Colonial Women in the Pennsylvania and Virginia Gazettes

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COLONIAL WOMEN IN THE
PENNSYLVANIA AND VIRGINIA GAZETTES

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Anthropology
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Lisa Kay Bergendahl
1995
APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to show the effectiveness of archaeology as a tool for studying women’s history. It is argued that women’s history as a discipline suffers from a limited resource base as women represent a nearly invisible aspect of history. Archaeology through recent developments in material culture theory is presented as a key to alleviating this problem.

Over the past decade, archaeology has witnessed the development of post-processual theory. Led by archaeologist Ian Hodder, post-processualist archaeologists argue that their research methods can tap the minds of cultural participants long since gone through the material remains they leave behind. These material resources, both archaeological and documentary, represent tangible pieces of the culture that created them. Through their form, style and function they communicate on a variety of levels the beliefs and values of their creators. Consequently, material culture embodies messages waiting to be heard and interpreted.

In this study the two colonial newspapers, the Pennsylvania Gazette and Virginia Gazette, are analyzed in light of the post-processual ideas mentioned above. Both newspapers were approached as artifacts of the time period 1750 -1776. Analysis looked at both the textual content and structural form. The questions asked of the newspapers focused around women and their possibly changing roles in this period.

The analysis showed that women in this period experienced differing levels of change. Women in Philadelphia seemed to be enjoying an expansion into the commercial community in a variety of roles. Women in Williamsburg, however, exhibited little to no change over the period surveyed. These differences are credited to the regional differences between the two cities.
COLONIAL WOMEN IN THE
PENNSYLVANIA AND VIRGINIA GAZETTES
Introduction

With the rise of feminism in the 1970s, the area of women's studies was born as a recognized discipline. As consciousness of a need to reevaluate the study of women spread, disciplines like history and anthropology underwent significant changes.

For the field of history, historians were forced to realize that women were nearly invisible. Few documentary resources related the past lives of half of the world's inhabitants. Although women had been studied since the mid-nineteenth century, feminist historians raised criticisms that showed the flawed nature of the methodologies followed and assumptions maintained in past studies. Feminists developed new methods and revised the biased assumptions that plagued former studies. However, some problems could not be easily resolved. Women's history continued to and still does contend with a limited resource base. As the largest roadblock in women's studies, such limitations have also narrowed the scope of conclusions to be drawn. In a sense, women's history has found itself caught in a whirlpool of perspectives. New ideas are limited, while reiterations are seemingly the norm. As a discipline that feeds on discourse, such a limitation is highly detrimental to the area's future.
As an area of women's American history, the colonial period suffers from just such limitations. As exhibited by the contrasting works of Joan Hoff-Wilson and Mary Beth Norton, two predominant perspectives continue to be reiterated in histories of this period. Historians tend to argue either that the colonial period was a time of female emancipation or the exact opposite, that women experienced a time of growing restriction and social containment. With such diametrically opposed ideas, one must asks which perspective is more accurate? Also, one must ask if women's history left to its own devices would be able to seek such an answer?

I would argue no. I propose that women's history if left to itself would continue to reiterate the same ideas since it would only be able to reassess old research. So how might this problem be alleviated? The key lies in the theoretical developments of post-processual archaeology.

Similar to history, anthropology was tremendously impacted by the rise of feminist thinking. However, for anthropology not all of its subdisciplines were noticeably effected. The field of archaeology, both historic and prehistoric, seemed to continue oblivious to the changing perspectives. Fortunately, over the past decade this has begun to change.

With the introduction of more women into the field of archaeology coupled with advances in theoretical ideas there has been an increased interest in feminist studies within the subdiscipline. Recently, symposiums have been held to focus upon the new studies being conducted. Through these symposiums, it has been recognized that archaeology does possess a potential for expanding the resources of women's history. Through the growing theoretical basis of post-processual archaeology as developed by Ian Hodder,
Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley, archaeologists have begun to develop methodologies for reapproaching and reevaluating historic and prehistoric resources both archaeological and documentary. New pathways into the minds of old have been opened. By approaching all man-made objects, including documents, as artifacts of past cultures, new perspectives and interpretations are being produced. Artifacts are no longer just tangible remains to be counted and classified. Instead, artifacts are recognized as material symbol systems laden with cultural messages. Communication occurs on many levels through multiple channels. Both conscious and subconscious messages can be uncovered. For feminist studies, these new perspectives and consequent methodologies have supplied the missing link that slowed the inclusion of feminist thinking into archaeological research.

The following study is offered as an example of such developments. Within the following chapters, a methodology is developed to approach colonial newspapers not just as documents but as artifacts of the colonial period from 1750 through 1776. By looking at these papers as both objects of form and content, both conscious and subconscious channels of communication are sought. Sampling the Pennsylvania and Virginia Gazettes, I ask of these documents: Were women in the colonial period gaining more public freedom? Or were they experiencing social constriction? The central focus of the study is to extract cultural information relating to the roles assumed by women and mapping any changes that may have occurred in those roles with the advent of the Revolutionary War.

I argue that both historians discussed above were generally correct in their conclusions. However, what they fail to highlight in their conclusions is the highly regional nature of women’s lives in the colonial period. Mary Beth Norton is correct in
stating that women's roles were changing. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* exhibits this change by exposing the expanding roles women assumed in the commercial community of Philadelphia. Yet, Hoff-Wilson is also correct in her conclusions in that no change occurred except for a tightening of social boundaries. In the *Virginia Gazette*, women are seen as nearly promoting a status quo by not exhibiting a bit of change over the period surveyed. Therefore, both historical perspectives are correct when it is realized that women are not to be grouped together as a universal group in American history. They were greatly effected by their geographic and socio-economic positions.

In general, the significance of this study lies in its ability to show how archaeology through documentary research can significantly add to the discourse of women's history. Through such additions feminist history can expand its discussions of women throughout time. Women were always the partners of men through time. As new methodologies arise in both history and archaeology, it is important that the academic world continue the quest to uncover this partnership by finding new ways to make women visible again.
Chapter I

History, Feminism and Archaeology

Unbeknownst to many, the study of women in American history or women's history as a subdiscipline was not born during the feminist revolution in the 1970s. In fact, women's history could be said to have had its start as early as 1848. However, women's history would not obtain its due attention (respect is still questionable to this day) until the issue was forced into the discourse of American historians, male and female, by the rise of feminist thinking in academia witnessed in the 1970s. History as a discipline is probably one discipline most affected by this rise. Over the past twenty years, historians have been forced to change their perspectives of women in relation to history. This change has caused subsequent changes over time in the historiography of women.

The birth of women as a subject in American history is generally dated to the year 1848. In 1848, a female historian named Elizabeth Fries Lummis Ellet published a three-volume history entitled, *The Women of the American Revolution*. The study focused upon the "'great women' of the late eighteenth century" (Norton and Berkin, 1979:5). Women featured were the likes of Martha Washington and Abigail Adams. To conduct her research, Ellet contacted the subjects' remaining descendants to gain access to personal
diaries and similar writings. Although narrow in its focus, Ellet's work was a start for women's history in America. Unfortunately, the books were received with little attention and basically entered obscurity as novelties in the large annals of history (Norton and Berkin, 1979:5).

It is believed that Ellet's desire to write her history of American women was a direct result of the rise of feminist thought in the mid-nineteenth century. Interestingly, Ellet's book was published the same year as the first women's rights conference held in Seneca Falls, New York (Norton and Berkin, 1979:5). Women began to realize that if women as a whole wished to gain a "secure status" or "better its position" in the present, the best way to fortify the group's assertions would be to uncover the group's "mutual heritage" and separate "its history from that of the controlling factor, which in the United States is composed of white males" (Norton and Berkin, 1979:5). This would spark many women to pursue the task of uncovering this hidden past. Over the next century, the area of women's history would expand, manifesting in three fundamental structures—biographies, organizational histories and ideological studies. However, these structures would only begin to fill the potential for women's history. Only with the rebirth of feminist thinking in the early 70s would women's history finally gain its due recognition.

Following the publication of *The Women of the American Revolution*, many historians would emulate the style of Ellet's biographical volumes, discussing the lives of "women worthies or notable women" (Lerner, 1975:2). Although biographies exhibited the contributions of women in the past, they in nature were only partially enlightening. Biographies at this early stage of feminist writing, in the fact that they were descriptive of
the lives of "exceptional, even deviant women," represented only a small minority of female historical experience (Lerner, 1975:2). Women as a whole in the past are recognized as a very "inarticulate" group. Consequently, biographies tell readers "very little about the lifestyles of the overwhelming majority of women who were not members of a small social elite or who did not pioneer in one of the professions" (Gordon, Buhle and Dye, 1976:79). Therefore, as a structure, biographical writing was only able to reflect a narrow piece of the complete historical experience of women.

With the advancement of women's suffrage and its subsequent acquisition, leaders within these movements realized the importance of recording their organizational histories. This sparked a second trend in structure for histories of American women, organizational histories. A renowned example of this second structure was History of Women's Suffrage. Written by Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony in collaboration with other fellow leaders, the work published in multi volumes traced the trials of the movement and discussed its accomplishments and the women involved. However, similar to biographies, these histories have also been viewed as problematic.

Unlike biographies, historians of women's organizations had access to an abundant data base. This explains why they enjoyed early popularity in feminist studies. Leaders of these movements foresaw the need to record the paths taken for future generations. However, many of these histories have developed perspectives of history that are now seen as detrimental. Critics of these histories feel that their authors do not recognize the continued idea that women are only important to history when they deviate from their "women's work" (Gordon, Buhle and Dye, 1976:77). Organizational histories seemed to
neglect the women who were not participants within the movements or investigate why these women may not have been part. Issues of racism and class division were typically neglected, while a progressive view of sisterhood surmounting the struggle was developed. Another large criticism of these organizational histories lies in their lack of recognition of the large social forces acting upon women like urbanization or industrialization. Many of these historians visualized change as a result of the organizations under study. They do not view the organizations as a result of the larger societal changes affecting women's lives. Typically, some mention would be made about the changing character of social relationships. Yet, this hardly ever took the form of serious analysis (Gordon, Buhle and Dye, 1976:77).

A final criticism now raised against past organizational histories is in their larger conceptual framework. Many female historians of these histories presented very evolutionary or linear courses for history. They viewed women's history as a progressive path of "democratic emancipation" (Gordon, Buhle and Dye, 1976:78). The conceptual schema pictured women as moving away from "a reputation for weakness and delicacy" (Norton and Berkin, 1979:6). History therefore became the movement toward the vote and, subsequently, the right to vote became synonymous with emancipation. Criticism for this schema rose out of the valuation inherent in its use. Current women's historians complain that this schema places too much importance upon assigning value terms like better and worse upon the experiences of past women. It is not hard to see how the schema simplifies the idea of history. The framework gives history a very story-like read. The tale complete with "heroines (the leaders of the women's rights movement) and
villains (those who oppose suffrage)" unfold as "morally uplifting, suggesting that things are getting better and that improvements have come largely through the efforts of hardworking women" (Norton and Berkin, 1979:7). Apart from the frameworks obvious appeal, it does not necessarily reflect the reality of women's history. The framework oversimplifies the progression of events and lives that make up the historical experience of women.

A final structure for feminist history to develop before the feminist revolution was the study of social ideas. These histories would take on the task of investigating the larger male ideology within which women lived. Research would be focused upon the prescriptive writings of men in "etiquette books, child-rearing and marriage manuals, and home economics texts and literature" (Gordon, Buhle and Dye, 1976: 81). These texts would investigate the definition of women's place, which was typically in the home. *Women in Eighteenth-Century America: A Study in Opinion and Social Usage*, written by Mary Sumner Benson in the 1930s, stands out as an exemplar of this style. In her book, she presented "an exhaustive discussion of English, French and American writings on the subject of women's place in society" (Norton and Berkin, 1979:6). Thirty years later, right before the arrival of the feminist revolution, this type of study would formulate under the banner of studying "The Cult of True Womanhood" with the introduction of an article so titled written by Barbara Welters. Her study focused solely upon women in eighteenth-century America. Her research was based upon the "characteristics of the 'true woman' described at length in the many eighteenth-century books advising young ladies on their behavior" (Norton and Berkin, 1979:6).
Again, current studies have brought these past ideological studies into questionable value. Much of the criticism against these studies rises out of a misconstrued relationship. "Prescriptive studies assume a relationship between ideology and social practice which may not always exist" (Gordon, Buhle and Dye, 1976:81). Although women may have been told to act one way does not necessarily mean that the instructions were followed to the letter. In addition, these studies do not seemingly recognize the lives of women who were not exposed to such literary manuals. These studies raise the question of ideal vs. real in historical studies (Lerner, 1975:359). Does this information give the reader a snapshot of a time period or just an ideal portrait of what the dominant ideology of the time wanted to be seen and remembered?

With the revolution of feminist thinking in the 1970s many of the problems of these past historical styles were addressed. In fact, the whole study of women in history underwent reevaluation. Up to this time, women's histories were hardly recognized by the discipline or assigned any great value. The recognition they did receive was more in the form of criticism or mere publication. With the rebirth of feminist thinking, women once again recognized their lack of participation in historical study and text. This realization of denial came "as a staggering flash of insight, which altered [their] consciousness irretrievably" (Lerner, 1975: 9). Women would take on the task of "resurrecting and reassessing the lost women of history, individually and collectively" (Caroll, 1976: ix). Attention would turn to addressing the criticisms and problematics of studying women as the lost factor of American history.
In reaction to the criticisms raised against the past histories discussed above, women set out to redefine the task of feminist history. To begin they worked upon identifying the needs of such a history for it to be a consequential and valuable resource. In general, it was decided that a number of assumptions had to be set. Women in history could no longer be seen as "unchanging, passive and silent" (Gordon, Buhle and Dye, 1976: 82). Women had voices, although they were not as easily heard as men's in the written record of time. In addition, women were equally as affected by the larger social forces of industrialization, urbanization and the like.

Another assumption to be determined was that women in historical contexts were just as categorically differentiated as men. Woman could not be an all inclusive category of study. Although one could not deny the biological bonds in the nature of all women (i.e. childbirth, etc.), womanhood did not necessitate an equity for all. Women had to be differentiated economically, racially and socially. The experiences of an African-American slave living in Georgia could not be seen as synonymous with those of an upper-class, white, urban housewife. Only once these differentiations could be recognized would women's history begin to address the larger experiences of women through history.

With such assumptions in place, feminist historians began to identify a need for a new structural approach. Moving away from biographical, organizational and prescriptive ideological histories, historians began to write what has come to be distinguished as social histories. Through a combination of feminist consciousness and interpretive methodologies, women's history now attempts to "connect women's experience with historical developments in American society" (Gordon, Buhle and Dye, 1976: 83).
Historians are now trying to capture the active female responses to societal changes that effected their lives as well as men's. "In other words, feminist historians are asking what it was like to be a woman at various times in history and are exploring women's subjective responses to their environment"(Gordon, Buhle and Dye, 1976: 83). The issue at hand is to recapture the awareness of women of their lives around them at all levels of society.

How did women view themselves? How did women interact with their husbands, children, other women around them? How did women construct their roles in the continually dynamic realm of womanhood?

Consequent to this change in approach, researchers quickly became concerned over the issues of theory and methodology. It was wondered whether a strictly interpretive approach would be able to meet the goals and needs of women's social histories. There were three main reasons why such a concern arose. First, historians recognized the problematic nature of past histories as shown above. Secondly, women in history were unique from men. As a nearly invisible aspect of American history, women's lives are not necessarily readily awaiting discovery in the documentary record. This makes their study inherently more complicated and complex. Lastly, the third reason stems from a need to counteract the traditionally existing theories used in the past to frame the experiences of women over time. This reason relates back to the past assumptions of female passivity and the progressive or linear nature of history(Caroll, 1976: x). As long as feminist historians wished only to supplement or change the traditionally accepted picture, the past frameworks and interpretive methods could continue to add information. However, only the use of new conceptual frameworks developed through the use of new
theoretical ideas like the category of gender could historians aim studies at answering questions of "why and how women become invisible to history when, in fact, they were social and political actors in the past" (Scott, 1988:13). With the expansion of theoretical frameworks, whole new areas of study can be opened up and questions asked.

Although historians as a group tend to react "with suspicion towards issues of theory" (Caroll, p.ix), theory has been greatly incorporated into feminist study in a variety of forms. Over the last twenty years, three major influences seem to stand out as exceptionally influential in the development of historical theoritizing—Marxism, the works of Jacques Lacan and Michael Foucault.

Marxists historians have focused their investigations around the sexual divisions of labor and how this enables the development of capitalism. These historians view women and men divided into separate spheres. Men are seen as "public," associated with "production and political activity." Women, on the other hand, are viewed as "private," associated with "reproduction and domestic activity" (Scott, 1988:14). Through this framework, the invisibility of women in history is explained through an ideological separation of women from the public. Relegated to the domestic or private realm, motion beyond that realm was seen as abnormal or masculine. Consequently, women were continually devalued. Their work, their awareness and importance as historical subjects were all affected.

Jacques Lacan's theories revolve around the symbolic nature of language. In history, his perspective has been used to better understand the ways in which women related to the larger symbolic structure of the society they were in. Researchers working
with Lacan’s ideas often call upon the psychological aspects of female identity.

Consequently, the lack of women’s history would relate to their symbolic representation as "'other' in relation to the central, powerful, privileged male"(Scott, 1988:15).

Similar to Lacan, Michael Foucault also centered his perspective around issues of language. However, his ideas dealt more with the manipulation of power. To Foucault, "relationships of power are constructed through `discourse"(Scott, 1988:15). In this case discourse is not a matter of literal conversation but the ideological structure of knowledge and the dissemination of information. Historians using this approach have found the lack of women in history to be a result of negotiations of power. Typically men have held power over the records of history, so they maintain their power by not allowing women to enter such discourse. Therefore, history was a tool to perpetuate certain ideas like the natural subjection of women(Scott, 1988:16).

Women's history today is typified by an eclecticism of methodology and theory. Although some feminist historians hope to find a unifying theory and methodology that will be distinctly feminist, women's history does not seem obstructed by such a lack. As anyone browsing in a library can tell, women's history as a subject of study has established itself as a distinctive field.

Beyond issues of theory and methodology, the large proliferation of studies being published have shown some trends in subject areas. The four largest areas in women's history so far centralize around: women's work, family, politics and ideology(Kleinberg, 1988:ix). Women's work as a topic discusses the issue of the productive activity of women. Studies focus upon the impact of the rise of capitalism and industrialization and
its effects upon women's productive lives. Questions about changing roles and definitions of sexual divisions are often discussed.

Family as a concentration of study may be the broadest realm of women's history. Issues like "reproduction, fertility, contraception, child rearing, and sexuality are included" (Scott, 1988:19). Interestingly, the area of family lies centered around two predominant approaches which address such issues from diametrically opposed conceptions. For some researchers family is seen as the "private sphere" of women. The interrelations of family are seen as removed from the public sphere of commercial and political activity. In contrast to this conception, many researchers believe that "the family is a social and political institution, integrally connected to economic and political life" (Scott, 1988:19). Historians of the later approach criticize the former for its lack of attention to the women who worked outside of the home. In their minds, such a perspective perpetuates an "ideology of domesticity" (Scott, 1988:19). Nevertheless, either approach is still effective at uncovering areas of neglected historical experience.

The area of political studies focuses upon women's relations to the larger forces of the state. Studies have centered around: "the participation of women in general political movements (revolutions, war, political movements and parties); the formation of specifically women's political groups, devoted to advancing some perceived common agenda for all women or of a particular group of women; and the relationship between the political and legal status of women and the form, organization or announced purposes of the state" (Scott, 1988:22). Researchers look to understand the relationship women had with politics. Did they participate or was it a realm of men? How did they negotiate their
way into political realms? With a recognition of the false assumptions of female passivity, many of these political histories have been able to further dispel archaic myths.

The final area to characterize women's histories is that of ideology. These histories are a reaction to the past histories written upon the prescriptive literature of old. These social histories try to approach the lives of women in a variety of classes in the past. Instead of trying to understand the ideal woman of any particular time period, researchers now wish to uncover the actual experiences of women. How were women defining themselves? What factors played in on how they reached those definitions? Deviance is no longer seen as automatically exhibiting reality. Historians seek to find examples of common every day life across the largely differentiated spectrum of women in the past.

Social histories in their collection of concentrations have addressed many of the criticisms brought upon earlier more problematic forms of historical studies. However, it is still debated as to whether women's history has truly solved or remedied the criticisms mentioned. Feminists today still sound a call for needed changes in methodology and theory. The whole idea of feminism itself is still under debate. As early as the late 70s, feminists were complaining that the feminist frame of reference was becoming "archaic and fairly useless"(Lerner, 1976:351). As feminists continue to wrestle with the issues of definitions, historical studies continue to deal with the old problem of limited resources.

The discipline of women's history continually strives to expand its data base. Unfortunately, as mentioned above, women as a topic of history is continually plagued by invisibility(Klienberg, 1988:ix). "For women, it has seldom been in the interest of the
institutions of society to preserve their papers—the two exceptions are family memorabilia and feminist collections" (Smith, 1976:372). Although these collections of memorabilia and feminist collections can be at times large, they are often many obstacles to contend with before analysis can begin. For example, often in large family collections, letters are seldom indexed in reference to women. Therefore, hours may be spent just searching out individual pieces which embody only a minute proportion of a collection. In addition to problems of indexing, one must also be aware of the fact that timely customs often made it inappropriate for women to write. Consequently, letters and other writings may not be forthcoming with its author's true identity.

In contrast to most areas of women's history, the area of organizational histories, do not suffer the same shortage of resources. As discussed earlier, movements like the women's rights movement and the like have left exhaustive amounts of resources. History to them was a means for continued empowerment. Nevertheless, this information tells historians much about the history of feminism and little else. Women wishing to investigate the roles of women settling in the American colonies of the early seventeenth century do not benefit from such an abundance.

From the proliferation of women's histories in print today, one would wonder if the problems discussed above really impinge upon feminist historians' or even non-feminist historians' abilities to produce valuable histories of women. With limited resources and multiple frameworks, feminist histories have opened a very interesting discourse. It is not uncommon to read two histories that have basically used the same data based but have
reached opposing conclusions. This fact can raise interesting questions about precision. Who's conclusions are correct? Or more aptly put, who's are the most accurate?

For the study of colonial American history, feminist historians have produced a variety of pictures of life in the colonies. However, for the period before and during the American Revolution, feminists histories have constructed often opposing views of women in this period. Some historians see this period, framed within the middle to the late eighteenth century, as a time of great changes in the roles of colonial women. On the other hand, a number would argue that women at that time experienced little change. This opposition in perspective can be seen by contrasting the conclusions drawn within works written by Joan Hoff-Wilson and Mary Beth Norton. While both studied women in relation to the American Revolutionary War, their conclusions are hardly related. Even more interesting is the fact that both writers conducted their research in similar ways and with similar data bases.

Joan Hoff-Wilson in her article, "The Illusion of Change: Women and the American Revolution"(1976), develops an argument that the Revolutionary War did not emancipate women as it men in the colonies. Hoff-Wilson in her investigation concludes that the Revolution brought "no significant benefits for American women"(Hoff-Wilson, 1976:387). Prior to 1776, Hoff-Wilson sees colonial women's lives as constricting. With a "severe labor shortage" plaguing the colonies, women's work was given a "premium" both inside and outside the home. Women were restricted to traditional roles of home production like weaving and spinning and few new opportunities were opened to them. Women were called upon for the Revolution in their domestic capacities through family
economy (i.e. boycotting and increased production of home-spun materials, etc.). This eased their exclusion from the discourse and dealings of disputes over land, local politics, religion and taxes. Women in a sense were not being "prepared to understand the political ramifications of the Revolution" (Hoff-Wilson, 1976:386-7). As a result, once the Revolution was concluded, women were ill prepared to stake a claim in the new democratic nation. "Women of the post revolutionary generation had little choice but to fill those low status functions prescribed by the small minority of American males who were prepared for modernization by diverse activities and experiences" (Hoff-Wilson, 1976:387).

Hoff-Wilson presents her history as a reaction to the past histories that concentrated upon "the increased benefits of Lockean liberalism that accrued to a relatively small percent of all Americans" (Hoff-Wilson, 1989:387). Women, especially those of the middle and lower classes, in this time period generally experienced a time of sharp definition for women as domestic beings outside the realm of political developments.

In contrast to Hoff-Wilson's picture of social containment, Mary Beth Norton offers her study, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800*. Norton through her studies comes to an opposing conclusion that the American Revolutionary War was a very empowering time for women. Women experienced an expansion of roles beyond the realm of domesticity and into the male world of the political public.
Norton focuses her study around the creation of Liberty's Daughters. Liberty's Daughters were groups of women usually found in urban areas who would organize their efforts to contribute to the war effort. Norton argues that through these organizations women were "asserting their right to acquiesce in political measure" and shouldering "the responsibility of a public role" (Norton, 1980:103). Women were experiencing a turning point in their relation to the state and society. Men were beginning to recognize the roles women could fulfill that related more to politics than to purely private domestic concerns. As Norton quotes the editor of *The Boston Evening Post*, he praises:

"The industry and frugality of American ladies must exalt their characters in the Eyes of the World and serve to show how greatly they are contributing to bring about the political salvation of a whole Continent" (Norton, 1980:104).

Beyond their material contributions, women were being recognized for their increased control of homesteads while an increasing number of men were being sent off to fight. This new found authority expanded women's activities outside of the home as they often were made to deal with markets and legal affairs in their husbands' absences. According to Norton, "as the months and years passed, women became more expert in their handling of business matters and their husbands simultaneously more accustomed to relying on their judgement" (Norton, 1980:107). For Norton, the American Revolutionary period saw a loosening of role definitions. "The line between male and female behavior, once apparently so impenetrable, became less well defined" (Norton, 1980:110). Women experienced a realization of voice and a shift in ideological underpinning. Groups like Liberty's Daughters and other like them allowed women to view themselves as active in
the political developments of the time. To women, these organized groups represented a symbolic recognition of their newly found political participation. With the conclusion of the war, this newly found participation would allow women to voice their concerns about the treatment of women in the newly emerging nation.

The contrasts shown above between Hoff-Wilson's and Norton's histories of the later half of the eighteenth century exemplify the complicated discourse generated in feminist history. If two historians can use the same restricted data base—in this case personal letters, diaries and newspapers—and draw such opposing conclusions, how might this discipline seek answers to questions of: Who's interpretation is more accurate? Were women gaining new freedoms as well as men? Or, were women just being valued for their traditional roles and consequently being further contained within them? Would additional studies of the same materials really answer these quandaries?

Hoff-Wilson and Norton in their writings represent a problem continually developing in women's history. Plagued by a limited resource base, women's history has begun to languish in a whirlpool of limited perspectives. A circular tract of ideas has been established, where ideas are being reiterated because newer studies are not necessarily uncovering new data but reassessing the old. Therefore, discourse is becoming frightfully repetitious. Discourse does not seem to be moving forward, in new directions or in one direction in particular.

It would seem logical that the only means to alleviate this problem in women's history would be to find means to expand its resource base. If a new methodology for the study of women in documentary history could be introduced that could expand the
information to be extracted from the existing resource base, then women's history could continue to maintain a vital discourse on the experiences of women through time.

This is where anthropology through the use of recent developments in historical archaeology can be an aid to women's history. Similar to the effects felt in history, anthropology was another discipline greatly effected by the rise of feminist thinking in the seventies. Through the recent developments in archaeology's post-processual theory, new perspectives upon the study of material culture will allow archaeologists, historical and otherwise, to expand the capacities of information to be derived from the documentary record. While archaeology has traditionally been the study of the tangible material remains of history, with the rise of new perspectives developed in post-processual theory, archaeologists are now able to expand their studies into areas once thought unapproachable.

In the early 70s, anthropologists were called upon, male and female, to reevaluate the issue of women in anthropological studies. No longer were intellectuals able to rest easy upon their former theoretical assumptions. Within the field of anthropology, feminists began to head "full tilt at culture bound assumptions" that had "allegedly masqueraded as analytical constructs" (Atkinson, 1982:238). Researchers sought to change "the ambiguous way in which social anthropology...treated women"(Moore, 1988:2). Through the recognition of inherent male biases in the representation of women in research and flawed assumptions universally applied to women (i.e. the assumed insignificance of all women to men, etc.), researchers began to develop new models and approaches that did not only create a "study of women" in society and culture but also a
"study of gender" (Moore, 1988:3). Feminist anthropologists would seek to accomplish more than just bringing women into the focus of continuing studies. Attention would also be brought to the issues of male and female interrelations as well as the "role of gender in structuring human societies, their histories, ideologies, economic systems and political structures" (Moore, 1988:6).

Although feminist thinking quickly found a home in cultural anthropological thinking and study, it was basically ignored by anthropology's subdiscipline of archaeology. Somehow, it seems, archaeology was able to avoid feminist attention. A reason for this avoidance is most likely due to the discipline's overwhelming male dominance in the early and late 1970s. Only in the past decade has feminist thinking begun to truly affect archaeology as a tool for understanding the past. With a continually increasing number of women entering the field, archaeology has begun to recognize the potential for feminist frameworks to expand archaeological investigations. Since the majority of these women are entering the field of historical archaeology, the greatest number of advances in feminist archaeology have been within this subdiscipline.

In 1989, the Society of Historical Archaeologists organized a symposium focusing upon the issue of gender in archaeological investigations. The symposium was the first of its kind. Prior to the symposium, archaeological investigations of women had been scarce, often the result of female archaeologists conducting site analysis. Although these studies touched upon the study of women historically on occasion, these studies were rarely feminist in nature (Spencer-Wood, 1991:234). Conducted with the same models and methodologies to be criticized as androcentric and biased today, they did not truly address
the more complex issues currently recognized and addressed in cultural anthropology. The symposium at the annual conference marked a beginning for historical archaeologists to acknowledge a new awareness in historical research which would be continued with another symposium later that same year at the 22nd annual Chacmool Conference in Calgary, Canada. Through these conferences feminist archaeologists were able to begin to better define the parameters and assumptions of and future goals for gender archaeology.

Conference participants began their discussions by questioning why archaeology as a whole had avoided or resisted feminist influences. The answer they found lay in the recognition that the predominance of systems theory in the empirical models of New Archaeology had basically negated the importance of women in archaeological research. By relegating the issue of gender to a "biological given," systems theory assumed the issue of gender to be a stable one. Since feminist theory recognizes gender as a cultural construction diametric to a biologically determined sex, such models made the inclusion of women seem fruitless as their involvement was seen as "irrelevant" to the study of a culture as a whole (Wylie, 1991:17-19). This would change with the decline of New Archaeology in the 1980's.

In general, feminist archaeologists found that archaeology was riddled with androcentric assumptions that basically negated the importance of gender by associating the concept with solely sexual differences that were seen as inherent and naturally defined. They realized that a new conceptual framework was needed that would recognize the "relational" and "dialogical" nature of gender. Researchers needed a framework that
would "situate processes of gender construction in a greatly expanded social, human context" (Wylie, 1991:22). Feminists would develop gender archaeology as a solution to these needs.

Gender archaeology basically aims to deconstruct the typical western constructs of past archaeological study. Researchers approach gender as if it really matters (Conkey, 1991:29). Gender is more than a merely recognizable social construction. It is also a historically changing characteristic of social interaction. By problematicizing gender, archaeology centralizes its research around women as well as men. Women are not necessarily the focus, but they become recognized as active agents in the construction and influences of the culturally defined issue of gender (Conkey, 1991:26).

Currently, the impact of gender archaeology has begun to take hold. Studies in this area have begun to expose the active participation of cultural members, both male and female, in the construction of gender (Yentsch, 1991; Weber, 1991) as well as raise strong contradictions to traditional assumptions of gender related labor divisions (Gero, 1991). Gender archaeology appears to be adding a large amount of new information to the discourse of contemporary archaeology both prehistoric and historic. It is interesting that gender archaeology has enjoyed such an accelerated growth over the past decade. It nearly seems as though a gate which once held feminists back, has recently been opened. As stated briefly earlier, the key to the newly opened gate appears to be greatly related to recent changes felt within the dominant theoretical approaches to archaeological research (Sorensen, 1991:130). Archaeology over the past decade has witnessed the development of post-processual theory. Lead by archaeologist like, Ian Hodder,
Christopher Tilley and Michael Shanks, post-processual theory has introduced tremendous changes in theoretical outlines and methodologies that have expanded the traditional realms of archaeological research.

In the 1960s, archaeology as a whole went through a major revolution in thinking with the rise of New Archaeology. Introduced in two papers written by Louis Binford, "Archaeology as Anthropology" (1962) and "Archaeological Systemics and the Study of Cultural Process" (1965), New Archaeology redefined the theory and methods of traditional archaeology. In reaction to the "artifact-centered, culture-historical approach," Binford argued that archaeology could answer the same questions asked by ethnologist through the archaeological record (Trigger, 1989:296). New Archaeology brought three major changes to the field. Researchers moved away from normative views towards more evolutionary models of culture change and process. These theoretical changes lead to the introduction of systemic models of culture. Lastly and probably the most noticeable change of the New Archaeology was the tremendous expansion and application of scientific methodologies (Willey and Sabloff, 1993:222).

New Archaeology or processual archaeology was very popular, especially with young archaeologists through the sixties and seventies. Utilizing positivist approaches to research, archaeologists sought to explain culture change through external environmental influences. Systems models allowed researchers to observe the functioning of cultures with their varying roles and institutions (Trigger, 1989:297-99). Although New Archaeology would predominate American archaeology, especially in the area of prehistoric studies, by the early eighties, a group of archaeologist predominantly located
in England began to voice dissatisfaction with the theory and methodologies of New Archaeology.

Led by Ian Hodder, post-processual archaeology appeared in 1982 with the publication of his book, *The Present Past*. Hodder and colleagues like Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley began to voice many critiques of the processualist approach. To begin, post-processualists argued that New Archaeology was too positivist. Researchers in their view were trying too hard to fit cultures into equations and identify all powerful governing laws. The next critique focused upon the conception of cultural members. Processual researchers used predominantly ecological and demographic determinist models that pictured cultural change as initiated by exterior factors. Consequently, cultural members become passive recipients of change. For the Post-processualist, this conception denied the active behavior of cultural members and their abilities to react to and negotiate social conflict and contradictions. Material culture was merely reflective of cultural adaptations. Culture, in the processualist framework, assumed a static nature when undisturbed (Miller and Tilley, 1984:2-3).

In general, post-processualists were complaining that New Archaeology in its positivist methods was too restrictive. Post-processualists desired a means to expand the realm of archaeological research both historic and prehistoric. They felt that archaeologists could answer many of the questions raised by ethnologist, but the key did not lie in ethnoarchaeological studies of faunal deposition or carbon 14 dating techniques and the like. Archaeology for the post-processualists is not an objective, empirical science. Instead, reminiscent of the traditional cultural-historical ideas negated by New
Archaeology, post-processual archaeology acts as an interpretive tool to seek information about the past in highly subjective ways. There are no necessarily absolute truths to be found, but an intellectual discourses to be fed. The key to this new subjective archaeology lies in ability to reach understandings of meaning in the past. With a changed conception of culture and its relation to its members, and most importantly, its relation to and production of material culture, post-processualists believe that they can reach many areas of the past previously thought inaccessible.

The term post-processualist refers not only to one theoretical approach but to many approaches that have recently surfaced in reaction to the predominance of New Archaeology. Several names have been given to the new approaches--contextual, critical, hermeneutic, social, etc. Regardless of the many names given to the different approaches, there are basic assumptions common to all that create the fabric of the post-processualist umbrella.

To begin, post-processualists believe that cultures are never static. Even when left to themselves, cultures maintain a dynamic nature experiencing change from both exterior and interior factors. To understand this change, the task at hand is not just to map it through time but to attempt to understand how it occurs. The members of a culture do not just passively accept change. They are not just bystanders. They are participants. Therefore, it is imperative to recognize a culture's members as active social beings who initiate, negotiate and at times resist change(Shanks and Tilley, 1987:122-4). At the same time, a researcher must also accept that cultures are not just structures of social relations and roles, but are also symbolic structures of meanings. It is through these meaning
structures that social participants shape their reality. These structures represent the
dynamic functioning of ideological forces. But, it must be remembered that these meaning
structures are as dynamic as the cultures they shape. For they are both continually
structuring as well as being structured. Participants of a culture both unconsciously
accept these structures while at the same time actively shape and alter them. Through the
agency of a culture's participants, meaning structures are continually faced with
contradictions or conflicts that cause these structures to adapt. Consequently, another
task for the archaeologist is to find ways to understand the meanings and their structures
in the past with a raised attention to the contextual nature of these meanings. Meanings
are temporal, they relate to specific times. They are also related to specific groups.
Therefore, meanings can only be understood when their context is recognized temporally
and spatially (Shanks and Tilley, 1987:127; Hodder, 1986:72-9). The key then to
understanding cultures in the past is to find manifestations of these structures and their
changes over time. Where are these manifestations to be found in the archaeological
record? For the post-processualist, the pathway exists through material culture.

Post-processual archaeologists believe that it is possible to reach back into the
minds of peoples in the past. The pathway to such information is through the social
productions of those minds, mainly material culture (Prown, 1993:1). Material culture for
the processualist is seen as "merely a reflection of ecological adaptation or sociopolitical
organization" (Trigger, 1989:348). For post-processualist, material culture is probably the
most neglected research tool in archaeology. As Ian Hodder remarked, "While
archaeologists and anthropologists have considered material culture as functionally
useful... few have tried to identify it as a distinct realm with distinct theories relevant to it" (Hodder, 1982:212). Thus, post-processualists have concentrated most of their efforts upon just such a task. With the general assumptions discussed above, post-processualism has mobilized to formulate a theory of material culture which when applied in both prehistoric and historic contexts will enable archaeologists to expand the traditional realm of archaeological research.

In his book, *The Present Past*, Ian Hodder introduced the first formal theory of material culture. Hodder's theory would become the template for later works that would expand his original ideas. Archaeologists working with Hodder's theory would find a need to fine tune his basic framework. While never altering Hodder's original conceptualization, researchers would find some areas in need of greater clarification.

Hodder mapped out this original theory through eight distinct properties that aid its use as a pathway to past understandings. First, material culture must be understood as a symbolic representation of value-laden messages. Material objects as symbols "are saying things about underlying beliefs and values" (Hodder, 1982:213). Beyond messages of status, these material symbols act as communicators of social ideology.

The second characteristic of material culture is that these symbolic meanings are only understood in "reference to the particular historical situation within which artifacts have been used" (Hodder, 1982:213). Artifacts are contextual. If taken away from their appropriate context—temporally, spatially and culturally—meaning will undergo alteration. Shanks and Tilley (1987) in their work, *Re-Constructing Archaeology*, further construct this characteristic. They too argue that symbolic meanings can only be understood
contextually. Context to them is seen as a "double moment." At first, artifacts must be positioned temporally and geographically. This is parallel to Hodder's ideas. However, artifacts must also be situated within their specific cultural or social totalities. This means that artifacts can only be interpreted within the culture that manufactured them. Consequently, interpretations cannot be cross-culturally linked (Shanks and Tilley, 1987:132).

A third characteristic of material culture lies in its "ambiguity" (Hodder, 1982:213). Material culture acts as a form of non-verbal communication. Objects communicate through form, function and style, and often their messages are not immediately apparent. Consequently, these messages can be "ambiguous" in nature. This gives material culture a greater complexity compared to the often more explicit use of language. However, this does not restrict the researcher. In fact, it presents "a greater potential for disassembly and reassembly" of the symbols involved (Hodder, 1982:214).

Related to the third characteristic, Hodder's fourth characteristic is the recognition that symbolic messages can at times be very covert. These messages may not be made upon a conscious level. "Social actors may not realize in many instances that they are employing a series of embedded codes and in [such a] case the sign system will use them rather than vice versa" (Shanks and Tilley, 1987:133). This conception of unconscious communication can be conceptualized through a multichannel model. Since material culture can communicate both conscious and unconscious messages, it is feasible to distinguish these separate voices as separate channels of communication. Then, through interpretive means of analysis, both channels can be tuned in and viewed (Shanks and
Tilley, 1987:133). Such an ability makes material culture very informative once the ambiguity is decoded.

Material culture in its production, use and distribution is seen as social action. Hodder describes this fifth characteristic as the "performance aspect." Material culture is by no means a passive reflection of cultural norms and values. It exists as conscious action within a social totality. Artifacts can "stimulate, shock and disturb" as well as express consensus (Hodder, 1987:214). The creation of material objects is always an action of social production. It has purpose. While material culture can unconsciously embody messages covert to its maker and audience, it also can be used to negotiate messages and contrast them. In this sense, artifacts become a medium for communication that is utilized consciously. The cultural participant therefore becomes an active agent and material culture becomes purposely expressive (Shanks and Tilley, 1987:132-3).

The recognition of social agency leads us to the sixth characteristic presented by Hodder. Since material culture acts as a communicative medium for individual agents within a culture, artifacts exhibit a "particular importance in ideological and social strategies" (Hodder, 1982:215). As discussed above, artifacts embody the values and beliefs as well as ideological structures of the culture within which they are produced. At the same time they can be used to confront those structures with intention to alter them. It is then important that researchers pay particular attention to the strategies to be acted out through material means. Material culture as the objectification of social relationships holds a very powerful means for change through its manipulation. Thus, material culture represents a tangible means to trace cultural change through time (Hodder, 1982:216). It
also becomes a means to investigate issues of dominance and power. As individuals use material culture as a means of confrontation, it also is used as a means of control. Material culture, therefore, also represents an instrument to understand power structuring and maintenance (Miller and Tilley, 1984:3).

The last two characteristics presented by Hodder are to some extent repetitive of ideas already expressed. Both deal with issues of interpretation. The seventh attribute to material culture is that it may often express aspirations or ideals, not necessarily realities. For example, Hodder points out that people do not always wish to be reminded of reality. Consequently, symbolic messages may work to hide reality. Hodder refers to the "chamber pot syndrome" to illustrate this attribute. Chamber pots as a means to contain and remove human waste products were typically decorated with gentile floral and bird motifs. In this case, the design is used to refer its audience to other ideas not those actually associated to the function of the pot (Hodder, 1982:216).

The final attribute to be discussed by Hodder refers not to the actual material objects but how they are discussed in research. In Hodder's mind the interpretations of these objects may not be expressible in scientific means. As a step away from the scientism of New Archaeology, Hodder argues in his framework that typical traditional writing styles used in the past may not do justice to the interpretations to be made through material culture research. He calls for the use of more "poetic or elliptical language" (Hodder, 1982:215).

When developing this theory, Hodder saw its use centered around prehistoric studies. His theory would allow archaeologist investigating preliterate cultures to access
their social and ideological structures. Nevertheless, his and the ideas of post-processualism are being utilized by prehistoric and historic archaeologists. In fact, it is in the realm of historical archaeology that this study will apply the theory discussed above.

As mentioned earlier, it has been argued that post-processual thinking has opened a door for feminism to enter archaeological studies. Through its expanded understanding of the realm of symbolic meaning in material culture, feminist archaeologists have recognized a potential in the new thinking for gender studies. "The symbolic element of gender relations and gender representation needs further analysis, which must incorporate material culture as active" (Sorensen, 1991:128). This is where the significance of Hodder's ideas come to light. Although some archaeologist have criticized Hodder and his colleges like Shanks and Tilley, for being androcentric and exclusionary towards women in their conceptual schemes (Englestad, 1991:116), these archaeologists themselves have admitted the biases and errors previously made. In fact, Hodder in a paper presented at the Chacmool conference openly confessed his biases and pledged to revise his errors (Hodder, 1991). With this new found tool to tap into the history of women, the post-processual theory above represents a key to unlock more of women's history.

Although Hodder envisions his theory to be applied to artifacts like pots and burial goods, his colleges Shanks and Tilley have shown that material culture of historic and contemporary forms hold equal potential. One published example presented by Shanks and Tilley involves the analysis of British and Swedish beer cans. The study analyzes the styling and form of beer cans in two variant cultures to compare their cultural beliefs and
values in relation to alcohol consumption. The analysis observes both the structural forms of the can's decorative elements as well as the textual expressions featured. The study concludes that through a combination of conscious and unconscious communicators—the textual and design features—the beer cans show how both cultures attempt to mediate the value given to alcohol. Such a study introduces the idea that material culture theory could be applied to other artifacts that combine the use of textual content and unconscious structuring to tap into more historic times and questions.

That is exactly what follows. Instead of beer cans, this study will use the theory discussed above to frame an investigation of two colonial newspapers, the Pennsylvania Gazette and the Virginia Gazette. The questions being asked relate back to the problems addressed in chapter one. Women's history needs new tools to feed its growing discourse. These newspapers as artifacts of the time period leading up to the American Revolution will be analyzed to gain understanding about the possibly changing lives of women. As shown through the works of Mary Beth Norton and Hoff-Wilson, contradictory conclusions have been reached about the period as a time of liberation and that of growing restriction. Through the use of Hodder's ideas, archaeology will be able to expand its newly developing realm of documentary archaeology and add needed information to women's history. With an anthropological view instead of merely historical one, Hodder's theories will allow researchers to enlarge the data base for women's history.
Chapter II

Methodology

The resource base that has been used in this study is the two newspapers, *Pennsylvania Gazette* and *Virginia Gazette*. The scope of the analysis spans a twenty-six-year period from 1750 through 1776. A sample size of 38% has been utilized, which consists of examining the issues from the first and last weeks of each month of every third year. Although there were some gaps within the later years, where certain weeks were missing, alternate weeks were substituted so to maintain the sample ratio. However, before presenting the information which has been generated from the analysis, it is important to understand why and how this resource was used.

There are basically two reasons why behind the use of these materials. Initially, newspapers were chosen as an available artifact of the time period in question. Since this study is trying to bring further light into the question of the possibly changing roles of women during the advent of the American Revolutionary War, these newspapers are very temporally specific. Not to mention, they were readily accessible at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Library. As artifacts of the appropriate time period, it is assumed that these newspapers manifest the values and beliefs of the cultural landscapes within which they were produced. In addition, although these newspapers have been
previously used by historians to analyze similar questions, this study recognizes that these artifacts possess more than one channel of communication.

Newspapers as artifacts of colonial America embody two channels for communication. Through the combination of textual and structural styling, newspapers represent both conscious and unconscious cultural expression. The primary channel of communication for newspapers is through its textual content. Texts are created through a manipulation of words. The words used are consciously chosen to express specific ideas. Subsequently, these words then embody conscious expressions of thought presented in a tangible form. However, it cannot be forgotten, that beyond the textual, newspapers are also structurally styled artifacts. All of the textual content conforms to the parameters of the page through placement and ordering. As Barbara Little (1992) argues in her article, "Texts, Images, Material Culture:

"In any literate society written language is necessarily concrete. It becomes an artifact with form and style. It is subject not only to the poetics of language, but also the poetics of space" (Little, 1992:217).

Through structural styling, covert unconscious messages also find tangible expression. Such a recognition of this resource's dual channels takes this analysis beyond mere content analysis. To assess the unconscious structural messages, quantitative analysis is necessary. This will be discussed with greater detail later.

The second reason for these artifacts use is less obvious. Since this study is aimed at uncovering changing relations of women to the public realm, these newspapers are a key element to information sought. Newspapers during the time period under
investigation change symbolically from tangible representations of white male elitism to "the proper medium of the public" (Warner, 1990:32). To best understand this symbolic change, the context within which these newspapers were created must be reviewed.

In 1789, Dr. David Ramsay declared: "In establishing American Independence, the pen and the press had a merit equal to that of the sword" (Ramsay, 1789:319). By the late eighteenth century, newspapers symbolized the political public. However, it would take nearly a century for it to embody such meaning. Only after a series of political confrontations between colonial rights and British rule, would the public artifact undergo a radical transformation.

The first colonial newspapers or contemporary equivalents (i.e., broadsides, pamphlets, etc.) appeared in Philadelphia in 1685. These initial presses were not regularly published as they relied predominantly upon foreign correspondences for information. By 1725, five weekly newspapers were established. Three were located within the Boston area. The other two were published in New York and Philadelphia (Walett, 1977:157-8). Although these gained more regularity in publishing, their informational value was questionable. Historian John Harrison describes:

"Colonial newspapers...tended to be little more than bulletin boards, filled largely by generous scissoring of British publications, contributions from assorted local residents and such intelligence as could be gathered from ships' captains and friendly public officials and...juicy bits of scandalous and unconfirmed rumors" (Harrison, 1977:208).

Newspapers at this early stage were not editorial entities. In fact, publishers were very fearful of editorial comment. Colonial publishers worked under heavy restrictions.
Political pressures from government agents and controlling legislation curbed editorial expression. In addition, commercial threats to business and hostile citizenry would also restrict the verbal latitude of the early American press (Walett, 1977:159).

In 1735, the seeds for the symbolic transformation of newspapers would be planted with the trial of printer Peter Zenger. As a printer in New York, Peter Zenger was approached by two civic leaders, William Smith and James Alexander, who felt it time for someone to voice dissatisfaction with city politics. Zenger agreed to print their views. After a month's worth of articles criticizing governmental officials and essays proclaiming the freedom of the press, Zenger found himself arrested on "a charge of printing 'Scandalous, Virulent, and Seditious Reflections'" (Hart, 1970:120). Zenger in the eyes of the government had overstepped his editorial bounds. Nevertheless, after a lengthy trial that would have rivaled the Scopes Trial for dramaticism, Zenger was acquitted on all charges. In general the case won printers the right to criticize government officials. However, what is more important, the Zenger case marked the foundation for the First Amendment. The Zenger case initiated changes in the conceptualization of newspapers by the readership. In the ability to criticize political officials, the conception of political relations was changing. Officials were no longer unquestioned authorities; they were now becoming representatives whose actions could be called into question. The public readership was gaining a supervisory role in politics through the discourse of newspapers (Warner, 1990:53). Newspapers were no longer passive tools of communication; they were becoming recognized as tools for public action.
After the Zenger case, newspapers did not really change to any great degree. Editorial comments were slowly becoming more popular but the British policy of "benign neglect" left the colonist with little to really criticize (Harrison, 1977:208). However, thirty years later in 1764 the enactment of the Sugar Act would awaken colonists to the decreasing concern by the British authorities for the welfare of the colonists. Colonists would begin to use newspapers regularly to "bring economic pressures to bear on the mother country in various ways" (Walett, 1977:159). By voicing displeasure with the recent political act and calling for protest through boycotts and the like, the newspapers would act as a ready forum for views to be expressed.

Such protest would double with the passage of another act known as the Stamp Act passed in 1765. The Act placed taxes of "a halfpenny to a penny, according to size, and advertisements two shillings each, it also required publication on each paper of the publisher's name" (Lee, 1973:35). Newspapers that wished to continue printing had to bear a required stamp that was not cheap. Not to mention, editors no longer would be able to enjoy the generality of pseudonyms. News of the political action taken by the British Parliament hit the colonies and inflamed protest. By the time the actual enactment date arrived, the colonist had successfully dismantled the British means to enforce the Act. The newspapers would act as the rallying center bringing the public together "first on the local level and then on an inter-colonial basis" (Walett, 1977:166).

After the Stamp Act repeal in early 1766, the newspapers in colonial America would never be the same. For the colonists, the newspaper no longer represented a passive forum of communication. Instead, it became synonymous with "civic
liberty" (Warner, 1990:69). The Stamp Act was not only an economic action on the part of the British Parliament. It was also an attempt to control the politics of the colonies by controlling its greatest political tool. The Stamp Act was "noxious" because it struck a united public that had been brought together over time through the freedoms of the press. Newspapers were the public sphere. To speak publicly was to do so in print (Warner, 1990:64).

This is the second reason why newspapers have been chosen for this study as a resource base. Since this investigation is probing into the relation of women and the public realm in the years previous to the Revolution, from what has just been discussed they seem to be a most appropriate resource. As the historical context of the papers show, these documents symbolized the public sphere for the period in question. The time span of the sample identified earlier has been chosen to test the effects of this change over time. The twenty-six years which have been chosen touch both the old and newly transformed symbolic meanings of the press in the colonial period. This fact presents an interesting opportunity to see how changes in public definitions of political features affected society as a whole especially women.

Now that it is understood why colonial newspapers were chosen as a resource base, it is equally important to outline how they were analyzed. Keeping in mind that newspapers represent a two-channeled artifact, the methodology developed below had to address both these channels so that later analysis of the data would yield information upon both levels of communication. The subsequent method developed sets about this task simplistically so to make the analysis manageable.
To begin, every direct or indirect mention of women was recorded. In most cases the entire mention was transcribed or photocopied. However, with later repetition of form in advertisements and certain types of articles, general type specifications were noted instead (i.e., article, letter, advertisement, written about women, written by a woman, etc.). Along with general characteristics, placement within the newspaper was recorded. Page number, column number and in the case of advertisements sequential placements were logged. Sequential placement of advertisements was determined by counting the total number of advertisements and then the sequential number of the ad itself in relation.

The data collected represented data of two kinds—that related to the textual content and that relating to form. Since the two types of data represented two separate levels of communication within the newspapers themselves, their analyses mandated separate and differing treatments. The textual content was analyzed by an ethnohistorical approach. Data collected was treated as emic expressions of cultural data. Consequently, information within the textual content was used to address five central questions. The questions posed were: Do women participate in the textual discourse of the newspapers? What roles are reflected by this participation? Is there a starting point to this participation? In what ways are women viewed in the newspapers when not actually an active participant? What roles do these women represent? It must be noted that the textual data was treated in two distinct sections. Both newspapers featured a separate section of advertisements. Since these commercially related announcements were not incorporated into the prose content of the documents, it was decided that their separate
treatment would ease analysis. Although examined separately, the same questions as stated above were applied.

For the structural data collected analysis was more complicated. Similar to a study of contemporary beer cans reviewed in Shanks and Tilley's book mentioned above, I decided to approach the messages within the structural form of the newspapers through a quantitative analysis. Emulating Shanks and Tilley's study, I used the placement and sequential arrangement data to expose the messages to be uncovered within the structure of the documents. Statistical analysis was expected to exhibit patterns that were subconsciously presented to the reader. Specific areas of analysis have dealt with the location of women within the newspaper by page and column and the arrangement of advertisements in relation to their subject matter—Where did women appear in the newspapers? Did this placement change over time? What messages might be communicated by these placements? It is assumed that the placements are diametrically oppose to subject matter directly or indirectly related to men.

The concluding analysis will be presented in two parts. The first will concentrate upon the conclusion drawn from the textual analysis. These will be presented by focusing upon each newspaper individually. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* will be addressed first then the *Virginia Gazette*. As mentioned above the analysis will be further divided between prose and commercial content (i.e., advertisements). Once the textual analysis is fully discussed, the analysis of the structural data will be presented. Again each newspaper will be treated separately.
Chapter III

Textual Analysis: *Pennsylvania Gazette*

**INTRODUCTION**

The first newspaper printed in Philadelphia was the *American Weekly Mercury* on December 22, 1719 (McMurtrie, 1969:14). Owned and operated by Andrew Bradford, the newspaper enjoyed nine years without competition. However, for those nine years, Bradford would find himself battling with socially and politically powerful Quaker censors. Only in 1728, with the introduction of the *Universal Instructor in All Arts and Sciences; and the Pennsylvania Gazette*, would Bradford begin to compete with other printers.

The *Universal Instructor*, published by Samuel Keimer, was the second newspaper published in Philadelphia. Keimer felt that Bradford's paper was inadequate. Keimer described the *American Weekly Mercury*’s writing as "wretchedly performed" and a "Scandal to the Name of Printing" (Kobre, 1960:53). Consequently, Keimer felt the Philadelphia market which covered most of Pennsylvania, Delaware and southern New Jersey could handle two newspapers. Unfortunately, although Keimer's assessment of the market would prove correct, his business sense did not translate into his personal financial management. He was forced to sell his printing office by the summer of the next year (Kobre, 1960:55). The purchaser, probably one of the most famous figures in American history, was Benjamin Franklin.
A past employee of Keimer and Bradford, Franklin in partnership with Hugh Meredith bought Keimer's print shop. Although in partnership, Franklin would be the force behind the printing company. Hugh Meredith would turn out to be a silent partner, later leaving the firm all together to settle social debts. Franklin would immediately turn his attentions upon recreating the *Universal Instructor*. Franklin began by shortening the newspaper's title. Dropping the whole first section, Franklin published the first edition of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in the fall of 1679 (Kobre, 1960:55).

The *Pennsylvania Gazette* would continue under Franklin's control for nineteen years. In 1748, Franklin would enter a partnership with his apprentice David Hall. However, Franklin would maintain control of the Gazette until his retirement in 1765 (McMurtrie, 1969:29-33). At that point, Hall would assume control of the paper. Hall with a later addition of partner William Sellers would continue to publish the *Gazette*. The two would completely own and operate the printing firm by 1776. However, publication of the *Gazette* would be suspended in 1777 with the British occupation of Philadelphia. However, the suspension would be short, as Hall and Sellers would move their operations to York, Pennsylvania, and recommence publication by the fall of that same year.

The *Pennsylvania Gazette* was a consistent institution of eighteenth-century Philadelphia. As shown in this brief historical sketch of its beginnings and life up to the Revolution, it represented a regular expression and reflection of Philadelphian lifeways. When used to address the questions raised in the previous chapter, the *Gazette* does
exhibit change in designated realms for white women in later eighteenth-century Philadelphia. Black women are completely unseen in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*.

Within the *Pennsylvania Gazette* women do appear as participants from the beginning of the test survey. However, active participation would only be observed within the advertisement section through the placement of advertisements. Such activity as observed through the varied types and subjects of the advertisements placed displayed a wide variety or roles from executors, wives and shopkeepers. More important, the advertisements exhibited an increase in involvement and roles represented over time. Although many of the roles seen in the first decade surveyed showed little motion from traditional domestic pursuits, the second two decades in the survey exhibited an expansion of women's participation in the commercial realm of Philadelphia. In contrast to the advertisement section, the prose text would yield not even a single example of participation in the sample surveyed. Although one article observed did refer to an inquiry to the newspaper as having been made by a woman (*Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 3, 1765:3), the *Gazette* showed no text produced by women. In general, the advertisement section would embody the *Gazette'*s only evidence of observable change.

Although women would not figure as writers within the prose content of the *Gazette*, they would figure regularly as a subject of writing. Through such articles less direct information was uncovered about how women were acting. Articles that referred to women, directly and indirectly, exemplified what women were seen as doing. Such information was able to expand the roles evidenced within the advertisement section. Women were observed as political actors, criminals and victims. Although additional roles
are displayed, they do not show change over time. In addition, the additional roles are not universally assumed. Not all women were seen as political actors or criminals. As will be discussed further, issues of status, as defined by title and wealth, would limit access socially for the assumption of certain roles.

**ANALYSIS**

For the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, women were only seen as direct participants within the advertisement section. Such participation was evidenced by the publisher’s indication of an advertisement’s procurement by a woman. The ad’s buyer would be indicated by the presence of the advertiser's name at the very beginning or at the conclusion of his or her ad. At times, the advertiser’s names could also be presented within the middle of an ad's text, but that was rare. In general, advertisements over the time period studied did not parallel a present-day idea of advertisements. They were completely textual and were presented much like articles. The only typical visual element featured within advertisements were linear boarders that wrapped around individual ads. Women in the Philadelphia area were procuring ad space within the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for the complete time period surveyed. For the first decade, these advertisements would give a very narrow picture of women as widows and executors. However, by the early 1760s, the advertisements would exhibit an expansion of women into the commercial markets of Philadelphia.

In the 1750s, advertisements taken out by women were typified by this ad procured by Mary Leacock in the *Gazette's* January 2, 1953 issue:
"ALL persons indebted to the estate of John Leacock late of this city shopkeeper deceased, are desir'd to pay: And those that have demands against said estate, to bring in their accounts, that they may be adjusted by Mary Leacock, Administratrix."

Within this ad, Mrs. Leacock places an ad as the executrix of her husband's estate. As such, she is also shown within the role of widow which can be translated into an expression of the role of wife. For the first decade surveyed, ads of this type were the only ads seen as taken out by women. Similar to Leacock's ad, other ads of this type also showed women acting as executors to estates formerly owned by their brothers and fathers. These ads, although not very expressive of the larger duties of an executrix, do give a primary indication that women at this time did have some connection to the commercial realm.

As executrices, women like Mary Leacock would call upon the commercial community to settle all their husbands' debts. Acting in such a capacity, women would represent their former husbands or family members outside the home. Therefore, these ads seem to indicate that women were recognized as active participants within the commercial community when acting as executrixes.

Ads like Mary Leacock's would be a continuous feature throughout the entire survey. However, over the next two decades, a wider variety of ad types would surface that seemingly indicate a further expansion of women into the commercial community of Philadelphia. It appears that in the early 1760s the Pennsylvania Gazette's advertisement section doubled in size. In the 1750s, advertisements would usually only fill a single page at the end of the Gazette. By 1762, advertisements would consistently fill two pages of
the *Gazette*. Typically these two pages would be situated at the end of the issue. In 1765, advertisements would begin to be featured upon the front page. The second page would be relegated to the final page. This change may be related to the argument raised by Warner discussed in the previous chapter.

Warner argues that newspapers in the 1760s underwent a symbolic change. Prior to this time they had been viewed as an informational source for remote and exotic news, rarely reporting local events beyond shipping information. By 1765, this would change. Newspapers would become the "proper medium of the public" (Warner, 1990:32). Consequently, the increase in advertisements would reinforce such a change. If the newspapers were then considered the communication medium of public discourse, how better then to advertise your services or goods but within such a medium?

What is interesting to note is that women were not excluded from this public medium nor from activity within the commercial community. Over the next two decades women's advertisement's would exhibit women in a variety of roles as independent merchants. As merchants, women would use advertisements in a variety of ways beyond as a method of self-exposure. In addition to merchants, non-business women would utilize the *Gazette* as a means of public voice. Advertisements would represent the doorway for women into the public sector. The 60s and 70s would show that women had a ready presence in public affairs.

The majority of ads secured by women in the 60s and 70s were those used by female merchants looking to gain public exposure for their services and wares. A typical example can be seen by an ad placed by Jane Kirk when opening her grocery shop:
JANE KIRK
Hath opened a Grocery shop on the East side of Front-Street near Walnut-Street, where the ----ing Goods are sold on the lowest terms, either whole sale or Retail, for ready Money. viz. BEST West India Rum, and Jamaica Spirit, Melaffes, Mulcovado, Lump, single and double refined Sugar, Bohea and Green Tea, Coffee, Chocolate, Pepper, Cinnamon, Mace, Cloves, Capers, Anchovies, Madeira Wine, Sweet Oil, White Wine and Common Vinegar, Limes and Lemons, fine Salt, China, Stone, Delph and Earthen Wares, Decanters, Flint Glasses, and many other goods. As she has laid in every Article on the lowest Terms, she will fell as low as any person" (Pennsylvania Gazette, July 4, 1965:1).

Many merchants like Jane Kirk would place ads of a similar nature. Such ads would show women as grocers, sellers of cloth and agricultural supplies, boarders, gristmill operators and milliners. One ad observed even showed a woman running an iron mongery, selling tools and an immense variety of objects manufactured from iron (Pennsylvania Gazette, November 7, 1771:1). In these ads, the purchaser would give their location and a typically lengthy list of the wares or skills available. As can be seen in Kirk's ad above, women in their ads expressed their sense of competitiveness with other merchants. It is obvious that these women were assuming the roles of merchants and worthy competitors in the Philadelphia marketplace.

Beyond ads expressing goods and services, female merchants would also use advertisements to conduct other issues of business. For example, in the spring of 1762, Hannah Flowers a farm owner advertises her intention upon finding a partner for her business or someone to help manage it (Pennsylvania Gazette, May 6, 1762:4). Similarly, a businesswoman named Maria Juliana Berckert submitted an advertisement in the fall of 1765 that relates a desire for information related to indentured servants (Pennsylvania
Ads of this nature further our understanding of women's participation in the commercial community. These two examples exhibit two aspects of business management. Women as the heads of companies were aware of and dealt with management and employee needs.

All the ads published by women in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* were not purchased by female merchants. Advertisements were also used by private citizens as a means of public voice. In these cases, women would use the medium to announce rewards being offered for stolen property, the sale of property (not necessarily related to estate executing), even to voice warnings to other consumers or present rebuttals to public accusations. These ads represent possibly the most important aspect of the information to be coaxed out of the advertisements. These advertisements represent possibly the only means for women not active within the commercial community to maintain a voice in the public sector. Since women were apparently excluded from direct discourse within the prose area of the *Gazette*, it appears they turned to advertisements as a means to communicate publicly.

Typical examples of such ads can be seen in two ads purchased by Mary Way and Susanna Cryder. In a May 2, 1771 issue of the *Gazette*, Mary Way would use an advertisement to accuse John Angle of committing fraud, subsequently, cautioning other members of the community of his ill dealings. The ad reads:

"To the PUBLIC.
WHEREAS a certain John Angle, a Dutchman, who served his time with Reuben Haines, of Philadelphia, to the brewing business, did on the 20th day of this instant, under the presence of releasing to me one half of a brew-house, and some lots of land, situate in London Port
town, in West Cain township, Chester County, artfully procure from me a mortgage deed which I had taken of him for the security of the payment of Three Hundred and Fifty pounds; as also seven judgement bonds for the payment of said money. The aforesaid mortgage deed was for one lot of land, and half a brewery; as also for three other lots, all situate in or near the aforesaid London Port; all persons are hereby cautioned not to take any conveyance or assignment of the said brewery or lots from the said John Angle, as I am determined to hold the said premises, and prosecute the aforesaid John Angle, for the notorious treachery he has been guilty of in the taking of the aforesaid writings, which was on this wise; he the said John Angle had purchased the said brewery from me, and the three other lots from John Whitaker, and for the security of the payment gave me the aforesaid mortgage and judgement bonds, and being unable to make good his payments come to me, and requested me to take his release for the aforesaid brewery and lots, and give him up his mortgage and bonds, which I consented to, and accordingly I procured a deed of conveyance to be wrote agreeable to our bargain, and when we met on the aforesaid day at the house of William Clingan, Esq.; with several people of credit present, who came as evidences, the aforesaid deed was produced, and John Angle refused to sign it until he had the mortgage deed and bonds delivered up, no one thinking but his ignorance might induce him to think the deed and bonds might be detained after the deed was signed, but he soon made his design known by treacherously putting the said mortgage deed and bonds in his pocket, and then refusing to sign the aforesaid release, and so went off; I went to his house the ensuing evening, and waited till late bed-time, but he was not to be seen, which gives me good reason to believe his intention is to defraud me. Mary Way" (Pennsylvania Gazette, May 2, 1771:4).

Through this ad, Way shows her ability to express her views publicly. In the role of property owner, Way has found herself crossed. It is interesting how this ad reflects Way’s participation in business and legal transactions. However, its significance resides in the fact that this ad shows a woman taking public action. As a member of a community, Mary Way has decided to use an advertisement to speak to that community.
Similarly, women would use advertisements as a means to solicit assistance from the community. In an ad purchased by Susanna Cryder, we can see how women used the newspaper as a method to speed the return of stolen goods:

"TEN POUNDS Reward. STOLEN from the subscriber, living in Third-street, in this city, yesterday, the 28th instant, a roan horse, about 14 hands high, had a star on his forehead, and white legs, carries high, and mostly paces; and old saddle, new girth, new curb bridle, and black reins; likewise stolen from a French gentleman, who lodges at the subscriber's, a gold watch, with a chased case, black silk string, gold seal and key, and a small gold fish; the name of the place where made Bordeaux, but the maker's name unknown. The thief, who is the noted Doctor Louis, a Frenchman, but speaks also English, is a tall will made man, has a smooth and full face, wears, his own hair, curled on both sides of his head, and tied behind. He wears a suit of light blue cloth, and took with him a white frock, he has also with him several very good french books of physic and surgery; likewise a fine felt set of surgeons instruments. He has the fear of a dresses gentleman-like. Whoever takes up the said thief and horse, and secures the thief, so that he may be brought to justice, and the goods be had again, shalt have the above reward, or for the horse only THREE POUNDS, and reasonable charges, paid by SUSANNA CRYDER" (Pennsylvania Gazette, April 6, 1774:4).

Within this ad, we see a woman who runs a boarding house reporting a theft which was transgressed against her and one of her tenants. Cryder through her ad calls upon the public to assist her with due reward to capture the thief. Again, women are seen as active participants within the economic community and vocal participants within the community as a whole.

Possibly, the most powerful example of the type of ad just described was published in the fall of 1771 by Martha Thompson. Martha Thompson in the spring of 1771 had decided to leave her husband and elope with another man. Her husband's reaction was to place an ad in the Gazette stating that his wife had eloped and that he would not be held
responsible for any debts incurred by her. The type of ad purchased by Mr. Thompson was fairly common. However, Martha Thompson very uncommonly replied to her husband's ad through the placement of her own, which read:

"I think it incumbent on me, in my own justification, to inform the public, and my friends, left they should be misled by his false advertisements, that the want of every necessary for myself and children, for some years past, together with his all usage, such at beating abusing and knocking me down as a dog, only for asking his assistance, along with myself, to provide and get bread for his small and helpless charges of four children, as the real and sufficient cause of my elopement, rather than stay and possibly perish through his hands this approaching winter, he being so much addicted to drink, that all the money he earns, it squandered that way, and we at home perishing through want of common necessities; the truth of which can be truly certified by all my neighbors, who have known me since childhood, and commiserated me ever since my unhappy connection with him. Martha Thompson"(Pennsylvania Gazette, October 3, 1771:3).

Thompson's rebuttal is fascinating in two ways. To begin, this advertisement shows a woman utilizing the newspaper as a means of public communication. Acting as a protector of her children and herself, Martha Thompson's action gives insight into the role of mother as protector of her children and health of the family as a whole. This article also gives insight into the institution of marriage in colonial Philadelphia.

Traditionally, it has been argued by historians that women in colonial America enjoyed a much more "fluid and less well defined" life in marriage than their counterparts in England(Norton, 1979:40). European travelers would often remark upon the "free attitude of American girls"(Lerner, 1971:12). Historians seem to have three reasons for this difference. A primary reason lay in the fact that American women were in short supply as the sex ratio of the colonial population was heavily unbalanced. Men out
numbered women by a large margin. Consequently, the necessity of dowries and commensurate class status lost much importance as even poor women would find themselves open to a wide variety of eligible husbands. In addition, women did not necessarily have to fear an inability to remarry. Therefore, elopement was not considered a difficult option when faced with an ill-arranged or unhappy marriage (Lerner, 1971:13).

Secondly, women through their labor were seen as "essential to the survival of the family" (Norton, 1979:40). Men needed women to conduct the tasks of food processing and cloth production. Women in return were viewed as gaining some sense of recognizable power within the relationship between husband and wife and household decision making. The final reasoning behind this traditional view of colonial American women relates to the second reason in that women's roles were not as strictly defined. American women were observed as having more access to activity outside the home. Beyond their necessity within the home, women in America seemed to enjoy less resistance to their incorporation into the public sphere outside the home (Norton, 1979:40).

Martha Thompson in her advertisement appears to reiterate just such traditional ideas of relationship of women and marriage in colonial America. Finding herself within a dysfunctional marriage, Thompson does not sit idly by. She takes action to protect her children and herself from neglect and physical abuse. Since her estranged husband's ad points out that she has already sought to remarry, Thompson's ad exemplifies the ability of colonial women to easily remarry. In addition, the ad exposes the ability of American women--in Philadelphia at least--to defend themselves outside of the home. Wives were
not necessarily passive members of the household. Instead, they represented empowered partners.

There is one last insight that must be recognized about these advertisements before moving into the information found within the prose text of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. What has been clearly shown above is the fact that women were active participants in the commercial community as merchants, property owner, mothers and wives as well as the larger Philadelphia community in general. However, what must be noted is that these women have all paid to participate in this medium. It is interesting that women find participation only in the area of the newspaper where there existed a cost for involvement. Consequently, only women with the financial means necessary could participate. Granted the fees were minimal, access appears defined by financial capabilities.

There is no indication of other criteria defining access. The ability to write would not necessarily limit a woman from purchasing such an advertisement. Since the printer could take an ad verbally transcribing the text for the purchaser, an inability to write would not restrict a woman's use of the medium. As shown by the articles above, no indications of class as might be represented through the use of titles are observed. For women Philadelphia seems to have been a place where women could speak, be heard and acknowledged publicly, but only for a price.

Within the prose text of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, women did not surface as direct participants. Nevertheless, they did figure as a topic for news. Over the twenty-six years surveyed, many articles would focus upon news that either related the actions of women, events that affected them or memorialized them. Unlike the advertisement
section, women would appear as subjects evenly throughout the prose text over the three decades surveyed. In fact, the articles observed formed a pattern of types that can be categorized into three groups—women of status, curiosities and obituaries. From these groups more indirect information can be drawn about roles not seen in the advertisements, like political actor and criminal. However, many of these roles were restricted by prerequisites of status—defined by wealth or title—or lack thereof.

The first category of mention observed in the Gazette related to articles upon women has been termed women of status. These articles were characterized by the presence of women who held particular titles that related them to royalty or upper class status (i.e., princess, lady, queen, etc.). A typical example can be seen in an item published in the January 4, 1759 edition:

"Her Imperial Czarish Majesty interests herself so heartily in everything that concerns the royal family, that most of the grandees of the kingdom are already informed, by her directions, that supposing they should refuse to acknowledge Prince Charles for Duke of Courland, she will maintain his election cost what it will" (Pennsylvania Gazette, January 4, 1759:2).

Articles of this nature were the most common concerning women in the prose text. They concerned mainly the marital relations of the European royal families giving announcements of births, deaths, betrothals and marriages. However, within such articles as the one seen above, these women could also be seen as political actors. As implied by the verb "maintain," women in these families acted upon issues of state and who was to direct its future. Yet, such action within political affairs is only seen as accessible to
women with status. Titles and royal birth seem to be the keys for women into politics if the *Pennsylvania Gazette* is representative of cultural views at the time studied.

The second category of article type has been termed *curiosities*. In contrast to the first category, these articles feature women in a greater spectrum both titled and untitled. In fact, these articles often feature women of no status at all. This category is divided further into three subcategories---crime, tragedy and interesting facts.

As the first subcategory, crime is fairly self-explanatory. Articles in this subcategory refer to women in relation to criminal events. In these articles, women would figure both as criminals and victims. For example, one article relates an attempted escape by an insane female criminal:

"A Woman confined in the Tower on the Bridge, who had been committed to Prison for misdemeanors some Time before, being dissatisfied with her lodgings, jumped out a window into the river below, was later picked up out of her mind" (*Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 2, 1753:2).

Other accounts of women as criminals refer to acts of purgey, robbery and murder. From the articles observed, female criminals were never women of status or class. Criminal women were often referred to as "lowly" or "of little means." Women with title or any means of wealth are not seen committing crimes. Therefore, it appears that illegal activity was the realm of the poorer classes.

Crime articles would also relate events where women were the victims of criminal acts. In contrast to the articles about female criminals, the role of victim showed no discrimination. Women of all classes could find themselves victimized. An interesting
example can be drawn from an issue in 1765. Although sadly comical, the article below exemplifies how women were presented as victims:

"In a town at some distance from this city, a few days ago, a man who had been many years married, it should appear, had conceived some dislike at her. The method he took was uncommon: While asleep, he put a noose over her neck, and pulled her up to the ceiling, where he keep her hanging so long a time, that he made no doubt of her death. He then put her into bed where she had been before, left her, and went to alarm the neighborhood of the story of his wife's being fit and expiring. The neighbors came to his assistance; but to his amazement and mortification, in place of finding his wife dead, he found her alive, and able to tell distinctly to all around, the story of his wickedness. The man was committed to prison" (*Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 3, 1765:2).

In addition to murder, articles related women as the victims of theft, rape and fraud. It is interesting to think why these accounts were so numerous in the newspaper’s prose. The only reasoning proposed here can be related to present day journalism. Everyone reads tabloid papers at one time or another. Here, through articles relating anecdotes of criminal events, we can see that readers in eighteenth-century Philadelphia were just as voyeuristic as readers today.

The final two subcategories, *tragedy* and *interest facts*, further express the voyeuristic nature of much of the news printed in the *Gazette*. These articles would often relate accounts of strange events that often affected or involved women. Although they would commonly feature women, they hold little value for information relating to the roles assumed by women in eighteenth-century Philadelphia.
The term tragedy has been chosen to characterize articles that present women in situations beyond their control. In an article dating to 1771, an article describes the result of an earthquake:

"Men, women and children fell flat on their faces to the Ground, making most bitter Lamentations and ceased not crying and groaning till the Horizon became serene again" (*Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 2, 1771:1).

Women in these articles are portrayed as passive often helpless witnesses. Interesting facts as a subcategory includes mentions that describe extraordinary phenomenons related to matters of illness and death. Similar to the "believe it or not" type items found today, these items give little insight into the women in which they refer. In an article about a woman who had been "afflicted with a dropsy for six years," the horrific nature of these items can be observed:

"A poor woman, who has been afflicted with a dropsy for six years, to such a degree that her body was eight ells in circumference and who, unable to stir, was entirely confined to her bed, is lately dead; and after her decease they drew off 164 pints of water from her body" (*Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 7, 1765:2).

Other articles in this subcategory would focus upon tales of women who lived to surprising ages. Again, these items were merely anecdotal in nature and hold little analytical value. In the end, they just reiterate that voyeurism is not a new feature to journalism.

The last, larger category mentioned above was that of obituaries. These brief memorials of deceased women only begin to appear in the later half of the 1760s. Such articles unlike those just discussed feature some insight into how women were viewed.
Each obituary would typically eulogize the deceased family member and describe her greatest assets. These descriptions are the keys to these articles’ information. They reflect roles associated to women and characteristics seen as ideal.

In 1776, the family of Mary Dunn submitted her obituary. Within the obituary, the Dunn family described their loved one:

"She fitted her different stations in life without noise, but with great prudence and dignity; she was religious without show or ostentation, was a loving wife, a tender parent, affectionate to her relatives, indulgent to her servants, charitable . . ." (*Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 3, 1776:3).

Dunn’s memorial as a typical obituary shows a variety of insights. Through her description it is shown that women were recognized as fitting into many roles at one time as expressed by the phrase, "different stations." In addition, Dunn is viewed as a "wife," "parent" and patron. It is interesting that in all obituaries reviewed over the survey all referred to women in purely domestic roles. Unlike the roles viewed in the advertisements, women in these articles are strictly matronly. In some cases, obituaries did show some indication that the women were matrons within affluent homes. This may account for their scarcity. They may have represented a status statement in some sense. However, the obituaries reviewed may only represent the beginnings of the incorporation of such items into the typical discourse in newspapers. Once more, the analysis is reflecting the changing symbolic nature of the newspapers as a medium of public discourse. Perhaps obituaries were not quite established as proper for the printed page.

The *Pennsylvania Gazette* gives an interesting picture of women in colonial Philadelphia. Women in this period seem to be moving outside the traditional domestic
realms of the typical household and into the marketplace. In the sample taken, the *Gazette* shows no indication that women are assuming political roles as well. They are making a place for themselves in business, but they still remain outside issues of state, except when royal status permits. The above analysis does not agree with the ideas presented by Mary Beth Norton. However, at the same time they do not agree with Joan Hoff-Wilson's ideas either. The *Gazette* did not exhibit a society in which women were being pushed back into the home. The key to understanding the information discussed above in the larger scheme of colonial America as a whole will be uncovered later. For, as will be seen shortly, the *Virginia Gazette* gives us yet another contrasting picture of colonial women.
Chapter IV

Textual Analysis: *Virginia Gazette*

*INTRODUCTION*

In the southern colonies, newspapers became a regular feature of printing much later than in the northern colonies. The *Maryland Gazette* began circulating in fall of 1727, which marked the beginning of southern published newspapers. Before this date, southern residents interested in foreign accounts were forced to subscribe to northern newspapers. For Williamsburg specifically, a regular newspaper would not be established until 1735. The reason being that printing as an established trade would experience an interrupted beginning. Although William Nuthead from England ran a press in Williamsburg for six years, 1680-1686, his print shop produced little more than governmental documents. In 1686, Nuthead tired of troubles related to licensing closed the shop and move to Annapolis. As a result, outside printers would be commissioned for all printing needed in Williamsburg. For nearly fifty years Williamsburg would function without a local print shop. Finally, in 1735, printing would return with the arrival of William Parks from Annapolis, Maryland (*Williamsburg Craft Series*, 1978:5).

Upon the invitation of Williamsburg, William Parks moved his printing establishment to the governmental center of Virginia. Over his first year, Parks set up
shop on Duke of Gloucester Street. Parks' shop became the post office, stationery store and printing center. By early 1736, Parks was commissioned as the "printer to the colony" which included a regular salary from the government(Kobre, 1960:81). Once firmly established by the fall of 1736, Parks turned his attention over to the publication of a newspaper. Having already published the *Maryland Gazette* for a time in Annapolis, Parks redirected his interest to the local area and created the *Virginia Gazette*.

The *Virginia Gazette* would continue under Parks until his early death in 1750. The *Gazette* then continued under the guidance of Parks' employee, William Hunter. After eleven years, Hunter retired. The *Gazette* was then published by Joseph Royle. As patriot sentiments began to rise, the *Virginia Gazette* found itself in the middle of two factions. Dissatisfaction with the *Gazette* led some locals to invite another printer, William Rind, to print a second newspaper in Williamsburg. In 1766, the last year of Royle's tenure at the *Gazette*, a second *Virginia Gazette* entered circulation in Williamsburg. For the next eleven years Williamsburg supported the two newspapers.

Over those years each paper would experience additional editorial changes. In 1766, Alexander Purdie assumed control of the original *Gazette* that continued until 1779. In 1773, William Rind passed away. Interestingly, Rind's wife, Clementine, continued the paper's publication until her death a year later. Following Clementine Rind's editorship, the second *Gazette* maintained circulation with the entrance of John Pinkney as editor. During the Revolutionary War, Purdie would move the original *Gazette* to Richmond to continue publication. The second *Gazette* was discontinued (*Williamsburg Craft Series*, 1978:31).
For the facilitation of this study, it was decided that data would only be reviewed in the original *Virginia Gazette*. This decision was made for the simple fact that only the original *Gazette* ran continuously throughout the time span under investigation. With this methodological clarification made, attention shall now turn to the analysis.

The *Virginia Gazette* gives a highly limited picture of women in later eighteenth-century Virginia. Women do participate within the newspapers directly in both the prose and advertisement sections. However, examples of this past participation are sporadic and indicate high restrictions to particular areas of access. Similar to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, women are seen as participants in the commercial community. But, a much smaller range of roles are represented in the evidence observed. Examples of direct participation by women in the prose discourse in the form of letters to the editor and submissions of essay type articles was observed, but they too yielded little information related to roles for women. The *Virginia Gazette* does hold a wealth of information upon eighteenth-century southern views on women. However, this information is only to be observed through indirect reference within articles obviously directed at women. It would seem important then to make a key observation: women in eighteenth-century Williamsburg were definitely a recognized part of the newspaper's audience. Therefore, women definitely were assuming the role of subscriber and reader. But, even these roles were highly limited.

Direct access to the *Virginia Gazette* by women was highly defined by a woman's education level and, consequently, issues of status as defined by wealth. Basically, any woman could place an advertisement within the *Gazette* as long as the fee for the space
could be met. As discussed in the previous analysis of the Pennsylvania Gazette, literacy did not necessarily restrict this type of access. Nevertheless, access to publication within the prose text was much more restricted. As seen by the examples observed, women who were able to find expression through the prose section exhibited not only literacy but a level of education that expressed an additional exposure to literary education. More than the ability to write was communicated by the submissions credited to women. Similarly, articles—or essays as they would more appropriately be termed—directed at the newspaper's female audience required some exposure to a higher level of literary education than mere literacy. Consequently, access to and understanding of the prose text was highly restricted to women with status. Status in this case refers to an elevated level of wealth, because it is only through such wealth that women in the eighteenth century found such a level of education.

The Virginia Gazette does offer a wealth of information, but this information exhibits a highly socially divided culture. Predominantly data focuses around an ideal cultural view of upper class white women in late eighteenth-century Virginia. To a lesser degree, the Virginia Gazette does yield information upon the commercial roles of women held not necessarily by women of status and minor details about the existence of Black women in the South. The two pictures to be observed in the Virginia Gazette are not pictures of social change for women. Instead, the pictures are static, to a degree where over the time period investigated no significant indications of change are observed. Women consistently figure as writers and readers of the Virginia Gazette throughout the period surveyed.
ANALYSIS

In the *Virginia Gazette*, as seen in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, women participated in the newspapers discourse through the procurement of advertisements. In fact, there are many parallels in the types of ads printed. Nevertheless, there are some differing examples that indicate other roles taken by women in the Virginia area not seen in the more northern city of Philadelphia.

The most common advertisements seen in the *Virginia Gazette* were ads used by women to communicate the loss or discovery of stolen or unclaimed property. Horses were the most common property discussed. These advertisements would at times also refer to slaves, both male and female, who were either runaways or for sale. In addition, the *Virginia Gazette* contained a fair number of ads run by women acting as executrixes of their relatives’ estates. As seen with the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, private women in Williamsburg were able through the small cost of an advertisement to communicate with the community as a whole, both private and commercial.

Women in Williamsburg were also using the *Virginia Gazette* as a means to publicize themselves as businesspeople. Similar to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, female milliners and boarding house owners were seen as roles maintained by women in the marketplace. Nevertheless, the *Virginia Gazette* did exhibit some additions not seen in its northern counter part. In an advertisement published in the spring of 1752 one such role can be observed:

"WHEREAS some ill-disposed Persons have falsely reported that the Ferry at Claiborne's is put down; This is therefore to give public Notice that those who favor me with their Custom, may depend
on good usage and a quick Passage over to the usual Place for Seven-pence Half-penny Man and Horse, or down to Capt. Macon's Landing for One Shilling, which cuts two Miles in their way to Williamsburg. Jane Claiborne" (Virginia Gazette, April 22, 1757:4).

Ferry runner was not a role seen in Philadelphia. It definitely was an occupation held by women in the Williamsburg area as more than one ad would be seen for female ferry owners. Another occupation assumed by women in Williamsburg not seen in Philadelphia was that of tavern keeper. One such instance was record in an ad placed in 1772 by Jane Vobe. Within the ad she also announces her need for a cook. Obviously women were recognized in Williamsburg as members of the commercial community.

The advertisement section within the Virginia Gazette was not as prominent as that in the Pennsylvania Gazette. This is most likely due to the fact that Williamsburg was not as large a commercial center as Philadelphia. Although the Virginia Gazette sounded some variation within the roles taken by women in the marketplace, there is a greater significance to be deduced in the advertisement section.

As mentioned above, many ads taken out by women referred to the sale of and search for slaves. It is through ads like these and others purchased anonymously that Black women appear as existent in southern culture. Not one example was seen in the northern newspaper of a single mention of Blacks in any sense. In a way they seemingly did not exist. However, as can be seen by an ad placed anonymously in the summer of 1776, Black women were property to be bought and sold:

"FOR SALE
"A YOUNG, healthy Negro WENCH, who is an exceeding fine spinner, can wash and iron well, and do other business in a Family;
likewise her CHILD, For farther Particulars inquire of the Printers of this Gazette" (*Virginia Gazette*, August 31, 1776:3).

Black women were used as domestic servants as well as field hands. By the advertisements placed in the Gazette, they were apparently property to be bought and sold. Little information can be drawn from the advertisements related to Black women, for they rarely are descriptive. The example shown here was the most elaborate reviewed. Some ads would announce that certain slaves had runaway. In these ads, often the female slaves were identified as field hands. Further description would relate names and general physique. Nevertheless, the ads do expose the fact that these Black women would attempt to escape their conditions. It is interesting to see such an obvious example of resistant behavior discussed publicly.

Although these ads yield little valuable evidence of the lives of Black women in the area of Williamsburg. They do exemplify one obvious difference between the northern Gazette and its southern counterpart. With these ads we begin to see what will be further shown, that these newspapers were highly reflective of regional differences in American colonial culture.

In contrast to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, women did act as writers within the prose text of the *Virginia Gazette*. They are seen as members of a highly literary discourse. Issues of morality, behavior, station and style are discussed. Women in Virginia were speaking publicly upon more than commercial concerns as seen within the advertisements discussed earlier. However, only a select group of women were given such a voice. To gain access to the medium of prose in the *Virginia Gazette*, one's writing needed to be
more than grammatically correct with proper spelling and proper sentence structure. It also needed to be artful and literary. Immediately, such requirements excluded the majority of women in eighteenth-century Virginia. Only women who were endowed with a higher, more classical education could meet such criteria. Consequently, only an elite of upper-class, white women were active participants within the prose discourse of the *Virginia Gazette*. For they were the only women with the wealth and leisure to facilitate such a lofty education.

The published works of women in the *Virginia Gazette* appeared evenly throughout the three decades surveyed. Although not overly frequent, they do appear to be a regular fixture of the newspaper not just novel occurrences. In general, women's writing took two forms, letters and poems. Through these writings women would voice their opinions, concerns as well as reactions to other printed materials. Although their writings holds little information into the roles in which women acted, they do give insight into how women viewed themselves and the world around them.

The most common form of writing submitted by women was in the form of letters. Women would send the newspaper letters they wished to have published. Letters that were reviewed in the survey showed women using letters to react to other submissions composed by men and to communicate with the community as well as family members. In the summer of 1772, one woman submitted a letter to the *Gazette* in reaction to a letter previously published by a gentleman who had "found fault with her on Account of her being over studious of Dress" (*Virginia Gazette*, June 4, 1772:1). The original article written by the gentleman criticized women in general for taking too long to prepare
themselves for social gatherings, stating that women could spend such time on more
intellectual pursuits like reading. In reply to the gentleman's criticism, the unidentified
woman reminds readers of the reasons for such studiousness:

"But that this lost Time might be better employed in reading,
thinking reflecting...you will permit me, Sir, to believe Nothing of the
Matter.
If your Sex would place a flattering Value on our virtues, if it
would grant to Merit the Tribute of Praise it lavishes on Beauty, we
should be seen studious to embellish our natural Graces with the solid
charms of even Temper, Goodness, Sweetness, Wit, and Knowledge;
sure of Friends, we should disdain the Art of attracting Lovers.
But a woman never inspires any Thing but a Sentiment of
Interest...she is beloved, because she is beautiful.
If you were Persons of sense, women would be rational
Beings. Their Manner of life is not a Fault of their natural Disposition,
but the inevitable Consequence of your Behavior to them; your Errors
necessarily lead them astray. Correct yourselves; be candid, honest,
sensible; cherish Decency; prize Virtue; you will create our Sex
anew" (Virginia Gazette, June 4, 1772:1).

The author of this letter through her perceptions on the relation of women to men gives a
tremendous insight into how gentry-class women in colonial Virginia viewed themselves.
To these women they were subjects to male cultural control. This letter also exhibits the
artful language required of submissions to the Gazette. For both men and women, letters
were a formal form of literary expression. Letters were not necessarily a lackadaisical
method of communicating with friends and family. Letters represented a formal form of
expression that embodied the art of language. Through the publication of this letter, it
appears that gentry-class women were accepted as artists of the word.

The other form of writing used by women was poetry. Similar to letters, poems
exemplified the literary nature of writing in the Virginia Gazette. Poems were a common
feature within the *Gazette*. Beyond exemplifying literary skill, poems also show how women used these forms of expression to discuss issues not often related to them. One female author would use her poem to discuss the issue of cowardice in soldiers:

"On a late REPRESENTATION.
To the Lords of the Admiralty.----------(By a young Lady of Fifteen.)
My Lords,
'Tis the humble Opinion of us the Court Martial,
(A Court of all Courts, most surely impartial)
That Admiral Byng his utmost did not,
'TEngage------And adjudge him for that to be shot;
But to palliate his Crime, with Deference we shew,
In our Sentence, Distinctions quite subtle and new;
That 'twas prov'd he ne'er shew'd any Tokens of Fear,
(And how the Plague should he, so far in the Rear?)
That clearly to us, he appears in this Light,
Not a Coward, ------ *but only damn'd backward to fight*;
Or more clear to refine it, we've shewn in Effect.
To be backward in fighting, is ------ *but a Neglect.*
And tho' we've condemn'd him, for Mercy we pray,
Lest his Case be our Case, as it certainly may" (*Virginia Gazette*, April 22, 1757:2).

Within this poem, the young author relates what she sees as a misjudgment on the part of the naval court. Her poem complains that a soldier should not be considered a coward if he is placed at the back of his regiment and never actually reaches the battle. The young author speaks publicly her opinion upon issues of military code. It is interesting that the newspaper would recognize her reflections with publication, but it seems as though such areas were not *off limits*, so to speak. Again, the poem expresses the art of writing valued within the *Gazette*. The author crafts a fairly complicated rhyme scheme in her poetic piece. The poem also implies that women are not necessarily restricted by age for participation in the press. As long as the piece is artful in its presentation, access will not be restricted from consideration.
Another issue that these two examples raises is the fact that both pieces show that women were a recognized portion of the Gazette's audience. The letter shows that its author must have read the gentleman's letter that had been published within the previous edition of the Gazette. Similarly, one can ask where a girl of fifteen learned about a court marshall hearing not necessarily held in Williamsburg. It would probably be safe to assume that the young girl read about the trial in the Gazette. Beyond participation as writers, women were also acknowledged readers and this would be further reflected within the prose text by the presence of writings obviously targeted at women.

Aside from allowing women to speak through the Virginia Gazette, the newspaper also spoke to women. Many examples can be cited where articles were intentionally included for the female readership. Through a variety of forms, such pieces addressed women personally, practically and authoritatively. Within these articles, an interesting array of information was transmitted. Many focused upon issues of moral and proper behavior. Others were more simplistic, relating proposals of love. In such discussions, women were given an ideal picture of how the larger culture of eighteenth-century America--as defined by the dominant male ideology of the time--expected women to conduct themselves. Through these pieces, the newspapers yield wisdom as to how women were perceived and expected to act and think.

Articles directed at women spoke to readers on different levels. On an initial level the Gazette was used by individuals, in this case a male, to send personal messages to specific women in the community. These messages were not always pleasant. As they
were often used to profess admissions of love, they were also a means to issue scorn. Two examples pulled from the *Gazette* exhibit these two extremes.

In a poem by a man using the pseudonym, Alexis, we can see how women were addressed by their lovers publicly through the newspaper. Although pseudonyms obscure the names of the two lovers involved, the newspapers were frequently used as a means to communicate in courtship. It was thought that the publication of such pieces would emphasize the sentiments expressed (Spruill, 1972:146-51). The lover Alexis through his poetic art warns his teasing lover that she ought to think seriously of matrimony. As the following excerpts shows, he tells his love that age is a consideration in the art of love:

"To Constantia
Constantia, came at HYMEN's call,
Nor yet regard the rising blush;
Before love's shrine devoutly fall,
While chaste desires thy beauties flush.
You hesitate: You won't; You will;
Alas! your lover's in despair;
Constantia, either cure or kill,
Does cruelty become the FAIR?...
Short-liv'd beauty out of date,
And then how quick comes on our noon!
Old age and pain will come apace,
Rank enemies to soft desires;
They'll plough up furrows in thy face,
And quite extinguish gentle fires.
Haste then, Constantia, while the rose,
With crimson die, bepaints thy cheek;
While youthful blood with vigour flows;
The matrimonial pleasure seek" (*Virginia Gazette*, December 1, 1774:3).

Alexis obviously has asked Constantia to marry him but he has been kept waiting by his chosen love. Through the character of Constantia, it is seen that women had the power to agree or reject suitors. Although arrangements were often made between the parents of
likely couples, it seems that women practiced the art of keeping suitors at bay. However, as Alexis so aptly reminds Constantia, time passes and reflects its passage physically. Nevertheless, women are seen here as mindful and given a certain level of power. Of course it must be understood that the women referred to here are still those of the gentry class.

Other works directed towards women were not so sentimental. At times the Gazette was utilized by subscribers to voice ridicule at particular women. Typically the names of the accursed remained anonymous. Yet, the author would have his name featured to assure the reader's recognition. One example of this type of letter was submitted by John Wright in 1776. His submission publicly chided his lover who had recently canceled their wedding. He accuses his ex-fiance of being a "vain coquette" who was "false" in her intentions. He explains his use of the newspaper as a means to warn others of her ill behavior. In the final paragraph of his letter he summated his reactions to her:

"I find no distress, Madam, in banishing the idea of your ill usage and you from my breast; and it shall go hard with me, if, among the numerous circle of your sex, created to refine the joys and soften the cares of life by the most agreeable participation, I do not quickly find on more worthy of my patience, the fickle, vain, perfidious one I have abandoned; of whom I shall only say that, Were I to curse the man I hate, A bride like thee, should be his fate. John Wright" (Virginia Gazette, July 6, 1776:3).

The Gazette was obviously a vehicle of courtship in Williamsburg. It was a medium used to speak publicly what might have been awkward or disagreeable to speak privately. Wright in the letter above uses the newspaper to gain revenge. For not only has he
announced his dismissal of the "vain coquette," he has also humiliated her publicly.

Granted her name is not given, her identity was probably not that protected as those who knew Wright would be able to make an easy connection. Women may have maintained some power in courtship, but obviously at times it was taken too far.

A second level upon which women were addressed was that of practically. In these instances, the issues discussed would be of a domestic nature. A prime example of such an article was featured upon the front page of the Gazette in 1767. The article related an "excellent" manner for to pickle "STURGEON, and other FISH, in America:"

"To pickle Berwick Salmon.

Fill your copper full of water, to every ten gallons of water put seven pounds of common salt, let it boil half and hour for pickle, then take out of the copper as much of this pickle as you will have occasion for; put your salmon (first split and cut into five pieces) into the remainder of the boiling pickle and let it boil between thirty and forty minutes, then take the salmon out carefully to prevent its breaking, and lay it on wooden gratings in a cold place to cool quickly; if you have more salmon to boil, you may boil it in the same liquor before you throw it away; after the salmon is quite cold, and the pickle likewise, pack the salmon into small kits, and let it be covered with the following liquor, viz. one quart of the pickle you took out of the copper before the salmon was put in to boil, and five quarts of vinegar, and head up the kit close...." (Virginia Gazette, July 2, 1776:1).

The presentation of this recipe raises an interesting question. Was this recipe printed for the benefit of upper class white women? It seems odd that women who enjoyed lives of leisure, free from household chores by the presence of domestic servants, would want to be told how to pickle fish. Of course they were in charge of the kitchen staff in the household, but did they set the methods used by the cooks?
What this article displays is that although most of the articles were directed to gentry-class women, the newspapers recognized that more than gentry-class women were reading the newspaper. I believe that this recipe is directed more to the larger component of women in Williamsburg, mainly that of the merchant and lower classes. Although these women lacked the ability to submit texts themselves did not mean they were negated as readers. The recipe above was directed to them, to aid in their daily lives and work. Even though gentry-class women may direct the attention of their cooks to the article, it is more feasible to believe that the article was directed at women whose task it was to conduct the food procurement for the household.

A final level upon which women were spoken to through the Gazette was that of authoritatively. Through these articles, women were presented with the characteristics and values of the ideal woman. Fictional forms of writing were often assumed for these pieces. The virtues and morals presented would be implied through fairy tale like stories of husbands and wives or poetic tales. The ideal woman according to the Gazette was a loving wife with compliance and humility. As will be seen, these works were not directed to all women. Although the virtues and behavior could be expected of all women regardless of material wealth or social standing, the context of the fictional works do not relate to the world of the impoverished farm-wife.

Much of the communication mediated through the Gazette was subtle with its messages. This appears especially true for articles that were used to transmit the values and virtues of cultural ideals. Upper-class women were expected to conduct themselves in certain ways both privately and in public. Possibly one of the most important values
emphasized to women through the Gazette was that of humility. Most articles of this nature spoke of the virtue as key to a woman's marital and social success. An example of such an expression appears in a poem entitled, "Occasioned by a Lady's Falling on her Face as she danced at a private Ball." The poem warns women of the dangers of hubris:

"IRIS, with every Power to please,  
Has all the graceful Aids of Art;  
She speaks, she moves, with matchless Ease;  
Her voice, her air, alarms the Heart,  
While every Eye her Steps pursu'd,  
As through the sprightly Dance she shone,  
The Queen of Love with Envy view'd  
A Form superior to her own.  
Cupid, my darling Child, she cry'd,  
Behold, amid that jocund Train,  
A Nymph elate in Beauty's Pride,  
The dangerous rival of my Reign.  
If aught a Mother then may claim,  
O let her triumph here no more,  
But mortify this earthly Dame,  
Or who will Venus now adore!  
She spoke, her Son obey'd, and lo!  
While yet the mazy Dance they trace,  
At Iris' Feet he dropp'd a bow,  
She tripp'd, and fell upon her face.  
But e'er a Youth could land his aid,  
The Softer Graces rush'd between,  
Who still attend the lovely Maid,  
And softly rais'd her up unseen.  
The little archer, in a Fright,  
To her who first the Deed design'd,  
On fluttering Pinions took his Flight,  
And left he guilty bow behind.  
In Paphos, on a flowery Bed,  
Reposes now, bereft of Arms,  
Wile Iris conquers in his Stead,  
And reigns resistless in her Charms" (*Virginia Gazette*, April 2, 1772:4).
Although the "Nymph elate" is shown as winning the day, capturing Cupid's arrow, the Queen of Love is the one who loses as her attempt to thwart the nymph's beauty by embarrassing her backfires. Instead of humiliating the lady, the lady's fall actually works to endear her to the suitors who quickly came to her aid discreetly raising "her up unseen."

Basically, the moral to this poem is not to allow pride to control your judgement. The Queen of Love gained nothing in her attempts and Cupid lost his arrow. Now both characters remain ineffectual for their conceited behavior. Interestingly, it seems as though by making the goddess the loser, it insinuates the ability on the part of the "earthly Dame" to remain humble and not attempt such conceit.

Other such articles would let their messages be known more obviously. In a fictional narrative, a man describes visiting his long time friend Honorio. While there the unnamed narrator finds occasion to compliment Honorio's wife, Aspasia. The compliment is encased within a fairly thorough description of Aspasia's character:

"The charming Aspasia, to whom he has been married about Two Years, bears in her Countenance the lively Picture of her Mind, which is the Seat of Honour, Truth, Compassion, Knowledge and Innocence. By her kind Behavior, her genteel Economy, and Perseverance in a steady Course of Piety and Virtue, she endears herself to all who have the Pleasure of her Acquaintance. Her tender Affection for Honorio's, a Husband every Way worthy of her, shews itself in the kindest Words and most endearing Behavior, void of all disagreeable Ostentation, and affords to a Friend an agreeable View of the Happiness and Felicity of the married State. In short, her whole Life is one continued Series of Humanity, Kindness and Complaisance. The Humble opinion she entertains of her own common Merit, makes her so much the more sensible of Honorio's; and those little Submissions which a Woman of more Pride and Spirit would consider only as a Claim of Right are esteem'd by Aspasia as so many additional Motives to her Love and Gratitude"("Virginia Gazette", August 7, 1752:1).
Aspasia is presented as an ideal wife. Her characteristics are blatantly mapped out in a list of virtues and manners. It would be hard not to understand the ideal being projected here. The ideal role for a woman is that of wife. In this role, a woman was expected to conduct herself as a reflection upon her husband. Complacency and kindness were the model virtues as ostentation was definitely not flattering for a woman of any position.

Articles directed at women in the Gazette were predominantly directed at women of elevated social standing. The literary forms and contextual settings of the poems, letters and essays all relate to a higher society that participated in balls and educated its members in the arts of language. Except for instances like that seen through the recipe for pickled fish, the female audience most recognized by the Gazette was that of the upper-class, white, planter society women. Possibly the commercial nature of the newspaper in its need to sell subscriptions explains the less frequent recognition of the women less socially elevated through practical pieces. As a business, it paid to know your market.

The *Virginia Gazette* would also feature through its more newsy writing indirect insights into the lives and perceptions of women in colonial America. Such articles would mirror those insights seen in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. The three categories discussed in northern Gazette's analysis were also found within the southern newspaper. The only differences to be noted would be the inclusion of Black slave women as criminals and victims. Women of royal birth would be seen as political actors. Women of no status would be featured as criminals. And, women of all statuses would be considered appropriate for the role of victim. Through the inclusion of the three subcategories of
curiosities in the *Virginia Gazette*, it would appear that Virginians were just as voyeuristic as Pennsylvanians.

The *Virginia Gazette*'s picture of women in the southern city of Williamsburg is a static picture of a highly divided society of wealth and lack thereof. Women with status could access the public medium of the newspaper more freely than those women lacking education who were restricted to paying for their access. The roles seen through the southern *Gazette* show women as active in the commercial community to a small degree. However, by and large they are seen as wives expected to behave in manors becoming to their station. The *Virginia Gazette* shows another contrasting view to the ideas presented by Norton and Hoff-Wilson. In general, the *Virginia Gazette* and *Pennsylvania Gazette* exemplify an aspect slightly undeveloped within the studies of Norton and Hoff-Wilson. The definition of women's lives in eighteenth-century colonial America was heavily shape by the region within which they lived.
Chapter VI

Structural Analysis

Within this study it has been postulated that as well as the conscious expression of the textual content, newspapers possess a second channel of communication housed within their structure. Therefore, by trying to understand the dynamics of this structure, it is possible to uncover the unconscious messages sent through it. However, before attempting to analyze the papers surveyed, a general familiarity with the newspapers' forms is needed.

The Virginia and Pennsylvania Gazettes were stylistically similar. They ran four pages. Nevertheless, it was not uncommon for an occasional issue to run six pages. The largest issues observed were eight pages but these were exceptionally infrequent. The text was initially divided into two columns. Then, as a result of decreasing text sizes, three columns became the norm. Typically, the papers' contents were divided into two sections. The front section which usually included the entire first two pages and most of the third featured the prose material of the paper--articles, letters, poems, etc.. The second section which usually began on the third page consisted of advertisements. Through the twenty-six years surveyed, the advertisement sections showed slow increases in size. In some issues surveyed, advertisements were placed along the third column along side prose material. However, this was rare. Another noteworthy variation of design was that ads
could often be found featured upon the entire front page of an issue. This ordering was only observed in the last two decades of the survey within the Pennsylvania Gazette. This was never observed in the Virginia Gazette.

The text within these papers had a limited variety of sizes and graphic images were minimal. Images did not become frequent until the later half of the survey. They would only appear as features within the advertisement sections. Images would be patterned representations of the contents of the ads themselves. For example, an ad announcing the impending voyage of a schooner for England may be embellished by a stylized print of such a vessel. Within the prose text not a single graphical embellishment was observed in either newspaper.

Three basic questions have been asked about the structure of these two newspapers: Where did women appear in the newspaper? Did this placement change over time? What messages might be communicated by placement? As explained within the methodology section earlier, answers to these questions were sought through a quantitative analysis. Although the findings showed limited results, minor patterns were discerned.

Looking at the Pennsylvania Gazette first, women appeared generally throughout the whole paper. In the 1750s, women were distributed fairly evenly with a minimal tendency towards the first and second pages. Column placement in general for all pages showed a definite favor towards the first and second columns. During the next decade this balance would shift and women would become predominantly located upon the second and third pages. These pages composed the interior of the newspaper. Column placement
became evenly balanced. The final decade exhibited a shift to the third and fourth page with some prominence upon the first page. And again, the column placement remained relatively even. (See Figures A and B, pp. 89, 90)

Basically over the twenty-six years, women seemed to move from the front of the newspaper to the back. This transfer is most likely related to the fact that for the Pennsylvania Gazette most of the mentions noted related to women were advertisements. As can be seen by comparing the total number of mentions with the total number of ads, advertisements made up 75% of all mentions noted. (See Figures C and D, p. 91, 92) The movement might then be related to the fact that in the 1750s women did not figure as highly in the advertisements as in the later two decades. Therefore, for the first decade, more was indirectly related through the prose section than directly through the advertisements. The later predominance of mentions in the interior and than back pages is related to the increase of women utilizing the medium of advertisements. For the second decade, advertisements were featured upon the third columns of the second and third pages. By the third decade this practice was ended and advertisements were featured mainly on the back two pages and the front page with some frequency.

For the prose textual content a similar progression was observed. By collating the locational data in relation to the categories discussed within the content analysis—women of status, curiosities, obituaries and articles by and directed to women—the patterns of change in structuring were retrievable. (See Figure E, p. 93) In the categories of women of status and obituaries, there was an obvious motion away from the front pages. However, the category of curiosities changes in an opposite direction becoming more
frequent upon the front page. This contrast may be due to the nature of the text within these items. As was noted earlier, articles within the curiosities category were extraordinary and entertaining as tales of strange incidents or events. It may be assumed that their inclusion may have been related to a need to break up the monotonous nature of news writing. For the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the last category of articles by or written to women was completely reflective of the advertisement section’s use by women. It was only through this medium that women found access to a public voice. Therefore, the trends observed within this category have already been discussed in the first paragraph on the *Pennsylvania Gazette*.

In contrast to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the *Virginia Gazette*’s structure actually showed little change over the twenty-six years surveyed. Instead of exhibiting a progression to either the back or front pages, the textural content of the newspaper seemingly remained consistently ordered with few exceptions. (See Figure E, p. 93) In the woman of status category, items tend to remain located upon the first or second pages. Similarly, obituaries remained exactly the same. The only observable movement was minor at best. The articles by and written to women actually moved from typical presence upon the first page to a more even distribution throughout the whole newspaper. The final category of curiosities showed a minor shift from the second page onto the first. Since the *Virginia Gazette* was a much more literary newspaper, the category of curiosities may not have been as needed as in the northern *Gazette*. Actual news writing was not as prominent. The need for textual breaks from such writing may not have been as necessary.
Another contrast with the *Pennsylvania Gazette* can be found within the advertisement section. For the *Virginia Gazette* an opposite progression occurs with advertisements related to women moving from an even distribution throughout to a frequency within the first third of the section. Whether this shift is significant is questionable. It may be a matter of chance since women were relatively infrequent participants within the advertisement section of the southern *Gazette*. As the data shows, advertisements made up only 27% of all the mentions recorded from the *Virginia Gazette*. (See Figures C and D, pp. 91, 92)

So what messages were communicated by these structural changes? Within the northern *Gazette*, women seem to be related predominantly with the back pages. Keeping the general structure of the newspaper in mind, this reiterates that women with financial means were given access to the medium through the purchase of advertisements. Only through this means was a public voice obtainable. On a lower level this may reflect that women were being dissociated from the recognized public discourse found in the prose text. During the period studied, much of the discourse in the prose section dealt heavily with political matters as the Revolutionary War was soon to erupt. As these politics increasingly took center stage, women were pushed to marginal locations as they were not participating in such discourse. Women were possibly being told that they had no place in political matters. Yet, they could happily participate in those of a commercial nature.

For the *Virginia Gazette*, which shows relatively little change over time, structural configurations express statements upon the more public lives of gentry-class women in the South. As seen in the textual analysis, these upper-class women were participating within
the public discourse as authors as early as 1752. With the advent of the Revolutionary War, instead of being marginalized, women continued their participation in public discourse. They remained prominent upon the front page not relegated to the interior. Women's writing as well as women as a subject maintained a significance within the medium. This may indicate that upper-class women in Virginia were not necessarily removed from political realms. They were located within it also.
General Column Distribution

![Bar chart showing percentage of articles by column and year (1750, 1760, 1770) for Virginia Gazette and Pennsylvania Gazette.]

- Column 1
- Column 2
- Column 3

Years: 1750, 1760, 1770

Figure B.
Sequential Ad Distribution

Figure C.
### Article/Ad Numerical Information

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Figure D.
### Article Location Analyzed by Type

**Virginia Gazette**

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Figure E.
Conclusion

The pictures of eighteenth-century women in colonial American offered by the *Pennsylvania* and *Virginia Gazettes*, in contrast to those produced by Norton and Hoff-Wilson, enter two more pictures to be discussed in the discourse of women's history. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* showed women as commercial actors and household partners. Women are portrayed as a large group defined by their sex. Class and wealth only appeared in prose discourse. Such social dividers did not appear to also divide women's access to the public medium. In Philadelphia, women's lives were changing as they continued to enter the commercial world. In contrast, the *Virginia Gazette* painted a society of great division. Those without wealth and social status were relegated to the back pages, only heard through the purchase of ad space. Meanwhile those with wealth and status were able to speak through the literary pages of the prose text. Although access was restricted, the newspaper did reach a varied audience. However, this audience was heavily divided for the same reasons. Women in Virginia showed no visible changes over time.

Why do these two newspapers show such varying views of women in eighteenth-century America? The key lies in one word, regionalism. The cities of Philadelphia and Williamsburg were very different. Consequently, the lives of its female inhabitants were also. Regional differences between the two cities lie behind all the differences observed in the earlier analysis. By looking at the differences of these two
cities demographically and socially, an understanding of why change occurred in Philadelphia while Williamsburg remained static can be gained.

Philadelphia in the later half of the eighteenth century was a growing urban area. From the years 1750 to 1780, the city's population doubled from 150,000 to 300,000. By the end of 1769, Philadelphia had become the third largest export center in the colonies (Kobre, 1960:149). Surrounded by highly productive wheat country, Philadelphia was one of the most economically dynamic areas in the colonies.

The middle colonies generally enjoyed the benefits of both northern and southern influences. The lands surrounding Philadelphia were rich and fertile. Agriculture boomed in its natural abundance. Like the southern colonies, commercial agriculture flourished. However, the middle colonies did not rely on this alone. "They developed a diversified economic base in which local merchants supplied and directed the capital for a wide range of enterprises (Henretta and Nobles, 1987:72). The diversity of commerce brought a large degree of wealth into the area. Much of the wealth, 57%, was held by an elite tenth of the population (Main, 1965:37). However, the rest of the wealth was more evenly distributed through out a growing middle class of merchants and small farmers. A lower, landless class would also proliferate, but the chances for upward financial mobility were great. Nearly all residents in the area felt the benefits of growing economic opportunities (Main, 1965:194-5).

These economic opportunities also effected Philadelphia on a social level. Initially, Philadelphia had been settled as a Quaker stronghold. The Quakers highly influenced the social structuring of the middle colony city until the Revolutionary War. However, this
influence would combined with economic influences to create a city of the middle class. Philadelphia in the eighteenth century was the city of entrepreneurs (Warner, 1968:6).

Possibly the greatest influence of the Quakers was the advancement of privatism. Quakers emphasized "equality over hierarchy and gentle guidance over strict discipline" (Henretta and Nobles, 1987:85). The church and the community were the sources of control for society. But this control was an issue of consensus through meetings. All were given equal chance to speak and be heard. Within this environment grew the ideas of tolerance and an ability for every man to better himself independently through the pursuit of financial success. Social mobility was not a birth right but an individual quest. Such a belief supported a city of independent merchants and artisans. All previous methods of commercial control failed to take hold. Guilds and unions were not allowed to form. It was believed that such controls would inhibit newcomers from fulfilling their potentials (Warner, 1968:8).

Although much of the wealth was centered within an elite group of wealthy property owners, the city in general was a place of social opportunity. Newspapers in this environment focused upon the commercial community and its needs for foreign news and shipping information. This was reflected in the Pennsylvania Gazette. The advertisement section of the Gazette mirrors the rising size of Philadelphia's commercial community. Over the time period surveyed it doubled in size. And, as noted in the earlier analysis, in 1765, advertisements became a regular feature of the complete front page. The prose section focused highly upon foreign events related to local economic concerns as well as local events similarly related.
Women did have a place within this medium, for they obviously had a place in the commercial community. It seems that Quaker ethics extended to women in the ability to provide for themselves financially within the commercial market. However, this seems to be the only area in which they were allowed. Political issues and discourse appear to have been out of reach. Consequently, the picture given by the Gazette reflects this changing economic center and how women figured into that change. But, beyond economic changes little insight was retrievable.

The city of Williamsburg in the later half of the eighteenth century was nothing like its northern counterpart. In the early eighteenth century the south remained very remote to northern areas as routes of travel were not well established. This isolation coupled with a monocultural economy, where tobacco was king, would slow the development of the southern city of Williamsburg demographically.

In 1750, the whole southern colony of Virginia’s population was totaled at 275,000 people. Half of this number was slaves (Kobre, 1960:80). In 1775, the total population of Williamsburg was recorded at 1,880 and still over half of this number was slaves (Rittenhouse, 1775:2). Williamsburg was not a commercial center like Philadelphia. Commerce in the city was limited. The plantation system central to the areas economy did not focus around Williamsburg as a marketplace. Crops when harvested would be shipped from plantation docks to more exterior ports like Yorktown and Jamestown. Trade was conducted directly with English and Scottish merchants. Little ready money was available. Planters relied upon a mercantile system of credit wagered against yearly crops (Henretta and Noble, 1987:66-7). Consequently, the southern city was very economically and
socially divided. Williamsburg had a very small middle class. The largest group in the area was that of slaves and the landless poor. The elite plantation owners controlled nearly 60% of the wealth (Rittenhouse, 1775:3).

Williamsburg was more of a political and social center than a commercial one. As the home of Virginian government, it had obvious political importance. Consequently, the town supported a number of taverns, lawyers and a smaller number of service artisans like milliners, grocers, blacksmiths, etc. Socially, Williamsburg was a meeting place for elite plantation society. Since plantations relied mostly upon direct trade with the mother country and her neighbors, southern society maintained strong ties with British social culture. Many traits of London society continued in the colonies. For example, Williamsburg would house one of the first theaters in the new land. Such events and balls would allow the southern wealthy to mingle and perpetuate the lofty lifestyles enjoyed by the privileged in England (Henretta and Noble, 1987:63-7; Kobre, 1960:79-81; Bridenbaugh, 1928:35)

The Virginia Gazette reflected this southern society. As seen earlier, The Virginia Gazette was a very literary newspaper. Its pages featured essays and poems. News writing was not the dominate aim of the publication. The Gazette played an obvious role in the communication of elite society. However, at the same time it did not forget its commercial foundations in the need for subscriptions. The Gazette functioned as more than a medium of the gentry class alone. The commercial community as limited as it was also used the medium.
Women in their participation reflected the divided nature of the society surrounding the southern newspaper. White, upper-class women could access the newspaper through artful writing. Less educated women could access the Gazette commercially through its advertisements. Black women only featured as property to be lost, found or sold. In this, women are seen on three levels. Women with status had voices to be heard by everyone. Women with some financial means could access a similar voice. Slaves and women of no means had no voice.

Within this society there seems to have been little change. This is probably related to the fact that the tobacco industry remained strong right up to the American Revolution. The area of Williamsburg, according to the issues examined, did not seem to witness great changes either politically or commercially in the period examined. Therefore, the Virginia Gazette seems to be reflecting this staticness or desire for such in the society at that time.

It appears that newspapers are a ready resource for regional studies. As the analysis in this study has shown regional social differences and economic differences figured highly into the shape and content of these documents. It is interesting to see how divergent the conclusions drawn here are from Norton's and Hoff-Wilson's summarized earlier. The use of the more anthropological perspective through post-processual theory have proven effective at increasing the ideas to be extracted from historical documents. This study shows that there exists a great potential for further studies of newspapers to outline the regional differences separating the cultural forms and structures of early America.
Documentary research like the one conducted here is still in an adolescent stage. With the publication of *Documentary Archaeology in the New World* in 1988 initial steps were taken to analyze how archaeologists and anthropologists use and approach documentary evidence. Within the text, a variety of theoretical approaches are used and methodologies tested. Since the book's publication documentary studies have gained even more recognition. This study is offered as a further expansion of this growing subfield in archaeology.

In the continued debate between history and archaeology, documentary archaeology has opened a new pathway for insight where history once held control. What must be recognized here is the fact that archaeology has much more to offer than just provenience matrixes and mute material remains. Instead, archaeology is developing methods to allow those remains to speak. Our only task now as archaeologists is to listen and learn.
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Yentsch, Ann
Vita

Lisa Kay Bergendahl