Untapped: Fermenting Feminism through the Craft Beer Movement

Anne Meredith Sugar

University of Colorado Boulder, annie.sugar@colorado.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholar.colorado.edu/comm_gradetds

Part of the Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Ethnicity in Communication Commons, and the Mass Communication Commons

Recommended Citation
Sugar, Anne Meredith, "Untapped: Fermenting Feminism through the Craft Beer Movement" (2016). Communication Graduate Theses & Dissertations. 63.
https://scholar.colorado.edu/comm_gradetds/63

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Communication at CU Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Communication Graduate Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of CU Scholar. For more information, please contact cuscholaradmin@colorado.edu.
This dissertation entitled: Untapped: Fermenting Feminism through the Craft Beer Movement written by Anne Meredith Sugar has been approved for the College of Media, Communication and Information.

__________________________________________________
Polly McLean, Ph.D.

__________________________________________________
Marlia Banning, Ph.D.

__________________________________________________
Lee Chambers, Ph.D.

__________________________________________________
Kelty Logan, Ph.D.

__________________________________________________
Kathleen Ryan, Ph.D.

Date______________________

The final copy of this dissertation has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

HRC protocol # ___________ 14-0114 ___________
ABSTRACT

Sugar, Anne M. (Ph.D., Communication, College of Media, Communication and Information)

Untapped: Fermenting Feminism through the Craft Beer Movement

Dissertation directed by Associate Professor Polly McLean

This dissertation investigates how the neoliberal turn of the 1980s created a gendered, male space around beer as a function of power and social control designed to subjugate both women and working-class males to the new white-collar hegemonic masculinity in the wake of the second wave of feminism. Research by the beer industry indicates an abandonment of their market by female consumers, and this study contends that hostile gender portrayals in television series and advertisements steered Generation X and millennial women away from the macroindustry beer market. A recent shift in both the media and beer industry from corporate control to grassroots enterprises allowed women to reengage with beer and the social ritual of its consumption through women-only craft beer enthusiast groups that reject the regressive, sexist advertising messages in the mainstream broadcast media.

This project uses feminist critical theory to investigate how beer became gendered in the neoliberal media of the past 30 years and the impact of that gendering on the social ritual of beer drinking for millennials and Generation X. This research uses historical and textural analysis to explore the gendering of beer in the mainstream media. An ethnography of women-only beer clubs and in-depth interviews with club members discerns the characteristics of women beer drinkers and determines the role
social media plays in the relationship between the craft beer movement and women beer drinkers.

Results of this analysis suggest that the media portrayals surrounding beer and its consumption as a male, and largely blue collar, space and ritual that aired on television during Generation X’s and millennials’ formative years contributed to women’s negative impressions of the products brewed by the corporate beer industry and inspired them to consume other alcoholic products, namely craft beer. In addition, the craft beer industry, heavily-run by Gen Xers and millennials, conducts their business and engages social media in an inclusive and collaborative manner as an oppositional response to the macrobrewing industry’s gendering of beer in the media. This dissertation examines women’s involvement with women-only craft beer enthusiast clubs for intellectual and social engagement with both beer and other women and their need for safe spaces that do not include men in response to the hostile gendering of beer in the media and social ritual over the last three decades. The findings herein point to social media as the link between women and their engagement with craft beer, and show that it helped to create a female beer fandom that functions as a participatory culture online and off. Finally, this work asserts that the craft beer industry, and its inclusion of all genders, is both a millennial and feminist movement in response to years of negative, gendering neoliberal media messages employed by the corporate macrobrewing industry.
DEDICATION

This is for you, Dad. Whenever anyone calls me Dr. Sugar, I'll look around to see if you're standing behind me.

And you will be. Because you always have been.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation was far from a solo undertaking, and I have many professors, mentors, colleagues, and friends to thank for their help in bringing this project to fruition. It has been a pleasure to have people from every corner of my life and community contribute to this process over the last five years. It truly did take a village.

First and foremost, I must recognize my dedicated advisor and stalwart champion, Polly McLean. Dr. McLean was the alpha and omega of this work; she allowed me to explore the kernel of an idea that started as a research paper about beer commercials and served as cheerleader and midwife as I birthed it into a full-blown dissertation. None of this would have been possible without her unflagging guidance. Thank you for being so patient and committed.

I am grateful for the insights, ideas, and expertise of my committee members, Kathleen Ryan, Kelty Logan, Lee Chambers, and Marlia Banning. Throughout my graduate studies at the University of Colorado Boulder, each of them directed parts of this research, helped to focus my theoretical approach, and served as supportive and enlightening instructors in the classroom and beyond. I was beyond fortunate to have an extraordinary team of women scholars in my adviser and committee to steer me through feminist academic waters during a challenging process.

In my wider academic circle, I must acknowledge the wisdom and advice I received from several devoted mentors. Thank you to Laura Border, who took an interest in my future as an academic and provided me with ample opportunities to share my research. Clifford Jones’ early and regular advice to “just answer one question” with
my dissertation kept me focused and gave my project a manageable scope. I cannot thank David Ostroff enough for always making time to help me negotiate the curves of the Ph.D. process. Thank you, David, for reminding me that the best dissertation is a finished dissertation and to keep my eyes on the prize; I am much obliged for the way you stepped up to be the mentor I needed from a distance. He may not realize it, but Sidney Bland set me on this journey 20 years ago when he agreed to serve as my thesis director during my first master’s degree at James Madison University. His belief in my abilities and commitment to my work imbued me with a love for research and academic writing. Even though they departed this earth before I began my Ph.D., both Betty Luse and Lynda Kaid and their loving wisdom were with me in spirit and buoyed me throughout this long process.

There are no words to adequately express my gratitude to E. Jill Pollock for her friendship, sponsorship, and dedicated hours of proofreading. She is indeed the best boss any woman could ask for, and, without her, none of this would have been possible. Thank you for your patience, generosity, and the resources that allowed me to write this dissertation. You are truly a gift.

I am indebted to the women of The Crafty Ladies Beer Club and Ales 4 Females for inviting me into their ranks, for sharing their lives and thoughts so generously, and for agreeing to contribute to this research. They are the pivot point around which this dissertation revolves, and, ultimately, they made this project happen.

Undying appreciation goes out to my extraordinary and fervent friends who provided helping hands and good humor while I wrote. Thank you to Lisa Dunbar and Mitra Keykhah for being excellent and dedicated editors, creative contributors, and
tireless daily sounding boards throughout my years in this program. Thank you for listening so patiently and providing laughs as well as proofreading. This list would be incomplete without thanks to Lucy Pisoni whose sushi nights, long massages, loyalty, and laughter kept me together body and soul. I am also thankful to Katie O'Shea, Juan Padro, Morgan Zamora, Julie Humbird, Jody McGirk, Holly Elkins, Sarah Garber, Gabrielle Renner, Christy Hulsman, Aisha Sayles, Amanda Accamando, and Roger Rodriguez for their love, support, and devotion. Finally, none of this would have happened without Amy Elkins and Dave Nespoli lending me a substantial hand when I moved to Colorado eight years ago. Thanks for inviting me to volunteer at the Great American Beer Festival with you back in 2008, Dave. You started me on this path as soon as I got to town without either of us realizing it.

I am grateful for the endless care and feeding I received from the kind and hard-working wait staff at the Colorado Boulevard Village Inn and the many meals, pots of strong coffee, and bottomless iced tea refills they served me with a smile to fuel my long days and late nights of writing and editing. Thank you for letting me hole up in a booth and focus on my work without the pesky distraction of self-maintenance.

And, finally, I owe a debt to my Pumpa, who first shared his beer with me so many years ago. No matter how many degrees I earn or how much craft beer I drink, I will never forget the wonderful taste of your cold Black Label straight from the can on a hot summer day.
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Chapter One: No One Wants A Pink Beer ................................. 1

- Introduction .................................................................................. 1
- The Brewing Process: Qualitative Methodologies ............................. 5
- Mashing In: The Feminist Researcher ............................................. 12
- Water, Barley, Hops (and Yeast): Theoretical Frameworks ............... 16
  - Enter Neoliberalism ................................................................... 17
  - Neoliberal Femininity and Third Wave Feminism ............................ 20
  - Neoliberal Masculinity .............................................................. 22

### Chapter Two: Drinking Femininity ............................................. 29

- When Beer Had a Goddess: A Brief History of Gender and Beer .......... 29
- Screens within Screens: Post-Prohibition Hollywood .......................... 32
- Repeal Appeal: Alcohol and Sex in the 1930s .................................... 37
- Demure Drinking and Wartime Domesticity ..................................... 46
- Temperance in Moderation .......................................................... 53

### Chapter Three: This Bud’s Not For You ................................. 58

- Hotties and Bitches: Gender and Beer Commercials .......................... 58
- Regression of a Ritual ................................................................... 60
- Beer and Buffoons: Television and Neoliberal Masculinity .................. 62
- The Blue-Collar Blues .................................................................. 64
- Beer as a Condensation Symbol .................................................... 68
Talkin’ Bout My Generation ................................................................. 72
The Super Bowl Crucible ................................................................. 74
This is a Man’s World ................................................................. 76
  I’m a Bud Man ................................................................. 79
  The Super Party Animal ................................................................. 81
  Whassup?! ................................................................. 83
  What Game Are You Watching? ......................................................... 86
Beer as a Gendered Space ................................................................. 87

Chapter Four: The Kids Are Alright ................................................................. 91
  The Mythical Rope Line ................................................................. 91
  The Most Interesting Beer Ads in the World ................................................. 94
  Barrel Aging: Beer, Media, and Generational Identity ........................................ 99
  Beginning the Boil: Craft Beer Culture ......................................................... 102

Chapter Five: That’s What She Said ................................................................. 111
  Ladies’ Night: An Ethnography of Women and Beer ........................................... 111
  Crafty Ladies Beer Club ................................................................. 113
  Ales 4 Females ................................................................. 117
  Girls Pint Out and Barley’s Angels ......................................................... 121
  Girl Talk: In-Depth Interviews with Craft Beer Enthusiasts .................................. 122
    Intellectual Engagement ................................................................. 125
    Social Engagement ................................................................. 130
    Co-ed vs. Women-Only Groups ......................................................... 134
Women Beer Enthusiasts as Consumers ........................................ 136
Social Media .............................................................................. 137
Queen of Beers: Women’s Beer Clubs ....................................... 140
Drunk with Power: The Emerging Craft Identity ....................... 144

Chapter Six: Ninkasi’s Revenge
Brewing Dissent: Findings and Outcomes .................................. 150
Another Round: Limitations and Next Steps .............................. 162

References .................................................................................. 168

Appendix A ................................................................................. 196
Appendix B ................................................................................. 197
Appendix C ................................................................................. 198
Appendix D ................................................................................. 199
Appendix E ................................................................................. 200
Appendix F ................................................................................. 202
CHAPTER ONE: NO ONE WANTS A PINK BEER

“No one wants a pink beer, including ladies.”

– Nick Fell, SABMiller Marketing Director (O'Reilly, 2014)

Introduction

In 2011, a market survey conducted by multinational corporate giant SABMiller estimated that men account for 80% of North American beer sales and for an even higher percentage of the United Kingdom market, a finding the major beer producer attributed to a product it believed female drinkers found too high in carbohydrates and calories rather than their promotion of that product (LaSalle, 2012). Subsequent efforts by MolsonCoors¹, Carlsberg, and independent brewers to develop and launch feminized pink and pastel malt beverages targeted women with names like Animée, Eve, and Chick and flavors like lychee, passion fruit, rosé, and lemon that featured special low-calorie, low-carbonation, and low-ABV² formulas. With branding more reminiscent of a douche than a beverage, these attempts at feminized “beers” failed to generate sales because beer as a product was never the issue (Cole, 2011; Crosan, 2011; O'Reilly, 2014). What the corporate beer industry did not realize in 2011, and still neglects to grasp, is that the shortfall in their consumer reach is not due to the characteristics or qualities of their beer; rather, their failure is a result of the success of decades of television beer commercials, beginning in the early 1980s, designed to attract the male market while alienating women from drinking beer (Cole, 2011).

¹ A subsidiary of SABMiller
² Alcohol by volume
Regressive gender portrayals in television beer commercials have long been the focus of feminist media criticism, which theorizes that gender roles and behavior are both learned and reinforced through media representation. In the past two decades, however, research on television beer commercials focused on images of masculinity rather than feminine portrayals in the texts. Several researchers have addressed the objectification of female body parts for the male gaze in beer commercials (Allen & Coltrane, 1996; Iijima Hall & Crum, 1994; Andsanger, Austin, & Pinkleton, 2002) but have not addressed feminine portrayals as whole people nor with regard to gender roles (Drewniany, 2003). In addition, a larger study into gender portrayals in Super Bowl commercials considered beer commercials only tangentially. Duncan and Allen’s (2009) study of humor used in Super Bowl beer commercials only analyzed the masculine portrayals in those commercials, but beer commercials were not the focus of that research. In his 2011 article about the use of violent masculinity in print ads to gender and market products to male consumers, Katz claims that Miller Lite beer is gendered as feminine but provides no support for his assertion. Katz’s claim for Miller Lite’s femininity is confusing, because its first commercials in the early 1980s prominently and strictly featured older, middle-aged, male athletes to promote the Miller Lite brand. Even today Miller Lite’s marketing uses a strictly masculine approach. The assumption that a lower calorie food product is automatically sold to women or gendered female is shortsighted and flawed. Several publications investigate masculine portrayals in television beer commercials (Strate, 1992; Collins & Vamplew, 2002; Messner & Montez de Orca, 2005; Duncan & Allen, 2009; Wenner, 2009), but the role women play in beer commercials remains unaddressed in the academic conversation, as does the
gendering of beer consumption in television programming – particularly its prevalence in situation comedies depicting blue-collar families. This dissertation seeks to address the representation gap and simultaneously examine how and why beer became gendered male.

Today’s gendered space of beer is the direct result of late-20th and early-21st century America’s neoliberal ideology. As doors opened for women during the second wave of feminism, male hegemony sought social refuge and cultural retribution in a new, mediatized social and cultural space of beer declared off-limits to women. The lack of a feminist identity in Generation X (those born between 1965 and 1981), which came of age between the second and third waves of feminism, made the media’s construction of a consumer space that alienated women both possible and undetected (Watkins & Emerson, 2000; Krolokke, 2005). The de-industrialization of the United States economy in the 1970s and 1980s caused the decline of historically masculine blue-collar industries, which, combined with the increasing numbers of women in the white-collar workplace due to the advances made by the Women’s Movement in the 1960s and

---

3 Because the identification of generational cohorts is not an exact science, cohorts’ start and end dates are often subject to debate, and Generation X is no exception. This research frames Generation X between 1965 and 1981 in keeping with other studies that employ these years of generation-defining low birth rates as the years that establish the cohort (Calavita, 2003; Harmon, Webster, & Weyenberg, 1999; Poindexter & Lasorsa, 1999; Pompper, Soto, & Piel, 2007). Not all studies adhere to these dates, however, as the Pew Research Center ends Generation X in 1980 and explains:

The Pew Research Center’s approach to generational analysis involves tracking the same groups of people on a range of issues, behaviors and characteristics. Setting the bounds of generations is a necessary step for this analysis. It is a process that may be informed by a range of factors including demographics, attitudes, historical events, popular culture, and prevailing consensus among researchers. As a result, the lines that define the generations are useful tools for analysis, but they should be thought of as guidelines, rather than hard-and-fast distinctions (Pew, 2015).
1970s, destabilized male hegemony and left established perceptions of masculinity vulnerable to attack in and manipulation by the media (Brush, 1999; Faludi, 1999; Ashcraft & Flores, 2000; Messner & Montez de Oca, 2005; Lair, 2007).

Media portrayals have a profound impact in shaping how the members of a generation view themselves and relate to one another. By the time the oldest members of the United States’ Generation X came of legal drinking age in 1986, beer commercials no longer sold a beverage but rather a series of “desirable and believable worlds” (Messner & Montez de Oca, 2005) that held beer at their center. These worlds created a space best explained using the literary concept of the chronotope, or time-space, as envisioned by Mikhail Bakhtin (1981), which fuses the temporal and the spatial so that “time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history” (p. 86). The chronotope of beer creates a world of everyday adventure-time (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 111) inhabited by a storehouse of recognizable characters that resembles real life but with enough “otherness” to give it the quality of fantasy where society’s rules do not apply and an entire lifetime of a story can be expressed in 30 seconds. Through this chronotope, beer advertising carves out a space in society that transcends the immediate representations in an individual commercial; this gendered space of beer commercials has continued to pervade the media viewed both by the members of Generation X and the generation that directly succeeded them, the millennials (those born between 1982 and 2000).

The neoliberal influence of gender portrayals in television commercials and narrative programming successfully steered Generation X and millennial women from
the macroindustry beer market for the past nearly 30 years. Social media, however, have enabled a recent oppositional behavior by women of these generations through the formation of female beer aficionado groups both online and in local communities, where women can gather to share their enthusiasm for craft and microbrew beers. Transitions in both the media and the beer industries from corporate control to grassroots enterprises that thrive on individual expression allow women to rediscover beer and consume the beverage together as a social ritual and practice in spite of advertising messages in the mainstream broadcast media. Interestingly, however, this dissertation’s ethnography of women’s beer enthusiast groups and interviews with their members reveal another, new gendered space of female-only drinking clubs that does not welcome men; hence, beer remains a gendered space in our society, as the women who do enjoy beer still often choose to do so separately from men.

**The Brewing Process: Qualitative Methodologies**

If someone told me when I began my Ph.D. in Media Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder four years ago that I would choose to write a dissertation about craft beer, I would have declared them insane. As a former public radio professional, I entered into this academic pursuit with the expectation that I would use my degree to delve further into research on issues surrounding public and community media. However, my designs to extend my prior work with radio audience engagement and social media took an unexpected dogleg with, somewhat ironically, a story I heard on PRI’s *The World* while listening to Colorado Public Radio on my commute home between campus in Boulder and my home in Denver one afternoon in November 2011.
Andrea Crossan’s (2011) report, “Molson-Coors markets new pink beer to women.” That news story caused me to reflect on my personal experience as an annual brew crew volunteer server at the Great American Beer Festival (GABF) that takes place in Denver each fall. When I moved to Colorado in October 2008, I was a beer neophyte, and the national craft culture was in its relatively infant phase. I did not move to Denver looking to work at a beer festival, much less the largest one in North America, but when one of my two friends in town invited me to join him at a volunteer gig during my second weekend in a city where I had no social life. I accepted his offer with the hope that it would help me shake off my homesickness for the East Coast. I was lonely and unsure about the move and desperately wanted to settle in and meet people. Little did I know that spending that first long Saturday pouring for Boulevard Brewing Company out of Kansas City and the Saturdays I would spend in the years following would help to inspire me to abandon all the ideas I had about public radio-related research and alter the course of my academic career.

After hearing that radio story and thinking about the GABF for a few days, I pitched a project that investigated gender in beer advertising for the Media and Popular Culture course I was taking with Dr. Polly McLean. Dr. McLean approved the idea with enthusiasm and convinced me that Colorado’s Front Range was the perfect place to research beer. The rest, as they say, is history.

What began as a simple research paper about beer advertising for one class quickly grew into a larger and more personal project. That first paper spawned a second

---

4 I have had the pleasure to serve as a member of the Beer Garden brew crew team at the GABF for the past eight years.
for my Qualitative Methods class during the same semester, and I decided to take the opportunity to dig deeper into the craft beer market growing around me. A visit to a new group of female beer enthusiasts called the Crafty Ladies that met twice monthly at a new restaurant in an up-and-coming Denver neighborhood led to a second visit and then a third and finally a couple of in-depth interviews. I finished the paper and turned it in, but I kept going back to the Crafty Ladies month after month. When they offered me the opportunity to purchase one of a limited number of annual VIP memberships the following spring, I signed on for the long haul and embarked on an ethnography that would change my work and my life. But, I digress. In order to tell this story properly, I need to define and explain how it unfolded and told itself over the last four years.

What follows is a story about power – power given, power taken, and power reclaimed. This dissertation investigates how the neoliberal turn created a gendered space around beer that redefined it as a male product and social ritual. This gendered construction is a function of power designed to subjugate both women and working-class males to a new white-collar hegemonic masculinity, which came about in response to feminism. This project seeks to understand the methods used to create the mediatized gendered space surrounding the social ritual of beer drinking for members of Generation X and the millennial generation. This research explores the media used to gender beer, investigates the grassroots relationships forming between the growing craft brewing industry and women beer drinkers through female beer enthusiast groups, and seeks to discover what role the nature of craft brewing plays in this backlash phenomenon and how much of it is social media-driven. The research achieves these objectives via a four-year ethnography that employs four successive qualitative
methods: textual analysis, historical analysis, participant-observation, and in-depth interviews. Together, these methods build on each other’s findings to mine rich data and perform a deep, 360-degree interrogation of a social problem in our neoliberal consumer culture that limits itself to neither gender nor beer. The intersection of gender and beer provides an excellent unit of analysis for the exploration of a pattern of hegemonic power and exploitation that repeats itself across multiple institutions and myriad social constructs. In the end, this research tells a bigger story.

So, to that purpose, this dissertation aims to answer the following three research questions:

RQ1: Why and how did beer become gendered male in the United States?
RQ2: What are the traits of female beer drinkers in the United States?
RQ3: What role does social media play in opening a space for women to participate in the U.S. craft beer phenomenon?

The depth of understanding required to answer these questions calls for a richness and thickness of data that only a qualitative research approach can achieve (Creswell, 2007). This methodology employs separate approaches to each research question.

**RQ1:** Why and how did beer become gendered male in the United States?

**Historical analysis:** Historical research into the mediatization of alcohol, and specifically beer, consumption as a social ritual in post-Prohibition American film and television provides a contextual foundation for this dissertation. This method ascertains historical patterns of mediatized consumption by men and
women and establishes the theory of the gendering of beer as male in the media as result of the feminist movement and the neoliberal turn.

**Textual Analysis:** The second step is textual analysis of nine television beer commercials aired in the United States since the neoliberal turn in the mid-1980s until the present. This analysis focuses on beer commercials that aired during the Super Bowl and represented significant campaigns or messaging in beer advertisement that demonstrated a gendering pattern.

**RQ2:** What are the traits of female beer drinkers in the United States?

and

**RQ3:** What role does social media play in opening a space for women to participate in the U.S. craft beer phenomenon?

**Ethnography:** I was a regular participant-observer with the Crafty Ladies Beer Club in Denver, Colorado from 2011-2015 and with Left Hand Brewing’s Ales 4 Females in Longmont, Colorado for a year during 2014. In addition, I also attended occasional events with four other female beer enthusiast groups on the Front Range during 2014: Oskar Blues Brewery’s Can Can Girls Beer Club and Avery Brewing’s Sisterhood of the Hops, both in Boulder County, Colorado; and the Denver chapters of national organizations Girls Pint Out and Barley’s Angels. Through my extended participant-observation, I developed personal relationships with the women in these groups as well as the club organizers.

---

5 In Boulder County, Colorado
and the brewers who host and present to them. My status as a female beer
 drinker myself, as well as a long-term volunteer at the GABF\textsuperscript{6}, also led to
personal insight into craft culture and credibility with craft enthusiasts.

**Interviews:** To build on the relationships I established as a participant-observer,
I performed 14 in-depth, one-on-one interviews with individual members and
organizers of the Crafty Ladies, Ales 4 Females, Girls Pint Out, and Barley’s
Angels (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003; Turner, 2010). I identified and selected
interview participants using purposive sampling through my work as a
participant-observer. This approach allowed me to continue to build and
develop rapport with female beer drinkers and the craft beer community. The
interviews employed emergent design and took the form of structured, but
informal, conversations that varied in length from 45 minutes to three hours in
relaxed settings such as restaurants, coffee shops, and homes. Emergent
design provided the opportunity for follow-up questions that allowed for
clarification, probing investigation, and adaptability. The conversations regularly
opened new and unanticipated avenues of discussion where the interviewees
 contributed to the direction of not only the interviews but also my research
(Turner, 2010). The sample interview guide follows this in Appendix A.

\textsuperscript{6} Volunteer positions at the GABF are now coveted and difficult to obtain. The Brewer’s
Association capped open enrollment in 2011 and instituted an annual volunteer
application process. Volunteers must now undergo an application and vetting process
on an annual basis and meet performance and attendance standards during the festival
to maintain their positions from year to year.
I readily identify three limitations with this methodology. First, qualitative interview methods employing emergent design do not provide the consistency in questions that a more structured interview approach would provide, but emergent design did lead to richer, more authentic responses. Given that there is no research on this subject in the field to lead the way for this dissertation, it was important that I let my research participants help me blaze the path. My commitment to a feminist methodology also requires that I embrace a shared approach. Second, my data collection is limited to the Boulder/Denver corridor of the Front Range, but, given the size and scope of Colorado’s $1.15 billion craft brewing industry and its place as a national leader in the movement, I am confident that my research gathered an adequate sample in an area boasting more than 150 craft brewing operations (State Craft Beer Sales, 2014; Colorado Front Range, 2015; Torres, 2015; Wallace, 2015). Finally, this dissertation has racial limitations, as beer has a history of being marketed largely to a white population, and both the production side of the craft brewing industry and its followers are an overwhelmingly white demographic. While race and class also have intersections with beer, as well as gender, that intersection exceeds the reach of the current study. This dissertation touches briefly on the intersection in a later chapter but cannot devote the in-depth investigation it deserves within the project scope. I do have ambitions to extend future research to incorporate the intersections of race and class, however, and am aware the racial bias of this social and cultural phenomenon is limiting.
Mashing In: The Feminist Researcher

As a postmodern feminist researcher, my commitment to feminist media criticism extends beyond theory into methodology. As such, I conducted my observations and interviews according to Anne Opie’s (2008) urging that the researcher let the subject’s act of storytelling be an empowering experience for them. She urges reflexivity and tells the researcher to look for themes and data in the little moments of emotion, in the tone of voice, in the margins of the text. She encourages different interpretive readings of the analysis by the researcher and the subject, because information lies in that disagreement. There is more methodological value – it is more adherent to feminist ideology – to empower the subject with a discordant voice than to “colonize” them in the interest of nice, neat, unified findings.

Alison Jaggar states, “Postmodern feminist researchers cannot pretend to offer one true story, but instead must recognize that many stories may be told, each incorporating a partial truth,” and such research “tends to focus on the details of small slices of reality, including inconsistencies and anomalies” (p. 345). Here is where postmodernism’s plurality of small narratives truly resides: where the chaos of the philosophy breaks down feminism’s tendency to universalize and essentialize. It is impossible to do so when taking on one person’s messy, individual story at a time, which is why, I hope, the truth, as best as it can be told, emerges in the collective of my story and the stories of the women who participated in this critical research.

Via the reflection and strategic contemplation required by feminist methodology, I must first admit that my research benefits from the privilege of my age, race, education, and middle-class economic status (Royster & Kirsh, 2012). I was able to
observe and participate in the social structure of not only female beer enthusiast clubs but also Colorado craft beer culture with backstage-pass access of a “native”, because I fit the profile of the native. I fit seamlessly into the group as just another white, affluent, professional, educated, middle-class, Gen X woman. I am the face of the female Colorado beer drinker, which afforded me the opportunity to observe and conduct my academic research unfettered and largely unnoticed. Throughout my years in the field as a participant-observer, I made no secret that I was a Ph.D. student researching the group as I spoke with brewers and club members. In fact, most members and brewers introduced me to others up and down the Front Range as “the beer researcher,” “the beer Ph.D.,” or “the girl doing the beer dissertation,” and I was met with enthusiasm and offers to help and join my study. My intentions were always clear. My outward appearance and life experience, however, installed me effortlessly into the largely homogenous sorority I studied and enabled me to leverage my own commonalities with the participants in order to start conversations and form relationships with them. That I presented myself as a similar entity meant that the participants took little or no issue with my role as a researcher in their midst. The craft drinkers I observed were curious about my research, but most eventually forgot that I was more than just another imbibers and openly shared their thoughts with me. While meeting the obligation to inform my fellow participants of my work and intentions, I also remained vigilant of ethical situations which might have violated their trust (Ellis, 1995) or spoken for them rather than about them (Alcoff, 2008). The care taken with these relationships has transcended that of researcher and participant and moved into the more intimate and
cherished realm of friendship over the years as my “native” status became less a state of nature and more a matter of choice (and grace).

The advantage of “belonging” also presented a possible methodological and ethical quandary for me as a researcher and feminist. In working with the women who participated in my study, I remained mindful of the tendency to assume that the other club members saw me as similar and relatable to them as I believed myself to be. The experience of Patricia Zavella (1996) as a Chicana studying other Chicanas is reminder that, regardless of race, gender, or socio-economic status, my position as an academic endowed me a place as an outsider, an “other”, with my subjects. It was necessary for me to respect their constructions of identity instead of creating and enforcing my own assumptions about those constructions. It was not my place to accept that my reality as a white, Generation X woman carried identical experiences to theirs or that my education provided me special insight into their lives. A feminist researcher must be self-aware about his or her own contradictions, because “as we go through the process of talking with people like ourselves who are called ‘other,’ we should try to understand our own feminism and political struggles (Zavella, p. 194).

Alison Bailey (2010) accedes that white feminist scholars hail from an academic establishment that teaches the philosophy and critical theory of the white, Western patriarchy, and so “much feminist theory rests on the ideas of the patriarchs” (p. 51). Bailey’s (2010) warning, “When white feminists modify these tools to fit our projects we are certain to leave the fingerprints of domination on the conversations we begin,” points to the frustrations of many feminist scholars who yearn for a methodological and theoretical tradition with its own roots separate from those of white male philosophers
(p. 52). How, as a researcher trained in hegemonic critical theory and expected to employ it to be a successful academic, can my methodology conduct value-free research wiped clean of those fingerprints?

Bailey offers the antidote in her suggestion that white feminist scholars “reach into other toolboxes” (p. 69) from non-European cultures and women writers of color to reframe feminist theory. Similarly, Sally Haslanger asserts that race and privilege need not be a handicap in feminist studies, as, “Once we’ve noted that our experience of the world is already an interpretation of it, we can begin to raise questions about the adequacy of our conceptual framework.” This perspective allows me to insert my own personal experience as a female, beer drinker, and member of Generation X into my own narrative, but requires that I do it and include my own subjective personal experience as a participant, too, beyond my idealized (but never perfectly realized) objective roles as academic, researcher, observer. In writing and researching this dissertation and dealing with the people who made it possible, I wear the hats of feminist and feminist scholar. My voice has a place and a purpose in the qualitative research narrative of my own dissertation, and so it includes my own experience as a female beer enthusiast along with the women I studied.

Both Bailey and Haslanger suggest a feminist methodology that expands to embrace non-dominant and rarely-heard ideas to temper the white, Western, male paradigm of intellectual pursuits that infects even feminism. Therefore, even as a white researcher, I can reach into the toolbox for the epistemology of Patricia Hill Collins’ black feminism and employ the ethic of personal accountability to my own story and the viewpoints of my study’s participants in order to report the truth of our joint experience
To present a reliable empirical retelling of my participants’ accounts as shared with me, I turn to Katherine Borland’s *That’s Not What I Said* (1991) to find a pattern for my methodology. Borland explains her philosophy regarding the nature of others’ narrative experiences she collects, analyzes, and reports through her work as a feminist folklorist, saying:

> from my own perspective…the story does not really become a story until it is actualized in the mind of a receptive listener/reader (p. 529)…how, then, might we present our work in a way that grants the speaking woman interpretative respect without relinquishing our responsibility to provide our own interpretation of her experience? (p. 524).

The importance Borland gives the receiver in the transmissional model of communication, and the significance she places on the dual duty of the researcher, illustrates the methodological conundrum of feminist empiricism.

**Water, Barley, Hops (and Yeast): Theoretical Frameworks**

According to the Reinheitsgebot, or purity order, passed in Bavaria in 1516 that regulated the brewing of beer, the ingredients of the beverage are specific and limited to three ingredients: water, barley, and hops. Good research needs a similar theoretical recipe to build a framework within which to function. This dissertation is no different. And so, this study leans on a mix of neoliberal and critical feminist theory with a healthy dose of generational cohort theory as its mash of water, barley, and hops to build the base recipe. In later chapters, the dissertation includes Bakhtin’s theory of the chronotope, Kenneth Burke’s terministic screens, and various theorists who address...

---

7 Court cases in recent decades have altered and loosened the regulations of the Reinheitsgebot, but it remains a valuable marketing tool for German beers.
participatory and fan culture as the yeast that ferments the brew. This chapter introduces the superstructure of neoliberalism, feminism, and generational cohort theory upon which the qualitative research of this project builds.

**Enter Neoliberalism**

To understand why a commercial industry in a capitalist economy would seek to alienate more than half the consumer market, it is necessary, first, to define neoliberalism and understand its goals with regard to gender and, second, to juxtapose neoliberalism with the theoretical and social goals of feminism. In his book, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, anthropologist and geographer David Harvey asserts that the 20th century brought the failure of both capitalism and communism, and neoliberalism is the resulting “political project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites” (p. 19) that found a foothold in the United States in the 1980s during the Reagan administration. According to Harvey, “the founding fathers of neoliberal thought took political ideals of human dignity and individual freedom as fundamental” values of civilization (p. 5). Furthermore, the Framers worked under “the assumption that individual freedoms are guaranteed by freedom of the market and of trade” as the primary tenet of their philosophy (p. 7).

According to Jodi Dean (2009) in *Democracy and other Neoliberal Fantasies*, neoliberal thought holds freedom sacrosanct over concepts like justice or equality, because freedom seeks to “redefine social and ethical lives in accordance with economic criteria and expectations” in a world where market exchange guides human interaction and provides the path to the aforementioned freedom (p. 51). Dean (2009)
argues that this freedom is illusory, however, because, while neoliberal ideology appears to release us from static, prohibitive, symbolic social norms and replace them with “an immense variety of lifestyles” from which to choose, the shifting frame of reference built on social comparison under neoliberalism “renders imaginary identity extremely vulnerable” (p. 66). As a result, “communicative capitalism’s circuits of entertainment and consumption” exert pressure on these delicate individualities to constantly fashion and re-fashion ourselves to meet the neoliberal expectations to “have a good time, have it all, be happy, fit, and fulfilled” (Dean, 2009, p. 66-67).

In *The Twilight of Equality?*, feminist Lisa Duggan (2003) explains that neoliberalism in the United States has been a long time coming, advancing upon us in five stages that have their inception in the New Deal era and culminate in our current “stripped-down, nonredistributive form of ‘equality’ designed for global consumption during the twenty-first [sic] century, and compatible with continued upward redistribution of resources” (p. xii). Duggan emphasizes that neoliberalism relies on the divisive effects of “identity and cultural politics” and their intersection in race, class, gender, and sexuality to achieve the culture wars and political alliances that made ascendance of equality impossible. Neoliberalism exploited this intersection and forged vulnerable new gender roles to use to their advantage in a divide-and-conquer market strategy that included the rebranding of beer as a male space in the 1980s via advertising that alienated women for the purpose of the upward redistribution of resources Duggan describes.

The pressures of Dean’s communicative capitalism on individual identities are made possible and effective by what Marxist theorist Guy Debord (1994) called the
“integrated spectacle,” which combines the dictatorial qualities of the totalitarian counter-revolutionary regimes of the communists and fascists with the seductive illusion of commodities and choice inherent in American capitalism into a global spectacle that is “simultaneously concentrated and diffuse” and “permeates all reality” (Debord, 1994, p. 8-9). Debord (1994) talks of the integrated spectacle’s investment in the “manufacture of a present...which wants to forget the past and no longer believes in the future” (p. 13). This theory helps to explain the ahistorical formation of new identities with each generational cohort that makes possible neoliberalism’s exploitation of the intersections of identity and cultural politics Duggan highlights for the purpose of redefining the gendered social roles of femininity and masculinity via the media. The successful construction of a new gendered space around a beer industry that previously marketed to both men and women and often launched advertising campaigns that directly targeted female consumers in the decades prior to the neoliberal turn that took place when many members of Generation X were still young and most millennials not yet born illustrates the impact of new identities created by integrated spectacle’s manufactured present.

Counter to Debord’s theory of a saturating, omnipresent media that delivers integrated spectacle with a scattershot approach, in Selling the Free Market: The Rhetoric of Economic Correctness, James Arnt Aune (2000) presents an alternative argument for a neoliberal rhetoric that takes on fragmented audiences in an effort to persuade rather than overwhelm and does so by tailoring its message to resonate with those audiences. Aune presents another avenue by which neoliberalism delivers its
message of identity in our culture in an attempt to reform such identities, striking contrasts with one another to divide and conquer in locations of intersectionality.

In his 2006 book *The Economics of Attention*, rhetorician Richard Lanham returns to Debord's 1967 theory of integrated spectacle and updates it for our media-intensive, Web 2.0 world with his theory that information from the neoliberal media overwhelms the “scarcity” of human attention (p. 5). In doing this, the media feeds the human mind knowledge as a commodity. With this method, neoliberalism convinces us that we find freedom by buying on the free market ("stuff") and cramming as much information ("fluff") into our brains at the same time (Lanham, 2006). This preponderance of fluff serves as 21st century spectacle, keeping the American mind mired in information the media feeds it and giving rise to an ahistorical, here-and-now-centered group-think.

**Neoliberal Femininity and Third Wave Feminism**

This dissertation focuses on the intersection of gender and neoliberal thought, and, more specifically, how the latter has manipulated and used the former to forge vulnerable new gender roles that it can exploit via the market in a divide-and-conquer strategy for the purpose of that “upward redistribution of resources” (Duggan, xii).

Nancy Fraser (1995) employed political economy to approach the neoliberal encroachment into “post-socialist” conflicts where “demands for ‘recognition of difference’ fuel struggles of groups mobilized under the banners of nationality, ethnicity, ‘race,’ gender, and sexuality” (p. 68). She noted that, in these conflicts, “cultural recognition displaces socioeconomic redistribution as the remedy for injustice” (Fraser,
1995, p. 68). Fraser asserts, however, that second wave feminism actually aided in neoliberalism’s ascendancy in the 1980s by subjugating its call for socioeconomic equality and justice to its “critique of culture” at the very moment when neoliberalism “wanted nothing more than to repress all memory of social egalitarianism” (Fraser, 2013, p.13). And so, second wave feminism found itself neoliberalism’s strange and unlikely bedfellow at neoliberalism’s outset.

Feminism’s complicity in the third wave is, however, a more ambiguous proposition. That neoliberalism has worked to destabilize female gender identity and, transitively, feminism, via what Dean called communicative capitalism, is well-established in the works of feminist scholars like Naomi Wolf (1991) and Jean Kilbourne (2010). Exploding gender binary upon which neoliberalism so relies to exploit the intersection of gender identity is the aim of much of Judith Butler’s landmark third-wave feminism scholarship, particularly the revolutionary theories about gender she presents in her books *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Undoing Gender* (2004).

In her 2008 assessment of neoliberalism and post-feminism, Rosalind Gill wrote that, “just as neoliberalism requires individuals to narrate their life story as if it were the outcome of deliberative choices so too does some contemporary writing depict young women as unconstrained and freely choosing” (p. 436). Gill evaluates third wave advertising as representing women with sexual agency while simultaneously subjecting them to the objectification of the male gaze. She also argues that women in the media returned that gaze with their own while summarizing third-wave, neoliberal femininity thusly:

On the one hand, young women are hailed through a discourse of “can-do” girl power, yet on the other their bodies are powerfully re-inscribed as sexual objects;
on the one hand women are presented as active, desiring social subjects, yet on the other they are subject to a level of scrutiny and hostile surveillance that has no historical precedent. The patterned nature of the contradictions is what constitutes the sensibility, a sensibility in which notions of autonomy, choice and self-improvement sit side-by-side with surveillance, discipline and the vilification of those who make the “wrong” “choices” (e.g. become too fat, too thin or have the audacity or bad judgement [sic] to grow older) (Gill, 2008, p. 442).

Gill concludes that, in our neoliberal culture, the issue is not just that the gendering of subjects is “governed, disciplined or regulated in ever more intimate ways, but even more fundamentally that notions of choice, agency and autonomy have become central to that regulatory project” (p. 443).

**Neoliberal Masculinity**

As in the past, the neoliberal man is defined by his work. This idealized work in neoliberal America is very specific, however, and is to follow the sexual division of labor that assigns the unpaid, private work of the home to women while entrusting the paid, public work to men. According to Michael Warner in his book *Publics and Counterpublics* (2005), such public work “is understood to be public, forming vocational identity, fulfilling men as individuals” (p. 37). For the past 30 years, the majority of children in the United States have grown up with mothers who are single parents employed outside the home in the public sphere (Mitchell, 1997). The collapse of blue-collar jobs and the shifting economic landscape to service industries shunted men into more feminized white-collar work environments that have less physical demands and require working side-by-side or being subordinate to women, leading to a neoliberal crisis of masculinity both caused by and reflected in the media.
In their 2000 article, “Slaves with White Collars,” Ashcraft and Flores frame the masculine portrayals in the movies *Fight Club* and *In the Company of Men* as protest against the emasculating force of the corporate world "sterilized by women's civilization" (p. 22), locating the struggle as one of economic culture rather than one of strictly gender politics. Men live and work in a white-collar world that exists half in the public sphere and half in the private sphere, where “white/collar masculinity is susceptible to feminization, given its reputed lack of physicality and bureaucratic sterility, suppression of the body, self-imposed discipline, and obligatory ingratiation” (Ashcraft & Flores, 6). The authors do not frame the crisis of masculinity they discuss as the collateral of the neoliberal human condition, in part because the rise of neoliberalism was the result of the failure of post-World War II socialism and Keynesian capitalism. The masculinity crisis is rather the earmark of neocapitalism’s subsequent failure (Harvey, 2005). The message is that the economic controls of socialism and capitalism clearly did not deliver on promises of individual freedom and happiness, but neoliberalism’s promise of freedom via the free market will.

Neoliberalism makes its promises to men based on their willingness to meet physical and emotional standards of masculinity. Men are expected to be entrepreneurial and take-charge when it comes to their success, freedom, and happiness. The ideology endorses the maverick, cowboy maleness of its idol, Ronald Reagan, and demands adherence to a “cult of hardness” that includes emotional stoicism, a lack of attachment to women, and a fit, “take no shit” body (Bordo, 1999, p. 55-57). The value placed on hegemonic physical masculinity is at odds with the economic reality of the work performed by most white-collar male employees in
neoliberal America, but its popularity persists because, as Lauren Berlant notes in her 2011 study of the affect of neoliberalism, *Cruel Optimism*, humanity’s desire for stability and social location causes us to cling to the norm even if the norm of neoliberalism oppresses us with a continuous loop of slavish consumption that will never realize our dreams or make us happy. Berlant asserts that this fear of change and need for social location allows us to trample the ideals of democracy and dehumanize each other in the name of neoliberalism’s core value of freedom.

The men and women of Generation X came of age during an era of economic and political deconstruction that generational scholars Strauss and Howe (1997) characterize as an “Unraveling” [Strauss and Howe’s capitalization], specifically known as the “Culture Wars” between conservative and liberal social values that took place from 1984-2005 as a result of the neoliberal turn. The majority of Generation Xers grew up with mothers who worked outside the home or came from divorced families where they were raised by single parents (Mitchell, 1997). These cultural changes, brought about in part by white, upper middle-class women entering the workforce as a result of the women’s movement, also placed Generation X’s formative years squarely between the waning second wave of feminism that saw its heyday in the 1960s and 1970s and the third wave of feminism that formed slowly in the 1990s (Krolokke, 2005; Watkins & Emerson, 2000). Generation X’s location in the postfeminist 1980s uniquely positioned it in a period of transition that both shaped the cohort’s gender identities and created an opening for neoliberalism to influence the third wave of feminism that followed.

Neoliberalism’s reliance on the gender binary to make destabilization possible is the target of a significant amount of feminist scholarship. Linda Zerilli (2005), while
not directly locating her position on gender roles as an anti-neoliberal one, asserts that the false choice of “equal or different” women historically have been offered by a feminism laid across the framework of the male that social contract has made the illusory option of “freedom” as an alternative goal attractive to women and third wave feminists (p. 96). This focus on freedom appears to mimic the core value of neoliberalism, but third wave feminism also includes Judith Butler’s attack on the gender binary (1990, 2004) that deconstructs the concepts of femininity and masculinity instead continuing the second wave’s focus on equality and justice – two values rejected by neoliberalism. Feminism’s inclusion of masculinity in its lens simultaneously dismantled the very concept, causing neoliberalism to build a safe haven for the male hegemony upon which it had relied for its success. The haven took shape in media-created realms where counterpublics of men (Warner, 2004) could find safety and comfort together within the increasingly ungendered public sphere.

The media of the period reflected the social upheaval that shaped Generation X’s world as they grew from children into young adults of legal drinking age and served to define their perceptions of both gender roles and alcohol (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Television commercials of the 1980s portrayed more women in the workplace and in a greater range of professions than the advertising of prior decades but also continued to depict them as parents and housewives, contributing to the image of women shouldering the obligations of family and home while simultaneously assuming new career responsibilities (Allen & Coltrane, 1996). Television beer advertisements presented a world where men vastly outnumbered women, and women wore significantly less clothes in increasingly objectified feminine portrayals (Iijima Hall &
Crum, 1994). The popular prime-time network program *Cheers* presented heavy and
daily consumption of beer as a male after-work (workplace substitution) socialization
ritual to a large general audience (Hundley, 1995), while HBO’s *Sex and the City* made
the pink cosmopolitan cocktail the drink of the “single-girl narrative” for its more female
audience (McCabe & Akass, 2004).

In the wake of the male beer drinking on *Cheers* and *Sex and the City*’s female
bonding over cosmos, today’s gendered space of beer is the direct result of late-20th
and early-21st century America’s neoliberal ideology. As doors opened for women
during the second wave of feminism, male hegemony sought refuge in a new social and
cultural space anchored by beer, and the lack of a feminist identity in Generation X,
which came of age during the interregnum of the second and third waves of feminism,
made the transition into this gendered consumer space both possible and undetected.

America’s deindustrialization and the rise of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s
stripped men of their dominance in the family and workplace, blurred the lines between
the public and private spheres with new gender roles during the second wave of
feminism, and sent masculinity looking for new place to call home. The neoliberal
chronotope of beer reconstructs the beverage for a space similar to a fraternity, a
Moose Lodge, or a garage. The place is designed to soothe, strengthen, free, reaffirm,
and empower men with feelings of control, adoration, and the companionship of other
men like them. It is a world where a man and his friends at age 30 can act like kids,
watch the game in peace and be lords of all they survey. The neoliberal fantasy this
chronotope sells tells men that they are still lords of their castles with beer as their
armor. What’s more, the fantasy sends a message that the free market is their ally,
because it sells them the beer that is their ticket to escape, freedom, and power. The moral of the chronotope is that a man in neoliberal America need not work for his success: he can simply buy it out of the refrigerator case at his local convenience store.

The gendering of beer is significant to the identities of Generation X and millennial men. Men of these generations missed the opportunity to experience the staunch masculine hegemony of the generations before them; their social position in the public sphere is uncertain and unguaranteed. The gendered space that the beer chronotope creates tells them that, with a cooler of Budweiser and some male buddies, they can reclaim the masculinity lost in the public sphere by retreating to a special private sphere of a hegemonic male counterpublic in postfeminist America that can transform the lives of the men who participate by association with one another through beer, allowing them to forget the promises of success and freedom the free market failed to keep. Regardless of appearance, age, race, class, skill, education, or other social standing, beer offers men a way to be desirable and dominant even if they are losers (Messner & Montez de Oca, 2005). For the men of Generation X, the gendered space of beer advertisements offers them access to the neoliberal promises of freedom and power while meeting the neoliberal obligation to be happy through “happy objects” like beer that offer a social good through the shared experience (Ahmend, 2010). These men are exercising their right to the free market. Buying a six pack of cold ones will ensure their autonomy, affirming their male right and duty to be neoliberal men who take charge of their lives by grasping the brass ring offered them, exemplified by buying a red-blooded American lager like Budweiser, Miller, or Coors.
Beer drinking as a specifically male (and male-only) social ritual was not endemic to the public sphere until the media made it so with the rise of neoliberalism. In keeping with Debord’s integrated spectacle, we now have a society that reflects a belief created by the media that women don’t drink beer; it is a man’s beverage and always has been. The neoliberal media spectacle of the mid-1980s subsumed beer’s cultural identity and its associated social drinking rituals and created a new gendered space in American society – a space where men can enjoy their freedom without having to be concerned with others’ demands for equality and justice for their cultural identities. Gendered beer provides the American male a mechanism by which he can both be the neoliberal masculine ideal and turn back the clock to an idealized masculinity born of a history that does not exist. Over the last 30 years, neoliberalism’s integrated spectacle successfully redefined beer and its mediatized social rituals as male through an almost Orwellian process of revisionist history that gave beer an accepted gendered cultural position for Generation X and millennials that went unchallenged for decades.

As the following chapters demonstrate, the spreading influence of feminism and growth of the craft beer movement combined in recent years to bring the gendered instrument of social control surrounding beer to the attention of younger consumers and dismantle the constructed distraction of the neoliberal spectacle that made such gendering possible. In order to understand the progression away from the gendered neoliberal space surrounding beer, however, it is first necessary to explore its late-20th century origins.
CHAPTER TWO: DRINKING FEMININITY

“You poured a libation over the brick of destiny,
You placed the foundations in peace [and] prosperity,
May Ninkasi live together with you!
Let her pour for you beer [and] wine,
Let the pouring of the sweet liquor resound pleasantly for you!”
– Hymn to Ninkasi (Civil, 1991, p. 4)

When Beer Had a Goddess: A Brief History of Gender and Beer

The social production and consumption of beer is a crucial instrument of political economy and social change that dates back 6,000 years (Standage, 2005).

According to ethnoarcheologist Michael Dietler (1990):

although drinking alcohol is not an essential human physiological activity . . . it has been regarded by the people using it as a fundamentally important ritual and social artifact, with patterns of use deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of various societies (p. 359).

The earliest brewers of fermented beverages in Neolithic cultures and civilizations across the ancient world were women (McGovern, 2009). For the Sumerians, the brewing of fermented beverages, particularly beer, was a feminine undertaking under the purview of the goddess Ninkasi, and the ode written in her honor is the world’s oldest beer recipe (BeerAdvocate, 2000; Civil, 1991; Nurin, 2015a). Men and women of all social strata in Mesopotamian society shared beer from special, multi-spout jars to establish community bonds in the third century B.C. and later spread the tradition, along with practice of female brewing, to their trade partners in Ancient Egypt (McGovern, 2009; Nurin, 2015a). The ancient Greeks reserved wine for male drinking and considered beer to be a womanly beverage (Nelson, 2005).

Ancient Norse, Baltic, and Slavic cultures all assign the discovery and protection of brewing to feminine divinities in their mythologies, and European domestic
beer production during the Middle Ages was a decentralized cottage industry maintained by female brewers called brewsters (Nurin, 2015a). Prior to the politicization and codification of beer production under the Reinheitsgebot, the nuns of St. Hildegard of Bingen in Germany discovered and introduced hops as a preservative ingredient in beer in the 12th century (Nurin, 2015a). Thus, it was women, as small-scale craft brewers, who shaped the brewing process and taste of the beverage we recognize as beer today.

As in the ancient Middle East and Medieval Europe, colonial women were the first beer brewers in the Americas (Meacham, 2009). Unfortunately, as was the case in Ancient Egypt and Europe at the start of the Renaissance, the masculinization of beer production pushed female brewers from their craft as it became a profitable commercial industry in each culture (Meacham, 2009; Nurin, 2015a).

The tradition of alcohol consumption by both men and women as part of community celebrations and rites of passage came to the American colonies with English settlers and later to the United States with waves of immigrants (Martin, 2006; Rorabaugh, 1979). Annual personal consumption of all alcohols in the United States reached its peak in 1830 at seven gallons per capita. In 1850, however, per capita consumption of commercial beer began to increase from the threshold of two gallons per person as the beverage moved away from home production to factory brewing with the influx of German immigrants during the Industrial Revolution (Green, 2015; Rorabaugh, 1979; Whitehead, 2015).

In 1920, the passage of the 18th Amendment, also known as the Volstead Act, resulted in a national ban on the sale, manufacture, and transportation of all alcoholic
beverages in the United States and changed Americans’ relationship with beer for the remainder of the 20th century. Ironically, Prohibition’s attack on the social ritual of alcohol consumption was the result of Progressive-Era gender-specific, grassroots crusades like the Women’s Christian Temperance Movement (WCTU) (Putnam, 2000).

For the ladies of the WCTU, drinking was “not only the root of the most social evil but a symbol of cities, sexual freedom, and the eroding ethics of modern life in general,” and they sought to replace the ritual of drinking with a “stricter moral order and a cleaner, simpler nation” through dry socialization in wholesome organizations and activities intended to preserve and strengthen the American republic (Nash, 1970, p. 145).

In the years following repeal of the Volstead Act in 1933 and the subsequent end of Prohibition in the United States, two commercial developments changed the drinking landscape of the nation. First, spirits distillers constructed a post-Prohibition campaign of portrayals in Hollywood films that targeted female drinkers and specifically promoted liquor as the chic and sophisticated drink of choice for women drinking alone or in mixed company (Blocker, 2006). The beer industry made no such effort, and this development initiated a gender gap between beer and the female market. Second, government laws that favored off-premises sale of beer combined with the technological developments of refrigeration and packaging in beer cans in the 1930s pushed beer consumption into the domestic sphere, where it became a drink largely consumed in private (Blocker, 2006). These changes, combined with establishment of the philosophy of alcoholism as a disease and Alcoholics Anonymous to address it, led to a steady decline in alcohol consumption in the United States during the 1940s and 1950s (Blocker, 2006).
Consumption levels do not tell the whole story, however, and the true measure of social change lies in the demographic shifts of American drinkers rather than the gross numbers. Generation X and millennials are not the first cohorts to have the media not only influence who drinks what and where but also impact both their gender roles and generational identity. Long before television worked its magic to create a gendered space around the social ritual of beer consumption, the film industry reframed American femininity for Generation X and millennials' grandparents and great-grandparents that included drinking as a trait that was both accepted and expected. Moreover, Hollywood’s collusion with the liquor industry in the wake of Prohibition influenced what, where, how much, and with whom the women of the G.I. and Silent generations drank, establishing a pattern between the media and consumer culture that is still at work today.

**Screens within Screens: Post-Prohibition Hollywood**

*Rhett Butler*: It’s no good, Scarlett.
*Scarlett O’Hara*: What?
*Rhett*: The cologne.
*Scarlett*: I’m sure I don’t know what you mean.
*Rhett*: I mean you’ve been drinking…brandy…quite a lot
*Scarlett*: Well, what if I have; is that any of your affair?
*Rhett*: Don’t drink alone, Scarlett. People always find out, and it ruins their reputation.

— *Gone with the Wind* (Cukor & Fleming, 1939)

Set during the Civil War and in Reconstruction-Era South of the 1860s, *Gone with the Wind* features the amoral and opportunistic Rhett Butler using Victorian moral codes regarding women and alcohol to teasingly admonish the twice-widowed Scarlett O’Hara’s attempt to drown her grief over her latest husband’s murder in a bottle of
cheap drink in private behind her own locked bedroom door. Drawing attention to Scarlett’s fictional impropriety in a post-Prohibition American film spoke aloud what is often implied in our modern culture: alcohol consumption by women is accepted, and even embraced, as long as it follows certain social rules.

Despite the fact that the 18th Amendment of the United States Constitution prohibited the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors from 1920 until its repeal in 1933, American film continued to depict alcohol consumption by both men and women throughout the Prohibition Era (Corzine, 2010; Room, 1988; Warsh, 1988). The “wet” fantasy world of the silver screen in silent and early sound film of the 1920s and 1930s reflected the reality of a United States that saw the number of illegal drinking establishments during Prohibition far outnumber their legal counterparts before the passage of the Volstead Act in 1920. Speakeasies replaced the legitimate bars, nightclubs, and restaurants that flourished before the federal temperance law took effect and put them out of business (Behr, 1996). Film also reflected the changing demographic of drinkers in the United States during the 1920s as the social ritual expanded from one largely associated with working class men in the 19th and early 20th centuries to include women, middle-class, and affluent Americans of all stripes. The most profound and lasting effect of prohibiting the sale of alcohol was the growth and acceptance of drinking as a cultural activity for all adults. Denial created desire, and, as Prohibition historian Edward Behr (1996) explains, “[Drinking] became the thing to do, among students, flappers, and respectable middle-class Americans all over the country, to defy the law – as much a manifestation of personal liberty as a thirst for alcohol” (p. 89).
Cinematic portrayals of women consuming alcohol in the decades following the repeal of the 18th Amendment shaped the historical expansion and rhetorical redefinition of drinkers in the post-Prohibition United States. The liquor industry exploited the terministic screens of gender and class in film to foster the growing popularity of cocktails begun during Prohibition once intoxicating beverages were again legal (Burke, 1966; Room, 1988; Warsh, 1988). Past studies of female drinking portrayals in post-repeal films argued that said portrayals domesticated liquor consumption for women and capitalized on its dominance in the pre-1933 bootleg market to sell legitimate distilled spirits to a female population that met their acquaintance as illegitimate bathtub gin (Corzine, 2010; Murdock, 1998; Room, 1988; Warsh, 1988). The partnership between liquor and the cinema of the 1930s and 1940s created a change on a cultural level and used drinking and class to redefine the terministic screen of 20th century femininity on a fundamental level. This new definition of femininity both reflected and served to shape gender identity and gendered drinking behavior for the adults of the G.I. Generation that weathered the Great Depression and fought in World War II, as well as the Silent generation that followed.

Burke (1966) defines terministic screens as the fictions generated by symbols we use to create the filters through which we make sense of the world and maintain social hierarchies that form the basis of the power structures that allow us to communicate with one another. Two such broad terministic screens used to create our social hierarchy are gender and class. The 20th century terministic screen of gender in the United States employed the strict social construction of a false male-female binary that placed men in a superior hierarchical position than women – a model and hierarchy still
largely in place today. The terministic screen of gender relies on specific gender roles, behavioral expectations, and limits on access to certain social and economic realms and rituals to construct and maintain the established hierarchy. A similar screen exists for class, which is a complex and diffuse concept that often defies definition. In his *Keywords*, Raymond Williams (1985) provides a Marxist critique that frames the term ‘class’ as an economic category used for relative social ranking and defined by usefulness in terms of production and the nature of work performed. Within this framework the unskilled working class that performs manual labor ranks below the more skilled middle class that often performs cerebral or supervisory work.

Because major shifts in cultural values and societal norms often coincide with the advent of new generational cohorts, media portrayals and the terministic screens they build and provide can shape how the members of an entire generation view and represent themselves as well as how they relate to one another. Generational cohort theorists Strauss and Howe (1991) describe the members of the G.I. Generation born between 1900 and 1924 as optimistic and energetic, yet bound by rationality. Marked by the bookends of the “watershed” turn of the century and birthdates that made even the youngest members of the generation eligible for the draft during World War II, this cohort has a unified identity developed by shared struggles and experiences and strongly influenced by government attention and control in their culture and lives that included the Progressive-Era reforms, Prohibition, the New Deal, conscripted military service during the war, and the G.I. Bill that followed (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Theirs is a generation that learned to trust authority but is characterized by individualism, a belief that they are special, idealism, a can-do spirit, a strong sense of self and conviction in
their ability to steer their own destinies. In contrast, the Silent Generation born between 1925 and 1942 lacked strong identities both as individuals and a cohort and exhibited “middle age values” even in their youth (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Without crises like the Great Depression and World War II to define their cohort and provide cohesive experiences, this stagnated peer group “without a cause” wanted for leaders and a culture of their own and instead relied on conservative institutions, traditional values, and a “sense of obligation” to compensate for their deficiencies (Strauss & Howe, 1991).

As a persuasive tool of the integrated spectacle theorized by Debord, the media serve to define gender and class and update those social boundaries to serve the hegemonic male power structure by creating an “ambient coconstituitiveness” between the image and the audience that has the desired rhetorical effect (Rickert, 2013). Social cognitive theory holds that people learn from the observations of others and model their behaviors and values on the behaviors and values they see demonstrated by those in authority; this modeling behavior is most strongly influenced when observing individuals with characteristics the viewer shares such as age, race, or gender (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 1994; Bandura, 2001). The powerful moving images of film provide the ideal primer for how gender and class look, sound, act, and behave, and its influence was particularly potent in the first half of the 20th century when the medium was new and had little or no visual competition with television.

The portrayals of drinking women, including their behavior when drinking and their relationships with liquor, in films of the decade following the repeal of Prohibition defined drinking femininity for the women of the G.I. Generation and the Silent Generation. What follows is an analysis of four films that are an archive of two mid-
century decades of “wet women” immediately following repeal: the sexy, booze-fueled Depression Era comedic romps *The Thin Man* (1934) and *The Women* (1939) and World War II tales of duty, dignity, and identity *Now, Voyager* (1942) and *Since You Went Away* (1944). Together, these films demonstrate how America’s modern relationship with liquor created distinct iterations of not just feminine drinking, but a drinking femininity for white, affluent, American women who sought an identity in the wake of the early 20th century’s first wave of feminism and how the dominant discourse of drinking femininity changed to suit the social, political, and economic needs of a nation at war.

**Repeal Appeal: Alcohol and Sex in the 1930s**

* Nora Charles: How many drinks have you had?  
  * Nick Charles: This will make six Martinis.  
  * Nora Charles: [to the waiter] Alright. Will you bring me five more Martinis, Leo? Line them right up here [points to the table in front of her].

  – *The Thin Man* (Van Dyke, 1934)

Nick and Nora Charles are alcoholics, and they wear their besotted nature as a badge of honor; it is the source of their witty banter, sexual chemistry, and deep and abiding love for each other. Booze is the bedrock upon which their marriage and individual personalities are built.

When we first meet retired detective Nick Charles, portrayed by William Powell, in the 1934 adaptation of Dashiell Hammett’s novel *The Thin Man* written earlier that same year, he is three sheets to the wind and bellied up to the bar of a posh New York

---

8 Author’s term.
City hotel, instructing four bartenders on the finer points of mixing the perfect Martini. His tall, dark, and beautiful wife, Nora, played by Hollywood veteran Myrna Loy, makes her entrance not long after falling head-over-heels into the lobby as their beloved dog Asta pulls her and her armload of just-purchased Christmas parcels to the floor in an effort to reach his master. Despite the clumsy entry that introduces her as a screwball comedienne, wealthy heiress Nora is head-to-toe glamour and sophistication with her long, lean form dressed in the chic fashions of costume designer Dolly Tree, one of the visionaries responsible for the daring, modern look of the New Woman in 1920s and 1930s cinema (Mulvey, 2010).

The front-and-center placement of liquor in the film, particularly gin, which was easily bootlegged and so rose to popularity during Prohibition, is undeniable and was obvious to contemporary audiences. *Chicago Daily Tribune* critic Mae Tinee (1934) went so far as to suggest that “Between Drinks” would have been a better title for the film, which, as she puts it, “is a tale of a murder mystery that’s solved by a super-brained Hawkshaw who takes his drinking very, very seriously and his sleuthing very, very lightly” (p. 15). She forgot to mention that he also takes his Martini very, very dry, just like his wife’s wit, but she does describe the film as “awfully wet” and says that its drama “swims ably about in its ocean of liquid refreshment” (Tinee, 1934, p. 15). She notes that Nick and Nora are both on a “drinking vacation” and have “decided that a moment of abstinence is a wasted moment and that of such there shall be none” (Tinee, 1934, p. 15). Clearly, cocktails should have received top billing above the lights along with Powell’s and Loy’s.
Less than one year after repeal, the characters in *The Thin Man*, including its female star, drink with a vengeance as if to make up for the legitimate consumption they were denied for the thirteen years prior, despite their obvious indulgences during Prohibition. Nick and Nora imbibe at an expert level clearly achieved by years of heavy drinking, a reflection of both actual and fictional behavior during the years the United States lived under the Volstead Act. Daniel Okrent (2010), author of *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*, characterizes the relationship between the drinking depicted in films and the lived experience in American culture during Prohibition as a “self-sustaining cycle.” “Hollywood showed stylish characters drinking,” Okrent explains, and “movie goers . . . mimicked the characters, and Hollywood thereby justified providing more of the same” (p. 213). Where art and life imitated each other in the cultural blur of Prohibition America is perhaps impossible to discern, but it is certain that the role drinking played in both modern entertainment and daily life began with the “cocktail parties and speakeasies” that became the norm of a lifestyle that included private group drinking for both sexes depicted in the films produced while alcohol was illegal in the United States (Okrent, 2010, p. 213). What Prohibition started both on the screen and in the streets during the 1920s continued during the post-repeal cinema in the 1930s, where the role of liquor consumption in film served as one part social lubricant for both genders and one part social-climbing inspiration porn for the underclass, with female cultural emancipation as a garnish.

In addition to the ubiquitous and dominating role of liquor in the film, *The Thin Man* is also notable for the lead characters’ gender equality. Nora is Nick’s match in every way and, much like Powell and Loy’s co-star arrangement in the film, the
marriage they depict is one of equals. Nick is a washed-up, if brilliant, private investigator with no income, and Nora’s inheritance bankrolls their crime-solving exploits and cocktail-infused escapades as they solve mysteries from their New York penthouse at the height of the Great Depression. Nora is no shrinking violet; she is a smart and outspoken and Watson to her husband’s Sherlock. A politically, socially, and economically emancipated woman, she gives as good as she gets both intellectually and physically; she spars verbally and flirts openly, and even incurs injury in an fight scene, all while looking impeccably fashionable with a drink in her hand. Nick and Nora are in it together in the partying and crime fighting, and Nick would have it no other way.

Nick prefers his wife behind the wet bar pouring them both dry Martinis rather than in the kitchen where Nora would be a disaster in traditional domestic roles. Raised a socialite and accustomed to luxury even while most of the nation stand in breadlines, Nora throws a massive Christmas Eve cocktail party at the Charles’ penthouse and provides nothing but alcohol for her guests. She only realizes that a better hostess would serve food after everyone is drunk and calls down to the front desk for sandwiches when her company begins to get out of hand entirely. Rather than provide Nick with domesticity and family, Nora serves as his best friend and wing woman – a companion who will match him cocktail for cocktail without shame, drink most men under the table with no concern for her reputation, and then openly complain of her hangover the following day.

Despite the fact that they spend the film trying to send their livers to hell in a matching set of hand baskets, Nick and Nora are ace detectives who solve the case and get their man, all while being entertaining and likeable. Much like Prohibition Era
cinema, the lifestyle the Charles live and world they inhabit does not reflect the reality of the world beyond the movie house doors. Just as the films from 1920-1932 depicted a world of open and unfettered drinking, *The Thin Man* depicts a shiny, clean, well-fed, and employed world free of want that did not match the lives of the audiences of the Great Depression. Nora’s wealth, wit, and carefree lifestyle offered an ideal for the women who watched her, providing a much-needed respite from the bleak existence the women faced when the theater lights rose again. Feminist film scholar Jackie Stacy’s theory of female spectatorship cited three discourses: escapism, identification, and consumption, and Nora Charles certainly offers the first, as do the leading ladies of the hit 1939 film, *The Women* (McCabe, 2004).

Where *The Thin Man* is a demonstration of an equitable relationship the post-Prohibition attitude toward drinking created between genders, *The Women* tells a story of how modern, drinking women relate to one another over the social ritual of alcohol consumption. Based on the 1936 Broadway hit by Clare Booth Luce, the film is a biting comedy of manners that chronicles the friendships and rivalries of a group of Manhattan socialites and the up-and-coming status seekers who enter their midst and threaten their social standing as fashionable wives of wealthy men. Characterized by the rapid-fire trade of insults of acerbic wit, both jealous and self-effacing, and the feminist dialogue about men, drink, and divorce, *The Women* is radical in both the content it includes and whom it omits. Despite the film’s promotional tag line that declares “And It’s All About Men!” there are no men whatsoever in a cast of over one hundred women with speaking parts (Cukor, 1939).
While the story dishes up copious amounts of banter about love, friendship, and heartbreak among several women, the central plot focuses on the backstabbing and competition between meek, wholesome high society wife and mother Mary Haines and scheming, deceitful Crystal Allen, Mr. Haines’ gold-digging shop girl mistress, played by Prohibition-Era fan favorites and MGM screen rivals Norma Shearer and Joan Crawford, respectively (Lugowski, 2011). Mary makes a daring and progressive move when she boards a train to Reno, Nevada to file for divorce upon learning of her husband’s affair with Crystal. Crystal sees sexuality as her ticket to marrying up the ladder from working class to high society and leverages both her feminine wiles and her party girl charms to replace Mary as the new Mrs. Haines. Crystal’s usurpation of Mary’s position provides gossip fodder in the beauty salon the New York women patronize and Black’s department store where Crystal and her friends work and Mary’s ilk shops, at the ranch in Reno, and on the train there. There is constant talk about gender, class, and sex, all of which are framed by alcohol and its consumption.

The characters in *The Women* are assertive to the point of being aggressive and often engage in traditionally masculine behavior. Many of the exchanges between the women include verbal threats of violence, and on one occasion two of them, Miriam Aarons and Sylvia Fowler, come to blows over Sylvia’s soon-to-be ex-husband, Howard. Barbs replete with sexual innuendo thrown between the women and behind each other’s backs throughout the film insinuate promiscuity, with most of the women openly discussing their own sexual desires, urges, and motives regarding men. The characters name sex among their reasons for marriage on a list that includes money and fun rather than love, children, or domesticity. On the train to Reno to obtain their
divorces, humiliated, conservative Mary discusses the heartbreak of giving up on her marriage with her new friends, the sassy and straightforward Miriam, and the older and extravagant Countess De Lave, who, dripping with pearls and fur, is on her way to Nevada to part ways with husband number three:

Mary: You’re not a very good judge of character, are you countess?
Countess De Lave: No, that’s the trouble with me. I don’t pick them for character. I bet you picked yours for character.
Mary: Well, yes, in a way.
Countess De Lave: Yes, and where did it get you? On the train for Reno.
Mary: [with a wistful chuckle] On the train for Reno.
Countess De Lave: My way, your marriage may not last, but it’s fun while it hangs together. [laughs] You know, I think it’s cruel sitting around waiting for somebody to die. [To Miriam:] What’d you pick yours for, darling?
Miriam: Not for character! (Cukor, 1939)

Like much of the discussion of men, sex, power, and money in the film, the train conversation takes place over drinks, notably champagne, in the club car.

The female characters in the film are not shy with their love of alcohol and the role it plays in their personal identities and the bonding rituals in which they mutually engage. The women in Mary’s set use champagne much in the same way the four friends in HBO’s Sex and the City made meeting for cosmopolitan cocktails the forum for frank female discussion of sex and relationships sixty years later (McCabe & Akass, 2004). Straight glasses of whiskey, a traditionally masculine beverage, feature prominently in a conversation between Miriam and the Countess in Reno, and, as with The Thin Man, the Prohibition Era popularity of gin and gin drinks continues to appear throughout The Women. Back in New York City and distraught over the news of her latest husband’s affair with the devious Crystal, the Countess collapses onto the divan and wails, “Get me a bromide . . . and put some gin in it!” (Cukor, 1939). The use of alcohol is not limited to the wealthy socialites, however, as the working-class women at
the salon and department store also discuss each other’s drinking, at times as part of jocular plays at character assassination. Early in the film, when the selfish and conniving Crystal hires black department store domestic Lulu to cook dinner for the romantic evening she has planned at her apartment with Mary's husband, Lulu asks, “Will I find anything in that ice box of yours?” to which Crystal's perfume counter co-worker Pat offers the snarky reply of, “Yeah, cobwebs and a bottle of gin” (Cukor, 1939). However insulting the barb is meant to be, the remark still belies the normative nature of a single woman drinking and keeping a stash of liquor in her own home for personal enjoyment, allegations of alcoholism notwithstanding.

As with The Thin Man, The Women presents a stylish, modern femininity. With characters dressed in lavish Adrian designs, including the five-minute Technicolor fashion show in the middle of the black and white film, the women on the screen are the picture of late 1930s glamour, a phenomenon that achieved the desired effect of translating Hollywood fashions to popular culture as women nationwide demonstrated the modeling effect that forms the basis for social cognitive theory, emulating the hairstyles, cosmetics, and clothes they saw movie starlets wear in their favorite films (Dyhouse, 2010). Both films feature wealthy, sophisticated, cosmopolitan New York women engaging in low-brow behavior and humor while dressed to the nines in expensive dresses, jewels, and furs and sipping on expensive champagne at a time when most women in America struggled to feed their families. Rather than elicit a social backlash, these images and stories of love and marriage with modern gender politics achieved immense popularity at a time of instability in most American homes, because, as cinema historian James Castonguay (2011) explains, they offered, “escapist
fantasies of class harmony, ethnic assimilation, and financial security” (p. 220). The fact that these fantasies were told using well-known and popular stars from the Prohibition Era cinema such as Loy, Powell, Shearer, and Crawford not only guaranteed success at the box office but also gave the stories credibility with audiences who engaged with the narratives told by their fan favorites (Lugowski, 2011).

In their escapist spectacle, the rhetoric of these fantasies exerts its influence on real-life practice “through manifestation in contemporary settings” to create the tradition of a mid-century femininity based in the concept of the New Woman born of the first wave of feminism and rooted in the carefree culture of the 1920s Jazz Age (Farrell, 1993, p. 7). Enfranchised with the vote, emancipated from marriage by the emerging social freedom to be either bachelorette or divorcée, established as crucial members of the labor force outside of the home, and savvy, independent consumers, the media portrayed the New Woman as smart, sexy, competent, independent, and stylish. Women’s entry into new public spaces such as cocktail parties and speakeasies during Prohibition, combined with the depiction of such in the media, made their inclusion into the legitimate drinking culture at bars, parties, dance halls, and supper clubs of the 1930s a new social norm. Like many early American films, both The Thin Man and The Women boasted female screenwriters who penned likable women characters whose lives included enviable relationships built on believable dialogue, which served to sell the characters, their stories, and their consumption habits, to female audiences. The heroines of these films were sexually-experienced women and sophisticated drinkers whose enjoyment of sex and alcohol and open expression of such on the same level as their male counterparts served as the foundation of new, mediatized gender politics.
Demure Drinking and Wartime Domesticity

Anne Hilton: Emily, let's not go to the bar. I could use a drink, but—
Emily Hawkins: Nonsense. Don't be so old-fashioned!

—Since You Went Away (Cromwell, 1944)

American cinema made the cultural shift from its role as Depression Era mood booster to war effort instructional guide as the United States entered World War II in 1941, and the Hollywood social narrative moved from celebrations of individual freedom and indulgence to stories of self-sacrifice and delayed gratification. With this rhetorical social policing came an adaptation in depictions of femininity, including the role of drinking within the gender role. During the war, major studios' tentpole features continued to star popular actresses with well-known marquee names from the prior decade to attract audiences, but the curtain fell on the extravagant, over-the-top, and, at times, borderline amoral, behavior of 1930s' heroines in favor of more understated glamour in stories of women who were stalwart protectors of home, hearth, and family. Two such examples of this shift in tone are 1942's Now, Voyager starring Bette Davis and 1944's Since You Went Away starring Claudette Colbert.

Adapted from the 1941 novel by Olive Higgins Prouty, Now, Voyager tells the story of the metamorphosis of Charlotte Vale. The brow-beaten late-life child of the bitter, demanding, and thoroughly controlling matriarch of a wealthy, old guard Boston society family, Charlotte is a shy, sheltered, and lonely ugly duckling driven to the verge of a nervous breakdown as she approaches middle age, thanks to the constant bullying she receives at the hands of her tyrannical mother and other unsympathetic family members. Close to her breaking point, she leaves the repressive environment of her home and retires to the Vermont sanitarium of the gentle and compassionate Dr.
Jaquith, played by Claude Rains, where she transforms into a svelte, strong-minded sophisticate. Jaquith sends his recovering patient on a cruise to South America to test her new-found confidence in preparation for her return to the family home where her disapproving Victorian mother awaits. While on the cruise, Charlotte falls in love with suave, but unhappily married, international businessman Jerry Durrance, portrayed by the aristocratic Paul Henreid.

As the late-blooming heroine engages cautiously in the shipboard romance, she is initially nervous that cracks in the veneer of her nascent self-assurance will show and discourage Jerry’s pursuit. While she puts on airs of sophistication on their first date, she defers to his judgment when he asks what she would like to drink before dinner and relies on him to place their cocktail order of two bourbon Old Fashioneds, a whiskey cocktail that marks a departure from the post-Prohibition cultural hangover that emphasized champagne-and-Martini party aesthetic of 1930s drinking behavior. Upon her return to the family brownstone, Charlotte finds the backbone she needs to stand up to her mother and eventually become the head of the family on her own terms. Her new routine and demeanor gives a nod to tradition while infusing family events with the affection and levity her previous life and home lacked. While on the South American cruise together, Jerry christened her “Camille” as an alias to use during their romantic exploits in Brazil; Charlotte continues to borrow strength from the passionate and capable alter ego her male lover helped to inspire at sea after she parts from him. The new and improved Camille version of Charlotte regularly incorporates corsages of camellias into her wardrobe after he sends her one as a gift upon her return to Boston
and serves the bourbon Old Fashioneds he taught her to drink at social gatherings in her home.

One of America's oldest alcoholic drink recipes, the Old Fashioned has a fitting name (Chinirco, 2005). Unlike the Martini, which is simply two spirits – gin and vermouth – mixed together in a large stem glass, the Old Fashioned is smaller club cocktail and served in an understated hi-ball glass that mixes rye or bourbon with sugar, fruit, and bitters. A more conservative cocktail made with traditional spirits not largely associated with Prohibition bootlegging and Roaring Twenties speakeasies, the Old Fashioned is meant for slow sipping and moderate consumption with refined company that drinks alcohol for the enjoyment of the beverage rather than to get drunk. More social lubricant than self-medication, the choice of Old Fashioneds lends a controlled, sophisticated atmosphere to the film that mirrors the chaste and unconsummated romance between altruistic Charlotte and the wedded object of her mutual affection, a metaphor for the self-denial and delayed gratification so common in the lives of women living rationed lives on the home front without the husbands and lovers fighting the war half a world away.

Through her sexless relationship with Jerry, where intensely shared cigarettes stand in for physical affection, her selfless and loving guardianship of his troubled daughter in his absence, and her maintenance of and reliance upon her new male-constructed feminine identity, complete with the drinking behavior Jerry patterns for her, Charlotte is the model allegory of the loyal wife and girlfriend putting the needs of men first in order to preserve tradition, home, and hegemony. Far from the bright, quick screenplays of *The Thin Man* and *The Women*, *The New York Times’* review of *Now,*
Voyager characterizes the film as “two lachrymose hours,” calls the script “deliberate and workman-like,” and chides its sexual repression, blaming the latter on the Hays Code that censored sexuality, but not drinking, in films due to alcohol sales’ importance to the economic engine in the wake of repeal (T.S., 1942, p. 25).

Three years into the United States’ military involvement as a belligerent participant in World War II, the Hollywood image of the home front woman went from allegorical to overt with producer David O. Selznick’s nearly three-hour saga, Since You Went Away. Inspired by the 1943 novel of the same name by Margaret Buell Wilder, the film chronicles the wartime experience of upper-middle class officer’s wife Anne Hilton who must live without her beloved husband and former advertising executive, Tim, and raise their two teenaged daughters, portrayed by popular young actresses Jennifer Jones and Shirley Temple, while their father fights in with the Army in Europe. For the years the family patriarch is gone, the three women face economic and emotional uncertainty, which they weather with a close-knit community composed of their loyal, but unpaid, live-in housekeeper, the aptly-named Fidelia, flirty family friend-cum-dashing Naval officer Tony Willet, their curmudgeonly elderly boarder, retired Army Colonel William G. Smollett, and Smollett’s sweet, but estranged, enlisted grandson Bill.

As with Now, Voyager, The Washington Post’s 1944 review acknowledges Since You Went Away’s sentimentality and tear-jerker tendencies. It calls the movie a “10 handkerchief picture” for Selznick’s “keen insight into the emotional turmoil of simple and recognizable people caught up in the maelstrom of war” and applauds Claudette Colbert’s depiction of Anne’s “dignity” and “spartan [sic] spirit” in a film that “is more an examination of the human heart than it is an adventure in flamboyant dramaturgy” (Bell,
1944, p. 6). Famed Hollywood gossip columnist Hedda Hopper (1943) cheered an advanced screening for being “as American as apple pie with rat cheese” and “just as easy to digest” (p. 15). Hopper’s (1943) review of the film also lauds it because its “dialogue is the sort of thing that you and I use in our daily lives. No pomp, no bombast,” with the implication that the script provides relatable female characters to a movie-going audience in need of reassurance and cultural direction during the national crisis of World War II (p. 15). Hopper’s enthusiasm for the wholesome depiction of the self-sacrificing American home front in *Since You Went Away* belied her personal conservative patriotism that made her an ardent supporter of McCarthyism in the decade that followed.

As the film begins, Tim’s absence is still fresh and the war a novelty before the reality of loss and limitation sets in. Anne and her friends have yet to feel the impact of the conflict, and her identity as a conservative, pampered, country club wife and suburban socialite is still very much intact as she meets social climbing busy-body Emily Hawkins for happy hour at the Paradise Cocktail Lounge. The neon sign in front of the bar flashes a message to “Buy War Bonds,” but inside the patrons socialize without a care in a white American middle class World War II home front chronotope that serves to demonstrate and enforce the desired gender roles during the national time of crisis.

As the camera follows Anne and Emily through the establishment, the audience overhears the conversations between male customers who talk of anything but the war and expound with opinions that include, “This whole moral breakdown is being caused by drinking and nothing else; they certainly serve rotten Scotch at this bar,” and, “I haven’t got anything against red fingernails, but it’s carrying it too far when they paint up
their toes,” as a critique of femininity in an effort to enforce social control (Cromwell, 1944). There is an arguable link between the man’s nail polish comment in Since You Went Away and the empowering role the new “jungle red” nail polish plays as a symbol of feminine power among the social circle at the Manhattan salon in The Women – a color Mary Haines rejects until she decides to don it as war paint as she resolves to sharpen her claws and fight to get her husband back from homewrecker Crystal at the end of the film. “Jungle red” are the last words in The Women, and the color remains a pop culture icon and symbol of fierce femininity today (Cukor, 1939).

When Anne and Emily find there are no tables available in the lounge, Emily suggests that the two women push their way through the crowd to sit at the bar. Anne protests this idea as Emily drags her along. While it is feminine to drink socially with another woman, Anne questions the propriety of women bellying up to the bar only to have the more assertive and overbearing Emily admonish her for being “old-fashioned” (Cromwell, 1944). While Emily’s retort is meant as rebuke, the scene portrays Anne as the more appealing of the two women: she is friendly, smiley, and soft-spoken.

The narrative reinforces Anne’s feminine superiority with the handsome Tony’s clear preference for her company when he arrives at the bar looking every inch the American hero in his tailored officer’s uniform and dismisses Emily out of hand as course and offensive. Later in the film, Anne’s entire social circle dismisses Emily as an unpatriotic snob because she refuses to volunteer or seek employment for the war effort.

The difference in the characterization of the two women in this chronotope is made obvious in their dress as well as their behavior. While Anne’s suit is understated
and demure, its clean lines are more confident and chic than Emily’s outdated and ostentatious layered look complete with a large, attention-grabbing bonnet. The juxtaposition of the two women implies that Anne’s dress, demeanor, and morality mark the preferable feminine performance for the “stalwart wives and sweethearts” from whom the nation required constant domestic sacrifice if the United States was to defeat the Axis powers (Roffman & Purdy, 1981, p. 222).

The contrast between the two women grows starker when they reach the bar and the bartender asks what they would like to drink. As Charlotte does in Now, Voyager, Anne defers to the more dominant, self-assured, and traditionally masculine-performing character, Emily, to decide on their order and place it. The bartender is clearly annoyed with both Emily’s bossy affect and complicated order of a Planter’s Punch, a fruity, multi-ingredient cocktail whose trendiness had expired by the time the war began (Moss, 2011). The message is that, while she seems confident and fancies herself classy and stylish, Emily is an amateur drinker with no business at the bar. The rhetoric of this scene is that, while alcohol consumption remains part of wartime femininity, it should be done in an understated manner and according to traditional convention in the spaces where it is appropriate for women to drink: at a restaurant table, where food can also be ordered, or at home, which is where the limited amount of drinking in the movie takes place later as the war wears on, and then in the company of their male friends Tony and Colonel Smollett.

As with Now, Voyager, Anne’s drinking is not the only aspect of her femininity tempered in comparison to the emancipated and expressive femininity of her film heroine counterparts in the decade prior. While Anne tolerates Tony’s friendly, if
aggressive, flirting and confessions of a long-held torch for her, he comes close to violating their platonic relationship when he uses her as the inspiration for a Naval recruiting poster he creates featuring her likeness as a scantily-clad pin-up girl in a sexually-suggestive pose. The conservative Anne is scandalized and insists the poster never see the light of day. While Tony and Anne’s exchange about the poster, as in the lounge scene, demonstrates that 1940s femininity includes drinking and sexuality, Anne’s offense is rooted in the transformed social expectation of the now-patriotic wife, mother, and lover from unabashed party girl to a more sacrosanct woman of American film who exercises her vices discreetly with maturity, decorum, and a modicum of public denial in the interest of her social and sexual reputation.

**Temperance in Moderation**

Hollywood’s trend away from the drunken cavorting and free sexual expression of women in 1930s cinema to the more reserved and domesticated heroines of 1940s films demonstrates a new temperance reform movement less than 10 years after the repeal of the Volstead Act. Due in large part to the social and economic demands of World War II, this new push for temperance differed from the Prohibition Era in two distinct ways. First, the new reform relied on the subtle, implicit cultural influence of the film media rather than explicit legislation to manipulate the behavior of audiences who emulated their screen idols. This new tactic was a hegemonic acknowledgment that the new cultural power of the film medium held greater ideological sway over the masses than any law on the books. Prohibition proved nothing if not the futility of attempts to legislate behavior and served more to liberate women from traditional cultural domestic
norms than the first wave of feminism. The 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution gave women the vote, but the 18th Amendment got them out of the kitchen and the house to participate in public spheres of drinking, where they explored their sexual and gender identities. Second, the new temperance took the form of moderation rather than complete prohibition, which relied on self-control, discipline, and denial framed in terms of social class and patriotism. Finally, the new, low-level, and unofficial temperance movement was a gendered cultural shift targeting femininity.

This cultural shift toward self-control relied on the principle of modeling that would later serve as the foundation for social cognitive theory. The film industry, which worked closely with the government through the industry-created War Activities Committee, made movies during the first half of the 1940s that glorified sacrifice and celebrated American ideals through both overt and implied wartime propaganda replete with social control via scripts that favored collective effort over individual needs and desires to support the military and home front effort (Roffman & Purdy, 1981). This endeavor included more repressed and demure on-screen behavior demonstrated by popular Hollywood heroines, with the understanding that audiences would copy the actions performed and decisions made by the likes of characters played by popular and acclaimed actresses like Bette Davis and Claudette Colbert.

The realignment of cultural values in film from freewheeling intoxication during the gloom and instability of the Great Depression to more temperate domesticity during goal-oriented and labor-intensive wartime has its roots in two social tropes that apply only to female drinking. The first notion of the drunken woman is one of volatility and irresponsibility that threatens the need for constant and stable care of children and the
home, which is considered a feminine gender role. The second concern involves the myth that inebriation naturally leads to a loosening of sexual morals and debauchery in women (Leigh, 1995). Women's sexuality posed a threat to both social order and the war effort in that it might lead to infidelity and illegitimate birth, which meant more mouths to feed in a rationed domestic economy and a potential morale issue for the married men fighting overseas. The potential for inconstant care of the home and community also presented a crisis at a time when the United States relied on women to not only maintain the national social and economic infrastructure, but also to serve as the labor force to supply equipment and munitions to the fighting men who left their jobs to join the military.

Due to a need for women in the factories during World War II, Hollywood also turned away from glamorizing wealthy socialites as the feminine ideal as it had done during the tough economic climate of the Depression. Instead, films idolized the contributions and sacrifices of middle- and working-class women during the war in an effort to associate labor with patriotism and encourage women to work outside the home while simultaneously managing their households, à la Anne Hilton in Since You Went Away. On one hand, the nation needed the liquor industry to remain successful to support its economy and did not wish to deny the large wartime female consumer base while the men were away. On the other hand, the manufacturing sector required a sober and reliable workforce to build the military’s bombs, planes, tanks, and ships. Just as the temperance movement that resulted in Prohibition sought to control the issue of an inebriate male labor force, the wartime effort encouraged moderation in female consumption to prevent drunkenness in its women workers.
The lasting result of the new temperance that preached moderate and discreet alcohol consumption for women is how the conservative feminine portrayals in 1940s cinema both shaped and appealed to the subsequent Silent Generation. The films of the 1930s lionized the independent spirit of the women of the G.I. Generation, who displayed the radical thinking, gumption, and survival skills necessary to see the country through the upheaval of suffrage, Prohibition, The Great Depression, and World War II. The propaganda for domestication of the 1940s, while aimed at the adult audiences of the G.I. Generation, reached the early wave of the Silent Generation, who viewed these films when impressionable teenagers and young adults. These films modeled behavior with the more conservative values during World War II, particularly where women’s gender roles were concerned, and created a pattern the Silent Generation followed in the Eisenhower era that saw white, middle-class women leave the workplace and return to more private, domestic roles in American life.

But whither alcohol? Interestingly, the effort to temper feminine drinking during World War II does not reach so far as to attempt to erase the liquor consumption as an accepted social practice for women. While drunkenness becomes taboo, drinking cocktails as a fundamental feature of adult femininity remains for three reasons. First, some bells just cannot be unrung. The enfranchisement, experience, and emancipation of women to the degree that it occurred in the 1920s and 1930s established new social and cultural boundaries for gender roles that no democratic power could reverse. Second, the economic engine of the nation relied too heavily on women both as laborers and consumers to expect a change in behavior and knew well enough to deem such an attempt unwise. And finally, in a related conclusion, the failed social experiment
of Prohibition taught the nation a hard-learned lesson about the futility of denial of rights in a society that relied on the free market and democratic power for its fundamental identity. With women enjoying full political power and growing economic influence by the mid-1940s, the very definition of feminine behavior had been fundamentally and irreversibly altered by Prohibition culture and the film industry to include drinking as a sophisticated and glamorous feminine trait that continued with the Silent Generation and beyond.

While alcohol consumption was an expected and accepted adult activity for women in the mid-20th century, what they drank, how much, and with whom was policed by the media. From Martinis to Old Fashioneds and Planter’s Punch, the film industry of the era did not include beer as a drink of feminine leisure, much less female bonding. In fact, beer did not make an appearance as a mediatized beverage until the 1960s and 1970s, when it became heavily marketed via television programs and advertisements that targeted the baby boomers and, later, their children and grandchildren. It is through these shows and commercials that the gendering of beer as a social ritual came to influence Generation X and millennials the same way movies created a new drinking femininity and marketed cocktails to women 40 years earlier.
CHAPTER THREE: THIS BUD’S NOT FOR YOU

“Now son, you don’t want to drink beer. That’s for daddies and kids with fake IDs.”

– Homer Simpson, The Simpsons (Harrison, 1997)

Hotties and Bitches: Gender and Beer Commercials

Television audiences in the early 1960s recognized Joan Kemp as the face of many popular consumer products, including Budweiser, which featured her broad smile, accessible good looks, and versatile singing voice in a series of commercials for their beer. One black-and-white advertisement aired in 1960 and partners a coiffed Kemp in chic evening wear with a jazz quartet on a set built to resemble a night club stage (MrAtomichunter, 2011b). She sings a sultry tune that calls attention to the label on the Budweiser’s bottles and cans and promises “where there’s life, there’s Bud,” while the voiceover from an unseen man praises the quality ingredients and her choice of beer. At the end of the commercial, a partially obscured man in a suit pours a Budweiser into a tall pilsner glass, and she watches with a smile as the carbonation bubbles to the surface in a manner reminiscent of a glass of fine champagne.

The second commercial, from 1961, also features Kemp with a jazz band. Dressed in a pressed casual blouse and full calf-length skirt, she snaps, claps, and sings a bright jingle that urges the viewer to “pick a pair” of Budweiser six-packs while a male voiceover once again interjects a sales pitch (MrAtomichunter, 2011a). The commercial also features a man, who stands mostly outside of the frame, pouring a tall, clear pilsner glass of Budweiser for a beaming Kemp as part of a cookout party scene. Both commercials imply that Kemp will drink the beer and relish its taste. While there are hints of men in the edges of both commercials in the form of voices and
disembodied arms and hands, Kemp serves the main focus of each spot and the identifiable spokesperson for the beer.

More than 40 years later, viewers who tuned in to the 2002 Super Bowl saw a very different woman in a very different Budweiser advertisement. *Cards* opens with a moderately attractive blonde woman in her late 20s in the greeting card aisle of a store (Ocampo, 2010). Her hair is styled in a neat bob, and she is dressed as though she is on her way home from an office job. She looks tired and exasperated under the fluorescent lights as she picks up several anniversary cards and reads the unsatisfying messages inside them in an effort to find one that conveys the perfect sentiment for her boyfriend. Tedium Muzak plays overhead. After a long search, a dreamy smile slowly crosses her lips as she finds the right card and clutches it to her chest. The scene then cuts to a thin, sloppily dressed man in his 20s entering a convenience store. He exudes a “slacker” air in his jeans, t-shirt, zip-up track jacket, and dirty hair that say he probably did not leave the house all day, but, if he did, it was not to go to work. He approaches the cashier with a six-pack of Budweiser for purchase. At the last minute, he notices a small wire rack next to the cash register with two or three greeting cards in it, and he tosses one with a tropical scene that says “love you” on top of the beer as an afterthought. The final shot shows the man and woman together at a small table in what appears to be the woman’s neat, well-decorated apartment. The couple is in midst of a home-cooked anniversary dinner. The boyfriend watches his girlfriend intently as she reads his card; she declares it “perfect,” and he breathes a loud sigh of relief to give the impression that he put effort into selecting a meaningful card. Two open Budweiser bottles sit on the table, but neither the man nor the woman takes a drink from them. The
beers are simply incidental to a story about an unbalanced relationship in which the woman plays the dupe.

These two commercials for the same product created four decades apart clearly illustrate a sharp deterioration in the relationship between women and beer. How did Budweiser's message move from a gender-inclusive celebration of beer that focuses on a sophisticated female spokesmodel singing the praises of the drink’s quality and powers of hospitality and seduction in 1960 to a downbeat product pitch that utilizes unflattering gender portrayals with misogyny as subtext in the 21st century? The answer to this question requires some historical context that goes back further than four mere decades.

**Regression of a Ritual**

Social drinking made a strong return in the 1960s with the baby boomers and reached its peak in 1976-1978, when 71% of adults in the U.S. reporting regular alcohol consumption (Newport, 2010). Members of the boomer generation continue to be heavy drinkers into late life (Yang, 2015). Beer drinking became an accepted norm as a male bonding ritual among the growing population of college men of that generation, a trend that has continued and contributed to beer’s position as the top-ranked alcohol in the U.S. since 1992 (Blocker, 2006; Capraro, 2000; Newport, 2010).

While fewer Americans report drinking alcohol today than in the 1960s (Blocker, 2006; “Liquor Consumption,” 1989, Newport, 2010), the drinking gender gap has widened. Across cultures, men are more prone to consume alcohol than women and are more likely to consume greater quantities and be dysfunctional drinkers than their

not only is drinking primarily a male activity, but initiation into drinking for boys is also viewed as a right of passage into manhood . . . to drink is to be masculine, and to drink heavily is to be even more masculine. Men use alcohol to gain a sense of power (p. 227).

While women consume alcohol – and at one point in the early 1960s were even allowed to purchase it at age 18 in Illinois, while men had to wait to turn 21 years old – drinking, and particularly the ritual of social drinking, is a performance of hegemonic masculinity related to men’s power (Khazan, 2015). Contemporary men drink and drink together because it is a social expectation and a coping mechanism for the fear and shame of inadequacy as individual men dealing with the gender-role conflict (Capraro, 2000). More to the point, men’s studies on gender-role conflict have concluded that “in objective social analysis, men as a group have power over women as a group; but, in their subjective experience of the world, men as individuals do not feel powerful” (Capraro, 2000, p. 159). As men form groups to drink together, they create a social distance from women “to confirm male solidarity and male dominance” while developing and employing a discourse about women that “dehumanizes” them and constructs them as “Other” (Hunter, MacKenzie, & Joe-Laidler, 2005, p. 228). Neither gender separation in social drinking – that is, beer consumption as a male bonding ritual – nor the gendering of beer as a male beverage developed organically in our culture; rather, these changes in social behavior were mediatized to create, maintain, and reproduce neoliberal ideology through television programming and advertising over the last three decades as a means of social control of men, and, by extension, women.
Beer and Buffoons: Television and Neoliberal Masculinity

The media serve as a persuasive tool to define gender and class and to reproduce and update those definitions in order to serve male hegemony by creating an “ambient coconstituitiveness” (Rickert, 2013, p. 205) encompassing the image and the audience to create the desired rhetorical effect. The media can also, as this paper argues, serve to redefine said male hegemony itself and whom it includes by shifting the very definition of hegemonic masculinity with its content to satisfy the needs of those wielding power within the culture. Such a shift, however, is no easy feat.

In his introduction to the volume Culture, Rhetoric, and the Vicissitudes of Life, Michael Carrithers (2009) defines culture to include people, relationships, events, and situations that “stand apart from, and are to a degree resistant to, patterning by cultural ideas and dispositions” (p. 4). He explains that, for new patterning to have the desired impact, society must have a “cultural repertoire which is mutually intelligible among its members,” but that just anticipating what serves as intelligible does not prepare for all the myriad and unpredictable ways different members of society will use and respond to intelligible concepts (Carrithers, 2009, p. 5-6). Carrithers argues that rhetorical culture challenges researchers to look for disruptions in cultural patterns and watch how society uses rhetoric to refashion old patterns into new ones using repurposed materials from the cultural repertoire. Such repatterning and repurposing is particularly prevalent at the “vicissitudes of life,” which is itself a terministic screen that both reflects the volatile nature of reality and selects what part of that reality deserves attention in order to address “events that are a break with the expected, the desired and the comforting routine” (Carrithers, 2009, p. 9-10). In Norms of Rhetorical Culture, Thomas Farrell (1993) asserts that in order to create and maintain these terministic screens, rhetorical
culture invokes norms that it communicates through “principles, conventions, genres, and procedures” that “exert real-life influence on rhetorical conduct through their manifestations in contemporary settings” – like the media, especially, television (p. 7).

The powerful images on television provide the ideal primer for how gender and class look, sound, act, and behave. Television offered potent information to a mass audience easily and in a short period of time. The human brain processes the audiovisual information as transmitted via television with greater speed and higher retention than strictly verbal information, and the ability to absorb and manage visual information takes root at a much younger age than is the case with verbal information (Graber, 1996). Television is also the modern storyteller, and, as Fiske and Hartley explained in Reading Television (2003), its discourse “presents us daily with a constantly updated version of social relations and cultural perceptions” (p. 5). New seasons of programming means that television constantly refreshes its content, thus, its discourse, in a flexible medium well suited to update and establish new patterns in culture, transmit rhetorical culture, and spread the selective reality of changing terministic screens. The repetition and sometimes decades-long lifecycles of popular programs, thanks to renewal and second-run syndication, also means that television helps to reinforce terministic screens with constancy and longevity.

So, what does this mean? Essentially, television transmits messages that create, maintain, reinforce, and even alter terministic screens. The medium’s flexibility and reach has made it a favorite tool of hegemony to construct and share persuasive, selective realities about gender and class with the masses. This flexibility and reach is particularly useful during the “vicissitudes of life” that require re-patterned screens to
adjust to changes in cultural routine. One such change was the neoliberal turn of the second half of the 20th century that created the shift in both economic and cultural power from blue-collar to white-collar industries, which required that the terministic screens for gender and class, as well as their intersection, receive a makeover.

The Blue-Collar Blues

In 2012, Derek Thompson of The Atlantic reported the massive changes to the labor sectors of the United States economy. His research noted that, while manufacturing continues in this country, the blue-collar jobs associated with it have all but disappeared:

An American economy that used to be built on making stuff is now built on shuffling paper instead. From 1947 to 2009, manufacturing shrank from more than a quarter of the gross domestic product to just a ninth of it. Meanwhile, white-collar work grew from less than a fifth of GDP to nearly half of it . . . Manufacturing’s role in the economy crested in 1953 when factories contributed 28.3% of GDP. Since 1977, its share has declined every year except 1988 and 2004 . . . The big story about American jobs in the post-war period is this: The manufacturing/agriculture economy shrunk from 33% to 12%, and the services economy grew from 24% to 50% (Thompson, 2012).

Eight percent of agricultural jobs disappeared over the last 60 years, and Thompson (2012) marveled that such a startling employment trend received little news coverage. The question about the lack of attention given to agriculture could also apply to the general cultural acceptance of the death of the blue-collar sector as a whole. How has the collapse of so many jobs and the way of life that went with it gone the way of the dodo bird without so much as a peep from the masses? Who worked what magic in order to make the men who worked those jobs disappear, and where did they go? The short answer is: they went to television sitcoms.
The blue-collar comedic hero has been with the sitcom genre for most of its existence and even dates back to radio programs like *Amos n’ Andy*. *The Honeymooners* in the 1950s, and its 1960s cartoon homage, *The Flintstones*, are largely credited with bringing the clock-punching, working-class husband and father into American living rooms to compete with an abundance of popular comedies featuring white-collar male heads of households who carried briefcases, wore suits to the office, and had little or no concerns about their families’ financial health.

With its mid-season debut on CBS in 1971, *All in the Family* entered the picture and changed the blue-collar sitcom forever with its introduction of a politicized family headed by Archie Bunker, a character who took television’s tiresome “bumbling father” trope and transformed him into “a blue-collar bigot and petty tyrant of the home,” where he ruled from a beaten and threadbare wingback chair that served as his ersatz throne, with his trusty beer and cigar on the table next to him as his mace and scepter (Green, 2008, p. 135). Owner of a modest row house in the Astoria section of Queens, New York, Archie worked as dock foreman by day and moonlighted as a cab driver to bring in extra money. When Archie Bunker’s story finally ended and left the air in 1983, television programming was once again awash with middle class families with polite, politically correct, affluent professionals, and engaged, if slightly inept, fathers like Cliff Huxtable of *The Cosby Show* until Homer Simpson took to the air as Archie’s successor in 1989. Strung somewhere between being an uneducated blue-collar shift worker and a corporate nuclear power plant employee in a tie and short-sleeved dress shirt, incompetent Homer, in FOX’s runaway hit satire, *The Simpsons*, “personifies the stereotype of loud, working-class ignorance” and “American middle-class ‘other’
because he has yet to evolve from the proletariat-as-primate to Atomic age (post)modern man” (Green, 2008, p. 202).

Archie and Homer are significant in the creation of the neoliberal terministic screens of gender and class for three reasons. First, both characters indicate a redefinition of masculinity for blue-collar men, and, in a second, related trait, both of their identities are inextricably related to beer. Finally, Archie Bunker and Homer Simpson have transcended from stereotype to archetype, inspiring dozens of variations on their theme to the extent that the characters and their shows not only redefined the blue-collar sitcom genre but also created a genre that simultaneously functions within and satirizes the terministic screen.

In his essay “Ralph, Fred, Archie, Homer, and the King of Queens: Why television keeps re-creating the male working-class buffoon,” Richard Butsch asserts that the trope of the bumbling blue-collar buffoon appears repeatedly in sitcoms in programming line-ups simply because it is a tried and true success that presents no challenge to audiences, little financial risk to television networks, and assured acceptance from advertisers (Butsch, 2011). While all of these factors may indeed be the case from the strictly business angle of these decisions, on the rhetorical culture level, much more is at work; Archie and Homer, and the genre they started, are actually an effort to shift the terministic screen of gender and emasculate working-class men in order to assure white-collar male dominance in hegemony.

Feminist scholars have long recognized the false binary of gender and documented the ability and tendency of individuals to perform genders within genders with masculine femininity and feminine masculinity in personal politics (Butler, 1990 &
2004; Halberstam, 1998; Bordo, 1999; Corey, 2000). To this end, researchers also indicate that the power of hegemonic masculinity does not pass through to all men equally, especially those who perform unpaid or other feminized work (Donaldson, 1993; Connell, 1993). Donaldson (1993) points out that:

> Through hegemonic masculinity most men benefit from the control of women. For a very few men, it delivers control of other men. To put it another way, the crucial difference between hegemonic masculinity and other masculinities is not the control of women, but the control of men (p. 665).

Connell (1993) identifies the irony that an alliance of sorts between liberal feminists in the Women’s Movement and the white-collar men in academic and professional fields during the late 20th century is partly responsible for the rise of dominance-based masculinity evidenced with blue-collar depictions. Donaldson and Connell agree that institutional change and gender and class relations intersect, which is the blue-collar terministic screen manufactured by neoliberalism with media portrayals like Archie Bunker and Homer Simpson.

The lack of power in the lived experience of working-class characters like Archie and Homer is demonstrated in their low levels of education and general ignorance of most of the world beyond their narrow interests and control. For Archie, his kingdom is the chair from which he can dominate his wife and hold forth with his daughter, her husband, and various neighbors and family members while enjoying his beer and cigar. He prefers not to stray from his comfort zone outside the demands of his job, because he is aware that the world has passed him and his perspectives by. He is out of his depth when he leaves the house. Unlike Archie, Homer does not get a chair to serve as throne. He shares a small couch stuffed with three other family members and their pets. The fact that Homer gets no space of his own demonstrates the continued
slide from power the working class man experienced during the 1980s. He is no longer the head of his household or king of his castle. Homer Simpson is just one more butt on an inadequate couch, due to his proximity to his wife and children, doing the feminized work of being an engaged parent even though he repeatedly demonstrates that he longs for the responsibility-free bachelor’s existence of sloth, non-stop television, and endless six packs of Duff Beer. In fact, Homer must escape his home and visit a third space – Moe’s Tavern –to feel powerful, in control of his life, and in his comfort zone while bonding over pints of cheap domestic pilsner with other emasculated and powerless men like him.

**Beer as Condensation Symbolism**

And so the question at the heart of the matter is this: what role does beer play for Archie Bunker and Homer Simpson’s identities, and how does it relate to neoliberalism’s blue-collar terministic screen? While Archie Bunker was not the first working class man on television, he was the first with a consistent link between beer and his personality and daily life. Archie’s post-work relaxation routine in every episode was to sit in his chair (around which most of the show’s action centered) and enjoy a cigar and a beer, which his wife dutifully fetched for him, establishing him at the top of the pecking order in his own home. While Archie’s ratty old chair is his most identifiable and iconic possession, his home blue-collar lifestyle of standing up all day as an

---

9 Busch beer did air a television advertisement in 1967 featuring Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble shilling for their product, but beer was not part of Fred and Barney’s regular in-show activities or life in the fictional world of Bedrock.

10 Considered a significant cultural artifact, Archie Bunker’s chair is part of the permanent collection on exhibit at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.
unskilled manual laborer and the beer represent negotiated dominance in his own little corner of the world. His no-name brand of beer comes in a yellow can with a nondescript red heraldic lion to lend some Germanic flavor to the branding, but is just called “Best Quality,” which, while kept generic because it is a prop on a show prior to the trend of product placement, also serves as an ironic emblem of Archie’s low social status. Archie’s beer is most likely a cheap, watery pilsner and the brand he has been drinking his whole life. It’s inexpensive and almost guaranteed to be less than the best quality, but, as with his masculinity and place in the power structure of the world, Archie’s beer is labeled to be something better than it actually is.

Despite its quality, the beer is Archie’s badge of honor. In “Writing the President,” the show’s second episode, he chides his wife Edith when she asks if he would like his beer in a bottle or can, reminding her that they never buy bottled beer; his attitude indicates that bottled beer is inauthentic and middle class (Lear, 1971). When Archie’s chair ends up in an exhibit at a modern art gallery after being accidentally trashed in the seventh season episode, “Archie’s Chair,” Archie proudly tells a gallery patron, who asks what Archie used to “antique” the fabric, that the stains on the chair are Schlitz beer (Lear, Doran, Arango & Bogart, 1977). Finally, when Archie starts a doctor-ordered diet in the sixth season episode, “Archie’s Weighty Problem,” Edith attempts to cheer him with the reminder that his daughter and son-in-law are also dieting because “misery wants company.” Archie’s single-minded response is, “Misery wants beer” (Lear, Rhine, Tolkin, & Bogart, 1976).

In the terministic screen of the working class, misery does indeed want beer…and company, which is why, unlike Archie who drinks alone on his throne for the
better part of his series, Homer Simpson’s relationship with beer is often part of his bonding time with other beta males of his social class, especially his co-workers Lenny and Carl, his friend and bartender, Moe, and close childhood buddy and full-time alcoholic, Barney Gumble. Homer’s beer has a name, and Duff Beer, a play on the euphemism for derriere and an obvious spoof of the Anheuser-Busch Budweiser “Bud” brand, is a character of its own in the postmodern satire of The Simpsons. Duff is ubiquitous in Homer’s hometown of Springfield. It’s the official beer of Springfield’s baseball team, the Isotopes, who serve it at their ballpark. Homer’s favorite watering hole, Moe’s, serves several varieties of Duff beer, although they’re all the same beer just labeled differently (Stern & Baeza, 1993).

The link between Duff Beer and Homer Simpson’s blue-collar identity extends to his family’s social status and happiness. When his sister-in-law Selma decides to test drive Homer and Marge’s children for a day to see if she’s cut out for motherhood, she takes them to Duff Gardens, which is a spoof of the Busch Gardens amusement parks, with a nod or two to Disneyworld, and brings Lisa home sick from drinking contaminated water (Stern & Baeza, 1993). Unlike Archie Bunker, Homer, as a degradation of the blue-collar male, lacks self-control and maturity, and his drunkenness adversely affects his life and his family on more than one occasion. In the season two episode “The War of the Simpsons,” Homer’s embarrassing behavior due to his overconsumption of Duff

---

11 All in the Family later becomes Archie Bunker’s Place when a widowed Archie leaves his job and opens a bar for the last four seasons of the show (1979-1983), and his drinking becomes more social in nature.
12 Barney Gumble’s name is nod to Fred Flintstone’s friend Barney Rubble.
13 Shelbyville, Springfield’s neighboring, and slightly more affluent, rival town Shelbyville drinks Fudd beer.
during Marge’s attempt to host a classy dinner party for their family and friends puts their marriage in jeopardy (Swartzleder & Kirkland, 1991). In season four, Homer and Barney visit the Duff Brewery where both men get drunk on the tour. “Duffless” chronicles the consequences Homer faces when arrested for driving drunk on the way home from the tour. He struggles with a month of Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and forced sobriety only to find Moe’s Tavern suddenly depressing and Marge’s temperate company preferable to beer (Stern & Baeza, 1993).

The role of beer in The Simpsons is more pronounced and negative than the neutral position it holds in All in the Family. While Archie Bunker’s blue-collar hero is an outmoded Everyman who tries to cope with the changing politics of a progressive culture, Homer’s working/middle-class hybrid personality is childish, id-centered, and, at times, just plain drunk, sloppy, and stupid. Homer’s characterization marks the degradation and further humiliation of working-class status in the terministic screen of class and non-hegemonic masculinity. This condensation symbolism of beer, or beer’s “significance being out of all proportion to the apparent triviality of meaning suggested by its mere form” on both television programs, marks this decline in status (Sapir, 1934, p. 493). As with images of abstract concepts used in political communication, and evinced by the role beer plays in the lives of blue-collar characters Archie Bunker and Homer Simpson, beer and the disenfranchised working-class man become synonymous though association (Graber, 1985 & 1996). The condensed symbol of beer has the ability to evoke powerful meanings as part of rhetorical culture; beer alone illustrates the terministic screen that removes the dominance of the blue-collar male and reduces him to buffoonery. The repetitious use of the condensed symbol of beer created by Archie
and Homer extends to other blue-collar sitcoms like *Cheers*, *Rosanne*, and *Married with Children*. Beer as a condensed symbol plays a particularly strong role in animated programs featuring working-class families, like *King of the Hill* and *Family Guy*; Hank Hill and his cronies only drink Alamo Beer together in their back alley, and Peter Griffin and his pals go to The Drunken Clam for bottles of Pawtucket Patriot Pale Ale (Feasey, 2008).

**Talkin’ Bout My Generation**

Until recently, television viewing was often a family activity, which meant that cultural transmission of the social values and terministic screens conveyed by their images reached viewers at a young age when they were not only impressionable but also able to engage in lengthy relationships with the messages they received from television (Fiske & Hartley, 2003). This scenario was particularly relevant for generations of children in the baby boom and Generation X cohorts, who regularly watched adult-targeted prime time programming from a limited number of broadcast networks with their parents as part of family evenings at home from early in childhood. With the advent of cable, online streaming, and time shifting, television viewing is now more a niche and individual activity, so television may not have the same impact on younger generations. As a member of Generation X, however, I relived memories of viewing *All in the Family* and *The Simpsons* as a child and young adult, and attest that the messages in both shows had a personal effect. Members of my generation and the millennials who followed grew up with a repetitious and pervasive connection between working class masculinity and beer in comedy television programming, and that
programming notably omitted similar and regular beer consumption by women, blue-collar or otherwise.\textsuperscript{14} While four decades of family sitcoms had a socializing effect on mass audiences, that programming has not operated in a vacuum and is most notably reinforced, and perhaps eclipsed, in impact by the gendering messages in television beer advertisements broadcast since the neoliberal turn of the early 1980s.

This research theorizes that two seminal historical events that bookended the defining years of Generation X altered attitudes about women as beer drinkers and thus shifted media representation. The FDA approved the birth control pill for contraceptive use in the United States in 1960, the same year Joan Kemp crooned “where there’s life there’s Bud” with a bubbly pilsner in her hand. Five years later in 1965, 6.5 million American women used The Pill as their chosen form of birth control (Nikolchev, 2010). This action caused Generation X’s defining low birth rate and provided women unprecedented reproductive and sexual agency that made possible the Sexual Revolution of the late 1960s and early 1970s. These developments led to a shift in the perception of female sexuality with relation to alcohol consumption in American culture. Suddenly, a drinking woman was a promiscuous woman who was either on the prowl for casual sex or who could not be trusted to make responsible sexual choices under the influence of alcohol (Andsanger, Austin, & Pinkleton, 2002; George, Gournic, & MacAfee, 1988).

On the other end of Generation X’s cohort birth dates was the medical community’s discovery of fetal alcohol syndrome and the Surgeon General’s 1981

\textsuperscript{14} Cheers and Rosanne stand as notable exceptions with occasional depictions of female characters drinking beer and even consuming it together, but in both cases, such consumption was shown with less regularity than men’s.
advisory that pregnant women should severely limit or eliminate their alcohol intake. This development created a misperception of women as at-risk drinkers (Plant, 1997) and diminished their appeal as a consumer market for alcohol manufacturers. Beer advertising served as a specific and singular reflection of these adjustments in America’s sexual and drinking culture, because industry self-regulation limited wine advertisement and prevented liquor marketing in the media until 1996, when distillers lifted their self-imposed ban to counteract a record decline in sales and compete with omnipresent beer marketing (Elliot, 1996; “Liquor consumption,” 1987; Sherman, 1985).

Until 20 years ago, beer was the only game in town when it came to televised alcohol advertising. Social transformations in beliefs about women’s health and sexual behavior, coupled with postindustrial economic pressures brought about by the disappearing manufacturing and agricultural sectors and the changing gender balance in the workplace, resulted in a backlash in the media that actively diminished the female role in beer advertising and alienated women from beer as a cultural practice through feminine portrayal or omission in advertising.

The Super Bowl Crucible

Today, beer advertising is common across most genres of television programming and a particularly pervasive sponsor of televised sporting events, especially football games. Beer advertising aired during the Super Bowl supplies the ideal empirical medium for this study for three reasons. First, the inextricable cultural intersection between masculinity, sports, and alcohol is well-documented, particularly with regard to the specific connection between football viewing and beer consumption
as related masculinated lifestyle activities at games, at home, and in bars (Collins, & Vamplew, 2002; Craig, 1992a; Craig, 1992b; Messner, & Montez de Oca, 2005; Wenner, 2009). A de facto national holiday for nearly 40 years, the Super Bowl is the most-viewed American television program each year and thus considered a “mega-event” (Drewniany, 2003; Langman, 2003; Wenner, 2009) more likely to draw a significant audience than the average regular season football game. Second, it serves as a culturally-defining American spectacle that “contains the mythical framework of the culture in miniature” (Cummings, 1972) as it celebrates the masculine ritual of aggression and reinforces male hegemony on an annual basis (Gramsci, 1972; Langman, 2003) to an enormous and broad-based audience that transcends race, class, age, and gender (Duncan & Aycock, 2009). Finally, the Super Bowl’s popularity is due as much to its role as an advertising showcase as the championship football game that happens between the commercial breaks. The line between the Super Bowl as sporting event and the Super Bowl as advertising extravaganza blurred decades ago.

Beer companies like Anheuser-Busch, Coors, and Miller recognize the power of this popularity and have traditionally been major advertisers during the game, spending hundreds of millions of dollars to air several 30-second spots that reach the largest captive audience of the year in an effort to win a heated, decades-long battle to outcompete one another in the free market (Van Munching, 1997). These beer ads reach an enormous audience of both women and men, and become part of the national discussion for days, weeks, or even years to come, with many inevitably earning a lasting place in our cultural landscape or lexicon (Watts & Orbe, 2002). It is now a neoliberal tradition that the Super Bowl and its advertisers come together each winter
“as a celebratory junction of corporate capitalism, masculinity, and power that
hegemonically affirms and perpetuates inequality” (Schwartz, 1998).

Super Bowl ads are a specifically potent snapshot of the social values of the
time, and they had cultural impact and influence during the formative adult years of
Generation X, beginning with the “1984” Apple commercial, rife with neoliberal
messages of the competitive, unbridled individual rebelling against Big Brother’s
ultimate nanny state, that aired during the game in its eponymous year (Tungate, 2007).
The Super Bowl and Generation X grew up together.

This is a Man’s World

Instead of selling beer, the neoliberal advertising asks consumers to buy into
andronormative fantasies that rely on a strict gender binary and employ tropes of
masculinity to portray male bonding through beer, a magic beverage whose mere
presence endows the average man and his friends with the ability to control their
environment and ensure their dominant masculinity, even if they are not particularly
masculine (Messner & Montez de Oca, 2005; Wenner, 2009). In this fantasy, control
and dominance extend to the women in their lives. Messner and Montez de Oca (2005)
delineate the two varieties of women who inhabit television beer commercials: the non-
committal, attractive, and sexualized “Hotties” who validate masculinity as they “serve
as potential prizes for men’s victories and proper consumption choices;” and the
“Bitches” who are the wives, girlfriends, and other women who represent commitment
and serve as “emotional and sexual blackmailers who threaten to undermine individual
men’s freedom and erotic pleasure at the center of the male group” (p. 1887).
Neither the chronotope nor the gendered space it created sprang fully-formed during the four quarters of a single Super Bowl. The alienation of women through gender portrayal and representation crept slowly forward in the mid-1980s. As Joan Kemp’s commercial campaign exemplifies, beer commercials often used women to pitch the product in earlier decades. Prior to the neoliberal turn, beer advertising featured both male and female spokespeople who represented a range of ages, economic classes, and races. In 1970, a year before Coca-Cola’s famous “Hilltop” television ad, Budweiser’s marketing aired a commercial with similar images of heterogeneous beverage-inspired harmony. The Anheuser-Busch outing featured an attractive young black woman as the leader of a group of twenty casually-dressed men and women enthusiastically singing and dancing to the “When You Say Budweiser, You Said It All” jingle. The members of this commercial chorus ranged from young adult to middle age and included several races and ethnicities who painted a picture of diversity on a stage set with an enormous Budweiser label in the shape of the map of United States as backdrop. From the 1950s through the 1970s, television beer advertising relied heavily on messages that promoted gatherings of adults enjoying each other’s company and images of quality products and American strength, with campaigns like Budweiser’s long-lived “King of Beers” campaign featuring the majesty of their iconic Clydesdales pulling a big red beer delivery wagon. Then, suddenly, television beer ads made a clear shift from inclusive messages designed for general audiences to the trope masculinity in the mid-1980s.

The change was notable by 1986 with Miller Brewing Company’s Miller Lite television campaign featured middle-aged men like sports personalities Bob Uecker and
John Madden and comedian Rodney Dangerfield with no female counterparts. These spokesmen eventually became jocular adversaries in the long-running “Tastes Great, Less Filling” slogan campaign in which these stars and their friends debated the best reason to drink Miller Lite for the remainder of the decade, selling beer with the subtext that it was Dad’s drink of choice while watching the game. Budweiser began their “Bud Man” and “Spuds McKenzie” campaigns in 1987, both of which targeted a younger, partying audience with a male focal point and objectified female portrayals. Seven years of the animated “Bud Bowl” Super Bowl ads, which featured bottles of Budweiser and Bud Light as football teams with few or no humans portrayals and a male sportscaster’s voiceover began in 1989 and reinforced the relationship between beer and the male hegemony of televised sports.

The 1990s saw Bud Light’s “I Love You, Man” campaign that riffed on drunken affection in male bonding. The popular “Ladies’ Night” campaign in the same decade featured four very masculine and hirsute middle aged men dressed in frumpy drag that mocked women in an attempt to get discounted Bud Light during the local bar’s ladies’ night special. The animated, but male-voiced, Budweiser Frogs and Lizards campaign starred reptiles with thick, blue-collar, New York accents. Coors spent the decade using images of non-beer drinking bathing beauties with no speaking parts to convince their audience that the Silver Bullet of Coors Light was “The Right Beer Now.”

The early 2000s saw Budweiser’s popular “Whassup” series as an ode to male bonding. Coors Light’s testosterone-charged, Rock and Roll-fueled “Here’s to Football” campaign celebrated men drinking beer and eating grilled food at tailgate parties while fantasizing about group sex with a pair of large-breasted, scantily-clad, Barbiesque
twins. Finally, the decade brought the rise of the Everyman “loser” (Messner & Montez de Oca, 2005) as the hero in various beer advertisements for Budweiser, Miller, and Coors. While all three of the major American beer companies produced advertisements that serve as ripe specimens for research here, this study focuses on Budweiser’s advertisements to standardize the texts under our lens. A narrowed focus allows us to better observe the regression of gender portrayals via an in-depth textual analysis of four Budweiser commercials that aired during the Super Bowl between 1987 and 2001 and were each part of long-lived and culturally influential advertising campaigns for the major beer producer. *I’m a Bud Man, The Super Party Animal, Whassup?!, and What Game Are You Watching* serve as the basis of the following discussion of media messages received by Generation X from the beer industry during the cohort’s formative adult years.

*I’m a Bud Man*

The first text under examination is a montage-style commercial that was the first advertisement aired during the Super Bowl in 1987. It is fast-paced and colorful and begins with a drum roll and a wailing guitar riff that introduces the bluesy rock song “I’m a Bud Man” that plays underneath the images in the commercial. The visuals start with fast cuts among several different shots of a modern city skyline, pictures of the beach, and the Budweiser logo. The camera finally settles on the image of a young, thin, white woman’s derriere in cut-off jean shorts. Her hands are in her back pockets, accentuating her derriere and upper thighs. A shot of a good looking man lifting his eyebrow with a lecherous smirk on his face follows immediately, seemingly in response to the previous
image. Images of a man dressed in jeans, a vest, and sneakers dancing alone on a plaza, a couple riding down the street on a motorcycle with a dog in the sidecar, a man skateboarding at the beach, and several fast, successive shots of men playing Rock and Roll interspersed with pictures of hot rods follow as the gravelly-sounding male singer intones that he likes “fast guitars and fancy cars.” Footage of two men horsing around with a woman riding a bicycle on the boardwalk precedes a long profile shot of a sexy blonde reclining in a deck chair wearing a white one-piece bathing suit with high-cut thighs. She throws her head back and arches her chest to the sky.

The commercial then moves on to a man’s hand pulling a cold Budweiser bottle out of a bucket of ice and then a shot of a man sitting and drinking a beer while a woman sits in his lap admiring him and hanging on his every word while he talks to someone off camera. After some shots of the beach and random neon signs, the camera then settles on an attractive woman in short shorts walking away from the viewer toward the ocean with a beer bottle in her hand. She looks back over her shoulder seductively. The following shot shows a man resting on what looks like a large, low window sill, and even though his shot and the previous one are not connected, the connotation is that his gaze is on the woman and her shorts. A quick glimpse of a pretty blonde in a cowboy hat and sunglasses hugging her knees comes immediately after. The commercial then moves on to successive shots of the beach, parts of a Budweiser bottle and the bottle cap with the company logo falling onto a black surface. The final shots of the commercial show the silhouettes of three tall, curvaceous, bikini-clad women heading down to the water’s edge to surf at sunset, three men laughing and putting their arms about each other in a congratulatory manner, and then the Budweiser
I'm a Bud Man is a commercial that sells both the chronotope of the beer world and the male identity within it. The title makes it clear that this commercial is about a boys' club, and there is no such thing as a Bud Woman. The song is a declaration of independence with its rebellious blues undertone and references to cars, guitars, and Rock-and-roll in a man's utopia brought about by his choice of beer. His fantasy world is endless leisure time that trades work and obligations for spontaneous fun and Hotties. A Bud Man gets to look, and, when he wants, to touch; the women in Bud Man wonderland are always available, up for a good time, and approve of his drinking. They like Budweiser, but they like him even more. The icing on the cake is that his buddies are in wonderland with him, because they're Bud Men, too, and while the Hotties are nice to have around, what he really wants is to share a beer with his male friends. The bottom line is that, if you pledge your allegiance to the King of Beers, you too can be a Bud Man and have the wonderland that comes with it. The price of admission is a six-pack.

The Super Party Animal

No discussion of 1980s beer commercials would be complete without Spuds McKenzie, the Hawaiian-shirt clad Bull Terrier who was the life of every party with his Bud Light. His first appearance also aired during the 1987 Super Bowl in a commercial depicting a party on a California beach full of body builders lifting weights and women in
strapless bikinis (Pukenshette, 2013). The ad’s Beach Boys-esque jingle track identifies him as “The Super Party Animal Spuds McKenzie” as everyone on the beach takes excited notice of his presence. Two attractive women see him and exclaim, “Look at him! What a hunk!” while a good-looking man with a beer can in his hand says “Get a load of him!” to his pretty date, who is also in awe of Spuds. When the viewer finally gets a look at Spuds, he is a small, fat, black and white bulldog sitting uncomfortably on his back in a small sling chair wearing a tropical shirt and sunglasses with a cooler of icy Bud Light next to him. He appears to be asleep. All of his admirers flock to him, while three “Spudettes” skate around in their sun visors and bathing suits to celebrate the presence of a dog who the song says is in a “party frenzy,” even though he is just sitting next to a blonde who talks to him in a very animated way. A voiceover by Robin Leach, host of syndicated television program *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*, finishes the commercial by enthusiastically introducing the object of everyone’s affection with, “He’s Spuds McKenzie, one party-loving happening dude!” Spuds then rolls away on a skateboard as the blonde longingly shouts, “Call me.”

Viewing this commercial immediately brings to mind a 2003 episode of *The Simpsons* parodying this ad campaign. Ever astute and wise beyond her years, little Lisa Simpson watches a similar advertisement for imaginary Springfield’s own Duff Beer and asks, “Why would a dog have human girlfriends?” (Fink, Payne, & Anderson, 2003). Lisa’s question sums up the absurdity of the Spuds McKenzie commercial and stabs at the heart of its alienating and misogynistic feminine portrayals that hint at bestiality. Sure, a couple of men in the commercial admire Spuds and even have a beer with him, but the women who clamor for his attention are reduced to being his back-up singers or,
worse yet, his potential bedmates. The insinuation is that the Hotties have such low standards that they will party with anyone and even flirt with a dog just to be near something male in possession of a cold Bud Light. The message this commercial sends to the male viewer is that, in Spud’s world, hot women will fawn over you if you only bring some inexpensive beer in a can to the party or the beach. Spuds offered men a vicarious experience. The Hotties are neither intelligent nor choosy, so will not challenge his dominance, which he has just because he is male and has beer. Moreover, the overarching subtext in this commercial is the suggestion that men are dogs, and dog-like behavior is acceptable in Spuds’ noncommittal world where the price of admission is only drinking a Bud Light. Men who enter it do not even have to commit to being a Bud Man; they can come and go as they please, and they do not have to call the blonde afterward.

Whassup?! One of Budweiser’s most famous Super Bowl commercials aired in 2000. Known as Whassup?!, the commercial is the ultimate celebration of male bonding through beer (Bulls7123, 2006). The ad opens with a man reclining on the large, comfortable couch in his well-appointed apartment with a Budweiser in hand as he watches a football game on an off-camera television. The phone rings and commercial cuts to a shot of the friend who is calling. He is a man relaxing on the sofa in his own home who asks his friend, “Hey yo, what’s up?” The first man replies that he’s watching the game and drinking a Bud. He asks his friend the same question and gets the same response. The first man acknowledges their synchronicity with, “True, true,” as a third
friend walks through his front door with his arms in the air asking "WHASSUP?!" in an exaggerated manner. The first man responds likewise. The second man asks who has entered the first man’s apartment, and the third man picks up the kitchen extension and they all start saying “WHASSUP?!” into the phone to each other in loud and increasingly goofy ways to the extent that the word becomes nonsensical. The third man inquires as to the whereabouts of “Dookie,” who is the second caller's roommate. Dookie picks up the extension at his house and lets loose with a very deep “WHASSUP?!” All four men then say the catch phrase into the phone to each other repeatedly and exaggeratedly. A fifth friend arrives downstairs at the first man's apartment with a six-pack of Budweiser in his arms. He buzzes into the intercom to be let into the building and also lets loose into the speaker with a manic “WHASSUP?!” All five men work up to a frenzy with this verbal bonding ritual until the two men on the extensions hang up the phone and leave the two original men in the conversation to return to their quiet, casual conversation and reiterate that they are each just watching the game and having a Bud. A graphic with the Budweiser logo and the word “TRUE” in capital letters closes the commercial as the first man says, “True, true” to confirm the fact that he and his friend are on the same page and understand one another.

Whassup?! is a critical text for three reasons. First, because all five men of the 30-somethings in the commercial are African American, it provides an example of a beer-created world that is not exclusively a White male fantasy. What is more, this commercial exploits the "padoxical tension between the 'different' and the widely available" with both the interaction between the five real-life friends who portray themselves and their use of words like "whassup" and "true" as slang. Both sources of
tension endow the commercial with the "Otherness" of African American culture that Budweiser appropriates to give their beer's world an air of authenticity that White audiences interpret as "cool" (Watts & Orbe, 2002).

Second, it depicts a fantasy about male interaction within a space that is devoid of women, and beer provides a time-space that bridges distance to link male friends in different places. The chronotope is more defined than ever in this commercial, because the space beer and the mindset of its drinkers create is the shared location and the conduit for the bonding over the phone lines. The space they share with each other reinforces their masculinity through a shared language that is an obvious inside joke with history and meaning for all five men. The group uses the "Whassup" ritual and their mutual consumption of Budweiser to put their arms around each other even when they are not together. The message is that a man drinking a beer is never alone; his friends are there on the couch watching the game and partying with him as long as he has a Bud in his hand. Moreover, the space men create while drinking beer is a place where the jokes and behavior of their youth can continue indefinitely. Beer means that men can avoid growing up and live together in a perpetual, virtual fraternity house, "whassup" and all.

The most notable feature of this commercial, however, is the complete lack of women, thus requiring a third category of female portrayals in beer commercials: the "Absent." While Hotties are desirable to provide men with attention and eye candy in the beer chronotope, it is also a positive experience to have no women around at all. The Absent ensures that men can enjoy their beer alone or with one another without distraction or disapproval. Men can be themselves with each other and behave in
ridiculous and immature ways to bond and celebrate their heterosexual friendship and their beer in a world devoid of commitment or women’s needs, desires, or judgments. With the Absent, the beer chronotope erases women completely in favor of men. The Absent is even more desirable than the Hottie, because the Hottie can potentially become the complicated Bitch and create problems and entanglements that interfere with a man’s dominance and good time in the beer world. A woman who is never there at all is never an issue.

What Game Are You Watching?

Budweiser immediately recognized the hit it had with *Whassup?!* and aired a follow-up commercial continuing the story with the same five men during the Super Bowl in 2001. *What Game Are You Watching?* opens with Dookie at home on the couch drinking a Budweiser while his girlfriend snuggles with him (Best of Beer, 2013). The audio from an ice skating competition can be heard coming from the television playing off-camera. Dookie answers the phone to find that his four friends are out together at a bar and calling to see what he is doing. The men at the bar shout “WHASSUP?!” at the top of their lungs into the phone, and Dookie response with the same, only at a whisper volume with a sidelong glance at his girlfriend. He does not want her to hear him acting juvenile and bonding with his friends, for, as a clear application of the Bitch trope, he knows she will not approve of the disruption of his attentions to her and wants to avoid her retaliation. The men at the bar say they are watching the game and having a Bud, and Dookie replies that he is doing the same, only to have his girlfriend start shrieking with excitement about an on-screen development in the ice skating competition they are
actually watching. Dookie’s friends overhear her and ask him, “What game are you watching?” The commercial ends with the Budweiser “TRUE” logo.

Dookie’s girlfriend in this commercial is the Bitch and a prime example of how women in the beer chronotope can threaten male dominance and why the chronotope seeks to oppress, eliminate, or vilify them. She prevents Dookie from being his authentic, free self. Her presence robs him of his self-determination and masculinity because she stops him from doing what he wants to do, forces him to watch a feminine sport, keeps him from bonding with his friends, and makes him modify his behavior. Most importantly, she is a symbol of commitment and adulthood that restricts and undermines him with emotional or sexual blackmail (Messner & Montez de Oca, 2005). *What Game Are You Watching?* is an homage to the Absent and a warning about how the female presence threatens the male beer fantasy.

**Beer as a Gendered Space**

How did a genderless beverage consumed by both men and women for six millennia become a gendered space for a generation in American society in just two short decades? When applying the concept of the chronotope to this deep reading of gender portrayals in Super Bowl beer commercials aired between 1986 and 2002, it is necessary to keep one foot in the real world with a discussion of the historical context of the feminist movements of the time. With Generation X beginning in 1965, most of the cohort was too young to participate in the Women’s Liberation Movement and other politicized efforts to gain gender equality in the second wave of feminism that helped to define the culture and society of the 1960s and 1970s. Instead, the oldest members of
this cohort at best experienced the fringe of the second wave as children who observed their mothers reading *Ms. Magazine* or were raised on the tolerant, gender-neutral messages of Marlo Thomas’ *Free To Be You And Me* album and its companion ABC Afterschool Special. Instead, Generation X largely grew up during what is characterized as the postfeminist era of 1980s that is labeled as such to denote either a time *after* feminism or that proved the *failure* of feminism depending on the political use of the term; in either case it was a decade when mainstream society and its media considered feminism obsolete (Henry, 2004, p. 18-19).

Generation X grew up with benefits from the political and social gains made by the second wave feminism but did not have a feminist movement to call their own in their youth. The earliest Generation X feminists were already in their 20s or 30s by the time third wave feminism began to appear in the early 1990s (Henry, 2004, p. 34). Rather than following in its predecessor’s footsteps and placing politics at its core, third wave feminism embraces spheres of femininity and focuses on issues of sexuality, performance, choice, individual experience and agency, globalization, and diversity (Krolokke, 2005). In addition, third wave feminism neither synchronizes chronologically with Generation X nor is it ingrained in the generation’s self-identity (Henry, 2004). As a result, beer advertisers of the period were able to exploit the gap between the feminist movements and create a chronotope in their television commercials that served as backlash against the social changes brought about by second wave feminism in order to build a niche male market for their products (Krolokke, 2005, p. 16). Over nearly two decades, this chronotope created more than a consumer market; it redefined beer as a

---

15 Henry’s italics.
gendered space – a “Beerverse” – in society into which post-industrial America’s men could escape reality and enjoy the mythical male dominance of days gone by.

Women may not inhabit the the Beerverse, they may pay an occasional visit, but only if they are attractive, largely silent, and make no undue demands on the time and attentions of men. Women are useful to male egos and can improve the view at the party, but make no mistake, beer is not for women. The beer chronotope is not a space women can use to bond with one another or even with men, because they cannot be trusted to drink. Their sexual weaknesses make them a liability for men who need a place to enjoy their beer and each other. Beer is the modern day man cave, a place of masculine ritual where women are not welcome.

The gendering of beer is significant to the Generation X identity. Men of the generation missed the opportunity to experience the staunch masculine hegemony of the generations before them; their social position is uncertain and unguaranteed. These men live and work in a white-collar world that exists half in the public sphere and half in the private sphere where “white-collar masculinity is susceptible to feminization, given its reputed lack of physicality and bureaucratic sterility, suppression of the body, self-imposed discipline, and obligatory ingratiation” (Ashcraft & Flores, 6). The gendered space that the beer chronotope creates tells them that a cooler of cold ones and some male buddies can serve as their refuge. For the men of Generation X, the gendered space of beer advertisements offers them the key to the neoliberal promises of freedom and power while meeting the neoliberal obligation to be happy (by exercising their right to the free market and buying a six pack of cold ones that will make them kings).
The masculine portrayals in the Beerverse are tools of social control for non-hegemonic men in neoliberal culture, but the feminine portrayals in the beer chronotope have a more ominous message for the women of Generation X that traces a clear progression of increasing social hostility toward women. Although most likely a result of collateral damage in the neoliberal march to exercise social control over men, women’s alienation and exclusion from the gendered space of beer is indirect payback for their mothers’ sexual liberation, usurpation as head of the household, and intrusion into the workplace and other traditionally-male spaces in society. *Cards* is de-industrialization's and second wave feminism's legacy of sexism and dehumanization left for Generation X, and third wave feminism offers no remedy.

Today’s gendered space of beer is the direct result of late-20th century America’s changing social landscape. As doors opened for women, male hegemony sought refuge and retaliation by declaring a new space off-limits to women. A lack of a feminist identity in Generation X made the transition both possible and undetected. Ironically, the social, political, and economic successes of the women in earlier generations laid the groundwork for the women of Generation X to grow up with new cultural limitations as part of their identity. Such limitations are difficult to realize and combat.
CHAPTER FOUR: THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

"The entire reason millennials is a term is a marketing classifier. I think of millennial as a word that writers put in Forbes to teach older company owners."

— Anthony D’Angelo, 19, college student (Sanders, 2015)

The Mythical Rope Line

You’re Not on the List is a Coors-brand beer advertisement that aired in heavy rotation during televised sporting events in late 2010 and early 2011 (Corsetti, 2011). While the Super Bowl beer advertisements discussed in chapter 3 demonstrate the marketing messages that targeted Generation X as they came of age between the mid-1980s and early 2000s, You’re Not on the List is a prime example of how the macro-industry continues to mediatize beer drinking as a male social ritual that excludes women in an effort to preserve beer as a signifier for masculinity among the successive millennial generation.

The commercial begins with a tight shot of a man’s hand reaching into a spotless, well-stocked refrigerator to pour a glass of beer from a silver cardboard box adorned with the Coors Light logo and a tap on the front. The camera pulls back to reveal a white, middle-aged gentleman dressed as a bartender with a white button-down shirt and a black bow tie in an apartment kitchen. A young, attractive, white, brunette waitress works at a counter in the background. The bartender announces, “Coors Light, coming up!” as he hands the freshly-poured beer to a young white man in worn jeans and a Western-style plaid shirt. The apartment is a clean, well-appointed bachelor pad that hints at affluence. As the man joins his host, another young, white male on the couch, he touches their glasses together in a casual toast and approvingly
tells the friend, “Bob, sweet set-up.” Both men are in their mid- to late-20s and average in appearance. Bob, the apartment’s denizen and the star of the ad, sports a polo shirt, ripped jeans, tousled hair, and a five o’clock shadow that gives him the appearance of a single man without responsibility. Bob’s guest also looks like a bachelor without professional or familial demands on his time and the freedom to spend an afternoon drinking with buddies.

As Bob explains that the new Coors Light Home Draft box in his fridge has magically turned his home into a private bar, the slim, perky, long-haired waitress enters the living room to set a bowl of nuts on the coffee table in front of the two men. As she bends forward the camera provides quick-angle shots of her from both the front and the back; nameless and silent, she flashes a friendly, dazzlingly white smile at the men and cheerfully performs her duties. Bob thanks her as his friend asks him, “What’s your girlfriend gonna say?” Bob confidently assures his guest that he’s “got that covered.”

The commercial then cuts to a street scene at the exterior of the apartment. Bob’s girlfriend arrives to visit him only to be confronted by a tall, African American bouncer with a well-muscled body builder’s physique who stands before a velvet rope, consults his clipboard, and tells her, “You’re not on the list.” Bob’s girlfriend is white, well-dressed, and in her mid- to late-20s. She is also slim, but, with dirty-blond hair, minimal make-up and a disapproving scowl, is less attractive than the waitress and portrayed as an angry killjoy. “Bob has a list?” she responds incredulously. “And you’re not on it,” the huffy bouncer quickly retorts with a snarky tone, rolling eyes, and a smirk.

The advertisement then segues to a detailed explanation of how the new Coors Light Home Draft box is, “CO2-pressurized for up to 30 days of fresh, frost-brewed
draught beer straight from your fridge.”. This six-second informational interlude in the half-minute ad includes a visual demonstration of the box with a male hand and graphic instructions for use of the pressurized spout, and the fact that the product fits the length of a home refrigerator.

Once the brief product pitch concludes, the advertisement’s narrative returns to the street scene where another white, mid-20s, male friend of Bob’s arrives, greets the bouncer as “Big Darryl,” and the two casually bump fists. Darryl unclips the velvet rope to allow the friend access to the front door, and the friend acknowledges the girlfriend with, “How you doing, Sarah? Good to see you,” before he hurries into the building. Sarah, now tense and fed-up, shouts, “Come on, really?!” after the unnamed friend entering her boyfriend’s apartment without her. The commercial closes with an animated graphic of Coors Light’s phallic trademark silver bullet train whooshing through a snowy Rocky Mountain landscape as the company logo and tag line, “The World’s Most Refreshing Beer,” appear on the screen.

Despite the fact that You’re Not on the List is an advertisement for the beer equivalent of cheap box wine, a drink commonly associated with women, it is a 31-second depiction of a white, middle class, heterosexual, but homoerotic, male fantasy that portrays men bonding and enjoying domestic dominance through beer. This advertisement is yet another archetype of a decades-long trend of gendered beer marketing that first targeted Generation X and then the millennials who followed. In addition to the chronotope theorized by Bakhtin, Roland Barthes’ (1984) semiotics explains how the myth of beer drinking as a male ritual is created and perpetuated by the media.
Television beer commercials use semiology of andronormative fantasies that employ the signifier of beer and the signifieds of power and sexual prowess to build and reinforce the myth of masculinity and culture of male bonding with beer through the dual authorities of television and sports programming, particularly football, with which beer advertising goes culturally hand-in-glove. This authority mediatizes the ritual of drinking beer, which endows non-hegemonic males with the ability to control their environment and ensure their dominance even if they are not particularly masculine, much less macho (Messner & Montez de Oca, 2005; Wenner, 2009). In this constructed myth, women exist to either facilitate or ruin a good time for the men, and, regardless of their roles, women almost never drink the beer. Beverages and the fun are strictly the purview of men. It is no accident that You’re Not on the List features a bouncer, a rope line and a guest list to give Bob’s apartment the appearance of being a an exclusive nightclub. The semiology of this commercial uses the recognizable signs of the myth of beer as a boy’s club, and the continuing moral of the story remains that when men gather together to drink beer with each other, women still pose a threat and are not welcome unless they are serving the suds.

The Most Interesting Beer Ads in the World

Not all advertisements targeting the male millennial beer market are as openly hostile to women as You’re Not on the List. In keeping with the light-hearted, humorous take on masculinity that Budweiser used to target Generation X drinkers in their proto-viral series of Whassup! commercials during the early 2000s, Heineken International launched a new advertising campaign for their Dos Equis Mexican lager in 2006
featuring a character called The Most Interesting Man in the World. Portrayed by Jewish-American actor Jonathan Goldsmith who used his close friend, Argentinean actor and international playboy Fernando Lamas as inspiration for the character, *The Most Interesting Man in the World* commercial series features a suave, sophisticated, older gentleman who is the consummate Latin lover with a style that reeks of the Old World and old money. The ultimate raconteur and master of seduction, the dashingly handsome, nameless hero with a full head of silver hair and a salt-and-pepper beard is an alpha male who manages to dominate every situation while never being threatening or exclusionary. Ebullient and popular, he exudes sex and approachability while still commanding every eye in the room. Men want to be him, women want to be with him, and he could probably charm the pants off both. He is happy, fulfilled, educated, wealthy, and magnanimous; he enjoys the finer things in life and shares them with others. He is old enough to be well-traveled and have a colorful history full of stories but young enough to have the energy for new adventures. His unique confidence and superhuman charisma cause a wide variety of people to flock to his charms.

It is the main character’s impossibly exaggerated and endless list of varied experiences, skills, talents, and competencies that serves as the defining characteristic of The Most Interesting Man in the World and the punch line for the humorous media-agnostic campaign that uses the Internet, print, outdoor, radio, and television to promote Dos Equis. In the brand’s April 2013 television commercial, 1970’s-era Latin jazz serves as the soundtrack to washed-out faux-vintage 8mm photography that chronicles the past and present exploits of The Most Interesting Man in the World (World Handball of Handball Foundation, 2013). As in all audio and video installments in this series of
advertisements, a voiceover by PBS *Frontline’s* Will Lyman lends a high brow, documentary quality to the commercial as it conveys a litany of rapid-fire, hyperbolic facts about the commercial’s eponymous hero. Lyman’s voiceover listing humorous and impossible facts is fundamental to the chronotope and semiology created and employed by *The Most Interesting Man in the World* ads to make them instantly recognizable and engaging to audiences. Fake footage of The Most Interesting Man in the World as a young man wearing a shirt with a wide collar paired with bell-bottom slacks and playing a game of handball with a fit, attractive young black man while a crowd looks on in what appears to be 1970s Harlem follows, and Lyman’s voice tells the viewer, “In a past life, he was himself.” The next scene features the older, modern-day version of our hero exploring the interior of a pyramid with an Egyptian guide and laughing with a pretty female archaeologist as they decipher the hieroglyphics on the walls; the voiceover says, “If opportunity knocks, and he’s not home, opportunity waits.” More footage of a 20-something version of the impossibly suave Latin man guiding a flock of geese in a motorized hang glider accompanies narration that, “He gave his father ‘the talk’.”

Once the zingy one-liners conclude, the narrator introduces the hero of the ad with, “He is...The Most Interesting Man in the World” over sepia-toned footage of the impossibly perfect and able older gentleman riding atop a train traveling through India. Donning his signature suit and cravat, our hero holds forth surrounded by attractive young Indian men and one beautiful Indian woman and simultaneously cross-stitches a portrait of his female traveling companion. When presented with the completed portrait as gift, the woman smiles broadly to match her likeness on the completed craft.
The commercial ends with a tight shot of The Most Interesting Man in the world sitting at a dark, richly polished wooden table in a posh lounge sharing beers with two glamorous and well-dressed women who look like models. He sits with a bottle of Dos Equis on the table in front of him, the redhead to his left has a bottle of Dos Equis amber, and the black woman on his right has a pint glass of the original lager. The smiling women focus completely on their dashing male host, and neither woman touches her beer. The Most Interesting Man in the World ignores the women in favor of the camera, picks up his bottle of beer, and says, "I don't always drink beer, but when I do, I prefer Dos Equis." The closing shot eliminates the women and features only a headshot of the hero in a tux with no tie and open collar as the Dos Equis Logo appears over his right shoulder as he tells the audience: "Stay thirsty, my friends." The implication is that Dos Equis drinkers are thirsty for life, adventure, power, sex, and beer and that their refined choice of Dos Equis will make them, too, as interesting as The Most Interesting Man in the World.

Like You’re Not on the List, The Most Interesting Man in the World uses tropes of masculinity to maintain the gendered space of television beer commercials and beer itself. Dos Equis employs a more sophisticated masculinity and sense of humor than the Coors Light ad; unlike the frat party “boy’s club” atmosphere of Bob’s apartment in the American beer commercial, the chronotope of the Mexican beer advertisement is more inclusive of women and people of color.16 The Dos Equis commercial nonetheless

16 While the Dos Equis advertisement under analysis here does include depictions of people of color, it also does so with Orientalism subtext that exoticizes both Egyptian and Indian cultures and depicts them as Others both within and serving a Western Imperial context (Lewis, 1996; Said, 1985; Said, 1994).
implies that no one other than the male main character drinks beer or enjoys the social and cultural power it gives.

Unlike the Coors Light ad that depicts the standard one-way relationship between a man and his magical, masculine beer, however, it is unclear if The Most Interesting Man in the World is made cool and interesting by his choice of beverage, or whether the beer is made desirable because he drinks it. The Dos Equis ad campaign marks a change to a new marketing tactic that depicts a symbiotic man-beer relationship facilitated by humor, employing hyperbole to poke fun at the historical trend of hyper-masculine portrayals in other beer commercials and the media in general. The long-running series of ads17 featuring The Most Interesting Man in the World is a chronotope within a chronotope that relies on a running satirical, tongue-in-cheek inside joke that nudges and winks at the hip, “in the know” millennial audience member; the message from Dos Equis is that if you get their joke, you’re the discerning consumer who should be drinking their beer.

There are two major differences in how the Coors Light and Dos Equis commercials use humor in their narratives. First, where the humor in the Coors Light ad targets young, millennial men in their 20s and uses overt, exclusionary misogynistic humor to make male beer drinkers in the chronotope appear superior, the Dos Equis ad is more subtle in its gendering. Dos Equis keeps masculine supremacy front and center but allows women to exist in its chronotope and in on the humor without making them

17 The Most Interesting Man in the World advertising campaign aired in the United States from 2006 until March 2016, at which point Dos Equis retired Goldsmith’s adventurous character was with a one-way trip to Mars. The future of the campaign and whether or not a younger actor will replace Goldsmith as a more millennial or Gen X version of the character is unclear at the time of publication (Domonoske, 2016).
the butt of the joke. Beer is still a man’s world full of men’s jokes, even if women hang out and laugh along with them. As with James Bond films, which feature another seasoned, handsome, globetrotting, and uber-capable man of mystery, the women in *The Most Interesting Man in the World* chronotope are all significantly-younger millennial Hotties in their 20s or early 30s who serve as temporary, if charming, arm candy of various races and ethnicities from across all continents. The Dos Equis campaign mirrors a Bond film in the manner in which it requires the presence of women to make a man a man, but Bitches or women of average appearance need not apply. It is less aggressive and hostile with its misogyny, but only the most gorgeous women can serve as The Most Interesting Man in the World’s arm candy while he enjoys his cervezas. Second, whereas the Coors Light commercial provides information about its product amidst the humor (information that is the point of the commercial), the Dos Equis advertisement has no cognitive pitch. *The Most Interesting Man in the World* is strictly an emotional and affective appeal that uses humor and the promise of sexual prowess to persuade young, but maturing, viewers to buy its product.

**Barrel Aging: Beer, Gender, and Generational Identity**

The theory of generational cohort identity groups people born during a range of 15 to 20 years. This theory hinges on a collective identity shaped via a three-pronged approach that blends members’ age effect, or position in the life cycle, with the period effect created by the social impact of shared historical events and pop culture moments, and with the cohort effect in which history and age influence the opinion formation to become the world view/group think of a generational cohort ("Whys and Hows," 2015). Born between 1982 and 1997, according to the Pew Research Center’s measures, but
with no agreed-upon end date as yet, the millennial generation is the largest in history with numbers currently above 75 million and an anticipated peak of 81 million members (Frye, 2015a; Frye, 2015b; “Whys and Hows,” 2015). In 2015, millennials became the cohort with the largest number of adults in the US workforce, and they now spend an estimated $1 trillion each year (Frye, 2015b; Sanders, 2015). The millennial generation outnumbers the boomers, which was previously the largest generation in history, a milestone it is anticipated the much-smaller Generation X cohort will not achieve until 2028 as baby boomers die (Fry, 2015a).

Generation X is the smaller, often-neglected “middle child” of the current adult cohorts in the U.S. workforce, with a less-sharply defined identity than the baby boomers and millennials that bracket them (Taylor & Gao, 2014). That they now fall into an over-35, middle-aged demographic and only number 66 million Americans means they are currently a less influential and desirable market segment for advertisers (Taylor & Gao, 2014; “Whys and Hows,” 2015). Millennials are a more appealing market, given their age and the sheer size of their cohort, but they present three major new challenges to advertisers.

First, millennials are more racially and economically diverse than past generations: only 57% are non-Hispanic whites compared to 61% in Generation X and 72% and 78% in the baby boom and Silent generations, respectively (“Whys and Hows,” 2015). The one-size-fits-all marketing to a white majority may not be effective when the majority of the generation with buying power becomes less and less white each year.
Second, millennials are often considered “digital natives” who prefer to interact and build personal relationships online with the companies they patronize and not to respond to traditional or direct marketing that makes obvious, hard sells (Sanders, 2015). The young adults of this cohort react most favorably to branding and advertising strategies that employ smart humor, that allow for self-expression and social interaction and build and sustain community (Serazio, 2015; Shore, 2010).

Third, unlike Generation X, millennials have a period effect and cohort effect that aligns perfectly with third wave feminism, and, whether individual millennials identify as feminists or not, their collective opinion formation includes progressive views of gender roles and even an outright rejection of gender norms (Kott, 2014; Lopez, 2015; Thompson, 2014). Masculinity has taken an especially hard blow in an increasingly millennial world where the majority generation views its heteronormative gender tropes with skepticism at best and a judgment of amorality at worst (Schwarz, 2013). Male-dominated industries such as manufacturing, agriculture, and construction that were hit hard by layoffs in the economic shift of the 1970 saw a further decrease in both status and available jobs with the economic recession of 2008, which left men disproportionately unemployed for long periods of time or even permanently (Appelbaum, 2014; Thomson, 2014). The new, post-2008 reality for the entire U.S. labor force, but especially for millennials, is one where men are no longer the default household breadwinners and may be likely to forgo paid employment and take on domestic roles at home. What masculine tropes do survive and thrive among white, urban, male millennials are responses to a crisis that strive to achieve an air of “authenticity” with ties to hard, honest labor, as in the growing popularity of the
“lumbersexual” performance that includes full beards and copious amounts of plaid in a throwback to the turn of the last century (Brown, 2014). Beneath the flannel and neatly-trimmed and oiled facial hair, the rugged, or metrosexually rustic, throwback aesthetic of the lumbersexual male continues to reject the buff and muscle-bound testosterone chic of the “engorged” 1980’s Reagan-era action hero for a lean, natural, and attainable physique that carries a more gender-neutral appeal (Bordo, 1999; Jones, 2011).

Given the differences and challenges the massive millennial cohort presented the macrobrewing industry, the way major corporate brewers marketed their products on television changed slightly in the early 2000s, as the first members of the generation grew old enough to purchase alcohol. The whip-smart humor and viral nature of Dos Equis’ *The Most Interesting Man in the World* campaign echoed the shift in masculinity from boys-will-be-boys, skirt-chasing, traditional machismo to more self-aware, self-effacing comedy used by established brands like Old Spice to reboot their reputation to attract a younger, more feminist-leaning male market. While aggressively misogynistic ad campaigns like *You’re Not on the List* continue to circulate, corporate beer producers have begun to lose the millennial market to competing wine and spirits as well as the growing craft beer market; Budweiser’s sales dropped nearly 50 percent from 30 million barrels in 2003 to only 16 million barrels in 2014, denoting a need for a new relationship between beer and beer drinkers – a relationship that the craft beer industry cultivates successfully and organically (Ferdman, 2014; Schiavenza, 2014).

**Beginning the Boil: Craft Beer Culture**

In 2004, researchers presented men with various vignettes of interactions between men and women in a social, night-out situation to examine the “role of female
subtyping in ambivalent sexism by assessing hostile and benevolent sexist evaluations of a female character whose behavior was consistent with either a stereotypically sexually positive (i.e., chaste, sexually pure) or negative (e.g., seductress, sexual tease, flirt) subtype” (Sibley & Wilson, p. 688). Consistent with Sibley and Wilson’s (2004) hypotheses, “Men expressed increased hostile, but decreased benevolent, sexism toward the female character when her behavior was consistent with a negative sexual female subtype (that of a promiscuous sexual temptress), whereas they expressed increased benevolent, but decreased hostile, sexism toward a female character whose behavior was more consistent with a positive sexual female subtype (that of chastity and sexual purity)” (p. 693).

The results of this research supported prior hypotheses that the strong positive correlations between hostile and benevolent sexism observed across numerous cultures and different samples occur because participants draw upon their own subjective female subtypes when responding to items that refer to “women as a general category” (Sibley & Wilson, 2004, p. 693). The researchers concluded that male sexism idealizes and rewards women in “subtypes that conform to male dominated social hierarchies, whereas women who defy traditional gender roles may experience more hostile and negative attitudes” and, given their data collected on their male subjects’ own sexual schema, found it “ironic that men who think of themselves in sexual terms and who tend to have greater sexual experience are the ones who also tend to express derisive attitudes toward women with levels of sexual experience similar to their own” (p. 693).
Historically, television advertising patterns, rife with triggers for sexist thought initiated by the mass-production beer industry, created a male fantasy world around beer that subverts women into dehumanized and hollow tropes accessible to the everyday man. Such tropes help to set the stage for a beer culture where men are little more than predators and women, if present at all, are their prey. After three decades of this pattern both male and female beer drinkers in Generation X and the millennial cohort find themselves fatigued by the hostile portrayals of both genders and reinforcement of both the gender binary and heteronormativity by extension. These drinkers want a business culture that welcomes consumers of all genders. Established in earnest in the late-1990s, the burgeoning craft brewery industry rushed to fill the gender sales gap in the beer industry with the belief that the margin in sales made to men and women is not a function of beer itself but rather the macrobrewing industry’s alienation of female drinkers with its advertisement and branding strategies.

The craft movement began with a small group of baby boomer and Generation X entrepreneurs in the late 1980s and early 1990s who sought to re-establish “True Beer” in the United States (Hieronymus, 2015). The Brewers Association now defines craft breweries as operations that are small, independent, and traditional with an annual production of six million barrels or less and that “maintain integrity by what they brew and their general independence, free from a substantial interest by a non-craft brewer” (Brewers Association, 2013). Craft brewers are passionate about their work and seek to make an impact on a steadily-crowding market with products that are notable for their “quality and uniqueness” (Alonso, 2011). The number of microbreweries in the United States exceeded the number in microbreweries in Germany, the motherland of lager, in
1997, and the niche industry of small, specialized operations with high-quality product offerings targeting local markets took off from there (Seiler, 2002, p. 47). By 2002, craft beers had a brand associated with well-educated, economically prosperous beer drinkers ages 25-34 who consumed their choice of “imaginatively named” beverages at a higher rate than beer drinkers who patronized Budweiser, Miller, Coors, and Pabst, and paired their beers with food (Seiler, 2002, p. 47). Some early craft breweries like New Belgium and Dogfish Head saw a meteoric rise to national distribution in the decade that followed. Today more than 3,500 independent craft breweries operate across the United States, and several craft brands own multiple brewing operations across the country to better establish a nationwide market (Gordon, 2015).

In 2002, Glenn Carroll and Anand Swaminathan used the resource-partitioning model of organizational ecology to explain how late-stage segments like microbreweries developed as an “unexpected outcome” in an industry of large, consolidating generalists competing for “the largest consumer bases of the mass market” of beer consumers (p. 717). In keeping with the ethics of late Generation Xers and early millennials, Carroll and Swaminathan (2002) postulated that microbrewery customers buy into those local business’ “mystique” of smallness and the belief that participation in said mystique makes them appear to be knowledgeable consumers with an inside track on unique and quality products that endow them with “an overall image of sophistication and refinement” (p. 729). This implication that craft beer is somehow more middle class, or even upper-class, as opposed to the mediatized blue-collar condensation symbol of television sitcoms is both a rejection of the neoliberal terministic screen that joined class
and beer and a reinvention of that screen to fit a different relationship between men and beer.

Carroll and Swaminathan (2002) also claim that craft drinkers purchase craft beers as a conscious backlash against mass production rooted in post-materialistic self-expression (p. 729). In response, “participants in the microbrewery ‘movement’ attempt variously to portray their firms as small production organizations that refuse to cut corners in their quest for quality, care about their customers and communities, employ traditional methods and ingredients, and appeal to the most discerning consumers” (Carroll, G. & Swaminathan, 2002, p. 730).

Beer labels’ brand identity has long been proven to have a greater impact with consumers than actual product content (Allison & Uhl, 1964, p. 39.). But as small, community-minded brewing operations grew and flourished to become neo-local “insiders’ clubs” that encouraged pride in distinctiveness of place and history, the literate, clever, and eclectic beer names with artistically lavish labels endemic to craft brews became badges of identity for both the brewers and the consumers to use as signifier and sign to identify each other using mythical language like a secret handshake (Schnell & Reese, 2003, p. 65).

The visual communication and cultural capital of beer label imagery is no small matter in the craft community, as it is part and parcel of the word-of-mouth social marketing that stands in for the nearly-complete absence of traditional advertising in the craft market. Despite its separation from television advertising, craft beer is not free of the long shadow of the gendered Beerverse, and the specter of sexism continues to fall across the branding and labeling of some craft beers. While the majority of craft brewers
eschew sexism in their marketing, objectifying images of nude or scantily-clad women are still common on labels, and some brewers still produce beers with hostile names that use misogynistic terms like Flying Dog’s “Raging Bitch” IPA and Pig Minds’ “Panty Dropper” blueberry ale, invoke male ejaculation at the expense of female sexual gratification in brands like Flying Dog’s “Pearl Necklace” oyster stout and SweetWater’s “Happy Ending” imperial stout, or reference violence against women, as is the case with Pig Minds’ “Southy Bitch Slap” American red ale (Gordon, 2015; Karl, 2014).18

According to Barthes (2012), semiology reveals that the historical infusion that mythical speech receives from culture is returned in a “natural justification” of that history that seamlessly weaves the myth into the collective social conscience until it is accepted as an ahistorical true state of affairs (p. 254). “If our society is objectively the privileged field of mythical significations,” Barthes (2012) explains, “it is because formal myth is the most appropriate instrument for the ideological inversion which defines this society” (p. 254-255). Advertising and branding rely on this mythical speech for not only the power and impact it supplies to them but also the very mechanism that allows them to exist at all. It comes as no surprise that past beer marketing research applied Barthes’ theory of mythical speech and semiotics in textual analysis of nationalistic and patriotic messages (Seiler, 2002) and depictions of masculinity (Strate, 1992) in beer advertising.

By Barthes’ definition, branding images are a potent form of speech for myth building, as he notes that “pictures, to be sure, are more imperative than writing, they

18 This is not a complete and comprehensive list of misogynistic craft beer names on the market today and in recent years.
pose meaning at one stroke, without analyzing or diluting it" (Barthes, 2012, p. 219).

Barthes' concept of mythical speech provides the link between the signifier of beer and the signified of masculinity that is expressed in the sign of gendered branding of beer labels that objectify and subjugate the female form to the male gaze (Mulvey, 1975).

The semiotics of mythical language provides the theoretical framework through which the concept of male hegemony is expressed in the form of the beer labels because:

The signifier of myth presents itself in an ambiguous way: it is at the same time meaning and form, full on one side and empty on the other . . . the meaning is already complete, it postulates a kind of knowledge, a past, a memory, a comparative order of facts, ideas, decisions. When it becomes form, the meaning leaves its contingency behind…but the essential point is that the form does not suppress the meaning, it only impoverishes it, it puts it at a distance, holds it at one’s disposal. One believes that the meaning is going to die, but it is a death with a reprieve, the meaning loses its value, but it keeps its life, from which the form of the myth will draw its nourishment (Barthes, 2012, p. 226-227).

Barthes' (2012) asserts that “the form of myth is not a symbol” because it has “too much presence” but is “tamed, put at a distance, made almost transparent” and as “it recedes a little, it becomes the accomplice of a concept which comes to it fully armed” and “once made use of, it becomes artificial” (p. 228).

Despite the occasional black mark of misogyny on its record, craft beer culture largely departs from the sexist gendering of neoliberal corporate beer in favor of third-wave feminist ethics and millennial idealism. In addition to eschewing costly mainstream advertising most small breweries cannot afford, the craft culture lives and interacts largely online via social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and the mobile app beer network Untappd. The use of social media is just one way craft beer has an advantage over the macrobrew market; it offers millennial consumers the interaction, self-expression, and community they desire as part of their consumption
(Sanders, 2015). Despite their limited mass media reach, craft breweries in the United States collectively outsold Budweiser in 2014 for the first time, with annual sales exceeding 16 million barrels of beer nationwide (Wu, 2015). This consumer sea change demonstrates the power of small and local businesses in an economy fueled by a generation who want a personal connection with the people who grow, make, and sell the products the millennials buy, especially their food and drink (Wu, 2015).

In addition to the appeal of access to local brewers and beers, craft culture’s feminist philosophy of access and inclusion also offers inroads for drinkers who wish to participate in production. Craft beer as a pastime or professional endeavor simultaneously can be an individual hobby for homebrewers and certified tasters and cicerones, a business or a job, and a collective community experience of collaboration brews and bottle shares in keeping with the growing millennial sharing economy (Fixell, 2015; Hagerty, 2014; Mosher, 2014; Ruffin, 2014). Community engagement, education, and innovation are endemic to the craft industry, which supports the brewing of historic, even Paleolithic, beer recipes, the revival of rare and lost regional styles like gose, and the participation of local breweries in a growing number of more than 35 college- and university-based brewing certificate and degree programs nationwide (“College Students,” 2015; Estabrook, 2014; Geddes, 2014; Stange, 2014).¹⁹ Above all, craft culture values a quality experience for consumers, as is indicated by the development of new specialty glassware to enhance the experience of drinking various beer styles and advances in low-ABV session beers that promote leisurely drinking and superior flavor

¹⁹ Colorado’s Front Range is now home to academic brewing programs at Colorado State University, Regis University, Johnson & Wales’ Denver campus, and Metropolitan State University of Denver.
over an extended period of time than intoxication (Agnew, 2015; Tribou, 2015). The emphasis on taste, sophistication, and maintenance of self-control through lighter intake of better-quality alcohol in craft culture mirrors the moderation-through-consumption in the World War II-era cinema discussed in chapter two. Sessionable sours and pale ales are the new Old Fashioneds for the 21st century.

While the craft brewing movement is not the brainchild of the millennial generation, nor did it start with them, it is the influence of millennials and the intersection of their identity with third wave feminism that turned the movement into a revolution. The irony in this social and economic turn is that the efforts of neoliberalism and corporate brewers to enforce social control of non-hegemonic masculinity through the gendering of beer served as the inspiration for craft brewers and their Generation X and millennial consumers to create an industry that rejected such control and, for the most part, gendering only to outcompete the large corporations at their own game. Most importantly, millennials' rejection of the masculinity tropes marketed in more than three decades of macrobrew advertising did more than burst the economic and media messaging monopoly that Budweiser, Miller, and Coors held on the beer market in the United States. Craft brewers began to dismantle the gendered space that barred women from their rightful place at the bar in the beer market and invited them to participate in and help lead the emerging feminist craft beer revolution.
“What got me in was the flavor, what kept me in was the community.”

– Rosie, Ales 4 Females

Ladies’ Night: An Ethnography of Women and Beer

In 1993, Anheuser-Busch’s *Ladies’ Night* commercial was an instant hit for its Bud Light brand (Stanley, 2014). With Kool and the Gang’s 1979 disco song by the same name playing underneath the action, the ad begins with silhouettes of four, heavy-set female figures in the doorway of a pub where a banner that reads “Bud Light Ladies Night” hangs on the far wall. The camera pans to the stocky legs of one of the women, and another twists an ankle in her high heels as all four women muscle their way up to the bar. Shot from the back, the women push a thin, attractive brunette in a tight black mini dress out of the way in their quest to place a drink order. The male bartender gives the four new arrivals a quizzical expression before the camera pans to his point of view to reveal that the women are actually bearded men in ill-fitting drag. One of the costumed men orders Bud Light for the group in a comically over-the-top high voice. The bartender tells them, “Tonight’s ladies’ night, and there’s a special on Bud Light,” to which the “ladies” feign surprise and squeal, “Oh, really?!?” Despite his recognition of the customers’ thinly-veiled female performance to take advantage of the discounted price, the bartender plays along and serves the beers. A male voiceover makes the brand pitch, “If you want great taste that won’t fill you up and never lets you down, make it a Bud Light,” and the advertisement ends with two of the “ladies” standing together at a hi-top table. Looking toward the bar, one of them says, “Oh no, it’s Ted from
Accounting,” in a deep, unmodified voice as the camera cuts to a middle-aged man in a suit who gives a flirty little salute. One “lady” responds with an embarrassed wave, but the other embraces her temporarily-female persona and enthusiastically flaps her hand back at Ted and flashes a big smile.

On the surface, *Ladies’ Night* seems a light-hearted bit of fun. While the joke appears to be on the clownish men in their inauthentic drag, the true mockery is of female beer drinkers. Gender is a social construct and performance, and the men in the commercial over-perform their roles as women with exaggeratedly-high voices and a willingness to be objectified by men in order to get their drinks. The advertisement’s drag act portrays women, albeit as disguised men, as unsophisticated drinkers who are more interested in consuming cheap beer and flirting with men than bonding with each other. The feminine performance of the four men dressed as ladies subverts the male bonding experience. The comedic, but ultimately hostile, portrayal of female beer drinkers in *Ladies’ Night* perpetuates the myth that, even in a dress, social beer drinking is a male activity at the core (Wolf, 1997). Women who attempt to imitate men in their beer consumption look amateur and ridiculous, at best, and licentious, at worst.

There’s an old adage about how to confront seemingly undefeatable opponent: if you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em. And so, into this neoliberal culture of exclusivity, alienation, and gender-enforced social control, I interject the experience of Colorado women who come together to share their mutual enjoyment of beer in spite of life-long rejection by the beer industry. This chapter details years of ethnographic work with four women-only beer groups on the Front Range: the Crafty Ladies, Ales 4 Females, Girls Pint Out, and Barley’s Angels. These organizations offer female beer enthusiasts an
opportunity to explore and learn about craft beer, interact with brewers, and, most importantly, revel in their love of the beverage with other women. These clubs, and others like them across the United States, offer women a chance to flip the tables on the male Beerverse and ban men from their own, exclusive drinking spaces in order to engage in female bonding over beers.

Crafty Ladies Beer Club

Established in March 2011, the Crafty Ladies gather twice a month on Tuesday nights in the back room of Denver, Colorado’s Highland Tap and Burger, which is decorated in masculine creams and browns with burgundy leather booths, walnut-stained wooden screens mounted on the walls, and a large garage door that opens onto the sidewalk patio. An inspiration of the Highland Tap’s husband-and-wife owners, who thought it would be a good way to fill some seats in their new restaurant on a slow weeknight while showcasing the 18 Colorado craft beers on tap, the full-capacity Crafty Ladies’ meetings quickly became a staple in the Denver craft community and an inextricable part of the family-oriented sports bar’s business model. It is logical that such an organization should emerge and thrive on the Front Range, which became home to the largest craft brewing market in the country at the start of this decade (Colorado Brewers’ Guild, 2011).

My four-year ethnography of female craft beer enthusiasts began when I became a regular attendee of Crafty Ladies’ events in September 2011. The focus of each meeting is a presentation by and discussion with a wide rotation of craft brewers who have proven to be unlikely allies invested in cultivating and engaging the female
consumer market. The 36 craft brewers and distillers from across the country and abroad who presented to the group during my research tenure with them are listed in Appendix A. Beginning with New Belgium Brewing Company, the first breweries to present to the group assumed the attendees would be inexperienced drinkers and attempted to give the women a basic course in Beer 101. The Crafty Ladies quickly disabused the pioneering brewers of that notion; most attendees were experienced and sophisticated beer consumers, and some were home brewers and beer bloggers, as well.

Within a months of its inception, the group gained a regional reputation among brewers as a room of affluent, professional female consumers who are intelligent, inquisitive, and demanding of in-depth information about brewing processes, ingredients, beer histories and business philosophies. The women come armed with questions about the industry and how each brewery differentiates itself from the growing competition in craft brew culture. Many attendees bring notebooks to document brewers’ presentations and take tasting notes, which lends an academic quality to some gatherings. The women in the group have extensive beer knowledge and informed opinions about what they like and what they do not, which they share freely. By the end of 2011, presenters eager to impress the potential customers and outspoken opinion leaders in the club began to implement elaborate tasting experiences for the Crafty Ladies. Brewers went to great lengths to give the women in the group unique offerings like cellared brews, limited edition beers, special releases, and food pairings with homemade recipes that featured their beers as an ingredient to demonstrate the gastronomic flexibility of their products. By 2012, the guest brewers had established a
pattern where each of them attempts to up the ante and outdo the efforts of those before them with in-depth information and unique samplings of their offerings. The expectations and competition are so high that brewers scheduled for future months often sit in to observe the presentation of breweries on the docket before them so they know what to expect with the Crafty Ladies.

A little more than a year into its existence, the Crafty Ladies experienced two milestones. The first was the addition of a piece of artwork featuring the Crafty Ladies’ orange-and-green hops logo to the wall of the back room that has served as the group’s meeting space in spring 2012. Created by a local female artist and attendee and made from discarded craft beer bottle caps mounted on a sheet of brushed steel, the sculpture is a focus of pride and attention and often is photographed by new participants. The installation signifies the permanence and importance of the Crafty Ladies organization at the Highland Tap and the status of the meeting room as a sacred site for the secular group with the logo as a locus of devotion (Pike, 2008).

In April 2012, the Highland Tap and Burger also launched an independent website for the Crafty Ladies and instituted a new membership and admission structure for its events. Prior to this change, women could RSVP online for free until the event reached the room’s maximum capacity of 40 people; every meeting was fully booked within a few hours of each invitation. The new structure included an admission fee of $7.50 in advance or $10 at the door, and a two-tier annual membership was

---

21 General admission to Crafty Ladies events is currently $10 in advance, and tickets are no longer available at the door, because each meeting sells out immediately.
established for members who wanted to make a long-term commitment to the club and receive special benefits. In 2013, the membership structure consolidated into only advance-purchase general admission tickets and a $150 annual VIP membership tier limited to 12 women who hold their memberships indefinitely until they choose to relinquish their slots to someone else. Both the logo artwork and the institution of membership marked the club’s establishment as a permanent, invested fixture at the Highland Tap.

The club meetings usually involve five or six rounds of three-ounce beer tastings from bottles and pitchers shared by the women seated at various tables. The majority of attendees are white, professional, middle-class women, most of them in their late 20s through early 40s. In more than four years with the Crafty Ladies, I never met a woman who did not have a college degree, and most of my table mates held graduate and terminal degrees in their job fields. While some attendees arrive in pairs or with small groups of friends, most women attend the club meetings alone and strike up conversations with the other individuals around them during the 90-minute gatherings.

Unlike other female beer enthusiast groups on the Front Range, the Crafty Ladies’ home base is a restaurant rather than a brewery, and the women view their brand-agnostic, female-dominated space as their “turf” onto which they invite the largely-male guest brewers. Over the years, attendees likened the Crafty Ladies’ social structure to a book club in their conversations with me. The meetings are a space where

---

22 VIP membership guarantees pre-paid admission to monthly tasting events, access to VIP-only tastings and brewing days, discounts on food and drink, and guest tickets. I became a VIP member in April 2012.
strangers come together and bond over a shared interest or experience, only in this case, the experience is beer instead of the latest bestseller. I noticed an increase in interpersonal bonding within the group and a more familiar social atmosphere in the room with the implementation of the new membership structure. Other women agreed with my assessment and attributed it to the fact that investment in long-term, paid membership guaranteed a group of recognizable regulars attended the meetings. Repeat attendance allowed the women to get to know one another and build relationships with each other, even if those relationships only took place at the monthly meetings. Despite their similar demographics, attendees repeatedly asserted that the women they met at Crafty Ladies’ gatherings had nothing in common and no prior or outside relationships except the time they spent together at the Highland Tap, so the meetings were a little like Vegas – what happened there, stayed there – and what happened there was hardcore intellectual engagement with craft beer and a shared love of its culture.

**Ales 4 Females**

After three years as a Crafty Lady, I extended my ethnography to include a second female craft beer enthusiast group in May 2014. Located in northern Boulder County, Ales 4 Females differs from Crafty Ladies in its connection to a craft brewery, in its membership, and in the content of the meetings.

Whereas the Crafty Ladies meet in the brewery-neutral ground of a restaurant that serves dozens of bottled and tap craft beers and invites a variety of brewers to come into their space to present to its members, Ales 4 Females is the property of the
Left Hand Brewing Company in Longmont, Colorado and only drinks Left Hand beers at the meetings. Established in 2008, the group is a personal project of female Left Hand co-owner Cinzia Wallace, who despaired at the brewery’s all-male tap room patronage 15 years after the brewery’s opening. Wallace wanted to diversify her tap room and make the brewery experience friendlier for her female friends who thought breweries were a boys’ club and felt more comfortable drinking beer at home. Ales 4 Females had an initial focus on beer and food pairings, because Wallace’s friends enjoyed beer with their dinners, but once the group helped them enjoy beer and feel confident as drinkers, they naturally progressed to the tasting room.

Like the Crafty Ladies, Ales 4 Females has a dedicated space at the brewery in the large, barn-like tasting room located behind the public tap room. The rustic room accommodates 50 women at high white-clothed tables that seat 10-12 people on tall, wooden stools. Whereas the Crafty Ladies arrive to a full-set restaurant room at the Highland Tap, the women at Ales 4 Females set up and tear down the seating in their tasting room before and after each meeting, which creates to a sense of community and ownership of their space. This collective activity began with a few women who volunteered to help with the events in exchange for Ales 4 Females tickets and bar tabs in the tap room and eventually became part of the group culture, which is in keeping with the working-class community values of Longmont.

Ales 4 Females’ membership differs from the Crafty Ladies in both age demographics and membership attendance. Located in the larger, more diverse city of Denver, Crafty Ladies attracts young millennial and Generation X professionals who are largely single or married and childless, allowing for free time and disposable income to
attend beer events and indulge their expensive craft beer hobby. Longmont is a smaller bedroom town with an older population, and Ales 4 Females hosts large numbers of older women. The majority of attendees at Ales 4 Females events are often baby boomers. Their membership is almost exclusively white, and, while a few women I encountered and spoke with during my ethnography had graduate degrees and professional careers, many of them had associates or bachelor degrees and more working-class jobs than the women of the Crafty Ladies. Ales 4 Females has a large, loyal membership. While Crafty Ladies events have a few of the 12 VIP members in attendance among the 30 or more casual general admission ticket-holders, the twice-, and now thrice-monthly Monday Ales 4 Females meetings comprise an average of 80 to 90 percent paid annual members who often wear Ales 4 Females and Left Hand t-shirts and other branded merchandise.\(^\text{23}\)

Many Ales 4 Females members attend their tastings together in coordinated groups of three or four friends, and, while everyone is friendly, I felt like an outsider initially in a way I did not in the room of single women at Crafty Ladies. It took a few months, but I did eventually develop relationships at Ales 4 Females and began to get women to engage me in conversation, but being from Denver always made me the odd one out.

Ales 4 Females members perform a group identity that extends beyond their meeting space to their individual bodies and their interpersonal relationships, making

\(^{23}\) Annual Ales 4 Females memberships sell for $120 each December for the coming calendar year and provide pre-paid tickets to monthly events at a discounted rate, access to special tasting events, and a 20-ounce Left Hand-branded pint glass for discounted pours.
them a more closed system with a higher level of brand loyalty. Crafty Ladies does not have a brewery brand attached to them, they do not have t-shirts, and, for many women who attend, the tastings are more of an event where they meet new people and enjoy new beer than a third space in their lives. Ales 4 Females tastings serve as a girls’ nights for attendees – a coveted opportunity to get out of the house and enjoy an evening socializing with established friends in their local community.

Because a brewery is Ales 4 Females’ home base, the majority of the organization’s 2014 events only served Left Hand’s beers. Appendix B contains a list of activities and events I attended during that year. Whereas Crafty Ladies’ tastings involved exposure to a breadth of beers from dozens of brewers based throughout the country and across the globe, Ales 4 Females gives its members an opportunity to develop a deep relationship with one brewer and drill down into their brewed offerings and styles while developing close relationships with the brewery’s personnel. Tasting events in 2014 provided attendees an opportunity to try the same style of beer served on draft, on nitro, and from the cask, and gave them in-depth education on seasonal styles like Märzen lagers, enabling the group to do hands-on group experimentation with beer and food infusions (which was my favorite tasting of the year). Ales 4 Females expanded their 2015 activities to include other breweries but maintains a localized craft beer experience. Ales 4 Females also features fewer pours, but full pints, at their tastings; members spend more time with the beers they consume at events than at the Crafty Ladies do at their tastings, which offer multiple three-ounce glasses of beer.

Because Left Hand is a brewery and not a restaurant, it does not have a kitchen. Food pairings at Ales 4 Females are simple, small plates that include a meat
dish and a dessert delivered by a local Longmont caterer. These servings differ from the larger, full-plate proportions prepared by the Highland Tap’s chef as special beer pairings or served from the restaurant’s full menu at most Crafty Ladies events. The Ales 4 Females experience is more about a deep relationship with Left Hand’s beer and less about pairing with food.

Two other Boulder County craft beer operations, Oskar Blues Brewery and Avery Brewing Company, also have hosted in-house women’s beer groups, the Can Can Girls Beer Club and Sisterhood of the Hop, respectively. Their model was similar to Ales 4 Females’ relationship with Left Hand in that they did not invite in outside brewers. I attended the joint Crafty Ladies, Ales 4 Females, Sisterhood of the Hop, and Can Can Girls Beer Club parties at Oskar Blue’s Hops and Heifers farm in Lyons, Colorado in August 2013 and 2014. The Oskar Blues and Avery groups were both active in 2015, but these clubs now appear to be defunct as both breweries have increased their production, expanded their facilities, and moved their focus away from specifically developing the female market.

Girls Pint Out and Barley’s Angels

A third organizational model for female beer enthusiast groups on the Front Range bears mentioning, even though it is only tangentially included in this ethnography. In addition to the brewery-based model at Left Hand, Oskar Blues, and Avery and the brewery-agnostic, restaurant-based model of Crafty Ladies, Girls Pint Out and Barley’s Angels, two groups in the Denver-Boulder metro area, have no home base at all. Girls Pint Out is a national organization with a local chapter in Denver that
employs a crowdsourcing model that allows members to plan and organize happy
hours, beer tasting, trips to festivals, and other beer-related events for members who
RSVP via the group’s Meetup or Facebook page. Barley’s Angels is another national
organization with a local chapter that hosts tasting, pairing, and brewing events in
Denver and Boulder that are organized by a single chapter leader and marketed on the
group’s website and in their monthly e-newsletter. Due to membership overlap among
Crafty Ladies, Girls Pint Out and Barley’s Angels, my ethnography did include events
with these two nomadic enthusiast groups. Some of Girls Pint Out and Barley’s Angels
members participated in in-depth interviews, but their culture and organization were not
given close reading in the scope of this study. Appendix C offers a full listing of Front
Range women’s beer enthusiast groups.

Girl Talk: In-Depth Interviews with Craft Beer Enthusiasts

After three years in the field as a participant-researcher with the Crafty Ladies
and Ales 4 Females, this research moved to the final stage of data collection
methodology. I conducted in-depth interviews with 14 women who are active members
of the Crafty Ladies, Ales 4 Females, Girls Pint Out, and Barleys Angels, including
current and past organizers of the first three groups. A list of the interview participants,
their group affiliations, and basic demographic information about their age, generational
cohort, education level and race/ethnicity follows in Appendix D. While this research
protocol was deemed exempt by the University of Colorado Boulder’s Institutional
Review Board, all interviewees received informed consent forms prior to our recorded
discussions. The women who assisted with this data collection understood that their
participation was voluntary and had no anticipated risks or benefits. The names of all interview participants have been changed in the Appendix and ensuing text to ensure confidentiality. The aliases are pulled from the names of the 14 pioneering women in the Timothy Greenfield-Sanders documentary *American Masters: The Women’s List*, which aired on PBS in October 2015.

With the exception of one interview with two women, I conducted all interviews on an individual basis between November 2014 and June 2015. Our conversations took place at my house, in their homes, or at local coffee shops or restaurants, and varied from 45 minutes to three hours in length. One interview took place over the course of two days. All 14 interviews employed sample interview questions included in Appendix E as the basic structure for the emergent design that used probing questions to delve deeper into participants’ responses and gather rich data.

Respondents received a survey with 18 closed questions that gathered demographic and lifestyle questions at the beginning of the interview. The survey included questions about age, gender identification, educational level, ethnicity, political ideology, relationship status, reason for drinking beer, professional or employment status, preferred beer consumption location, beer they most often consume, media consumption, and social media use to determine whether there were demographic trends among the interview participants. The survey found that all but two participants identified their race as only white. Nine of the 14 women were married or living with partners at the time of their interviews. The participants were an even split between the Generation X and millennial cohorts; the youngest woman was 27, and the oldest woman was 39 when we spoke. All of the interview participants graduated high school
and attended college; only two women did not complete college, one holds an associate’s degree, and five have graduate degrees. All 14 women reported earning a minimum of $25,000 a year, and 11 had an annual income of over $50,000. The majority of respondents reported liberal political leanings and a feminist identity. Only one participant indicated strongly conservative political beliefs. All of the women were heavy media consumers, all of them reported having at least one social media account, and all but one was a heavy social media user. Six participants told me they homebrew beer as a hobby, and six have STEM-field careers; the link between STEM education or careers and an interest in beer makes sense given the science used in the brewing process. The participants’ detailed responses also served as topics for probing questions and discussion as a function of the emergent design used for the open-ended interview. Appendix F includes the closed-ended survey questions.

The qualitative method of data evaluation allows for the development of grounded theory regarding the nature of the relationship between women and the craft beer market in an effort to answer the second and third research questions posed in this dissertation’s first chapter. I transcribed and evaluated the interviews during the data collection process to gain an overall sense of the meaning of the data collected and to conduct constant comparison for concurrent coding, analysis, and reflection (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Using the Glaserian school of grounded theory, I applied open and selective coding to identify emerging categories in the data and determine saturation (Glaser, 1992; Jones & Alony, 2011). I performed deeper subsequent reads for theoretical coding to allow subcategories to emerge and to identify major concerns voiced by the interview participants in order to build a theoretical model (Glaser, 1992;
Jones & Alony, 2011; Stern, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Once coded into five simple and substantive categories, I then highlighted the corresponding data in the transcripts, cut apart the passages that applied to corresponding codes and taped them to categorical sheets on my office wall to assess my developing theory and ensure alignment with the data (Jones & Alony, 2011). I then used my own experience with and knowledge of the craft beer culture gained through my ethnographic fieldwork as well as the theoretical framework of the larger project to find the grounded theory in the data (Creswell, 2007; Glaser, 1992; Jones & Alony, 2011; Stern, 1994).

Analysis of the interview transcripts revealed five major themes from the data collected. The first four themes address RQ2: What are the traits of female beer drinkers in the United States?: intellectual engagement with the beer, brewing process, and the business of craft beer; social engagement with other female beer lovers; the benefit of female bonding through women-only beer enthusiast groups; and the consumer traits of female beer enthusiasts. A fifth theme – the central role of social media use in the women’s relationship with both craft beer and other enthusiasts – addresses RQ3: what role does social media play in opening a space for women to participate in the U.S. craft beer phenomenon?

Intellectual Engagement

Both the ethnographic field research and in-depth interviews conducted for this research reveal that craft beer culture in the United States attracts intelligent and well-educated women. It should therefore come as no surprise that women craft beer enthusiasts seek and derive intellectual engagement with the beer they consume and
through the time they spend socializing with brewers and each other. Craft beer groups specifically attract female career STEM professionals and hobbyist homebrewers who are interested in engaging craft brewers to learn more about the chemistry and biology behind the brewing process. Women with related interests and passions like gardening, agriculture, entrepreneurialism, and culinary pursuits also find an intellectual outlet in craft beer as a hobby, because they can learn about growing and using ingredients in beer and building brewing businesses of their own. Several women interviewed also voiced relief at finding a community that allowed them to be smart or “geek out” and “be nerds” in a way that rejected gender norms that often “dumb down” women. Female craft beer enthusiast clubs are an environment where women can find like minds who accept and applaud them for their knowledge and pursuit of more information. They also seek company with others who appreciate the “art” of craft beer and consume it with proper regard.

Many of the Crafty Ladies’ VIP members take notes at tasting events, but one member, Betsey, kept a large journal the other women collectively call the “beer bible.” Despite good-natured teasing about her journal, Betsey is considered the archivist of the group on whom everyone can rely to keep an accurate history of the Crafty Ladies’ activities and who is respected as one of the more incisive and inquisitive minds of the club. Nia plays a similar role at Ales 4 Females, albeit with a smaller notebook, and she and Laurie volunteer as “Beer Geeks” for the Brewers Association at the GABF each fall, walking the convention center hall to answer attendees’ questions about beer and brewing.
Within the category of intellectual engagement, the women interviewed repeatedly listed and described the complexity and variety of experiences and the value of individual tastes as a central trait and value of female craft drinkers. Despite now working for a craft brewery, Rosie only discovered craft beer in recent years and recalls the first time she tried a brew that did not contain ingredients that would exacerbate her recently-diagnosed corn allergy:

*I had that first beer, and I will never forget it, it was Dry Dock’s hefeweizen, and I had this like oh my God, bubble gum, vanilla, coriander, clove explosion, and ‘I said this is what beer is.’ I had no idea. I had been missing out. Then I started to find the complexity and depth that all these beers had. And then you got into style and specifics and beers from different countries, but now what keeps me into craft beer is the community.*

For Rosie, the community of her group provides an opportunity for exploration and learning with brewers but, more importantly, it gives her a chance to learn from other intelligent female beer drinkers who bring their own experiences and analyses to the table in ways that allow her to engage her brain as well as her taste buds. Rosie’s quote also demonstrates a clear intersection of intellectual engagement and social engagement in her women’s beer group experience. I chose to code this passage under the theme of intellectual engagement because that theme was predominant in this quote; for Rosie, the community the beer group provides is more about collective exploration of beer and learning from other women’s personal experiences with different styles and pairings than it is about socializing and getting to know the other women themselves.
Aimee grew up with a grandmother who was a fine-dining chef at a hotel in Germany, so good culinary experiences are as important to her as is a beer that allows her to explore her taste buds while learning about beer:

It’s also about food. It’s also about wine…and beer. There are so many things you can experience. There are so many tastes and so much variety, and it’s different, and it can be from one end of the spectrum to the other and so much in between. That’s why I think having someone ease you into it…maybe it becomes less daunting and maybe you will try something because it wasn’t so overwhelming.

Alicia celebrates that “craft beer brought like-minded women together.” She invested in a Crafty Ladies VIP membership because:

I like learning about the stuff behind the scenes. I like learning about a brewery and what they stand for and how they choose to make their beers. I used to really not like Prost’s Brewery, but then I went to their presentation and listened to them, and they’re still not my favorite, but I really like the thought that goes into their beer. They think of all the little details of why their beer is the way it is and how they want to present their beer, and I think that really interests me.

Nancy holds both sommelier and cicerone certifications and confesses that she finds craft beer and brewers are approachable in a way that beverages like wine and vintners are not. The culture is inviting, transparent, local, and accessible. Regular Crafty Ladies and Girls Pint Out attendee Edie appreciates the complexity and variety not only of craft beer but also in all alcohol as well her own drinking tastes. She loves craft beer, but she’s not necessarily loyal to it even while exploring its offerings in Denver:

I will still mix it up. I’m not 100 percent beer. It’s probably 75 percent. For me, it is more the flavors and mood. If I’m choosing a beverage it’s, ‘What am I in a mood for flavor-wise today?’ I’ll have beers that sit in the fridge for a while, because I’m not in the mood for it. If I have a drink at home it tends to be more wine than
beer. For me beer is more social. It’s the social aspect of it. In addition to taste, it’s checking out the breweries and checking out the food trucks, and the whole scene.

Crafty Ladies VIP Shonda is probably the most active, adventurous, and dedicated drinker I encountered in the female beer enthusiast groups. She visits different taprooms almost daily, plans regular “beercations,” incorporates brewery visits into her business travel, and her daughter visited 34 breweries with her mother in her first year of life. For Shonda, one core value drives her interest in craft beer and how and why she consumes it with a passion:

I like the variety. It’s funny, I never can go to a buffet, but I love the idea of a buffet. Like all the different options. But I never can eat enough. I’ll hate myself later. One of my favorite things in the world is a bento box. All the variety. But when it comes to beer, I don’t do tasters. I like my full pour. We don’t order pitchers of beer. We do have two growlers we fill and bring home for when we work on the house, but I usually don’t drink two of the same beer in a row.

Betsey is a Colorado native who cut her teeth on craft beer while an undergraduate at Colorado State University. As a woman whose first beer ever was New Belgium’s Sunshine Wheat, her nuanced palate developed at a young age, but her beer choices constantly change according to meals and seasons. She is a neuroscientist who finds that engagement with craft beer to be an experience of experimentation and analysis:

I think the biggest thing for me is taste. I’m fine drinking a high ABV, but one of the things I love is finding a sessionable beer that has great flavor, great balance, but is a lower alcohol content. But for me taste is most important. Do I like it? Is it interesting? Can I pick up on the different flavors? I like to try different beers. There are certain beers that go better with certain foods, and the cool thing is you just try it out and see. For instance, I wouldn’t have a stout with spicy food, but an IPA or a light lager would be great with spicy food. So that’s fun. And we’ve had those events at Crafty Ladies, and it’s great to see what beers go with what cheeses and just try new things.
For Toni, a Crafty Ladies attendee and Girls Pint Out member, engaging brewers at the clubs expands her intellectual horizons regarding the processes behind the planning and production of craft beer, because “it’s interesting to see everyone’s different take on brewing the same thing.”

Social Engagement

In her interview with Nia and me, Aimee succinctly summarized a sentiment repeated in various ways by several of the women interviewed: “I’m not a normal woman.” Over and over, participants told stories of how they felt they did not fit gender norms. Nancy related that, despite owning restaurants now, she’s not domestically inclined. The first night her now-husband stayed over at her apartment, he got out of bed to make breakfast for them in the morning and was shocked to find that the only items in her fridge were a four-pack of Guinness and a jar of pickles. Some of the women said that working in male-dominated fields like entrepreneurial business, information technology, and other STEM fields caused them to reject or subsume traditionally feminine behaviors. Co-workers and Ales 4 Females attendees Aimee and Nia confided that they like bucking gender norms, and Aimee told me, “I work in IT. It’s also a very limited female-penetration kind of thing. I’m a project manager; I cuss like a sailor and insult people at work.” Crafty Lady and independent business owner Madeline shared, “I often find myself in a boardroom with ten guys, and I’m the only girl in the room. I probably have always had a general dose of hanging out and having to fend for myself in all situations – work and life.” Similarly, Alicia said, “I became a [Crafty Ladies] VIP because it was really hard to get in, and it was the first time I’ve really been
exposed to women. I’m an engineer. I work with men, and that is my life. Most of my friends are men."

Just as taste and variety are central themes for intellectual engagement, community and camaraderie prove to be pivotal and satisfying experiences that women beer drinkers seek from both craft culture and membership enthusiast clubs. While the two themes once again intersect, for some women, the clubs offer them an opportunity to develop elusive female friendships, and the passages quoted here demonstrate ways they prioritize relationships that also engage them on a cerebral level. Other members reported that they found satisfaction in meeting other women who shared their passion in a real space where they can spend time consuming beer together in a way that the media do not portray them. For Rosie, her craft beer experience is largely about other people:

*We have women who are so inbred in the industry. They own breweries, they’ve been in it for 35 years. And then we have these other women who are sometimes dragged by their friend, and I’m handing them their first craft beer. The one thing they all have in common is their desire to know what they’re having and be involved in what they drink. Beer is fun when you’re by yourself, but it’s better to drink it with someone else, it’s better to talk about the notes with someone else, and I often find myself far more interested in what I think about someone else having the same beer as me than I am about any other experiences. What got me in was the flavor, what kept me in was the community. Part of my enjoyment [of beer] is based on my peers’ enjoyment.*

Aimee expressed a similar sentiment about imparting her love of craft with other women:

*I love sharing in general. If I like something, I want other people to like it, too. If I see someone drinking Bud Light and they could be drinking and appreciating a really nice beer instead of this swill you’re chugging down, then I want to help introduce you to the possibilities.*
Betsey made the emotional observation that it is difficult to meld her craft beer connections with the rest of her social life, because her time with the Crafty Ladies is a special, and almost sacred, space to her that she chooses to keep separate from her other friendships:

It’s hard for me to bring someone new to Crafty Ladies, because there’s such a great camaraderie and I love the discussions we have. I know we don’t see each other very much outside of that arena, but me, I hold the Crafty Lady VIPs that have been here a long time close to my heart, and I care very deeply about each one of them even though we don’t do things outside of that usually. And so it’s hard for me to bring somebody in to that, because, not necessarily that we can’t have the same conversation, but you want someone to feel comfortable. We’ve been at the same events for years. I think Crafty Ladies gets us together. It’s a reason to get us together in the same room. We’re all extremely busy, and Crafty Ladies gives us that time when we all come together and instead of diving deep into personal stuff we choose to focus on the beer, because we know that the group wants to do that, and we don’t get that anywhere else. We look to turn on our brains together more than with our outside groups, but we do care about each other. I care deeply for everyone’s well-being, but I think it’s a place where we can take all the baggage and away and just use our brains. Backpacks off.

Nia explains that joining an all-women group was key to her learning process and that Ales 4 Females helped her develop her palate and feel more confident speaking up about her beer knowledge. Now, she and her best friend regularly text beer recommendations back and forth and, as previously mentioned, she volunteers as a “Beer Geek” at the GABF.

Edie considers her years of volunteering for event set-up and team captain role at the GABF as more than a hobby. It is a potential future career path:

I really thrive at that event. I really enjoy it and could almost see doing something like that. I’m intrigued by the craft beer industry and the camaraderie of it. Just the whole family aspect it. That’s why I love going to beer festivals, just the people and the brewers, and you get to have conversations about beer.
After witnessing Edie hard at work at the GABF first hand, I must agree with her; she does indeed truly thrive in that environment.

For multiple enthusiast group member Wendy, friendships are a pleasant result of beer clubs, but she attends to learn about the beer. Still, she admits, “beer tastes better with friends.” Alicia confides that she thinks craft beer and women need each other and that she wouldn’t meet women without craft beer. Crafty Ladies gives her access to “women who are smart, intelligent women who aren’t drama. They’re solid people.”

She and other participants also noted that the women they meet at the beer clubs have healthy drinking behavior that does not result in drinking to get drunk or accidental intoxication. For a group that includes several women with a family history of alcoholism, moderation and consistency are traits they value in their friends, and they actively seek safe drinking environments. As an adult child of two alcoholic parents myself, I was affected by the frankness of their words during our interviews, and upon reflection I realized that I felt the same. The fact that craft beer culture does not welcome or tolerate drunkenness is part of what attracts me to it. In my four years with the female beer enthusiast groups, I have never been drunk or seen any of the women drunk. As Toni aptly described, “With craft drinkers the attitude is never, ‘oh, where’s the next place we can get drunk?’ It’s not like that.”
Co-ed vs. Women-Only Groups

While not originally part of the interview structure, through emergent design, the one question I came to ask each woman with whom I spoke was, “Do you think we need women-only beer groups to allow us to drink separately from men?” Each participant replied to the question with a resounding “yes” and reported that they feel and behave differently when drinking in mixed company. Even though most of the women reported that male friends, boyfriends, or husbands either introduced them to craft beer or discovered and initially explored the beverage and culture with them, all of the participants reported that time to drink and bond only with women is as important to them as craft enthusiasts.

Some of the female beer drinkers’ complaints about mixed-gender drinking events included a sense of physical self-consciousness and intellectual insecurity around men when imbibing alcohol, especially a beverage that both they and their male counterparts think of as traditionally male. Every woman mentioned that issues of dating and romantic or sexual interests and expectations come to the fore when single men and women drink together, which was to be expected. I was surprised, however, to hear confident, knowledgeable beer lovers with whom I regularly share a pint mention social drinking as a potentially hostile space where they would be talked down to, talked over, objectified, hit on, and made to feel generally unsure of themselves. Several of them admitted that, while they sometimes drink with men and enjoy it, they do tend edit themselves at co-ed drinking events.

Probing into interview participants’ responses to this question, I learned that some of them had some concrete and personal reasons for treasuring their women-only
drinking spaces. Madeline made a direct connection to the effect beer advertising has had on women of the Generation X and millennial cohorts:

*Growing up in the 80s and 90s, there was a lot of marketing with T-and-A, there are an immense amount of ads that are heavily geared toward [sexualizing] me, and when that sort of image goes along with the product, I think women think ‘why would I drink that beer?’ It’s a little awkward.*

Wendy’s story of an experience with a past romantic relationship cut to the core in a slightly more intimate way:

*The one guy that I dated for a couple of years, you know, we were both really into beer. I think when I started dating him, he definitely knew a lot more than I did, and he joked that in the end I had far surpassed him.*

She further reported that her ex-boyfriend was jealous of the social life she built with beer and the friends and connections at breweries that exceeded his own. Rosie confirms that men might have a reason to have an inferiority complex around her club members and told me that, “I often find our Ales 4 Females far more [versed in beer] than men.”

The attached heterosexual women I interviewed love their male partners and husbands and enjoy drinking with them and their male friends and colleagues from time to time. Alicia, however, summed up the importance of female beer groups and the safe space free of the demands of gender roles or expectations of heterosexual romance they offer women when she said:

*Sometimes it’s nice to not be with the opposite sex. It just gives us that freedom. We don’t have to worry about impressing them or what they’re thinking. The conversation that goes on when you’re with a guy is totally different than when you’re with your girlfriends. Your girlfriends are somebody different. They’re the*
same body. They have the same experiences. They see society in a way the guys are never going to see it.

Women Beer Enthusiasts as Consumers

As craft beer is an intellectual pursuit for female enthusiasts, their knowledge about breweries, styles, releases, ownership, and business practices plays a significant role in the consumer choices they make at breweries and bottle shops. Female beer drinkers seek and develop relationships with breweries, and they expect responsibly-made, high quality, well-crafted beer from the brewers they patronize.

Wendy is the archetype of the active and engaged craft beer consumer who gathers information through first-hand experience. She constantly explores the craft beer landscape online and through word of mouth at tap rooms and restaurants that serve craft beer to find unique beers she knows she likes or wants to try with her friends:

There are places I know that get in limited release beers. So, I’ll go in my Facebook, because usually they’ll post things. I’ll see one or two things I want to get, and I go and I leave with six or seven. I collect beers, and then I try to find people to drink them with, because I can’t drink a bomber by myself.

She also acknowledged that the rich and competitive craft beer culture here in Colorado allows her to be adventurous with her consumer habits:

I think, with beer, it’s growing so much and changing so much, you never get bored. Maybe that’s not the case in all states, but I like the small batch stuff so go to a liquor store, and I never leave with something I have never tried. Some people may love to go shopping for shoes, I go shopping for beer.

As an employee at a craft brewery as well as a female consumer, Rosie knows that, “when you have transparency, you’re going to attract a smarter consumer, and smarter consumers are going to be vocal and loyal.” A wise brewer will court the female
beer market and use women’s knowledge, loyalty, and position as opinion leaders in their social circles to promote the beer they make.

**Social Media**

Across the board, every woman I interviewed for this study agreed that social media and the craft movement go hand-in-hand; the latter would not happen without the former. As a millennial, Rosie noted that social media is crucial for engagement with her generational cohort. She did, however, reveal that social media has been more or less useless for reaching the baby boom members of Ales 4 Females who are more likely to learn about events from fliers in the tap room women’s bathroom. Wendy said that Facebook is her source for learning about the releases and special tappings that fuel her compulsive beer-shopping habit.

Social media makes information about craft beer accessible to the general public and notifies the community about new openings via a platform that is cost-effective or free for both the breweries and end users. With rare, and often limited, exception among the larger operations like Boston Brewery, Kona Brewing Company, and New Belgium Brewing Company, craft breweries do not advertise nationally in the macrobrew-dominated mainstream print and broadcast media (Schultz, 2014). To fill

---

24 It is important to note the controversies surrounding two of these breweries and their status as craft operations. While the Samuel Adams brand helped pioneer the craft beer movement, craft beer culture currently questions Jim Koch’s multi-billion-dollar Boston Brewery’s status as “craft” because, in their perception, it exceeds the Brewers Association’s definitive “small” production threshold and yields a large portion of its revenue from sales of cider and malt beverage products rather than beer (Brewers Association, n.d.; Crouch, 2015; Sarris, 2014). Boston Brewery’s beers have fallen out
the information gap created by this lack of mass media advertising, craft brewers and enthusiasts rely on social media sites to find and learn about craft breweries, craft beers, and each other.

Most of the women interviewed reported that they started exploring craft via social media but have since come to rely on their own expertise and connections. Some participants stated that they used Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Untappd early in their engagement of the craft culture in order to learn about craft breweries, find events, and gain a foothold in the community. The women who continue to use social media cited the overwhelming amount of brewery information on Facebook as a reason for their disengagement or increased curation of their accounts. Multiple interviewees also mentioned privacy concerns about Untappd’s geotracking feature that allows other users to monitor their movements and locate them via brewery check-ins as a reason to not use the popular beer-sharing network’s app and expressed similar concerns about location features on Facebook and Instagram. Safety with regard to male proximity and socializing with drinking men remains an issue for women in the beer culture online as well as in real spaces. Several of the women I interviewed perceived a clear connection of favor with craft drinkers who view Koch’s highly-promoted push-button operation as a smaller, slightly folksier version of Budweiser.

In addition to being a small and traditional operation, according to the Brewers Association’s guidelines, a craft brewer must be small, traditional, and independent, which means that “less than 25 percent of the craft brewery is owned or controlled (or equivalent economic interest) by an alcoholic beverage industry member that is not itself a craft brewer” (Brewers Association, n.d.). Anheuser-Busch InBev purchased Hawaii’s Kona Brewing Company and its fellow Craft Brew Alliance partners, Widmer Brothers Brewing in Washington and Redhook Ale Brewery in Oregon, in 2013, which cost all three breweries their craft distinction. Since Kona’s television commercials aired in 2014, their inclusion in a list of craft brewers who advertise.
between limiting the access drinking men at large had to them and their whereabouts online and their personal safety within the bounds of craft beer culture. This is not to say that the women interviewed do not feel safe in the craft beer culture or that they automatically conflate men with danger, but, for some of the women interviewed, their need to limit the access men had to them and their interactions with beer online was quite similar to the reason they sought out the option to consume beer with other women in women-only spaces like Crafty Ladies, Girls Pint Out, or Ales 4 Females.

The women who are active social media users in the beer community tend to be producers of online media as well as consumers. Shonda posts all of her taproom expeditions on Facebook and documents most of her craft consumption there, too. Rosie, Nancy, and Betsey all identified as avid beer Instagram users and maintain that beer imagery is a powerful draw for beer enthusiasts, regardless of gender. Rosie stated that well-composed photos that demonstrate the rich color of a beer are key in the craft beer culture’s presence on social media; “It may be the closest thing to trying the beer yourself without actually getting to try it,” she insisted. Nancy supported Rosie’s claim with a similar one of her own: “Beer is so beautiful, and it comes in all different colors. It’s just so aesthetically pleasing. It really does enhance the experience. I always want to take pictures of my beer.” Toni offered a more practical last word on the subject at the tail end of the final interview I conducted when she concluded with, “for me, trying a new place is about a referral or knowing something before I walk in the door, and social media gives me that.”
Queen of Beers: Women’s Beer Clubs

But what of the exclusion of men from these new feminized spaces of craft beer examined in the wake of women’s own exclusionary experience with the corporate beer market at the hands of both macrobrewers and, by extension, masculinized beer-drinking culture? The ethnography and in-depth interviews here do not reveal a case of backlash, payback, or turnabout being fair play. Rather, the research discloses myriad social pressures, some endemic to the gendered environment around beer put in place by the marketing mechanisms of neoliberal turn, and some symptomatic of the larger gender imbalance in our patriarchal society. Extensive experience with these beer clubs revealed three reasons for the creation of a new, women-only gendered space in the craft beer culture.

The first appeal of these clubs for the women who join them is the special attention the members receive from the craft beer industry, which recognizes that women are a large market of engaged, networked, and powerful consumers who have gone long-ignored by their corporate competitors. As the nature of most craft breweries is local, small, and grassroots, these businesses depend on personal connections with influential and adventurous consumers who serve as free advertising through online recommendations and word of mouth within their social circles. Brewers understand that women present a market of both consumers and opinion leaders they can educate, groom, and win over through the captive audience of club meetings. Women who attend these enthusiast group events are treated with abundant respect and receive special access to brewers who seek to answer their questions and teach them all they can about craft beer. Members also get opportunities to try new and rare products, the
chance to share in unique experiences like high-end food pairings or brew days with popular breweries, discounts on brewery gear, and copious amounts of attention from a business sector who sees them as powerful allies. These beer enthusiast club offer an experience that would appeal to women in any market, but it is especially welcome to have brewers hold open a door women found locked to them for decades. When the women of these clubs walk through this metaphorical door, they find a new chronotope that turns the one seen in television marketing that targeted men for generations on its head and offers instead a new “Girl World” of intellectual engagement where brewers repeatedly treat the women who want to try their beers like queens for a day (Michaels & Waters, 2004).

While the new Girl World chronotope offers pampering, indulgence, information, and access with relation to the brewers and the beer of craft culture, women seek out each other’s company in the women-only beer groups they join. This camaraderie offers a place of sameness that extends beyond gender-based similarities to the shared experience of discrimination and alienation at the hands of corporate, neoliberal beer culture and society on a grander scale. The women who join these gendered craft beer enthusiast groups do so partly in retreat from a sexist world that judges, uses, and isolates them on a daily basis in an effort to sell products and partly because they were driven there by the media of a political economy that didn’t value them as consumers of said products. In this space of sameness, these women can come together to find strength and recover from the damage done to them by the gendered neoliberal attack they weathered as they grew from children to adults. Together, they can rebel against the masculinized corporate culture through a new, feminized craft culture.
Finally, women-only beer groups offer their members a sense of safety in a space that allows them to explore beer without being judged as low-class, unsophisticated, too masculine, or too lacking in knowledge or experience to be worthy beer drinkers. More importantly, however, these clubs provide a sphere of physical safety in a rape culture that tells them that drinking licentiously and enjoying alcohol in the company of men is a sexually-irresponsible choice that puts their bodies deservedly at risk. Despite their love of craft beer and general ease within mixed-gender craft beer culture, the gendered space created around beer for the last 30-40 years still leaves even women who are seasoned beer drinkers with the lingering need for spaces both online and in person that allow them to maintain their privacy and separateness from men when enjoying beer. Thanks to decades of hostile Hottie/Bitch/Absent portrayals in corporate beer advertising and classist, gendered television sitcom messages coupled with the larger issues of rape culture, women still do not always perceive the social ritual of beer as an equal or safe space where they can enjoy their drinks without fear of condescension, sexual advances, or other unwelcome male intrusions.

Admittedly, women-only craft enthusiast groups do present a conundrum in the new gendered spaces they create around beer. How do women who were alienated by the male gendering of the mediatized Beerverse and the real-life social ritual of beer consumption for so long justify the seeming irony of creating another, new space that accepts only one gender? Furthermore, how does the feminism of these largely white, women-oriented spaces in Colorado reconcile both the limited racial inclusion of these Front Range beer enthusiast groups and what appears to be their reinforcement of the gender binary? The fault in the former most likely lays with the methodology of this
research and the limitations of its current scope. While the qualitative methods of ethnography and in-depth interviews provide insight into the richness of personal experience, they don’t allow the researcher to wrap her arms around a wide sample. Between the small sample of both beer clubs and one-on-one interviews and the financial and time limitations of a Ph.D. dissertation that kept this research to the local geographic area of the largely-white Denver-Boulder metropolitan area, this study does not fully represent the diversity present in the national craft beer scene. While the Front Range is the largest craft beer market in the United States, it still is only one market. This is a story that has room to grow geographically, racially, and in the full scope of gender exploration in future iterations.

While none of the women I interviewed or encountered during my ethnography expressed anything but a straight, cis-gendered, female identity, this researcher did not fully examine those aspects of sexuality or gender at the beer clubs in this study; again, this is, in part, a shortcoming of the research design. However, for many of the women I interviewed, and the discussions held both in club meetings and during other social events that took place as part of the ethnography, feminism was a relatively new personal, political, and philosophical venture. Because of their nascent and exploratory individual feminist identities, as well as, for many of the women, white and straight privilege, issues of equal access for women, sexual objectification, and economic and political empowerment took the fore in discussions rather than more complex issues of intersectionality. This is not to say that the women I spent time with as part of this research did not have a clear sense of their own feminist identities and beliefs, but the introduction of this study into their personal experiences with craft beer and direct
exposure to both me and my academic work sparked self-reflexivity and broadened their exposure to and discussions about feminism, what it means, and who and what issues it includes (Sholock, 2012). Now, at the end of this current study, our conversations as a group and on a one-on-one basis continue to expand to include intersectionality and explorations of race, class, disability, gender, and sexual identity on a more personal and non-binary scale. Due in part to the time spent with this research, members of the group are eager to learn and absorb a deeper understanding of feminism, feminist issues, and feminism’s commitment to an inclusive dismantling of the patriarchy across multiple oppressive social constructs. This research is not the exclusive influence of these women beer enthusiasts’ political and philosophical expansions or self-reflexivity. The women in question are inquisitive media consumers and many of them established and committed feminists who engage feminism and the patriarchy in their own right. However, several of the women who participated in the interviews have since approached me to begin a salon-structured, community-based course on feminism and gender studies; perhaps taking on such a challenge will allow this research to grow and better and more fully address the role of the gender spectrum in craft beer with those in the culture.

**Drunk with Power: The Emerging Craft Identity**

In August 1997, Amy Harmon published an article in the Business Day section of *The New York Times* about the rise of fan culture and the growing popularity of fan fiction on the new technological and media phenomenon known as the Internet. For many who read the article at the time, it was a first peek at a long-lived, but
underground and transgressive culture known by few beyond the *Star Trek* convention set. Nearly 20 years after its publication, members of fan culture still hail Harmon’s article as a seminal moment in the mainstream acknowledgment of participatory culture. It also marks the changes the World Wide Web brought to the relationship between media producers and consumers. So, why does a dissertation chapter about women who love craft beer include a story about fan fiction? The answer is in this passage from Harmon’s piece:

> As much a template for communication as it is a creative outlet for excess enthusiasm, on-line fan fiction is a new testament to TV’s role as a common language in a society becoming both more global and more fragmented. It also reflects the power of the Internet as a grass-roots publishing platform, making every viewer a potential contributor.

> The mixture of the two, some media theorists say, may presage an information-age return to the folk tradition of participatory storytelling, which in earlier times spawned the "Iliad" and the legend of King Arthur. Or at least it may make watching TV more fun.

> ‘If you go back, the key stories we told ourselves were stories that were important to everyone and belonged to everyone,’ said Henry Jenkins, director of media studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. ‘Fan fiction is a way of the culture repairing the damage done in a system where contemporary myths are owned by corporations instead of owned by the folk’ (Harmon, 1997).

While most the most-often repeated and reprinted part of the above passage is Jenkins’ quote at the end, the entire extract provides an important framework in which to interpret the grounded data collected and analyzed in this dissertation. During the four years I have spent with the media texts that illustrate the creation of a gendered space surrounding beer consumption in American culture and within the community of resistance surrounding craft beer, I discovered that female craft beer culture, especially the enthusiast clubs within it, is a participatory culture. The structure, self-identity,
cultural, and media impact of the gender revolution in the craft beer market parallel the trajectory of fan culture in the past two decades.

Harmon’s passage, above, identifies several elements of cultural reclamation underway with fan culture that mirror the reclamation happening in craft beer culture. First, she acknowledges the hegemonic part of television, as demonstrated here with the analysis of television programming and advertisements in chapters three, four, and five of this project. She also notes the fragmenting media and the power of the Internet to turn media consumers into producers who talk back to hegemony and wield grassroots power, much as the women in the craft community do via social media today. Both Harmon and Jenkins go on to predict a cultural shift where the “folk” who were manipulated by the media wrest and reclaim control over stories the media have told about them to enforce neoliberal social control over the past four decades. Such an overthrow of cultural storytelling is exactly what craft beer culture – and women in that culture – do when they reject a media message that defines social beer drinking as a male activity and space. Such women choose not only to gather with other women to consume the forbidden neoliberal beverage but also to do so to the exclusion of men in the collectively feminized physical spaces of their women-only craft beer enthusiast clubs.

The traits of women in the craft beer culture and their use of social media found in this research match the characteristics of a participatory culture. The first qualifying measure of a participatory culture is that it must have low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement (Delwiche & Henderson, 2013). In craft beer culture, women express themselves with photos they post on easy-to-access and free social media.
Their diligent consumer research and spending is also a powerful form of self-expression and backlash against corporate media and macroindustry beer companies; in 2014, women purchased 32% of all craft beer sold in the United States, and almost half of those purchases were made by millennials age 21-34 (The year in beer, 2014). The craft market talks back to neoliberal hegemony with Instagram and financial support of a small business economy that successfully competes with corporate beer monopolies and degrades their market share with the help of the female consumers whom those monopolies alienated long ago with hostile media portrayals. Participatory cultures also demand strong support for individual creations and a system of mentorship, both of which the female craft beer enthusiast clubs demonstrate with their commitment to intellectual and social engagement that not only shares ideas and knowledge with each other but seeks to foster entry of neophyte craft drinkers into the fold (Delwiche & Henderson, 2013). The women in the beer groups investigated in this study feel an obligation and bond to one another that rivals their love for craft beer and shapes their identities as women, consumers, professionals, and community members. In addition to the characteristics of a participatory culture, these women’s beer enthusiast groups also exhibit a key trait of fandom – that of persecuted and stigmatized outsiders and “marginalized subcultural groups” who seek each other out to form a community and, eventually, a movement, in order to “pry space for their cultural concerns within dominant representations” for their shared interests and passions (Jenkins, 1988, p. 87; Jindra, 1994).

In addition to the distinctive attributes of participatory cultures and fandom, the ethnography and interviews with the women of craft beer enthusiast clubs on the Front
Range of Colorado indicate a feminist identity in the women as individuals, in groups to which they belong, and in the culture of craft beer itself. The growing participation of women as both producers and consumers in what have become male-dominated beer and spirits industries in recent years signals an increasing power and inextricable gender shift in the alcohol market as a whole as women rediscovered their traditional roles in brewing, distilling, and consuming drinks like beer and whiskey (Aubrey, 2014; Bryen, 2014a; Bryen, 2014b; Gilpin, 2015; Nurin, 2015b). Feminist outrage in both the press and the craft industry at a Bud Light label that implied the promotion date rape with the slogan, "the perfect beer for removing 'no' from your vocabulary" as part of their Up for Whatever campaign in the summer of 2015 resulted in Anheuser-Busch InBev immediately halting production of the offending cans (Alworth, 2015b). On a more individual scale, male brewers and journalists now speak out against dark corners of misogyny that persist in the craft beer culture, including beer names and label art that objectify women and sexist behavior by other men in tap rooms, and call for a welcoming and inclusive environment that not only appeals to women as potential consumers but recognizes that women everywhere are humans deserving of equal respect (Gordon, 2015; Hayden, 2016). The feminist element present in craft culture, recognizes that women are already part of the market and production processes that help craft beer rival the corporate macrobrew giants who used sexist marketing to chase women from the field.

Craft beer is not without an emerging identity crisis as its market share grows and diversifies, however. The increasing size and wealth of craft breweries currently inspire debates about the true definition of craft beer that reject brewers who sell their
operations to investors and corporate beer giants like Anheuser-Busch InBev (Alworth, 2015a; Crouch, 2015; Morris, 2015). Another effect of the crowding craft market is increased brand litigation between brewers where collaboration was once the order of the day in that community (Bland, 2015). As the craft beer industry grows, corporatizes, and, potentially, masculinizes much in the same way corporate macrobreweries did 40 years ago, it could face the choice to invest in its own destruction or embrace the internal feminist influence that advocates for the importance of individual experiences and relationships as well as the call to lead a macrocosmic cultural shift. Women in the ranks of craft beer culture see in the gender revolution of craft beer movement a responsibility to social justice built on the personal connections of a community that loves the beer and growing participatory and feminist culture it ferments. As Betsey, the keeper of the Crafty Ladies chronicle, explained in her interview:

*Craft beer essentially levels the playing field. Feminism is not just about women leading the charge. It’s about us all, through race, through gender, through ability, we all want an equal footing. We should embrace each other’s differences, but we should all have the same opportunities to experience the same things, and I think craft does that. I think we all want that feeling of camaraderie. More and more women I know are getting more into beer, because they do see the variety. They see they can find things they really enjoy, and that it’s not just one note. There are emotional things going on in that glass.*
CHAPTER SIX: NINKASI’S REVENGE

“Cynically pandering to millennials – a generation too young to remember when bad beer was considered ‘normal’ – isn’t going to cut it.”

– “How Budweiser lost millennials” (Schiavenza, 2014)

Brewing Dissent: Findings and Outcomes

This dissertation began five years ago in an effort to understand beer’s transition to a gendered space in the media and drinking culture of United States during the neoliberal turn of the 1980s. That objective expanded into an investigation into the impact that gendering had on the members, especially the women, of Generation X and the millennial generation, and a study of how social media and the craft beer movement now work together to dismantle that gendered space in the media and social practice.

Chapter one of this study posed three research questions. The first inquiry sought to know why and how beer became gendered male. Research question number two asked what identifiable traits female beer drinkers in the United States shared. Finally, the third question investigated how social media allows women to participate in the craft beer phenomenon and the re-gendering of the space surrounding beer in American culture.

This concluding chapter serves of a review of how the research herein achieved its goal to answer the questions this dissertation asks.

Textual analysis of white feminine portrayals in 1930s and 1940s cinema, white, blue-collar male portrayals on television situation comedies beginning in the 1970s, and televised commercials from the mid-1980s to the present charted a path from the new drinking femininity that emerged after Prohibition to a mediatized, neoliberal social space that limited beer-drinking depictions to a male activity on television and actively
alienated women with hostile female representations in commercials. These media texts serve as a road map from a drinking culture that welcomed and included women to one that not only worked to eliminate women from the social ritual of beer consumption, but needed to do so in order to sell and enforce a new neoliberal agenda that sought to convince men of their power and superiority with one hand while tearing them down and diminishing their social and economic status with the other in order to use masculinity as a tool of social control.

Beginning in 1929, the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform (WONPR) advocated for the repeal of the Volstead Act that the WCTU worked for decades to put into place. The success of the WONPR’s efforts in 1933 bears two ironic contradictions about the relationship between women and alcohol in the 20th century. First, in a connection to women’s past, the WONPR’s campaign for repeal employed the same argument that the WCTU used in favor of temperance: that alcohol consumption served as a threat to the home and community lives of American families. The WONPR turned the WCTU's earlier morality call on its head and argued that Prohibition was a failure that only increased drunkenness and the criminalization of alcohol only served to escalate the rates of adjacent social ills such as organized crime, violence, and licentiousness (Rose, 1996). Thus, by the 1930s, women, the very group that worked to make alcohol illegal in the United States, advocated for moderate consumption of the metaphorical “hair of the dog” in order to eradicate a cure that had only worsened its disease.

In the second contradiction, the experience of Prohibition, including its enactment and repeal, granted emancipating social and political power to American women,
particularly white women, which they carried into the mid-20th century. The irony is that a movement that focused on the feminine defense of children and the home both coming and going ultimately resulted in the new drinking femininity that portrayed a modern middle- and upper-class white womanhood that traded the mundane bonds of domesticity and the singular role of motherhood for sexual liberation, chic consumer tastes, and more egalitarian relationships with men of equal class status. This dissertation’s analysis of mid-20th century post-Prohibition films *The Thin Man*, *The Women*, *Now, Voyager*, and *Since You Went Away* and, later, the focal point women played as spokespersons in beer advertising on television in the 1960s and 1970s firmly establishes that drinking not only had a place in late-20th century femininity, but that femininity had a place in beer culture prior to the neoliberal turn that began to show its head in the media of the 1970s and reached its alienating and gendered fever pitch by the mid-1980s.

The media’s male gendering of beer took place on two fronts and in two stages. First, it employed beer as a condensation symbol of the intersecting terministic screens of economic class and masculinity through the television portrayals of working class fathers. Television advertising simultaneously launched the chronotope of the portable man-cave of the Beerverse in advertisements for corporate beer companies like Anheuser-Busch InBev and MillerCoors. The gendering of beer is not a long-established cultural characteristic; it is a recent social development, compliments of the neoliberal turn that received a helping hand from the transition from the second wave of feminism to the third. While Archie Bunker is a character situated in feminism’s second wave, his bigoted, slovenly, and beer-loving working-class portrayal was a direct backlash against
the women’s movement that played as a regressive comedic character rather than the vanguard of a new masculinity. The demise of the second wave of feminism in the early 1980s helped to make room for the neoliberal turn of that decade that took advantage of the lessened mainstream interest in social justice during the post-feminist years that held sway until the introduction of the third wave feminist identity of the 1990s to redesign and enforce binary gender roles as social control. The neoliberal 1980s’ focus on consumer culture and the individualism of the free market found its way into the Girl Power of the third wave as well and resulted in a new feminism that held purchasing power and self-expression-through-shopping as an avenue to female empowerment for the young women of Generation X (McRobbie, 2009). Meanwhile, millennial children grew up in the neoliberal consumer culture of cartoons targeting girls or boys, pink toy aisles, and the chronotope of the male beer space in the media. What is interesting is that the use of gender roles as both a marketing tool and an instrument of social control under neoliberalism in the 1980s and for the last 30 years has been both a backlash against and made possible by the feminist counterpublic.

Ironically, the second and third waves of feminism helped to make the gendering of beer a reality for the Generation X and millennial lived experience. The second wave failed Generation X when it bowed out and left the stage with the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment in 1982 and left the children of the late 1960s and the entire 1970s without a feminist movement to follow or fight for them in the face of neoliberal gender roles. On the other end of the spectrum, the third wave, for all its talk about the fabricated and fantastical nature of gender and a false binary created by “the truth effects of a discourse of primary and stable identity,” did little to tackle the damage
being done to all genders by mediatized, neoliberl masculinity (Butler, 1990, p. 186). Commercial and comedic portrayals of men as macho misogynists or irresponsible children of below-average ambition and intelligence who objectified, mocked, or estranged women in favor of homosocial drinking behavior or time alone with their beer harmed all genders in entire generations. The fact that this piece of critical feminist research is the first to tackle the gendering of beer more than 30 years after the neoliberal turn began to use the media to create the gendered space around the consumption of that heretofore gender-neutral beverage is a symptom of the neglect shown to men and issues of the masculine end of the gender spectrum by feminist movements.

While the historical and textual analysis conducted for this study revealed the decades-long process behind the how and why of the gendering of beer, the ethnography and in-depth interviews told a personal story of the direct experience beer drinkers have with both the product and the mediatized culture surrounding it. The theory and rhetoric of third-wave feminism may, at best, fail to materialize in praxis and openly confront the gendered, neoliberal marketing of beer and its effect on the social ritual of its consumption on political and academic fronts; at worst, feminism may have actually facilitated the neoliberal gendered space in both the media and in practice. In contrast, craft beer culture, by its very definition and execution, challenges neoliberalism and the mainstream advertising media with its intersection as both a fourth-wave feminist and millennial movement that incorporates an economic power shift as well as social change around issues like gender.
For several years now, corporate macrobrewers like MillerCoors and Anheuser-Busch InBev have seen their overall market share shrink to the point where they now only claim half of all American beer consumers while thousands of “small, independent, and traditional” craft brewers account for the other 50 percent of sales, but even more concerning is the fact that 44 percent of millennials in their 20s report having never tried a Budweiser (Brewers Association, n.d.; Schiavenza, 2014). Competition for young drinkers’ attention from other popular alcoholic options like whiskey and wine also accounts for macrobrewers’ shrinking sales, but the local, artisanal, authentic, collaborative, and personal nature of craft breweries and their beers offer an alternative business model that aligns with feminist values while simultaneously rejecting corporate culture and the limiting, stereotyping, and controlling gender role messaging in their mass media advertising campaigns. As part of their generational identity, millennials largely reject traditional gender roles, and men younger than 35 are less likely to subscribe to tropes of masculinity at a higher rate than women reject social expectations of femininity (Kott, 2014; Lopez, 2015). Millennial denunciation of gendered spaces and expectations also extends to a commitment to social change that seeks to redefine gender roles in social areas from the workplace to personal aesthetics in ways that broaden the cultural acceptance of third-wave feminist theory’s refutation of the fabricated nature of both gender itself and its constructed binary, particularly where masculinity is concerned (Applebaum, 2014; Brown, 2014; Schwarz, 2013; Thompson, 2014).

Craft beer offers consumers a small, local business alternative to patronizing massive, multi-national conglomerates that contribute to growing social, economic, and
environmental ills like income disparity, transnational labor exploitation, outsourced jobs, collapse of the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, the gender pay gap, sexist and objectifying advertisements, increased carbon footprints, pollution, and climate change. The prioritization of small, local, and environmentally-friendly economic models aligns with the values of Generation X and millennials who have been raised sorting their recyclables and buying hybrid cars in adulthood. Because it is built on small-scale individual wants and needs as well as personal relationships rather than mass-media advertising and multi-layered vertical integration, craft beer also supports feminist ideals with its commitment to sustainability, teamwork and collaboration with homebrewers and other breweries, equitable treatment of both labor and customers, local sourcing, educational opportunities for a wide variety of college students and community members, on-the-job training, family-friendly tap rooms, and a commitment to increasing the number of women working in brewing and other production positions (College students tap, 2015; Fixell, 2105; Hagerty, 2014; Hieronymus, 2015; Wu, 2015). The value of the wider craft beer culture’s exploration of historical, anthropologically-significant beer recipes from the past, rediscovery of forgotten traditional styles, innovative specialty glass design, emphasis on complexity over alcohol content, intricate and well-trained evaluation in tasting competitions, and the collective learning experience of community bottle shares is not only gender neutral but rejects the meathead, slacker male persona depicted in corporate beer commercials in favor of creativity, hard work, intelligence, and academic pursuits surrounding beer. Whether producers or consumers, craft beer welcomes the smart, the clever, the inquisitive, and
the engaged and seeks to enrich the lived experience of those who drink it rather than sell it as an escape. Craft beer is work and proud of it.

The inquiry posed by the second research question in this dissertation – what are the traits of female beer drinkers in the United States? – required me to spend extensive amounts of time in the beer culture and, specifically, in women’s craft beer enthusiast groups. In my experience on Colorado’s Front Range, the demographic answer to that question is that the women in craft culture are largely white, Generation Xers or older millennials in their early 30s, college-educated, politically liberal or moderate, middle-class, working professionals, married or partnered but childless, either working in STEM fields or with STEM-related hobbies, engaged with the news, and heavy users of social and other online media like commercial-free streaming platforms. They are savvy consumers who like to be well-informed and on the cutting edge with their purchases. When it comes to shopping, they are more likely to buy a beer or other consumer items, or patronize a business like a brewery, based on personal contact with the owner or seller, the promise of a unique or high-quality experience, or a positive first-hand review from a trusted personal source rather than be influenced by an advertisement. In fact, the women in these groups largely work to avoid contact with television advertisements. They make decisions based on individual experience and are discerning consumers who are willing to spend money on quality products and like to have an inside track on what’s new and cool.

Beyond economics, women beer drinkers, like the men in beer advertisements, are social and look to include other people, particularly other women, in their imbibing plans. Many of the women I spent time with in my years with the Crafty Ladies and Ales
4 Females mentioned a pattern in their social lives regarding gender: they often spend a good deal of time around male friends, who are easy for them to come by, male partners, and male co-workers; the last category was particularly common for women working in STEM fields that are dominated by men. Finding and establishing female friendships proved to be more of a challenge for them, because they encounter fewer female colleagues and because they have never considered themselves to be notably feminine or a “girl’s girl.” A shared love of craft beer and the single-sex feature of women-only beer clubs offer female beer drinkers a chance to build friendships with other women, which every woman in my interviews stated as a personal priority. Women beer drinkers enjoy having relationships with other women, and they particularly value female friends with whom they can share their love of beer and explore it together. Between their education levels and the intellectual curiosity endemic to craft beer culture at large, the women who drink craft beer are intelligent and curious, and the beer-related friendships they seek are more than just social; they want to meet other intelligent people who can engage them and beer on sophisticated analytical levels. Not just any woman friend will do for women craft beer drinkers; for the women in this market, their drinking buddies must be as complex as the beverages they share.

The relationships I saw form around me in the women’s beer clubs, and the relationships I built myself would be difficult to distill into a simple 30-second television commercial. I cannot help but wonder what impediment that presents to corporate beer companies and if it influences the fact that, while women increasingly appear in television beer commercials as beer drinkers in male-dominated party and bar scenes, to date, no beer company has aired a commercial features a group of women, and only
women, drinking beer together. I contend that the true change will come, and that the
gendered space established by the chronotope created by the neoliberal turn in the last
30 years of advertising, will end only when a depiction of female bonding that accurately
depicts women drinking beer together rivals all the representations of male beer
bonding that have aired repeatedly for decades.

While the women-only beer enthusiast groups present new gendered spaces
around beer, I contend that they work to break down the gender binary as they work to
dismantle the gendered space surrounding beer in the media and social practice. I base
this assertion on two observations. First, women’s beer clubs do not make
specifications about the definition of womanhood. In my experience, any participant who
identified as a woman was welcome, and gatherings involved various representations of
femininity. Second, my ethnography of the women’s beer enthusiast clubs I attended
found them to be gender-collaborative spaces where rooms of women sought to engage
with brewers, distributors, and others involved in beer production regardless of gender
identity. While the relationships that the members sought to build and deepen with one
another were primarily with fellow women, over the years, members developed lasting
contacts and relationships with the male brewers who presented to them, hosted them
in restaurants, bars, and taprooms, and brewed special-release beers with them. These
gatherings and projects functioned as collaborations between equals, which also
worked to dispel any misconceptions the men in the craft beer industry had about the
inexperience or lack of knowledge on behalf of women beer enthusiasts and
consumers. I must note, however, that women beer enthusiast groups are not the first
or only point of contact between women in the craft beer culture and male brewers and
other producers. Another feminist feature of the craft beer culture is the significant and growing number of women brewers and brewery owners in the industry as the brewing profession returns to its millennia-old, female roots, and the press women brewers and owners receive in beer publications due in part to advocacy groups like the Pink Boots Society (Bryen, 2014a; Bryen 2014b; Nurin, 2015b). Interestingly, brewers and other beer purveyors have found so much value in the opportunities that women’s craft beer enthusiast groups present to educate and connect with the growing market, that the Fort Collins, Colorado restaurant, The Mayor of Old Town established a men-only craft beer enthusiast group, The Gary Brewseys, in late 2015, thus beginning to level the gender playing field in craft beer – or illustrating a need to do so. It is significant that men would seek knowledge about and access to craft beer in what has been a male-gendered social space for the past few decades. This development may indicate that the access women have been granted to brewers and breweries in an effort to groom their segment of the consumer market has contributed to the feminization of craft beer culture as well as its feminist values.

While addressed relatively in-depth in chapter five, a final summation regarding the third research question’s inquiry into the role social media plays in opening a space for women to participate in the craft beer phenomenon is in order. Because the women engaging with craft beer through enthusiast groups engage with media that do not include television advertisements, such mainstream, mass media commercial strategy is a poor avenue to use to gain access to their purchasing power. Given the hostile and alienating sexist content of television beer commercials, many of the women who drink craft beer tuned them out long ago, as they realized they were not beer corporations’
target market. While all of the women interviewed and most of the women I spoke to on a casual basis as part of the ethnography used social media regularly regardless of generational cohort, those with a millennial identity relied heavily on social media to connect with people, businesses, and events. For an industry that functions with millennial values seeking young Generation Xers and older millennial customers, social media is the obvious route to eyeballs and word of mouth. Given that women in craft beer culture function as a fandom, in short, a participatory culture, it stands to reason that they gather and share information online along with other participatory cultures. Women beer enthusiasts are, by nature, wired, and engaging them online is how brewers let women know that they are welcome and valued as part of their growing industry. In short, the participatory and personal nature of social media has been the key to carving out a space for women in beer culture and undoing the alienating damage done over the years by television shows and advertisements. Social media and the craft beer industry today function much like Hollywood and the liquor industry did in the years immediately following the repeal of Prohibition, in that the online engagement of women in the participatory culture now establishes and reproduces a new era of drinking femininity in the wake the neoliberal turn’s social and cultural prohibition of women from the chronotope of the Beerverse. Finally, social media offers women an opportunity to engage with each other, express opinions about sexism in beer culture, and organize beer enthusiast groups in the first place and then bring a feminist identity and feminist issues to the fore in the craft beer culture online, which contributes to the influence of feminism in social craft beer spaces. This is not to say that craft beer creates automatic feminist havens, as the issue of women’s assertions for a continued
need for safe spaces surrounding alcohol and gender both online and in face-to-face social settings evolved as a theme during the in-depth interviews, as discussed in the previous chapter. However, I contend that craft beer culture engages feminist ideals, social standards, and business practices on a level not seen in other, more general drinking cultures and at a level not common for consumer culture on the whole. In part because craft beer culture lives, connects, and markets itself online, it functions as a larger participant community, and the participant community within it has worked to increase the feminist discussion happening within the larger collective. To this end, craft beer culture serves as not only an avenue to the undoing of the neoliberal market economy and the gendered social control it enforces through the media, but as a vanguard of the coming next wave of feminism that focuses on an intersectionality that is more inclusive of all genders and gender roles – masculinity as well as femininity.

**Another Round: Limitations and Future Research**

Research, no matter how passionately undertaken, has limitations, and I identify the following gaps in the methodology of this study. Historical research is limited by the distance in rhetorical paradigm and cultural experience between the researcher and her chosen units of analysis. A researcher who is not a contemporary of the media she is researching will always bring a perspective of her own age to the research, which creates an agenda, however unwittingly or unknowingly, that frames the research from the perspective of time rather than the period in which the media were created (Royster & Kirsch, 2012). Textual analysis has its limits in the micro aspect of a text with regard to its place in the macro context of social life and culture. Meaning-making cannot be derived from examination of text alone; therefore, textual analysis must be combined
with a wider examination of other cultural artifacts and data and is best framed within an ethnography (Fairclough, 2003). Participant observation’s limits increase with the elapsed time between event and transcription, an issue of both memory and perspective. The limitations with this approach can appear in the processes of registering, recording, and interpretation by the researcher (Schwartz & Schwartz, 1955). Interviews have limitations in that the data collected from them are not generalizable, and the general interview guide approach does not provide consistent data across interviews, because the less-structured format does not ensure that the same questions are asked in each interview (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003; Turner, 2010), requiring the researcher to be diligent in identifying themes in the data collected from the interviews.

With the conclusion of this project, it is necessary to consider what the research could not achieve and what the next steps should be to further address the social and cultural issues surrounding gender and the beer market. Because the scope of this current dissertation project limited the ethnographic and interview data collection to Colorado’s Front Range, future expansion of this research would benefit from a geographic expansion to include the national craft beer market and to interview brewers, as well. Thanks in part to a diversity of sectors, a strong small business model, tourism, and recreational marijuana sales, Colorado’s economy, in step with its craft beer industry, is booming. Most residents on the Front Range who have the interest and disposable income to engage in an expensive a hobby like craft beer are relatively affluent. Inclusion of beer enthusiast groups and brewers located in other urban,
suburban, and rural locales as well as those with greater class, race, and gender identity diversity would provide greater depth and richness to research on this topic.

This dissertation has racial limitations, as beer has a history of being marketed largely to a white population, and the craft brewing industry and its followers are an overwhelmingly white demographic. The racial and ethnic bias of this craft beer phenomenon, however, limits this project, and the geographical limitations of this current study contribute to its racial limitations, despite the fact that people of color have always been part of the beer market and are a growing segment of craft beer culture. The Denver-Boulder metropolitan area has significant Hispanic, black, and Native American populations as well as myriad immigrant communities, but, due to the overwhelmingly white culture here – especially in the craft beer community – non-white groups are rarely engaged in local craft beer activities. However, while volunteering for a more nationwide and international crowd during my three shifts at the 2015 GABF, I poured more beer for black, Latino/a, Asian, and multi-racial attendees than I had the pleasure to serve at all seven of my previous years at the GABF combined. The culture is not only more diverse in other locations, but that diversity is increasing quickly. In New York City, Harlem Brewing Company’s black, female owner and head brewer now has a regional distribution deal with Wal-Mart (Bronner Helm, 2016). In Los Angeles, Agustin Ruelas, Milton Ramirez, Adrian Ruelas, Adrian Gonzales, Raul Gomez, and Isaac Ruelas run Brewjeria Company, which brews beer with Latin ingredients like Nicaraguan chocolate and contributes donations of beer and funds to neighborhood non-profits (Afroxander, 2015). Harlem Brewing Company and Brewjeria are by no means the first breweries run by brewers of color, but their growth and success is an
indicator of changes in the largely-white beer culture. An extended study would include more brewers and beer drinkers of color in locations like New Mexico, Texas, California, Chicago, and New York. Given the particularly fast increase of Hispanic consumers in the craft market in recent years, such an expansion is necessary to get a full picture of the true craft beer culture as it moves faster than a dissertation can pace (The year in beer, 2014). Ideally, the next steps of this research would also encompass the role of women in beer cultures abroad, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa where brewing is still a traditionally female industry, and sorghum beer is made and served by local businesswomen known as shebeen queens (Edwards, 1988).

Finally, I cannot understate the challenge of researching an industry that is growing and changing at a fever pitch. The beer industry in general, and craft beer, specifically, became an unfathomably hot topic during the course of this research project, particularly within the past year and a half since I defended my prospectus and set my scope of work. When I began this dissertation in 2011, Anheuser-Busch InBev had acquired one craft brewery – Goose Island Beer Company in Chicago, Illinois. Since that time, the international beer conglomerate has bought an additional 11 craft breweries across the United States and in the United Kingdom. Six of those craft brewery purchases took place between January 2015 and April 2016, and three of the acquisitions took place during three successive weeks in December 2015.25 The

25 As of April 2016, Anheuser-Busch InBev currently owns the following former craft breweries: Goose Island Beer Company (IL), Widmer Brothers Brewing (WA), Redhook Ale Brewery (OR), Kona Brewing Company (HI), 10 Barrel Brewing (OR), Blue Point Brewing Company (NY), Elysian Brewing Company (WA), Golden Road Brewery (CA), Four Peaks Brewing Company (AZ), Camden Town Brewery (UK), Breckenridge Brewery (CO), Devil’s Backbone Brewing Company (VA).
corporate buy-out of craft brewers, as well as craft brewery mergers, partial buy-ins by outside capital investment firms, expansion of production facilities to the East Coast by Western craft breweries, and the sales of smaller breweries to larger ones within the craft industry happen on a near-daily basis in the current economic climate and constantly change the beer landscape as well as the political and social climate surrounding the beer culture. Within the national and local Front Range craft beer communities, debates rage about the definition of craft beer, what makes an authentic craft beer drinker, and the future of the industry. Meanwhile, Anheuser-Busch InBev wages a three-pronged battle to outflank its craft competitors with buy-outs, control of distribution, and pressure on retailers to limit craft shelf space (Tuttle, 2015). To add insult to injury, Anheuser-Busch produced and aired television commercials during the Super Bowl in 2015 and again in 2016 mocking the very craft beer industry they have actively acquired and the male craft consumer market who no longer drinks their Budweiser products (Vorel, 2016). Moreover, a potential SABMiller/Anheuser-Bush InBev mega-merger looms in the distance that would put nearly the entire macrobrew industry in the United States under one corporation. The beer landscape in the United States currently changes daily, which makes comprehensive academic study difficult.

While corporate beer throws money and more hostile, gendered advertising that fails to include women at its encroaching craft dilemma, the craft culture continues to grow and innovate and serve its community with inventive and collaborative recipes, philanthropic work and donations, and work to further include all genders in their consumer base and participant communities. Between the constant growth and quickly changing dynamics in the beer industry and culture, managing this project often felt like
wrapping my arms around an ever-expanding amoeba. As a result of the size and scope of the dynamic organism the subject of study became over the last five years, this dissertation had to limit itself to manageable bites in order to be able to chew and swallow its meal. Looking down the road, however, future study should further investigate intersections of race, ethnicity, and all genders in the feminist culture that craft beer works to create for itself and beyond, and incorporate additional ways that feminism expresses itself as it now takes the neoliberal, corporate beer culture head-on on several fronts. The craft beer revolution is a cultural movement helping to usher in the next wave of feminism and a new social order of more egalitarian gender roles. Look for the feminist craft revolution online and in your local tap room, however, because, this time, it will not to be televised.
REFERENCES


Sherman, M. (1985). We can share the women, we can share the wine: The regulation of alcohol advertising on television. *Southern California Law Review*, 58, 1107-1145.


APPENDIX A


Alaskan Brewing Company
Avery Brewing Company*
Blue Moon Brewing Company
Boulder Beer Company*
Breckinridge Brewery
Caution Brewing Company
Crazy Mountain Brewery
Denver Beer Company
Deschutes Brewery
Diebolt Brewing Company*
Elevation Beer Company
Epic Brewing Company* **
Factotum Brewhouse
Fate Brewing**
Firestone Walker Brewing Company*
Former Future Brewing Company*
Great Divide Brewing Company
Goose Island Brewery
Joyride Brewing Company**

Lagunitas Brewing Company
Left Hand Brewing Company*
Moa Brewing Company
Mockery Brewing
New Belgium Brewing Company*
Ninkasi Brewing Company
Odell Brewing Company**
Oskar Blues Brewery* **
Prost Brewing Company
Ratio Beerworks
Renegade Brewing Company*
River North Brewery
Ska Brewing Company
Spring 44 Distilling Company
Stone Brewing Company*
Twisted Pine Brewing Company
Upslope Brewing Company* **
Wynkoop Brewing Company

* Presented to Crafty Ladies more than once
** Hosted Crafty Ladies to brew special-release collaboration beers
APPENDIX B

Ales 4 Females Presentations (2011)

- Sensory training using Left Hand’s Polestar Pilsner
- Screening of independent film *Crafting a Nation* (2013)
- Comparison of Left Hand cask beers, draft beers, and nitro beers
- Sexism and beer
- Oktoberfest & Left Hand’s Märzen-style Lager
- Hops and International Bittering Units (IBUs)
- Food infusion experiments with four Left Hand beers
- Left Hand quality control processes
APPENDIX C

Front Range Women’s Beer Enthusiast Groups (December 2015)

Boulder County, CO
Left Hand Brewing Company’s Ales 4 Females
Avery Brewing Company’s Sisterhood of the Hop
Oskar Blues Brewery’s Can Can Girls Club
Barley’s Angels, Boulder

Colorado Springs, CO
Brew Divas

Denver, CO
Highland Tap and Burger’s Crafty Ladies
Barley’s Angels, Denver
Girls Pint Out, Denver
Hopped Up Dames
Factotum Brewhouse’s Women-Only Craft Beer Classes

Fort Collins, CO
The Mayor of Old Town’s Beer Bettys
## APPENDIX D

### In-Depth Interview Participants (November 2014-June 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alias</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Group Membership(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rosie</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>Hispanic/White</td>
<td>Graduate degree</td>
<td>Ales 4 Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Graduate degree</td>
<td>Crafty Ladies*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeline</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Four-year degree</td>
<td>Crafty Ladies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nia</td>
<td>33-37</td>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Four-year degree</td>
<td>Ales 4 Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aimee</td>
<td>33-37</td>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>Ales 4 Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>Ales 4 Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Four-year degree</td>
<td>Crafty Ladies*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edie</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Four-year degree</td>
<td>Crafty Ladies Girls Pint Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Associate’s degree</td>
<td>Crafty Ladies Girls Pint Out Barley’s Angels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shonda</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Four-year degree</td>
<td>Crafty Ladies*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Graduate degree</td>
<td>Crafty Ladies*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toni</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>Black/White</td>
<td>Four-year degree</td>
<td>Girls Pint Out Crafty Ladies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betsey</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Graduate degree</td>
<td>Crafty Ladies*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloria</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Graduate degree</td>
<td>Crafty Ladies*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Crafty Ladies VIP member
APPENDIX E

Sample Interview Questions

What about beer excites you?

What other things are you passionate about?

What does being a part of [enthusiast group(s)] mean to you?
  • How did you discover this group?
  • What have you learned about beer as part of this group?
  • What do you like about this group and why?
  • What would you change and why?
  • What other similar groups are you part of?

Tell me about your beer drinking habits.
  • What kind of beer do you drink?
  • Who do you usually drink beer with?

What do you think makes craft beer a favorite among women?
  • How do you think that came about?
  • How did you come to like craft beer?

Some people argue that women beer drinkers are different from men who drink beer. What are your thoughts on that?
  • In what way?

What do you think has led to craft beer as a woman’s drink of choice?

What are your favorite social media sites and why do you choose to use them?

Tell me how you use social media.
  • What do you like most about social media?
  • How often do you use each site?
  • Which is your favorite site and why?
  • Who is in your social network?
  • What do you like to see on social media?
  • What do you share on social media?

Tell me about something new you learned on social media that you might not have become aware of otherwise.
  • How did you learn about it?
  • Who shared it with you?
  • What did you do with your new knowledge?
As a woman who enjoys beer, what online networks for beer drinkers are you a part of?

- How did you discover them?
- How do you engage with them? How often?
APPENDIX F

Closed ended survey questions

Instructions: For each question below either circle or fill-in your answer.

What is your gender?
1. Male
2. Female
3. Other ____________________________
4. Prefer not to answer

What is your age group?
1. 21-26 years old
2. 26-32 years old
3. 33-37 years old
4. 38-43 years old
5. 44-49 years old
6. 50-54 years old
7. 55-59 years old
8. 60-64 years old
9. 65-69 years old
10. 70+ years old

What is the highest level of education you have attained?
1. Some high school
2. High school diploma/GED
3. Some college
4. Associate’s degree
5. Four-year college degree
6. Graduate or professional degree
7. Prefer not to answer
What is your race?

1. White
2. Black or African American
3. American Indian or Alaskan Native
4. Asian
5. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
6. Other race(s) ________________________________________
7. Two or more races
8. Don't know
9. Prefer not to answer

Please list any ethnic identity or identities you would like to share.

1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. Don't know
6. Prefer not to answer

Politically speaking, do you consider yourself to be:

1. Strongly liberal
2. Somewhat liberal
3. Moderate
4. Somewhat conservative
5. Strongly conservative
6. Other ________________________________
7. Don’t know
8. Prefer not to answer
I identify as a feminist.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. I don’t know
7. Prefer not to answer

Into which of the following categories does your individual annual income fall?

1. Less than $25,000
2. $25,001-$50,000
3. $50,001-$75,000
4. $75,001-$100,000
5. $100,001 or more
6. Prefer not to answer

What is your relationship status?

1. Single
2. Partnered
3. Married
4. Divorced
5. Separated
6. Widowed
7. Other ________________________________
8. Prefer not to answer
What is your employment status? (Indicate all that apply)

1. Employed full-time
2. Employed part-time
3. Self-employed
4. Business owner
5. Unemployed
6. Searching for employment
7. Retired
8. Full-time student
9. Part-time student

If you are working or running a business, what do you do?

If you are a student, where do you attend school, and what do you study?

Why do you consume beer? (Indicate all that apply)

1. Taste
2. Alcoholic effects
3. Food pairings
4. Social aspects/my friends like to drink it
5. I brew it
6. It helps me meet people/build relationships
7. It’s popular
8. It’s my job
9. It’s a hobby
10. It’s fun
11. The culture
12. Other ________________________________
13. I don’t know
14. Prefer not to answer
What do you look for in a beer? (Indicate all that apply)

1. Taste
2. High ABV
3. Low ABV
4. Low calories
5. Low carbohydrates
6. Pairing with food
7. Particular style(s) ________________________________
8. Particular brand(s) ________________________________
9. Uniqueness
10. Rareness
11. Newness
12. Brand recognition
13. Reliability/knowing what to expect
14. Interesting names
15. Interesting labels
16. Other ________________________________
17. I don’t know
18. Prefer not to answer
What social media sites do you use? (Indicate all that apply)

1. Facebook
2. Flickr
3. Google+
4. Instagram
5. LinkedIn
6. MySpace
7. Pinterest
8. Reddit
9. Tumblr
10. Twitter
11. Vine
12. Other _______________________________
13. I don't know
14. Prefer not to answer

What social media site do you use most?

1. Facebook
2. Flickr
3. Google+
4. Instagram
5. LinkedIn
6. MySpace
7. Pinterest
8. Reddit
9. Tumblr
10. Twitter
11. Vine
12. Other _______________________________
13. I don't know
14. Prefer not to answer
What other media do you regularly consume? (Indicate all that apply)

1. Network/broadcast television
2. Cable/satellite television
3. Netflix
4. Hulu
5. Amazon Prime
6. Other streaming service ________________________________
7. Commercial broadcast radio
8. Public broadcast radio (NPR)
9. Satellite radio (SirusXM)
10. Internet radio
11. Pandora
12. Spotify
13. LastFM
14. Downloaded/purchased music
15. Films in the theater
16. Films at home
17. Films and television on mobile devices
18. Purchased/downloaded films and television
19. E-books
20. Paper books
21. E-magazines
22. Paper magazines
23. Prefer not to answer
Which of the following have you done in the last six months? (Indicate all that apply)

1. Seen a film in the theater
2. Watched a film at home
3. Watched an entire television series
4. Purchased a paper book
5. Purchased an e-book
6. Purchased music
7. Purchased a magazine issue
8. Held a magazine subscription
9. Joined a new social media site
10. Left a social media site
11. Purchased a new tech device
12. Tried a new restaurant
13. Tried a new bar
14. Attended a beer festival
15. Taken a vacation
16. Traveled to a new city/location in the U.S.
17. Traveled internationally
18. Attended a sporting event
19. Participated in an athletic event
20. Purchased a new beer
21. Brewed a beer
22. Prefer not to answer