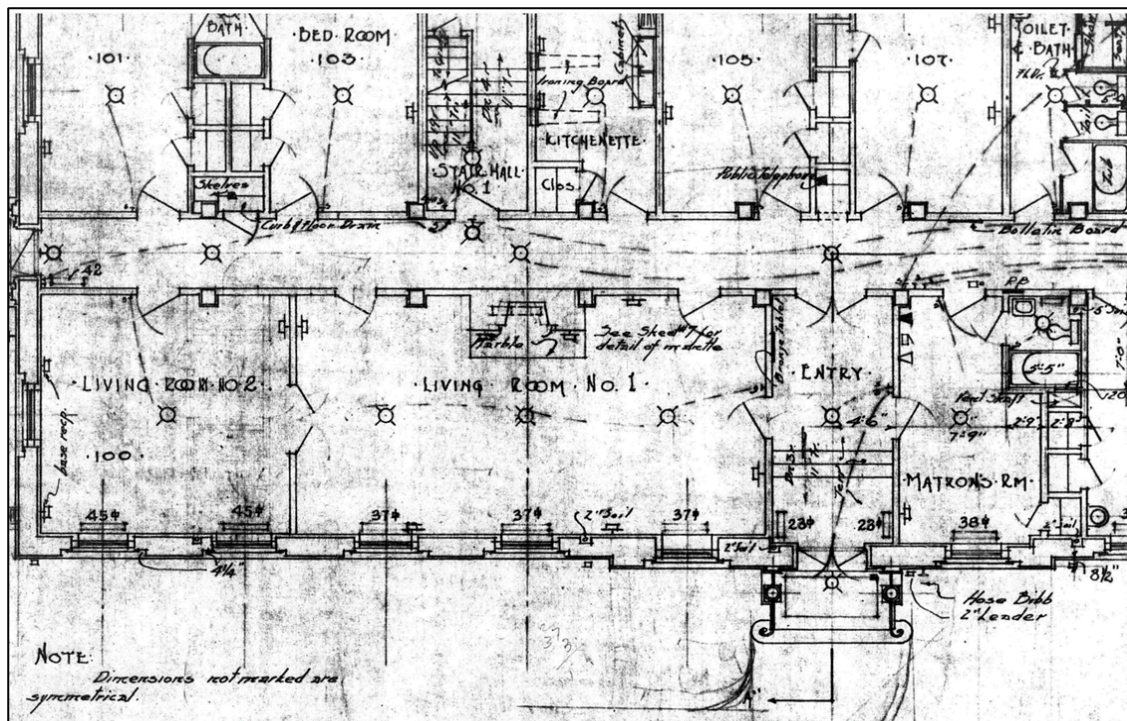


Figure 6. Architectural Floor Plan of Brown Hall First Floor, 1930. Document courtesy of Special Collections Research Center University Archive, William & Mary.

Discussion

Institutionalized Social Regulation

The ideal of the Southern Lady persisted in the aftermath of the Civil War through the 1930s. Founded in white patriarchal hegemony, the ideal Southern woman was pious, submissive, and chaste. The perpetuation of this particular vision of femininity upheld the white patriarchal society where women were virtuous, gentle, and submissive to men. College was seen as a transition between girlhood and ladyhood, and it became the role of the university to nurture and uphold Southern femininity as women left the home and ventured outside of the protection and influence of their parents (Freeman 2011, 22). College was an opportunity to both develop the mind and prepare the future workforce. This purpose held fast for both women and men in co-educational institutions. Through meeting notes from the women's student government, it is clear that William & Mary was determined to develop the moral character of its female students in line with the ideals of the Southern woman. The following paragraphs will discuss this in conjunction with documentary evidence of regulated social life within these bounds. This element of moral development also functioned as part of the college's role as substitute parents. In the home, parents are tasked with the safety and development of children, and the college assumes this role in the parents' absence. In a December 1919 letter to the Dean of Women he would hire, President Chandler states that the duties of the director would center around the care of the female students: "In general, they [the duties] are to organize and look after the social work among the girls with due consideration to their health and to matters of hygiene, this work to be done under the immediate direction of the president" (Office of the President Julian Alvin Carroll Chandler Records). This letter reveals that the duties of

certain administrative staff resemble those of a parent and further indicates that the College had a vested interest in looking after the hygiene and social health of its female students.

Until the 1960s, both public and private universities and colleges operated *in loco parentis*, or as a stand-in for parents in the legal sense. This allowed them to assume control over students' lives “including speech, association, and movement” and place decision-making responsibility with the school rather than students, parents, or courts (Lee 2011, 66).

Records from the University Archives reveal evidence of this level of institutional control over students and targeted development in line with normative femininity for the time and geographic region. Strict regulations in the form of rules and punishments existed in part to make women's lives at school resemble their lives in their parents' homes. This took the form of set study and bedtimes, limited and structured socialization between women and men, required house and student government meetings, limited movement off-campus, and rules for dress and standard behavior. Also, living spaces promoted familial arrangements and a particular social development. The women could practice domesticity in the parlors and dining room by hosting peers and dates under the guidance of an elder matron. These rooms also allowed the policing of women's sexuality, as dates were approved, received, and observed by the housemothers. Even the Dean of Women approved dates for the female students. Courses in home economics were offered to teach women skills in childcare, home management, sewing, cooking, and other domestic tasks. Though William & Mary also offered courses to prepare women for the workforce, they also emphasized the importance of domesticity.

One critical component of Southern femininity that colleges sought to uphold was piety. Even though William & Mary was a public institution unaffiliated with any religious

denomination or organization, they still encouraged students to attend local services and drew heavily on Christian religious ideals and narrative in their operations. WSCGA meeting notes from 1927 reveal that one of the talks given to the female student body at weekly meetings was on prayer and “the desirability of attending chapel” (Women Students’ Cooperative Government Association Records). The minutes also stated that the Dean of Women and the guests she brought also gave talks that framed honesty, love, truth, and purity as “sacred things” (Women Students’ Cooperative Government Association Records). These talks directly address topics and narratives similar to those found in Christian teachings. Often in the rules, exceptions to dating restrictions centered around religious activities. The only time women could date outside of social hours was if they attended church on Sundays with a date (Women Students’ Cooperative Government Association Records). Though the school did not require chapel attendance, it was strongly encouraged. These actions by the College can be directly connected to the institution’s role of maintaining and further developing the moral, pious character of its female students.

Since the dorm was run by a religious institution until 1939, it is important to consider the religious values and teachings of the Methodist Church as part of the wider context of the site. The house mother, usually a deaconess, was selected by the Women’s Missionary Society to both care for the women and lead bible instruction. This carried through the first two iterations of Brown Hall under the Methodists and even for the first few years after William & Mary purchased the building from WMS. Though stated as an intention for the dorm before it was operable, it is unclear whether bible study was ever conducted in Brown Hall. Whether the women living in the dorm were actively exposed to Methodist teachings or not, they still occupied a space with a religious purpose. In a student

newspaper article in 1926 on the new Brown Hall, the pastor of the Methodist Church states that the new dorm and the new Methodist Church on the same block were to be used by all students, not just Methodists. He also states that “the dormitory is a place where the ideals of religion and of the home may be retained by any student while at College” (*The Flat Hat* 1 Oct. 1926). Here, we see the same theme of college and the dorm as resemblant of the home as well as the emphasis on religious ideals that we also see in the institutional goals and methods of William & Mary. President J.A.C. Chandler even had a close friendship with Mrs. Lee Britt, the president of the Virginia Conference of the Women’s Missionary Society. As mentioned earlier in the results, one letter between Mrs. Britt and the bursar revealed that the school’s administration and the Methodists worked together on practical matters related to water and power for the building but also on more conceptual tasks like structuring the dorm to fit with campus social life. Though it is unclear which specific Methodist teachings were emphasized in the dorm, reports from the annual meeting of the Southern WMS conference exhibit the activities and goals of the dorm from the Methodist perspective. At the 1933 conference, College Deaconess Zoe Anna Davis reported that “the purpose for the maintenance of the dormitory is to provide a wholesome Christian atmosphere for girls while away at college. Vespers each Monday evening, monthly parties, and informal interviews are some of the influences which make life in Brown Hall different” (*Twenty-Third Annual* 1933, 154-55). She also states that the dorm is the third point of the “complete educational triangle” of Methodist “devotional and recreational” student life along with religious courses at William & Mary and work by the local church’s student council (*Twenty-Third Annual* 1933, 154-55). As evidenced above,

the women living in Brown Hall were exposed to religious teachings and values through their dormitory experience.

Furthermore, the architecture of the first Brown Hall building reinforces gendered expectations as the reception room enforces the social rules for dating and the notions of proper, virtuous behavior for a Southern woman. Reception rooms were created to control interactions between the genders and thus to control women's sexuality. The ideal Southern lady was virtuous, and though dating was allowed, it occurred under severe restrictions to prevent promiscuous behavior. If women wanted to have a date, they had to bring men into the drawing room or reception room of their dorm after approval by the house mother and complying with all the other detailed restrictions regarding time, day, and social class. One social rule from the 1933-34 WSCGA handbook states that "all dates must be held in the living rooms of dormitories or sorority houses, but at certain seasons the administration will announce when dates can be held on campus or porches of dormitories and sorority houses" (Women Students' Cooperative Government Association Records). Another rule from an undated standards card from the time states that "girls are expected to use ONLY the main door when leaving or returning to a dormitory with a man" (College Rules Collection). The daily practice of receiving men under the surveillance of the housemother was structured by notions of chaste femininity. This practice also structured how women viewed themselves and the ways they interacted with the men they dated. Close surveillance prevented women from engaging in promiscuous behavior in the dorm. The College even went as far as to expel two students who became pregnant outside of marriage. Clearly, the school and dorm administration attempted to control heterosexual contact through rules that both limited and structured interactions between women and

men. No other acceptable practice of sexuality was represented in the documents, though that does not mean that women did not engage in alternative, non-heterosexual behaviors. Women often broke the dating rules when it came to dating men, so it is not impossible to imagine that some women covertly engaged in romantic or sexual relationships with other women or that some women did not view themselves strictly as women on a gender binary.

One important finding of this project is that social rules for female students differed greatly from those for male students at the time. In the WSCGA handbook for female students, rules governed women's personal lives in aspects ranging from dating to social activities to standards of dress. In addition to explicit rules, there were also implicit expectations for behavior based on standards for women. For instance, in a WSCGA meeting in December 1926, Dean of Women Ms. Taylor "emphasized clean dancing" and told the students that "it was a custom of the College for girls not to smoke" (Women Students' Cooperative Government Association Records). Notes from other meetings remind the girls of proper dress length for dances and what can be worn outside of the dorm. No handbooks for male students survive in the record, though rule sheets from right before co-education reveal limited regulation of male social life beyond reminders to take proper care of the dormitories. There is also no evidence men were subject to talks encouraging them to uphold values of masculinity. In this study period, all students were subject to the same ten rules set by the administration, the honor code, and dorm rules, but only women were subject to extensive social rules. This potentially occurred as a response to concerns about co-education expressed by parents and male students. Another important consideration when discussing disproportionate regulation is the potential for disproportionate punishment. For instance, if a male and female student were caught on a

date past curfew, only the woman was punished since only women were prohibited from being on dates at certain times. Even though the two equally participated in breaking the rule, only the woman faced the consequences. This inequality speaks to the importance placed on the difference between men and women and the perceived need to regulate women's behavior to protect their gentle, virtuous, and submissive nature. The parental character of the institution contributed heavily to the regulation of the women's lives which impacted their daily experience in the world through structured gender rules and expectations.

Disciplining the Self and Peer

Surveillance of female students' bodily and social comportment to gendered expectations occurred on multiple levels: the administration, the peer, and the self. As discussed above, the administration surveilled student behavior through top-down rules, architecture, and controlled social activities. Not only did the administration closely watch student behavior, but surveillance was also encouraged at the peer level. One survey response from Laura Parrish's questionnaire sent to women who attended William & Mary between 1918 and 1945 stated that Social Director Ms. Taylor "asked her to spy on other students and report any wrongdoing" (Parrish 1985, 23). In an oral history recorded in 1976, Mrs. Marguerite Wynne-Roberts, the former Assistant Dean of Women in the 1930s and 40s, remembers that rules were not broken too frequently and if they were, it was innocent. She also recalled that when rules were broken, the students "were very good in seeing that their regulations were conformed to and that the students abided by them" (Wynne-Roberts 1975). Institutionally speaking, the College relied on the concept of self-governance to legislate and adjudicate student conduct. The women students oversaw

recommending legislation, enforcing policies, and judging cases of rule-breaking through their cooperative government association that all students were required to join. The women's student government had one committee dedicated to judging honor code violations and another to judge violations of social rules. The women ran the investigations themselves where they issued punishments with final approval from the Dean of Women and the President. In part, they judged each other's compliance with feminine norms and restrictive sexuality since rules also regulated behavior along the guidelines of proper Southern womanhood.

The women also self-legislated and regulated one another in an unofficial capacity through a set of rules for freshmen called "duc rules." Every year, upper-class women and men set arbitrary rules for freshmen to follow during their introductory course week and sometimes throughout the year. Students imposed rules on one another to distinguish the social classes and establish the upperclassmen hierarchy. These rules concerned the appearance and social behavior of students. Rules differed by gender. Those for freshmen women in 1927 included requirements to wear dresses backward, wear ribbons, skip to meals, address upperclassmen by "miss" and "mister," and occasionally forbid them from wearing nail polish or dating upperclassmen (Women Students' Cooperative Government Association Records). Most notably, all underclassmen were required to wear special caps called "duc caps" to distinguish them from other students for two months (Women Students' Cooperative Government Association Records). Though often temporary and childish, Duc rules had material counterparts and impacted students' bodily appearance based on gender. These rules altered their social experience based on bodily identifiers.

In addition to bodily regulations by the administration and their peers through rules, daily practices in the dorm also shaped the women's experience through habitual practices of proper, gendered behavior. One such practice is hosting and socialization enforced in line with the ideals of Southern womanhood. These behaviors leave traces in the archaeological record through the recovered glass and ceramic tableware. Though not complete, they provide a glimpse of the dining sets used by the women in the dorm. The fragments found in the well may have been part of larger dining sets used in the kitchenette in Brown Hall or the earlier dining room in the house before the new build. Though it is unlikely they were deposited during the time of the Bray-Digges House dorm, it is possible that the dining sets were brought into the new building after the old one moved. After all, the transfer happened during the Great Depression, so the Methodist Women's Society could have saved money by using old sets in the new building. When interpreting these fragments of dinnerware, one must consider the distinction between the purchaser and the user. Since the dorm is a form of boarding house, it is unlikely that the women brought their own dishes. Instead, the Methodists likely purchased dining sets along with the other furnishings in the house. Rather than representing the tastes of the women, the ceramic better represents the tastes and considerations of WMS. Analysis of the form and style of the fragments revealed that most known dining pieces were undecorated and less than half of the unknown fragments were decorated. Investigations of other boarding houses and dorm-like settings found that dining sets were primarily plain white rather than decorative (Wilkie 2010; O'Donovan and Mills 2020). This lack of decoration is equally as meaningful to interpretation. In her study of fraternity dining sets, Wilkie explains,

Still others suggest that the plain white ceramics nicely presented the values of simplicity, purity, and cleanliness, which became so important in the domestic

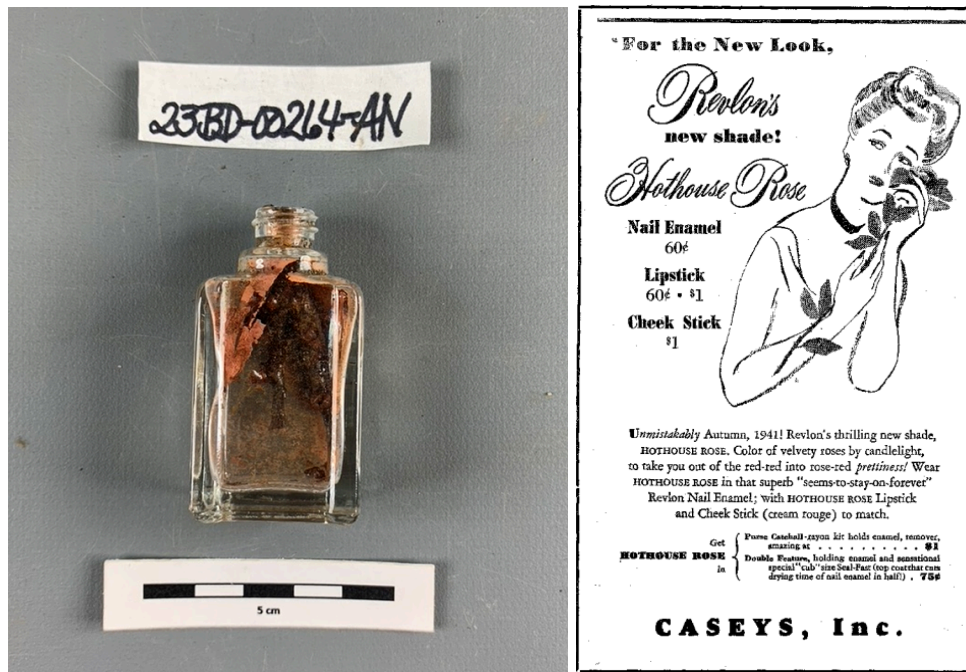
sphere....A woman who set her table with white ceramics was demonstrating her role as keeper of her family's moral and physical well-being (and of course, the two were intrinsically entwined, with cleanliness brushing against Godliness). (2010, 70-71)

It is possible that the Methodists purchased plain dinnerware for functional, economic reasons since decorative tableware was expensive. It is also possible that they chose plain white to represent their values and identity. The color white is often associated with purity, and a matching dining set would resemble the unification of a family. Though decoration is typically associated with women and their role in displaying social status in the home, there is also meaning in plain ceramics (Vincentelli 2000, 78). As previously mentioned, the dormitory setting acted as a space where female students could practice domesticity under the careful watch of an older woman, and the ceramic tableware would allow them to practice middle-class consumption and display (Vincentelli 2000, 78). These vessels serve as a physical remnant of the women's practice of group socialization since they would eat and drink together. In conversations around these vessels, the women likely engaged in unconscious discursive practices such as discussing the deviations from appropriate behavior they saw during the day, bringing up topics that they believed were proper for young women, and engaging with the matron about all sorts of topics. Even without decoration, these material items reinforced notions of femininity since they allowed the women to physically practice domesticity and engage with material symbols of the values associated with pious Southern women. Here, in these social settings, the women reinforced their own and each other's notions of proper femininity.

Though the school administration placed external expectations for behavior on these women, archaeological evidence highlights that the women of Brown Hall policed their own social identities in accordance with gender norms and the vision of a Southern

Lady. Bodily manipulation in the form of decorative adornment and hygiene practices served as self-disciplinary control to keep women's bodies in line with the enforced feminine identity. Both sex and gender are forms of embodied identity (White and Beaudry 2009, 212). The body is manipulated and elaborated on through voluntary and involuntary measures to align with the corporeal style defined for each sex and gender. Bourdieu's *habitus* and *hexis* provide a framework to think about how the women both perceived the world and acted in it according to internalized socio-cultural dispositions. Structured by and structuring these dispositions, *hexis* is how one acts in one's body, or the embodiment of these dispositions (Bourdieu 1977, 87-88). Embodiment happens through structured lifestyle, habits, postures, and the decoration and elaboration of the body according to culturally given dispositions. These methods of embodiment through manipulation include hygiene and beauty products that not only communicate affiliation to particular identities or standards but also connect to materials found in the archaeological record. Arguably the most exciting find in the well feature is a complete, rectangular nail polish bottle (See Figure 7). Though it is missing its cap, there is an iron alloy lid liner protecting the red polish color and a nylon bristle brush inside. Nail polish can be directly associated with feminine identities since it was advertised directly to women, and it was taboo for men to use it at the time of this study. Ads for similar nail polish appear in the student newspaper along with images of well-put-together, young white women (See Figure 8). Polish was used to alter the appearance of fingernails, and users could pick colors to match clothing or convey messages. It was also a cheap accessory that allowed women to retain their femininity despite the financial hardships of the Great Depression. This kind of bodily adornment could easily align women's bodies to the ideal feminine form or convey a

subversive message. For instance, the color red can be both a patriotic color during wartime or a suggestive nod to sexuality and love. Something as minimal as nail polish serves as bodily self-discipline to conform the body to the expectation of femininity but also presents an opportunity to establish and communicate personal, symbolic meaning on their bodies.



Figures 7 and 8. Nail Polish Bottle from 23BD-00264 and Caseys Advertisement of Revlon's Beauty Products from *The Flat Hat* 28 Oct. 1941

Hygiene products serve as another material correlate of bodily manipulation that the women of Brown Hall used to inscribe and embody feminine identities reinforced by the self, peer, and administration. The catalog of artifacts contains an entry for a pharmaceutical bottle labeled “Drene” with a bottle style that dates between 1935 and 1949 (See Figure 9). This bottle would have contained synthetic Drene Shampoo produced by Procter & Gamble who marketed their product towards women to silken and shine hair. Archaeologists also found a fragment of a black, plastic pharmaceutical bottle lid marked with the Lambert Pharmacal Company (LPCo) brand. The form and branding of the cap date to around the 1930s. LPCo primarily sold antiseptic mouth rinse and toothpaste. The

well also contained a fragment of aqua pharmaceutical glass with a prescription lip and a small, rectangular glass bottle with measurement lines down the body. These remains of pharmaceutical products fit within the category of hygiene and non-essential beauty products that people would have used to clean themselves and maintain a particular appearance. In addition, a fragment of a clear, pyralin comb was found in the same context as a fragment of a glass mirror likely from a bathroom or bedroom. These artifacts serve as evidence that women in the dorm participated in self-regulatory hygiene practices since the products would be used to alter the body in a way that met standards of hygiene and beauty. Though the women themselves were the ones to physically practice this form of regulation, the expectations and enforcement came from figures of authority. As discussed previously, watching over the health and hygiene of female students was an explicit responsibility of the Dean of Women and housemothers. Though no meeting minutes mentioned talks on proper hygiene, one can imagine the director reminding the girls of proper appearance and cleanliness. Also, the women likely internalized feminine beauty standards from the larger cultural authority of ads. Each edition of the student paper contained gendered adverts with beauty products like makeup, mouthwash, nail polish, and hair serums that explicitly stated the kind of women their products were meant for. Ads often framed their products as ways to keep men attracted to a woman's body and overall appearance, and they included drawings or photos of what women could and should look like with their products. This surveillance of women's health and hygiene manifests in the material record as fragments of pharmaceutical products used to alter women's physical appearance to keep the body within standards set by society at large and the college administration.



Figure 9. Drene Shampoo Bottle from 23BD-00264

Though daily acts of changing one's appearance with pharmaceutical products or socializing around a set table seem minimally consequential, they all represent forms of self-regulation in the face of externalized and internalized messages about gendered behavior. Power is enacted on and carried out through individual bodies, and daily movements train the body according to and in ways that reproduce particular gendered dispositions (Foucault 1995, 136; Bourdieu 1977, 81). Though authoritative bodies like educational institutions may regulate students according to gender using rules, activities, and punishments, social expectations of gender and sex are enacted on the body by the self. Acts of self-discipline and bodily manipulation with material goods alter the self to communicate particular messages about social identity. In this context, the women in the dorm used beauty and hygiene products to convey their compliance with normative Southern femininity expected by the school, their parents, and one another. It is also important to consider the women's personal choice in these acts of self-discipline since they involve acts of consumer consumption. In the context of increased consumerism and

consumption post World War I, women had an increased choice of products and styles to fit within the expected standards. They also had the choice to adhere to standards of behavior and appearance, and the social consequences ranged from ostracization to punishment by the school and peers for nonconformity. Though the women were predominantly subjects of regulation, they still exercised agency within these restrictions on their bodily movement and appearance. The next section will discuss this further in relation to their engagement with gendered expectations through material symbols and consumption.

Subversive Consumption

Archaeological evidence also revealed that not all students adhered to the ideal behavior and identity set forth by the school's administration and the wider society. Students in part negotiated the gendered expectation for women to be reserved and well-behaved through their consumption practices. It was considered unladylike to drink in excess, and the school barred women from drinking at all. Throughout the study period, all students were forbidden from keeping or consuming alcohol in their rooms, and even as school policies loosened in the 1940s, the school expressed that students should not misuse alcohol on or off campus. Early co-education at William & Mary also took place against the backdrop of a national prohibition of the production and sale of alcoholic beverages, so it was also illegal to purchase alcohol. The prohibition and temperance movement reflected Protestant values against excessive drinking and women played a large part in promoting the prohibition. However, archaeological evidence suggests that the women at Brown Hall regularly broke these rules since liquor and beer bottles appear repeatedly in the record. In the top well layers, archaeologists found forty-four fragments of glass associated with alcohol consumption and two complete bottles. One of those bottles is a complete

“Edelbrau” beer bottle dating from 1930 to 1940 (See the center bottle in Figure 10). Alcohol-related artifacts also include drinking tumblers, stirrers, wine bottle fragments, and brown and clear liquor flasks. There are also fragments of large, indeterminate glass containers and one complete “one-quart” glass bottle that possibly held home-brewed alcoholic beverages that were common during prohibition. Together with documentary evidence of women reprimanded for drinking on campus, these findings indicate that the women likely drank inside or around the dorm and disposed of the bottles in the well outside. Though an open well is publicly accessible, the contents are hidden from the eye and the depth provides a level of secrecy and anonymity for stashing contraband. All students knew the campus rules against drinking since they were constantly reminded and even tested on them, so any act of drinking could be considered an intentional subversion of the school’s regulation of behavior. In these acts of subversive alcohol consumption, the women also disregarded standards of behavior for proper, pious Southern women since both the school and Protestant, Southern society at large saw immoderate drinking as inappropriate for young women.



Figure 10. Beer and Liquor Bottles from 23BD-00264

Not only did the women consume alcohol against the school and federal rules, but they took part in the excessive consumption of soda as well. The top three layers of well fill contained approximately 2,761 crown bottle caps, 317 fragments of green soda bottles, and three complete soda bottles. Of those 317 fragments, 278 are known to come from Coca-Cola branded bottles from Newport News, VA (See Figure 11 for a sample of bottles). The sheer number of caps and bottle fragments suggests that the women engaged in excessive consumption of soda since the well was likely only accessible for a few years. Though they were not banned from drinking sugary beverages, immoderate consumption of any kind was not considered to be ladylike. The well fill also contained a partial glass model of a car that was once an “All American ‘Willys Jeep’” candy dish manufactured by J. H. Millstein Co. circa World War II (See Figure 12). This demonstrates that the students consumed all sorts of sugary treats. Downtown Williamsburg had multiple candy stores and soda fountains within a block of the dorm, so sugary treats were easily accessible. WSCGA documents highlight how consumption intersected with rule breaking. In one of the disciplinary trials held by the women’s judicial committee, a girl was punished for staying out later than curfew because she stopped to get cokes with a boy after studying in the library. Meeting minutes from February 1929 state that the WSCGA president “asked the girls to avoid loitering unnecessarily around the Kandy Kitchen on Sunday night,” which was located right around the corner from Brown Hall on Duke of Gloucester Street (Women Students’ Cooperative Government Association Records). Though it was not the act of consumption that was regulated in the same way alcohol consumption was, the act of going to a shop to purchase treats was a social activity the school sought to regulate. That

social time off-campus and outside of administrative surveillance gave women the opportunity to establish social identities outside of what was expected of them.



Figures 11 and 12. Coca-Cola Bottles from Newport News, VA Plant from 23BD-00264 and “All American ‘Willys Jeep’” Candy Dish from 23BD-00264

Historical archaeology has only recently begun to assess personal artifacts as interpretive tools for understanding the complex identities of past people. When thinking about identity on the microscale, material objects make up the few remains of the means by which people affiliated with groups and particular facets of identities. As discussed by Cook, people relate to objects through possession, and the acts of purchase and consumption transform an object from a “symbol of estrangement” to an active element of self-identification (1996, 55). People add their own meanings besides what meanings are promoted by advertisements. Fragments of personal items discarded in the well suggest that women attempted to forge individual identities that are both inclusive of and outside of the sole feminine vision presented in advertisements or encouraged by the school. One type of personal item found by archaeologists in the well feature was vinyl record albums. Although the musical artists recorded on these records are not known, purchasing and playing vinyl records was an opportunity to express one’s taste in music or conform to the

normative or acceptable types of music. The well also contained fragments of mother-of-pearl buttons. These small decorations could be interpreted as feminine since they adorn the body, though they could also be personally meaningful since the buttons could have been intentionally added to a garment for reasons outside of gender conformity. Here, the self is negotiated through an appropriation of objects whether or not one conforms to a particular corporeal style.

The above artifacts remind us that the women were still young and engaged in behaviors typically associated with college students like drinking and socializing. They enjoyed having fun and did not always submit to campus and dorm rules when presented with the opportunity to break them. These subversions, whether intentional or not, allowed the women of Brown Hall to construct identities beyond the feminine identity imposed upon them by school rules and expectations for proper Southern feminine behavior. Newspaper articles from *The Flat Hat* highlight some of the other subversive behaviors students engaged in around the dorm. One article shares that the local Brown Hall Trustees from the Women's Missionary Society would like a stolen painting taken from the Brown Hall living room to be returned for an anniversary celebration (*The Flat Hat* 10 Feb. 1928). In a statement made to the Board of Visitors in November 1929, President J.A.C. Chandler states, "Taken as a whole, the general conduct of the students has been good. However, there has been some unrest among the girls, and for a while there was an attitude of rebellion towards the regulations as to women students" (Office of the President Julian Alvin Carroll Chandler Records). With so many rules, it was difficult to follow them all perfectly and the women themselves interpreted some of them as excessive. Breaking rules

was a small act of subversion, and it allowed the women to express themselves and their opinions outside of what the school wanted from them.

I hope to have impressed the importance of analyzing the documentary and archaeological record for plurality in meaning both in past practices and the symbology of material culture. For instance, social dances could be both a fun activity where women could express themselves through dance and dress, though they also occurred within set boundaries for socialization and enforced proper gender behavior in how the dance was conducted and how attendees conducted themselves under regulation. Material culture can have more than one symbolic meaning. Nail polish could at once be patriotic, sexual, youthful, or glamorous depending on the local historical context, individual intention in the act of consumption, and the symbolic understanding of the person perceiving the adornment. Almost all behavior by students was conducted within a regulated framework whether students chose to comply, and these were most often frameworks that differentiated acceptable behavior by gender.

To conclude, this project sought to explore the intersection of gendered social regulation and the material remains of an all-women's dorm on a co-educational campus. Documentary evidence revealed the extent to which institutional regulation impressed a particular femininity, and material evidence highlighted how women also practiced self-regulation in daily corporal practices. The women both conformed to gendered expectations for behavior and appearance and also subverted these regulations of social identity through consumption. The findings of this paper were impacted by my positionality as a white, young, female student at William & Mary almost a century after the study period began. My understanding of the regulations of social life is shaped by my

experiences as a college student in the twenty-first century where regulations of personal identity and activity are limited in practice but are often discussed in the media regarding personal freedoms. It is important to note that my research questions and qualitative interpretation of the documents and material evidence were subject to my biases and opinions no matter how objective I tried to be. My findings were also limited to what documentary evidence I found and reviewed in a limited time. Future research could search for personal narratives in the diaries of these women that may give a clearer picture of social life in the words of those who lived them. The Bray Site also offers more archaeological contexts dating to this study period, so future research could also evaluate a greater number of artifacts. A comparison to current social and bodily discipline based on gender and race at William & Mary could illuminate similarities and differences over time. Overall, this project takes a singular feature and evaluates the hyper-specific sociocultural world of those who constructed it. With material culture, we can deepen our understanding of mundane stories that make up greater institutional histories.

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