

Imperial Pubs: British American Taverns as Spaces of Empire, 1700-1783

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Imperial Pubs: British American Taverns as Spaces of Empire, 1700-1783 employs the North American tavern space to investigate how colonists connected with the British Empire, and in turn, understood their position(s) in local and global networks. Utilizing taverns as microcosms of colonial society, the dissertation argues that British American taverns were far more than small drinking establishments on the fringe of Empire—they were centers of Imperial connection, understanding, and ultimately contestation. Colonial taverngoers read tracts from London and beyond; consumed beverages made of products from around the world such as coffee, tea, chocolate, rum punch, and wine; conversed with foreigners and fellow Britons; sent and received transatlantic mail; booked trips to far off places; debated myriad cosmopolitan topics; penned politically charged manifestos; and attended balls, concerts, lectures, clubs, and art exhibitions. Taverngoers also appropriated the tavern space around them to reposition themselves in the colonial hierarchy by retiring into exclusive tavern rooms, enacting exclusionary drinking rituals, opening their own taverns, and sometimes fighting. More than any other public space, early American taverns helped colonists assert themselves initially as ardent British subjects and later as revolutionary Republicans.

Understanding early American taverns as both reflections of and influences on colonists' Imperial desires advances our understanding of early American society in multiple ways. First, by revealing colonial taverngoers' intense urge for global connections, the dissertation challenges colonial American historians to broaden their geographical and ideological canvas beyond the thirteen colonies. As the colonies erupted into Revolution, however, patriots transformed American taverns into centers of resistance against the Empire they had previously embraced. Second, then, the dissertation urges historians of the revolutionary era to more seriously consider taverns as fundamental in the transformation from imperial to republican society. Third, the international direction of the dissertation pushes historians to reconsider the "Atlantic world" model as a *process* of imperialism and globalization more than a geographically limited field of study. A transatlantic perspective, "Imperial Pubs" contends, is more useful when understood within and in conjunction with global processes and networks, almost all of which were made possible by imperialism.

For Craig and Susan Scribner

Your unending support, sacrifice, and love have always kept my vision steady.

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Introduction

After spending the morning of June 8, 1744 reading “a strange medley” of French and English literature, Dr. Alexander Hamilton—an upper class Annapolis doctor traveling the northeastern American seaboard to combat tuberculosis—visited a Philadelphia tavern for lunch. Within the tavern’s dim confines Hamilton found a seat at an oblong table with a “mixed company” of “Scots, English, Dutch, Germans, and Irish... Roman Catholicks, Church men, Presbyterians, Quakers, Newlightmen, Methodists, Seventh day men, Moravians, Anabaptists, and one Jew.” As the men’s bellies felt full and their spirits light, the twenty taverngoers “of different nations and religions” divided into conversations on politics and the possibility of a French war. Hamilton eavesdropped on a group of Quakers ardently debating flour prices and religion while a gentleman next to him inquired about news from Maryland. Having enjoyed his fill of this “mixed” company, Hamilton joined some friends in the afternoon to observe privateering and shipping vessels in Philadelphia’s bustling harbor. After marveling at the myriad tall-mast ships, Hamilton proceeded to yet another tavern in the evening where he enjoyed a dish of coffee with his confidant, Mr. Hasell. When Hamilton and Hasell had sipped coffee for “an hour or two,” Dr. Phineas Bond escorted Hamilton to the Tun Tavern and introduced him to the “Governour’s Club,” which Hamilton described as “a society of gentlemen that met at a tavern every night and converse[d] on various subjects.” Hamilton remarked that in this club the “conversation was entertaining” as they debated the works of “the English poets and some of the foreign writers, particularly Cervantes.” At eleven o’ clock Hamilton went home, thus ending his busy, informative day.¹

¹ Alexander Hamilton, *Gentleman’s Progress: The Itinerarium of Dr. Alexander Hamilton, 1744*, ed. Carl Bridenbaugh (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1948), 20-21.

Hamilton's June 8, 1744 diary entry opens a window onto early American colonists' Imperial urges. In this study, I argue that British American taverns were far more than small drinking establishments on the fringe of Empire. They were centers of Imperial connection for colonists who ardently craved association with the British Empire. Such an international perspective redirects scholarly understanding of colonial American taverns while also confronting historians' use of the Atlantic world model.² As Hamilton's experiences on June 8, 1744 suggest, British American taverns were important spaces for colonists who increasingly found their identities tied to the Empire during the eighteenth century.³ Hamilton visited a tavern for lunch where he met with a "mixed company" of taverngoers who repeatedly debated Imperial matters. In the afternoon Hamilton enjoyed a dish of coffee—a beverage made possible and encouraged by the Empire—in another tavern. Finally, Hamilton convened with a group of elites in yet another tavern to participate in a gentlemen's club. The following pages examine how connecting with and challenging various Imperial currents like public development, hierarchy, consumerism, and cosmopolitanism allowed colonial taverngoers of every class and creed to profess their intense dedication to—and ultimate rupture with—the British Empire.⁴ Only

² Throughout this document I will capitalize Empire, Imperial, and Imperialism since I am referring to the British Empire in particular.

³ For more on colonists' ties to the Empire in the eighteenth century, see Richard L. Merritt, *Symbols of American Community, 1735-1775* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 123. Merritt contended that most colonists were "viewing their land more and more as a part of [the] British community...the colonial image reflected substantial decreases in sentiments of separate identity and, by implication, an increased readiness to accept symbolic ties to the mother country." In the spring of 1748, the *Maryland Gazette* published a dispute between a "Native Marylander" and "Americano-Britannus." Although proud of his native status, the Marylander was sure to state that "he prides himself more in being descended from British ancestors." Robert Micklus, *The Comic Genius of Dr. Alexander Hamilton* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 5-6 (quote).

⁴ Throughout this project, the terms hierarchy, status and class will be used interchangeably—often combined with descriptors like artisan or laboring, lower, middle, upper, or elite—in order to develop a hierarchical colonial system. The use of "class," I should note, is not in the assumption that an industrial class-system existed in colonial America. Rather, it is used to show how colonists existed in an Empire portioned off into particular roles that occupation, wealth, and education dictated. I agree with Sharon Salinger's assertion that although "the elite was separate from the rest of society [*pace* Richard Bushman], the laboring class carved its own tavern niche." Sharon V. Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), n.1, 247; Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992).

through understanding taverns as microcosms of Empire can we fully grasp colonists' intense, ongoing urges for Imperial connection and how this interaction shaped the center and the periphery.⁵

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, Britain's reach spanned the globe as Britons exchanged goods and ideas with Asia, India, South America, and the Ottoman Empire, colonized North America and the West Indies, and constantly struggled to maintain the balance of power in Continental Europe. An evolving entity constructed by multiple agents, continually renegotiated and reconceived, and constantly challenged, the British Empire marked the lives of every one of its subjects. The Empire's strongest eighteenth-century networks, however, lay among and around the Atlantic Ocean. Within this "Atlantic world" the British Empire found its greatest and most condensed exchanges as well as conflicts in the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century.

Due to their commercial, population, and geographic centrality in the Atlantic world, the North American colonies became principal products of and causes for the explosion of the British Empire during the eighteenth century. Unfettered by the burdensome chains of the War of Spanish Succession, the transatlantic slave exchange and various other commercial trades expanded at an unprecedented rate. Communication networks grew throughout colonial America's urban centers and backcountry. More regular and rapid Atlantic crossings became possible, as did more expansive and available news, intercolonial roads, colonial newspapers, and a regular postal service. New England became a predominant hub for transatlantic ship

⁵ For more on the relationship between the "colony" and the "metropole," see Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda," in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 1-58; Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

manufacture, the middle colonies grew numerous crops and shipped them throughout the British Empire, and the southern colonies' tobacco enticed addicts from Charleston to Paris.

Tied closely to the increase in trade and communication was an increase in population. Harboring just over 250,000 people in 1700, the British American colonies had grown to more than one million souls by 1750 through forced importation of slaves, deportation of British convicts, immigration of indentured servants and middling farmers, and natural growth within the colonies. Philadelphia, Boston, New York, and Charleston, moreover, finally began to carve their position in the British Empire as centers of metropolitan development during the eighteenth century.⁶ By 1720, Boston had the largest population in the colonies with 12,000, while Philadelphia had 10,000 inhabitants, New York had 7,000, and Charleston had almost 4,000. Boston's population growth, however, stagnated over the next forty years due largely to its lack of cash crops and resistance to slave labor. By the mid-1760s, Philadelphia had become the most populated city in America, boasting 30,000 residents, while New York had grown to 25,000 residents. Boston had only reached 16,000.⁷ The colonies, their cities, and their inhabitants were no longer wholly relegated to the periphery of the British Empire. They became increasingly potent players in an already overpowering mixture of Imperial conquest.⁸

⁶ For more on British convicts transported to the New World, see Gwenda Morgan and Peter Rushton, *Eighteenth-Century Criminal Transportation: The Formation of the Criminal Atlantic* (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave, 2004). For an eighteenth-century commentary on imported convicts, see Benjamin Franklin, "Felons and Rattlesnakes," *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 9, 1751.

⁷ David Yeltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)

⁸ For more on the centrality of trade for the economy of British North America, see John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British North America, 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), "Chapter Four: The Centrality of Trade," especially. For more on English immigration to the New World, see David Cressy, *Coming Over: Migration and Communication between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). Gary B. Nash, *Class and Society in Early America* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 17, 4; James Oakes, et. al, *Of the People: A History of the United States, Concise Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 140; James Delbourgo, *A Most Amazing Scene of Wonders: Electricity and Enlightenment in Early America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 18; Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of an American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

Although the British Empire rose to global prominence rather quickly during the early modern period, such progress was not the result of some planned, progressive blueprint for Imperial expansion. Rather, the Empire was the culmination of confused, complicated human interaction across time and space. Studying the entirety of the British Empire and its relationship with the British American colonies, however, is a task beyond the scope of this project.

Therefore I frame British American taverns as microcosms of Empire in order to more fully understand how colonists related to and interacted with the ever-changing British Empire from 1700 to 1783. As the most popular and widespread public spaces in the American colonies, British American taverns served as fundamental nodes of Imperial connection and conflict for colonists of every creed and class and therefore reflected the Empire's diverse peoples, growing number of goods and ideas from a variety of local and faraway locations, changing class structure, confused identities, and ultimate rupture with the Americans.

This dissertation is the first step in a long process of fleshing out and more fully understanding the myriad ways in which British American colonists saw themselves within the ever-globalizing British Empire. I have thus chosen to utilize a somewhat micro lens—the British American tavern—to study such a macro topic as early modern British Imperialism. For purposes of manageability, moreover, I keep my eye to mainland North American port cities rather than investigating Caribbean port cities in Jamaica and Barbados. This is not to say that West Indian taverns do not merit further attention, only that the scope of this project did not encourage or necessitate such study. Since taverns were most accessible, numerous, internationally-affiliated, and contested spaces in the British American (mainland) colonies, I

have selected these spaces as the most concrete representations of the colonies' growing material, ideological, and commercial position in the British Empire.⁹

Although usually small, cramped, and dirty spaces in the seventeenth century, British American taverns evolved into spaces of and for Imperial connection by the eighteenth century. Not only did tavernkeepers improve the tavern space through decoration, but they also built larger, increasingly ornate taverns with more rooms serving more specialized, exclusive purposes. Furthermore, tavernkeepers provided a more diverse array of imported food, drinks, and services. Taverns came to generally offer food, drink, lodging, stables, and camaraderie. The “Great Room” of a tavern often boasted one or more large tables designed to foster sociability, while separate rooms were often meant for more isolated interaction such as club meetings, gambling, balls, lectures, or sleeping. Every room was outfitted with varying degrees of decoration ranging from simple tables and chairs to fine mahogany furniture, European paintings, looking glasses, billiards tables, and books. By the eighteenth century, colonial Americans taverns emerged as community gathering points as well as the prime stopping points for foreign travelers, centers of lower class revelry and upper class refinement, and sources for local as well as global goods.

Rather than framing British American tavern culture as limited to a North American context, this study investigates British American taverns as central nodes of Empire, which helps us to move beyond the limits of a local mindset and instead study the myriad—often

⁹ According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a tavern is “a public house or tap-room where wine was retailed; a dram shop.” Yet, the *Oxford English Dictionary* also equates “tavern” with “public house.” The *Dictionary's* definition of a public house is as follows: “a building whose principal business is the sale of alcoholic drinks to be consumed on the premises; a pub, a tavern,” or “an inn or hostelry providing food and lodging for travellers or members of the public, and usually licensed for the sale of alcohol.” Colonial Americans called taverns “inns,” “public houses,” “ordinaries,” “alehouses,” and “coffee houses.” Although inns, taverns, and alehouses held individual distinctions in England, British American taverns were a mix of the three, and thus did not garner such distinctions. In order to avoid confusion, I will refer to these spaces primarily as taverns, and occasionally as coffeehouses, which denotes a slight variation on the traditional tavern.

contradictory—British identities, networks, and ideologies that colonists grappled with from 1700 to 1783. Extending their research away from early-twentieth century historians who considered taverns simple but important community-building establishments, recent historians have treated taverns as frameworks for understanding the cohesion of colonial society, the development of a colonial “public sphere,” the growth of early American bourgeois society, the exclusion of certain groups of people from public life, and the maturity of a revolutionary ideal in the colonies. Scholars such as David Conroy, Peter Thompson, Sharon Salinger, and Benjamin Carp have thus done much to further our understanding of British American taverns’ central position in the early American colonies, but have not fully explored how these spaces connected colonists with larger, more complicated networks of the British Empire. In short, historians have done well in placing taverns as important structures for community, intercolonial connections, and Revolution, but much work remains to adequately place taverns in a global context.¹⁰

Although recently Benjamin Carp and David Hancock have begun to investigate taverns in a larger context, neither has truly examined taverns in from a global perspective. Carp touted a global outlook in theory more than practice, while Hancock opened more lines of enquiry than he

¹⁰ The late nineteenth and early twentieth century scholars Oscar F. Northington, Jr., Alice Morse Earle, Mary Caroline Crawford, and Edward Field considered taverns simple but important community-building establishments. Oscar F. Northington, Jr., “The Taverns of Old Petersburg, Virginia,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Second Series, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Jul., 1936): 340-346; Alice Morse Earle, *Stage-Coach and Tavern Days* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912); Mary Caroline Crawford, *Little Pilgrimages Among Old New England Inns: Being an Account of Little Journeys to Various Quaint Inns and Hostleries of Colonial New England* (Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1907); Edward Field, *The Colonial Tavern: A Glimpse of New England Town Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Providence, RI: Preston and Rounds, 1896); With *In Public Houses*, for example, David Conroy concentrated on New England taverns’ decisive role in the transition from Puritan to republican Massachusetts, while Peter Thompson also took a decidedly geographically-limited stance with *Rum Punch & Revolution*, arguing that in Philadelphia tavern culture was rather divisive until stratification took hold in 1750. Although somewhat diverging from Conroy and Thompson’s geographically-limited arguments by examining taverns “throughout the mainland British colonies rather than within a smaller geographic area,” Salinger still did not break the bonds of the North American coast with *Taverns and Drinking in Early America*. David W. Conroy, *In Public Houses: Drink and the Revolution of Authority in Colonial Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 2; Peter Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution: Taverngoing and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999); Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America*, 5.

addressed. In *Rebels Rising*, Carp contended that “New York taverngoers...used public houses as their conduits to the rest of the Atlantic world,” but devoted only one chapter to taverns in Revolutionary New York and never pursued this line of inquiry. After briefly noting that because New York taverns harbored close social and communication relations with “far-flung mercantile networks,” they became “intimately connected with the Atlantic world,” Carp continued his study by concentrating on local and continental contingencies for the rest of the chapter, which developed New York taverns’ importance in the Revolutionary War, but did little to advance his transatlantic assertions.¹¹ Until 2011, Hancock used British American taverns only as a side story to larger examinations of early modern, decentralized globalizing trends. By collaborating on a volume on British American and American taverns (a part of a five volume set, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World: Voices from the Tavern, 1500-1800*) with Michelle McDonald, however, Hancock became one of the first scholars to set colonial American taverns in a decidedly international context. By viewing taverns “first and foremost” as “businesses...complex community developmental institutions,” Hancock and McDonald built upon previous scholarship to establish taverns as “some of the most important spaces in early American communities because customers used them to create and maintain the overlapping networks that made up their communities.” Moreover, by contributing to a larger set of four volumes that covered taverns in France, the Holy Roman Empire, and England, Hancock and McDonald presented early American taverns as part of a larger world of public drinking institutions, thereby stripping them of regional exceptionalism. The commercial (Hancock and McDonald’s primary focus), communal, and social networks that taverns fostered, however, was limited as *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World* was a project devoted to publishing

¹¹ Benjamin L. Carp, *Rebels Rising: Cities and the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 66.

primary documents relating to taverns. Hancock and McDonald introduced each section of primary documents, but such short introductions allowed them little room for deep analysis. Their volume on British American and American taverns opened more lines of enquiry than it answered and has done much to inspire my own analysis and research.¹²

Placing early American taverns in the context of larger Imperial developments is thus key to understanding colonial American taverns as globally-integrated, class-contested, consumer-driven spaces. British North American colonists lived in a world rife with religious, gender, racial, and regional divisions. One might argue, however, that each of these partitions were peripheral, or perhaps related, to the most overarching divisional structure in the British Empire—class. Even though an aristocracy did not fully develop in Americas as in Europe, upper class colonists still strove to distinguish themselves from their supposed social inferiors. Yet without the reassurance of an entrenched, established aristocracy, this new breed of colonial patrician had to utilize what was only one among many of signs of aristocratic society in England as their chief distinction in the New World. British American elites purchased locally- and globally-sourced, exotic consumer goods and utilized them as signifiers of politeness, exclusivity, and power. The ability to purchase politeness served elites well in their quest for social superiority until the mid-eighteenth century.

Although the British Empire was not, of course, inhabited exclusively by elites, the upper classes did everything in their power to make the Empire their mechanism of social control. John Winthrop espoused the inherent virtues of class structure in his 1630 sermon “A Model of Christian Charity,” noting that God “hath soe disposed of the condition of mankind, as in all

¹² For Hancock’s earlier work, see David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); David Hancock, *Oceans of Wine: Madeira and the Emergence of American Trade and Taste* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); David Hancock and Michelle McDonald, editors, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World: Voices from the Tavern, 1500-1800, Vol. IV: America* (New York: Pickering and Chatto, 2011), xii, xix.

times some must be rich, some poore, some high and eminent in power and dignitie; others mean and in submission.” Similarly, Cotton Mather argued in 1719 that the poor should “not indulge an Affectation of making themselves in all things appear equal with the Rich: But Patiently Submit unto the Difference, which God the Maker of you Both, has put between you.”¹³ The poor were expected to be deferential to the rich, and in turn the rich were expected to take care of the poor. As long as each class upheld their end of the bargain all was well in elites’ eyes.

In the tradition of the British Empire, colonial America’s social organization developed into a vertically-integrated, well-established hierarchy by the eighteenth century. The emergence of a full-fledged slave society in the southern colonies marked the racialization of labor relations, Native Americans were increasingly forced west to the backcountry and down the hierarchical scale, and women locked in the private sphere of deference and femininity. Within and/or slightly above these marginalized peoples were what historians (and eighteenth-century contemporaries) broadly term the “lower classes,” “lesser sorts,” “plebeians,” or “laboring” people. Primarily poor workers, mariners, journeymen, lesser artisans, merchant seamen, servants, and lower occupational identifiers like cordwainers, carpenters, and bakers (to name only a few of the hundreds of jobs that existed in British America’s urban centers), these plebeians served as polar opposites to the upper classes. Elites considered them rude, crude, and worst of all, disorderly. The plebeians, however, played important roles in British American public spaces—especially taverns—by the mid-eighteenth century as they increasingly

¹³ Cotton Mather, *Concio ad populum. A distressed people entertained with proposals for the relief of their distresses. In a sermon at Boston; made in the audience of His Excellency the governour, and the General Assembly of the Massachusetts-Bay, New England* (1719); John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity (1630),” *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 3rd Series, Volume 7 (Boston, 1838): 31-48; As Gary Nash argued, “almost all the alterations that are associated with the advent of capitalist society happened first in the cities and radiated outward to the smaller towns, villages, and farms of the hinterland.” Gary B. Nash, *Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), vii.

challenged elite authority and asserted their own power as important members of a global Empire.

Next up the hierarchical ladder, and perhaps most misunderstood in colonial American history, were the controversial “middle” classes or “middling” sorts. The “middling” sorts were, to provide the simplest definition possible, those self-employed, small landholders, skilled artisans, manufacturers, professionals, and teachers (to name a few) who “occupied the middle ground in the hierarchies of wealth, status, and power.”¹⁴ The existence and definition of the middle class is still contested, for as the historian Jonathan Barry argued the middle classes were (and are) “continuously making themselves.”¹⁵ By defying definition and documentation in so many ways, the middle classes have pressed scholars to continuously assess and reassess this somewhat shadowy social group.¹⁶

British historians have provided the “middling” sorts much more attention than have historians of colonial America, who often argue that no sort of people existed in the colonies before the “horizontally-oriented” post-Revolutionary nation. David Shields, for instance, contended “the period that most concerns me, the colonial era (roughly 1690 through the 1760s), predates the formation of an American middle class. It was a time during which society was organized by a general distinction between the leisured quality and the working commonality.”¹⁷ While the “general distinction” between the “leisured quality” and the “working commonality” were no doubt the most conspicuous and eminent class distinctions in the colonial era, this period did not predate the formation of the middling sorts. Although ever elusive and still in its nascent

¹⁴ Keith Wrightson, “‘Sorts of People’ in Tudor and Stuart England,” in Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks, ed., *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 49.

¹⁵ Jonathan Barry, “Introduction,” in *The Middling Sort of People*, 24.

¹⁶ See, for example, Robert E. Brown, *Middle-Class Democracy and the Revolution in Massachusetts, 1691-1780* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1955).

¹⁷ Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 11-42; David Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), xix-xx.

stages, this class held an increasingly powerful sway over their inferiors *and* superiors. Middle class imitation pressured elites to distinguish themselves, which gave the lower classes hope of upward mobility and accordingly upset the increasingly-anxious upper classes.¹⁸ As this study demonstrates, the middle classes—a liminal but important group, ever-changing often eluding a straightforward definition—nonetheless very much existed in the mid-eighteenth century, and often found their prime breeding grounds in colonial America’s taverns.

No study of British Imperial class would be complete without at least mentioning the most researched, powerful, and visible of all groups in the British Atlantic world—the upper classes. As historians have written many volumes on this illustrious collection of North American “polite,” landowning noblemen, merchants, gentlemen, governors, and plantation owners, space and time do not permit an absolute investigation of British elite culture in the eighteenth century. Taking this into account, British American elites’ anxieties regarding class conflict will be a main focus of this project. In line with the middle classes, colonial American elites became increasingly difficult to categorize in the mid-eighteenth century, for wealth no longer necessarily denoted gentility or politeness.¹⁹ A merchant, for example, may have accumulated vast riches through a variety of trade networks, but his commercial prosperity did not make him a true “gentleman.” To achieve such a status, this merchant had to improve himself through “polite” public and private pursuits including collecting art, reading, fashion, charity,

¹⁸ See, for instance, William Livingston, *The Independent Reflector: Or Weekly Essays on Sundry Important Subjects More particularly adapted to the Province of New-York*, ed. Milton M. Klein (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963), “Number XXIX, On the Extravagance of Funerals”; Jonathan Barry, “Bourgeois Collectivism? Urban Association and the Middling Sort,” in Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks, ed., *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994); Lawrence E. Klein, “Politeness for Plebes: Consumption and Social Identity in Early Eighteenth-Century England,” in *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, ed. Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London: Routledge, 1995), 362-382.

¹⁹ Lawrence E. Klein, “Property and Politeness in the Early Eighteenth-Century Whig Moralists: The Case of the *Spectator*,” in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, ed. John Brewer and Susan Staves (London: Routledge, 1995), 221-231; Livingston, *Independent Reflector*, “Number XLIII, The Vanity of Birth and Titles; with the Absurdity of Claiming Respect without Merit.”

and social participation.²⁰ This pursuit of politeness increasingly denoted elite status by the mid-eighteenth century primarily because of pressure from below.

Due largely to what scholars have termed the “consumer revolution,” British American elites had to work harder to signify themselves as distinct, polite members of British American society in the mid-eighteenth century.²¹ As increasing numbers of men and women produced for local and global markets, they became more active constituents in numerous webs of commerce and trade. This increased civic participation (and population), combined with better trade throughout the Empire, more consumer goods, and more public outlets in which to purchase, use, and display these goods generated a contested environment of consumerism, public sociability, and hierarchy.

As a vital part of the British mercantilist system by the mid-eighteenth century, the British American colonies served as international exporters and importers of myriad goods. Colonists exported raw materials such as sugar, tobacco, rice, wheat, lumber, fish, and animal pelts to Britain in exchange for increasingly diverse, polite, and exciting products of decentralized Imperial networks like fabrics, ceramics (including china), tea, coffee, chocolate, metal goods, dining utensils, baking tools, manufactured goods, clothing, books, drugs, cheese, furniture, all sorts of alcohol, firearms, and more. The Swedish naturalist, Peter Kalm noted in the mid-eighteenth century American colonists imported so many “article[s] of English growth

²⁰ See Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, Chapter One. For more on elite culture and class, see Bushman, *The Refinement of America*; Lawrence E. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994). While on his travels, Hamilton met “a man of great estate, but of base character, for being constituted one of the committee for signing the publick bills of credit, he had counterfeited 50,000 pound of genuine bills which the Government had then issued.” Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 159.

²¹ See, for instance, Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, J.H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982). T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), xv, xvi; T.H. Breen, “An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776,” *The Journal of British Studies* 25 (Oct. 1986): 467-499; A bibliography on the consumer revolution could easily encompass a full page. For a fantastic bibliography, see Jon Stobart, Andrew Hann and Victoria Morgan, ed., *Spaces of Consumption: Leisure and Shopping in the English Town, c. 1680-1830* (London: Routledge, 2007).

or manufacture, together with all sorts of foreign goods” that “all their specie, together with the goods which they get in other countries, must go to England to pay their accounts there, and still are insufficient.”²² Englishmen both at home and abroad consumed goods and services at an unprecedented rate by the mid-eighteenth century—in the fifty years after 1720, per capita colonial imports increased by 50 percent.²³ Colonists and English officials alike soon realized that an updated infrastructure was necessary to support this “consumer revolution.”

While the seventeenth century had been marked by elite conspicuous consumption of “polite” local and global goods, the eighteenth century ushered in a period of change. More of the lower and middle “sorts” gained limited access to once-elite-oriented goods by the mid-eighteenth century as a result of the expansion of colonial trade, population, and city centers within the British American colonies. These lower and middling sorts still could not buy large and diverse amounts of these exotic goods like their social betters, but they nonetheless gained limited advances into elite consumer society.²⁴ Foreign imported goods became so much more affordable and available in the colonies that poor colonists could buy tea for their wives and stock their shelves with select pieces of fine porcelain. Such overt lower-class consumption caused British American patricians new anxieties. With far less title distinction than their English counterparts, British American elites had utilized material grandeur as their main point of exclusivity in the colonies, but these markers began to fall by the wayside with the consumer revolution. In the eyes of colonial American patrician Gottlieb Mittelberger, plebeians’ “foolish

²² Peter Kalm, “Peter Kalm, Scientist from Sweden (Excerpt from his journal, *En Resa til Norra America (1753-61)*,” in *This Was America*, ed. Oscar Handlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949), 23.

²³ Alan Taylor, “Power Shopping,” review of *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*, by T.H. Breen,” *The New Republic Online*, February 26th, 2004, http://www.powells.com/review/2004_02_26.html.

²⁴ Wrightson, ““Sorts of People”” in *The Middling Sort of People*, 28-51.

fondness of Foreign Commodities & Fashions...and a hunger for things above their station in life” was a direct affront to the hierarchical tradition of the British Atlantic world.²⁵

Consequently, the eighteenth-century consumer revolution both served and scared British American elites. The enhanced trade, population, and urban growth of this period did much to augment many patricians’ wealth, yet the commercial development of the British Empire also began to flatten the consumer-driven hierarchy of colonial America. Whether upper class colonists liked it or not, the British American colonies had become firmly ensnared in the “web of empire;” their cities developing into international ports of trade, information, and immigration, and their inhabitants maturing into crucial actors in local and global networks.²⁶

Because of its concentration on global currents, this dissertation offers a different way to understand what scholars call the “British Atlantic world”— that vast swath of territory controlled by the British Empire in and around the Atlantic Ocean. Numerous historians have viewed the Atlantic world as a more enclosed model of study.²⁷ Nicholas Canny, for instance, stressed the importance of the Atlantic world as a “self-defining geographic entity” in a 1999 article. Particularly in regard to the history of British America, Canny argued for Atlantic over

²⁵ Gottlieb Mittelberger, *Gottlieb Mittelberger’s Journey to Pennsylvania in the Year 1750 and Return to Germany in the Year 1754*, ed. Carl Theo. Eben (Philadelphia, 1898), 50; Nash, *Urban Crucible*, 51 (quote); Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 54-55.

²⁶ Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

²⁷ Bernard Bailyn, arguably the most decisive proponent of the Atlantic world, not only believed in the importance of the model as “a distinctive state of action,” but also treated the study of the Atlantic world as a historical subject in Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concepts and Contours* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005). For Bailyn, the genesis of a consciously transatlantic American mindset emerged in February 1917 when the American journalist Walter Lippman urged readers of *The New Republic* to join World War I against Germany: “We must recognize that we are in fact one great community and act as members of it.” By the 1950s, colonial American scholars also realized the importance of this Atlantic connection and began to apply it to their studies. Key to their “realization” however, was not an American, but a French, scholar— Fernand Braudel. Although not a study of the “Atlantic world” *per se*, Braudel’s influential *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1949) pioneered a new methodological lens through which to study history. In this volume, Braudel used the Mediterranean Sea to investigate the history of its surrounding landmasses, and in doing so produced a broad vision of a Mediterranean world of sorts. Patrick O’Brien, “Historiographical Traditions and Modern Imperatives for the Restoration of Global History,” *Journal of Global History* 1 (March 2006): 11.

global history, emphasizing “the nearly self-contained character of the various spheres of European interest in the Atlantic” as his main justification.²⁸ In his widely-influential *The English Atlantic*, Ian Steele concentrated on internal “English transatlantic and intercolonial” communication.²⁹ Although having now embraced the global implications of the Atlantic world, Games also stressed the transatlantic and intercolonial nature of the Atlantic world in *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (1999), where she termed the Atlantic world “a place created by [English] migration” and “the tightening web that joined Europe and America.”³⁰ While fruitful conclusions have resulted from this “regional” interpretation of the Atlantic world, such a focus is not the sole direction of Atlantic history. By looking for an exceptional, isolated Atlantic world rather than observing Atlantic history as a process of globalization and empire, regional Atlantic historians “impede our understanding of the degree to which this unit drew its lifeblood from and hemorrhaged into others.”³¹

While the British Atlantic world remained somewhat unique in the concentration and frequency of certain Imperial networks, it was nonetheless the product of Imperialism and coinciding globalizing trends. The decentralized, ever-evolving British Empire upheld the consumer networks that transgressed the Atlantic Ocean; it encouraged colonists to plant themselves throughout the globe and seek profit; it instigated wars and peace. Atlantic history, then, cannot be divorced from Imperial history. Since the British Empire was an international

²⁸ Nicholas Canny, “Writing Atlantic History; or, Reconfiguring the History of Colonial British America,” *The Journal of American History*, 86 (December 1999): 1093-1114.

²⁹ Ian K. Steele, *The English Atlantic, 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 93.

³⁰ Alison Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 4,6. It should be noted, however, that Games directed her focus outward in her next major work to global travelers and the global nature of the seventeenth-century British Empire in Games, *Web of Empire*.

³¹ Peter Coclanis, “Atlantic World or Atlantic/World?,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 63 (October 2006): 713-724. Alison Games harbored similar feelings in Alison Games, “Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities,” *American Historical Review* 111 (June 2006): 741-57, arguing that by not observing Atlantic history as “a slice of world history... a way of looking at global and regional process within a contained unit,” these historians “let one small part of the Atlantic define the whole.”

entity based on expansion by the eighteenth century, moreover, Atlantic history should also be considered as an important contributor to global history. Although the British Atlantic world remained a central intersecting point for local and global networks alike throughout its peak in the eighteenth century, it should nonetheless be understood as a process of global Imperialism identified by porous, dotted boundaries instead of solid lines of demarcation. British (global) Imperial and Atlantic history were not and should not be study as mutually exclusive.³² In so many ways they were one and the same.³³

Such an approach is one which appreciates international and internal currents alike. In 2002, David Armitage produced an article which perhaps more than any other work defined the feasibility of such a methodology. As Armitage explained, “Trans-Atlantic history”—what he

³² Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, 14-15. It should also be mentioned that Hancock defined “global” and “globalization” as denoting “the range and breadth of the associates’ contacts with commercial points around the globe, especially with lands and peoples not traditionally tied to Britain; it does not mean that any single merchant maintained contact with all points” (15). I share a very similar definition of globalism, globalization, global, international, and internationalism, which I do not distinguish among. Of course, not all historians agree on this time period for “globalization.” For instance, Fernand Braudel and Immanuel Wallerstein traced globalization back to the fifteenth-century origins of the capitalist world-system in Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Vol. 1: The Structures of Everyday Life, the Limits of the Possible* (London: Collins, 1981); Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Vol. 2: The Wheels of Commerce* (London: Collins, 1982); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974). Henry Kamen also traced the first “global economy” to Spain’s empire from 1492-1763 in Henry Kamen, *Empire: How Spain Became a World Power, 1492-1763* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003). C.A. Bayly also traced the idea of globalization back to 1780 in C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), contending “all local, national, or regional histories must, in important ways, therefore, be global histories” (2). Janet L. Abu-Lughod uncovered a “world system” in the thirteenth century in Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System, A.D. 1250-1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). The McNeills also traced global connections to 1000 A.D. in J.R. McNeill & William H. McNeill, *The Human Web: A Bird’s-Eye View of World History* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2003).

³³ For more regional definitions of the British Atlantic world, see Bernard Bailyn, “Preface,” in *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (New York: Palgrave, 2002), xiv-xv; For more on the debate of the usefulness, regionalism, and scope of the Atlantic world model, see David Armitage, “Three Concepts of Atlantic History,” in *The British Atlantic World*, 13-29; Alison Games, “From the Editor: Introduction, Definitions, and Historiography: What is Atlantic History?,” *OAH Magazine of History* 18 (Apr., 2004): 3-7; Bernard Bailyn, “Introduction: Reflections on Some Major Themes,” in *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500-1830*, ed. Bernard Bailyn and Patricia Denault (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 1-44; Nicholas Canny, “Writing Atlantic History,” 1093-1114; Steele, *The English Atlantic*; Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World*; Peter Coclanis, “Atlantic World or Atlantic/World?,” 713-724; Peter Coclanis, “Drang Nach Osten: Bernard Bailyn, the World-Island, and the Idea of Atlantic History,” *Journal of World History* 13 (2002): 169-182.

described as “the international history of the Atlantic world”—is made possible by “Circum-Atlantic history,” which is “the history of the Atlantic as a particular zone of exchange and interchange, circulation and transmission...the history of the ocean as an arena distinct from any of the particular, narrower, oceanic zones that comprise it.” Armitage’s three-tiered model is useful because it combines the idea of a geographically-isolated Atlantic world with that of a globally-integrated one.³⁴ For Armitage, one model cannot exist without the other, and the peoples, ideas, and objects within his transatlantic model find “meaningful comparison because they already share some common features by virtue of being enmeshed within circum-Atlantic relationships.”³⁵ Thus, the Atlantic world was both a regional and an international stage—an arena of equally important internal and external actors.³⁶

David Hancock put Armitage’s theory into practice with *Oceans of Wine* in 2009.

Hancock followed Madeira wine “and the people who made, marketed, sold, bought, and drank it in the early modern Atlantic world” to reveal “how decentralized the early modern Atlantic was, with widely dispersed agency and frequent transgression of Imperial boundaries.” Besides noting the decentralized, permeable nature of early modern empires and the Atlantic world, Hancock also highlighted their international web of connections, contending that “analysis of the Madeira wine complex shows that world as extensively linked by networks—family, ethnic, religious,

³⁴ Armitage also noted the usefulness of national or regional history within an Atlantic context (“Cis-Atlantic history”).

³⁵ Armitage, “Three Concepts,” 15-19.

³⁶ Numerous other historians of the British Atlantic world also continue to strive for a globally-integrated Atlantic world. Games summed up the idea of a globally-integrated Atlantic world when she argued “Atlantic history, then, is a *slice* of world history. It is a way of looking at global *and* regional processes within a contained unit, although that region was not, of course, hermetically sealed off from the rest of the world, and thus was simultaneously involved in transformations unique to the Atlantic and those derived from global processes.” Games, “Atlantic History,” 748. Peter Coclanis also pushed for more “scholarly cosmopolitanism” in Atlantic studies with a fifteen-page article. Coclanis’ article covered the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of Atlantic history, with an underlying thread that pushed Atlantic historians to become more “cosmopolitan” and worldly. Coclanis, “Drang Nach Osten,” 181. Also see Nicholas Canny, “Atlantic History and Global History,” in *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*, ed. Jack P. Greene and Phillip D. Morgan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 317-336; Laura Benton, “The British Atlantic in Global Context,” in *The British Atlantic World*, 271-289; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Atlantic in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

business, and social—that participants created and managed.” This sort of interdisciplinary, critical, decentralized, and far-reaching methodology is fundamental for the future of Atlantic, Imperial, and global history. Just as Madeira wine revealed that “the boundaries of empire were extremely permeable,” so too has Hancock showed the porosity of these historical models.³⁷

Utilizing the tavern space to investigate how Anglo-American colonists understood their connections with and position in the global British Empire accomplishes multiple goals. As Chapter One shows, British American taverns contributed to and were a culmination of a much larger world of public spaces, consumerism, and class conflict. By investigating colonists’ interactions in other public spaces such as streets, churches, theaters, shops, markets, fairs, universities, libraries, and hospitals, Chapter One reveals the pervasiveness of British Imperial ideology, the importance of public spaces, and the endurance and significance of consumerism, class conflict, and elite anxiety for the development of the American colonies within the British Empire. This chapter also establishes a three-stage pattern of pre-Revolutionary class conflict and elite anxiety that, while playing out noticeably in every British American public space, unfolded most distinctly in and around taverns.

Chapter Two utilizes taverns as windows through which to view colonists’ consumer connections to the British Empire. Arguing that taverns were themselves products of global Imperialism, this chapter takes a global approach to the origins of British American tavern culture, thus revealing colonial taverns’ international roots spanning time and space. Chapter Two also takes a microscope to the myriad products of British Empire that littered British

³⁷ Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*, xiv-xvi. Scholars largely contend that the “Atlantic world” model ceased to exist after the eighteenth century, but some have contended that we need to press it into the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries. See, for instance, Greene and Morgan, ed., *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*; Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Erik R. Seeman, ed., *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall Press, 2007); Donna Gabaccia, “A Long Atlantic in a Wider World,” *Atlantic Studies* 1 (2004): 1-27.

American taverns' walls, rooms, and tables such as decorations, paintings, furniture, silverware, vessels, animals, machines, reading materials, and, of course, beverages such as coffee, tea, chocolate, Madeira wine, and rum punch. Utilizing a variety of sources, including tavernkeepers' probate inventories and ledgers, architectural records, archeological studies, travel diaries, and colonial laws, Chapter Two exposes British American taverns as multi-faceted spaces of global consumption.

Chapter Three explores how, contrary to previous historians' understanding, class conflict invaded and shaped the British American tavern space *before* the Revolutionary Period. Rather than serving as democratic spaces of inclusiveness where hierarchy, deference, and social constructs diminished in the face of fraternal drinking and bonhomie, pre-Revolutionary taverns were—more than any other public space—direct reflections of the British Empire's well-established (but increasingly contested) traditions of class, hierarchy, and deference. Accordingly, British American taverns were spaces marked by intense class conflict, exclusivity, and resistance far more than mixing pots where class lines dissolved. This chapter thus investigates the class-contested nature of pre-Revolutionary taverns—how anxious elites sought to separate themselves from and establish order over what they considered the “rabble” of taverns, and how, ultimately failing to convert the lower classes to their idea of a polite citizenry, patricians retreated to their own exclusive tavern spaces.

Chapter Four combines the impulses of class and consumption to inspect how certain elite colonists utilized taverns to become more cosmopolitan members of the British Empire. Select patricians met in exclusive tavern groups to read tracts from around the world, debate enlightened topics, consume exotic goods, pen their own works, form clubs, and critique the world around them, all with the express purpose of becoming detached “citizens of the world.”

Although these men utilized the tavern space to think beyond the Empire, this chapter will show that the reality of cosmopolitanism lay in its inherent entrenchment in Imperial ideology. Thus British American elites who sought cosmopolitan identities did so more to separate themselves from the lower classes and ultimately establish their position in the British Empire more than transcend Imperial identity(s).

Chapter Five concentrates on how, after 1763, British American taverns transformed from public spaces where colonists sought to connect with the British Empire into Revolutionary spaces where colonists evaluated, condemned, and avoided many Imperial connections in favor of more Republican ideals. Consumerism, class, and cosmopolitanism remained important political principles for taverngoing patriots and Tories alike. This chapter studies how revolutionaries and loyalists adjusted each of these forces to their own means in Revolutionary taverns. Consumerism came to symbolize political allegiance, class lines forever shifted, and cosmopolitanism became firmly intertwined with patriotism and nascent nationalism. Just as taverns served as stages for colonists to navigate their connections with the Empire, so too did taverns crash at the center of the radical, Revolutionary debate over Imperial and Republican ideologies.

Above all else, then, this dissertation frames British American taverns as spaces of and for Imperial connection, understanding, and ultimately contestation. Yet like taverns, the British Empire was an ongoing process marked by change and conflict, understanding and misunderstanding. The British Empire and the American taverns they spawned were not preordained entities driven by purpose but were rather ambiguous creations of human interaction, always contested and ever adjusting to fit humanity's purposes. Both reflected each other because both were two sides of the same coin—mechanisms of control, mixing pots of

conflict, networks of connection, and currents of enlightenment. Understanding British Empire and taverngoing as intertwined, reciprocal developments, then, speaks to our current world by revealing how the interconnected, global nature of our present world has a much deeper past.

Chapter One

“All the World’s a Stage”: British American (Imperial) Public Spaces

“All the world’s a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts.”

Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (1623)³⁸

This now-famous verse from William Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* well encapsulates the importance of British American public spaces in the British Empire. The roads, shops, churches, markets, and theaters of British America’s bustling cities were the stages upon which colonists of every class and creed acted and interacted on a daily basis, finding their “entrances and exits” and negotiating their position in the British Empire. Most notable, however, were the “many parts” that “one man in his time play[ed]” in public life. Besides utilizing public spaces to connect with more tangible Imperial currents such as consumerism, news, religion, and entertainment, in public spaces colonists also most visibly reacted against and connected themselves with one of the Empire’s most eminent maxims of social order—hierarchy.³⁹ As the American colonies increasingly connected to and associated with the Empire, colonial public spaces also became more diverse and numerous. This growing British connection, however, translated to more social disorder and an increasingly anxious elite class.

Colonial leaders used public spaces as mechanisms of power and order during the seventeenth century. With such a small population and no major cities, the colonial public scene

³⁸ William Shakespeare, *Shakespeare’s As You Like It. A Comedy*, revised by J.P. Kemble (London: Covent Garden Theatre, 1810), 34.

³⁹ As Wim Klooster noted, “the early modern Atlantic was...a world with pronounced social stratification.” Wim Klooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World: A Comparative History* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 3.

was limited at best and thus easy to control—most streets remained unpaved, filthy, and meandering; simple, unadorned churches dotted the landscape, colonists ran the majority of taverns out of their small homes, cities could not support extensive networks of shops and marketplaces, and more “genteel” spaces such as theaters, libraries, universities, and hospitals were practically non-existent. Because of the nascent nature of colonial America’s public spaces, those few elite officials and governors in the colonies exerted considerable control over the local populace and coincidentally quite successfully upheld British traditions of hierarchy and class. The population, commercial, and urban boom by the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, changed everything.

As a period of considerable expansion and “refinement” of early American public spaces began after 1690 because of the colonies’ expanding role in global flows of commerce and migration, class upheaval and conflict rather than order became the main marker of colonial public spaces.⁴⁰ Lower class Britons throughout the Empire began to resist the long-held traditions of hierarchy in the second half of the eighteenth century, perhaps nowhere more noticeably than in public spaces. Lacking a landed aristocracy, fostering a quickly multiplying majority of lower- and middling-class colonists, enslaving thousands of Africans, and having already experienced upheaval because of trans-Imperial movements like the “Enlightenment,” the “consumer revolution,” and the “First Great Awakening,” British American society began to take its own shape separate from that of the rest of the Empire after the 1760s. Just as colonists had utilized public spaces to connect with and reconfirm notions of class in the seventeenth century, then, they also utilized every public space in order to contest and redefine class during the eighteenth century.

⁴⁰ For more on this period of “refinement” in British America after 1690, see Bushman, *The Refinement of America*.

As colonists and their public spaces became more intimately connected with the Empire during the eighteenth century, anxious elites also saw themselves losing control over the social order of the colonies. Ironically, then, the same Imperialism that propelled the upper classes to social power also catalyzed a hierarchical reordering. Elite colonists' ongoing struggles to maintain power over their social inferiors played out most distinctly in public spaces. As upper, middling, and lower class colonists met together in public spaces they continuously debated notions of hierarchy, deference, and paternalism. What emerges from these public interactions is the importance of understanding how British class structure pervaded every aspect of colonists' public lives, ultimately leading to class conflict and elite apprehension. In short, the Empire—in this case the persistence of the longstanding British culture of class—marked the lives of every British citizen, nowhere more than in their social interactions. A fuller investigation of these public relationships will help us to appreciate the pervasiveness of Imperial ideology, the importance of colonial American public space, and the endurance and significance of class conflict and elite uneasiness for the development of the colonies within—and without—the Empire.

Although more in-depth, abstracted, theoretical understandings of public space and the “public sphere” have become en-vogue topics for historians of every period and place, thus far no scholar has investigated British American public spaces as a class-contested, Imperially-entrenched, collective whole. While public streets, churches, theaters, shops, markets, fairs, universities, libraries, and hospitals drew different colonists for different reasons, three stages of class conflict and elite anxiety marked colonists' interactions in public spaces. First, nervous patricians attempted to transform public spaces into “polite,” exclusive spheres of gentility by regulating and cordoning these spaces. Second, lower class colonists opposed upper class

attempts at control through various forms of public resistance. Increasingly anxious because of failed attempts to order and control public spaces, patricians enacted the third stage of class conflict through their creation of elite-controlled hybrid public/private spaces of “improvement.” Not only do these hybrid spaces reveal the upper classes’ attempts to project their power onto the public landscape, enforce control over disorderly plebeians, and create a bastion of gentility within the growing tide of class chaos, but they also more fully expose the crisis of Imperial order by the mid-eighteenth century.

The Urban Streetscape

By the mid-eighteenth century, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Charleston had grown into full-fledged urban centers. Roads snaked across the countryside, and their ports connected them to a larger Atlantic world. Philadelphia, however, was perhaps the most lauded of all colonial American cities for its street plan. Josiah Quincy called Philadelphia “the most regular, best laid out city in the world,” as did visiting Englishman James Birket in 1751. Birket added that if built “according to the Plan,” Philadelphia would “be large enough for the Head of an Empire.”⁴¹ Increasingly reflecting the order of other cities in the British Empire, Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, and Boston became crucial intersection points of Empire in the eighteenth century.

As central conduits of sociability, urban streets connected colonists to people and places alike. By walking or riding along these crowded, noisy spaces, people met with each other on the

⁴¹ Josiah Quincy, Jr., *Memoir of the Life of Josiah Quincy Jun. of Massachusetts* (Boston: Cummings, Hilliard, & Company, 1825), 138; James Birket, *Some Cursory Remarks Made by James Birket in his Voyage to North America, 1750-1751* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1916), 63-4. Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, Chapter Five. For other visitors’ impressions of Philadelphia, see Mittelberger, *Journey*, 49-50; Handlin, *Kalm Journal*, 20-21; Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 21.

streets and at their final destinations such as shops, taverns, or churches.⁴² Even more, streets often served as arenas for the markets, fairs, horse races, processions, celebrations, bonfires, and riots. Upon stepping onto Boston's streets, a young John Adams remarked that he could not "raise [his] mind above this mob Croud of Men, Women, Beasts, and Carriages, to think steadily." The British American urban street was truly a public space for all.⁴³ As a result of such uncontained social mixing, however, streets also became a main stage for colonial class conflict.⁴⁴

Elites did not like the idea of rubbing elbows with the "lower sorts" among the filth and stench of the city streets. Consequently, if "genteel" colonists walked along the streets, they consciously asserted their superiority while doing so, especially window-shopping. Elizabeth Drinker, an elite Quaker, often shopped on certain Philadelphia streets with other upper class women. Colonial American patricians adopted the "promenade" from their English counterparts, who imitated the French (as the English did with so many aristocratic activities). For patricians,

⁴² New York elite, Cadwallader Colden, reminded Alderman Johnson in 1744 "to remove the Nusances" and drain "the stagnating Waters" from New York's crowded streets. Cadwallader Colden, *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden, Volume 3, 1743-47* (New York: New York Historical Society, 1918), 95. Accessed at the New York Historical Society General Collections, January 2012; New York residents had been complaining of how bad their streets reeked for quite some time. On June 23, 1696, New York officials stopped butchering in Queen Street "Near ye Gate" since the slaughter houses had "become a Great Nusance to the Inhabitants Adjacent by the Noisome Smell of ye filth thereof." I.N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909*, Volume 4 (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1915), 371. "An ACT to prevent and remove certain NUSANCES [sic] in and near the City of PHILADELPHIA," *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 10, 1763.

⁴³ March 14, 1759, John Adams diary 2, 5 October 1758 - 9 April 1759 [electronic edition]. *Adams Family Papers: An Electronic Archive* Massachusetts Historical Society. Accessed February 10, 2012, <http://www.masshist.org/digitaladams/>; Stobart called streets spaces of commerce "and important arenas for public consumption, where people could access goods, knowledge, and information." Stobart, Hann and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*, 86; Miles Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680-1780* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1998); Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, Chapter Five.

⁴⁴ Sir William Beauchamp-Proctor, an English elite living in Middlesex County, England in the mid-eighteenth century, repeatedly dealt with class conflict in Brentford's streets and taverns, especially during election times. The 1768 Middlesex election riots wrecked Brentford's public spaces, and Beauchamp-Proctor felt much of the blame since he engineered a large number of gangs. Disgusted with the mob violence, the elite Beauchamp-Proctor publicly condemned—and ultimately paid for much of—such conflict and disorder. Myriad tavernkeepers sent him bills for the destruction caused to their establishments during the riots, and various witnesses took the stand to reconstruct physical altercations. Citizens were beaten in the streets for supporting different candidates. "Sir William Beauchamp-Proctor Papers, 1760-1771." James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. See especially Box 1, Folders 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23.

promenading in the streets was not about actually purchasing goods as much as being seen by other strolling elites—it was a performance of and for polite society.⁴⁵

When not employing city streets as spaces of public demonstration, patricians preferred to travel by chaise or carriage. Such conveyance sheltered elites not only from the noisome muck of the streets, but their social inferiors as well. Chaises symbolized elite power in multiple ways. For one, they created an air of privacy, safety, comfort, and exclusivity in even the most public of spaces. When the New York merchant gentleman, Francis Goelet was invited to a turtle frolic with “about 20 couple gentlemen & ladies of the best fashion in Boston” in 1750, he “waited on Miss Betty Wendell, with a chaise.” After the party Goelet and his fellow partygoers all “rode home & see [their] partners safe.”⁴⁶ Goelet and his “polite” company could create their own private sphere within their carriage through which to control the dirty, “rabble”-filled streets. Usually detailed with painted designs and rich wood, carriages manifested their passengers’ comfort and prestige. Even more, the only fully visible person related to this “gilded chariot” was the driver—a servant tasked with the single job of obeying orders.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Elizabeth Drinker, *Extracts from the Journal of Elizabeth Drinker, From 1759 to 1807, A.D.*, ed. Henry D. Biddle (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1889), 15. Also see Drinker’s shopping excursion on September 19, 1768: “Walked out this morning with H.d., H. Jones, and Nelly Moode to a number of print shops, Booksellers &c., and particularly to Gerardus Duykink’s Medley shop; also to Grove Ben’s shop...” (26); For more on elite shopping and the promenade, see Stobart, et al., *Spaces of Consumption*, Chapter Four; Peter Borsay, “All the Town’s a Stage: Urban Ritual and Ceremony, 1660-1800,” in *The Transformation of English Provincial Towns, 1600-1800*, ed. Peter Clark (London: Hutchinson, 1984), 228-58; Paul Glennie and Nigel Thrift, “Consumption, Shopping and Gender,” in *Retailing, Consumption and Capital: Towards the New Retail Geography*, ed. N. Wrigley and M. Lowe (Harlow: Longman, 1996), 221-37; Jon Stobart, “Shopping Streets as Social Space: Leisure, Consumerism and Improvement in an Eighteenth-Century County Town,” *Urban History* 25 (1998): 3-21. For more on the English adoption of French customs, see Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740-1830* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987). While in one elite Boston tavern, Alexander Hamilton noted “This house is the rendezvous of many of the gentry of both sexes, who make an evening’s promenade in the summer time.” Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 139; Alexander Hamilton went on the promenade with elite men and women while in Newport. Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 155.

⁴⁶ Francis Goelet, *The Voyages and Travels of Francis Goelet, 1746-1758*, ed. Kenneth Scott (New York: Queens College Press, 1970), October 2nd, 1750 (no page number available).

⁴⁷ A young James Boswell noticed elite Londoners who “rattled by [him] in gilded chariots” in 1763. James Boswell, *Boswell’s London Journal, 1762-1763*, ed. Frederick A. Pottle (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1950), 148.

Patricians utilized public streets for another display of power, exclusivity, and gentility: the procession. Enacted for occasions like Masonic demonstrations, the arrival or election of a nobleman or governor, or a military review, these processions physically and symbolically transformed the once-public street into a cordoned-off space of elite power. In celebration of the anniversary of St. John the Baptist, Benjamin Franklin (the Grand Master of the Masons) reported in full detail the grandeur which ensued upon the procession of “the Brethren of that most ancient and worshipful Society, the FREE and ACCEPTED MASONS” from their Lodge Room to attend service at Christ Church in Philadelphia. Franklin provided a chronological list of those who participated in the Grand Masonic procession, noting that the Masons, “all new cloathed with Aprons, white Gloves and Stockings...made a handsome and genteel Appearance.” An announcement of Masonic—and, in turn, elite—exclusivity, power, and gentility, the procession entered Market Street to the salute of cannon, the ringing of church bells, and a full band.⁴⁸

Elites encouraged all ranks of people to gather closely, watch intently, and behave politely during street processions and parades. Upon Britain’s announcement of war with France in 1744, one elite onlooker remembered “a rabble of about 4,000 people in the street and great numbers of ladies and gentlemen in the windows and balconies” to cheer on Philadelphia’s celebratory procession. “The streets, Windows, Turrets, &C. were crowded with Spectators” to welcome Boston’s Governors as they returned from a diplomatic meeting in 1755 and “People of all ranks” gathered and gave “three Huzzas” to celebrate a Lieutenant Governor’s arrival in Boston in 1761.⁴⁹ While patricians expected commoners to line the streets in an orderly fashion, however, they did not permit open speech. When at the end of the Philadelphia procession the

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 25; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 29, 1755; January 29, 1761.

governor asked for volunteers for the war with France “a certain bold fellow in the croud” questioned how he and his poor brethren were to join the fight without the credit to purchase a musket. “What you say is right,” this fellow bellowed out across Philadelphia’s crowded streets, “but I and many others here, poor men, have neither money nor credit to procure a musket or the third part of a musket, so that unless the publick takes care to provide us, the bulk of the people must go unfurnished, and the country be destitute of defence.”⁵⁰ Rather than respond to this undersupplied man’s plea for elite aid in such a public setting, the governor only smiled, stepped into his covered chariot, and rode home to his stately mansion. A public voice was not a privilege that patricians wanted the lower classes to enjoy.

As the eighteenth century ushered in population booms, urban growth, and various class conflicts, certain lower class colonists employed streets as a public stage on which to resist order. The *Pennsylvania Gazette*, for example, reported in 1742 that a body of about seventy or eighty sailors “arm’d with Clubs and huzzaing” marched “in a tumultuous manner” to the foot of Market Street during the general election. Fearing a fight—or worse, a disturbance of the election—some of the local magistrates “and other persons of Note” met the sailors and “endeavour’d to prevail with them to return peaceably to their Ships.” Their attempts were in vain, “for [the sailors] fell on with their Clubs, and knocking down Magistrates, Constables, and all others who oppos’d ‘em, fought their Way up to the Court-House, and clear’d the Place of Election.” Fearing for their lives, the patricians fled to Second Street as the sailors “triumph’d awhile” in front of the courthouse. When the magistrates attempted to return to Market Street, the “Sailors returning more numerous and furious than at first, fell upon the People a second time...several were carried off for dead, and the Confussion and Terror was inexpressible.”⁵¹ This

⁵⁰ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 25-6.

⁵¹ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 7, 1742.

was the final straw for the Philadelphians: they defeated the sailors and committed fifty of them to prison that night.

This 1742 Philadelphia sailor riot is a perfect example of lower class “mob” violence. Why the sailors rioted was never mentioned in the *Gazette* article; only that they did so suddenly, violently, and with great consequence.⁵² Whether stealing “lighted lamps” and breaking glass windows in the streets of New York’s north ward, defacing signs in Boston’s “principall Streets,” or making a bonfire of the Savannah, Georgia guard house, lower class colonists engaged in a power struggle over public streets with their increasingly anxious social superiors.⁵³ In a somewhat subtler act of resistance, groups of plebeians also employed the streets for their own “processions;” albeit with less means and no upper class support. In 1764, for example, Boston’s lower classes celebrated the downfall of the Popish Plot of the 1670s by having “Negroes and other Servants” carry effigies of the Pope through the streets. Although this “vulgar” display ended in violence, it nonetheless provided “the lower Class of the People” with an ephemeral control over Boston’s streets. Their riotous activities also, however, reinforced elites’ notions of lower class vulgarity and inferiority.⁵⁴ In patricians’ minds, the lower classes would only ultimately riot, fight, and destroy if allowed a modicum of sovereignty.

⁵² For an example of such sudden and violent mob activity in Boston, see *The New-York Weekly Journal*, January 4, 1747-8. On December 14 and “outrageous mob” of servants, slaves, and seamen attacked the Boston’s Council Chamber with “Brick bats” and other weapons. Such instances were some of elites’ biggest fears.

⁵³ For the instance of lamp theft and glass breaking, see *John Tabor Kempe Papers, 1678-1782*, Box 10, Folder 10, 1771. New York Historical Society Manuscript Collections. For Boston, see *New York Gazette or Weekly Postal-Boy*, October 3, 1749, New York Historical Society General Collections; For the Savannah incident, see *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 7, 1755. News of the surrender of Louisburg in 1745, for instance, was beyond elites’ control as it flew “instantly around town.” The *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported mob activity after “upwards of 20 bonfires were immediately lighted in the street.” Although Philadelphia’s elites believed they had regained order the next day through the structured traditions of polite feasting, drinking of toasts, cannon discharges, illuminations of houses, and fireworks, “A Mob gathered, and began to break the Windows of those houses that were not illuminated.” While the mob was soon “dispersed” and “supress’d,” such activity further symbolized the constant power struggle over the public streets. *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 18, 1745

⁵⁴ John Spurr, *England in the 1670s: This Masquerading Age* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 289-95; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 22, 1764; Francis Goelet observed a similar “mob” procession in Boston in the mid-eighteenth century. While out with a “large company of gentlemen,” he went to the north end of town where

Public streets in Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Newport, and Charleston served as stages for numerous social and civic purposes. In a physical sense, urban streets were the threads that bound people and place. Stinky, dirty, crowded, and often confusing, city streets connected citizens with each other, their city, and notions of hierarchy and order.⁵⁵ Just as the elites sought control of and distance from the urban streets through stricter regulation, processions, promenading, chaises, and window-shopping, certain portions of the lower classes also claimed their own place in the public streets through (admittedly rambunctious) processions, riots, theft, and other criminal acts. As in all public spaces, colonists' interactions in city streets symbolized how urban development affected—and was effected by—myriad Imperial currents.

Religion: The Polite Church, Reverend Whitefield, and Power Struggles

By the mid-eighteenth century, church steeples defined a city's skyline. Upon taking the river into Newcastle (Delaware) in 1751, James Birket noted the city's "very grand & Genteel appearance"—"A large Meeting house with a very high Wooden Spire Steeple which you See many miles at Sea" was the first feature of Newcastle that Birket noticed.⁵⁶ In a similar fashion, Benjamin Franklin observed upon first seeing Newport in 1726 that the city "makes a pretty prospect enough from the hills that surround it...a tall old-fashioned steeple rises in the midst of

he saw "the devil & the Pope &c. carried about by the mob, represented in effigy, very drole. Soone after see two more of them, but the justices, feareing some outrages may be committed, put a stop to them." This was to celebrate Guy Fawke's Day. Goelet, *Voyages*, November 5th. These watchmen, however, did not always dissuade such activity, nor did lamps. In the Boston criminal article detailing the sign damage from see *New York Gazette or Weekly Postal-Boy*, October 3, 1749, New York Historical Society General Collections, for instance, noted that the "Blades" who defaced the signs on Boston's principal streets "were so civil to the Watchmen, as not to give 'em the least Disturbance, nor can we learn that they lost one Moments Sleep by the whole Frolick." In the Philadelphia incident detailed in the *John Tabor Kempe Papers, 1678-1782*, Box 10, Folder 10, 1771. New York Historical Society Manuscript Collections, the villains simply took the lamps down before they proceeded with their crimes.

⁵⁵ Following Lefebvre, I argue that individuals of varying class, creeds, and nationalities expressed themselves and carved their identities amidst constant conflict. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991), 33-34, 86.

⁵⁶ Birket, *Cursory Remarks*, 7.

the town, which is very ornamental to it.”⁵⁷ Whether viewed from the sea or the surrounding countryside, high-rising steeples marked a city against the surrounding landscape as Godly and polite—a city rising toward heaven.

Although before 1720 British American churches resembled large one-story houses more than grand structures of worship, in the beginning of the eighteenth century congregations began funding renovations in their church’s architecture and decoration. This was a period of polite transformation for British American public spaces, a time when “the great mansions were rising on the landscape, and when balls and assemblies were being organized in the long rooms of the best taverns.”⁵⁸ Imitating the Georgian movement toward urban development in England, early American congregations built new, more elaborate, steepled churches.

By the mid-eighteenth century, colonial American churches had become symbols of the Empire’s power. Alexander Hamilton’s 1744 description of New York’s Trinity Church is telling of how ideologies of politeness and class affected the church. After being “provided with a pew,” Hamilton explained:

This church is above 100 foot long and 80 wide. Att the east end of it is a large semicircular area in which stands the altar, pritty well ornamented with painting and gilding. The gallerys are supported with wooden pillars of the Ionick order with carved work of foliage and cherubs’ heads guilt betwixt the capitals. There is a pritty organ att the west end of the church consisting of a great number of pipes handsomely guilt and adorned, but I had not the satisfaction of hearing it play, they having att this time no organist, but the vocall musick of the congregations was very good.⁵⁹

Hamilton’s description reveals numerous impulses of hierarchy in British America’s churches.

To begin, he noted the size and shape of the church. Rather than the latitudinal layout of seventeenth-century meetinghouses and churches, eighteenth-century en-vogue British American

⁵⁷ Benjamin Franklin, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin*. Vol. II, ed. William Temple Franklin (London: Henry Colbourn, 1833), 307.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 179.

⁵⁹ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 45.

churches adopted a longitudinal orientation for their congregation, which reflected colonial churches' attempts to keep up with British patterns of architectural progress. Hamilton next noted the "pritty well ornamented" altar "with painting and gilding." Another growing aspect of the Imperial influence, urban churches increasingly lavished attention upon their preachers' pulpits, often lifting pulpits high above the congregation, topping them with sounding boards, adding elegant (sometimes curved) stairs, and applying painted and gilded details to the woodwork. Hamilton's observation of musical additions also speaks to the Empire's impact on the British American urban church environment. Resembling congregations in England, non-dissenting Anglican churches across the colonies adopted organs to enliven their services during the eighteenth century. By applauding the "very good" "vocall musick of the congregations" of the New York Anglican Church, Hamilton highlighted another recent addition to the urban church musical experience: congregational singing. Finally, Hamilton was sure to note first that he was "provided with a pew," and second the existence of "galleries." By the mid-eighteenth-century, the urban church was one of the most class-determined public spaces in the colonies. Through remaking churches' exteriors and interiors to more closely resemble their own private houses and ballrooms (which were themselves imitations of England's grandest structures), patricians molded the church into a polite space of upper class power and exclusivity in the eighteenth century.

Upper class churchgoers also literally separated themselves from the lower classes through the use of private pews. One had to pay a "pew rent" in order to use such a space, which only the upper classes could afford.⁶⁰ Benjamin Bullivant, an Englishman visiting New York in

⁶⁰ Although not pursued at length in this work, elites also found their own conflict with which pew they were assigned in relation to their social competitors. For more on elite competition within the church, see Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 137-144. For more on pew order and hierarchy in the English church, see Kevin Dillow, "The Social and Ecclesiastical

1697, described the hierarchical nature of the church in full detail. He remembered that many of the most prominent gentlemen of the city (along with armed musketeers and a band) accompanied the Governor to the church's doors. New York's mayor and sheriff then led the governor to his "distinct and elevated" stall in the church and sat down in their own private stalls (which each had "a Carpet of Turkie work") along with New York's "Aldermen & principal gentry."⁶¹ The upper classes had truly transformed the urban church into a public space of genteel performance, hierarchy, and empire. Recognizing the power of law and religion in one space, these men regaled their leaders with the finest material goods of empire, symbols of religious prestige, and distance from their social inferiors.

Bullivant did not mention the lower classes because he might not have noticed them. As Hamilton mentioned in his description of Trinity Church, there were "galleries" constructed for women and lower class worshipers on a rear, upper level of the church. Such hierarchy was not limited to Anglican, Dissenting, and Catholic congregations. While visiting a New York synagogue in 1753, Peter Kalm observed "the galleries...were reserved for the ladies, while the men sat below."⁶² Although the seating arrangement of a Jewish synagogue represented religious tradition far more than hierarchical customs, the Swede, Kalm understood this division as related to the European religions he best understood. This divided layout allowed patricians to ignore those who they did not wish to interact with. Moreover, such divisions translated the hierarchical traditions of the Empire into the holiest of all spaces.

Significance of Church Seating Arrangements and Pew Disputes, 1500-1750," (D. Phil. dis., University of Oxford, 1990); Robert Tittler, "Seats of Power: The Symbolism of Public Seating in the English Urban Community, c. 1560-1620," *Albion* 24, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 205-23; David Dymond, "Sitting Apart in Church," in *Counties and Communities: Essays on East Anglian History*, ed. Carol Rawcliffe et al. (Norwich, 1996); Christopher Marsh, "Order and Place in England, 1580-1640: The View from the Pew," *Journal of British Studies* 44 (January 2005): 3-26. See also, Alexander Robertson, "Account Book. Scotch Presbyterian Church, 1784-1798." New York Historical Society Manuscript Collections.

⁶¹ Wayne Andrews, ed., "A Glance at New York in 1697: The Travel Diary of Benjamin Bullivant," *The New-York Historical Society Quarterly* XL (January 1956): 66.

⁶² Handlin, *Kalm*, 33.

British American elites strove to mold churches—just as they did streets—into polite, exclusive spaces. Yet controlling a city’s churches was not simple—a major port city such as Philadelphia, Boston or New York possessed dozens of different sects by the mid-eighteenth century. Upon visiting Philadelphia in 1750, the German traveler, Gottlieb Mittelberger lauded the city’s religious variety, explaining (perhaps with some hyperbole),

All religious sects are tolerated there. We find there Lutherans, Reformed, Catholics, Quakers, Mennonists or Anabaptists, Herrnhuters or Moravian Brethren, Pietists, Seventh Day Baptists, Dunkers, Presbyterians, Newborn, Freemasons, Separatists, Freethinkers, Jews, Mohammedans, Pagans, Negroes and Indians. The Evangelicals and Reformed, however, are in the majority. But there are many hundred unbaptized souls that do not even wish to be baptized...In one house and one family, 4, 5, and even 6 sects, may be found.⁶³

By 1732 New York also harbored two Dutch churches, two Episcopal churches, one French Catholic church, two German Lutheran churches, one Quaker meetinghouse, one Moravian church, one small Anabaptist meetinghouse, and a Jewish synagogue.⁶⁴ Finally, Boston—although engaged in its own battle against religious diversity—still held “Nineteen different places of Worship” in 1750.⁶⁵ Already somewhat divided, the “Great Awakening” of the mid-eighteenth century splintered the religious traditions of British America even further. As Jonathan Edwards and next George Whitefield extended their evangelical tours from Great Britain to the colonies in the mid-eighteenth century, they combined their worldly knowledge and itinerancy with the printed power of men like Benjamin Franklin to spread their word of God to unprecedented numbers of people.

An immensely popular figure throughout the British Empire, Whitefield used his booming voice to entrench certain Christians’ faith in prayer, confession, and repentance while

⁶³ Mittelberger, *Journey*, 55.

⁶⁴ William Smith Jr., *The History of the Province of New-York: First Discovery to the Year 1732* (London: Thomas Wilcox, 1757), 189-194.

⁶⁵ Birket, *Cursory Remarks*, 22.

also internally segregating longstanding Christian sects.⁶⁶ Divided between the “old” and “new” orders, colonial churches soon witnessed Whitefield’s profound effect as lower class white men and women as well as blacks and Indians began to question the traditional, hierarchical authority of their upper-class controlled churches. Although Whitefield ultimately reconciled himself to slavery, his message nonetheless caused many whites and blacks alike to challenge preexisting notions of religion. One South Carolina planter and follower of Whitefield built a school for black students in 1740 and soon thereafter led a movement to evangelize slaves, while evangelical congregations throughout the colonies encouraged blacks to convert to Christianity. Women also challenged religious authority. Charles Chauncy complained in 1742 that evangelists’ “frightful language” caused women in his congregation to “shriek” and extend themselves beyond their position in their church. Certain Native Americans also picked up on the upheaval of the “Great Awakening” to begin their own movements.⁶⁷ Lower class whites, finally, challenged upper class authority by constructing their own churches (under the direction of Whitefield), encouraging women, blacks, and Indians to join their congregations, and steadily attempting to restructure the traditional hierarchical nature of the Anglican Church. Such turmoil only heightened elite anxieties.

Urban churches, then, were public stages of class conflict and patrician anxiety. During the mid-eighteenth century elites utilized church structures as yet another reflection of their own politeness—they funded towering steeples to mark the grandiosity of their city and congregation as far as the eye could see, redecorated both the exterior and interior of the church to more

⁶⁶ Peter Charles Hoffer, *When Benjamin Franklin Met the Reverend Whitefield: Enlightenment, Revival, and the Power of the Printed Word* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

⁶⁷ George Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-Century British and American Culture* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 112; Linford D. Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Nancy Ruttenburg, *Democratic Personality: Popular Voice and the Trial of American Authorship* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 170 (quote).

closely reflect their “resorts of gentility” like mansions and ball rooms, and divided the church by class and gender to solidify the space as exclusive and genteel.⁶⁸ Yet the ordering of society was not as simple as steeples and pews. Although religion helped to produce structure for elites in their own churches, it also created further divisions that cut across class, nationality, and occupational lines. The Great Awakening, moreover, capitalized on these pre-existing fault lines to provide lower class colonists new opportunities of power. Colonial American churches were thus incongruously some of the most—and least—ordered public spaces in the British Empire.

Entertainment: Theaters

Colonists of every class and creed also came to love the theater of drama, comedy, and tragedy during the eighteenth century, even in the face of religious resistance.⁶⁹ As actors from throughout the Empire spread across colonial America’s urban centers, the early American theater (following its English counterpart) became a public stage of entertainment, Empire, and the continuing battle over social disorder.⁷⁰ In Charleston and Williamsburg the gentry embraced plays as a polite connection to their English counterparts. Lacking a proper playhouse in 1735, actors staged Thomas Otway’s *The Orphan, or the Unhappy Marriage* in Charleston’s courtroom. This Charleston troupe enjoyed such success that Charleston built its “Dock Street Theatre” in 1736. As in Williamsburg, however, Charleston’s theatrical interest was brief as the

⁶⁸ Hamilton mentioned clocks gracing multiple British American steeples. See Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 102, 119; Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 160.

⁶⁹ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 31, 1766. Many elite colonists (especially in Boston) considered the theater “a dangerous School of Vice” and consequently vehemently resisted such public spaces during the eighteenth century.

⁷⁰ Theaters gained their first foothold in the southern British American colonies. Although records are scant, we know that elite merchants Levingston and Stagg constructed a playhouse in Williamsburg in 1718 and hosted numerous entertainments over the next three years. In 1721, however, Levingston and Stagg abandoned their theatrical endeavors. Yet no matter these Williamsburg merchants’ failure, amateur troupes throughout the British American colonies grew in popularity. I am heavily indebted to Hugh F. Rankin, *The Theater in Colonial America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960) for this chapter’s contents regarding the development of the early American theater.

“Dock Street Theatre” closed after only one year. Many scholars have attributed this sudden, widespread decline at least partially to the “First Great Awakening” as Whitefield’s campaign against vice and luxury caused many to sacrifice play going, balls, dancing, gaming, and card playing.⁷¹ Until the mid-eighteenth century, then, the American theater’s prominence was sporadic at best. This was all about to change.

A well-established, professional troupe of European actors, the Hallam Company took the American colonies by storm in 1752. The Hallam Company was no stranger to the various currents of the Empire; they knew that American colonists—especially patricians—craved politeness, exclusivity, and Imperial connections in their public entertainment. Thus the Company advertised their clothes and decorations as “rich” and “finished in the highest Taste;” they noted how the scenes were “painted by the best Hands in London” and were “excell’d by none in Beauty and Elegance;” finally, the Hallam Company assured Williamsburg’s gentry that they could “depend on being entertain’d in as polite a Manner as at the Theatres in London.”⁷² The Hallam Company advertised more than a play—they promised politeness, power, exclusivity, and worldliness for colonists.

Although still facing some opposition, the Hallam Company purchased a playhouse in Williamsburg in 1752 and soon thereafter advertised that they had converted it into “a regular Theatre, fit for the Reception of Ladies and Gentlemen.”⁷³ While at first glance only a side note, the Hallam Company’s notation that they had rendered the playhouse “a regular Theatre” fit for ladies and gentlemen had deep implications for entertainment and class structure. Since theaters were usually relatively small (the average outside dimensions measuring eighty-one by thirty-

⁷¹ Rankin, *Theater*, 25-30; regarding Whitefield, see also Odai Johnson and William J. Burling, *The Colonial American Stage, 1665-1774: A Documentary Calendar* (Rosemont Publishing, 2001), 76; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 1, 1740.

⁷² *The Virginia Gazette*, June 12, 1752.

⁷³ *The Virginia Gazette*, August 21, 1752.

seven feet), theater owners crammed as many people as possible between the stage and the back wall (termed the “pit”). In London’s popular Covent Garden Theater, for instance, each customer in the pit was allowed a maximum of twenty-one inches for “seat and void.” The pit was so full that theater builders usually erected a row of iron spikes across the front edge of the stage to separate actors from the raucous audience.⁷⁴ Elite members of the audience sat distanced from the lower classes in upper-tier, metal spike-protected boxes along both sides and across the rear of the theater.⁷⁵

As evidenced by upper class boxes, spiked dividers, the crowded nature of the pit, and the raucous galleries, the lower classes also defined the colonial theater. Here plebeians escaped the monotony of everyday life and middling colonists hoped to gain a foothold in polite society. As the cheapest section, the gallery harbored lower class mechanics, artisans, laborers, and eventually became a main area for prostitution.⁷⁶ Yet beyond the raucous nature of “the many-headed monster of the pit” during plays, the theater also became a stage of plebeian villainy and resistance after the curtains closed. At about eleven o’clock on the night of December 7, 1752, “one White Man and two Negroes” broke into Williamsburg’s theater and “violently assaulted and wounded *Patrick Malony*,” a Hallam Company actor. After “knocking him down, and throwing him upon the Iron-Spikes,” Malony’s attackers left him hanging by the spike that had impaled his leg. Such violent crimes not only scared Williamsburg’s citizens and actors alike, but also upset the notions of British politeness patricians so craved.⁷⁷ In 1772 “a Number of evil disposed Persons” used the night’s cover to break into a Philadelphia theater and “carried away

⁷⁴ Rankin, *Theater*, 53.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 53; The Hallam Company recommended before their first showing of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* that “ladies” give him “timely Notice...for their Places in the Boxes, and on the Day of the Performance...send their Servants early to keep them, in Order to prevent Trouble and Disappointment.” *The Virginia Gazette*, August 21, 1752.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁷⁷ Boswell, *Journal*, 155; *The Virginia Gazette*, December 8, 1752.

the Iron Spikes, which divide the Galleries from the upper Boxes.” While these villains were detected and escaped without the spikes, their attempt to destroy the spiked class barriers well emphasized underlying class conflict in the theater.⁷⁸

The “numerous and polite Audience” who watched *The Merchant of Venice* on the opening night of the Hallam Company in Williamsburg reportedly received the play “with great applause.” Yet their approval extended well beyond the walls of that “regular Theater,” for “this production marked the inauguration of a more dignified drama in America and the beginning of the continuous history of the American theater.”⁷⁹ Although met with religious resistance throughout the colonies, colonial American theaters became a public stage of entertainment, class conflict, and British expansion as the Hallam Company toured New York, Philadelphia, and the West Indies.⁸⁰ Elite colonists envisioned the theater as a chance to “know the world” and become more genteel. As a result they attempted to transform this public space to fit their exclusive, polite standards by installing boxes (ringed by iron spikes) and raising themselves above the masses. Yet the lower classes also saw the theater as a chief form of entertainment—a public space where they could escape the monotonies of life, revel with friends, and drink. Select groups of the lower classes took this revelry too far by committing crimes inside the theater.

⁷⁸ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 16, 1772.

⁷⁹ Rankin, *Theater*, 56.

⁸⁰ One writer asked his fellow elite countrymen “for what Purpose [do] you support a sacred Order of Men to teach you the pure and holy Laws of the Christian Religion, and at the same Time encourage by your Countenance and your Riches a Sett of the very Dregs of Human Nature, who make it their Business to debauch your Minds by their lewd Compositions and wonton Gesticulations?” “On Theatrical Entertainments,” *The American Magazine and Historical Chronicle*; August 1746; 3, pg. 356; One Philadelphia writer railed against the theater, stage, and its actors, exclaiming, “No one returns [from the theater] the better Christian, or the better Man; while Thousands, on the contrary, return the more debauched, vitiated, and confirmed in sinful Habits. The Stage is known to be a Place where shameful Intrigues are carried on, and the Actors, if they be not open Atheists and Profligates, are such, at best, who make Religion, or the Care of their Souls, their least Business.” *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 31, 1766; For more instances of Philadelphia anti-theater, see *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 19, 1754; January 29, 1767. It should be noted that the debate over the godliness of the theater also waged across Great Britain. See, for instance, the debate over plays in Edinburgh which played out in gentlemanly magazines like *The American Magazine and Monthly Chronicle for the British Colonies* Vol. 1, 4 (January 1758), 151 and Vol. 1, 5 (February 1758), 203.

Even such villainy, however, highlighted the inherent class conflict of British American public spaces as they became increasingly connected with various networks of the Empire.

Consumerism: Shops, Markets, and Fairs

As consumerism reached its apex within the Empire by the mid-eighteenth century it also became entangled with the ongoing challenges to hierarchy within the Empire.⁸¹ Colonists, slaves, and Native Americans' dependence on this global market spurred hopes of class mobility for the lower and middle sorts, anxiety for the elites, and a new idea of the public space for all.⁸² Colonists no doubt utilized private space to navigate this consumer-minded society, but public spaces highlighted the most dramatic features of colonial consumerism in the mid-eighteenth century. Consumerism not only defined colonists' interactions within public spaces, but also created and maintained Imperial connections far beyond their locality. Similar to other public spaces, shops, markets, and fairs served as stages of sociability, class conflict, and global connections. Within these growing consumer spaces elites sought control, the lower classes strove for autonomy, and everyone became more firmly interconnected through larger networks of international culture, communication, consumption, and identity.

Shopkeepers adjusted accordingly to the increase in consumerism, trade, population, and urban development spurred on by Imperial development during the mid-eighteenth century. As colonists opened more shops, certain shopkeepers diversified and increased their goods while others specified their selection of goods. Shops, of course, were only one outlet in a much larger

⁸¹ Historians have come to call this previously unparalleled period of conspicuous consumption as the "consumer revolution." See, for instance, McKendrick, Brewer, Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, xv, xvi; Breen, "An Empire of Goods," 467-499.

⁸² As the historian Thorstein Veblen argued, "closely related to the requirement that the gentleman must consume freely and of the right kind of goods, there is the requirement that he know how to consume them in a seemly manner." Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1912), 75; Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability*; Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England: 1727-1783* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

and more complex system of trade. Merchants sailed the world to bring goods to certain trade hubs, which shipped these wares to merchants' houses across Great Britain and Europe, who then sold to British American retailers, and finally to the colonial store.⁸³ Yet the logistics of trade is not as important for this investigation as are the meanings colonists placed on goods and the interactions within these shops. By adjusting to the global, consumer-driven Empire, shopkeepers positioned colonial shops as principal public spaces in intersecting networks of consumerism, trade, and hierarchy.

Shops became “windows onto a world of goods”—reflections of the colonies’ growing importance in the Empire—for colonial Americans as shopkeepers greatly diversified and expanded their stock of local and global goods and colonists increasingly utilized consumer goods to connect with assert their hierarchical standing in the Empire.⁸⁴ Realizing colonists’ urge for global goods, shopkeepers such as William Sitgreaves advertised grand new shipments of goods “to be sold by Retail, on the very lowest Terms, for ready Money” at their shops. Numbering well over two hundred items, Sitgreaves’ monstrous listing served a number of purposes. For one, its sheer size advertised the opportunities of visiting Sitgreaves’ shop. Here one could get lost in a world of European goods, “Roman ruins,” fine silks and cloths, exotic spices, polite tea accessories, ivory combs, enlightening books, sugar, and glittering watches. Not only did Sitgreaves offer “WEST INDIA” rum, but also Asian spices, “Russia and Irish sheeting,” Silesia and Pomerania linens,” and “most other European goods, that are generally sold in Philadelphia.” In an even more discrete attempt to incite colonists’ urge for politeness and global goods, Sitgreaves advertised golden-framed pictures of “Roman Antiquities” and “views

⁸³ For more on the global, decentralized nature of eighteenth-century trade networks—particularly regarding Madeira wine—see Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*; Also see Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, Chapter Four for a thorough investigation of colonial American consumer acquisition chains and Hancock, *Citizens of the World* for more on merchants’ global connections.

⁸⁴ Stobart, *Spaces of Consumption*, 14.

in and about London, Paris, Petersburg, Venice” and Germany. By listing so many goods, however, Sitgreaves also provided customers with a preview of his shop. A colonist reading this *Pennsylvania Gazette* advertisement could almost see himself walking through Sitgreaves’ bustling shop, interacting with global goods and visiting with discerning members of the urban elite.⁸⁵ Furthermore, by purchasing these global goods, colonists became active participants in larger commercial networks of trade, enslavement, and oppression.⁸⁶

As eighteenth-century shops became more diverse and numerous, shopkeepers also specialized their stock. Although shopkeepers no doubt concentrated their stock in reaction to the sheer numbers of goods bombarding colonial America’s shores, shop specialization might easily be interpreted as catering to elites’ need for control of the city’s public spaces. The Philadelphia saddler John Young, for example, advertised in 1762 that he had recently opened “the Sign of the English Hunting Saddle” where he offered finest “velvet, Plush, Cloth, Fringed, laced, and leathered” men’s and women’s saddles “in the neatest and best Manner, and at the most reasonable Rates” for “All Gentlemen and Ladies.”⁸⁷ Young was not alone in catering to an elite market. John Didip, a tailor recently arrived in Williamsburg from Edinburgh, advertised in the March 5, 1752 edition of the *Virginia Gazette* that he made “all Sorts of Mens wearing Apparel, after the best and newest Fashions; where all Gentlemen...that will favour him with their Custom, may depend on being faithfully and expeditiously serv’d.” Like Young, Didip understood gentlemen’s need for exclusivity and service. As they always had, British American elites constantly strove to keep up with the latest European fashions, which marked them as superior

⁸⁵ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 19, 1759.

⁸⁶ David Hancock, for instance, argued “commercial links bound together people who did not know each other except through intermediaries.” David J. Hancock, “The Triumphs of Mercury: Connection and Control in the Emerging Atlantic Economy,” in *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500-1830*, ed. Bernard Bailyn and Patricia Denault (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 121.

⁸⁷ *The Philadelphia Gazette*, September 9, 1762.

members of the British Empire.⁸⁸ In short, shopkeepers like Young and Didip did all they could in order to represent themselves, their shop, and their products as diverse, worldly, genteel, and exclusive.

As with all public spaces, however, the lower classes influenced shops in the mid-eighteenth century, which further upset already anxious elites. Sarah Kemble Knight, a Puritan woman traveling from Boston to New York in the early eighteenth century, described a lower class intrusion into polite world of consumerism. Upon observing “a tall country fellow, with his alfogeos full of tobacoo” step into a shop, make an “Awkward Nodd” toward the shopkeeper, and kick dirt over a wad of tobacco after he spat it on the floor, Knight described the man as staring at the store’s wares “like a Catt let out of a Baskett.” Soon thereafter the man asked the shopkeeper if he had “any Ribinen for hatbands to sell, I pray?” When the shopkeeper brought out the ribbon (after questioning the man regarding overdue past payments), the lower class man (Knight called him “Bumpkin Simpners”) “beckon’d in his wife” (who Knight called “Joan Tawdry). After “dropping about fifty curtsies,” Joan Tawdry proclaimed the ribbon “dreadful pretty,” and purchased silk and thread as well. In Knight’s description, plebeians did not understand polite consumer decorum. Besides spitting on the floor and looking uncomfortable, Bumpkin Simpners also incorrectly called ribbon “ribinen.” By “dropping about fifty curtsies,” moreover, Joan Tawdry only revealed her impoliteness and lack of need for ribbon and silk. “For want of improvements,” Knight concluded, many of the lower classes “render[ed] themselves almost ridiculous, as above. I would be glad if they would leave such follies.”⁸⁹ Patricians like

⁸⁸ See, for instance, N.B. Harte, “State Control of Dress and Social Change in Pre-Industrial England,” in *Trade Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England*, ed. D.C. Coleman and A.H. John (London: Littlehampton Book Services, Ltd., 1976), 132-65; Gilles Lipovetsky, *The Empire of Fashion: Dressing Modern Democracy*, trans. Catherine Porter (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 69-74.

⁸⁹ Sarah Kemble Knight, “The Journal of Madam Knight,” in *The Puritans*, ed. Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson (New York: American Book Company, 1938), 41-2.

Knight thus viewed the lower class intrusion into the world of consumerism as misguided. They were pursuing genteel self-improvement in the shop space when they should be concentrated on self-subsistence in private spaces.

Yet no matter how ardently the elites attempted to control, cordon, and monopolize the shop space, the lower classes continued to make various inroads, both legal and illegal.⁹⁰ For example, shoplifting became a serious problem across in the mid-eighteenth century and was almost always associated with the lower classes. After “Villains” stole a parcel of watches and silver from a New York shop in 1756, New York officials lamented: “Robberies, which, till of late, were scarce heard of amongst us, are now become so common, that not a Night passes” when a New Yorker is not robbed.”⁹¹ Only one of countless newspaper reports detailing shop theft in British American cities, this report well encapsulates elites’ growing anxiety regarding class conflict and theft and foreshadows their attempts at further control of the shop space.⁹²

In reaction to such villainy, anxious patricians reinforced windows and doors, avidly reported and tracked regional theft through news channels, installed more lamps surrounding stores, and increased night patrol. No matter—newspapers hardly went a week without reporting how groups of lower class thieves sidestepped every mechanism of elite control. One group of New York thieves, through “Dexterity of the Operation,” used the night’s darkness to circumvent a shop’s “well barred” double shutter windows in order to “throw up” the glass window and take off the hinges. Making off with “upwards of Two Hundred Pounds, in Gold, Silver, and Paper Money,” the “Rogues” also eluded “a Lamp...burning all night near the House” and “the

⁹⁰ As Stobart, Hann, and Morgan contended, “The ease with which the shop space could be invaded and disturbed...undermined the status of the shop as ordered and formalized space.” Stobart, *Spaces of Consumption*, 137.

⁹¹ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 30, 1756.

⁹² The examples of shop theft are numerous in colonial American newspapers. See, for example, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 7, 1731; September 16, 1736; January 7, 1755; March 11, 1756; January 14, 1762; November 29, 1764.

Vigilance both of Civil and Military Watch.”⁹³ Perhaps even more frighteningly, many shop thefts took place during open hours, right under the shopkeeper’s nose and within reach of browsing elites.⁹⁴ As goods became more available and common in reaction to demand, elite mechanisms of control simply could not keep up with villainy. Whether breaking and entering in the dark of night or tricking shopkeepers out of their goods, certain groups of lower classes used theft and crime to intrude upon shop space and break down elite barriers of control, gentility, and exclusivity.

Beyond shops, markets and fairs also served as important public spaces of global connection, consumerism, and class conflict. Moreover, due to the unorganized, arbitrary nature of markets and fairs, the lower classes were able to gain influence in these venues perhaps more than in any other public space. This plebeian power, of course, worried elites who increasingly sought control of colonial America’s public spaces in response to various social factors.

Markets and fairs were crowded, confused spaces of plebeian pleasure and power in colonial America. Although many colonists and visitors to North America considered Philadelphia’s “the largest and best market in America,” every major port city held a regulated market at least once a week for its citizens.⁹⁵ One visitor to Philadelphia in 1744 remembered that at the market “you may be Supply’d with every Necessary for the Support of Life thro’out the whole year, both Extraordinary Good and reasonably Cheap.”⁹⁶ Here colonists of all walks of

⁹³ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 3, 1755.

⁹⁴ See, for instance, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 6, 1753.

⁹⁵ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 21; Birket, *Cursory Remarks*, 69. It should be noted that magistrates issued various regulations over marketplaces. See, for instance, “A Law for the Better Regulating and Ordering the Public Markets Within the City of New-York,” in *New York (City) Ordinances, etc.* (New York, 1735), 49-52; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 8, 1763.

⁹⁶ William Black, “Journal of William Black, 1744 (Continued),” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (1877), 405. Black also called Philadelphia the largest market in America. Birket was also amazed at the selection, noting “I will only observe that Philada is Remarkable for having the largest and best Market in America it abounds with Beefe, Mutton, veal, Porke, all kinds of Poultry as Turkey wild & tame, Geese, ducks Wild & tame, Dunghill fowls, Pheasants, Quails, wild Pidgeons, also Venison as fallow Deer in abundance,

life bought and sold goods, creatures, and people, reveled in public entertainment ranging from giant hogs to horse races, talked, fought, received punishment, watched, and listened.

Many colonists realized the benefits of the public market. Boston shopkeepers S. Gerrish and J. Edwards, for example, argued that Boston “cannot think ourselves *wiser* than all the world besides, nor that we understand the Art of living well better than they” without a regular market. A weekly market, Gerrish and Edwards argued, would benefit Boston and the surrounding countryside in numerous ways. For Gerrish and Edwards, a market represented more than simply trade—it symbolized a healthy commonwealth, a saved soul, a stronger bond between city and country, and a Boston that stood upon principles of “virtue” and “good Morals.” In short, the market would help to bring colonists into a closer alliance with the various virtues of the Empire.⁹⁷

Yet where Gerrish and Edwards visualized hope in a Boston market, many elites also perceived decline, disorder, and loss. Boston was still without a market in 1733, and many—including one anonymous Bostonian—wanted to keep it that way. This unnamed instigator argued that a market would be too expensive to develop, raise the price of provisions since city demand would always outweigh country supply, decentralize trade, and depreciate the value of estates not in close proximity to the market. Most important for this author’s argument, however, were underlying anxieties of class conflict. “A Market,” he argued, would “be attended with much more disorder and confusion than is ever known in the usual way of Buying and Selling.” Where Boston was presently characterized by “nothing but Quietness, Peace, and good order,” a market full of “so great a Collection of People of Different Tempers, Quality, Ages, Sex, and

Rabbits, &c And great Plenty of fruite & Roots as Potatoes, Turneps, Parsneps Carratts Cabbage &C.” Birket, *Cursory Remarks*, 69.

⁹⁷ S. Gerrish and J. Edwards, *Some Reasons and Arguments Offered to the Good People of Boston and Adjacent Places, for the Setting Up Markets in Boston* (Boston: J. Franklin, 1713), 2, 6, 7.

colour” would only breed disorder and confusion—two of British American elites’ biggest fears.⁹⁸

As the eighteenth century progressed and markets grew in cities across the colonies, anxious elites equated the public market with inherent disorder and frequent crime. Besides mob activity like the previously detailed Philadelphia sailor riot, certain citizens also used the public venue of the market to make public announcements. One 1742 Philadelphia market day, the “Pythagorean-cynical-christian Philosopher” Benjamin Lay “bore a publick Testimony against the Vanity of Tea-drinking” when he mounted a stall and began breaking china pottery in front of a curious crowd. Lay’s protest, however, came to an abrupt halt when onlookers “overthrew him and his box, to the Ground” and carried off as much of the china as possible. Although seemingly innocuous, these colonists’ reaction to Lay’s public demonstration revealed the relationship between Imperialism and class conflict. As colonists became more enamored with the consumer goods available because of British expansion—in this case china tea equipage—they were willing to overpower Lay to prevent him from breaking his own china. Such a disorderly, lower class driven instance as Lay’s was exactly what elites feared in the market place, and it was brought on largely by understandings of, and conflict over, myriad facets of Imperialism.⁹⁹

Beyond mob activity, British American elites also feared the disorder that arose from the multitude of petty thievery in the market place. After being followed “from Stall to Stall” by a mysterious man at the much-celebrated Philadelphia market, for instance, one patrician was robbed of his pocket book containing “several Fifteen Shilling Bills.” The elite man tracked down the thief in the crowded marketplace and “carried him before a Magistrate, who sent him

⁹⁸ Anonymous, *Some Considerations Against the Setting Up of a Market in this Town* (Boston, 1733).

⁹⁹ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 25, 1742.

to Jail.”¹⁰⁰ This thief’s troubles, however, had only just begun since urban magistrates considered theft a direct affront to their power, and consequently punished thieves publicly. Philadelphia magistrates whipped one pick-pocketing woman “during the Market upon the Balcony of the Court-House with her Face towards the People, that every Body might know her.”¹⁰¹ Magistrates intended this punishment to more than simply humiliate the woman; they also meant to make an example out of her. Since her face was to the public, the hundreds in the audience saw her pain and remembered it.¹⁰²

Yet elites’ attempts at order through punishment in the market place did not always go as planned. The market was, after all, a space of considerable lower class influence, and consequently the lower classes sometimes rebelled against elite control. Having caught a man named “Watt” counterfeiting money, Philadelphia magistrates dealt his punishment of “being whipt, pilloried and cropt” in the market. Moreover, these elites encouraged lower class onlookers to throw debris and snowballs at Watt, which they hoped would further humiliate him and create a bond of hatred against counterfeiting (a considerable problem in the colonies) between the disparate classes.¹⁰³ Unfortunately, Watt “behaved so as to touch the Compassion of the Mob, and they did not fling at him (as was expected) neither Snow-balls nor any Thing else.”¹⁰⁴ Rather than pander to elites’ wishes of revulsion toward urban crime the crowd

¹⁰⁰ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 12, 1753.

¹⁰¹ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 4, 1736. In another instance, “two country women were detected in Stealing Goods out of a Shop near the Market, and whipt at the Bell.” *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 9, 1737.

¹⁰² In New York City on May 7, 1753, “*John Rian* was whipped at the Cart’s Tail, for picking a Pocket-Book out of a Gentleman’s Pocket in this City, as he stood in the Market.” *New-York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, May 7, 1753.

¹⁰³ For more on the psychology and theory of punishment, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). For more on early modern English punishment and penal systems, see John Briggs, Christopher Harrison, Angus McInnes, David Vincent, *Crime and Punishment in England: An Introductory History* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996); Garthine Walker, *Crime, Gender, and Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); J.A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England, 1550-1750* (London: Longman, 1984).

¹⁰⁴ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 11, 1733.

empathized with Watt and his plight, and thus most likely felt intensified distrust and disdain toward their upper class leaders.

Fairs were even more contested public spaces of uncontrolled, riotous, lower class revelry than markets. British fairs, according to Stobart, Hann, and Morgan, became “associated with unregulated social mixing and a breaking down of the traditional barriers policing polite space, practices and identities.”¹⁰⁵ Held twice yearly in major cities such as Philadelphia and New York City, urban fairs brought multitudes of lower class citizens from the surrounding areas together in one giant consumer-driven celebration.¹⁰⁶ Here one could buy and sell “Horses, Cattle, Hogs, Sheep, &c. and all sorts of Goods, Wares...Merchandises,” pocket almanacs, estates, and land. Even more, fair organizers often awarded prizes “of considerable value” to the victors of numerous competitions like horse and foot racing, horse and cattle breeding, fist-fighting, dancing, and pig chasing.¹⁰⁷ Numerous other attractions also greeted fair-goers—one group promoted “AN INGENIOUS PIECE OF Clock work...never heard of in England” at Philadelphia’s winter fair of 1744, some Philadelphians advertised an albino African boy at their summer fair in 1760, and fair organizers sometimes roasted an ox “for the Entertainment of the Country.”¹⁰⁸

Fairs also served as central sites of elite anxiety as violence, crime, and destruction increasingly congregated around these public spaces. While watching monkeys perform at

¹⁰⁵ Stobart, *Spaces of Consumption*, 107.

¹⁰⁶ For dates of Philadelphia fairs, see Benjamin Franklin, “Petition to the Pennsylvania Assembly Regarding Fairs,” (1731); accessed on 1/23/12 at 12:13 PM on <http://franklinpapers.org/franklin/framedVolumes.jsp>; also see Handlin, *Kalm*, 21. Franklin also announced fair times in his numerous editions of “Poor Richard’s Almanack.” For Williamsburg, see *The Virginia Gazette*, Parks, December 7, 1739; For New York’s semiannual fairs reference, see Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan*, Vol. 4, 377; The provincial legislature passed “An Act for the Setling of Faires and Marquets in each respective City and Country throughout the Province” on November 11, 1692. It stipulated that New York would have two fairs a year.

¹⁰⁷ *The Virginia Gazette*, November 30, 1739. For pocket almanacs, land, and estate sales, see *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 6, 1740, August 22, 1744, and July 4, 1745.

¹⁰⁸ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 8, 1744, May 29, 1760, November 11, 1736.

Bartholomew Fair in 1661, the Englishman Samuel Pepys was “troubled...to sit among such nasty company.” When fellow Englishman Ned Ward attended the May-Fair in 1709, he disgustedly remarked, “I never in my life saw such a number of lazy, lousie-look’d rascals, and so hateful a throng of beggarly, sluttish strumpets.”¹⁰⁹ Urban citizens constantly reported thefts at the fair ranging from boats to cloth to silver spoons. Even more, prostitution—already a problem in the colonies—often reached an apex during fair times as so many people crowded into city centers.¹¹⁰ Patricians throughout the Empire were quite used to petty theft and prostitution at fairs—murder, however, was an entirely different issue.

The combination of uncontrolled festivity, alcohol, and (largely lower class) crowds combined at the urban fair to foster a public space prone to violence and murder. *The Pennsylvania Gazette* reported in 1736 on a man who, after attempting to kill his wife with a clasp knife and breaking out of prison, “made his Appearance in the Fair, all bloody, with the Knife in his Hand, declaring *that he had taken his Revenge and kill’d the B---b, but that no body should put him in Prison again.*” Another *Pennsylvania Gazette* article described two men’s fight to the death on the last night of the fair. When Jacob Evoulkt caught Joseph Koster “unawares by the Hair of his Head with both Hands,” it only took Evoulkt “two or three sudden Jerks” to break Koster’s neck.¹¹¹ As a long English tradition, fairs served as central temporal markers of uncontrolled festivity, overt consumption, and violent conflict—they were in many ways anxious elites’ worst nightmares.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, Vol. 2, ed. Henry B. Wheatley (London, 1893), 92; Edward Ward, *The London-Spy* (London, 1709), 173.

¹¹⁰ See, for instance, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 28, 1762; June 9, 1763; May 29, 1735; October 26, 1758; May 4, 1758.

¹¹¹ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 4, 1736; November 26, 1741.

¹¹² For more on English fairs, see Jay Barrett Botsford, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1924); Elizabeth Burton, *The Pageant of Georgian England* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1967); Eric Wilson, “Sounding Out Early Modern London,” *Modern Language Studies* 25 (Summer, 1995): 1-42.

Benjamin Franklin, for example, published a *Petition to the Pennsylvania Assembly Regarding Fairs* (1731) in which he enumerated the various atrocities maintained and created by fairs. Besides serving no real retailing advantage, Franklin maintained that fairs were also “the Occasion of much Disturbance in the City; by such a Concourse of rude People many of them intoxicated with strong Liquors, and becoming quarrelsome or mischievous.” Franklin contended that the fairs also “corrupt[ed] the Morals, and destroy[ed] the Innocence of our Youth” as Philadelphia’s otherwise industrious youngsters were “induc’d to Drinking and Gaming, in mix’d Companies of vicious Servants and Negroes.” Moreover, fairs encouraged “Thieving and Pilfering,” as the large crowds prevented people from watching their goods and provided thieves with an easy escape. Yet for Franklin the trouble had only just begun during the day, for “the Riot and Confusion of the Rabble after Night [gave] great Offence to all sober People; and frequently Windows [were] broke and other Mischief done” by unpunished assailants. If such riotous, disordered fairs of “mix’d Companies” were to continue, Franklin feared “all these Disorders [would] increase as the City [grew] more Populous.”¹¹³ British American patricians like Franklin saw fairs—some of the most class-contested public spaces in colonial America—as one of the largest threats to their vision of a “genteel,” ordered British Atlantic Empire.

In the pattern of every other public space, elites exerted their own forms of control over the fair as they adopted horse racing—“a sport only for Gentlemen”—in their quest to imitate English gentry and foster a more polite, social atmosphere of patrician exclusivity.¹¹⁴ Besides the

¹¹³ Franklin, “Petition Regarding Fairs.”

¹¹⁴ When the Virginia tailor, James Bullock, arranged a race with a gentleman for 2,000 pounds of tobacco in 1674, for instance, the York County Court fined him 100 pounds of tobacco, “it being contrary to Law for a Labourer to make a race, being a sport only for Gentlemen.” Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Americans: The Colonial Experience* (New York: Random House, 1958), 104 (quote); For more on colonial American horse racing, see Randy J. Sparks, “Gentleman’s Sport: Horse Racing in Antebellum Charleston,” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 93 (Jan., 1992): 15-30; Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 98-101; T.H. Breen, “Horses and Gentlemen: The Cultural Significance of Gambling Among the Gentry of

expense of horses, gambling also accompanied horse races, which largely excluded the lower classes.¹¹⁵ Realizing the power of this elite activity, gentlemen like William Byrd II of Hanover County, Virginia used horseracing to gain a modicum of power over the rowdy fair crowd. Byrd II sponsored and funded “Horse Races, and several other Diversions, for the Entertainment of the Gentlemen and Ladies” during a 1737 Williamsburg fair. Only “Subscribers” capable of “defraying the Expence of this Entertainment” could race their horses for the five pound prize, and other elite-sponsored activities including fiddling and beauty competitions were awarded with genteel prizes such as “handsome Silk Stockings” or “a Pair of Silver Buckles.” Patrician sponsors also organized a polite dinner accompanied by royal toasts and music. A direct attempt at creating an “innocent,” orderly counterpart to the fair, the event’s organizers declared that “all Immorality” would be punished “with the utmost Rigour.”¹¹⁶ While horse races were colonial elites’ strongest antidotes to the fair, lower class colonists retained order—or, perhaps more accurately, disorder—over these festive public spaces.¹¹⁷

Consumerism thus defined colonists’ interactions within public spaces as well as creating and maintaining various Imperial connections beyond them. Colonists’ interactions within consumer-driven public spaces like shops, markets, and fairs served as principal stages of sociability, class conflict, and trade in the Empire. Mirroring the consumer revolution that raged throughout the British Empire, shops grew more diversified in their global goods, numerous in

Virginia,” *William and Mary Quarterly* XXXIV (April 1977): 239-257; For English horse racing, Dennis Brailsford, *Sport and Society: Elizabeth to Anne* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1969).

¹¹⁵ For more on Virginia gambling regulations, see William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, From the First Session of the Legislature, in the Year 1619*, Vol. V (Richmond, 1819), 229-30.

¹¹⁶ *The Virginia Gazette*, October 7, 1737.

¹¹⁷ While very popular in the southern colonies, horse racing was enjoyed throughout British North America. The Philadelphia patrician, Jacob Hiltzheimer, for instance, frequented horse races from 1765 to 1798. See Jacob Hiltzheimer, *Extracts from the Diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer of Philadelphia, 1765-1798*, ed. Jacob Cox Parsons (Philadelphia, 1893), 11-24.

their locations, and well stocked during the eighteenth century. As a result of elite anxiety, however, some shops also became more exclusive and specialized. Just as patricians had with streets and churches, elites continuously attempted to mold shops, markets, and fairs into polite spaces of consumption and decorum. The upper classes adopted certain shops as their own polite spheres, instituted more regulations over shops, markets, and fairs, wrote damning tracts, and asserted their power through public punishment.

But while patricians were fairly successful in their ordering of shops and markets, elites simply could not control fairs as they remained the most disorderly public spaces in the British American colonies. Moreover, much to elites' mortification plebeians gained an unprecedented consumer identity by the mid-eighteenth century as they purchased goods in urban shops, markets, and fairs. The lower classes' new consumer identity also helped them to join patricians as significant actors in larger networks of commerce and trade. Finally, plebeian informal (sometimes illegal) interaction within shops, markets, and fairs perhaps most defined them in relation to both the social world and their social superiors. Only through totally divorcing themselves from the fairs by sponsoring horse races had elites been able to construct a truly exclusive, genteel sphere of interaction in the consumer sphere. Realizing this, British American elites continued to build new, increasingly exclusive monuments to polite authority in the British Empire.

Public Improvement: "Polite" Libraries, Universities, and Hospitals

No matter how extensively (or partially) elites transformed streets, churches, theaters, shops, markets and fairs into harbors of gentility, these public spaces still existed in tandem with plebeian disorder and Imperial growth. To truly make British American public spaces "genteel,"

patricians realized they had to create their own hybrid public/private spaces. These hybrid spaces would still exist in the public, *per se*, but would be owned, funded, and controlled by the upper classes. Like horse races, then, hybrid spaces would be public since patricians attended them to symbolize themselves as social participants in public affairs, yet private since plebeians were not generally permitted in these genteel spaces without elite permission. Libraries, universities, and hospitals would be the perfect sphere of polite influence, Imperial connection, and consumption—devoid of lower class chaos, crime, and conflict while reflecting their constructors’ power and politeness.¹¹⁸

Beginning in the eighteenth century, upper class colonists tirelessly built monuments to reflect their prosperity, gentility, and worldliness as supreme members of the Empire. Rising above the mass of small frame one-story houses and smattering of seventeenth-century mansions, patricians’ Georgian mansions projected elite power onto the colonial landscape. These “fine estates” sported brick and painted clapboards, ornamented doorways and window openings, large sash windows distributed symmetrically across the façade, broad open staircases and decorated chimneybreasts. Elites decorated their interiors with fine art, sculptures, and antiquities and often hosted balls, lectures, and dances in their great halls and barbeques on their lush lawns. Moreover, the grandeur of these estates often extended into fine surrounding

¹¹⁸ Although beyond the scope of this work, British American urban elites also carved out other, less substantial, polite spaces within cities. For instance, while in Philadelphia William Black noted that he “took a turn to the Center House [at Penn Square], where is a Billiard Table and Bowling Green, where we Amus’d ourselves the Afternoon; this place is so call’d the Center as it ly’s in the middle, between the Rivers Delaware and Schoolkill, and according to the Plann of the City, it extends from the one River to the Other, and this place is laid off for the middle of the Town.” Black, “Journal,” 404-5. Colonial elites also followed the English custom of the hot water bath or spa in the late 1760s, however baths and spas did not take off until the Revolutionary Period. For two secondary sources detailing the development of British American baths and spas, see Carl Bridenbaugh, “Baths and Watering Places of Colonial America,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 3 (Apr., 1946): 151-181; Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*. For good primary sources, see *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 22, 1765; June 12, 1766; October 6, 1768; April 30, 1772; June 11, 1772; September 15, 1773; *The Virginia Gazette*, July 8, 1737; Benjamin Rush, *Experiments and Observations on the Mineral Waters of Philadelphia, Abington and Bristol* (Philadelphia, 1773); Drinker, *Journal*.

gardens.¹¹⁹ For all of their splendor, however, mansions' inherent privacy only afforded elites limited control over public spaces and visibility within the British Empire. Patricians' reformation of colonial America's public spaces consequently mirrored their own haunts in form and function, but somewhat diverged from their private "resorts of gentility" in purpose. In order to combat the growing tide of lower class disorder in the colonies, gentlemen decided to create their own bastions of power

The Philadelphia Library Company, established in 1731 by Benjamin Franklin and a number of other elites to instill "Learning, Virtue and Politeness" in the city's inhabitants, was public in that "so many Persons of different Sects, Parties and Ways of thinking" gained access to its volumes.¹²⁰ The Library, however, was also a private, polite endeavor—fifty gentlemen formed the company through donation and quickly nominated ten elite "Directors or Managers" to manage the Library. By 1741 over seventy Philadelphians paid for membership, John Penn lauded the Company's pursuit of "Virtue and useful Knowledge," the library stocked an impressive collection of English-bought books, and benefactors (including Penn) had donated a number of high-tech instruments, including "a curious Air-Pump" and "a large double Microscope."¹²¹

While the Company often labeled their project a "Publick Library," public access to the Library was actually quite restricted. To become a member of the Library Company one had to earn a nomination from a director and pay for a share in the Company (a cost beyond most colonists' limited budget that only grew in expense with book accumulation and building

¹¹⁹ Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, Chapter Four: Houses and Gardens; Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 51, 120.

¹²⁰ "Directors of Library Company to John Penn," Philadelphia, August 3rd, 1741, 312 in "The Papers of Benjamin Franklin," Yale University, accessed February 25, 2012, <http://www.yale.edu/franklinpapers/project.html>; "A Short Account of the Library," in *A Catalogue of Books Belonging to the Library Company of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: B. Franklin, 1741), 308.

¹²¹ "John Penn to Library Company," June 1735, "Papers of Franklin"; "A Short Account of the Library."

development). Non-members could borrow a book in exchange for “a Sum of Money proportion’d to the Value of the Book borrow’d,” but since most colonists could not afford a bound book, such a fee excluded the majority of the lower classes.¹²² Moreover, although literacy had spiked by the mid-eighteenth century, reading for pleasure was still a primarily upper class pursuit.¹²³ Upper class colonists had extended the gentleman’s library into the public sphere while still maintaining and even extending its private, polite, and exclusive peculiarities.¹²⁴

As the Company’s wealth, collection, and membership grew, it gained notoriety across the colonies and throughout the British Empire as a polite space of elite power and exclusivity. The Englishman James Birket, for example, commended Philadelphia’s “very good Library” for having such “a Large Collection of Books on Different Subjects” when he visited the city in 1750 while by 1772 the Library Company noted that its holdings had “become large & valuable, a Source of Instruction to Individuals and conducive of Reputation to that Public.” Patricians from New York to Boston followed Philadelphia’s lead and built subscription libraries of their own, which also gained praise from traveling Englishmen. After New York established a subscription library in 1754, the Englishman William Smith Jr. expected it would “probably become vastly rich and voluminous” after observing the Library in 1757. Franklin later

¹²² “Library Company to John Penn,” *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 5, 1735; “A Short Account of the Library.”

¹²³ Ian K. Steele noted, “a bare majority of white adult male households and about one third of white adult female households were literate in colonial North America in 1660 ...Adult male literacy in New England rose dramatically to 70 percent by 1710 and to 85 percent in 1760,” but “elsewhere in English America there seems to have been no comparable transformation...only a minority of the English-speaking adults in England or America could read and write well enough to do so regularly.” Steele, *The English Atlantic*, 133-167, 266.

¹²⁴ A topic investigated in a fuller context later in this work, gentlemen often kept extensive libraries in their estates. While in Philadelphia, for instance, William Black visited James Logan’s library, noting “we must first view his Library, which was Customary with him, to any Persons of Account, He had really a very fine Collection of Books, both Ancient and modern, he seem’d to Regrate that none of his Sons knew how to use them, and that he design’d them as a Legacy to the city when he Died.” Black, “Journal,” 407. The collection now forms a portion of the Loganian Library and is integrated into the Philadelphia Library Company. The eighteenth-century Virginia Gentleman, William Byrd of Westover had such a collection of books that a 654 page volume, Kevin J. Hayes, editor, *The Library of William Byrd of Westover* (Madison: Madison House, 1997) was published.

contended that while Philadelphia's Library was "the Mother of all the North American subscription libraries," by the end of the eighteenth century libraries throughout the colonies had "improved the general Conversation of Americans" and "made the common Tradesmen and Farmers as intelligent as most Gentlemen from other Countries."¹²⁵ Subscription libraries had, in short, extended patricians' power into more public and global networks.

One of Franklin's other "improving" Philadelphia projects—the College of Philadelphia—also reflected elites' mid-eighteenth century push for their own polite, hybrid private/public spaces of control. Besides advocating a more secular education than existing colonial colleges (Harvard, William and Mary, and Yale), the College of Philadelphia also focused on a more scholastic goal than its predecessors who—in the vein of Oxford and Cambridge Universities—also served as resorts of gentlemanly revelry. Franklin contended that British North America's colleges should focus on a "polite and learned education," and by doing so positioned Philadelphia yet again as a beacon of gentility.¹²⁶

In the same vein as the Library Company, a group of elite trustees organized, funded, and controlled Philadelphia's Academy. Their largest goal was the transformation of Philadelphia's youth—and in turn its public spheres and the city itself—into a polite sphere of patrician power. Franklin explained:

As Nothing can more effectually contribute to the Cultivation and Improvement of a Country, the Wisdom, Riches, and Strength, Virtue and Piety, the Welfare and Happiness of a People, than a proper Education of Youth, by forming their Manners, imbuing their tender Minds with Principles of Rectitude and Morality, instructing them in the dead and

¹²⁵ See Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, V. 4, 512; Birket, *Cursory Remarks*, 67; *The Annual Report of the Library Company of Philadelphia for the Year 1964* (The Library Company of Philadelphia, 1964), 7; Smith Jr., *History*, 195; *At the Insistence of Benjamin Franklin: A Brief History of the Library Company of Philadelphia* (The Library Company of Philadelphia, 1995).

¹²⁶ Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 37. "A Satyrical Description of Commencement. Calculated to the Meridian of Cambridge in New-England," (Boston, 1740); Jasper Danckaerts, *Journal of Jasper Danckaerts, 1679-1680*, ed. Bartlett Burleigh James and J. Franklin Jameson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), 267; "On the Need for an Academy," *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 24, 1749.

living Languages, particularly their Mother-Tongue, and all useful Branches of liberal Arts and Science.¹²⁷

Philadelphia's College catered primarily to patricians since trustees required a considerable sum for attendance. "When the fund is sufficient to bear the charge," Franklin noted, "poor Children shall be admitted and taught gratis, what shall be thought suitable to their Capacities and Circumstances." Similar to the Library Company, then, poor colonists gained restrained access to the Academy, but only at the trustees' discretion. Even more, instructors taught "poor Children" what they deemed "suitable to their Capacities and Circumstances."¹²⁸ With this genteel pursuit of education in the hybrid public/private space, Philadelphia's elite would become even more respected, and in turn, powerful.

Yet Franklin was not alone in his urges for new colonial universities. In New York, for instance, William Livingston led the charge towards an elite-controlled, secular university with his *Independent Reflector*. Livingston argued that a college would be "a Blessing...to the Community" and "Every Man who loves Liberty and the Province," should support such an endeavor.¹²⁹ The push for a secular university in New York was part of the "college enthusiasm" which raged through the British American colonies after 1740. Although this movement largely arose from churches vying with each other to found seminaries, it soon came to represent colonial American patricians' need for their own "enlightened," controlled spaces among the disorder of their cities' urban spaces.¹³⁰

Even with the establishment of a polite Library and University, Dr. Thomas Bond and

¹²⁷ "Constitutions of the Academy of Philadelphia," November 13, 1749, "Franklin Papers."

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ See, for instance, Livingston, *The Independent Reflector*, "Number XVII: Remarks on our Intended College," "Number XVIII: A Continuation of the Same Subject," "Number XIX: The Same Subject Continued," "Number XX: A Farther Prosecution of the Same Subject," "Number XXI: Remarks on the College Continued," "Number XXII: The Same Subject Continued and Concluded in, An Address to the Inhabitants of this Province."

¹³⁰ For more on the growth of the college system in colonial America, see Beverly McAnear, "College Founding in the American Colonies, 1745-1775," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLII (1955): 24-55.

Benjamin Franklin watched Philadelphia groan under the weight of its sick and “lunatick” poor. Realizing the ramifications of such disorder, Bond and Franklin proposed the creation of “a small Provincial Hospital” in 1750. “Erected and put under proper Regulations, in the Care of Persons to be appointed by [Philadelphia’s patricians]...with Power to receive and apply the charitable Benefactions of good People towards enlarging and supporting the same,” the Philadelphia Hospital developed into one of the British American colonies’ most lauded institutions over the next ten years. It provided poor citizens with free medical attention, aided in urban improvement, and perhaps most importantly for the hospital’s upper-class benefactors and organizers, established substantial mechanisms of elite control and politeness in Philadelphia.¹³¹

Crucial to the previously quoted “Petition” regarding Pennsylvania’s hospital are terms referencing power and control. Its author, for example, explicitly noted that the Hospital would be “put under proper Regulations” by “Persons...appointed by this house...with Power.” Within this language exist three explicit terms—“Regulations,” “appointed,” and “Power”—which symbolize elite control. The Philadelphia Hospital was perhaps just as much about patricians’ attempts at regulating the disorder of the lower class public as providing services to all. Philadelphia’s patricians literally decided whether the poor would live or die within hospital walls. Moreover, Franklin regularly printed the names of those elites who donated funds to Philadelphia’s Hospital, University, and Library in his *Pennsylvania Gazette*, which only further lent an air of elite control to Philadelphia’s urban landscape.¹³²

Upper class colonists no doubt benefited the public through their genteel organizations, but they also utilized these polite spaces as mechanisms of control, Imperialism, and politeness.

¹³¹ Benjamin Franklin, *Some Account of the Pennsylvania Hospital; From its first Rise, to the Beginning of the Fifth Month, called May, 1754* (Philadelphia: B. Franklin and D. Hall, 1754).

¹³² For more on Philadelphia’s Hospital and benefactor lists, see “Appeal for the Hospital,” *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 8 and 15, 1751; May 31, 1733; June 5, 1735.

Patricians crafted these spaces to exist as important public entities while also maintaining an atmosphere of exclusivity and hegemony. Rather than carving their own spaces into lower class public spaces that grew increasingly disordered because of various global connections, then, patricians imposed these new institutions on the public landscape to enforce their own form of order and politeness.

Looking Forward: Polite Spaces of Imperialism

Social conflict came to define the mid-eighteenth century British American colonies. As the Empire's population boomed, urban centers expanded, and commercial networks grew more extensive and diverse, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and Charleston became centers of local and global culture, communication, consumption, and identity. Yet the public spaces within these cities were where colonists interacted on a daily basis. All classes of colonists lived their public lives in public places including streets, churches, theaters, shops, markets, and fairs. Yet these public spaces also became stages for class tensions, which were a consequence of Imperial development.

As lower class colonists more fully asserted themselves throughout British America, its public spaces, and the Empire, elites became increasingly anxious. Patricians wanted to transform colonial America's cities into more "polite," worldly spheres of commercial and ideological communication, and in their eyes the growing masses of disorderly public spaces only hindered their genteel aspirations. Elites consequently began to carve out their own polite niches within the colonial cities' unruly public spaces. Through decoration, architecture, regulation, and punishment elites constantly sought public order. The upper classes ultimately attempted to project their power onto their locality and the British Empire by erecting their own

exclusive, polite hybrid public/private spaces like libraries, universities, and hospitals.

No matter how hard patricians tried to control the social scene, the lower classes continued to hold sway in existing public spaces through various forms of resistance. Unruly acts such as theft, fighting, revelry, drinking, rioting, and destruction of public property became hallmarks of small groups of lower classes as they took drastic measures against upper class control. More commonly, colonists whittled away at elite mechanisms of hierarchy and power through everyday acts like consuming goods, sidestepping deference, and worshipping. Lower class colonists were truly becoming crucial actors in the Empire, colonial America's cities, and public spaces as they asserted their own position in the social landscape. And no public space exemplified the social landscape of the colonies more than the tavern by the eighteenth century.

Chapter Two Global Taverns: Imperial Networks for All

While chatting with a “country gentleman” in an English tavern in 1716, Joseph Addison came into direct contact with the inherent connections among taverngoing, consumption, and Empire. After enduring his countryman’s incessant complaints that global trade “would be the ruin of the *English* nation,” Addison used their shared bowl of rum punch to smolder the flames of his fellow taverngoer’s anti-foreign foolishness. Noting “Water was the only native of *England* that could be made use of on this occasion,” Addison showed the man “that the lemons, the brandy, the sugar, and the nutmeg, were all foreigners.” Such a revelation of rum punch’s international roots, Addison commented, put the xenophobic Englishman “into some confusion.” Addison realized that rum punch—like so many other beverages consumed in taverns throughout the Empire—was a direct product of global Imperialism.¹³³

As the most accessible, numerous, internationally-affiliated, and influential of all British North American public spaces, taverns serve as the perfect spaces through which to investigate colonists’ consumer connections to the Empire. Taverns were the most defined, condensed examples of global consumerism in the British American colonies. Colonists from all walks of life could utilize these spaces to consume products made possible by British Imperialism. Early American taverns were thus the most concrete reflections of colonists’ growing position as consumers in the Empire.

Besides fleeting mentions, no scholar has tackled the tavern as a space of global interaction. Sharon Salinger diverged from past scholarship by arguing that early American taverns’ old world roots preserved the traditional culture more than transforming it, but only

¹³³ Joseph Addison, *The Free-Holder*, 5 Mar. 1716, in *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.*, 4 vols (London, 1721), iv, 435-438.

stressed colonial American taverns' English and Dutch roots. While Benjamin Carp's contention that "New York taverngoers...used public houses as their conduits to the rest of the Atlantic world" more coherently stressed colonial taverns' global connections, he did not build upon this sound argument. On the contrary, Carp concentrated on local and continental contingencies for the remainder of the chapter, which developed New York taverns' importance in the Revolutionary War but did little to advance his Atlantic assertions.¹³⁴ This chapter seeks to build upon Carp's argument that colonists utilized taverns as "conduits to the rest of the Atlantic world" by investigating the various global consumer networks available to colonial American taverngoers by the eighteenth century.

What scholars term the "consumer revolution" was principal in the tavern's emergence as a global consumption center in the eighteenth century. As a vital part of the British mercantilist system, the colonies served as international exporters and importers of myriad goods. While the colonies' exports had always been important, colonists' demand for imported goods increased as much as fifty percent in the eighteenth century. Foreign imported goods became so much more affordable and available in the colonies that one immigrant exclaimed in 1750, "There is actually everything to be had in Pennsylvania that may be obtained in Europe, because so many merchantmen land here every year. Ships are coming from Holland, Old and New England, Scotland, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Maryland, New York, Carolina, and from the West and East Indies." With more goods came greater access. While in the seventeenth century "polite" goods had been reserved for the upper classes, more of the lower and middle "sorts" gained limited

¹³⁴ Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking*, 5; Carp, *Rebels Rising*, 66.

access to these once-elite-oriented goods during the “consumer revolution” of the mid-eighteenth century. Empire was more available to all than ever before.¹³⁵

Reflecting the global importation craze of the colonies, British American taverns carried international baggage—when English, Dutch, French, and Spanish men and women established taverns in the colonies, they reciprocally influenced global traditions of drinking and the public places associated with this consumption. Colonists, in fact, often built a tavern before any other public structure upon arriving in North America because of taverns’ importance for local business and transatlantic trade. Englishman Thomas Walduck jested in 1710, for example, “Upon all the new settlements the Spaniards make, the first thing they do is build a church, the first thing ye Dutch do upon a new colony is to build them a fort, but the first thing ye English do, be it in the most remote part of ye world, or amongst the most barbarous Indians, is to set up a tavern or drinking house.”¹³⁶ As such primary centers of connection to the outside world, taverns served as central nodes of local community and Imperialism.

Unlike the British American colonies where “tavern” could be used as a blanket phrase for every drinking establishment, the English distinguished among different drinking places. Now an almost axiomatic—but necessary—observation in English tavern historiography, the early modern English victualing hierarchy included alehouses, taverns, and inns. Although often managed “by the poor for the poor,” elites like Samuel Pepys still occasionally attended alehouses.¹³⁷ English alehouses most resembled colonial America’s earliest taverns, which until

¹³⁵ See, for instance, McKendrick, Brewer, Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*; Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, xv, xvi; Breen, “An Empire of Goods,” 467-499; For a fantastic bibliography on the consumer revolution, see Stobart, Hann and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption*.

¹³⁶ Captain Thomas Walduck, Letter to John Searle, 1710, quote taken from Christine Sismondo, *America Walks into a Bar: A Spirited History of Taverns and Saloons, Speakeasies and Grog Shops* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 4. Also see David Pietersz DeVries, *Voyages from Holland to America, 1632-1634*, trans. Henry C. Murphy (New York, 1853), 148; Taylor, “Power Shopping: Review of *The Marketplace of Revolution*”; Wrightson, ““Sorts of People”” in *The Middling Sort of People*, 28-51; Nash, *Urban Crucible*, 51 (quote).

¹³⁷ Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History, 1200-1830* (New York: Longman, Inc., 1983), 4-14.

the mid-eighteenth century were all operated in buildings originally designed as private residences. Philadelphians apparently could not wait for houses to be built; they dug their first taverns into dank riverbank caves. America's earliest taverns, like English alehouses, were very basic—they had a single bar room, a common table, and offered only basic alcoholic beverages out of simple vessels. Food was plain (if offered) and beds (if available) were almost always shared, cramped, and dirty.¹³⁸

British America's finer taverns that began to spring up during the mid-eighteenth century were a combination of English taverns and inns. Forming “the middle and narrowest band of the hospitality pyramid,” these more accommodating taverns offered a wide range of alcoholic beverages (including wines) as well as hot food. English inns—operated primarily by the upper echelon of the middle class, occupying large, complex, often purpose-built sites with multiple rooms, offering a full range of alcoholic beverages and dining options, and accommodating travelers and their horses—rested at the apex of England's victualing hierarchy. Inns served a more polite crowd and, unlike alehouses and taverns, did not fall under regulatory licensing initiatives.¹³⁹ Just as in the colonies, patrician company often correlated with patrician control.

English taverns and inns thus influenced British American taverns' development. In a colony's earliest stage, publicans could only operate simple taverns that reflected the more rustic English alehouses. With growth, prosperity, and a more demanding (and anxious) elite class, however, early American tavernkeepers were able to open more complex, accommodating taverns that imitated England's finer taverns and inns. As in England, moreover, colonial

¹³⁸ Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 2-3; Knight, “Journal,” 10, 11, 18, 45; Philip Vickers Fithian, *Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian*, ed. by Hunter Dickinson Farish (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, third printing, 1983), 146; Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 93, 148, 150, 168, 195.

¹³⁹ James R. Brown, “The Landscape of Drink: Inns, Taverns and Alehouses in Early Modern Southampton,” (Ph.D. Diss., University of Warwick, 2007), 26-7.

patricians sought control of these spaces through strict regulations over order, company, and liquor licenses.¹⁴⁰

Although British American elites adopted taverns' structural and regulatory measures from England, Britons did not live in a vacuum. Rather, England's hierarchical structure of drinking establishments—as well as its culture of consumption—was rooted in global currents of drinking and public spaces.¹⁴¹ Colonial taverngoers consequently became enmeshed in these larger networks of consumption, space, and tradition as they adjusted English—as well as numerous other drinking traditions—to the North American colonies.¹⁴² The French, for example, boasted one of the most celebrated drinking traditions in the early modern world. Although “in the most mundane sense...open to all in society,” French taverns, *guinguettes*, and *cafés* evolved into “a public place where one could avoid rubbing shoulders with the masses,” and greatly influenced the evolution of English and British American public drinking as more Englishmen sought so ardently to imitate who they considered a more “polite” French populace. As globally-connected, hierarchical spaces of empire, French café culture's mark bore heavily on the Francophilic elites of the British Empire.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ This project's focus is not on tavern licensing. Much definitive work has already been done on the numerous licensing attempts by colonial magistrates. For Boston, see Conroy, *In Public Houses*; for Philadelphia, see Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, Chapters 2 and 3; for New York City, see Carp, *Rebels Rising*, Chapter Two; for a more general investigation, see Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking*, Chapters 4 and 5; Kym S. Rice, *Early American Taverns: For the Entertainment of Friends and Strangers* (Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1983), 47-69; For England, see Clark, *The English Alehouse*.

¹⁴¹ As Peter Clark contended, “Public drinking houses have their origins in the foothills of time. We know of inns in classical Greece and Rome and of similar establishments in ancient China. The peasants of twelfth-century Poland and Russia had their *korschmas*, and taverns could be found in many parts of western Europe by the late Middle Ages. Inns, taverns and popular *pulquerias* were common in colonial Mexico, while visitors to seventeenth-century Japan were struck by ‘the innumerable smaller inns, cook-shops, sachi or alehouses...all along the road.’” Clark, *English Alehouse*, 1.

¹⁴² For more on the global nature of taverns, see Thomas E. Brennan, “General Introduction,” in *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World: Voices from the Tavern, 1500-1800, Volume 1: General Introduction and France*, ed. Thomas Brennan (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), vii-xxii. Brennan concentrates on taverns in France. See the other three volumes in this set for investigations of taverns in England, the Holy Roman Empire, and the British American colonies.

¹⁴³ Thomas Brennan, “Taverns and the Public Sphere in the French Revolution,” in *Alcohol: A Social and Cultural History*, ed. Mack P. Holt (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 112, 109; Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, 10-40.

Prime outlets for Dutch immigrants, the British American colonies' alcoholic drinking traditions and structures were also strongly rooted in Dutch customs of alcohol consumption. One tradition in particular the Dutch carried with them to the New World was their understanding of alcoholic beverages as a form of sustenance. Dutch laborers often breakfasted on beer and eggs and punctuated the rest of their day with rounds of high-calorie, alcoholic beer, and Dutchmen of all classes flocked to their local tavern for business transactions. British American colonists caught on quickly to these Dutch drinking habits—Benjamin Franklin recalled watching lower class colonists gulp down six pints of beer every workday.¹⁴⁴ Steady drinking and taverngoing became important components of many colonists' lives since alcohol consumption provided them nutrients and also encouraged companionship and revelry.

As significant parts of a much longer, larger tradition of consumption and culture, British American taverns also became prime intersection points of Imperial development. Although most seventeenth-century taverns had been simple, rough, small establishments, the improvements publicans made to their mid-eighteenth century counterparts reflected larger currents of hierarchy, gentility, travel, and consumerism in the Empire. Such alterations led to further global interactions for both publicans and patrons. As transatlantic travel and communication skyrocketed during the eighteenth century, tavernkeepers modified their spaces to fit an ever-changing Imperial populace.

Many colonial tavernkeepers improved their taverns' interior decoration and general layout by the mid-eighteenth century in response to various Georgian influences. In contrast to the William Phillip's and George Emlen's late-seventeenth-century Boston and Philadelphia taverns which were both sparsely decorated with rustic furniture, sturdy trimmings, and simple

¹⁴⁴ Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York, 1987), 192; Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking*, 11; Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (Henry Altemus, 1895), 46.

beverages, for example, Wethered and Marsten's mid-eighteenth-century Boston Bunch of Grapes Tavern boasted internationally-oriented decorations such as "gran[d] China," "Curtains Feather," "Glass Lamps," numerous imported books detailing global voyages and tales, and various pictures on the wall. The Bunch of Grapes was also divided into several rooms, each with their own specific furnishings, decorations, and purposes.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, mid-eighteenth-century Williamsburg publican John Burdett decorated his tavern's walls with "Roman Emperor Prints," "Sir Richard Steels Picture," "a parcel of Mapps & Prints," and "30 Prints and Mapps."¹⁴⁶

Alexander Hamilton noted the mid-eighteenth century evolution of interior tavern decoration while visiting "Angel's at the sign of the White Horse" in Newgate. "A queer pragmaticall old fellow," Angel decorated his tavern's walls with various Imperially-influenced religious paraphernalia and other "elegant pictures." Hamilton observed "a paper pasted upon the wall which was a rabble of dull controversy betwixt two learned divines...entitled *Cannons to batter the Tower of Babel*." "Among the rest of the chamber furniture," Hamilton continued, "were severall elegant pictures, finely illuminated and coulered, being the famous piece of The Battle for the Breeches, the 12 Golden Rules taken from King Charles I's study, of blessed memory (as he is very judiciously stiled), the Christian coat of Arms,, etc., etc., etc., in which pieces are set forth divine attitudes and elegant passions, all sold by Overton, that inimitable ale house designer att the White Horse without Newgate."¹⁴⁷ More than simply decorating his tavern

¹⁴⁵ "Probate Inventory of William Phillips, Innholder, Boston, 2 October, 1704, *Suffolk County Probate Inventories*, volume 16, folios 50-1, Massachusetts State Archives, Boston, Massachusetts," David Hancock and Michelle McDonald, editors, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World: Voices from the Tavern, 1500-1800, Vol. IV: America* (New York: Pickering and Cahatto, 2011), 27-36; "Emlen Inventory;" "Wethered Inventory," Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking and the Early Modern World*, 45-50; "Marsten Inventory," Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking and the Early Modern World*, 51-53.

¹⁴⁶ "Burdett Inventory."

¹⁴⁷ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 149. Charles I's "12 Golden Rules" were a set of rules the King produced in the early half of the seventeenth century: "Unquestionably the maxim-loving monarch's jealousy of all interference with his

to appease an increasingly discriminate audience, then, Angel also made known his religious leanings and provided a local artist with a gallery by plastering his tavern's walls with art.

More importantly, globally produced and inspired decorations spoke to the larger networks that colonists increasingly connected with every day. Paintings hanging in taverns such as Wethered's, Marsten's, Burdett's, and Angel's depicted scenes and figures spanning the globe and were almost surely the products of European craftsmanship. Burdett hung portraits ranging from Roman Emperors to the ultimate English spectator, Richard Steele, while Angel displayed a painting that symbolized European men's growing sense of insecurity regarding their masculinity—"The Battle for the Breeches"—as well as a "Christian Coat of Arms." By stocking and decorating their taverns with in-demand, globally produced and traded consumer goods, British American publicans like Wethered, Emlen, Backhouse, the unidentified rural New York tavernkeeper, and Pattison operated successful taverns that satisfied patrons' Imperial urges while also binding "together people who did not know each other except through intermediaries."¹⁴⁸

Besides reflecting Imperial impulses through interior redecoration, tavernkeepers also stocked their taverns with locally- and globally-sourced newspapers, tracts, broadsides, and magazines in an effort to please a more globally-minded clientele. In the late-eighteenth century, Philadelphia's City Tavern advertised the holdings of its "Subscription Room," where readers could find "all the daily papers published in Philadelphia, New-York, Boston, Baltimore &c. together with those of the principal commercial cities of Europe." The City Tavern's

prerogative, even in conversation, as also his constitutional dread of contention, and 'counterblast' hatred of tobacco, are reflected in these counsels to a sufficient extent to fix him with their authorship." *Notes and Queries: A Medium of Inter-Communication for Literary Men, General Readers, etc.*, 3rd Series, Volume III, (March 14, 1863): 215.

¹⁴⁸ For more on "The Battle for the Breeches" and masculinity, see Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 2004), 96; For more on how people took such "popular" works for granted, see Ronald Paulson, *Popular and Polite Art in the Age of Hogarth and Fielding* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979); Hancock, "The Triumphs of Mercury," 121.

tavernkeeper assured his patrons that such papers were to be “regularly filed and none permitted to be taken away on any account.”¹⁴⁹ Such stocks of newspapers, however, were not restricted to elite urban taverns such as Philadelphia’s City Tavern. Tavernkeepers throughout the colonies kept regular—if limited and out of date—collections of newspapers for discerning toppers.

Exchanging news with other North American papers, as well as transatlantic news outlets like *The London Courant* or *Wilcock West Indian Intelligencer*, early American newspapers such as the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, *Virginia Gazette*, *New-York Gazette* or *Weekly Post-Boy*, *New-York Weekly Journal*, and *South Carolina Gazette* worked to keep “all persons in his majestys colonies in North America” up to date on the “freshest advices” of news. Mid-eighteenth century British American newspapers were rife with international news. The January 7, 1737 issue of the *Virginia Gazette*, for example, noted

We are assured that the King of Sweden, for the Sake of his India Company, has made an Acquisition of a small Island upon the Chinese Coast, that lies very conveniently for carrying on a Trade between that Empire, and Japan: and the Directors of the said Company, are actually engaging Men to settle a Colony there.

Just as this account spoke to the global nature of the Empire, so too did numerous other newspaper articles. Though news arrived in the colonies months late, colonists nonetheless eagerly sought news at their local tavern. On a single page of any New York, Boston, Charleston, or Philadelphia newspaper a colonist could find articles detailing events in Russia, Sweden, Germany, Hungary, Prussia, Italy, France, Great Britain, Asia, the Ottoman Empire, and the West Indies.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Steele, *The English Atlantic*, 167; Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*, 270; Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, 390. Tavernkeepers were looked to as key social figures. See, for instance, Zachary Andrew Carmichael, “Fit Men: New England Tavern Keepers, 1620-1720,” (Master’s Thesis, Miami University, 2009).

¹⁵⁰ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 19, 1756. This article provided prices and issue frequency for many different imported newspapers from the British Empire, including *The General Advertiser*, *Daily Advertiser*, *London Courant*, *General Evening Post*, *St. James Evening Post*, *Whitehall Evening Post*, *Spectator*, *Gentleman of London Magazine*, *London Gazette*, *French Hague Gazette*, and *Wilcock West Indian Intelligencer*; Cressy, *Coming Over*,

Beyond printed newspapers and tracts, British American taverns served as the primary outlet for sending and receiving transatlantic/global missives prior to the creation of the United States Post Office in 1775. New York developed an intercontinental post in the 1690s, which spread through the colonies and soon connected New York to Boston and Philadelphia. This limited intercontinental post combined with a transatlantic packet boat system to extend colonists' correspondence opportunities far beyond North America. Global news was, for many elite colonists, "the MANNA of the day...the true and genuine food of the mind."¹⁵¹ But since the packet boat system was not an economic success, ship captains, crewmembers, and travelers worked with colonists to deliver notes across the Atlantic. Shipmasters hung mailbags in taverns where colonists could leave dispatches, while travelers would often deliver a letter as a favor.¹⁵²

Colonists also received transatlantic and global mail in taverns. When Peter Kalm arrived in Philadelphia from Sweden, colonists flooded his ship inquiring for letters. The ship's captain ordered "those which remained...to be carried on shore and to be brought into a coffee-house, where everybody could make inquiry for them, and by this means he was rid of the trouble of delivering them himself." Upon arriving at Todd's tavern in New York City, Hamilton received a transatlantic letter from his French friend La Moinerie who sent it "by a medical doctor from

chapters 9 & 10. For an especially good example of concentrated global news, see *General Magazine* (June, 1741), 1, 6.

¹⁵¹ Richard Owens, "Essays First Published in *the World*, 1753-1756," in *The Works of Richard Cambrige, Esq: Including Several Pieces Never Before Published*, ed. George Owen Cambridge (London, 1803), No. 70, Thursday, May 2, 1754.

¹⁵² Steele, *The English Atlantic*, 113, 168-188; For a thorough investigation of "polite letters" conception in upper class colonial taverns, see Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*, 55-88; John Harrower, "Diary of John Harrower, 1773-1776," *The American Historical Review*, 6 (Oct., 1900): 85-86, 101; William Gregory noted in 1771 while in Boston, "I put my letter to Pater aboard the brig *Betsey* for London, dated September 25, Boston." Gregory, "Journey," 346.

Barbados who [was] going to Rhode Island.” A carrier took the letter from Rhode Island to Boston and finally to Hamilton’s eager hand in New York City.¹⁵³

But just because missives made their way to a tavern did not mean their intended recipients would ever read or receive them. In fact, prying colonists often read a note before it reached the true owner. After a letter did not reach his sweetheart, the young colonist Philip Vickers Fithian disgustingly wrote, “I hear with much surprise, that none of my letters, since I left your family, have been so fortunate as to arrive safe. I impute this to the jealousy of the public, concerning the contents of the letters passing through the continent.” One Richard Smith similarly advertised in a 1748 edition of the *New-York Gazette* that although a letter intended for him “with a Bill of Exchange inclosed” had been “left on the Table in the Merchant’s Coffee House,” it was recently “taken away by some Person unknown.”¹⁵⁴ While colonial taverns had become more “refined” by the mid-eighteenth century, thieves still roamed their rooms and halls.

In a more direct connection to the world beyond America’s borders, taverns often served as sites where colonists could sign up to board or send freight with a departing ship.

Philadelphia’s London Coffeeshouse (a tavern), for instance, offered colonists “Freight or Passage” on ships traveling throughout the British Empire in the years between 1754 and 1763, including Antigua, Nevis, St. Christopher’s, the West Indies, London, and Leith, Scotland. A Philadelphian who wanted to travel to the Madeira Islands in 1749 could contact “George

¹⁵³ Peter Kalm, *Peter Kalm’s Travels in North America: The English Version of 1770*, ed. Adolph B. Benson (New York: Wilson-Erickson Inc., 1937), 16; Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 182.

¹⁵⁴ Fithian, *Journal*, 281. It should be noted that Fithian wrote this during the Revolutionary Period, a time when letters where often read for fear of loyalist plotting. However, such activity was not confined to the Revolution. Rather, colonists often pried into others’ letters (and business) throughout the eighteenth century.; *New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, November 28, 1748; Similarly, on November 26, 1772, the *Virginia Gazette* advertised a tavern mail theft: “Last Sunday Night the Letter Box placed at the Raleigh Tavern by Captain Robert Necks, of the ship Lunn and Lloyd, bound to London, for the Convenience of the Merchants, now in this City, to their Letters for Great Britain, was taken away by some evil disposed person; and next Day several of the Letters were found to the Public, with the Invoices and Bills of Exchange that were therein.....and others destroyed. A Reward of Twenty Pounds is offered for the Detection of the Person, or Persons, concerned in the, that a crime of so detestable and pernicious a not escape the Punishment it so justly deserves.”

Bascum, merchant, at his lodgings at the Widow Evans's, at the sign of the Crown, in Market street," or he could also enjoy "freight or passage" to Jamaica by signing up at "Roberts's Coffee house" or Antigua by meeting with the ship's master at the Tun Tavern. Finally, any "Gentlemen Adventurers, inclinable to go to the Cruize" only had to "repair to the House of Mr. Benjamin Pain, at the Jamaica Arms [New York]." ¹⁵⁵ These ships' freight and passage services helped colonial elites to ship not only valuable goods around the world, but also themselves. By establishing their taverns as central sites of global travel, colonial tavernkeepers met many British American colonists' need for international connections while also bolstering their own business.

In larger port towns, publicans often opened their taverns as auction houses where they either served as the auctioneer or the auction's impresario. Williamsburg's "Norfolk coffee-house" advertised the sale of "An Assortment of European and East India GOODS, RUM, SUGARS, &c." in the mid-eighteenth century, while Philadelphia's "London Coffee House" sold "Four Chests of small Spanish Silver, each chest containing 2000 Ounces" on November 23, 1758. ¹⁵⁶ Urban taverns also served as prime book auction outlets. "The late Reverend & Learned" Ebenezer Pemberton's collection of "Curious and Valuable Books," for instance, were auctioned at the Crown Coffeehouse in Boston in early July 1717. Pemberton's collection of over 900 volumes included various religious and historical texts detailing local and world events. ¹⁵⁷ Finally, a colonist could often buy a ship, its outfitting or "Appurtences", and its cargo in the common or upper rooms of urban portside taverns. "The Sign of the Royal-Exchange in

¹⁵⁵ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 7, 1754; November 14, 1754; November 27, 1755; August 18, 1757; June 12, 1760; May 5, 1763; April 5, 1749; September 14, 1749; September 7, 1749; *New-York Post-Boy*, December 17, 1744, New York Historical Society General Collections; According to Stokes, "This tavern stood on the Cruger's wharf at the foot of So. William St. It was one of the resorts of privateers and a place of vendue for "prizes" captured." Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, V. 4, 587.

¹⁵⁶ *Virginia Gazette*, June 20, 1766; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 23, 1758.

¹⁵⁷ *A Catalogue of Curious and Valuable Books Belonging to the Late Reverend & Learned Mr. Ebenezer Pemberton* (Boston: Green for Gerrish, 1717).

Kingstreet Boston” advertised in September 1711 “there will be exposed to Sale by Public Vendue or Outcry, at six of the Clock in the Afternoon, the Loading of the ship Success Galley consisting of Anchors, Anchor-stocks, Graplins, new and old Sails, new and old Cordage, Linnen, Stockings, Tickin, hats, Sail Twine, Earthen Ware, Guns, Palteraroes, Muskets, &c.” Similarly, a coffeehouse in Philadelphia advertised the sail of a captured vessel, “the Cape Fear Hawke, mounting 16 Carriage Guns, 4 Pounders, and 22 Swivels, together with her Tackle, Furniture and Apparel, and a large Quantity of warlike stores” in 1759.¹⁵⁸ Such auctions allowed taverngoers intensified consumer connections to global currents of Empire.

Inanimate trade goods, however, were not the only consumer choices available at tavern auctions—tavernkeepers also offered patrons the opportunity to purchase human beings from their parlors. Although only one among many venues where one could purchase a slave in the eighteenth century, taverns nonetheless served as important sale points because of their multifaceted consumer nature. Philadelphia’s “London Coffeehouse,” for example, advertised the sale of “a very likely breeding Negroe Woman...fit for any Business either in Town or Country” in 1736 and in 1763 similarly offered for sale “a likely healthy Negroe Wench, about 24 Years of Age.” A potential buyer would not have to worry about the second woman’s untimely death since she had already survived the measles and smallpox, and she was also knowledgeable in business affairs. As a thriving institution of British expansion in the eighteenth century, the African slave trade offered colonists a chance not only to extend their power in their locality, but also to indirectly connect with larger networks of Imperialism and consumption. Colonists, in short, viewed the purchase of an African slave at their local tavern much as they did the purchase of other consumption goods—as connections to the Empire and direct reflections of their

¹⁵⁸ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 29, 1741; “*Boston News-Letter*, 3-10 September 1711,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, 393; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 16, 1759.

position in that Empire.¹⁵⁹

Beyond global correspondence such as newspapers, tracts, letters, transatlantic ship itineraries, and auctions tavernkeepers also satisfied patrons' need for global interaction with various exhibitions of international curiosities. The proprietor of the Indian King Tavern in Philadelphia displayed a camel at his tavern in 1740:

Notice is hereby given to all Persons, that there is come to Town, a very Wonderful and surprizing Creature to all Persons in these Parts of the World; and it is in Scripture the very same Creature, which is there called a *Camel*. It is impossible to describe the Creature, and therefore all Persons of ingenious Curiosity have an Opportunity of Satisfying themselves.

The Creature was brought with great Difficulty from the Desarts of Arabia in that Quarter of the World which is called Asia, to New-England; a Curiosity which never was in this Country, and very likely never will be again.

Constant Attendance will be given to all Persons desirous of seeing said Creature at the House of Owen Owen, Esq. at the Sign of the Indian King in Philadelphia.

By attending the Indian King, Philadelphians with “ingenious Curiosity” could view an animal “brought with great Difficulty from the Desarts of Arabia in that Quarter of the World which is called Asia, to New-England” and finally to Philadelphia. But the Indian King Tavern did not end its global exhibits with this camel. In 1744 the same tavernkeeper advertised “A Beautiful Creature, but surprizingly fierce, called a Leopard; his Extraction half a Lion and half a Pardeal; his native Place of Abode is in Africa, and Arabia.”¹⁶⁰ This tavernkeeper thus took advantage of certain colonists' cravings for knowledge of foreign lands, creatures, and people in order to attain more business. He was not alone.

Other tavernkeepers throughout the colonies opened their doors to various exotic exhibits. Charleston tavernkeeper, Mrs. Peach, for example, offered patrons “a choice and

¹⁵⁹ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 2, 1736, September 1, 1763; for more on the consumption of African slaves, see Walter Johnson, *Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

¹⁶⁰ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 22, 1740; October 25, 1744;

curious Collection of Pictures by the best hands” in 1732 and Hamilton remembered “retiring into a room” with Major Spratt at a New York tavern to view “a very nice piece of painting...done in oil colours upon wood...of a hermit in his cell contemplating upon mortality with a death’s head in his hand.” Such artwork helped elite colonists interact with a larger world of consumption as well as serving as a lens through which to view various global images. In 1729, moreover, The Sign of the Dolphin Privateer in New York advertised “The Effigies of the Royal Family of England, In a Composition of Wax...as big as LIFE.” Recently arrived from London, these wax effigies ranged from “His Royal Highness *Frederick*, Prince of Wales” to “The Effigy of Miss *Peggy Warsington* the present famous Actress now in England” to “The Effigy of the Empress Queen of *Hungary* and *Bohemia*.” By attending this New York tavern, colonists gained the unprecedented chance to see various global figures in detailed three-dimensional form.¹⁶¹



Figure 1: Two examples of viewing machines, or *vue d'optiques*, like Bonnin's "Philosophical Optical Machine." Picture taken by author at the New York Historical Society.

¹⁶¹ Quote on Mrs. Peach’s tavern taken from Anna Wells Rutledge, *Artists in the Life of Charleston: Through Colony and State from Restoration to Reconstruction*, Volume 39, Part II (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1949), 113; Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 179; *New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, July 4, 1749. This might have been a painting by the Italian Baroque master Caravaggio (1571-1610), “Saint Jerome in Meditation.”

Perhaps the most affecting of all globally-inspired American tavern exhibits, however, was the Englishman John Bonnin's "Philosophical Optical Machine." As Bonnin toured New York and Philadelphia from 1748 through 1749, he amazed curious colonists with "Perspective Views of most of the famous Palaces and Gardens in *England, France, and Italy...the siege of Barcelona, and the cities of Rome, Naples, and Venice.*" Bonnin's "Philosophical Optical Machine" was a mirrored mechanism that projected three-dimensional images of famous scenes onto a small screen. When looking into Bonnin's machine, colonists felt as if they were "walk[ing] to *Kensington, Hampton-Court, Vaux Hall, Ranelagh House,* and other grand Palaces and Gardens in and about *London*" (and the rest of Europe). Elite New Yorkers soon found, "there's no Body can set up the least Face for Politeness and Conversation, without having been to Mr. *Bonnin.*" While travelers had once been able to entertain New Yorkers "with their feint and confused Accounts, of the fine Palaces they have seen" across the globe, seemingly geographically-limited elites could now "detect their false pretended Description, and entertain them with a just, beautiful and regular One." Mr. Bonnin's "Philosophical Optical Machine" allowed British American colonists to travel and "see the world" without ever leaving their local city. By simply entering the tavern space, these colonists were whisked away to countless international, exotic places.¹⁶²

British American taverns were thus entwined in various global networks made possible by the Empire. Besides those more directly English traditions, however, various other customs of consumption made their way to North America's shores and thereafter characterized colonists' tavern experiences. Coffee, tea, and chocolate, for example, each became defining characteristics

¹⁶² *New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, October 31, 1749; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 1, 1749; *New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, November 28, 1748; Bonnin started a craze for optical machines across the British American colonies. One Philadelphia tavernkeeper, for example, advertised in 1749 a rival exhibit to Bonnin's. *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 13, 1749.

of the expanding consumer culture during the eighteenth century. Europe especially adopted each of these enchanting consumables during the eighteenth century as European coffee consumption grew from two million to 120 million pounds, tea from one million to forty million pounds, and chocolate from two million to thirteen million.¹⁶³ Such consumption increases are not a new observation. What has not been adequately investigated, however, are how these disparate, international consumables *and* the cultures associated with them converged in the British American tavern, allowing colonists to connect with and contribute to larger traditions of consumption. A fuller understanding of the older, larger traditions associated with consumables like coffee, tea, and chocolate help to bolster the international nature of the Empire as well as how colonial Americans adopted and connected with the various networks of this Empire.

Coffee, tea, and chocolate were rooted in distant lands, initially adopted exclusively by elites, distributed throughout the British Empire, and eventually made available to the masses. Moreover, each beverage coincided with long-established traditions of consumption in its home country. Coffee found its beginnings as a publicly-consumed beverage in Ottoman coffeehouses, tea in Chinese teahouses, and chocolate in Mesoamerican chocolate rituals of trade and consumption. When European empires adopted each substance, they steadily adjusted each to their own means by transforming the taste with spices and sugar as well as modifying traditional drinking vessels to fit their own preferences. The English, moreover, assimilated coffee, tea, and chocolate into already standing taverns and coffeehouses—themselves products of Anglo-French relations and various other global impulses. No matter these alterations, however, each beverage retained those traditions that always had defined its consumption, and by the time colonial Americans sipped coffee, tea, and chocolate out of china and porcelain dishes in the tavern

¹⁶³ Jordan Goodman, “Excitantia: Or, How Enlightenment Europe Took to Soft Drugs,” in *Consuming Habits: Global and Historical Perspectives on How Cultures Define Drugs*, Second Edition, ed. Jordan Goodman, Paul E. Lovejoy and Andrew Sherratt (New York: Routledge, 2007), 121.

space, they contributed to and connected with larger traditions of consumption, imperialism, and trade. Dutch and English drinking, French café, Ottoman coffeehouse, Chinese teahouse, and Mesoamerican chocolate cultures did not die in British American taverns—they were simply combined and refashioned for North America’s shores.

The growing popularity of coffee and coinciding coffeehouses throughout the British Atlantic Empire, for example, was a product of early-seventeenth-century British Imperialism in the Ottoman Empire. As coffee made its way through the Ottoman Empire, moving up from Yemen through Arabia to Egypt, next to Aleppo, Anatolia, Smyrna and finally Constantinople, numerous globetrotting Englishmen came into contact with this caffeinated beverage as well as the culture surrounding it. The English globetrotter George Sandys remarked that although Constantinople was “destitute of Taverns” in 1610, the City harbored “Coffa-houses, which something resemble [English taverns].” In coffeehouses Turks conversed and sipped “a drinke called Coffa...in little *China* dishes, as hot as they can suffer it: and black as soote, not tasting much unlike it.” Like the taverns of Sandys’ England, Turkish coffeehouses encouraged exclusively male sociability, drink, and conversation. Coffee soon gained a strong following among English merchants and elites who found that “this *All-healing-Berry*” made them “at once...both *Sober* and *Merry*.” Within years coffee became a prime beverage of the British Empire as elites opened coffeehouses in Great Britain as well as British North America.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ Markman Ellis, *The Coffee House: A Cultural History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004), 21. See, for instance, Sir Henry Blount, *A Voyage Into the Levant* (London, 1671), 20, 21, 54, 55, 138; William Biddulph, “A Letter written from *Allepo* in *Syria Comagena*,” in *Travels of certaine Englishmen into Africa, Asia, Troy, Bythinia, Thracia, and to the Black Sea*, ed. Theophilus Lavender (London: Th. Haveland for W. Aspley, 1609), vi, 60, 66; George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey Begun in An. Dom 1610* (London, 1615), 66; Jordan Goodman also referenced the English coffeehouse’s Eastern origins, noting “the mid-seventeenth-century European coffeehouse may be seen as an adaptation of the Near Eastern establishment, but in its social dimension and the commodities it offered for consumption it was distinctly European.” He also explained, however, that Europeans did not adopt the musical entertainments of Eastern coffeehouses. Goodman, “Excitantia,” in *Consuming Habits*, 127; Anonymous, *A brief description of the excellent virtues of that sober and wholesome drink, called Coffee* (London, 1673); In 1652 the well-traveled English merchant, Daniel Edwards, sponsored his Greek-Orthodox servant, Pasqua Rosee, in

Along with coffee, the ceremony surrounding tea consumption also greatly influenced and affected early American taverngoers. People from China to Japan to India widely consumed tea beginning in the third century, long before Britons ever tasted this enchanting leaf. Although only English elites initially drank tea (England only imported a few hundred pounds of tea in the last decade of the seventeenth century), tea became *the* non-alcoholic beverage of Britons as the Empire grew in strength and its global trade connections thickened during the eighteenth century. Soon after English elites adopted this drink, tea drinking “began to include elaborate rituals, requiring certain modes of dress and necessitating specific tools such as tea pots, spoons, and cups.”¹⁶⁵ Yet, like English coffee consumption, the public ceremony associated with tea was not an English invention. Rather, the Chinese had embraced “tea houses” for hundreds of years before the English ever laid hands on a leaf of tea. English (public and private) tea consumption was thus an extension and adoption of already established Chinese customs. In the tradition of the Chinese teahouse, Englishmen and women gathered in a preordained space to drink Asian-produced tea out of Chinese-influenced porcelain. Englishmen also adjusted tea consumption to

setting up Christendom’s first coffeehouse in London. The disputed nature of this being Christendom’s “first coffeehouse,” however, must be addressed. While some have claimed that Oxford opened the first coffeehouse in 1650, citing the Oxford Antiquarian Anthony Wood’s notation from 1671, Ellis contends that “no positive evidence—such as building leases or licenses issued by regulatory authorities—has come to light to back up these assertions, but nonetheless most authorities have accepted Oxford’s claim. Much better evidence can be found for Pasqua Rosee’s coffee-house in London.” Ellis, *The Coffee-House*, 30, 187; Aytoun Ellis, *The Penny Universities: A History of the Coffee-Houses* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1956); Brian Cowen, *Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 2005.

¹⁶⁵ While traveling through Peking in the early seventeenth century, for example, the Englishman John Bell explained “we went to a Publick tea-house, where we saw many people drinking tea and smoking tobacco.” While at another tea-house, Bell noted “none but people of fashion come to this place...things are executed with the greatest punctuality.” John Bell, *Travels from St. Petersburg in Russia to Diverse Parts of Asia* (Glasgow: Printed for the Author by Robert and Andrew Foulis, 1763), 49, 51; Philip Lawson, “Tea, Vice, and the English State, 1660-1784,” in *A Taste for Empire and Glory: Studies in British Overseas Expansion, 1660-1800*, ed. Philip Lawson, David Cannadine, Linda Colley, and Kenneth J. Munro (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1997), 3; In 1757 the East India Tea Company shipped three million pounds of tea to London from Canton and Madras; P.M. Guerty and Kevin Switaj, “Tea, Porcelain, and Sugar in the British Atlantic World,” *OAH Magazine of History* 18 (April 2004): 57.

their own requirements, sweetening this fragrant beverage with sugar and heating it to a boil. (Chinese tea drinkers did not sweeten their tea, nor did they drink it hot.)¹⁶⁶

British American merchants and publicans (tavernkeepers) realized the growing demand for tea and leapt to satisfy colonists' cravings. By the mid-eighteenth century, Philadelphia merchants advertised a variety of exotic teas, including "SOUCHONG TEA, which by the best judges is allowed to be superior to most of that Kind of Tea offered for Sale in this City."

"Likewise," many merchants sold "Bohea, Hyson and Congo Tea."¹⁶⁷ Tavern keepers' probate inventories also speak to the presence of tea in the tavern space. Adopting tea traditions from China, publicans across the British American colonies stocked their taverns with various Anglicized porcelain tea accessories for thirsty taverngoers. John Marston, proprietor of the Bunch of Grapes Tavern in Boston, kept "1 Tea Table," "1 Tea Urn," "1 Tea Tray & Set of China," and "1 Tea waiter and glasses." Benjamin Backhouse, a South Carolina tavern keeper, also kept various tea accessories, including "1 Dozen China Tea Cups and Saucers," "1 China Teapot, "1 China Tea Cannister," "1 China Milkpot," "1 Mahoy Tea Treat," and "9 white stone Teapots". Williamsburg publicans reserved "Tea spoons," "Tea Tongs," "Tea Boards," "Tea Kettles," "White Metal Tea pots," and "Stone Tea pots" for those colonists who required them. Curiously, although inventories always listed tea pots, cups, kettles, and sugar, they never listed the tea itself as part of a tavernkeeper's estate. Nevertheless, whichever tavern a customer

¹⁶⁶ Europeans also lauded tea for its medicinal properties. As the Dutchman, Johannes Nieuhof explained in 1673, "[tea] is of a Diuretick Faculty, much fortifies the Stomach, exhilarates the Spirits, and wonderfully openeth all the Nephritick Passages or Reins; it freeth the Head by suppressing of fuliginous Vapors, so that it is a most excellent Drink for studious and sedentary Persons, to quicken them in their Operations; and albeit at the first it seemeth insipid and bitter, yet Custom makes it pleasant." Johannes Nieuhof, *An embassy from the East-India Company of the United Provinces, to the Grand Tartar Cham, Emperour of China* (1673), Chapter VI. See also James Walvin, *Fruits of Empire: Exotic Produce and British Taste, 1660-1800* (London: MacMillan Press, 1997), 9; Joseph Hanway, *Hanway's Eight Days Journey, and Essay on Tea* (1756).

¹⁶⁷ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 7, 1764.

entered in the mid-eighteenth century—urban or rural—he was almost sure to find suitable tea accessories, even if the tea itself was “abominable stuff.”¹⁶⁸

Rounding out the three exotic, non-alcoholic beverage traditions that captivated colonial taverngoers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, chocolate (in the form of a drink) enchanted Englishmen throughout the Empire and soon gained a foothold in British American culture as a stimulating beverage often enjoyed at breakfast in public spaces. Although coffee and tea consumption far eclipsed chocolate by the eighteenth century, “chocolate helped pave the way for coffee by creating a craving among consumers for dark, bitter, sweetened, hot stimulant drinks.”¹⁶⁹ Like coffee and tea, however, the chocolate tradition was anything but a British American invention.

As a trade good, currency, and beverage, chocolate served as a unifying consumable for linguistically and geographically diverse communities throughout Mesoamerica. Mesoamerican communities mixed cacao with maize, honey, chili peppers, vanilla, and other native flora and drank the frothy beverage out of lacquered gourds and ceramics either intricately painted or colored in a “smoky” tone. Mesoamericans also endowed cacao with medicinal properties, psychological effects, and ritualistic purposes. Although Spaniards were not initially fond of chocolate, their material dependence on Mesoamericans in the New World ultimately led to fondness for the frothy beverage. Soon, Spaniards brought this Mesoamerican drink back to

¹⁶⁸ “Probate Inventory of John Marston, Proprietor of the Bunch of Grapes Tavern, Boston, 27 December, 1786, Suffolk County Probate Inventories, vol. 84, ff. 6-9, Massachusetts State Archives, Boston, Massachusetts,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, Vol. 4, 51; “Probate Inventory of Benjamin Backhouse, proved 21-3 September 1767, *Charleston County Will Books*, volume X (1765-9), pp. 176-80; “South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, 245-50. Hancock noted that “Mahoy” was “gilt decorated or painted furniture, often with caned backs and seats, in the case of chairs, or caned bases for mattresses in the case of beds; an inexpensive rendition of Japan-work” (245); “Pattison Inventory;” “Bowcock Inventory;” Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 186.

¹⁶⁹ Marcy Norton, “Tasting Empire: Chocolate and the European Internalization of Mesoamerican Aesthetics,” *American Historical Review*, 111 (June 2006): 667.

Europe with them and initially consumed chocolate in the same manner as the Aztecs—they spiced chocolate with *achiote*, gave it a foamy head, and sipped it from a *tecomate* (a cup fashioned from clay) or a *jícara* (a lacquered calabash gourd).¹⁷⁰

By the time chocolate reached England in the mid-seventeenth century, however, it more fully reflected the British Empire’s growing global presence. Englishmen kept the basic features of chocolate, but modified the beverage with sweeteners and spices lauded in the Old World such as sugar, cinnamon, black pepper, anise, rose, and sesame. Chocolate was thus a beverage rooted in Mesoamerica and modified by direct products of European global imperialism when it reached English pots. Beyond adjusting chocolate’s flavor to European taste, English and European elites also increasingly replaced ceramic cups and hollow gourds with porcelain and *mayólica* vessels.¹⁷¹ Although maintaining the same shape as their Mesoamerican counterparts, these new vessels reflected the growing influence of Asian and French consumption customs on the British Empire.

Even more, Englishmen combined chocolate consumption with the Ottoman and English traditions of the coffeehouse and the polite traditions of the French café. Although never enjoying the popularity of coffeehouses, exclusive “chocolate houses” sprang up throughout London from 1675 to 1725. Writing to a friend in 1695, for example, the Englishman Thomas

¹⁷⁰ D. Quélus, *The Natural History of Chocolate*, trans. R. Brookes (London: J. Roberts, 1730), 71; As Norton explained, “Mesoamerica is the geographic area covered by the Mayan area of Central America and southeast Mexico, the Oaxacan zone, the Gulf zone of Veracruz and Tabasco, western Mexico, and the central highlands.” Norton, “Tasting Empire,” 670-71. Goodman, “Excitantia,” *Consuming Habits*, 123; Mesoamericans lauded chocolate for its psychological effects: “when an ordinary amount is drunk, it gladdens one, refreshes one, consoles one, invigorates one.” Bernardino de Sahagún, *The Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain*, trans. Arthur J.O. Anderson and Charles Dibble, 12 Vols. (Santa Fe, N. Mex., 1950), 11:6, 119; Norton, “Tasting Empire,” 679.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 686.

Brown equated chocolate houses with other “places of publick resort” like the theater and taverns and the English elite Samuel Pepys adopted chocolate as his primary “morning draft” in 1660.¹⁷²

Although British chocolate consumption declined in the mid-eighteenth century and chocolate houses never emerged in the North American colonies, the chocolate tradition nonetheless served as yet another global connection for colonial taverngoers. Keeping up with demand for this internationally-influenced beverage, most tavernkeepers stocked chocolate-affiliated porcelain “China” pots, and cups such as “China Chocolate Cups,” “Chocolate Pots,” and “Copper Chocolate Pots.”¹⁷³ Like the beverage they accompanied, chocolate dishes were the products of Imperialism. These vessels found their roots in Mesoamerican *tecomate* and *jícara* containers. As Europeans adopted them, however, they adjusted these dishes to their own means. Reflecting Spain, France, Holland, and England’s rather extensive trade with Asia by the mid-seventeenth century, European empires transformed Mesoamerican vessels into porcelain and *mayólica* vessels. Finally, the English drank their chocolate—like tea and coffee—out of Asian-influenced “China” cups and pots. Chocolate was a beverage and drinking tradition conceived by a complicated network of Mesoamerican communities, assimilated by Spanish imperialists, transferred east across the Atlantic Ocean, transmitted through Europe, and finally translated back west across the Atlantic Ocean to the North American colonies. By the time chocolate arrived in the colonies, it served as a hybrid representation of British colonialism and trade. Through drinking Mesoamerican, European-influenced chocolate beverages out of hybrid Mesoamerican, Asian, English-influenced vessels, colonists unintentionally participated in and

¹⁷² “Thomas Brown to C.G. Esq in *Covent-Garden*,” in John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, *Familiar Letters: Vol. I* (London, 1697), 157-58; The first English chocolate house was opened in 1657 in London by a Parisian shopkeeper. Thereafter numerous chocolate houses opened as “meeting places for an odd mixture of aristocracy and deminmonde...” Bennett Alan Weinberg and Bonnie K. Bealer, *The World of Caffeine: The Science and Culture of the World’s Most Popular Drug* (London: Routledge, 2001), 58; Pepys, *Diary*, June 24, 1660.

¹⁷³ “Bowcock Estate,” “Wetherburn Estate,” “Pattison Estate.”

connected with larger and more complicated networks of consumption, Imperialism, and trade than they probably realized.

In admittedly abstract but nonetheless significant terms, then, colonial American tavern spaces—or the “tradition” of these taverns—were themselves rooted in international customs of consumption, trade, Imperialism, and sociability. Simply by entering a tavern a colonist entered an ever-evolving entity rooted in thousands of years of development and cross-cultural exchange. International taverns, coffeehouses, teahouses, and chocolate houses converged in the early American tavern. Consequently, the convergence of and contributions to international customs of consumption, Imperialism, and trade in the tavern space provided thousands of colonists heightened connections to distant traditions of time and space. The Empire came to increasingly define every colonist’s day-to-day life.

Although non-alcoholic beverages such as coffee, tea, and chocolate were popular in and greatly affected the atmosphere of taverns, colonial taverngoers most enjoyed alcoholic alternatives. As a traveling Frenchman noted while dining with Williamsburg tavern patrons, “Madeira wine and punch made with Jamaica rum Is their Chief Drink.” Colonists transferred the tradition of rum consumption across the Atlantic Ocean, and in doing so, became entangled in dual triangles of transatlantic trade, enslavement, and Empire.¹⁷⁴ Of course, a Pennsylvanian taverngoer enjoying a bowl of lemon punch with an Atlantic merchant was not directly participating in the African slave, sugar, or molasses trade. But by flocking to their local tavern

¹⁷⁴ “Journal of a French Traveller in the Colonies, 1765, II,” *The American Historical Review*, 27 (Oct., 1921): 743; Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), 43. Mintz points out “two so-called triangles of trade, both of which arose in the seventeenth century and matured in the eighteenth.” One “linked Britain to Africa and the New World: finished goods were sold to Africa, African slaves to the Americas, and American tropical commodities (especially sugar) to the mother country and her importing neighbors.” In the second triangle, “from New England went rum to Africa, whence slaves to the West Indies, whence molasses back to New England (with which to make rum).” Also see John J. McCusker, *Rum and the American Revolution: The Rum Trade and the Balance of Payments of the Thirteen Continental Colonies*, Vol. I (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989), 6-7.

for West Indian and New England rum, or “kill devil” as many colonists called the intoxicating liquor, colonial consumers became active members of a global marketplace.¹⁷⁵

Rum sat atop the beverage hierarchy as colonists’ favorite liquor. One scholar estimated that, in 1770, each North American white male drank more than seven one-ounce shots of rum each day, or about twenty-one gallons a year. Colonists loved rum, and like wine and beer, taverns were the best place to obtain this “cursed liquor.” But taverngoers seldom drank straight rum. Instead, patrons often shared a congenial bowl of rum punch, which according to the Virginia gentleman, William Byrd II, consisted of “two or three bottles of water—according to whether the drink is desired strong or weak—a bottle of brandy [rum], the juice of six or twelve lemons, which are strained through a clean cloth or piece of linen, and a pound more or less of sugar—according to the sweetness desired. All this is mixed together... after which one has a very pleasant drink.”¹⁷⁶ Tavernkeepers throughout the colonies kept on hand all of rum punch’s vital ingredients—rum, lemons, lime, and sugar—and sold “punch” by the bowl.

¹⁷⁵ William Byrd, *The Prose Works of William Byrd of Westover: Narratives of a Colonial Virginian*, ed. Louis B. Wright (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 205; Breen provides a more in-depth explanation of the development of the consumer marketplace in the colonies, stating, “Great Britain had created an empire of consumer colonies.” Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, chapters 2-4; John Josselyn also referred to rum as “that cursed liquor called Rum, Rum-bullion, or kill-Devil, which is stronger than spirit of Wine, and is drawn from the dross of Sugar and Sugar Canes...” John Josselyn, *John Josselyn, A Colonial Traveler: A Critical Edition of Two Voyages to New England*, edited by Paul Lindholdt (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1988), 99.

¹⁷⁶ McCusker, *Rum Trade*, 468; William Byrd, *William Byrd’s Natural History of Virginia, or the Newly Discovered Eden*, ed. Richmond Croom Beatty and William J. Mulloy (Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1940), 92; Benjamin Franklin composed a more musical recipe for rum punch entitled “Boy, Bring a Bowl of China Here,” that was featured in a 1737 edition of Poor Richard’s Almanac:

*Boy, bring a bowl of China here
Fill it with water cool and clear;
Decanter with Jamaica ripe,
And spoon of silver, clean and bright,
Sugar twice-fin’d in pieces cut,
Knife, sive, and glass in order put,
Bring forth the fragrant fruit and then
We’re happy till the clock strikes ten*

Benjamin Franklin, *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 32 vols. to date, ed. Leonard W. Labaree, William B. Willcox, Claude-Anne Lopez, Barbara B. Oberg, et al. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1959-), 2:168.

Just as the sweet intoxication of rum punch kept colonists coming to urban and rural taverns, so did the camaraderie it encouraged. While at a Newtown tavern, Alexander Hamilton shared a bowl of “lemmon punch” with one Captain Binning who gave Hamilton “letters for his relations att Boston.” The young Scottish colonist, William Black was welcomed into Philadelphia by a group of gentlemen “with a Bowl of fine Lemon Punch big enough to have Swimm’d half a dozen of young Geese,” and on numerous occasions the Scottish merchant, William Gregory shared “some good punch” with his fellow tavern patrons. Numerous colonial magistrates, especially those in Boston, attempted to curb rum consumption, but because of rum punch’s popularity as a group-correlated drinking experience, it continued to provide closer intra-tavern contact than any other colonial beverage.¹⁷⁷

But rum punch’s ties of communication stretched beyond the tavern. All the punch’s ingredients—rum, sugar, and citrus fruits—were part of global trade networks, thus creating a beverage of global tastes. Sugar provided rum punch with its sweet kick. Transmitted from India and spreading west with Islam, sugar became the staple crop in the West Indies by the mid-eighteenth century. Although New Englanders began distilling rum in the early eighteenth century, their rum was still “drawn from the dross of Sugar and Sugar Canes” harvested in the West Indies. In addition, colonists often preferred West Indian to locally-crafted rum, prompting one merchant to advertise New England rum as “so much improved in Smell and Flavour, as to be little inferior to, and scarce distinguishable from, that made in the West Indies.”¹⁷⁸ However,

¹⁷⁷ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 11; Black, “Journal,” 242; Gregory, “Journey,” 347. The Scot, William Gregory’s colonial peregrinations were also marked by constantly drinking “New England rum-toddy,” “toddy,” “wine,” “punch,” etc; Cotton Mather, Cotton Mather, *Sober Considerations, on a Growing Flood of Iniquity...* (Boston, 1708). For another example of anti-rum sentiment in Boston see the comical broadside, *The Indictment and Trial of Sr. Richard Rum* (Boston, 1724).

¹⁷⁸ Rum punch actually originated in India, made its way to England, and traveled with the colonists across the Atlantic. Earle, *Stage-Coach and Tavern Days*, 114-16. Karen Harvey also noted “while punch was an English passion, its distinctive blend of ingredients initially relied on imports from France, the Indies or China.” Karen Harvey, “Ritual Encounters: Punch Parties and Masculinity in the Eighteenth Century,” *Past and Present* 214 (Feb.

sugar's value transcended New England rum production, for without sugar and molasses the transatlantic trade triangles that proved so important to colonial America's mercantile success could not exist.

This strong beverage needed a citrus twist, and rum punch's final ingredients—lemons, limes, and oranges—provided just that. Each of these citrus fruits originated in India and spread west with Islam, ultimately becoming West Indian and even North American crops. Colonists attempted to grow oranges as far north as Virginia in the mid-eighteenth century, but like sugar, colonists preferred the taste of the West Indian variety of citrus fruits. Merchants soon realized the transatlantic market for West Indian citrus fruits and advertised in Boston and Philadelphia “extraordinary good and very fresh Orange juice which some of the very best Punch Tasters prefer to Lemmon,” and “a quantity of choice orange and lemon Shrub.”¹⁷⁹ Since rum punch's ingredients were direct products of transatlantic trade, punch-drinking colonists facilitated, encouraged, and contributed to the British economy through its consumption. Moreover, colonial taverngoers often shared a bowl of this cocktail with travelers in taverns, the most Imperial of public spaces.

But colonial taverngoers did not limit themselves to liquor—Madeira wine emerged in the eighteenth century as one of their favorite alcoholic beverages. When colonial elite William Byrd II first tasted Madeira wine, he described the drink as a “splendid wine from Madeira (a Canary Island), which is very delicious, and also strong, and [which is] far better and more

2012): 173; Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 25; Josselyn, *Colonial Traveler*, 99; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 2, 1769.

¹⁷⁹ L. Ramón-Laca, “The Introduction of Cultivated Citrus to Europe via Northern Africa and the Iberian Peninsula,” *Economic Botany* 57 (Winter, 2003): 508-510; Harold W. Glidden, “The Lemon in Asia and Europe,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (Dec., 1937), 381-396; Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 25. Mintz points out that sugar also transmitted from India and spread west with Islam; In 1751, John Blair of Williamsburg traveled to Green Spring with a friend, where “We gather'd oranges.” John Blair, “Diary of John Blair,” ed. Lyon G. Tyler, *The William and Mary Quarterly* 7 (Jan. 1899): 137; Sally Smith Booth, *Hung, Strung, & Potted: A History of Eating in Colonial America* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1971), 159; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 21, 1768.

healthful than all our European wines, not only because of its agreeable sweetness but because of its soothing quality.” Byrd was not alone in his praise. Madeira wine was the most popular wine in mid-eighteenth century British America, and since taverns were the most widely distributed and accessible retailer of Madeira wine in the colonies, colonists flocked to their local tavern to drink a glass of “excellent old Madeira wine.” During his 1744 journey from Virginia to Philadelphia, for example, William Black enjoyed Madeira wine in almost every tavern he visited. Tavernkeepers such as Samuel Wethered, Henry Bowcock, Thomas Pattison, and George Backhouse realized colonists’ demand for Madeira and kept their larders stocked with the popular wine.¹⁸⁰

Madeira wine’s distribution, however, reached far beyond American shores. Produced by islanders in the South Atlantic Ocean, exported by international traders residing in Portugal, and imported and consumed by North and South Americans, West Indians, Britons, and Europeans, Madeira wine revealed, as historian David Hancock noted, “the decentralized, networked, and self-organized features of the early modern transatlantic, transimperial markets.”¹⁸¹ Madeira wine also shed light on the global nature of early modern European empires, as inhabitants of Copenhagen, Bordeaux, Lisbon, Bengal, Canton, Cape Verde, Bahia, Surinam, St Croix, and Quebec all enjoyed casks of Madeira as well. Madeira wine, like coffee, tea, chocolate, and rum punch, was an Imperial beverage enjoyed in the most globally-connected of all colonial public spaces, the tavern.

Obviously, British American taverns, laden with international influences and serving a multitude of consumer purposes, relied greatly upon those who frequented them. Less obvious,

¹⁸⁰ Byrd, *Natural History*, 90; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 7, 1764; Black, “Journal,” 124, 406, 409.

¹⁸¹ David Hancock, “‘A Revolution in the trade’: Wine Distribution and the Development of the Infrastructure of the Atlantic Market Economy, 1703-1807,” in *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy*, ed. John J. McCusker and Kenneth Morgan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 128, 107-8; Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*, xxv.

however, were the various roles tavernkeepers inhabited not only in running a tavern, but also in maintaining and upholding the myriad global consumer networks available in the tavern.

Whether running an urban, “genteel” tavern or a small rural tavern, colonial publicans played minor parts individually, but important roles collectively in local, national, transatlantic, and global networks. Beyond operating, decorating, and regulating the tavern space, tavernkeepers also shaped and ordered patrons’ experience by offering various globally-produced consumer goods. Such consumer goods made taverns commercially successful as well as upholding taverns as central nodes of global connections.¹⁸²

Early modern urban tavernkeepers such as Samuel Wethered of Boston, George Emlen of Philadelphia, and Benjamin Backhouse of Charleston stocked their taverns with myriad consumer goods made possible by the decentralized, global nature of the Empire. Even though Emlen kept a sparse, simple tavern filled with “ould” furniture and linens, he still stocked 90 gallons of wine, from the Fayal Islands in the Azores. Samuel Wethered, proprietor of the elite-oriented Bunch of Grapes Tavern in Boston, kept considerably more internationally-affiliated goods in his tavern. Besides sundry tea, coffee, and chocolate-related porcelain accessories, Wethered also possessed an Asian-influenced “Buran Table” and a set of feathered China curtains. Finally, his liquor reserves included “9 $\frac{3}{4}$ Gall of Arrack” (a type of alcohol produced in Asia and the Middle East) and twenty-six gallons of Madeira wine. Benjamin Backhouse also offered various global goods in his Charleston tavern, including “China” dishes, cups, and pots, Madeira wine, “Geneva” (English-produced gin), Arrack, and English Brandy.¹⁸³

¹⁸² Edmund S. Morgan, *Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1988), 174-208.

¹⁸³ “Probate Inventory of George Emlen, Proprietor of the Three Tuns Tavern, 26 April, 1711, *Philadelphia Will Book C*, vol. 191 (B-F), ff. 235-53, Philadelphia City Archives,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, 29-36; Francis Goelet noted that The Bunch of Grapes was “noted for the best punch house in Boston and resorted by most the gentlemen merchants & masters vessels.” Goelet, *Voyages and Travels*, October 3, 1750; “Probate Inventory of Samuel Wethered, Proprietor of the Bunch of Grapes Tavern, Boston, 12 July 1759,

Yet urban tavernkeepers did not enjoy a monopoly on internationally-produced consumer goods. Although scholars have often supposed that rural British American taverns were rustic, isolated spaces on the fringe of the British Empire, eighteenth-century tavernkeepers actually sold a diverse range of global consumer goods. In contrast to a tavernkeeper in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, or Charleston whose civic purpose was more concentrated—to provide drinks, food, and lodging for locals as well as travelers—a tavernkeeper in rural South Carolina filled a variety of roles. He or she might simultaneously serve as the area’s tavernkeeper, brewer, distiller, and storeowner. For this reason, rural taverns provided their seemingly disconnected and distant patrons myriad transatlantic and global access points. As David Hancock contended, “rural retailers regularly sold items from China, India, Morocco, Spain, Portugal, France, Holland, Germany, and Sweden, in addition to those from England and Ireland.”¹⁸⁴

Eighteenth-century backcountry tavernkeepers such as David Frey of Middletown, Pennsylvania combined their industries in order to meet the needs of local and traveling patrons alike. Frey, for example, was a storekeeper, tavernkeeper, miller, and landowner—he relied on decentralized, overlapping, global networks to extend his as well as his customers’ connections with myriad peoples, places, objects, and ideas.¹⁸⁵ Like Frey, one unidentified late eighteenth-century New York backcountry tavernkeeper also offered an impressive array of global consumables for his patrons. As shown by this publican’s account book, rum was his best-selling item, followed by sugar, tobacco, and (probably locally-brewed) “drams” of beer. This is not surprising—these staple goods proved the most popular across the colonies. What is impressive,

Suffolk County Probate Inventories, vol. 54, ff. 447-52, Massachusetts State Archives, Boston, MA,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking and the Early Modern World*, 45-53. Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*, xxv; “Backhouse Inventory,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, 245-50.

¹⁸⁴ Hancock, “The Triumphs of Mercury,” 132; see also Ann Smart Martin, “Common People and the Local Store: Consumerism in the Rural Virginia Backcountry,” in *Common People and their Material World: Free Men and Women in the Chesapeake, 1700-1830*, ed. David Harvey and Gregory Brown, (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1992), 39-54.

¹⁸⁵ Hancock, “The Triumphs of Mercury,” 125-132.

however, are the sundry other internationally-sourced goods this backcountry tavernkeeper sold. In addition to rum and beer, he also offered gin, grog, various wines (sourced from around the world), cider, brandy, “sangaree” (a cold drink of wine mixed with water and foreign spices like nutmeg), toddy (an Indian, rum-based mixed drink with water, sugar, and foreign spices), and cherry toddy. But this anonymous New York backcountry publican’s sales reached far beyond rum, sugar, and lemons. He also sold an impressive variety of non-alcoholic beverages, cloth, spices, clothing, and tools. Tea and chocolate, for example, were always available at this rural New York tavern. Moreover, the tavernkeeper offered various internationally-sourced cloths—including “sheeting,” “stripe cotton,” linen (Irish), silk (Asian), calico (Indian), “cambrick” (French)—and globally-produced spices such as nutmeg (Spice Islands in Indonesia), pepper (Middle East), and mustard (sourced from various transatlantic regions).¹⁸⁶ He also sold various goods sourced from North American urban centers and beyond like butter, veal, molasses, gloves, shoes, handkerchiefs, white stockings, powder, shot, nails, fishing lines, and window glass, which speaks to the intercontinental in addition to transatlantic and global commercial trade networks.¹⁸⁷

By stocking and decorating their taverns with in-demand, globally produced and traded consumer goods, British American publicans like Wethered, Emlen, Backhouse, and the unidentified rural New York tavernkeeper operated taverns that satisfied patrons’ requirements while also connecting both parties to larger networks. As Hancock contended, such global networks “were created by the interactions of individuals working out solutions to local problems and extending the solutions through their networks to places, personalities, and

¹⁸⁶ “Day Book, Kept by an Unidentified Person, Probably the Owner of a Tavern, Long Island, 1780-85,” New York Historical Society Special Collections; Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise: A Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants*, trans. David Jacobsen (New York: Pantheon Books, 1992), Chapter One: Spices, or the Dawn of the Modern Age.

¹⁸⁷ “New York Daybook.”

situations one step beyond, where they were adopted and adapted.”¹⁸⁸ Colonists visited the tavern for their own reasons, publicans purchased local and international goods from merchants in order to appease their clients, and these merchants extended their own expansive networks in order to satisfy the needs of tavernkeepers. Through consuming myriad global goods, moreover, seemingly disconnected colonists became important actors in larger networks of consumerism, trade, tradition, and Imperialism. As exemplified by the various services, consumer goods, and traditions offered in taverns, every colonist lived in a world dictated by the ebbs and flows of the British Empire in the mid-eighteenth century. Consequently, international consumer goods—and in turn those urban and rural tavernkeepers who sold them—bound colonists “to the next county, the next colony or state, the next empire, and the next continent.”¹⁸⁹

The British American tavern, then, was a center of global connection in both indirect and direct terms. Indirectly, publicans and patrons participated in older and larger customs of consumption, Imperialism, and trade by carrying on various consumption practices in the tavern space. More directly, however, these same colonists connected with and factored into actual networks of consumption and communication when operating or visiting a colonial American tavern. By consuming globally-sourced alcoholic beverages, reading international news, conversing with strangers from across the Atlantic Ocean, or celebrating events occurring thousands of miles away colonists tied themselves to thousands of other people, places, and ideas.

¹⁸⁸ David Hancock, “Organizing Our Thoughts: ‘Global Systems’ and the Challenge of Writing a More Complex History,” *The Journal of the Historical Society* 10 (September 2010): 323.

¹⁸⁹ Hancock, “Triumphs of Mercury,” 121, 132.

Chapter Three

“The Rabble filled the House”: British American Taverns as Class-Contested Spaces of Imperial Connection

Writing to his son Cadwallader in 1757, Alexander Colden expressed well the class barriers that defined the British Empire—and in turn colonial taverns—during the eighteenth century. Hoping to find Cadwallader an exclusive, elite tavern in which to lodge while he stayed in New York to attend to his duties as colonial governor, Alexander warned his son that “the House at the Black Horse” was “too Publick.” Alexander assured Cadwallader that while he could not reserve the tavern at “Bloomindall,” it was “very probable” that he could procure a room in the tavern at Flushing, which was “the best & most Convenient house” he could think of, especially owing to the fact that Governor Clinton had recently lodged there. A patrician like Cadwallader Colden avoided taverns which were “too Publick”—or in other words too populated with lower class colonists, or not cordoned off well enough for privacy and security—at all costs, and instead sought out taverns where he could “depend upon being genteelly entertained” among his upper class peers. Such “genteel” lodgings, however were not always available in the early- to mid-eighteenth century, and thus the class conflict that characterized every other British American public space also invaded taverns, the most accessible, Imperially-affiliated, and influential of all British North American public spaces for the most people.¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ “Alexander Colden to Cadwallader Colden, New York, September 1st, 1757,” *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, Vol. V, 1755-1760 (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1921), 181-82; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 29, 1748. As a culmination of nearly every other public space, taverns provided colonists with outlets for their religious, entertainment, consumer, and improvement desires. While other public spaces like churches, shops, markets, and theaters served as key spaces of interaction for colonial Americans, more people from across various economic, cultural, and religious backgrounds employed taverns as their main social venue. ” Colonial Americans called taverns “inns,” “public houses,” “ordinaries,” “alehouses,” and “coffee houses.” Although inns, taverns, and alehouses held individual distinctions in England based largely on class, purpose, and refinement, British American taverns were a mix of the three, and thus did not garner such distinctions. No matter

Pre-Revolutionary colonial American taverns were not democratic spaces of inclusiveness where hierarchy and deference diminished. Rather, pre-Revolutionary taverns were—more than any other public space—direct reflections of the British Empire, and as the British Empire was upheld by well-established (but increasingly contested) notions of hierarchy and deference, so too were British American taverns arenas of intense class conflict. Within taverns, patricians sought control, exclusivity, and politeness, plebeians resisted order, and elites ultimately constructed their own genteel spaces. As culminations of nearly every other colonial public space, taverns provided colonists access to the Imperial connections they so craved, and thus serve as perfect lens through which to understand how colonists dealt with increasing global connections and the correlating tides of class conflict.

Historians have noted those restricted from the tavern space—Indians, blacks, servants, sailors, minors, and women—but have generally understood those white men allowed in pre-Revolutionary taverns as unified beyond (and despite) well-established class lines. David Conroy and Peter Thompson argue that pre-Revolutionary British American taverns permitted a “socially and culturally heterogeneous” tavern crowd to “abandon the constraints that governed interaction in most public situations” in order to “drink alongside one another,” while Benjamin Carp contends that taverns “brought together a broad array of white men and made them feel equal to any army officer, merchant, or member of Parliament of the Assembly.”¹⁹¹ On the contrary,

the quality of the tavern, colonists always called them taverns, and only in the second half of the eighteenth century did they start to refer to certain upper class drinking establishments as coffeehouses. For purposes of continuity, however, I will always refer to these colonial structures as “taverns.” For more on these distinctions, see Clark, *The English Alehouse*.

¹⁹¹ Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 16, 75; Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 2; Carp, *Rebels Rising*, 97. Since Thompson and Conroy investigated taverns in very different contexts—Philadelphia and New England—they took different approaches to making a similar argument regarding class mixing. By studying Philadelphia, “home to a tightly packed and culturally diverse population” with a population that displayed “uncommon heterogeneity,” Thompson had to deal with Philadelphia’s huge (and increasingly widening) gap between the rich and the poor. Thus Thompson argues that it was *because of* Philadelphia’s “uncommon heterogeneity” of nationalities, religions, and classes that no one class or ethnicity could impose their power over the tavern space. Conroy, meanwhile,

although (or perhaps because) British American patricians did not enjoy the titled aristocracy of their English brethren, they fiercely attempted to uphold deep-rooted institutions of hierarchy in the colonies. Class difference, as John Winthrop exclaimed, was for the British a natural order that God “hath soe disposed of the condition of mankind.”¹⁹² Why, then, would the underlying customs of hierarchy and deference that governed British society in every other aspect of colonists’ lives suddenly dissipate within a tavern’s walls?

Although Thompson, Conroy, and Susan Salinger have thoroughly investigated multiple themes regarding colonial taverns, much room remains for the historical study of class conflict, Imperial connection, and colonial development in British American pre-Revolutionary taverns.¹⁹³ This chapter challenges Shield’s contention that by simply inhabiting the same general tavern space, colonists’ proximity combined with “civil” discourse and drink “enable[d] congenial communication between persons of different ranks and permitted one to make common cause with them.”¹⁹⁴ Thompson argued that while tavern assemblies “free from deference...in which men from different ranks and ethnicities discussed politics” had helped to create Philadelphia’s egalitarian political culture in the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century, the end of the eighteenth century was marked by “an increasing preference for sociability among men of ‘their own kind.’”¹⁹⁵ Thompson thus revealed class stratification in the tavern, but as this investigation will prove, he placed that change too late.

studied a more culturally homogenous group, New Englanders, and accordingly stressed their cross-class unification behind ideas of resistance to “order.”

¹⁹² Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity,” 31.

¹⁹³ It must be noted that, while on page two of *In Public Houses* Conroy argues, “In taverns men did not ordinarily sit according to their place in the local social hierarchy,” by pg. 241 he contradictorily contends, “In socially stratified Boston, men of middling and low rank did not ordinarily drink and mix with those of exalted status.” Thompson similarly notes stratification in Philadelphia’s tavern space, but only in the last third of the eighteenth century.

¹⁹⁴ Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*, xx.

¹⁹⁵ Thompson, *Rum Punch*, 19. Similarly, James Oakes, et. al. argued that “taverns brought all ranks closer” in Oakes, et. al, *Of the People*, 140.

The divergence of taverns along class lines was an ever-evolving process. Patricians' exclusive taverns steadily materialized within existing taverns because of prolonged class conflict, anxiety, and Imperial development.¹⁹⁶ As a period of considerable expansion and social "refinement," the eighteenth century ushered in a new era for colonial American public spaces as class conflict increasingly defined colonists' social interactions. New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Charleston had grown into full-fledged urban centers; roads snaked through port cities and penetrated the countryside; churches' newly-constructed steeples soared toward the heavens; storekeepers offered exotic goods from far-off places; theaters burst onto the social scene; and markets and fairs became mainstays in the city and the country. With such growth, however, arrived new anxieties for elites already eager to assert their power over the populace, new motives for the emerging middle classes, and new opportunities for the lower classes to resist such patrician control. Just as Imperial connection provided colonists order, growth, and security, then, so too did these networks constantly instigate various transformations.

Although usually small, cramped, and dirty spaces in the seventeenth century, British American taverns by the eighteenth century reflected the Empire's growth—they evolved into spaces of and for British connection. The interaction of colonial taverns' "mixed company" throughout the eighteenth century thus necessitates a closer investigation, not only of hierarchy,

¹⁹⁶ Conroy similarly noted that elites began to open their own taverns in the late eighteenth century. Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 124. Others have also viewed taverns as somewhat separated among class lines. Sharon V. Salinger, for instance, noted that taverns were just as exclusionary among hierarchy and class (as well as gender and race) lines as they were inclusive in Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America*; Jessica Kross, "'If you will not drink with me, you must fight with me': The Sociology of Drinking in the Middle Colonies," *Pennsylvania History* 64 (Winter 1997): 28-55; Brown similarly somewhat stressed internal class divisions in Brown, "The Landscape of Drink," 179. He noted, "Most individuals are revealed to have been 'in company' with their social peers, whose shared participation in public drinking would at least in part have cemented structural affinities." Finally, Hancock noted "it is doubtful that drinking together eroded the orders of society...as recent scholars have suggested," but did not support these claims at length, or primarily from a tavern perspective. Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*; For an excellent investigation of class distinction in an early modern, British public space—in this case London's pleasure gardens—see Hannah Greig, "'All Together and All Distinct': Public Sociability and Social Exclusivity in London's Pleasure Gardens, ca. 1740-1800," *Journal of British Studies* 51 (January, 2012): 50-75; Martin D. Topper, "The Drinker's Story: An Important But Often Forgotten Source of Data," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* (1981): 78-80.

deference, and class conflict in the Empire, but also of the tavern as a space as, in Henri Lefebvre's words, "an image of a complex of mobilities, a nexus of in and out conduits" which spanned the colonies as well as the Empire.¹⁹⁷ Taverns were physical spaces with distinct natural and material divisions. To keep up with urban colonists' demands, tavernkeepers erected larger, increasingly ornate taverns with more rooms serving more specialized, exclusive purposes. Tavernkeepers provided a more diverse array of imported food, drinks, and services than ever. The "Great Room" of a tavern often boasted one or more large tables intended to foster sociability, while separate rooms were reserved for more isolated interaction such as club meetings, gambling, balls, lectures, or sleeping. Every room was furnished with varying scales of decoration ranging from simple tables, beds, and chairs to fine mahogany furniture, European paintings, looking glasses, and billiards tables. Tavernkeepers also stocked their rooms with books, beverages, and newspapers from throughout the Empire. New York and Philadelphia publicans even offered paying taverngoers the opportunity of "Perspective Views of most of the famous Palaces and Gardens in *England, France, and Italy...the siege of Barcelona, and the cities of Rome, Naples, and Venice*" through Bonnin's "Philosophical Optical Machine" in the

¹⁹⁷ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 92-94; As Ruth Bloch noted in a recent article, Habermas's "public sphere" has come "perilously close to dissolving into mush." Recognizing the relative devolution of this term, I will utilize the "public sphere" less in terms of a Habermasian sphere of democratic development and more with the purpose of establishing a public place of contact, communication, and culture. For this reason, although I use the term "public sphere," I am not necessarily employing Habermas's conception of the "public sphere" in this investigation. This is not a study of the relationship between state and society or the rise of a democratic voice, and all tavern "events and occasions" were not "open to all" as Habermas characterized public places. Only in my analysis of elite taverns will Habermas's literal conception of a "public sphere" be useful, and still in small doses. Taking previous interpretations of the "bourgeois public sphere" into account, I uncover some of the more undemocratic aspects of the tavern space, as well as their larger implications on identity, hierarchy, culture, and consumerism. Ruth H. Bloch, "Inside and Outside the Public Sphere," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 62 (Jan., 2005): 99; Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1991), 1; For more on the geography of urban public space, see Peter G. Goheen, "Public Space and the Geography of the Modern City," *Progress in Human Geography* 22 (August, 1998): 479-496. For more on space theory in early modern taverns, see Brown, "The Landscape of Drink."

mid-eighteenth century.¹⁹⁸ By the eighteenth century, then, many urban taverns came to reflect the ebbs and flows of Empire in architecture, interior decoration, and material goods.

But the colonial tavern experience varied substantially by region and population area. This chapter focuses on taverns in colonial American urban areas such as Philadelphia, Boston, New York, and Williamsburg. Within these growing cities, class conflict was most prevalent and pronounced as colonists and travelers from all walks of life jostled for social position. Although mid-eighteenth century Williamsburg was a less populated city compared to Philadelphia or New York and thus did not have the same level of class development, Williamsburg still retained a strong urban and social presence in the southern region where few communities could even be considered a city.¹⁹⁹ Besides hosting the colonies' first official playhouse in 1718, for example, Williamsburg also served as the central meeting ground for Virginia court days when vast multitudes of colonists from surrounding areas convened to settle legal affairs.²⁰⁰ Such development translated to more numerous, diverse, specialized, and class-conflicted taverns—Philadelphia and New York each boasted more than 100 taverns by the late 1750s, and at around fifteen, Williamsburg's taverns constituted the majority of its public buildings.²⁰¹ Hamlets,

¹⁹⁸ *New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, October 31, 1749; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 1, 1749; *New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, November 28, 1748.

¹⁹⁹ By 1720, Boston harbored the largest population in the colonies with 12,000, while Philadelphia had 10,000 inhabitants, New York had 7,000, and Charleston had almost 4,000. By the mid 1760s, Philadelphia had become the most populated city in America, boasting 30,000 residents, while New York had grown to 25,000 residents, and Boston had only reached a paltry 16,000. Williamsburg's population reached around 2,000 souls. London, comparatively, boasted an estimated population of 700,000 by 1700. Nash, *Class and Society*, 4; Oakes, et al., *Of the People*, 140.

²⁰⁰ Rankin, *The Theater in Colonial America*; Johnson and Burling, *The Colonial American Stage*; A.G. Roeber, "Authority, Law, and Custom: The Rituals of Court Day in Tidewater, Virginia, 1720 to 1750," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 37 (Jan., 1980): 29-52.

²⁰¹ Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, 20; for Williamsburg's number of taverns, see the excellently-maintained "eWilliamsburg" map at "Colonial Williamsburg." Accessed October 3, 2012 at 7:48 PM. <http://research.history.org/ewilliamsburg/map.cfm>.

villages, towns, ferries, and way stations simply did not demand the varied public life of larger cities, and thus played host to simpler, less populated, and less class-contested taverns.²⁰²

As the urban taverns that this chapter focuses on became more numerous, varied, and important for British American municipal and Imperial development in the eighteenth century, however, they also came to represent lower class disorder, crime, and drunkenness. Whether punishing taverngoing pickpockets, counterfeiters, or brawlers, magistrates had their hands full with taverns.²⁰³ Finding that “the abundance of taverns, punch houses, and blind tipping houses” had become “hurtful and prejudicial to the common good and welfare” of the colonies, patricians throughout the colonies instated laws restricting certain “lewd, idle, and disorderly” members of society—Indians, blacks, servants, sailors, minors, and women—from entering taverns.²⁰⁴ Leaders hoped such regulations would bring order to the confusion, drunkenness, theft, violence, gambling, and prostitution of taverns. Understanding who patricians deemed unfit for taverngoing also reveals whom they considered dangerous to colonial—and Imperial—development. Yet, controlling measures bred various forms of lower class resistance, and

²⁰² Thomas Prince, *The Vade Mecum for America: or A Companion for Traders and Travellers* (Boston, 1731); William Mylne compared tavern ratios in urban and rural areas, explaining, “In a few days I came to Philadelphia, in my way I passed through many pleasant villages in a fine cultivate country. Indeed here a man travels as much at his ease as in England, there being good inns and good beds, proper accommodations for ones horse, a great difference betwixt this and to the southward where I have road thirty miles without seeing a house.” William Mylne, *Travels in the Colonies in 1773-1775, Described in the Letters of William Mylne*, ed. Ted Raddock (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993), 73; Daniel B. Thorp, “Taverns and Tavern Culture on the Southern Colonial Frontier: Rowan County, North Carolina, 1753-1776,” *The Journal of Southern History* 62 (Nov., 1996): 661-688.

²⁰³ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 30, 1752; December 19, 1732; *John Tabor Kempe Papers, 1678-1782*, Box 11, Folder 1, 1765, New York Historical Society Manuscript Collections; While traveling through South Carolina in 1734, a young Englishman also recounted a tavern fight: “The next morning we left the house, and by noon reached Lewis, where there had been a very unhappy incident the night before. Two men being in liquor, they quarreled till they came to blows, when one had the fortune to throw the other down; the undermost, finding the other to be too strong for him, bit off his nose, which made the other immediately let him go; upon which the fellow made his escape, and was not then to be heard of.” “A New Voyage to Georgia by a Young Gentleman, Giving an Account of his Travels to South Carolina and part of North Carolina (1733-34),” *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society* 2 (1842), 48; Elizabeth Drinker also explained how a man was killed at a local Philadelphia tavern in 1760. Drinker, *Journal*, 16; Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, Chapter Four.

²⁰⁴ Thomas Cooper, ed., *The Statutes at Large of South Carolina*, Vol. 3 (Columbia, SC: A.S. Johnson, 1836-41), 581-85, 1741, no. 680; “An Additional Act to an Act entituled an Act for the Better Regulating Taverns and Punch Houses,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, Vol. IV, 179.

ultimately these various excluded groups managed to enter the tavern space despite restrictions. Plebeians helped build the Empire through shirking orders as much as following them.²⁰⁵

Just as certain upper class colonists utilized the liquor trade to become wealthy, so too did they damn particular spirits for their enervating effects on colonial society. While elites surely drank to excess in British America, many equated drunkenness as well as certain types of alcohol (especially rum) with plebeian debauchery. Drunkenness, the young patrician Nicholas Cresswell exclaimed, would not only “destroy his constitution” but also cause him to “sink...below the level of a brute.”²⁰⁶ Even more than distancing themselves from such pursuits, many elites also thought they were saving the lower classes from themselves by forbidding them entrance to taverns and, in turn, certain alcoholic drinks such as rum.²⁰⁷ Because rum was the most popular liquor in the colonies after the Navigation Acts drove Dutch-produced gin out of the market, rum also became one of the standard drinks of the lower classes. The Virginia gentleman William Byrd II disgustingly noted in 1733 that Norfolk “contribut[ed] much to the debauching of the country by importing abundance of rum, which, similar to gin in Great Britain, breaks the constitutions, vitiates the morals, and ruins the industry of most of the poor people of this country.” Byrd II later explained upon arriving in another small town, “there is a rum [tavern] for persons of a more vulgar taste.”²⁰⁸ Elites like Byrd II lamented the negative effects of rum as it broke “the poorer sort of Peoples” constitutions, vitiated their morals, ruined their industry, and even caused death. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* ran a story in 1753 detailing a “labouring Man”

²⁰⁵ For a thorough investigation of elite regulation of the New England tavern space, see Conroy, *In Public Houses*. For Philadelphia, see Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*. For more on how the lower classes helped make the Empire, see Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000).

²⁰⁶ See, for instance, A.B., “Reflections on Immoderate Drinking,” *The New-York Weekly Journal*, June 19th, 1749.

²⁰⁷ *At a Court, held at Punch-Hall, in the Colony of Bacchus, The Indictment and Tryal of Sir Richard Rum* (Boston, 1724). Bostonians produced this satire depicting rum’s pernicious effects in which rum stood accused of destroying the morals of British America’s lower classes, and was given a chance to redeem itself.

²⁰⁸ Byrd, *Prose Works*, 173, 374; Although “people of fortune” also drank rum, they imbibed in “very good,” imported alternatives and (allegedly) did so with more self control. Birket, *Cursory Remarks*, 9-10.

who “being at work in a House in Town, got to a Bottle of Rum [at a tavern], of which he drank so freely, that he died soon after.”²⁰⁹ In some patricians’ eyes, if not limited from taverns and rum, the lower classes would not only destroy themselves, but also the colonies’ Imperial prosperity.

Besides linking the lower classes more generally to drunkenness and rum, upper class colonists more specifically targeted Indians as stereotypical alcoholics. Since taverns served as one of Indians’ prime sources of public alcohol consumption, patricians throughout the colonies refused tavern services to Indians in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.²¹⁰ One Bostonian begged for “some more effectual Provision...to restrain Tavern Keepers...from supplying the Indians with Strong Liquors” in 1738, arguing that while Indians were “as peaceable a people as any whatsoever” when “not heated with Liquor,” drunkenness threw their ranks into “Feuds and Quarrels...that sometimes and indeed often, end[ed] in Murder.” Byrd II similarly noted that “nothing has been so fatal to [Indians] as their ungovernable passion for rum,” while *The Pennsylvania Gazette* reported in 1753 a Connecticut Indian “having intoxicated himself with Strong Drink” whipping his son “in such a barbarous manner that he presently died.” Patricians stereotyped Native Americans as particularly violent when intoxicated, thus placing Indians even further on the fringes of the Empire.²¹¹

Even though magistrates enacted more stringent laws regulating liquor sales to Indians, Native Americans still found their way into taverns. Not only did Native Americans disobey the

²⁰⁹ “Letter ‘To the Publisher of the Boston Evening-Post,’ *Boston Evening-Post*, 26 June 1738,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, 549; Benjamin Franklin constantly railed against the evils of drinking in his writings. Benjamin Franklin, *Writings* (New York: The Library of America, 1987), 1188; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 12, 1753.

²¹⁰ For more on Native Americans’ debilitating relationship with alcohol in the colonial period, see Peter Mancall, *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

²¹¹ “Letter ‘*Boston Evening-Post*,” *Public Drinking Vol. IV*, 549-50; Byrd, *Prose Works*, 219; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 18, 1734; See, for instance, “Chapter LII,” *Laws of New-York, from the Year 1691, to 1751* (New York, 1752), 23.

law by drinking alcohol in taverns, but tavern keepers and retailers who sold liquor to Indians directly challenged patrician ordinance as well. Beyond the exorbitant price these tavernkeepers charged Native Americans for alcohol, certain immoral (sometimes unlicensed) publicans intentionally got Indians drunk to cheat them out of their land.²¹² Such resistance should not come as a surprise—evading elite mechanisms of control for monetary gain was common in the colonies.

Like Indians, patricians also banned blacks from taverns in the eighteenth century.²¹³ Yet tavernkeepers continued to sell hard liquor to slaves. One 1740 *Boston Evening-Post* article reported a gentleman finding his missing slaves in a tavern “in a very merry humour, singing and dancing, having a violin and a store of wine and punch.” Not only did the article note the disorderly revelry of these slaves in the tavern space, but it also questioned patrician authority. Where were these slaves’ masters, the author wondered, and why did they not realize their slaves were gone? Compared to what happened—or at least what colonists perceived—in 1741 in New York, however, this Boston incident proved merely a trifle.²¹⁴

Colonists’ fear of slave uprisings reached a fever pitch following revolts in the Caribbean (1734) and in South Carolina (1739). After a fire broke out at Ft. George, New York in 1741, colonists began pointing fingers at John Hughson, a poor, illiterate cobbler who operated an unlicensed tavern out of his New York home. Since authorities had already accused Hughson of harboring and selling stolen goods and abetting prostitution, accusations that “a general Conspiracy among the Negroes, to burn the Town, and destroy the white Inhabitants” had

²¹² For one such instance, see “William Johnson to Cadwallader Colden, February 20th, 1761,” *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, Vol. VI, 1761-64 (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1921), 11-12.

²¹³ Charles Zebina Lincoln, ed., *The Colonial Laws of New York from the Year 1664 to the Revolution* 5 vols (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894) 761, 788; 3: 154-155.

²¹⁴ Quote from Rice, *Early American Taverns*, 72; Quote also found in Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 110.

formed within Hughson's tavern struck many patricians not only as possible, but probable.²¹⁵

Daniel Horsmanden, the lead investigator of the "great conspiracy" case, soon discovered that Hughson had served blacks strong liquor in his tavern, allowed slaves to carry alcohol away with them, and hosted feasts for the blacks. New York's elites were disgusted to hear that the slaves at Hughson's mimicked white polite society as they gathered around a clothed table set with "a goose, a quarter of mutton, a fowl, and two loaves of bread," and washed it all down with fine rum and two bowls of punch.²¹⁶

By illegally attending an unlicensed tavern to mimic a "genteel" dinner while drinking sundry strong liquors, these blacks had already affronted polite notions of exclusivity and power; that they were accused of conspiring to "destroy the white Inhabitants" of New York only added to—and finished—their sentence. Although historians debate the legitimacy of an actual slave plot in 1741, the hysteria that followed the initial trials was very real. Over the next three months, New York magistrates burned thirteen blacks at the stake, hung seventeen blacks and four whites, and banished seventy more blacks from New York (often to their ultimate death in Hispaniola).²¹⁷ Thereafter, colonial elites took a harsher approach to the "good Regulation" and "suitable Management" of blacks. In 1751, for example, Philadelphia's magistrates banned blacks from carrying weapons, "meeting and accompanying together...in great Companies or

²¹⁵ *The General Magazine, and Historical Chronicle, for all the British Plantations* (June, 1741) 1, 6; 424.

²¹⁶ Daniel Horsmanden, *The New York Conspiracy*, ed. Thomas J. Davis (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 148.

²¹⁷ Peter Charles Hoffer, *The Great New York Conspiracy of 1741: Slavery, Crime, and Colonial Law* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2003) 100-130. As Jill Lepore noted, the New York Slave Conspiracy was rife with various anxieties beyond simply those regarding blacks, including Spain and Catholics. Such an investigation helps us to understand the intense anxieties upper-class British Americans dealt with every day. Jill Lepore, *New York Burning: Liberty, Slavery, and Conspiracy in Eighteenth-Century Manhattan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005); Although an extremely complicated event well beyond the scope of this work to fully detail, the New York Slave Conspiracy of 1741 greatly affected how elites—as well as lower class whites—viewed slaves in public spaces. Not only did colonial magistrates clamp down harder on slaves in the tavern space, but they also more fully restricted tavernkeepers' licensing and liquor retailing ordinances. Kross, "Sociology of Drinking," 34, 38-40. New York magistrates especially restricted black tavern attendance after this event. "Mother O'Neal" was indicted "for keeping a disorderly House, & entertaining Negroes" in 1765. *John Tabor Kempe Papers, 1678-1782*, Box 11, Folder 1. New York Historical Society Manuscript Collections.

Numbers,” and “tippling or drinking in or near any House or Shop where strong Liquors are sold.”²¹⁸ No longer could slaves so easily elude their masters as they had in Boston, nor could they assemble in taverns like John Hughson’s without the strictest of punishments.

Although not viewed as quite so much a threat as Indians and blacks, magistrates also barred sailors, minors, and unfree servants from taverns since such lower class groups could not be held legally responsible for their own actions nor could complainants sue them in court for debts.²¹⁹ Sailors, for instance, gained notoriety in colonial port taverns for racking up large debts that they could not pay. If the sailor was at liberty, such a debt could be worked out fairly easily. But if a mariner was under contract to a ship, statutes such as those in Virginia dictated that sailors could not be served without “license from their respective masters” since elite contractors were those held responsible for unruly sailors.²²⁰ Even worse in magistrates’ eyes, sailors, servants, and minors would often drunkenly “quarrel, fight...do one another mischief,” gamble, and game within taverns, which only caused further disorder.²²¹ Hoping to gain control over this chaos, New York patricians barred “any Youths under the Age of twenty-one years, or any Apprentice or Apprentices, journeymen, Servant or Servants, or common Sailors whatsoever” from taverns, card and dice games, “Strong Liquors,” and using credit in 1745.²²² Such restrictions, however, proved only somewhat successful.

Sailors (numbering between one-tenth and one-quarter of the adult male population in British American port cities), servants, and minors continued to drink, fight, gamble, and fall into debt in colonial American taverns. Beyond causing havoc in taverns, however, sailors also

²¹⁸ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 5, 1751.

²¹⁹ For more on mariners’ interactions in the colonial American tavern space, see April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), Chapter Three: Mariners and Colonists.

²²⁰ Hening, *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia From the First Session of the Legislature, in the Year 1619*, (New York, 1809-23), III: (October 1705) 395-401; IV: (May 1722) 107-10.

²²¹ Josselyn, *A Colonial Traveler*, 144-45.

²²² *Laws of New-York, from the Year 1691, to 1751* (New York, 1752) Vol. 8, 355-57; 416.

served as important transmitters of news and information for local colonists. Having spent most of their time abroad, mariners helped to connect colonists to the Empire, or in historian April Lee Hatfield's words, "to make colonists constantly conscious of their links to other parts of the world and other colonies in the Americas."²²³ By 1751 South Carolina elites, realizing that mariners tumbled in taverns no matter how much they tried to restrict such activity, amended their statutes by making it unlawful for tavernkeepers to entertain any seaman for more than one hour out of twenty-four or to provide him food or strong drink worth more than ten shillings.²²⁴ Along with Indians and blacks, servants, seamen, and minors found their way into taverns in the face of elite restrictions.

Women, though not legally barred from taverns, rarely entered taverns as patrons. In the vein of every public space in the colonies, taverns were male-controlled spaces.²²⁵ Men expected women to reside in the private sphere, and besides occasionally lodging in taverns while traveling (usually with men), women only briefly visited taverns to buy alcohol for private consumption. When the Puritan Sarah Kemble Knight arrived in one New England tavern late at night, her landlady exclaimed "I never see a woman on the Rode so Dreadfull late, in all the days of my versall life. Who are You? Where are You going?"²²⁶ Besides deeming women out of

²²³ Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia*, 75.

²²⁴ Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking*, 38-44.

²²⁵ While in a New York tavern, for example, Alexander Hamilton (a elite physician traveling the North American coast in 1744) noted "there were 13 gentlemen att table but not so much as one lady." Hamilton, 173. Hamilton has been lately lauded as a prime source for understanding mid-eighteenth century British American culture, travel writing, the Scottish Enlightenment, and taverngoing. See, for example, Robert Micklus, "Dr. Alexander Hamilton's 'Modest Proposal,'" *Early American Literature* 16 (1981): 107-32; Micklus, *The Comic Genius of Dr. Alexander Hamilton*; Elaine Breslaw, *Dr. Alexander Hamilton and Provincial America: Expanding the Orbit of Scottish Culture* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008).

²²⁶ Knight, "Journal," 10; Select middle and upper class women like Elizabeth Drinker, Sarah Kemble Knight, and Charlotte Brown occasionally stayed in taverns, but often as travelers, and almost always in male company. Drinker, *Journal*; Fairfax Harrison, ed., "With Braddock's Army: Mrs. Browne's Diary in Virginia and Maryland," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 32 (1924): 305-320; For more on women's role in the tavern, see Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking*, 107, 114, 152-53, 172-73, 181; Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 38-45; Julia Roberts, *In Mixed Company: Taverns and Public Life in Upper Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009); Sarah Hand Meacham, *Every Home a Distillery: Alcohol, Gender, and Technology in the*

place as tavern patrons, society also considered women unfit for alcohol in large quantities—colonial newspapers were littered with accounts of women dying from over consumption, which for many men only supported women’s supposed incompetence regarding strong liquor.²²⁷

Women’s presence in the tavern space as patrons, consequently, was rare.

Although most women were informally excluded from taverns, some women filled important roles as tavernkeepers, landladies, maids, barkeepers, and servants. Women’s tavern interaction, even if seen by many men as passive, made them active participants in the same public, male-dominated networks as their male counterparts.²²⁸ Tavern licensing varied by region in the colonies, which greatly affected the frequency of female tavernkeeping in each region. In the Chesapeake region, for example, females operated many—if not most—taverns beginning in the seventeenth century, while in New England and Philadelphia magistrates only allowed the “poorer sorts” and women to operate taverns in hopes of curbing poverty and vice during the mid-eighteenth century.²²⁹

Colonial Chesapeake (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Susan Clair Imbarrato, *Traveling Women: Narrative Visions of Early America* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006), Chapter Two. Also see Nancy Isenberg, *Sex & Citizenship in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), Chapter Three for why women were excluded from the public sphere in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

²²⁷ See, for instance, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 19, 1735: “Sunday last one Rachel Twells of this City died suddenly and the Coroner’s Inquest having sat on the Body brought in their Verdict, that by drinking too plentifully of Rum and other strong Liquors she came by her Death. ’Tis said she had drank sixteen Drams of Rum and two Mugs of strong Beer that Day.” For more examples of women’s death by drunkenness, see *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 16, 1731, December 7, 1732; *The Penny Post, Containing Fresh News, Advertisements, Useful Hints, &c.*, January 18, 1769.

²²⁸ See, for instance, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, “Wheels, Looms, and the Gender Division of Labor in Eighteenth-Century New England,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 55 (January 1998): 3-38; Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife’s Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990); Mary Beth Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996); Judith M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England: Women’s Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

²²⁹ Meachem, *Every Home a Distillery*, 64-65. By the mid-eighteenth century, magistrates in New England also allowed poor people and women to open taverns so they would not become wards of the state. See, for instance, “Joseph Coolidge Petition (July 9, 1765),” “Rachel Masters, Widow, Petition (July 21, 1767),” Joseph Goldthwait, Chimney Sweep, Petition (August 12, 1767),” Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

Anne Pattison, a female tavernkeeper in Williamsburg during the mid-eighteenth century, exemplifies how women utilized the tavern to achieve power throughout various local and global networks. Pattison served a variety of roles as tavernkeeper—she purchased locally- and globally-produced items such as beef, cheese, ducks, oysters, rum, Madeira wine, coffee, lemons, oranges, tea, claret, persico (an alcoholic spirit prepared by macerating the kernels of peaches, apricots, etc.), sugar, “Cherie rum,” and “English Cyder,” arranged to rent pasture land for her own and her customers’ horses, brokered the sale of horses, settled accounts with patrons and suppliers, lent cash on credit, rented chaises to colonists, organized dinners and clubs, bartered with fellow tavern keepers, directed slaves and free servants, and assisted her female bond laborers with chores such as cooking, gardening, washing dishes, laundering, shopping, and serving food and drinks.²³⁰ In one sense, Pattison was a shrewd businesswomen enmeshed in local and global webs of commerce and trade. In another sense, however, Pattison performed the more private role of many women by taking care of domestic duties around the tavern. Female tavernkeepers thus gained footholds in the public, male-dominated spheres of international business, commerce, and communication while also maintaining a presence in the domestic, private sphere of femininity.²³¹

Just as some women achieved public influence through tavern labor, however, far more female tavern workers were only further relegated to the private sphere. Female servants often

²³⁰ Anne Pattison, “Anne Pattison Account Book (1743/4, Jan. 7-1749, June 13),” Virginia Historical Society, Reel B72 Mss 5: 3PZ783: 1; Heather Wainwright, “Inns and Outs: Anne Pattison’s Tavern Account Book, 1744-1749” (Master’s Thesis, Armstrong Atlantic State University, 1998); For persico, see William Byrd II, *The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-1712*, Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling, ed (Richmond, VA: The Dietz Press, 1941), 403, footnote 1.

²³¹ Pattison is not the only female tavernkeeper to leave a detailed account book. For instance, see also Jane Cazneau, a Boston tavernkeeper from 1767 to 1771. Her fifty-two page account book is held at the Massachusetts Historical Society. Like Pattison, Cazneau kept fairly strict records of whom she sold what, and when. Also similarly, Cazneau sold myriad goods to men and women, in addition to serving a variety of other public and private roles. Thus Pattison was not the exception to the rule, but rather part of a much larger pattern of female tavernkeeping in the eighteenth century colonies. “Jane Cazneau Account Book (1767-1771),” Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

endured the worst of male taverngoers' prejudices and sexual advances. Often overlooked by historians, these lower class women's unfortunate tavern experiences highlight the seedier sides of taverns.²³² During his surveying journey through North Carolina in 1728, for example, William Byrd II reported that his men frequently accosted women. "Much disorder" occurred after one female tavernkeeper "unluckily sold [Byrd's] men some brandy." The strong drink made "some too choleric and others too loving, so that a damsel who came to assist in the kitchen would certainly have been ravished if her timely consent had not prevented the violence." After the maid was forced to consent to sexual intercourse with these raucous taverngoers, Byrd II noted that his party had "been engaged in those sorts of assaults...before."²³³ While many female tavernkeepers utilized their public roles to gain civic authority, then, evidence such as this entry by Byrd II suggests that female servants were often only further objectified, degraded, and marginalized in their tavern interactions.

Women's illegal roles as tavern prostitutes and keepers of "bawdy" or "disorderly" taverns, moreover, simultaneously served to challenge elite authority while also objectifying and marginalizing women. Prostitution had become a notable, but surprisingly under-documented, problem in colonial America by the mid-eighteenth century as urban populations exploded. The owners of these "disorderly" houses challenged elite power by illegally selling the bodies of women of "Evil name and fame and wicked lifes & Conversations."²³⁴ Yet since many elites

²³² Brown examined women servants' roles in the tavern in "The Landscape of Drink," but Peter Clark devoted only a single page to them in Clark, *The English Alehouse*, 84-85, while Beat Kümin and B. Ann Tlusty did not address female servants at all in their introduction to *The World of the Tavern: Public Houses in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002). Although Sarah Hand Meachem devoted an entire chapter to female tavernkeepers, she neglected female servants in Meachem, *Every Home a Distillery*.

²³³ Byrd, *Prose Works*, 96.

²³⁴ Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking*, 129 (quote).

were also guilty of attending “disorderly” taverns, such establishments often escaped prosecution.²³⁵

As we have seen patricians could not keep everyone they deemed socially inferior out of the tavern. As the eighteenth century progressed, urban and rural taverns alike were flooded with lower class white men intent on sustenance, drunkenness, fellowship, and sometimes villainy. With no “refined” taverns in the countryside and a limited selection at best in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and Williamsburg, elites were often forced to share the tavern space (as the minority) with the lower classes. By simply walking into a tavern filled with “mixed company,” however, an elite man by no means related, interacted, or spoke with his fellow taverngoers. Cross class interaction, when it occurred, actually often bred resistance and conflict from every side.

Contrary to popular depictions of taverns’ social bonhomie, eighteenth-century patricians actually despised any notions of class “leveling” in taverns. During his English travels in the late-seventeenth century, for example, the Frenchman Abel Boyer was disgusted to find that while many of England’s “most ingenious persons” met in private tavern clubs, secluded from the “rabble,” many of these same upper class men came into direct contact with “promiscuous” (i.e. lower class) company in coffeehouses.²³⁶ Although English coffeehouses catered to urban virtuosi, scholars, and curious gentlemen, historian Brian Cowen contended that the “relative openness of coffeehouse learning to all comers...made the new institution vulnerable to charges that a site so indiscriminate could hardly promote the advancement of learning, but it was instead quite likely to debase learning through its association with the vulgar, dilettantism, and the plain

²³⁵ Ibid., 130.

²³⁶ Abel Boyer, *Letters of Wit, Politicks, and Morality* (London, 1701), 216.

inept.”²³⁷ British elites detested the idea of “leveling” spaces, and since the success of the Empire was a shared goal, colonial patricians were just as (if not more) intent on carving out spaces of exclusion and order in the colonies as their British brethren.

British elites especially condemned the supposed leveling environment of coffeehouses, claiming that in eighteenth-century English coffeehouses, “Pre-eminence of place, none here should mind...But take the next fit seat that he can find.”²³⁸ In reaction to the supposed egalitarian atmosphere of coffeehouses, one English patrician damned these institutions for being “free to all Comers, so they have Humane shape.” “Here,” this angry author declared, “there is no respect of persons.”²³⁹ Another Englishman denounced coffeehouses’ inferior company, arguing, “As you have a hodge-podge of Drinks, such too is your Company, for each man seems a Leveller, and ranks and files himself as he lifts, without regard to degrees or order.”²⁴⁰ Although such widespread and radical social leveling most likely never existed in the coffeehouse, the mere thought of “Levellers” caused anxious English gentlemen to reinforce their social standing. They expected a public environment of hierarchy, deference, and politeness, not class leveling and a disregard of hierarchical tradition.

As ardent Imperialists intent on recreating British society in the colonies, already uneasy British American elites were accordingly repulsed by the thought of class mixing and leveling. The Anglican itinerant, Charles Woodmason, lamented being “exposed to the Rudeness of the Mobb” after lodging in a rural South Carolina tavern (filled with Scots-Irish Presbyterians) while the Bostonian John Adams remembered in 1760 that “the Rabble filled the House” at a rural New England tavern; he continued to note, “Every room, kitchen, Chamber was crowded with

²³⁷ Cowen, *The Social Life of Coffee*, 100.

²³⁸ “*The Rules and Orders of the Coffee-House.*” *Brief Description of the Excellent Vertues of that Sober and Wholesome Drink, called coffee* (London, 1674).

²³⁹ MP, *Character of Coffee and Coffee-Houses* (London: John Starkley, 1661), 1, 5-6.

²⁴⁰ *Character of a Coffee-House with the Symptoms of a Town-Wit* (London, 1673), 3.

people” who danced the night away.²⁴¹ Furthermore, one patrician who called himself “R.D.” published a poem in the October 22nd, 1750 edition of the *New-York Weekly Journal* to express his dissatisfaction at being forced to mingle with the lower classes during a tavern stay:

Spue-scented rooms of noisy inns,
 And Chamber maids that reel!—
 What sorer punishment for sins
 Can *drowsy* mortals feel?
 Footmen, and fiddlers, rakes, buffoons!—
 (Such company but coarse is;)
 Polite, bold blust’ring *blood* and o—n!—
 With plaguy modish curses
 Such *dancing!* — *scraping!* — *whistling!* — *bawling!*
 Wild blades, that *rant* and *roar!*—
 Drunkards, that all the night are *brawling*;
 And, in the morning, *snore!*
 Confounded cur, in kennel *howling*;
 (Sweet comfort, past compare!)
 And, in the yard, such *catterwouling!*—
 ‘Twou’d make a *parson* swear.
 Rather, ‘twou’d make him heav’n Invoke,
 When got into a nest
 Of *hellish brutes*, and dev’lish folk,
 That thus disturb’d his rest.
 O hideous sign of *hell brake lose!*
 What *cursing!* *Stinking!* *Smoaking!*
 Of precious time, O vile abuse!
 Most monstrous!—most provoking!
 Slaves to the tyranny of *sin!*
Lew’d, filthy, desp’rate crew!
 Dire medley of *infernal din!*
 Adieu! Adieu! Adieu!²⁴²

Such elite disapproval of class mixing in taverns resounded throughout the colonies in the mid-eighteenth century. The colonial physician Alexander Hamilton, for example, recorded numerous instances of unwanted plebeian interaction during his 1744 inter-colonial peregrinations. While

²⁴¹ Charles Woodmason, *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution: The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant*, ed. Richard J. Hooker (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953), 7; John Adams, *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, ed., L.H. Butterfield, *et al* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), Vol. 1, 172; Woodmason—a wealthy planter and merchant who published multiple tracts in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* and was a member of the Royal Society of Arts (London)—was an elite colonist.

²⁴² *The New-York Weekly Journal*, October 22nd, 1750.

in one Philadelphia tavern, Hamilton “observed severall comicall, grotesque phizzes...which would have afforded variety of hints for a painter of Hogarth’s turn.” Hamilton continued to judge these Hogarthian plebeians’ conversation, noting “they talked there upon all subjects...most of them ignorantly.”²⁴³ Hamilton was ever the critical spectator, and much of his forced interaction with the lower classes resulted in graphic, condescending descriptions.

Most of Hamilton’s contact with the lower classes occurred in rural towns and hamlets where his tavern selection—and “quality” of company—was greatly reduced. Consequently, Hamilton often had to share this country tavern space with what he considered “savage and rude” plebeians. Hamilton disgustedly described one plebeian-laden Southland tavern as “crowded with a company of patch’d coats and tattered jackets” and added that “the conversation consisted chiefly in ‘damne ye, Jack,’ and ‘Here’s to you, Tom.’” After sharing a New Hampshire tavern with “a sett of low, rascally company” and being accosted by a “sawcy fellow” who made free in handling Hamilton’s (expensive) pistols, Hamilton snobbishly remarked that he ignored the man because he was “not...over fond of quarrelling with such trash.”²⁴⁴ Hamilton, like so many other elites, took every measure possible to avoid interacting with his social inferiors.²⁴⁵ When forced

²⁴³ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 18; Paulson, *Popular and Polite Art*.

²⁴⁴ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 93, 95, 125. Hamilton’s *Itinerarium* is littered with debasing accounts of the lower classes.

²⁴⁵ The only occasion that the upper classes ever sought out lower company was when young elites went on the “rake,” which meant they went out on the town to get drunk, carouse with women, and often cause mischief. Such activity was looked down upon in elite circles, but nonetheless happened. See, for instance, Alexander Graydon, *Memoirs of His Own Time, with Reminiscences of the Men and Events of the Revolution*, ed. John Stockton Little (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1846), 82. Graydon explained, “At an obscure inn in Race street, dropping in about dark, we were led by a steep and narrow stair-case to a chamber in the third story...here we poured down the fiery beverage; and valiant in the novel feeling of intoxication, sallied forth in quest of adventures...In a word, we aspired to be rakes, and were gratified.” Francis Goelet also described such diversions in Boston in Goelet, *Voyages and Travels*, October 1, 1750: “from whence went upon the rake, goeing past the Commons on our way home. Surprised a company country young men & women with a violin at a tavern, danceing & makeing merry. Upon our entering the house, they young women fled. We took possession of the room, haveing the fidler & the young man with us with the keg of sugard dram. We where very merry. From thence went to Mr. Jacob Wendell’s.” It should be noted, however, that in both cases these upper class men retained their distance from their lower class peers.

to share a tavern with the lower classes, patricians almost always criticized, condescended, and vilified colonial plebeians.

The historical record contains frustratingly few examples of upper and lower class colonists interacting within the tavern space. Such records, moreover, are almost exclusively from the perspective of upper class colonists, which presents an even more biased view of these interactions.²⁴⁶ The scarcity of documentation, however, can tell us much. For one, such sparse records might point to the simple fact that the upper and lower classes did not mix in taverns unless they absolutely had to. As shown by Hamilton and Adams' accounts, elites did everything they could to avoid the "mob." Yet perhaps the upper classes were not alone in their urge for same-class camaraderie. Having grown up in a society dictated by hierarchy, plebeians were also much more apt to drink among each other. As historian Jessica Kross contended, "choice of drinking companions was a decision based on the human need for predictability and safety."²⁴⁷ As certain tavernkeepers increasingly catered to the whims of elite colonists during the eighteenth century, then, so too did others see opportunity in pandering to the "lower sorts." By the middle of the eighteenth century, lower class Philadelphians, New Yorkers, and Bostonians had established their own tavern culture based largely upon defying those statutes of order that patricians attempted to install over society. Within lower class urban areas like Philadelphia's "Hell Town" plebeians met in taverns to drink, dance, fight, plot, and smuggle stolen goods. Although constantly under the scrutiny of local magistrates, these lower-class tavern interactions nonetheless point both to plebeians' increasing preference for each other's company and their

²⁴⁶ Thompson, for instance, noted "given the nature of the available record, we have a better sense of what self-consciously well-to-do men believed to be the larger political implications in behavior of companies of mixed social and cultural backgrounds than we have of the meanings laboring Philadelphians read into such encounters." Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 121. On page 79, moreover, Thompson briefly referenced men of different social standing visiting the same tavern by citing tavern ledgers. As this article contends, however, common habitation by no means meant common purpose or social mixing.

²⁴⁷ Kross, "Sociology of Drinking in the Middle Colonies," 49.

sense of themselves as distinct from patricians. By the Revolutionary Period, such divisions would blow up in the faces of the elite.²⁴⁸

Yet interacting with and maintaining control over tavern “rabble” was not the only fear of elites during the mid-eighteenth century, for Imperial development had helped create a new, more challenging, and more confusing class of colonists—the “middling” sorts. Where the lower classes increasingly defined themselves as separate from the upper classes, the middle classes existed in a liminal space. These “Farmers, Shopkeepers, and Tradesmen” were comfortable in their wealth and estate, but sought improvement through imitation of and commingling with the upper classes.²⁴⁹ The middling sorts were also still strongly rooted in lower class customs, however. They dealt with their social inferiors on a daily basis and relied upon material production for their subsistence. “Middling” men constantly risked falling into decline, but many nonetheless attempted to make inroads in elite society.²⁵⁰ Such men were usually considered relatively wealthy in their locality, but were not affluent enough to achieve notoriety on a continental or global scale. More than anything, the growth of the middling sorts—as well as their recognition by elites—signified a continuous redefinition of class relations in the mid-eighteenth century British Empire. The middling sorts, after all, became fundamental constituents of the marketplace that—as Breen and Bushman have argued—ultimately defined the colonies as separate from the Empire.²⁵¹

Because patricians valued traditions of class structure perhaps more than any other social framework, the growth of the meddling middle classes caused the upper classes new anxieties.

²⁴⁸ Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America*, 230-240.

²⁴⁹ “The Remainder of the ADDRESS to the Freeholders, begun in the News Paper,” *The New-York Weekly Gazette*, January 18, 1747-8. For an example of how the middle classes imitated elites—in this case in their extravagant funerals—see Livingston, *The Independent Reflector*, “Number XXIX, Of the Extravagance of our Funerals.”

²⁵⁰ For an example of a middle class family falling into decline, see Livingston, *Independent Reflector*, “Number III, The Abuses of the Road, and City-Watch.”

²⁵¹ Wrightson, “Sorts of People,” in *The Middling Sort of People*, 28-51; Bushman, *The Refinement of America*; Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*.

Noting that the middling sorts had “justly obtained the Character, to be generally the most honest” in the colonies, one New York author argued that the middling ranks had indeed surpassed elites by the mid-eighteenth century, contending “Our richest Men among us, cannot pretend to any Degree of Knowledge, in any Kind of publick Affairs, more than several of those of a middling Rank, evidently have, or to more Resolution for their King and Country’s Service, than what those of a middling Rank, upon every proper Occasion, have discovered.”²⁵² Whether this passage was political inflation or not, what is important for this chapter’s purposes is the discreet identification of the “middling Rank of Mankind” as a legitimate, powerful faction in relation to elites. The “middling People” no doubt existed by the mid-eighteenth century, and began to represent a direct threat to patrician exclusivity as they attempted to rise through the ranks through overt consumption and polite imitation.

Such class tension played out perhaps most noticeably in the most numerous, contested, and attended of colonial public spaces—the tavern. After visiting Boston and spending much of his time in the Puritans’ taverns, Hamilton observed, “the middling sort of people here are to a degree disingenuous and dissembling, which appears even in their common conversation in which their indirect and dubious answers to the plainest and fairest questions show their suspicions of one another.”²⁵³ Hamilton’s various conversations with middle class men in Boston’s taverns confirmed his suspicions and anxieties surrounding what he considered the defiant, “disingenuous,” “dissembling,” and suspicious middling sorts. For Hamilton and his fellow patricians, tavern interaction with the middle classes was much harder to avoid than that with plebeians. Many of these men constantly sought social upward mobility, and in doing so found patrician tavern company quite valuable.

²⁵² “Address,” *The New-York Weekly Gazette*, January 18, 1747-8.

²⁵³ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 146.

Such frequent interaction with middle class colonists in taverns, however, did not negate many elites' mistrust and condescension of the "middling sorts." Hamilton recounted one Morison, a "very rough spun, forward, clownish blade" in his tavern company "desirous to pass for a gentleman." Hamilton laughed when their tavernkeeper, "seeing [Morison] in a greasy jacket and breeches and a dirty worsted cap, and withal a heavy forward, clownish air and behaviour," took him for a lower class "ploughman or carman and so presented him with some scraps of cold veal for breakfast." Upon such direct association with the lower classes, Morison swore at the landlady and quickly thereafter attempted to "look like a gentleman" by replacing his worsted wool night cap with a more expensive linen one and exclaimed "that tho he seemed to be but a plain, homely fellow...he had good linnen in his bags, a pair of silver buckles, silver clasps, and gold sleeve buttons, two Holland shirts, and some neat night caps; and that his little woman att home drank tea twice a day; and he himself lived very well."²⁵⁴ Morison did not fully understand the intricacies of elite society. He enjoyed modest wealth—enough to purchase certain markers of gentility such as silver buckles and Holland shirts—but did not benefit from the education, knowledge, or condescension associated with the character of colonial America's patrician class.

Misunderstandings and resistance, however, did not stop the middle classes from challenging upper class power over the tavern space. As middle class men like Morison gained access to polite tavern companies in the eighteenth century, they gradually helped to break down the exclusivity that elites like Hamilton so cherished. These middling sorts utilized the same Imperial networks (especially consumer goods) as patricians to assert themselves in the social sphere. For Morison, the only requirements of a gentlemen were material goods such as tea and clothing—he did not prescribe to many of the polite maxims that anxious elites fell back on to

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 13-14.

assert themselves as unique and superior. Yet the mass “emergence of the middle class” in British America was only in its nascent stages.²⁵⁵ As the most influential class in the colonies, elites still possessed relative power in the tavern space in the mid-eighteenth century. How they did so, however, requires further investigation.

In the early- to mid-eighteenth century, elites utilized physical and ideological barriers to carve their own exclusive, polite niches of gentility in the tavern space. In order to distinguish themselves from the masses, exclusive groups of gentlemen rented out tavern rooms catered to their exact needs. While clubbing at Withered’s tavern in Boston one evening, Hamilton embarrassed himself twice by entering the wrong room and sitting “in the midst” of staring strangers after leaving his own group to talk with the tavern owner, while an Englishman remembered meeting with fellow gentlemen at a tavern “in a Room one pair of Stairs, set apart for that purpose.”²⁵⁶ Besides exhibiting patricians’ preference for “the right company” in taverns, these anecdotes also provide a fuller understanding of how elites cordoned off the tavern space.

Other than patrons’ records, probate inventories like that from Henry Wetherburn’s mid-eighteenth century Williamsburg tavern provide further insight into how taverns accommodated patricians’ insatiable urge for exclusivity, politeness, and Imperialism through physical goods and barriers.²⁵⁷ Wetherburn’s tavern sat on Williamsburg’s bustling Duke of Gloucester Street—

²⁵⁵ Blumin, for instance, set the mass emergence of the American middle class in the Revolutionary era and thereafter. Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Peter Benes, editor, *Early American Probate Inventories* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1987).

²⁵⁶ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 144; James Forrester, *The Polite Philosopher; or, an Essay on that Art, which Makes a Man happy in Himself, and agreeable to Others* (London, reprinted in New York, 1758), 29.

²⁵⁷ Michael Olmert and Suzanne E. Coffman, *The Official Guide to Colonial Williamsburg*, New Edition (Williamsburg: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2000), 52-3; Mary A. Stephenson, “Wetherburn’s Tavern Historical Report, Block 9, Building 31” in *Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Library Research Report Series—1167* (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Library, 1990); “Inventory of Estate of Henry Wetherburn, March 16, 1761” (Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library); For more on southern taverns in particular, see Patricia A. Gibbs, “Taverns in Tidewater Virginia, 1700-1744,” (Master’s Thesis: College of William and Mary, 1968); Wainwright, “Inns and Outs”; Wetherburn’s two-story tavern harbored twelve slaves, a twenty-five square foot “Great Room,” and ten smaller rooms. Moreover, the tavern held extensive stores of alcohol, silver utensils, ceramic

the city's social, consumer, and legal center, and a space open to all—among other popular taverns such as Raleigh's Tavern and Shield's Tavern. Set amid so much competition and social differentiation, Wetherburn realized that he had to adjust to the times and define his establishment as accommodating to every need, common or "genteel," even if it meant increased cost. Soon, Wetherburn's tavern became the most popular haunt for upper class politicians when they came to Williamsburg to serve in Virginia's House of Burgesses. Such specialization was a trend in urban taverns in the eighteenth century, and speaks as much to patricians' urges for tavern exclusivity as tavernkeepers' willingness to adjust their spaces to satisfy both polite and basic needs.²⁵⁸

Mid-eighteenth century taverns like Wetherburn's represent the emergence of taverns that catered to elites' exclusive requirements well before the last third of the eighteenth century. Having owned the tavern since 1738, Wetherburn was willing to accept the enhanced cost of running a more "genteel" tavern. Not only did Wetherburn keep fine furniture, accessories, decorations, consumer goods, and liquors in his twelve-room tavern, but he also held seventeen sheep, four cows, two horses, and four donkeys in his stables. To attend to his customers and livestock, Wetherburn also owned twelve African slaves, which were the most valuable (and costly) asset to his tavern. While a tavernkeeper and perhaps his wife and children could manage a small, lower-class tavern, a larger establishment such as Wetherburn's relied on servants to keep up with the day-to-day affairs of running a genteel tavern. Such additions were expensive, but as demand grew for more exclusive taverns during the eighteenth century (as did the

pottery, and furniture of various qualities. It also must be noted that other historians, including Thompson, have also looked into the probate inventories of taverns. Thompson investigated in-depth Philadelphia's "One Tun Tavern" in Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 68-73.

²⁵⁸ Stobart called streets spaces of commerce "and important arenas for public consumption, where people could access goods, knowledge, and information." Stobart, *Spaces of Consumption*, 86; Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity*.

opportunity for profit), tavernkeepers like Wetherburn eagerly attempted to satisfy their elite customers.²⁵⁹

Wetherburn's "Bullhead Room" exemplified the tavernkeeper's dedication to elite accommodation. Containing various items associated with polite culture such as one-dozen mahogany chairs, a mahogany tea table, a desk and bookcase with glass door, "1 Eight Day clock," a mirror, a printed picture, and a pair of fine pistols, the "Bullhead Room" on the ground level of Wetherburn's Tavern was the most elite-oriented of the tavern's eleven rooms. Mahogany furniture was expensive and exotic in the mid-eighteenth century and would not have been relegated to a public room, nor would a bookcase with a fragile glass door. A group of elites lounging in the "Bullhead Room" could glance at their reflection in a mirror to assure themselves of their own polite fashion, keep track of the time, scrutinize printed art, and admire a pair of fine pistols. These superfluous objects were not only associated with drinking, dining, and carousing, but also polite society. They simultaneously assured elites that they were among social equals and distanced them from their supposed social inferiors.²⁶⁰

A second room on the ground level of Wetherburn's Tavern, the "Middle Room," was also intended for private use, but did not have quite such luxurious trappings. Rather than mahogany furniture, the "Middle Room" contained walnut tables and chairs as well as an "Old Card Table." Furthermore, the "Middle Room" had eight "Large Prints," but at least three were torn. Thus, the "Middle Room" may have been named for just the class it catered to. While the "Bullhead Room" was reserved for elite reservation, Wetherburn intended the "Middle Room" for both aspiring middle- *and* upper-class patrons considering its slightly inferior decorations and furnishings. Nonetheless, such rooms accommodated patrons' need for exclusivity within the

²⁵⁹ "Wetherburn Inventory."

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

melee of the tavern, and probably did so with less cost to Wetherburn. Rather than keep multiple rooms stocked with the finest goods, Wetherburn could offer the “Middle Room” as a cheaper alternative to the “Bullhead Room.” Such differentiation reveals tavernkeepers’ attempts to make money as much as their efforts to satisfy customers. Customer satisfaction was important, but profit was always paramount.²⁶¹

Select examples of Henry Wetherburn’s glassware and silverware also denote upper class requirements. For instance, Wetherburn kept “5 Blue and White China Bowls,” “2 Japan Mugs,” a set of white flowered China, one tea pot with stand, one sugar dish, multiple tea cups, and six coffee pots in his tavern. While the lower classes had begun to consume coffee and tea in limited quantities (mostly in private spaces), both beverages still primarily represented politeness, especially in the tavern space.²⁶² Wetherburn also possessed a large number of silver utensils, including “19 Tea Spoons & Sugar tongs,” “2 Punch Ladles,” “1 Tea Kettle,” “1 Tea Pot,” “1 Coffee Pot,” and “10 Silver Hand Knives and 11 Forks with a Case.” Like the glassware, these silver utensils accompanied upper class displays of politeness. Patricians would have required fine tea, coffee, and punch utensils for their meetings and feasts. Moreover, the special “Silver Hand Knives” and “Forks with a Case” were set apart from Wetherburn’s “Black handle” and “Buck Knives,” which were probably intended for lower class use. Once again, Wetherburn was ready to offer elite patrons fine equipages, but only if they required it.²⁶³

Finally, Wetherburn kept small reserves of elite-oriented alcoholic beverages such as Madeira wine and claret. Wine was more expensive than rum, and thus became a sign “of wealth and refinement” throughout the Empire. However, because of wine’s expense, Wetherburn also

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Cowen, *The Social Life of Coffee*, 6-15.

²⁶³ “Wetherburn Inventory”

kept less of it on hand.²⁶⁴ Material markers of consumption such as silver and china, moreover, rounded out patricians' display of wealth and refinement in the tavern space. The young elite William Black remembered joining "a Select Number of Gentlemen" at a Philadelphia tavern where they enjoyed a "very Genteel Supper" with "several sorts of Wine and fine Lemon Punch set out the Table."²⁶⁵ Certain consumer goods—as well as the polite performance traditions related with them—became especially important for anxious patricians as they increasingly sought to distance themselves from the lower classes. Along with other business owners throughout the Empire, then, tavernkeepers increasingly catered to elites' requirements of politeness and exclusivity, but only when such a venture proved profitable.²⁶⁶

Tavernkeepers intent on gentility were especially open to renting out certain tavern rooms to elites (for a fee). Upper class patrons utilized private tavern rooms like those in Wetherburn's tavern for various exclusive purposes, including club and Masonic meetings, dances, feasts, lectures, classes, and gambling. In 1747, for example, Benjamin Franklin chose a Philadelphia tavern as the site in which to present "the Better sort of the People" with a tract detailing the dangers of a French attack.²⁶⁷ Deceased Anthony McKittrick's trustees rented a room in Williamsburg's Raleigh Tavern where his creditors could meet "in Order to settle their Claims and receive a Dividend," as did "The Members of the Mississippi Company" during the court days of 1752.²⁶⁸ After teaching fencing classes from 1741 to 1743, Richard Lyneall advertised that he would continue instructing "all gentlemen who desire to learn the right Method and true Art of DEFENCE, and pursuit of the Small Sword in its greatest perfection" at Philadelphia's

²⁶⁴ Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*, 337; "Wetherburn Inventory."

²⁶⁵ William Black, "Journal of William Black, 1744," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 1 (1877), 245.

²⁶⁶ For more on the intricacies of Madeira wine's consumption and performance related to this consumption, see Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*, 335-55.

²⁶⁷ "Richard Peters to the Proprietaries," November 29, 1747, <http://franklinpapers.org/franklin/framedVolumes.jsp>, accessed on January 30, 2012 at 2:54 PM; See also *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 26, 1747.

²⁶⁸ *The Virginia Gazette*, October 24, 1771; November 17, 1752.

Tun Tavern in 1756. Finally, mid-eighteenth century patricians such as Alexander Hamilton, William Black, William Byrd II, John Adams, and William Smith Jr. constantly referenced select clubs and meetings they attended in urban taverns' private rooms.²⁶⁹

Colonial American elites adopted this “clubbing” culture from their English counterparts. As historian Peter Clark contended, British American urban taverns (following those in London and Edinburgh) “supplied several of the key features of the social architecture of the voluntary association: heavy drinking, controlled social mixing, a combination of privacy and public openness, and a predominantly masculine environment.”²⁷⁰ Colonial gentlemen looked to British metropolitan clubs as models, and in doing so extended these exclusive urban tavern environments across the Atlantic Ocean. Within select clubs elite men distinguished themselves as polite and powerful by reading various tracts and books, debating politics, religion, and trade, viewing art, drinking toasts, and, perhaps most importantly, excluding themselves from “rude” society. These colonial clubs most clearly symbolized patricians’ need for polite exclusivity within taverns.

Besides two private rooms, Wetherburn’s Tavern contained Henry’s private room, six second-level sleeping rooms each intended for multiple lodgers, one rentable sleeping room, a kitchen, and the “Great Room.” Although elites occasionally reserved the “Great Room” for lectures, political gatherings, and balls, patricians primarily utilized the privacy of Wetherburn’s second-story rooms as spheres of polite exclusivity and material display.²⁷¹ But what if a group

²⁶⁹ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 9, 1756.

²⁷⁰ Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 41. England—especially London—abounded with clubs. For a particularly amusing contemporary list of these clubs in poem/song form, see Edward Ward, *A Compleat and Humourous Account of All the Remarkable Clubs and Societies in the Cities of London and Westminster* (London: J. Wren, 1667-1731).

²⁷¹ For an example of a ball “for the LADIES and GENTLEMEN” at Wetherburn’s Tavern, see *The Virginia Gazette*, March 5, 1752. For an example of a “celebrated LECTURE on heads, so much admired and applauded by all who have heard it performed” in the Great Room of the Raleigh Tavern, see *The Virginia Gazette*, January 8, 1767.

of elites could not reserve one of the two private rooms? Since private rooms were not always available—especially during periods of intense population influx such as fair, market, court, or celebration days—elites were occasionally forced to mingle with their social inferiors in taverns’ main (and most public) rooms. Yet many elites found ways to construct physical and ideological dividers even in these extremely public, “shallow” spaces.²⁷²

Because a taverngoer sang opera tunes and whistled in “a full House...as if he were in an empty Room,” one anonymous writer to the *Spectator* contended that Englishmen should “divide the Spaces of a Publick Room”—upper class taverngoers did just this.²⁷³ Various mid-eighteenth century publicans, including Henry Wetherburn, kept one or more “screens” in their Great Room.²⁷⁴ Although these screens, or “fire screens,” were most likely intended primarily to protect taverngoers of all classes from the fire’s heat, patricians could also use screens as physical dividers to create privacy within such public spaces. Thus, a group of elites forced to occupy a raucous Great Room could have used a screen to shield themselves from the “rabble” rather than the fire.²⁷⁵

²⁷² Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 143-75.

²⁷³ Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, No. 145, Thursday, August 16, 1711. This writer was not alone in his complaints of tavern noise. In 1645, Boston legislators tried to outlaw singing as the “younger sort” who convened “in places of publick entertainment, to corrupt one another by their uncivill & wanton carriages” engaged in the practice of “rudely singing & making a noyse, to the disturbances of the family & other guests.” By 1711, legislators expanded the definition of noise violation to include “Fidling, Piping or any Musick, Dancing, or Revelling.” Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, 403-4. Although Bostonians proved far stricter than their colonial counterparts, such restrictions spoke to elites’ condemnation of lower class tavern revelry and consequent noise making.

²⁷⁴ “Wetherburn Inventory.” For examples of other taverns with screens, see “Inventory of Estate of John Burdett, August 27, 1746,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library; “Inventory of Estate of Henry Bowcock, March 16, 1730,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library; “An Inventory of the Estate of James Shields Returned January 21, 1751,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library; “Inventory of Estate of Thomas Pattison, March 21, 1743; ““Probate Inventory of Benjamin Backhouse, proved 21-3 September 1767,” *Charleston County Will Books*, Volume X (1765-9), pp. 176-80. South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, Vol. 4, 246.

²⁷⁵ Brown also noted this possibility in Brown, “The Landscape of Drink,” 72.

Beyond the possibility of physical separation in a tavern's Great Room, patricians could also utilize numerous forms of material and ideological separators to establish distinction from the lower sorts. For one, elites literally wore their status on their sleeve in their attempts to keep with the most recent European fashions. Although often behind European fashion due to their distance from metropolitan centers, British American patricians nonetheless adhered strictly to the ebbs and flows of the fashion of the Empire. Ever the example of patrician condescension, Alexander Hamilton often remarked upon the attire of those he met and observed within taverns—at one country tavern Hamilton distinguished himself from the plebeian “company of patch'd coats and tattered jackets,” while in a New York tavern Hamilton found solace in meeting a well-traveled Scotch merchant who Hamilton described as “a little, dapper young fellow with a gaudy laced jacket.”²⁷⁶ Hamilton—often wearing a “dark colour'd silk coat,” a “laced hat,” and a sword—fully realized the importance of dress for denoting status.²⁷⁷

Colonial gentlemen could also utilize consumption-related markers of distinction like “polite” alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages to set themselves apart from their social inferiors in taverns. Although no doubt important in the exclusive settings of private tavern rooms, fine wines and liquors, coffee, tea, china, and silver became exponentially vital for elites who wanted to separate themselves from rum- and beer-guzzling patricians in the Great Room. While visiting Boston in 1750, the colonial elite Francis Goelet noted that he spent many evenings “with several gentlemen of [his] acquaintance” in taverns drinking punch and wine.²⁷⁸ These select companies

²⁷⁶ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 95, 180.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 79-80, 54-55. For a good description of how Philadelphians dressed in 1750, see Mittelberger, *Journey*, 116; for more on British American fashion, see Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 69-74; Linda Baumgarten, *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Kate Haulman, *The Politics of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*, 108. For primary documents on fashion's importance, see also Joseph Addison, *Spectator* No. 478 (Monday, September 8, 1712); No. 29 (Saturday, July 28, 1711); *The Virginia Gazette*, October 29, 1736, 2-3.

²⁷⁸ Goelet, *Voyages and Travels*, October 5th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 15th, 16th, 1750.

of gentlemen almost certainly did not share their beverages with anyone else in the tavern. Rather, the upper classes used elite-oriented consumables as markers of polite exclusivity within taverns' impolite Great Rooms.

Moreover, *how* elites consumed these drinks also did much to distinguish them from their social inferiors.²⁷⁹ Gentlemen like Hamilton and Black drank expensive wine out of fine decanters and glasses, lemon punch out of silver and decorated ceramic bowls, and coffee and tea out of expensive china. Tavernkeepers increasingly realized this demand and consequently stocked their taverns with fine accessories such as “China Plates,” China Sugar Dish[es],” “Wine & Cyder Glasses,” “Large China Bowls,” “Tea Cannisters,” and various other elite-oriented consumer goods.²⁸⁰ In the same vein as fashion, the upper classes used these diverse accessories to build upon their air of gentility. Furthermore, even more than they had in private tavern rooms, such polite consumption accessories came to symbolize elite exclusiveness in taverns' Great Rooms. If patricians could not put walls of stone and wood between them and their social inferiors, then they would construct barriers of cultural distinction.²⁸¹

Beyond these drinks' genteel vessels, the ceremony and politeness surrounding their consumption also served to differentiate patricians from those plebeians unfamiliar with such rituals. Although elites no doubt got too drunk and out of control in the tavern space, most of patricians' drunken tavern revelry took place behind closed doors in private men's clubs. When drinking among their social inferiors, upper class men were far more conscious of their self-appearance and deportment. Philip Vickers Fithian, a tutor who aspired to be a gentleman, disgustedly noted that one “rather Dull” southern tobacco inspector seemed “unacquainted with

²⁷⁹ Peter Thompson, “‘The Friendly Glass’: Drink and Gentility in Colonial Philadelphia,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 113 (Oct., 1989): 549-573.

²⁸⁰ “Inventory of Benjamin Backhouse,” in Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking in the Early Modern World*, Vol. 4, 245-48.

²⁸¹ Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 74-78.

company” as he held his glass of porter “fast with both hands, and then gave an insignificant nod to each one at the Table, in haste, & with fear, & then drank like an Ox.”²⁸² In contrast to this tobacco inspector’s lowly dining deportment, patricians hoped to exude an air of politeness while drinking in “polite company” through genteel conversation, delicate movements, proper posture, a sober mind, and appropriate toasts.²⁸³

Drinking rituals such as toasts were primary ceremonies of inclusiveness *and* exclusivity. As numerous historians have argued, toasting “promoted a style of drinking that identified and built upon what a company had in common.”²⁸⁴ What these toasters usually had in common, however, was social standing. When the patrician Francis Goelet visited a Boston tavern in 1750 he noted “a large company of gentlemen drinking toast & singing songs,” as did Alexander Hamilton during his peregrinations. After two special toasts—one to “our dear selves” and the other to Hamilton’s health—Hamilton warned his gentlemanly company “if such ridiculous toasts should be heard of out of doors, we should procure the name of the Selfish Club.”²⁸⁵ Such spur-of-the-moment toasts served as unifiers for upper class men. Drinking did not “relax or eliminate...consciousness of rank.”²⁸⁶ Rather, by toasting—whether in the private tavern club or the public Great Room—these elites asserted their position as exclusive men of politeness and order.

Besides these informal tavern toasts, gentlemen often transformed toasting into a grand ceremony of elite power and Imperial connection. Upon hearing news of King George II’s death

²⁸² Fithian, *Journal*, 138; John Fea, *The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008)

²⁸³ Influxes of courtesy books to the British American colonies helped elite colonists follow these standards. See Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, Chapters Two and Three.

²⁸⁴ Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 99; Salinger, however, noted “their rituals were inclusive, bonding each to the other, while also exclusive, reserving the space for them alone.” Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking*, 239. Yet she continued on the next page to stress the leveling nature of alcohol, arguing that consumption allowed lower class taverngoers to “set the rules.”

²⁸⁵ Goelet, *Voyages and Travels*, October 10, 1750; Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 177.

²⁸⁶ Conroy argued for alcohol’s leveling elements in Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 48.

in 1761, Philadelphia's governor provided "an elegant Entertainment...at the Fountain Tavern, where His MAJESTY and all the ROYAL FAMILY Healths were drank." At the same time, "a considerable Number of Merchants, and other Gentlemen of the City, repaired...to an elegant Entertainment" at another tavern, where they toasted to the King of England, Prussia, "and all the brave and gallant Generals, Admirals, Officers, Seamen and Soldiers, in His MAJESTY Service." With every toast provided, seven brass cannons were fired and "the Anthem of GOD Save the KING, was admirably well sung, with the Chorus, by the Company, with Heart and Voice." The *Pennsylvania Gazette* noted, "the whole was conducted with great Decency, and concluded to the entire Satisfaction of every one present." Toasts, whether casual or "conducted with great Decency" and ceremony, were thus imperative for gentlemanly society. They helped elites assert their power over the public and distinguish themselves from their social inferiors as connected to larger currents of politics, politeness, and consumption.²⁸⁷ Upper class taverngoers used toasts in taverns' Great Rooms to create yet another sphere of polite exclusivity. Everyone around a patrician group heard their loud toasts to power and Empire, which only reminded plebeians of their omission from polite society.

By the third-quarter of the eighteenth century, patricians had largely lost the battle for control over colonial America's public spaces. Taverns, like other public spaces, increasingly catered to the whims of the masses. Elites such as Alexander Colden and Alexander Hamilton felt the pressure of taverns that were "too Publick," and coincidentally sought out their own houses of polite refuge. Besides receiving special treatment from certain tavernkeepers (including Wetherburn), colonial patricians also began devising their own upper class taverns. Like elite-

²⁸⁷ Betty Leviner, "Patrons and Rituals in an Eighteenth-Century Tavern," in ed. Harvey and Brown, *Common People and Their Material World*, 95-113; Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*, 143; Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking*, 67.

controlled libraries, universities, and hospitals, patricians' taverns were spaces intended for elite expression of politeness, exclusivity, and Imperial power.²⁸⁸

While scholars have been right to study elites' preference for exclusive taverns in the last third of the eighteenth century, they have not adequately addressed patricians' ongoing attempts to cordon off the tavern space well before the Revolutionary period.²⁸⁹ Beyond taverns such as Wetherburn's that provided elites their own separate rooms, the proliferation of coffeehouses throughout the Empire during the mid-eighteenth century was fundamental to the emergence of British American elite tavern spaces. Although not officially restrictive, coffeehouses came to symbolize elite exclusivity as they charged a fee for entry and coffeehouse proprietors advertised directly to upper class patrons in the early- to mid-eighteenth century. Margaret Ingram promised Philadelphia patricians in 1748 that they could "depend upon being genteelly entertained" at her West Indian Coffeehouse, while countless other urban coffeehouse publicans held elite land, estate, and lottery sales within their doors.²⁹⁰ Beyond advertising to elites, coffeehouses' interior decoration, furniture, consumables, and divisional architecture also reflected the restructuring of public spaces to patrician preferences. Boston's mid-eighteenth century Crown Coffeehouse, for example, boasted its Coffee Room, an elegant, exclusive space decorated with ten painted panels, sixteen prints, and a "timepiece" where patricians could drink coffee, tea, and an assortment of Madeira, Canary, Fayall, Vidonia, Red Jury, and port wine.²⁹¹ Although influenced by polite English coffeehouses, colonial coffeehouse publicans sold a wide variety of alcoholic beverages (the Crown, for instance, sold far more brandy and rum than coffee), and thus defied

²⁸⁸ *Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, Vol. V, 1755-1760, 181-82.

²⁸⁹ Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 19-20; Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 314-318; Hancock and McDonald, *Public Drinking*, Vol. 4, 56-7; Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*, 244-45.

²⁹⁰ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 29, 1748.

²⁹¹ For more on the Crown Coffeehouse, see Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 88-94.

the distinction placed upon the coffeehouse overseas. Such a wide alcoholic selection, moreover, may have broken down early coffeehouses' hopes at elite exclusivity.²⁹²

As patricians grew more discontented with the lack of gentility and order in colonial taverns, tavernkeepers found ways to cater to their exclusive needs. When the wealthy Philadelphian, William Bradford, opened the Old London Coffeehouse in 1754 he pioneered a new age for British American taverns. Rather than privately control the Old London Coffeehouse, Bradford followed in the footsteps of Philadelphia's Library, University, and Hospital by forming a committee of elite subscribers to manage the Coffeehouses' construction, development, and regulation. The first floor served as a polite tavern where private associations such as "the Sea Captains Club" met, while the subscribers intended the second floor as a genteel coffeehouse and business "exchange."²⁹³ Elite-controlled establishments like Bradford's Old London Coffeehouse spread throughout Philadelphia and the colonies over the next forty years, helping elites to gain exclusive footholds in taverns.²⁹⁴

Numerous publicans throughout the colonies also opened more exclusive "city taverns"—or simply adjusted existing taverns—to cater specifically to patricians' private needs.²⁹⁵ Richard Singleton of Williamsburg advertised in 1772 that he continued "to occupy the House...where the Gentlemen Burgesses may depend upon the best Treatment, on the most reasonable Terms."²⁹⁶ Another Virginia tavernkeeper advertised in 1773 that he had taken over a tavern "well adapted for the Business, having a Number of very convenient Lodging Rooms,

²⁹² For more on the rise and development of British coffeehouses in England, see Cowen, *The Social Life of Coffee*; Ellis, *The Coffee House*; Markman Ellis, ed., *Eighteenth-Century Coffee-House Culture*, 4 Volumes (London: Chatto and Pickering, 2006).

²⁹³ Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 106-110; for the Sea Captains Club meeting, see *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 30, 1768.

²⁹⁴ For instance, the French and the Exchange Coffeehouses in Charleston, the Tontine in Boston, and the New York in New York City.

²⁹⁵ Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*, 62.

²⁹⁶ *The Virginia Gazette*, January 27, 1772.

several large and small Rooms for the Entertainment of Ladies and Gentlemen.”²⁹⁷ Finally, Philadelphia tavernkeeper Margaret Ingram gave “Notice to all Gentlemen” in 1748 that she “opened the WEST INDIAN COFFEE HOUSE, where they may depend upon being genteely entertained.”²⁹⁸ The craze for elite taverns had also begun to spill into the countryside by the mid-eighteenth century. Marge H. More, a Boston citizen, petitioned to open a tavern for “the Better sort” of “Country People” outside of Boston in 1765. More was sure to note that her tavern would not be for “clubs” or “town inhabitants,” but rather “a number of Sober orderly...Country Gentlemen.”²⁹⁹ None of these publicans mentioned the lower classes. Rather, along with Wetherburn, they hoped to attract a more genteel audience by advertising directly to elites.³⁰⁰

The creation of elite-controlled taverns such as Bradford’s Old London Coffeehouse should not come as a surprise. The Old London Coffeehouse was the final step of a long fought battle over class in colonial American taverns. The development of pre-Revolutionary British American taverns from simple structures in the seventeenth century to “refined” and divided institutions by the last third of the eighteenth century must therefore be understood within the contexts of class and Empire. Taverns, more than any other public space, were reflections of colonists’ intense urge for Imperial connection and consequently became boiling points of class conflict as colonists rich and poor dealt with the ongoing social changes wrought by the colonies’ global connection. Taverns, then, never were spaces of social harmony. Rather,

²⁹⁷ Ibid., October 21, 1773.

²⁹⁸ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 29, 1748.

²⁹⁹ “Marge H. More Petition for Tavern (August 22, 1765),” Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

³⁰⁰ While in “mrs. vaubes’s” Williamsburg tavern in 1765, a French traveler noted “all the best people resorted” there. “Journal of a French Traveller in the Colonies, 1765, II,” *The American Historical Review*, 27 (Oct. 1921), 741.

colonial taverns—like the colonies and the Empire—were contested spaces where colonists acted out their local and Imperial desires.

Chapter Four

Cosmopolitan Colonists: Elite Taverngoers' Contradictory Ideologies of Cosmopolitanism and Imperialism

Upon weaving through London's bustling Royal Exchange in 1711, Joseph Addison—an Englishman known throughout the British Empire for his pithy prose and taverngoing public life—remarked “there is no place in [London] which I so much love to frequent as the Royal Exchange.” Such a “rich assembly of countrymen and foreigners” made the Exchange for Addison “a kind of Emporium for the whole earth.” As Addison came across crowds of Armenians, Jews, and Dutchmen, he soon fancied himself “like the old Philosopher, who upon being asked what Countryman he was, replied, That he was a Citizen of the World.”³⁰¹ Addison was not alone in his urges to become a “citizen of the world.” As the British Empire became an increasingly global power in the eighteenth century myriad Englishmen adjusted their worldviews to fit—and perhaps transcend—the boundaries of Empire.

During the eighteenth century, select groups of elite colonists sought out cosmopolitan resources in British America's most Imperially-connected spaces, taverns. Like their English counterparts throughout the Empire, certain patricians transposed their urge for a more modern, “enlightened” community into the tavern space by reading tracts from London and beyond, debating topics such as politics, war, history, science, physics, religion, and world news, engaging in private “clubs” with fellow elites, penning tracts, songs, poems, and political manifestos, consuming a variety of foods and beverages, and attending balls, concerts, lectures, and art galleries. Although the elite goal of an “enlightened” cosmopolitanism was one of the many factors that helped establish and maintain the Atlantic Ocean as “a highway...an efficient waterway that united rather than divided members of the English Empire,” the reality of

³⁰¹ Joseph Addison, *Spectator*, no. 69, Saturday, May 19, 1711.

patricians' cosmopolitan pursuit lay in their constant Imperial anxieties and coinciding elitism, myopia, and attempts at control. The pursuit of the "citizen of the world" identity was about ethnocentrism, hierarchy, and control far more than cosmopolitanism.³⁰² Thus, those men who probably more than any other group in British America recognized their position in a larger, more complex world still could not break the bonds of Empire.³⁰³

Dr. Alexander Hamilton's 1744 peregrinations will serve as the central example of the pursuit of international cosmopolitanism and its various contradictions in the British American tavern. One historian has called Hamilton's coinciding travel diary "among the finest writings of the eighteenth century and, certainly, its best travel book," while another explained that Hamilton "was foreign enough to be interested in all aspects of the American colonies and yet sufficiently familiar with their civilization to look beyond the spectacular and the temporary and seize upon its fundamental and enduring traits."³⁰⁴ Hamilton's position as a learned elite combined with his elegant pen make him a useful figure through which to uncover the intricacies of cosmopolitanism. In addition to Hamilton, the writings of other patricians such as William Byrd II, Benjamin Franklin, John Dunton, Nicholas Cresswell, William Black, John Fontaine, Samuel

³⁰² The only scholar to explicitly touch on this understanding of cosmopolitanism, to my knowledge, is Tao Zhijian. Zhijian argued "the cosmopolitan vision is based on ethnocentrism" in Tao Zhijian, "Citizen of Whose World?: Goldsmith's Orientalism," *Comparative Literature Studies* 33 (1996): 30.

³⁰³ Ian K. Steele is predominantly credited for the concept of the Atlantic Ocean as a connector rather than a barrier after contending in 1986, "the assumption that land united and water divided is dubious for early modern times, and the seaborne empires are much more understandable if the assumption is challenged" in Steele, *The English Atlantic*, vii. See, for instance, Nancy L. Rhoden's introduction to a volume in Steele's honor, where she gave him credit for making her understand that "the Atlantic was not a moat but a highway, or more accurately, an efficient waterway that united rather than divided members of the English Empire." Nancy L. Rhoden, ed., *English Atlantics Revisited: Essays Honoring Professor Ian K. Steele* (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), xiii. However, thirty years earlier William L. Sachse made this same argument when he finished *The Colonial American in Britain* (1956) with the assertion, "And so the ocean, so commonly pictured as a barrier, was rather a broad highway by which a continuing, personal association with Britain was maintained." William L. Sachse, *The Colonial American in Britain* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1956), 207. Steele only briefly noted Sachse's *The Colonial American in Britain* in his *The English Atlantic*, and never in relation to the idea of the Atlantic Ocean as a bridge rather than a barrier.

³⁰⁴ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, xi. Bridenbaugh, this volume's editor, provided this description of Hamilton; Geoffrey D. Needler, "Linguistic Evidence from Alexander Hamilton's *Itinerarium*," *American Speech* 42 (Oct., 1967): 211.

Sewell, Robert Carter, and Daniel Fisher also reveal taverns' Imperial connections, as do numerous elite-oriented mid-eighteenth century tracts, newspaper articles, and broadsides. Bringing these sources together, this chapter will assess how mid-eighteenth-century colonial American gentlemen utilized the tavern as a polite node of cosmopolitanism, hierarchy, and "enlightened" discourse.³⁰⁵

An ideology with roots spanning ancient history, "citizen of the world," as early modern Britons came to understand it, meant being "subject to no master, obeying no law, regardless of the opinions of his own times, and looking only for the esteem of the wise and the suffrage of posterity."³⁰⁶ Sir Francis Bacon described a cosmopolitan man as one who was "gracious and

³⁰⁵ This chapter is influenced by Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite*. Shields' intense investigation of numerous centers of "belles lettres," metropolitanism, elitism, and cosmopolitanism in the elite world of British North America did much to link coffeehouses, taverns, colleges, salons, and clubs "to the power of public discourse to fashion new forms of group identity" (xxxii). However, while noting the importance of taverns' transatlantic letter network, Shields never delved into the Imperial nature of the elites' cosmopolitan goals, nor did he deal with their ideological hypocrisies and shortcomings. In addition, I will utilize Benedict Anderson's theory of the "imagined community" as well as Habermas's understanding of a "bourgeois public sphere" in this chapter to more fully understand elites' conceptions of their place in a larger, enlightened, nationalistic, "republic of letters." I contend that even though these elites sought detached, anti-national, cosmopolitan identities as "citizens of the world," they still could not separate themselves from their Imperial and local biases, myopia, and generalizations regarding other nations and peoples. Thus, Anderson's impression of a nationalistic "imagined community" works well in studying these elites' tavern interactions, for as they actively attempted to participate in a cosmopolitan, international community, they actually reinforced local and national ties (the national "imagined community") more than any international cosmopolitan "community." Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 2006), 43; Brennan, "Taverns and the Public Sphere in the French Revolution," 114; Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*; Clark, *The English Alehouse*; Thompson, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*; Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 52-11; Cowen, *The Social Life of Coffee*; Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (New York: Allen Lane, 2000); Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness*; Bushman, *The Refinement of America*; John Brewer, "The Most Polite Age and the Most Vicious: Attitudes Towards Culture as a Commodity, 1660-1800," in *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, ed. Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London: Routledge, 1995), 341-361; Hancock, *Citizens of the World*; Hancock, *Oceans of Wine*; Peter Calvert, *The Concept of Class: An Historical Introduction* (London: Hutchinson, 1982); Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability*; Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580-1680* (London: Hutchinson Press, 1982).

³⁰⁶ Constantin-Francois Volney, *Lectures on history, Delivered in the Normal School of Paris, by C.F. Volney, Author of the Ruins of Empires, Member of the National Institute of France, &c. &c.* (London, 1800), 116; Garrett Wallace Brown, *Grounding Cosmopolitanism: From Kant to the Idea of a Cosmopolitan Constitution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 4-5; Ancient religious texts like the *Quran* espoused certain notions of shared, cosmopolitan responsibility regardless of political or religious affiliation, suggesting "mankind is naught but a single nation," as did the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhnaton. Maulana Muhammad Ali, transl., *Holy Quran* (Dublin, OH: Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic Society USA, 2011), 2:213; Plato, *Protagoras*, in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 336c7-d3; For a much more detailed investigation of "cosmopolitanism" as well as an extensive bibliography on the subject, see: Pauline Kleingeld and Eric Brown, "Cosmopolitanism," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2011 Edition)*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed August 15, 2011,

courteous to strangers” and whose heart was not “an island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them.”³⁰⁷ Such an identity would not come easy. Luckily, the Empire fostered myriad developments perfect for an aspiring citizen of the world.

Essential to the pursuit of cosmopolitanism in the colonies was the emergence of “an informal empire of gentlemanly amateurs”—merchants, planters, physicians, scientists, parsons, and virtuosi throughout the British Empire—who took advantage of the “Age of Wonders” in which they lived to become more polite, cosmopolitan members of the Empire.³⁰⁸ Specifically, this select group of disparate cosmopolitan-hopefuls corresponded with each other through the “Republic of Letters.” Interacting within this vast network of “enlightened” correspondence, self-professed “men of letters” attempted to follow in the footsteps of great transatlantic “Enlightenment” thinkers like Locke, Diderot, Hume, and Voltaire by penning and reading various tracts, letters, broadsides, and books ranging from electrical experimentations to philosophical politics, going on the “Grand Tour” of Europe as young men, and reading popular publications such as the *Gentleman’s Magazine* and the *Spectator* that catered to Britons’ growing interest in strange lands, scientific experimentation, and philosophical inquiries.³⁰⁹

<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/cosmopolitanism/>. For more on Greek and Roman influences of the British Empire, see Anthony Pagden, *Lords of all the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France, c. 1500-c. 1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

³⁰⁷ Francis Bacon, *Essays Moral, Economical, and Political*. By Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam, and Viscount St. Albans (London, 1800), 55.

³⁰⁸ Richard Drayton, “Knowledge and Empire,” in *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume II: The Eighteenth Century*, ed. P.J. Marshall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 237; “Peter Collinson to Cadwallader Colden,” London March 30th, 1745, *Colden Papers*, Vol. 3, 109.

³⁰⁹ Writing to Jared Eliot in 1753, the English religious figure Jonathan Todd exclaimed, “I have Sometimes almost come to a Determination to endeavour by your Assistance to get into an Acquaintance with that Gentleman, a chief one in the Republick of Letters, whose Parts, Industry and Learning are known in both Englands; and devoted to the Welfare of Mankind.” “Jonathan Todd to Jared Eliot, East Guilford, March 6, 1753,” “Franklin Papers Online,” accessed February 27, 201, <http://franklinpapers.org/franklin/intro.jsp>; Porter, *Enlightenment*, xviii; Numerous historians have studied the French, English, British, and German Enlightenments (to name only a few), sometimes in isolation, but often in comparison. For major works, see Carl Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers*, Second Edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003; first published in 1932); Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, translated by Fritz C.A. Koelln and J.P. Pettegrove (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951, first published in German in 1932); Viktor Klemperer, *Ich will Zeugnis ablegen bis zum letzten: Tagebücher 1933-1945*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1995); Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation: The Rise of*

Benjamin Franklin, for example, corresponded and exchanged specimens with Gronovius in Holland, Buffon in France, Mazzei in Italy, and Peter Collinson, Joseph Banks, and Hans Sloane in England in addition to traveling throughout Europe.³¹⁰

Patricians throughout the Empire increasingly grouped cosmopolitanism with other enlightened, “genteel” maxims like reason, moderation, and benevolence. As defining a “gentleman” and his “polite” characteristics became more difficult throughout the eighteenth century, elites sought to define their distance from the lower classes by showing their superior understanding of the world.³¹¹ When defining “the Character of a Gentleman” in a 1741 *General Magazine* article, one Englishman explained “The various Customs and Manners in different Parts of the World, and the ceremonies there introduced, are in no Sort shocking or wonderful to him; He is of all countries and a Citizen of the World, if I may so say; it is because his Discernment is unlimited, and that extending his Prospect over the Universe itself, he forms to

Modern Paganism (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1966). Peter Gay traced “the Enlightenment” to France in Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation* (1966) and Gertrude Himmelfarb initially gave attention to Britain and France but saw the final emergence of “the Enlightenment” in America in Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity: The British, French, and American Enlightenments* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004). Roy Porter traced the origins of the Enlightenment to Britain in Porter, *Enlightenment*. Gordon traced the Enlightenment to France in Daniel Gordon, “Introduction,” in *Postmodernism and the Enlightenment: New Perspectives in Eighteenth-Century French History*, ed. Gordon (New York: Routledge, 2001). Knudsen traced the Enlightenment to Germany in Jonathan B. Knudsen, *Justus Möser and the German Enlightenment* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986). In short, this is a debate that will most likely never be agreed upon. Nonetheless, in debating these different interpretations scholars continue to challenge old assumptions and present new avenues of research. Finally, certain scholars have begun to trace the “Enlightenment” to America. See, for example, David Hackett Fischer, “John Beale Bordley, Daniel Boorstin, and the American Enlightenment,” *The Journal of Southern History* 28 (1962): 327-342; Hoffer, *When Benjamin Franklin Met the Reverend Whitefield*; Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R. Smitten, editors, *Scotland and America in the Age of the Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990); John Fea investigated the idea of a rural “Enlightenment” in colonial America through an investigation of Philip Vickers Fithian in Fea, *The Way of Improvement Leads Home*. He contended that just because certain colonial Americans did not live in metropolitan centers like Boston, Philadelphia, or New York, this did not mean they could not still participate in “the Enlightenment.” Delbourgo used the study of electricity to more fully understand the Enlightenment in America in *A Most Amazing Scene of Wonders*; Shields investigated American Enlightenment thinkers in *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*.

³¹⁰ Thomas J. Schlereth, *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought: Its Form and Function in the Ideas of Franklin, Hume, and Voltaire, 1694-1790* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), 29. For more on the exchange of scientific specimens—particularly those of the botanical variety—in the early modern British Empire, see Susan Scott Parrish, *American Curiosity: Cultures of Natural History in the Colonial British Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

³¹¹ See, for example, Klein, “Politeness for Plebes” in *The Consumption of Culture*, 362-382.

himself a Rational Idea of it.”³¹² A true “citizen of the world” was, in short, the most accomplished gentleman. Such a “Man formed for Society” had the wherewithal to distance himself from the social melee of his locality, utilizing his vast reserve of gentlemanly attributes to observe mankind with “Reason” rather “than Imagination.”³¹³

Yet the journey to become a “citizen of the world” was marred by more than social ambiguity, for those elite men who hoped to distance themselves from irrational local and British bias were often those same men expected to lead their countrymen and support the Empire. As historian Roy Porter noted, “The eighteenth century brought conflicts of allegiances for intellectuals, torn between cosmopolitan leanings and local loyalties.”³¹⁴ Fearing being labeled as unpatriotic, or even worse, traitorous, many British American patricians attempted to discern between rational and irrational patriotism. One anonymous writer to a December 11, 1752 edition of the *New-York Mercury* contended that a “ridiculous and absurd” patriotism was one marred by irrational, unbending cultural and social myopia. A cosmopolitan patriot, in contrast, was defined by rational, benevolent, and enlightened worldliness. He would “deliberate...resolve” and “rise into Action with a Heart undismayed, and a Courage invincible.” Beyond simply loving his country, a true cosmopolitan patriot would also become “a *Lover of Mankind*,” which was “far more noble and God-like.”³¹⁵ In order to resolve the seemingly inherent contradictions between patriotism and cosmopolitanism, then, elites touted cosmopolitanism as the most noble, rational, and enlightened path to a modern patriotism.³¹⁶

³¹² “The Character of a Gentleman, by Way of Dialogue between Polydamus and Theophilus,” *The General Magazine, and Historical Chronicle for all the British Plantations in America* 1, 4, April, 1741; 268.

³¹³ Addison, *Spectator* No. 49, April 26, 1711; Forrester, *The Polite Philosopher*, 4, 6.

³¹⁴ Porter, *Enlightenment*, 239.

³¹⁵ *New-York Mercury*, December 11, 1752.

³¹⁶ Englishmen in Great Britain faced the same problems. Writing in 1776, the English historian Edward Gibbons contended, “It is the duty of the patriot to prefer and promote the exclusive interest and glory of his native country...but a philosopher must be permitted to enlarge his views and to consider Europe as one great Republic

Cosmopolitan-hopefuls realized their fates were firmly intertwined with the Empire, and thus adjusted their ideological goals to fit this all-encompassing, global entity.³¹⁷

Taking the inherent connections between elite society and Empire into account, colonial patricians such as Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and William Byrd II tied themselves to global networks in order to foster an exclusive, cosmopolitan identity.³¹⁸ In his self-reflective piece, *Inamorato L' Oiseaux*, William Byrd II described himself as one who “knows the World perfectly well, and thinks himself a citizen of it without the...distinctions of kindred sect or Country.” Franklin likewise described himself as “a man of the world” and required members of his Junto Club (itself a club intent on cosmopolitanism) to declare that they “love[d] mankind in general; of what profession or religion soever.” Hamilton similarly professed his aspirations of cosmopolitanism by dissociating himself from certain New York taverngoing “fops” with “narrow notions, ignorance of the world, and low extraction” who “commonly held their heads higher than the rest of mankind and imagined few or none were their equals.”³¹⁹

Although Byrd II and Franklin repeatedly contradicted their cosmopolitan claims, Hamilton especially exemplified colonial patricians’ proclivity for bias, hierarchy, and self-superiority in his description of the New York “fops.” In Hamilton’s opinion, the problem with these “aggrandized upstarts in these infant countrys of America” stemmed from their inattention

whose various inhabitants have attained almost the same level of politeness and cultivation.” Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (London, 1776), 4: 163.

³¹⁷ As Boehm argued, “Cosmopolitanism as a mental attitude always manifests itself in the form of a compromise with nationalism, race consciousness, professional interests, caste feeling, family pride, and even with egotism.” Max Hilbert Boehm, “Cosmopolitanism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* (New York, 1932), 4:458. Schlereth also dealt with cosmopolitan’s contradictions in Schlereth, *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought*.

³¹⁸ John Knox, *The American Crisis, by a Citizen of the World; Inscribed to Those Members of the Community, Vulgarly Named Patriots* (London, 1777), 11-12.

³¹⁹ William Byrd II, *Another Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1739-1741: With Letters & Literary Exercises, 1696-1726*, ed. Maude H. Woodfin, translated and collated by Marion Tinling (Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1942), 280; Franklin, “‘On Wine’ From the Abbé Franklin to the Abbé Morellet (Paris, 1779?)” and “Rules for a Club Formerly Established in Philadelphia (1732),” in Franklin, *Autobiography*, 940, 205-207; Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 185-86.

to the world around them, which in turn denied them the capacity to “observe the different ranks of men in polite nations or to know what it is that really constitutes that difference or degrees.” Not only were these “fops” myopic and narrow-minded in Hamilton’s view, but their inability to understand the inherent hierarchy of Empire made them dangerous to society. Colonial elites lived in a world increasingly marked by class conflict, and such instances only affirmed their anxieties. Patricians wanted to transcend the Empire, as long as certain traditions like hierarchy remained intact. In short, colonial American elites’ aspirations of cosmopolitanism inextricably clashed with their notions of hierarchy and class. Although patricians such as Byrd II, Franklin, and Hamilton professed to consider all mankind as equals, they were actually resistant to the idea of a world where the Empire did not guarantee them a self-assured sense of superiority and safety. In their attempts to transcend Empire (i.e. become citizens of the world), then, colonial elites actually became irreconcilably entrenched in national currents. Perhaps more than ever, cosmopolitan-hopefuls considered those from other nations and those of lesser social standing as inherently inferior. Ethnocentrism—not tolerance—was the prime marker of eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism.

While upper class colonists utilized those same consumer connections that taverns provided as their social inferiors, patricians collected works of art and volumes of books from abroad, bought goods such as silverware, china, and clothes from Europe, and consumed beverages from across the globe in different ways and for different purposes. Since these patricians understood their cosmopolitan identity as directly tied with consumerism, they utilized their position in a global consumer network as another way to display their elite status as well as connect with and more fully understand their place in the British Empire³²⁰ Publications like the

³²⁰ Hancock, *Citizens of the World*, 16-18. William Byrd II, for example, consumed all of these. For art and books, see Byrd, *Secret Diary*, 310, 314. For consumer goods see 412, 524, 528. Byrd consumed wines from Lisbon and

Tatler and *Spectator*, for example, served as portable gateways into English cosmopolitan club culture for elite Britons throughout the Empire. Realizing their readers' keen interest in club culture, Steele and Addison (the authors of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*) spoke to the man who considered "the World as a Theatre, and desire[d] to form a right Judgment of those who are Actors on it." These periodicals furnished curious colonial patricians "with the greatest Variety of Hints and Materials" so they could "know everything that passes in the different Quarters and Divisions...of the whole Kingdom."³²¹ Steele and Addison, in short, targeted aspiring gentlemen cosmopolites who sought out English periodicals for their connections with larger worlds of ideology and culture.

While colonists of almost every class consumed beverages like Madeira wine, coffee, tea, and chocolate by the mid-eighteenth century, certain elites did so with the express purpose of bolstering their genteel, cosmopolitan identity. Many patricians, for example, used special, expensive accessories such as pots, cups, and spoons in order to "correctly" consume coffee, tea, and chocolate. While traveling through the Carolina backcountry in the mid-eighteenth century, the Anglican minister Charles Woodmason exclaimed, "I am obliged to carry my own Necessaries with me—as Bisket—Cheese—A Pint of Rum—Some Sugar—Chocolate—Tea, or Coffee—With Cups Knife Spoon Plate Towels and Linen." He further lamented that Carolina's rural taverns had "nought but a Gourd to drink out of Not a Plate Knive or Spoon, a Glass, Cup or any thing."³²² For the elite Woodmason, the accessories associated with coffee, tea, and chocolate were imperative for their consumption. While publicans used less refined glass, stoneware, and rougher delftwares to serve ale, wine and spirits, tavernkeepers reserved fine

the Madeira Islands (487, 511), beer from England (346), brandy from the Madeira Islands (279), and claret from Bordeaux (241, 261, 455).

³²¹ Richard Steele, *Spectator* No. 34, April 9, 1711; No. 10, March 12, 2011.

³²² Woodmason, *Journal*, 39.

porcelain and earthenwares for the more expensive, polite consumption of tea, coffee, and chocolate. As historian Karen Harvey contended, “these ‘novel and exotic containers’ used for hot drinks reminded [certain] consumers of the ‘foreign origins’ of the beverage.”³²³ Without such equipage, elites could not fully define themselves as genteel, worldly, and knowledgeable consumers. Not only was such equipage expensive, but knowing how to use them and what they signified was also a marker of difference and superiority. This self-awareness was what, for patricians, defined them as cosmopolitans in contrast to lower class colonists.³²⁴ While plebeians gulped these exotic drinks to emulate their superiors and feel their intoxicating effects, cosmopolitan elites cast themselves as genteel consumers distant from their social inferiors.

Once prepared, coffee, tea, and chocolate each required other “refined” actions in order to render its drinkers polite, worldly, and exclusive. Adding sugar to coffee, tea, or chocolate, for instance, denoted wealth because of its relative expense throughout the British Empire in the eighteenth century. The Englishman John Chamberlayn contended, “many find [coffee] to be very profitable...with a little Sugar, in a moderate quantity, and to very good purpose.” Writing in the late-eighteenth century, the English cleric David Davies contrasted rich and poor peoples’ tea consumption by adding the variable of sugar. Replying to the charge “*tea is a luxury*,” Davies exclaimed, “If you mean fine hyson tea, sweetened with refined sugar, and softened with cream, I readily admit it to be so. But *this* is not the tea of the poor.”³²⁵ Just as coffee and tea did not originate as beverages sweetened by sugar, nor did chocolate. While European, British, and colonial elites sweetened their already-expensive chocolate with “great quantit[ies] of Sugar” in

³²³ Harvey, “Ritual Encounters,” 176.

³²⁴ For more on the significance of ceramics and equipage, see Sarah Richards, *Eighteenth-Century Ceramics: Products for a Civilised Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Hilary Young, *English Porcelain, 1745-95: Its Makers, Design, Marketing and Consumption* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1999).

³²⁵ John Chamberlayn, *The Manner of Making Coffee, Tea and Chocolate* (London: William Crook, 1685), 14-15; David Davies, *The case of labourers in husbandry* (London: G.G. and J. Robinson, 1795), 39.

order to further distinguish themselves, Chamberlayn warned “it may destroy the Native and Genuine temper of the *Chocolate*.”³²⁶ As British American elites increasingly sought out “articles imported from opposite sides of the earth...as part of their daily diet” to signify themselves as polite, citizens of the world, the tavern became their stage upon which to act out their cosmopolitan, consumerist hopes and dreams.³²⁷

While early American taverns’ consumer goods provided patricians various indirect international connections, they also afforded cosmopolitan-hopefuls opportunities of direct contact with travelers from around the world. Consequently, as important nodes where, as one eighteenth-century Englishman noted, patrons could meet “for the purpose of rational conversation, and to learn news,” colonial Americans’ tavern conversations helped colonists to extend their worldviews beyond “the Length of [their] Nose.”³²⁸ As one globetrotting English taverngoer poetically explained, “mountains could not, but men who go and see the world can, meet each other.”³²⁹ Following the Englishman Hutton’s contention that “the intercourse of one with another, like two blocks of marble in friction, reduces the rough prominences of behaviour, and gives a polish to the manners,” cosmopolitan-hopefuls like Alexander Hamilton sought out tavern conversations with men from around the world. Communicating with diverse peoples, elites argued, would “render men sociable” and consequently provide a patrician with yet another set of cosmopolitan attributes. Such contact, however, often served to fortify colonists’ national bias far more than opening their minds to global currents of tolerance.³³⁰

³²⁶ John Chamberlayn, *The Natural History of Coffee, Thee, Chocolate, Tobacco* (London, 1682), 16.

³²⁷ Davies, *The case of labourers in husbandry*, 39.

³²⁸ Alexander Mackraby, “Philadelphia Society Before the Revolution: Extracts from the Letters of Alexander Mackraby to Sir Philip Francis,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 11 (1887): 283; Black, “Journal,” 405. This builds off of Anderson’s idea of an “Imagined Community” in Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

³²⁹ DeVries, *Voyages from Holland to America*, 52.

³³⁰ W. Hutton, *An History of Birmingham*, Third Edition (London: Thomas Pearson, 1795), 296-9; Rice, *Early American Taverns*, 79.

Alexander Hamilton's tavern conversations with trans-imperial travelers were varied and influential. He discussed the merits of the Freemasons with "a Barbadian gentleman" and shared a quick lunch with "a trader from Jamaica" in two separate Philadelphia taverns.³³¹ Hamilton enjoyed a heated discussion of Christianity and creation with "two Irishman, a Scotsman, and a Jew" while sitting in a Kingston tavern and compared the climates and inhabitants of Maryland and Jamaica with a pair of Jamaican gentlemen in a New York tavern. One "gentleman...from Coracoa" told Hamilton "that in a Month's time [he] had known either 30 or 40 souls buried which, in his opinion, was a great number in the small neighbourhood where he lived."³³² Hamilton could hardly help but rub elbows with gentlemen from beyond North America's shores in his urban tavern visits.

Hamilton was not the only colonist to recognize the opportunities of global interaction in early America's taverns. Other elites like James Birket also appreciated taverns' varied patrons, noting in 1751 that Portsmouth's taverns were "little frequented by any but Strangers." Sarah Kemble Knight remembered meeting a "French doctor" at a New England tavern in 1704, while William Byrd delighted at meeting "a Frenchman of great learning" at a Williamsburg tavern in 1712. The young elite Nicholas Cresswell confirmed Knight and Byrd II's mention of French company when he remarked upon the "Great numbers of French men" in Williamsburg, Yorktown and Hampton taverns. Jasper Danckaerts, moreover, noted that he met one taverngoer "who had formerly lived in Brazil, and whose heart was still full of it," while Benjamin Franklin remembered conversing with a fellow taverngoer who he supposed had been "an itinerant

³³¹ Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 19, 26.

³³² Hamilton meant Curaçao, a small Caribbean island.

Doctor, for there was no Town in England, or Country in Europe, of which he could not give a very particular Account.”³³³

Besides culling early American taverns’ diverse company from colonists’ records, foreign travelers’ recognition of taverns as crucial connections to international currents also speak to taverns’ global connections. During his 1680 trip through North America in search of a prospective settlement, Jasper Danckaerts sought out a tavern where he and his fellow Labadists “could be at home, and especially to ascertain if there were any Dutchmen.”³³⁴ The Scotchman William Gregory similarly found a link to the Old World while staying in a Newport tavern. Gregory “spent the evening together with...one Mr. Skelton, a Scotsman from Jamaica, with whom [he] got very intimate after drinking plentifully of punch, toddy and wine.”³³⁵ Along with numerous colonists who had already settled in the New World, Danckaerts and Gregory trusted taverns as reliable sources of food, drink, lodging, and company.

Foreign visitors also utilized colonial taverns in order to interact with locals. While visiting New York in 1716, for instance, the Irish Huguenot John Fontaine used taverns to enmesh himself in society, participating in French and Irish clubs, gossiping, and dining with all sorts of locals, ranging from lawyers to landladies.³³⁶ The Londoner Alexander Mackraby frequented taverns during his mid-eighteenth century tour of North America as well. Although not thoroughly impressed with American tavern culture compared to that of London, Mackraby

³³³ Birket, *Cursory Remarks*, 10; Knight, “Journal,” 21; Byrd II, *Secret Diary*, 331; Nicholas Cresswell, *The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell, 1774-1777* (London: Jonathan Cape, LTD, 1925), 209-10; Danckaerts, *Journal*, 67; Franklin, *Autobiography*, 25.

³³⁴ The Labadists took their name from Jean de Labadie, a Frenchman who detached himself from the Society of Jesus. “Labadism, theologically, belonged to the school of Calvin; in its spirit it was in line with the vein of mysticism which is met throughout the history of the Christian Church. In general respects the theology of Labadism was that of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands. Like so many adventitious but zealous movements, Labadism centred in its millennial hopes.” Danckaerts was sent to the New World to find a haven for the oft-persecuted Labadists. Danckaerts, *Journal*, xxiii.

³³⁵ William Gregory, “A Scotchman’s Journey in New England in 1771,” ed. Mary G. Powell, *New England Magazine*, 12 (1895): 347.

³³⁶ Fontaine, *Journal*, 116-119.

noted that in his tavern interactions he “made about three times as many acquaintance” as his local friend acquired “in so many years...I dine with governors, colonels, and the Lord knows who.” Mackraby later “danced, sung, and romped and eat and drank, and kicked away care from morning till night” in a tavern with twenty-nine Philadelphians.³³⁷ Even an incredulous Englishman could not resist the bonhomie of the early American tavern.

Such European travelers’ accounts provide a valuable insight into taverns’ position as central nodes of British Imperialism and cosmopolitanism. As global travelers utilized taverns as places of lodging, drink, information, gossip, and ties to home, they also afforded certain colonists unrivaled international connections. There were few other chances for a Dutch Labadist and a down-on-his-luck Englishman to confide in each other.³³⁸ Consequently, colonists and international travelers alike sought out taverns for food, lodging, and connections they could gain nowhere else—taverns were the most global of all British American public spaces.

While random tavern conversations provided colonial elites with the interaction they so craved, well-organized, male-dominated tavern clubs became one of patricians’ most dominant forms of cosmopolitan pursuit as Britons established as many as 25,000 different clubs and societies throughout the Empire during the eighteenth century.³³⁹ One mid-eighteenth century colonist explained, “Our little Clubs or Societies are the last Things we take our Leave of...They must have them in Coffee-Houses, Taverns, or private Assemblies: And few are able to live without ‘em.”³⁴⁰ As spaces “where Taste is refin’d, and a Relish giv’n to Men’s Possessions, by

³³⁷ Mackraby, *Letters*, 278-79, 286.

³³⁸ Danckaerts, *Journal*, 67.

³³⁹ Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 2.

³⁴⁰ “An Essay on Conversation,” *American Weekly Mercury*, 23 July 1730.

a polite Skill in gratifying their Passions and Appetites,” taverns became central to this transatlantic clubbing craze.³⁴¹

Writing to the *New-York Weekly Journal* on February 13, 1748-49, an author who identified himself as “Per Se” excitedly illustrated the various cosmopolitan merits of a group of gentleman who “formed themselves into a Club, and meet every Week, to Discant upon learned Subjects, in a private apartment [most likely a private room in a tavern].” Consisting “of twelve or fourteen Persons; all Men of the Finest Parts, true Taste, solid Judgements, deep Erudition, and a Talent to display it,” this alleged club (called “The American Royal Society”) “IMPROVED, upon the Plan of the other *Royal Society* at London” by concentrating almost wholly on “*Natural Philosophy*,” which “extends the Mind; relieves it from Ignorance and Prejudice; strengthens the faculties of the Soul; and is of Service in the conduct of life.” In “Per Se’s” telling, the American Royal Society seemed a club intent on creating polite “citizens of the world.” In contrast to so many other men who “live without Study” and converse “upon the most trifling Subjects” while smoking pipes “with a senseless Stupidity” and drinking away the hours “in a total Ignorance, of every thing Genteel and Manly,” the American Royal Society declared themselves “Enemies to *Nonsense* and *Vice*” who resolved “to improve the *Taste*, and *Knowledge*, to *Reform*, and *Correct*, the manners of the Inhabitants of [New York].” By assembling such a variety of “Skill, Art and Erudition”—musicians to inculcate members on the intricacies of sound, physicians the human body, and mechanics the myriad philosophical, mechanical, optical, and astronomical instruments—this New York tavern club would relieve members’ minds from ignorance and prejudice and reveal the truth of the world. In short, the New York American Royal Society was a tavern club formed for the express purpose of

³⁴¹ Richard Steele, *Tatler* No. 46, 1709.

providing its elite associates with various cosmopolitan impulses. It was a breeding ground for polite “citizens of the world.”³⁴²

A prime public arena for aspiring cosmopolites was the male-dominated tavern club, and Alexander Hamilton is one of the most famous cosmopolitan clubbers in British American history. Born into the Scottish gentry in Edinburgh in 1712, Hamilton received a fine education that spanned Scotland, England, and Holland before heading to Maryland in the winter of 1738 to pursue his profession as a physician. Although Hamilton arrived in Maryland during a time of enhanced colonial urbanization, sociability, and Imperial connection, Annapolis lacked many of the enlightened institutions that had shaped Hamilton in his previous peregrinations, especially an established club scene.³⁴³ Hamilton joined the Ugly Club—a group of men who met mainly “to argue and debate upon various Subjects, and to discuss points of a knotty and abstruse nature”—in 1739, but it did not satisfy his cosmopolitan yearnings, nor did his lifelong position as Annapolis’s common councilman.³⁴⁴ Somewhat ironically, Hamilton’s bout with tuberculosis spurred him to delve into British America’s cosmopolitan public scene as he traveled North America’s northeastern seaboard in 1744 to escape Maryland’s muggy summer.

Hamilton visited a variety of urban societies during his journey, including the Hungarian Club (New York), “Physicall Club” (Boston), Scots’ Quarterly Society (Boston), Music Club (Philadelphia), Governor’s Club (New York), and numerous other unnamed groups.³⁴⁵ Hamilton’s favorite was perhaps the Governor’s Club in New York, which he described as “a society gentlemen that meet at a tavern every night and converse on various subjects.” With

³⁴² *The New-York Weekly Journal*, February 13, 1748-9.

³⁴³ Alexander Hamilton, *The History of the Ancient and Honorable Tuesday Club*. Volume One, ed. Robert Micklus, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), xvi. Hamilton drank two-penny ale and smoked tobacco every Friday in memory of his beloved Edinburgh “Whin-Bush Club.”

³⁴⁴ Hamilton, *Tuesday Club*, xvii.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 43-45, 116, 133, 191, 21.

“entertaining” conversation ranging from international trade and politics to “English poets and foreign writers,” a mixed company of strangers and important local elites (including the Governor), and plenty of good food and drink, the Governor’s Club met most of Hamilton’s cosmopolitan expectations. Within this space Hamilton could directly interact with men from his own station while also indirectly contributing to a larger “enlightened” conversation.³⁴⁶

Hamilton also sought out international news and polite conversation at other North American clubs. While participating in the Hungarian Club in New York City one evening, for example, Hamilton “had a deal of news by the Boston papers and some private letters...that of the Dutch having declared war against France and the capture of some of the barrier towns in Flanders by the French, as also the taking of some tobacco ships near the capes of Virginia, which furnished matter for conversation all night.” For an elite gentleman like Hamilton, international news, polite company, and “enlightened” conversation were the most rewarding factors of any club setting.³⁴⁷

Yet not every club experience satisfied Hamilton’s cosmopolitan cravings. One evening Hamilton fell in with a group of “two or three toapers” (colonists often referred to fellow, loquacious drinkers as “topers”) in the Hungarian Club who “seemed to be of opinion that a man could not have a more sociable quality or enduement than to be able to pour down seas of liquor and remain unconquered while others sunk under the table.”³⁴⁸ Biting on their challenge, Hamilton left drunk from alcohol rather than enlightened from cosmopolitan debate. Another evening in Newport, Hamilton was a bit disappointed to realize that the Philosophical Club did

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 21, 26,

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 175.

³⁴⁸ “Toper” was a term commonly used in the colonial period to describe fellow drinkers (often those who were overly jolly in their libations) in a tavern setting. See, for instance, Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 42, 43, 88. “I put my horses up att one Waghorn’s att the Sign of the Cart and Horse. There I fell in with a company of toapers” (42). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a “toper” is “one who topes or drinks a great deal; a hard drinker; a drunkard.”

not deliberate philosophical matters, but rather its members prated on about “privateering and building of vessels...disputes and controversys of the fanaticks of these parts, their declarations, recantations, letters, advices, remonstrances, and other such damnd stuff of so little consequence to the benefit of mankind or the publick.” Considering his time spent with the Philosophical Club “thrown away,” Hamilton went elsewhere for cosmopolitan company.³⁴⁹

Improving conversation was a principal facet of polite, cosmopolitan club interaction and became “the pragmatic arena for ‘politeness’” in the British Empire.³⁵⁰ Early modern elites published countless works in newspapers, periodicals, and broadsides detailing proper and improper conversation etiquette. In a November 15, 1750 issue of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, for example, an author warned how “a Man of Wit and Learning may nevertheless make himself a disagreeable Companion.” Genteel patricians looked upon excessive boasting and drinking as especially inconsiderate and unbecoming of a “man who loves company” and is “formed for society.” A polite conversation “in company” thus required constant pragmatism, self-awareness, and discretion. One had to be careful to distinguish himself as genteel, clever, and cosmopolitan while not becoming too witty or loquacious. Polite conversation was the arena for self-display as well as a zone of freedom, ease, and sincerity—a man could make conversation enjoyable and improving or utterly destructive.³⁵¹

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 41-43, 151-152.

³⁵⁰ Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness*, 4.

³⁵¹ “An Essay on Bumpers,” *The New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, December 19, 1748. This author warned against the dangers of toasting and drunkenness in polite company. This “Essay” caused a backlash that lasted weeks. See “To the Author of the Essay on Bumpers,” *New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, December 26, 1748; “Hezekiah Broadrim,” “To the Author of the Sayings...Concerning Bumpers,” *New-York Weekly Journal*, January 2, 1748/49; Joseph Addison, *Spectator* No. 23, March 27, 2011. Addison spoke often of the benefits and dangers of being a wit. See also *Spectator* No. 504, Oct. 8, 1712; No. 31, April 5, 1711; No. 19, March 22, 1711; Klein, “Property and Politeness in the Early Eighteenth-Century Whig Moralists,” in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, 221-231; See, for instance, *The Virginia Gazette*, January 28, 1736; Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness*, 5. For more on the opportunities and dangers of conversation, see Forrester, *The Polite Philosopher*.

Beyond the balancing act of gentility and wit, discretion “in company” was a maxim of polite conversation and society. As one New York gentleman exclaimed in a piece written for the *New-York Weekly Journal* on January 9, 1748/9, “the bad faculty of *Tattling*,” was “not only base and unworthy of a Gentleman, but destructive to the very end of Private Societies.” In this gentleman’s opinion, “Relating Matters” of a discreet conversation to the general public only “promotes Dissentions, raises Quarrels, and is the Source of unspeakable Confusion and Disorder.” Just as these elite clubbers sought privacy and genteel conversation in the tavern space, they also expected members to uphold such exclusivity by keeping topics of conversations to themselves. A loose tongue could only destroy the respectability, honor, and sanctity of a cosmopolitan club setting.

Hamilton constantly remarked upon the quality of conversation in his numerous tavern club experiences. He fondly remembered the “agreeable and instructing” conversation available among “a company of philosophers and men of sense” at the Governor’s Club in Philadelphia and lamented the company of “One Mr. Clackenbridge” who used a club at Withered’s Boston tavern to constantly “argue against all the company...like a confused logician.” For all these positive and negative conversations, however, Hamilton’s disdain for one fellow New York tavern clubber named Dr. McGraa outshone any other conversation or relation in his travels. Although McGraa came across as a modest man, “when the liquor began to heat [McGraa] a little, he talked at the rate of three words in a minute.” Hamilton remarked that he “never met a man so wrapt up in himself,” nor did he “ever see a face where there was so much effronterie

under a pretended mask of modesty.” In Hamilton’s opinion, McGraa was just the sort of man who tarnished polite society.³⁵²

A subsequent heated tavern dispute between Hamilton and McGraa spoke well to the intricacies of conversation and cosmopolitanism within taverns. Although Hamilton regretted the harsh exchange of “hard physical terms” and therefore tried to discontinue the debate, “it being dissonant to good manners before company, and what none but rank pedants will be guilty of,” McGraa kept “teizing” him. Soon Hamilton found himself embroiled in a heated conversation with McGraa, “one of those learned bullies who, by loud talking and an affected sneer, seem to outshine all other men in parts of literature where the company are by no means proper judges.” Hamilton found McGraa to be the sort of man knowledgeable enough to masquerade as a gentleman among lesser company, but not polite enough to actually serve as one. When McGraa declared that he was “troubled with open piles” and “pulled out a linnen handkercheff all stained with blood and showed it to the company” Hamilton lashed out at McGraa by comparing his bloody condition with that of a woman’s menstruation cycle. Hamilton claimed he “only intended to play upon” McGraa, but the doctor took Hamilton’s quip as an affront and challenged him to a battle of the wits. After McGraa proclaimed his knowledge of “attraction, condensation, gravitation, rarification” and mathematical and astronomical theories, he also professed his cosmopolitanism by pretending “to have traveled most countrys in Europe, to have shared favour and acquaintance of some foreign princes and grandees and to have been att their tables, to be master of several languages.” Hamilton gave McGraa up “as an unintelligent,

³⁵² Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 189-90, 144, 83-84; “Remarks on the Behaviour, of the Author of the Letter to the Author, of the late *Essay on Bumpers*, published in the *New-York Gazette, Number 309*,” *New-York Weekly Journal*, January 9, 1748-9, Number 786.

unintelligible, and consequently inflexible disputant” who could not speak good French and “merely murdered Latin” and thus retired from this unfortunate tavern conversation.³⁵³

Although Hamilton regretted his dispute with McGraa, the exchange nonetheless highlighted numerous pitfalls of cosmopolitan conversation. McGraa was, for a knowledgeable gentleman like Hamilton, the epitome of a fool masquerading as a polite, well-conversed elite. Besides requiring overindulgence of alcohol to hold a conversation, McGraa “spoke in a very arbitrary tone as if his opinion was to pass for an ipse dixit (the truth),” bullied lesser men into listening to him, and committed an act which “exceeded everything [Hamilton] had seen for nastiness, impudence, and rusticity” when he displayed his blood-stained handkerchief at the food-laden club table. When Hamilton chided McGraa with what he perceived as a playful, scientific reprimand, the drunken doctor once again overstepped the bounds of polite exchange by bluntly professing his own learned, cosmopolitan attributes (which Hamilton passed off as unintelligible and false). Although this exchange was quite different from so many other “agreeable and instructing” conversations that Hamilton sought in tavern clubs, it nonetheless revealed the conflicts, contradictions, and intricacies of cosmopolitan conversation. Those who did not follow the rules were ousted from patricians’ cosmopolitan coterie.³⁵⁴

Besides meeting Hamilton’s varied cosmopolitan needs, clubs also fed his appetite for class distinction. Countercurrent to their cosmopolitan impulses of supposed acceptance, club members often assembled in a separate, isolated room, which also buttressed their feelings of class superiority. The English elite James Forrester remembered a group of elites who “pass[ed] an Evening, when they thought fit, in a [tavern] Room one Pair of Stairs, set apart for that

³⁵³ Ibid., 85-87.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 189-90. For another example of a bad club member, see Butterfield, *et al.*, eds., *Diary and Autobiography of Adams*, I, 348-349. Adams noted that James Otis, because of his rambling, disconcerted conversation, “will spoil the Clubb. He talkes so much and takes up so much of our Time, and fills it with Trash, Obsceneness, Profaneness, Nonsense and Distraction, that we have no [time] left for rational Amusements or Enquiries.”

Purpose.”³⁵⁵ Hamilton’s previously-noted experience at Withered’s Boston tavern also highlighted the exclusivity of tavern companies. When Hamilton stumbled into the wrong tavern room for a second time, he was so confused and “saw [the strange group of taverngoers] so inclinable to laugh that [he] ran out at the door precipitately without saying any thing” and hurried to “the right company.”³⁵⁶ These were not men who welcomed a stranger into their exclusive space, ranks, and conversation. Rather, one had to be invited to a club by its members and prove himself worthy of such an audience through correct conversation and conduct.

Myriad other tavern clubs and associations sprang up during the mid-eighteenth century. Hamilton, for instance, helped to form the Tuesday Club shortly after returning to Annapolis on May 14, 1745. As a dedicated clubber in Scotland, Hamilton hoped to emulate Edinburgh’s cosmopolitan atmosphere in Annapolis. With a core group of eight Annapolis elites, the Tuesday Club’s “almost limitless fund of entertainment” such as mock trials, musical compositions, bombastic speeches, and heaps of food and drink attracted “almost everyone of some importance in the northern Chesapeake Bay area” over the next eleven years. Moreover, the Tuesday Club fostered a self-consciously cosmopolitan—but still light-hearted—environment as its elite members penned numerous tracts relating global histories and events, philosophical inquiries, and moral conundrums.³⁵⁷ Benjamin Franklin—ultimately a member of London’s Royal Society, Dr. Bray’s Associates, and several discussion and social clubs in London—similarly founded the Junto Club in 1727.³⁵⁸ A tavern club which required its members to declare that they “love[d] mankind in general; of what profession or religion soever,” Franklin’s Junto Club’s membership

³⁵⁵ Forrester, *The Polite Philosopher*, 29.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 144.

³⁵⁷ Hamilton, *Tuesday Club*, xix.

³⁵⁸ Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 401.

was socially diverse, but nonetheless targeted cosmopolitan moral, political, philosophical, and scientific issues.³⁵⁹

Although allegedly based on cosmopolitan maxims of unadulterated tolerance and acceptance, both the Tuesday and the Junto Clubs upheld elite, British self-superiority as necessary cosmopolitan attributes. The Tuesday Club, for example, restricted clubbers to the colonies' "most distinguished residents and visitors" (Franklin himself visited the Tuesday Club) while the Junto Club, although consisting of lower-class members like a cabinetmaker and a merchant's clerk, ultimately defined itself as an elite mechanism of Imperial power, especially through the founding of the Philadelphia Library Company. While the Library Company often labeled their project a "Public" one, general access to their establishment was actually quite restricted since exorbitant fees and membership requirements excluded the majority of Philadelphia's populace.³⁶⁰ Keeping with the tradition of patricians' somewhat contradictory pursuit of cosmopolitanism, both the Tuesday and Junto Clubs served dual patrician purposes of polite cosmopolitanism and the maintenance of hierarchical tradition.

Various long-standing societies with British origins also met in the tavern space.³⁶¹ The Freemasons, for instance, often convened in taverns. In Philadelphia, the Masons assembled at the "Tun Tavern" where "a very Elegant Entertainment was provided" and "several...Persons of Distinction" often "honour'd the Society with their Presence."³⁶² Along with so many other British American clubs and societies, the Masons allegedly pushed members of the Society "not only [to] refrain from Prejudices, but cheerfully condescend to equal Terms," but contradictorily

³⁵⁹ Benjamin Franklin, "Rules for a Club Formerly Established in Philadelphia," (1732), in Franklin, *Writings*, 205-207; "John Penn to Library Company," June 1735.

³⁶⁰ Hamilton, *Tuesday Club*, xix.

³⁶¹ Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 302.

³⁶² *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 5, 1733, July 4, 1734.

upheld notions of British superiority and hierarchy.³⁶³ Consequently, although historian Margaret Jacobs suggested that the Masons became “a social nexus that bridged profound class differences,” upon closer investigation the Masonic society concurred with the American pattern of intense social stratification.³⁶⁴ Within the Mason’s rule-bound, secretive tavern meetings, patrician men donned aprons and jewels and studied the tradition of the magical arts in search of a universal wisdom.³⁶⁵ Furthermore, although the oft-ridiculed Masons professed openness to members of all social backgrounds, elite Masonic rulers such as Benjamin Franklin repeatedly called for “brothers of talent and orators of merit,” which inherently excluded a majority of the populace through simultaneous ambiguity and particularity. The Masons, in other words, pursued a cosmopolitanism that thrived on exclusivity.³⁶⁶

Though the Freemasons are the most studied and controversial of all colonial American fraternal organizations, numerous other societies found their way to British America’s taverns and also carried with them contradictory traditions of cosmopolitanism and hierarchy. Ethnic societies, for example, were especially popular in British America. Boston supported a Scots Society after 1658; New York harbored both Irish and French clubs in 1716 and its own Scots

³⁶³ John Price, *The Advantages of Unity Considered, in a Sermon Preach’d Before the Antient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons* (Bristol, 1748), 22.

³⁶⁴ Margaret C. Jacobs, *Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons, and Republicans* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1981), 115.

³⁶⁵ The reputation of the secretive Masonic Society was further damaged in 1737 when a group of Philadelphia men pretending to be Masons accidentally killed a young apprentice by throwing “burning spirits” on him during a mock initiation ceremony. See *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 16, 1737; June 23, 1737; February 15, 1738.

³⁶⁶ Margaret C. Jacob, *Strangers Nowhere in the World: The Rise of Cosmopolitanism in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 97 (quote). Although by the 1730s the Masons had published many of their “secret” customs, many contemporaries still did not trust them. While in a Philadelphia tavern, Hamilton remembered debating the merits of the Freemasons with “a Barbadian gentleman”: “After dinner Mr. V[ena]bles, a Barbadian gentleman, came in who, when we casually had mentioned the free masons, began to rail bitterly against that society as an impudent, assuming, and vain cabal pretending to be wiser than all mankind besides, an *imperium in imperio*, and therefore justly to be discouraged and suppressed as they had lately been in some foreign countrys. Tho I am no free mason myself, I could not agree with this gentleman, for I abhor all tyrannicall and arbitrary notions. I believe the free masons to be an innocent and harmless society that have in their constitution nothing mysterious or beyond the verge of common human understating, and their secret, which has made such a noise, I imagine is just no secret att all.” Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 19; Jessica Harland-Jacobs, “‘Hands across the Sea’: The Masonic Network, British Imperialism, and the North Atlantic World,” *Geographical Review* 89 (Apr., 1999): 237-253.

Society in 1744; and Philadelphia boasted the Society of Ancient Britons after 1729, an informal St. George's Society from the 1730s, and a well-ordered St. Andrew's Society after 1747.³⁶⁷ Established in London in 1715 to demonstrate Welsh loyalty to the Crown (in the face of Jacobitism), The Society of Ancient Britons often advertised their meetings in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* after establishing themselves in Philadelphia.³⁶⁸ The Society frequently held feasts "in Honour of Her Majesty Queen CAROLINE'S Birth Day, and the Principality of WALES" on St. David's Day at "the Indian King in Market Street." With tickets priced at five shillings, however, these feasts were reserved for the city's "Hon. Proprietor, Governor, and principle Gentlemen."³⁶⁹ Other ethnic societies like the Scottish-centric St. Andrew's Society also utilized the *Pennsylvania Gazette* to announce meetings and functions at the "Tun Tavern" until they established their own lodge in 1759.³⁷⁰

Although British American ethnic societies such as the Society of Ancient Britons or St. Andrew's served the somewhat cosmopolitan purpose of connecting members throughout the British Empire, they also bolstered feelings of myopia, chauvinism, and hierarchy. As the Scottish Bostonian, Benjamin Colman, noted in the early eighteenth century, "Strangers from Great Britain love one another's company and draw one another off."³⁷¹ While traveling throughout the colonies, Scottish-native Hamilton conversed with any Scotch "countrymen" he came across "about affairs at home." Hamilton bought his "countrywoman Mrs. Blackater" (his Boston tavernkeeper) a pound of chocolate, met with "Mr. Grant, a Scotch gentleman" in a

³⁶⁷ Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 302.

³⁶⁸ Emrys Jones, "Age of Societies," in *Welsh in London, 1500-2000*, ed. Emrys Jones (Llandysul: Gomer, 2001), 54-87.

³⁶⁹ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 13, 1734; March 13, 1734; February 15, 1733; February 23, 1731; March 11, 1731.

³⁷⁰ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 13, 1750; August 23, 1750; May 17, 1750; November 15, 1750; August 22, 1751; May 23, 1751; November 16, 1752; August 23, 1753; May 17, 1753; May 24, 1759; November 20, 1760.

³⁷¹ Niel Caplan, "Some Unpublished Letters of Benjamin Colman, 1717-25," *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings* 77 (1965): 137.

Newport coffee shop, and noted that his Albany “landlady, happening to be a Scotswoman, was very civil and obliging to me for country’s sake.” While staying in Boston, Hamilton was sure to visit the Scots’ Quarterly Society, “which met att the Sun Taveren.” After contributing “3 pounds New England currency” for the relief of Scotland’s poor, Hamilton stayed to chat with the Society’s president about (presumably Scottish) “news and politicks.”³⁷² John Fontaine, an Irish Huguenot elite traveling in the colonies, similarly gravitated toward the Irish Club while staying in New York in 1716—he spent at least two evenings “with the Irish Club” at his local tavern.³⁷³ Finally, the “bored” and homesick Scottish elite living in South Carolina, Alexander Gordon, joined the Charleston branch of the St. Andrew’s Society in order to connect with his home country as well as gain a stronger foothold with the most powerful men in the province, among them Rev. Henry Heywood, a Baptist preacher “esteemed one of the greatest scholars in *America*.”³⁷⁴ Hamilton, Fontaine, and Gordon—like so many British American elites—utilized taverns and their coinciding ethnic societies in order to connect with their own home country and elite countrymen far more than to gain a cosmopolitan insight. Consequently, ethnic societies were hardly cosmopolitan—they were exclusive spaces for like-minded elites from similar backgrounds to meet, converse, and distinguish themselves from the rest of society.

In their numerous attempts to achieve such a detached, cosmopolitan identity, elites actually reinforced and exposed their ethnocentrism. Traveling through the colonies in the late-eighteenth century, for example, Nicholas Cresswell engaged himself in countless cosmopolitan pursuits. The young elite attended balls where “Punch, Wines, Coffee and Chocolate” were served, enjoyed the company of “sensible, polite” men in various taverns, helped to found “the Black-eyed Club” in one Virginia tavern, constantly sought out global news, “Drank Coffee” in

³⁷² Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, 49, 182, 118, 70, 133.

³⁷³ Fontaine, *Journal*, 114-116.

³⁷⁴ Anna Wells Rutledge, “A Cosmopolitan in Carolina,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 6 (Oct., 1949): 640.

public and private venues, complimented one fellow because he had “seen a great deal of the World,” dined with a group of Frenchmen in Hampton, Virginia, and befriended a group of Scotsmen.³⁷⁵ Cresswell appeared to fit the cosmopolitan model.

Cresswell’s friendship with his “good friends,” the Scotsmen “Mr. Bailey, Captn. B. Knox and Mr. Wallace” especially displayed his cosmopolitan hopes. These gentlemen had cared for Cresswell when he was deathly ill after arriving in the colonies. Upon leaving his Scottish friends, Cresswell remembered how he had once disliked their nation. “Owing to the prejudice of [his English] education” Cresswell “was taught to look upon [the Scottish] as a set of men divested of common humanity, ungenerous and unprincipled.” Yet after enjoying the company and largess of the Scots, Cresswell openly exclaimed,

I have always found them the reverse of all this, and I most heartily condemn this pernicious system of education by which are taught to look upon the inhabitants of a different nation, language or complexion, as a set of being far inferior to our own. This is a most illiberal and confined sentiment, for human nature is invariably the same throughout the whole human species, from the sooty Africans down to the fair European, allowance being made for their different customs, manners and education.

Recognizing the error of his learned bias, Cresswell touted a cosmopolitan worldview where “human nature is invariably the same throughout the whole human species.” He made allowances for the “different customs, manners, and education” of the Earth’s various peoples, and seemingly accepted them as equals.³⁷⁶

Yet in line with elite “citizens of the world” throughout the British Empire, Cresswell’s cosmopolitan acceptance was more imagined than real, and more based on strict social stratification than tolerance. Less than two months later, Cresswell contradicted any cosmopolitan impulses while visiting Long Island. While walking home from a tavern, Cresswell and his friend, Mr. Furneal, came across a young woman in distress. Finding that she was alone

³⁷⁵ Cresswell, *Journal*, 53, 175, 153, 233, 209-10, 137-39.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 205.

and in labor, Cresswell and Furneal carried her to the nearest building, owned by an “Irish rogue of a sadler.” After finding an “old drunken woman” who would serve as a midwife, Cresswell watched on as the midwife delivered the young woman’s child. Although the birth incited gladness in Furneal’s heart—he swore he would “stand Godfather to the child”—Cresswell’s wickedness shone through as he hoped that the child would be “dead before morning.” Furthering Cresswell’s indications of anti-cosmopolitanism and extreme national bias, although the young woman told Cresswell “a long story about her virtue and sufferings,” he did not believe her “since she [was] an Irish woman.”³⁷⁷ Here Cresswell—the man who had less than two months earlier declared himself a cosmopolitan man who accepted everyone—not only declared a young woman’s story moot because of her perceived Irish heritage, but also wished her new-born child dead. No amount of tavern clubs, genteel traditions, globally-produced goods, or worldly literature could destroy the entrenched national and hierarchical biases of elite gentlemen like Cresswell.

Cresswell was not alone in his contradictory behavior. Although historians have lauded Alexander Hamilton for his tolerance, Hamilton’s interactions with foreigners and strangers demonstrated the inherent contradictions between his cosmopolitan urges and his deeply entrenched notions of superiority. Even Hamilton could not shed the cloak of chauvinism and hierarchy in favor of a cosmopolitan one. Hamilton, like so many other British American elites, contradictorily sought and feared a cosmopolitan world.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 235-6.

³⁷⁸ Tony Claydon and Anna Suranyi both employed early modern travel and ethnographic literature to uncover English nationalism. Claydon took a two-tiered approach to English nationalism by arguing not only that early modern English society (1660-1760) was inherently tied to Protestantism, but also that the English were very interested in their European neighbors; “alongside a fiercely Protestant England there was a cosmopolitan one: the English were familiar with, and fascinated by, their neighbors.” Tony Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England, 1660-1760* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3-4; Suranyi took a different approach to investigating English nationalism. Not only did Suranyi approach the subject in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, but she also challenged Claydon’s claim of religious significance, contending, “For many of the English, viewing

A common tendency among early modern Britons was to greatly generalize all other nations. Throughout his British American travels, for example, Hamilton constantly remarked upon “general” characteristics of the French, especially their supposed loquaciousness. Hamilton noted that his French tavernkeeper in Boston “had much of the humour of that nation [France], a deal of talk, and a deal of action.” While dining at a Boston exchange, Hamilton (himself a speaker of French) described a group of French prisoners as “very loquacious, after the manner of their nation, and their discourse for the most part was interlaced with oaths and smutt.” The next day, Hamilton “rose later than usuall...and breakfasted with his French tavernkeeper and her daughter. He noted that the young Frenchwoman was “a passable handsom girl” and displayed “nothing of the French spirit in her but rather too grave and sedate.” After speaking with “a very handsom...and well behaved” Spanish prisoner, Hamilton noted that the Spaniard displayed “none of that stiffness and solemnity about him commonly ascribed to their nation but [was] perfectly free and easy in his behaviour, rather bordering upon the French vivacity.”³⁷⁹ Such generalizations and bias toward the French, however, were common in the early modern British Empire.

A relationship marked by religious conflict and outright war—the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), the War of the Austrian Succession (1742-1748) the Seven Years’ War (1754-1763)—the eighteenth-century Anglo-French rapport was nothing less than difficult. Since France posed the biggest challenge to Britain’s Imperial quests, Britons constantly sought to show that Frenchmen were inferior. Yet British relationships with the French were more

themselves as members of a nascent Imperial power was even more important than their religious identity as Protestants in shaping national identity.” To bolster these claims, Suranyi studied English opinions and biases towards Ireland and the Ottoman Empire. Anna Suranyi, *The Genius of the English Nation: Travel Writing and National Identity in Early Modern England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 17-18; Alison Games also investigated supposed English cosmopolitans in the seventeenth century in Games, *The Web of Empire*. Finally, Linda Colley linked English identity with Protestantism in Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 106-108, 156.

complicated than sheer hatred. For many elite British gentlemen, asserting themselves as accepting of French culture came to symbolize their own genteel cosmopolitanism in contrast to the masses of lower class Britons who openly detested and debased the French and their customs. One group of lower class Dorset citizens jeered at the French traveler, Macky, as he traveled through their streets by screaming “Frenchie” at him. Although upper class Britons usually flaunted their British pride while traveling in France, they often spoke French, dressed in the French fashion, read French literature, and generally “acted French” upon returning home. Yet displaying one’s French leanings was a dangerous game, as too much French dress or custom could cause a gentleman to be labeled a “frenchified coxcomb,” or worse, unpatriotic. Gentlemen throughout the Empire thus stressed Francophilia as yet another defining factor of becoming a citizen of the world, but did so carefully. French and British elites traveled the same lands, consumed the same goods, read the same books, enjoyed similar public amusements, and followed similar aristocratic customs. Yet just because British elites touted their French acceptance did not mean that they actually meant it. In fact, even if certain British gentlemen did believe themselves to be especially cosmopolitan, they often still harbored deep-set, complicated, and contradictory biases toward the French Empire. British patricians often ascribed upon the French a number of demeaning characteristics, including loquaciousness and bad hygiene.³⁸⁰

Hamilton’s extended stay at a Boston tavern provides a clear window onto understanding the complications and contradictions inherent in British views of the French. Although this experience afforded Hamilton an unrivaled opportunity to objectively observe one Frenchman, it

³⁸⁰ Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, 13; Rosamond Bayne-Powell, *Travellers in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Benjamin Blom, 1951), 138-9, Adams, *Diary*, March 15, 1756 (coxcomb quote); For examples of negative depictions of the French by Englishmen, see Thomas Nugent, “The Grand Tour (1749),” in *Abroad: A Miscellany of English Travel Writing, 1700-1914*, ed. Alan Wykes (London: Macdonald, 1973), 118-119; Arthur Young, *Travels, During the Years 1787-1788 and 1789. Undertaken more Particularly with a View of Ascertaining the Cultivation, Wealth, Resources and National Prosperity, of the Kingdom of France* (London, 1792), 197-99, 8.

still only reinforced his sense of bias and xenophobia. When Hamilton first met Monsier de la Moinerie he described the Frenchman as “chatter[ing] like a magpie in his own language,” and further acquaintance with his “fellow lodger” only reinforced Hamilton’s English presumptions. Dr. Hamilton noted that La Moinerie “was the strangest mortal for eating I ever knew” after noticing that the Frenchman ate all of his meals on a trunk in his disorderly room: “here a bason with relicts of some soup, there a fragment of bread, here a paper of salt, there a bundle of garlick, here a spoon with some pepper in it, and upon a chair a saucer of butter.” To Hamilton’s surprise and disgust, La Moinerie also employed the same basin to eat soup, clean cabbage, shave, and bathe. Compared to the sensibilities of a British American physician like Hamilton, this Frenchman’s behavior was nothing short of shocking.³⁸¹

Yet, after weeks of “comical chat” with Moinerie, Hamilton surprisingly realized that he was going to miss the loquacious Frenchman. Hamilton lamented upon departing Boston:

Nothing I regretted so much as parting with La Moinnerie, the most lively and merry companion ever I had met with, always gay and chearfull, now dancing and then singing tho every day in danger of being made a prisoner. This is the peculiar humour of the French in prosperity and adversity. Their temper is always alike, far different from the English who, upon the least misfortune, are for the most part clogg'd and overclouded with melancholy and vapours and, giving way to hard fortune, shun all gaiety and mirth.³⁸²

Although Hamilton fostered a more amiable attitude toward the French than most Britons (especially considering King George’s War between France and England raged when he met Moinerie), Hamilton was still not able to divorce himself from bias and stereotypes, noting even after his close friendship with La Moinerie that French “temper is always alike.”³⁸³ Consuming goods from around the world as well as reading and discussing works on international topics might have made men like Hamilton more familiar with the world around them, but it did not

³⁸¹ Ibid., 116, 130.

³⁸² Ibid., 139, 147.

³⁸³ Ibid., 73, 156, 58.

dispel their deeply entrenched ethnocentricity. In fact, such enhanced acquaintance with the larger world might have done as much to bolster Britons' sense of self-superiority as it did to dispel such anti-cosmopolitan notions.

The Seven Years' War (called the French and Indian War by British colonists) only served to fan the flames of an already raging fire of anti-French sentiment in the colonies. "Philanthropos" warned "the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania" in 1754 that because the "French have long meditated our Ruin" and schemed "for universal Empire in North America," the colonists had no choice but to band together against "those inhuman Butchers...of that antiChristian Church." "Philanthropos'" detestations resounded throughout colonial taverns after 1754. Albany's elites toasted to the "total Extinction" of Catholic France's "Fortresses in America" in 1756, while New York patricians assembled in 1759 to express their "Gratitude and Joy" for British success in "the Reduction of that long dreaded Sink of French Perfidy and Cruelty, Quebec."³⁸⁴ Such colonial detestations of the French were one among many from 1754 to 1763, and were not the words of men who hoped to understand or connect with their French brethren. Rather, they were indicative of British—and colonial American—negative feelings toward the French Empire. Winning the Seven Years' War, of course, only reinforced many Britons' long-held biases toward the French.

Beyond bias toward the French, Hamilton also joined a long trend of British disdain for the Dutch. Mirroring previous English generalizations of the Dutch as ungrateful, cruel, and treacherous moneygrubbers who wished only for universal monarchy and a monopoly on all trade, the supposedly-cosmopolitan Hamilton exclaimed that Albany's Dutch "live in their houses...as if it were in prisons, all their doors and windows being perpetually shut. But the reason of this may be the little desire they have for conversation and society, their whole

³⁸⁴ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 5, 1754; August 5, 1756; November 15, 1759.

thoughts being turned upon profit and gain which necessarily makes them live retired and frugal. At least this is the common character of the Dutch everywhere.” The Swedish naturalist Peter Kalm, described as “a man of broad sympathies and of cosmopolitan understanding” by historian Oscar Handlin, similarly remarked that “the avarice, selfishness, and immeasurable love of money of the inhabitants of Albany are very well-known throughout all North America.” Such generalizations were not the remarks of a true “citizen of the world”—or were they?³⁸⁵

Benjamin Franklin, whose polite and scientific endeavors caused contemporaries to label him “a provincial cosmopolitan,” also harbored intense biases toward the German and Dutch nations.³⁸⁶ As more German and Dutch immigrants flooded into Philadelphia by 1750, Franklin lamented that Philadelphia “will in a few Years become a German Colony: Instead of [the Germans and Dutch] Learning our Language, we must learn their’s, or live as in a foreign Country.” English colonists, “uneasy by the Disagreeableness” of Germans’ “dissonant Manners,” fled neighborhoods where German families settled. Even worse, since the Dutch immigrants “under-live[d]” (i.e. did not live up to what Franklin expected in a useful, “civilized” citizen) and were “thereby enabled to under-work and under-sell the English,” colonists became “extreamly incommoded, and consequently disgusted” by their Dutch neighbors. Franklin, the same man who declared himself “a man of the world” and required members of his Junto Club to declare that they “love[d] mankind in general; of what profession or religion soever,” had little

³⁸⁵ Ibid., 73; Handlin, *This Was America*, 14, 33; The English elite, Sir W. Batten disgustedly noted in the late seventeenth century, “I think The Devil Shits Dutchmen.” Pepys, *Diary*, entry for 19th July, 1667; For more negative depictions of the Dutch by Englishmen, see William Temple, *Observations Upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, in *The Works of Sir William Temple, Bart. Complete in Four Volumes* (London, 1814), 163-4. Temple originally published this tract in 1673; John Smith, *England’s Improvement Reviv[e]d* (London, 1673), 2; William De Britaine, *The Dutch Usurpation* (London, 1672), 14; *The Emblem of Ingratitude: A True Relation of the Unjust, Cruel and Barbarous Proceedings Against the English at Amboyna* (London, 1672); Patrick Barclay, *The Universal Traveller...* (London, 1735), 303; Owen Felltham, *A Brief Character of the Low Countries* (1652), 5, 1-2; Ellis Veryard, *An Account of Diverse Choice Remarks...Taken in a Journey through the Low-Countries, France, Italy, and Part of Spain; with the Isles of Sicily and Malta. As also, a Voyage to the Levant* (London, 1682), 23.

³⁸⁶ Delbourgo, *A Most Amazing Scene of Wonders*, 143.

confidence in the quality of the Dutch and Germans as British subjects, and moreover doubted their faith to the British interest. In Franklin's words, Britons had always, through "an ardent Spirit of Liberty, so gloriously distinguished [themselves] from all the Rest of Mankind"—this supposed "citizen of the world" saw no equal to his British compatriots.³⁸⁷

Although certain colonial patricians consciously utilized British American taverns as spheres of cosmopolitan interaction, they simply could not become true "citizens of the world." These "Men formed for society" did everything they could to assert their authority as polite cosmopolitans in their tavern interactions.³⁸⁸ Yet through these efforts, anxious British American elites did more to protect their patrician status and reinforce their own biases than to become open "citizens of the world." Though certain elites saw the world as "a great school, wherein Men are first to learn, and then to practice" they could not help but constantly attempt to uphold a world where they held order, confidence, and power. Cosmopolitanism was, oddly, elites' ultimate goal and ultimate fear.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁷ "Benjamin Franklin to James Parker," in Benjamin Franklin, *The Importance of Gaining and Preserving the Friendship of the Indians to the British Interest, Considered*, ed. Archibald Kenned, editor (New York, 1751), 27-31. Available online at <http://franklinpapers.org/franklin/framedVolumes.jsp>; accessed on February 29, 2012 at 3:03 PM; Benjamin Franklin, "Governor Burnet and the Massachusetts Assembly," *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 9, 1729.

³⁸⁸ Addison, *Spectator* No. 49, April 26, 1711.

³⁸⁹ Forrester, *The Polite Philosopher*, 33-34.

Chapter Five

Revolutionary Taverns: The Tumultuous Transition from Empire to Republic

After supposedly warning New York patriots who refused to import tea that he “would cram Tea down their Throats” in 1773, William Kelly—a colonial merchant (residing in London) who distributed the East India Company’s tea to New York—found himself labeled “an Enemy to his Country.” “Friends of Liberty and Commerce” reacted to “this infamous, sordid, and parasitical Declaration of William Kelly” by parading an illuminated effigy of Kelly through New York’s principal streets. Kelly’s effigy, however, was not alone—the patriots slung a “horrid Representation of the Devil” next to the effigy and labeled its breast with the words, “The just Reward of that black and horrid Crime Ingratitude” and its back with “A Disgrace to my Country.” Finally, they fitted Kelly’s effigy’s hands with an illuminated tea canister baring the inscriptions “Tea three Pence Sterling Duty” and “The infamous Kelly.” After marching Kelly’s effigy through the streets, the patriots convened at a coffeehouse where they burnt the effigy in front of “Thousands of Inhabitants, who signified their Approbation with loud Acclamations.” Realizing that the crowd of thousands had reached a dangerous pitch, a gentleman stepped in front of the mob and after assuring them that he wished they could do the same to the real Kelly, asked the people to return home, which the local newspaper assured “they immediately did in the most orderly Manner.”³⁹⁰

This scene of disorder—and supposed order—in and around a New York tavern highlights the crisis of Empire that occurred in North America, and its taverns, after 1763. Kelly made himself an “Enemy to his Country” in many patriots’ eyes not only by importing tea, but also by threatening to force the detested leaf on angry colonists intent on non-importation. Kelly,

³⁹⁰ *The Virginia Gazette*, December 2, 1773; Thomas M. Truxes, *Defying Empire: Trading with the Enemy in Colonial New York* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), ccxxii.

in short, symbolized what colonists understood as the injustices of British rule. It is no coincidence, then, that these New York patriots chose the most Imperially-connected space—the tavern—to make known their grievances and criticisms of the King George. While the upper classes organized this parade of anti-Imperialism, the lower class “mob” was the driving force behind the procession’s power and effectiveness, thus forcing elites to either assert their authority over plebeians or retreat to bastions of exclusivity and let the “rabble” take the Revolution into their own hands.

As the colonies unraveled into disorder and eventually outright Revolution, colonists of every class relied upon taverns as bastions of safety, organization, and action. Within these important spaces patriots distributed broadsides damning the King and fellow colonists, hatched rebellious plots, stored ammunition, held ad hoc court sessions, feasted and toasted, set up temporary military posts and hospitals, and made their discouragement felt through mob action and violence. Beyond unofficial purposes, however, America’s elite men and Founding Fathers also realized the importance of taverns. Paul Revere chose Boston’s Green Dragon Tavern as his intelligence headquarters during the Revolution, as did Boston’s rabble-rousing Sons of Liberty and gentrified Masons. Washington used multiple taverns, including New York’s Fraunces Tavern, as his temporary headquarters during the Revolutionary War. The nascent Continental Congress, finally, preferred Philadelphia’s City Tavern as their respite from their official delegations in the Quaker city. Already spaces surrounded by controversy and inherently tied to Imperial impulses, taverns came to represent America’s severed relationship with the Empire during and after the American Revolution.³⁹¹

³⁹¹ David Hackett Fischer, *Paul Revere’s Ride* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Adams, *Papers*, Series 1, 114-125; Irvin Haas, *America’s Inns & Taverns* (New York: Arco Publishing Company, 1972), v.

One cannot truly understand taverns' revolutionary transformation into spaces of Republican conflict without appreciating how Imperially connected they had been for so long. Taverns had brought colonists into a tight and emotional connection to the Empire, which made the colonies' ultimate rupture with Great Britain all the more radical. Although historians such as Thompson, Conroy, and Carp have limited their tavern research to the Revolutionary Period, the current study's concentration on pre-Revolutionary taverns has set the stage for understanding the importance of Revolutionary taverns' anti-Imperial development.³⁹² For over a century, taverns served colonists as central spaces of Imperial connection—they reflected the colonies' position in the Empire and shaped colonists' understanding of the Empire. After 1763, however, British American taverns transformed from public spaces where colonists sought to connect with the Empire into public spaces where colonists evaluated, condemned, and avoided many Imperial connections in favor of more local, Republican ideals.³⁹³

Taverns thus offer a clear lens through which to discern colonial America's transition from a proud component of the Empire to a nascent, nationalistic, Republic. Yet investigating the Revolution through the lens of the tavern space also offers important insights into how certain colonists came to terms with the Imperially-determined, cosmopolitan identities they had worked so hard to cultivate before 1764. Besides grappling with their identities in a class-oriented, consumerist Empire, elite patriot and Tory taverngoers alike had to reconfigure their understanding of what it meant to be "cosmopolitan" during the transition from Empire to Republic. Like the colonies in which they were constructed, American taverns—for a short time—became centers of colonial revolution, political mobilization, and Republicanism far more

³⁹² Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 16, 75; Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 2; Carp, *Rebels Rising*, 97.

³⁹³ It is beyond the scope of this work to survey the long and tumultuous historiography of the Revolutionary Period. For a thorough treatment of this subject, see Alfred F. Young and Gregory H. Nobles, ed. *Whose American Revolution Was It?: Historians Interpret the Founding* (New York: New York University Press, 2011).

than crossroads of the Empire. In one sense, then, taverns continued to connect colonists to larger ideological entities (Republican ideology instead of Empire). But in another sense, Revolutionary taverns reveal the sheer radicalism of the Revolution as colonists transformed these spaces to meet their new, Republican needs.

Colonial elites took great pride in their Empire's victory over France, but the conclusion of the Seven Years' War set in motion a period of intense change for the Empire. Having finally crippled their French adversaries, Great Britain gained claim to thousands of miles of land in North America and the West Indies. However, King George III also found himself staring down seemingly insurmountable debt. The global conflict was an expensive undertaking, especially when dealing with France, and the British soon realized that they would have to reformulate their Imperial relationships in order to refill their coffers. New taxes and commercial fees were in order, and as self-professed British citizens abroad, the war-torn colonists were by no means exempt. Although sinking into an economic depression after the War, the colonists had finally driven the pesky French from their continent and in doing so believed they had proven to their King that they were equal, important members of the Empire. By leaning heavily on the colonists for military aid, furthermore, William Pitt had, in many colonists' eyes, once and for all revealed the importance of the colonies. In short, British American patricians felt they had proven themselves as worthy of the British aristocratic class. Colonial elites believed they had upheld their end of the bargain, and expected due respect. How to display such respect, however, was not understood in the same light on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

While colonial patricians believed they should control the colonies, British authorities thought it was time to clamp down on the colonists. When Parliament asserted its power of control over the colonists through various taxes and acts, social change erupted with a force that

reverberated throughout the Empire. Contrary to (or perhaps because of) the eventual explosion of plebeian power, elite-centered taverns such as Philadelphia's City Tavern and Boston's Crown Coffeehouse thrived during the early Revolutionary Period. As "levelling principles" among the lower classes proliferated throughout Revolutionary North America, patricians treated men of lesser rank with "surlly pride" and "insulting rudeness" more than ever. John Adams cautiously analyzed the "Republican Spirit" that spread from Massachusetts "like a Contagion, into all the other Colonies, into Ireland, and into Great Britain," as did New York elites like William Livingston. As fear of lower class power and a "levelling spirit" exploded throughout North America's elite ranks with the growing tide of Revolutionary fervor, patricians retreated more than ever to their exclusive taverns.³⁹⁴

Philadelphia's City Tavern, for example, served as the Quaker City's premier elite-centered, exclusive tavern after "radical master craftsmen" and "lesser merchants" adopted the Old London Coffeehouse (the original elite-owned tavern) as their unofficial headquarters in the mid-1770s. A multi-story, grand, patrician-funded establishment, the City Tavern was intended only for Philadelphia's "Gentlemen Proprietors." Here those anxious elites who remained patriots but resisted the company of the masses could retire into a well-furnished, well-stocked space "in the stile of a London tavern." The City Tavern offered its respectable patrons a "Large Room" intended for civic dinners, balls, dance classes, and grand banquets, a "genteel Coffee Room, well attended, and properly supplied with English and American papers and magazines," several "elegant bedrooms, detached from noise, and as private as in a lodging house," and fine livery stables right next to the building. The City Tavern's genteel founders assured future

³⁹⁴ Eric Foner, *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America, Updated Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 23; Isaac Weld, *Travels through the States of North America, and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, during the years 1795, 1796, 1797*, Vol. 1 (London, 1807), 21; Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 301; Adams, *Papers*, Series 1, 93; Carp, *Rebels Rising*, 73-76.

subscribers that it was “by much the largest and most elegant house occupied in that way in America.”³⁹⁵

The City Tavern served America’s upper classes well during the tumult of the Revolution. In such a well-furnished, well-stocked, globally-integrated, exclusive tavern, Philadelphia’s elites could make important decisions and conduct “genteel” conversations separate from the rude influence of the “mob.” Upon arriving in Philadelphia to serve on the First Continental Congress, for instance, John Adams met with Philadelphia’s “principal gentlemen” and “all the Gentlemen of the Congress who were arrived in Town” at the City Tavern, which Adams called “the most genteel [tavern] in America.” Here Adams received a “fresh welcome to the City of Philadelphia” as he was treated to genteel conversation and an “elegant” supper. Adams and his fellow members of the Continental Congress utilized Philadelphia’s City Tavern as their main haunt during their stay, as did George Washington when he visited Philadelphia in 1776. Rather than rubbing elbows with the masses, then, patrician patriots like Adams and Washington retreated to the exclusive confines of the City Tavern during the Revolutionary Period. Such decisions only further established the importance of an exclusive, elite-centered tavern for upper class patriots.³⁹⁶

Patriotic leaders’ reliance on exclusive taverns for political purposes also highlights patricians’ distrust of lower class decision-making and conversation. Just as they had prior to 1763, colonial elites viewed the lower classes as rude, unpolished, and ignorant. Such important political decisions, then, needed to be made away from the tumult of the masses. Whether in Boston or New York, local leaders had come to view taverns’ public rooms as breeding grounds of lower class disorder, and even worse, defiance. America’s patriotic leaders did not trust the

³⁹⁵ Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 162, 149-155; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 16, 1774

³⁹⁶ Adams, *Papers*, Vol. 2, 114, 118.

“mob” and were most certainly wary of “democracy.” They believed that a successful Republic required strict codes of morality, order, and hierarchy—too much power for the “masses” would only lead to destructive notions of luxury, vice, and disorder.³⁹⁷

Although patrician patriots utilized elite taverns like Philadelphia’s City Tavern to detach themselves from the lower classes before 1776, they were still intent on retaining important connections to the Empire (even if they did not agree with all of England’s recent statutes). After Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in 1766, patricians and plebeians alike flocked to local taverns to celebrate. Such tavern celebrations reveal various aspects of elite hierarchical anxiety and Imperial confusion during the Revolutionary Period. Williamsburg’s elites, for example, “repaired to the Bunch of Grapes tavern, where an elegant entertainment was provided” to celebrate the repeal of the Stamp Act and the King’s Birthday in 1766. While the patricians toasted to British figures such as “the KING,” “The Prince of Wales,” and “The Queen and Royal Family,” Williamsburg’s plebeians cheered each toast as they enjoyed “a plentiful dinner...at some distance”—evidently close enough to observe elites’ gentility and deference to the Empire, but still far enough away to be considered separate, lesser members of the community. The patricians next retired to the King’s Arms tavern for a ball, “during which the populace concluded their rejoicing, by a repetition of the healths round a large bonfire.” These gentlemen utilized both the private and public aspects of the tavern space to their advantage—they separated themselves from Williamsburg’s “rabble” enough to assert their exclusivity and power, but simultaneously celebrated the repeal of the Stamp Act and toasted to the Empire in a public manner, thus symbolizing themselves as knowledgeable colonists and loyal Britons. They

³⁹⁷ Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters*, Introduction; Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, Chapter Five; Conroy, *In Public Houses*, Chapter Six.

also maintained order over the unruly mob, assuring the public that “the whole day passed with the greatest joy, decency, and unanimity.”³⁹⁸

This same scene played out across the colonies as elites held private tavern celebrations in the public eye to assert their power over the locality while also simultaneously celebrating the repeal of the Stamp Act and the greatness of the Empire. The elite-led “Sons of Liberty” brightened Boston by erecting a “magnificent pyramid, illuminated with 280 lamps” with a round box of fireworks on top, and thereafter hosted “a grand and elegant entertainment [for] the genteel part of the town, and treated the populace with a pipe of Madeira wine” outside. The patricians then led the townspeople to the illuminated Liberty Tree (located in front of a tavern), which was surrounded by illustrated sashes depicting the King and other royal figures with the inscription “*Hail, PITT! Hail, Patrons! Pride of GEORGE’s days, How round the globe expand your patriot rays! And the NEW WORLD is brighten’d with the blaze.*” New York’s Sons of Liberty similarly met at “their usual house of public resort” where they enjoyed an elegant dinner, listened to “a band of musick,” and “cheerfully [drank] a number of loyal and constitutional toasts.” While New York’s patricians dined inside the tavern, “the vast concourse” of plebeians enjoyed bonfires and fireworks outside. As always, Boston and New York’s upper classes declared that these celebrations were “conducted with the greatest loyalty, harmony, and good order.” What, after all, was an elite-led celebration if not ordered and based on power relationships?³⁹⁹

Although elites utilized the tavern space in order to assert their gentility, power, and patriotism over the lower classes during the next ten years, Parliament’s ongoing taxation made patricians realize that they needed to cater more to the lower classes if they were going to sway

³⁹⁸ *The Virginia Gazette*, June 13, 1766.

³⁹⁹ *The Virginia Gazette*, June 20, 1766.

the home government. The Sons of Liberty spearheaded this movement to harness lower class power as they distributed mass quantities of alcohol, instated drinking holidays, and gathered plebeians in taverns to organize them around Revolutionary ideals and motivations. After coming across a New England tavern in 1770 whose owner had written “*Entertainment for the Sons of Liberty*” on his sign, John Adams exclaimed, “Thus the Spirit of Liberty circulates thro every minute Artery of the Province.” Adams was right—the Sons of Liberty adopted taverns from Boston to Charleston in order to push their Revolutionary agenda and harness the power of the lower classes. The Sons of Liberty were willing to accept a degree of disorder to ultimately maintain order over the colonies and the Empire. What they did not foresee, however, was the huge shift in class lines that would result from such social remodeling.⁴⁰⁰

The non-importation movement that swept across North America after 1765 proved imperative to the Sons of Liberty’s success in exploiting the power of the lower classes. As the Empire began instating taxes on the colonies to pay for their gross debts after the Seven Years’ War, many colonists came to view Parliament as a corrupt body intent on taxing the colonies not for positive, helpful purposes, but, as the lawyer John Dickinson (posing as a “Farmer in Pennsylvania”) contended, “*for the single purpose of levying money upon us.*” Tired of their wealth and power being affected by stifling Imperial policy, many elite colonists began urging their lower and middle class compatriots to boycott British-imported goods such as tea, sugar, ceramics, alcoholic beverages, and cloth. As “Philo Patriae” exclaimed in the pages of a Connecticut journal after Charles Townshend passed his dreaded taxes:

Certainly, ‘tis ten thousand times more eligible to enjoy freedom in this state, than to be slaves in large and well *glazed* houses, with fine cloaths, tea, wine or punch; and to have the pleasure of swallowing English beer and cheese; rustling in silks and ribbons, or

⁴⁰⁰ Adams, *Papers*, Vol. 1, 356.

glittering with jewels: all which we shall neither use or wear any longer than our [British] masters judge they need them to *protect, defend and secure us*.⁴⁰¹

The politics of non-importation served multiple purposes. As historian T.H. Breen noted, “the colonists’ shared experience as consumers provided them with the cultural resources needed to develop a bold new form of political protest.” Colonists came to interpret commercial decisions as political acts and consumer choices came to communicate personal loyalties—in short, “goods became the foundation of trust, for one’s willingness to sacrifice the pleasures of the market provided a remarkably visible and effective test of allegiance.” This shared consumer experience also simultaneously—and contradictorily—united the colonies in a common goal of patriotism while also shearing the barriers that had for so long defined colonial America’s class system. Because the enforcement of consumer boycotts fell mostly on the shoulders of the lower and middle classes, these colonists gained a power they had never enjoyed by publicly condemning and punishing those patricians who continued to import tea and wear British clothes. Since taverns were the most visible and accessible of all consumer spaces in the colonies, they served as a prime arena for the non-importation debate.⁴⁰²

Since many of the Sons of Liberty were gentlemen wholly reliant on the currents of consumerism and trade for their wealth and power, they utilized the consumer tendencies of the tavern space in order to bolster lower class support as well as condemn certain Imperial trade restrictions. Patricians thus attempted to use the non-importation movement for their own benefit, condemning British-traded tea as indicative of the evils of the Empire while simultaneously lauding rum—the most profitable and controllable alcoholic substance in the colonies—as a patriotic, colonial beverage. While taverns had once served as centers of global

⁴⁰¹ Benjamin L. Carp, *Defiance of the Patriots: The Boston Tea Party and the Making of America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 17 (quote); Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, 235 (quote).

⁴⁰² Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, xv, xvi.

consumption, the Sons of Liberty now rallied against “unwholsome Exotics” available in taverns, contending that the “genteel custom” of tea “impoverishe[d] the country” because of the “vast sums of money” continually “sent abroad to support it.”⁴⁰³

Arguing that the least breach in the “solemn Agreement” of non-importation could not be made “without the most pernicious Effects upon all the British Colonies, and perhaps upon the whole Empire,” the Sons of Liberty utilized taverns as centers of non-importation debate and judgment.⁴⁰⁴ New York’s Sons of Liberty held a trial at Mr. William’s tavern for New York’s merchants who refused to take part in the non-importation movement and chased one gentleman merchant who broke the non-importation agreement through the town’s streets until they could take him back to a coffeehouse for a trial. Connecticut tavernkeepers, “justly incensed at the persidious conduct of the New York importers” who continued to import British goods in 1770, posted those New York merchants’ names in their taverns and “unanimously determined not to entertain or afford them the least succor, aid, or assistance, in passing through that government.” When “a Pedlar with a Budget of Tea” arrived in a small Massachusetts tavern in 1774, a number of colonists accosted him with tar and feathers. Since the man “appeared very humble, plead Ignorance, [and] promised to return the Tea to the Place from whence it came,” however, the patriots dismissed him.⁴⁰⁵

The Sons’ enforcement of non-importation in taverns also led to violent clashes with the British Army. After the passage of the Stamp Act in 1765, for example, the Sons of Liberty initiated the burning of effigies of British leaders and erected the “Liberty Pole” in front of Bardin’s tavern. Disgusted with such outright rebellion, British soldiers stationed in New York

⁴⁰³ Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 262 [quote]; *The Virginia Gazette*, August 10, 1769; Carp, *Defiance of the Patriots*, 66-68; Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, 236.

⁴⁰⁴ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 28, 1770, January 30, 1766;

⁴⁰⁵ *The Virginia Gazette*, August 30, 1770, March 31, 1774.

cut down the Liberty Pole three times in 1766 and 1767 until New Yorkers erected a fourth Liberty Pole bound with iron. The patriots kept watch on the Liberty Pole from Bardin's tavern and taunted the soldiers, eventually prompting Her Majesty's soldiers to fire their muskets at the tavern. By 1770, British troops succeeded in bringing the fourth Liberty Pole down after days of fighting in front of and within Bardin's tavern (called De La Montagne's tavern by 1770). Soldier's broke into the tavern, assaulted the waiter, destroyed lamps and bowls, and finally cut the Liberty Pole into pieces and piled it in front of the tavern door. The incident at De La Montagne's ignited armed violence between civilians and soldiers that lasted two days.⁴⁰⁶

Such disorderly patriotic activity was not isolated to New York's taverns. As the Sons of Liberty grew in power and membership throughout the colonies and increasingly employed taverns as their primary centers of organization and non-importation they also came into direct confrontation with those colonists who remained loyal to the Crown. By the end of the 1760s, Americans developed somewhat muddled—but still important—barriers between patriots and loyalists. Just as the Sons of Liberty adopted their own taverns, so too did Tories seek out taverns where they were free to express their political views. In 1776 the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety found that one “Jones, the tavern keeper by the Dock” organized meetings for Philadelphia's Tories in a number of the city's taverns, but most notably at the widow Ball's. New York and Boston's Tory communities also attempted to meet at taverns, but as the Revolutionary Period raged on patriots found the most use in taverns. In 1768, in fact, the Sons of Liberty had no problem raiding and trashing a well-known Newport Tory tavern in search of a traveling Royal commissioner.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁶ *The Virginia Gazette*, April 16, 1767; Carp, *Rebels Rising*, 90-92.

⁴⁰⁷ Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 162; Carp, *Rebels Rising*, 94; *The Virginia Gazette*, September 29, 1768.

By the eve of the Revolution, many taverns became dangerous places for loyalists. The Philadelphian Jacob Hiltzheimer noted in 1774 that “The effigies of Alexander Widderburn, Esq., and of Thomas Hutchinson, Governor of Massachusetts Bay, after being exposed for several hours in a cart, were hung on a gallows erected near the Coffee House, set on fire by electric fire, and consumed to ashes, about 6 o’clock in the evening.”⁴⁰⁸ While staying in a New York tavern in March 1775 the traveling colonist Dr. Robert Honeyman noted, “Party spirit is very high...here nothing is heard of but Politics.”⁴⁰⁹ At another New York tavern earlier that year, patriots had forced a loyalist, John Case, to sit in a corner with a slave, since they found him as dependent on the Empire as a slave was to his master. After declaring that no one should talk with Case “under the forfeiture of a nip of Toddy,” Case’s persistent attempts to engage the patriots in conversation may have prompted one of them to threaten him with a red-hot gridiron. Upon finally escaping the tavern, Case concluded that such disorder should “convince every friend to order and the constitution, how dangerous a situation we should be in,” if the Sons of Liberty “are suffered to assume the lead in our public transactions.” Case pleaded with his fellow loyalists to unite against such “men whose actions prove, that instead of freedom, their aim is to establish disorder, oppression, and anarchy.”⁴¹⁰

Although loyalists were outnumbered in America and its taverns, they nonetheless occasionally heeded Case’s advice to unite against the growing patriot cause. Having heard that New York’s loyalist faction had recently met at De La Montagnie’s tavern to plan the suppression of a Congressional Committee in 1775, New York’s patriots convened around the

⁴⁰⁸ Hiltzheimer, *Diary*, 30. “Electric fire” was an electricity device that became popular throughout the colonies in the second half of the eighteenth century. These devices showed onlookers the power of electricity. See Delbourgo, *A Most Amazing Scene of Wonders* for more on these machines.

⁴⁰⁹ Robert Honeyman, *Colonial Panorama, 1775: Dr. Robert Honeyman’s Journal for March and April*, ed. Philip Padelford (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1939), 29.

⁴¹⁰ Carp, *Rebels Rising*, 62-63.

Liberty Pole and thereafter marched to the Exchange, “attended by musick” and carrying two Union flags bearing the inscriptions “*George III: Rex, and the Liberties of America; no Popery*” and “*The Union of the Colonies, and the Measures of the Congress.*” Shortly after arriving, the patriots were met by “some officers of the army and navy, several of his Majesty’s Council, and those members of the House of Representatives.” As the two parties met in the Exchange, flags waving and tempers raging, “some confusion arose” amidst screams and taunts. Although “subsiding without any bad consequences,” this clash reveals how Tories also utilized taverns to their own advantage in the face of growing Whig opposition.⁴¹¹

Tories also took every opportunity to ridicule what they considered American ineptitude and contradiction. While traveling along a New Jersey road in 1777, for example, John Adams noticed that the tavernkeepers all complained “of the Guard of the Light Horse which attended Mr. [Hancock].” Supposing that since they escorted a man as important and powerful as John Hancock they could get away without paying for the tavern’s services, “the Taverners were obliged to go after them, to demand their Dues.” Adams noted that the surrounding Tories who the tavernkeepers had thrown from their houses for “abusing” Mr. Hancock now “scoff[ed] at them for being imposed upon by their King, as they call him.” For these New Jersey Tories, the Continental Army’s refusal to pay their tavern tab combined with tavernkeepers’ feeble attempts at retrieval combined to prove the incompetence and hypocrisy of the patriot cause. And the loyalists were not scared to make their disapproval and mockery heard, as Adams obviously took notice of such imprecations from more than one person. Such a scene, finally, played out most distinctly in the tavern space, where patriots and Tories alike sought connections to the larger

⁴¹¹ *The Virginia Gazette*, March 31, 1775.

world, conflicts with each other over competing causes, and the power of speech in an increasingly tumultuous political climate.⁴¹²

Yet bold Tories were not the Patriots' only problems. No matter how much the Sons of Liberty attempted to bolster the power of the lower classes with the most "order" and "decorum," the power of the plebeians soon grew beyond the control of this small group of elites. Crucial to the Sons of Liberty's success—and ultimate downfall—was their plea for classlessness. While patricians had spent the last hundred years straining to bolster claims of hierarchy and order, suddenly the elite-led Sons of Liberty called on their "brethren" to attend to "the public good" and "let all divisions cease." With the new avenues opened up by the Revolutionary Period, the middle classes found both their ultimate blossoming grounds and greatest conundrum. On one hand, middling men such as Isaac Sears and Alexander McDougall (privateer captains during the Seven Years' War), and John Lamb (a trader) became important leaders of the Sons of Liberty during the Revolutionary Period, thus catapulting themselves to esteem and power in their locality and throughout the colonies. On the other hand, however, these same middling men finally understood the anxieties of power and class structure; like the elites, the middling classes also came to fear the growing power of the assembled lower-class laborers. Even more, the middle classes also had to deal with the growing animosity of their social superiors.⁴¹³

Although the middling class had only posed a minor threat to elites prior to the Revolutionary Period, the middle classes' enhanced power during the Revolution caused elites heightened anxieties. Realizing that they had to deal with increased mobility from the lower *as well as* the middling classes, elites attempted to enforce their power on the growing middle classes. After Philadelphian patricians restrained a lower class crowd (probably led by middle

⁴¹² Adams, *Papers*, Series 1, 268.

⁴¹³ Carp, *Rebels Rising*, 85.

and upper class men) from tarring and feathering a local loyalist in 1777 and thereafter suggested that the middle-class organizers of the event should be “whipped at the cart’s tail” for being “mobbish or mobbishing inclined,” the organizers replied with rebellious spitfire. Not only did the middle-class organizers deny any sort of mob activity, but they also attacked the “rich & powerful,” exclaiming that they would “pay no more respect to the person of the rich than to the person of the poor.” More firmly trapped between the upper and lower classes than ever before, the middling sorts used the remainder of the Revolutionary Period to carve a firm niche for themselves; one they never lost.⁴¹⁴

While “people of property” initiated various protests among the lower classes, they eventually lost control over the mob and “began to be filled with terrors for their own safety.” By 1774, Boston’s Sons of Liberty attempted “to restrain their own Miscreants, whom they [had] roused up to Rebellion.” This, however, was “a difficult task,” since “the ignorant Multitude, whom they [had] deluded” had grown into a self-conscious, self-governing body. Many of patricians’ greatest fears became a reality as lower class white men and women began to assert themselves in the public sphere and demand to be heard. Whether tarring and feathering Tories, fighting in taverns, or overwhelming elite mechanisms of control, “the madness of the multitude” had reached a fever pitch in America.⁴¹⁵

As patricians steadily lost control over the angry “masses” of lower and middling-class colonists, taverns became the central grounds for myriad riotous, lower class-led clashes. By

⁴¹⁴ “A Son of Liberty,” *New York Gazette or Weekly Post Boy*, December 26, 1765; Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution*, 55, 48; Peter Force, ed., *American Archives* (Washington, D.C., 1837-1846), 2: 174-176; *Pennsylvania Packet*, September 25, 1775.

⁴¹⁵ Thomas Gage to Henry Conway, 23 September 1765 and 8 November 1765, in *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage*, ed. Clarence E. Carter, 2 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1931), I: 72-73; *The Virginia Gazette*, September 1, 1774; Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 166; Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. For an older, but still enduring, argument directed toward the “decline of deference” during the Revolution, see Jackson Turner Main, *The Social Structure of Revolutionary America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965).

1779, America was in the throes of war and depression. Although the lower classes had gained unprecedented influence with their upper class leaders, this independence could not buy them increasingly scarce bread and goods. On October 4, 1779 handbills began circulating in Philadelphia's streets urging lower-class militiamen "to drive from the city all disaffected persons [Tories] and those who supported them" and put them on a prison ship headed for British-controlled New York. The militiamen chose a tavern on the outskirts of Philadelphia to organize, deliberate, and most certainly imbibe in drink, and thereafter seized four of Philadelphia's most detested Tory merchants and paraded them around the city. No longer did the lower classes need patrician leaders to protect them from "a few overbearing merchants, a swarm of monopolizers and speculators, [and] an infernal gang of Tories"—they could take matters into their own hands. As the group of militiamen headed for the prominent Tory James Wilson's house, Wilson (along with friends) barricaded his doors and windows. Intending to, as one poor carpenter asserted, "support the constitution, the laws, and the committee of trade," the militiamen paraded their prizes first in front of the coffeehouse and next by Wilson's house where a battle broke out which resulted in five deaths and fourteen injuries. Patrician Benjamin Rush lamented what became known as the Fort Wilson Riot exclaiming, "Poor Pennsylvania has become the most miserable spot under the surface of the globe." Blaming the lower classes' enragement "chiefly by liquor," Rush—like so many other patrician patriots—feared the disorderly power of the plebeians. "They call it a democracy," Rush cried, "a mobocracy in my opinion would be more proper."⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁶ Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 318-319; Steven Rosswurm, *Arms, Country, and Class: The Philadelphia Militia and "Lower Sort" During the American Revolution, 1775-1783* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987); L.H. Butterfield, ed., *Letters of Benjamin Rush*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1951), 1: 243-44. Billy G. Smith, *The "Lower Sort": Philadelphia's Laboring People, 1750-1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

Besides losing control over lower class taverngoers, upper class patriots also began to experience schisms within their patrician ranks as the Revolutionary Period wore on. John Adams happily noted that Philadelphia's St. George's Society, an elite association established for English connection and held in the Tun Tavern, had splintered by 1774. The members who considered themselves "staunch Americans" met at the City Tavern while "staunch Britons" gathered at a tavern outside of town and "halfway men" convened at the Bunch of Grapes tavern. Yet interior schisms were not always as simple as patriot versus loyalist. New York's patriots, for example, found themselves internally split among separate tavern factions in 1769. While Bolton and Sigel's taverns hosted non-importation meetings, two groups of "liberty boys" decided to hold their own repeal anniversary celebrations at Edward Smith and Henry Van De Water's taverns. Realizing the danger of such factions, the liberty boys at Van De Water's tavern extended a toast toward their fellow Sons of Liberty and assumed they returned the favor. Unsatisfied with assumptions, however, the Van De Water group decided to send an emissary to Smith's tavern, where he was given the choice to leave through the door, or be thrown out the window. Personal, political factions were growing in urban centers like New York and Philadelphia. While patriot leaders technically pursued a common goal of liberty, they also held their own esteem and reputation in high regard, which created internal schisms among their ranks. As elites quickly realized, Revolution was no simple task.⁴¹⁷

As Revolutionary taverns became "centers for the flowering and propagation of a new, secular, protorepublican political culture" they gave birth to a "many-headed monster" like patricians had never seen. No matter how much elites retreated to their private taverns, they could not escape the supposedly "mobbish" inclinations of their social inferiors. Plebeians rallied around taverns to assert themselves as strong constituents of a new, Republican America, and in

⁴¹⁷ Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution*, 162; Carp, *Rebels Rising*, 87.

doing so reconfigured their position in a long-standing hierarchy. A European visitor to Philadelphia in 1783 surprisingly noted “People think, act, and speak here as it prompts them; the poorest day-laborer on the bank of the Delaware holds it his right to advance his opinion, in religious as well as political matters, with as much freedom as the gentleman.” By spurring Revolution and encouraging the lower classes to participate in revolt, America’s patrician patriots had not only forever changed their Imperial identity, but also their hierarchical standing. Whether investigating Americans’ drastic shift from eager consumers of global products to staunch non-importers of British goods or the society’s transition from a strict hierarchy ruled by elites to a looser class system greatly influenced by the lower classes, taverns serve as a clear microcosm for understanding America’s revolutionary transformation from an Imperial subject to an independent Republic.⁴¹⁸

Studying the American Revolution through the lens of the tavern space also offers significant insights into how certain colonists came to terms with the cosmopolitan identities they had worked so hard to cultivate before the Revolutionary period.⁴¹⁹ Some cosmopolitan-hopefuls such as Alexander Hamilton and William Byrd II never lived to see the Revolution and thus went to their graves content with the pipedream of cosmopolitanism. Many other self-proclaimed “citizens of the world,” however, faced the ultimate challenge to their cosmopolitan identity as they were forced to reshape themselves as staunch patriots—whether of Britain or America. So intent on being viewed as equal, ardent, genteel members of the Empire by their metropolitan peers in the first half of the eighteenth century, after 1763 elite colonists were faced

⁴¹⁸ Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 254; Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*; Johann David Schöpf, *Travels in the Confederation, 1783-1784*, Vol. 1 (New York, 1968), I: 99;

⁴¹⁹ While this chapter explores the cosmopolitan identity as colonists would have understood it, other historians have utilized the term for their own means. Jackson Turner Main, for instance, described “Cosmopolitan” patriots as those more aligned with what would become the Federalist Party. He argued that the “Cosmopolitans” found their support in urban port centers along the Atlantic seaboard, while “Localists” (eventually Jeffersonian Republicans and anti-Federalists) were composed of inland/frontier agrarians. Jackson Turner Main, *Political Parties Before the Constitution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973).

with the harsh reality of Imperial inequality. Colonial patricians realized that—no matter how passionately they attempted to participate in the various threads of Imperial thought and culture—the British metropole did not see them as equals, but rather as provincial upstarts on the fringe of a global Empire. Whether a “staunch American” or a “staunch Briton,” every cosmopolitan-hopeful had to refashion his identity around a cosmopolitanism that existed more in symmetry with patriotism than it ever had. And while loyalists could retain the inherent Imperial nature of cosmopolitan thought, their patriot brethren had to come to terms with a new cosmopolitan, Republican patriotism; one divorced from the Empire that had spawned their cosmopolitan dreams in the first place.

As historian M.H. Boehm contended, “Cosmopolitanism as a mental attitude always manifests itself in the form of a compromise with nationalism, race consciousness, professional interests, caste feeling, family pride, and even with egotism,” but after 1763 aspiring British American “citizens of the world” had to deal with these contradictions more than ever. Although always an ideology at odds with lingering biases, the Revolutionary period put the cosmopolitan ideal in an especially precarious position. No longer unified in their goals for a universal cosmopolitan identity, anxious American elites divided along national, ideological, and political lines. Just as the world around them had radically changed in a very short time, so too had their hopes for becoming citizens of that world.⁴²⁰

Those cosmopolitan colonists who remained loyal to the Crown experienced little alteration in their own self-identification as “citizens of the world” during the American

⁴²⁰ Boehm, “Cosmopolitanism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* (New York, 1932), 4:458; Schlereth, *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought*, 133. Schlereth contended that the French Revolution was the beginning of the decline of our current understanding of cosmopolitanism: “The nationalistic excesses of the French Revolution were by no means the sole factors in the decline of the cosmopolitan ideal. In the international anarchy that followed, men throughout the trans-Atlantic community sought refuge against internal threat and external enemies in the concept of the nation. The Napoleonic Wars and the subsequent War of 1812-15 promoted a national consciousness in England, France, and America. The Enlightenment’s humanitarian nationalism became perverted into a militant national chauvinism.”

Revolution. Colonial loyalists saw themselves as “cosmopolitan patriots” defined by rational, benevolent, and enlightened worldliness in opposition to the revolutionaries who fell deeper into irrational patriotism every day. Take Savannah, Georgia loyalist James Habersham, for example. A man described as a “Citizen of the World” by historian Frank Lambert, Habersham constantly cultivated his cosmopolitan identity by participating in the elite tavern club the St. Andrew’s Society, consuming genteel products from around the globe, reading myriad Imperial publications, speaking Latin, wearing the most in-fashion clothes, and staying “so connected” with men throughout the Empire. Even when Habersham disagreed with Parliament’s conduct in the Stamp Act and his sons fomented rebellion against him and his fellow loyalists at Macheny’s Tavern, Habersham retained his belief in the Empire as the savior of “the rights of mankind.” He viewed the Sons of Liberty as anti-cosmopolitan, anti-Imperial upstarts who took the “powers of Government out of its proper and legal channel, and invest[ed] it in a Mob,” consequently subverting all “Law and Government” and exposing the American Continent only to “Violence and Rapine.” Habersham, a cosmopolitan colonist devoted to public life (including taverngoing) as a means through which to connect with the Empire and establish himself as a benevolent, rational, “citizen of the world” may not have had the same access to cosmopolitan channels he enjoyed before 1763, but this did not break his resolve. Rather Habersham, like cosmopolitan loyalists throughout America, dug in his heels during the American Revolution as a staunch supporter of the Empire and its inherent links to cosmopolitanism.⁴²¹

While cosmopolitan loyalists found themselves largely cut off from Imperial channels such as taverns during the Revolution, revolutionaries employed taverns as key tools to refashion their cosmopolitan identities. Those Revolutionaries who had once utilized tavern clubs to

⁴²¹ *The New-York Mercury*, December 11, 1752; Frank Lambert, *James Habersham: Loyalty, Politics, and Commerce in Colonial Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2005), 23, 130, 136, 168-69.

become “citizens of the world” adjusted the club setting to fit their new political and ideological beliefs. By 1770 they observed the absence—rather than a plethora—of many imported, genteel goods like tea as indicative of what they considered a cosmopolitan patriotism. Rather than isolating themselves from the lower classes, moreover, Revolutionary tavern societies such as the Sons of Liberty and the American Political Society celebrated the “rights of mankind” and called on their lower class “brethren” to attend to “the public good” and “let all divisions cease.” Middle class men joined previously exclusive cosmopolitan tavern clubs, which elicited much disgust from the multitudes of Tory elites remaining in North America. Reflecting the larger class and consumer alterations that accompanied America’s Revolutionary transformation from an Imperial vassal to an independent Republic, tavern clubs—and their cosmopolitan-minded members—adjusted their understanding of the world and their position in it to fit their new conception of what it meant to be a cosmopolitan who was also anti-Imperialistic and fiercely patriotic.

The American Political Society reveals how taverngoing patriots adjusted cosmopolitanism to their own means. Founded in Worcester, Massachusetts by middle class tavernkeeper Timothy Bigelow in December 1773, the American Political Society’s fifteen members secretly met in a different tavern each month to combat Worcester’s Tory minority. Although members took an oath to secrecy, the Society often unanimously agreed to make their decisions public, thus inviting mass participation and support. The Society’s members, moreover, were a combination of upper and middling class citizens, a far cry from the previously elite clubs that met in taverns. Combining Revolutionary fervor with genteel cosmopolitanism, the Society not only stressed that its members not drink to excess during their four-hour meetings, but also that any member who knew “of any infringements of the common rights of

mankind he shall make the same known.” Thus the Society adopted the language of cosmopolitanism to fit their purposes, labeling themselves defenders of “the rights of mankind,” which apparently the Empire and its followers had repeatedly broken. In cosmopolitan revolutionaries’ eyes, they were not falling into “ridiculous and absurd” patriotism as many Tories alleged, but were rather upholding what the Empire owed them—and what they considered one of the hallmarks of British superiority—liberty and limited monarchy. The members of Worcester’s American Political Society were, in short, defending what they considered the right sort of patriotic cosmopolitanism.⁴²²

Fundamental to the debate of cosmopolitanism versus patriotism that echoed throughout American taverns after 1763 was hierarchy—in particular how patriot cosmopolitans had to adjust their understanding of class and cosmopolitanism. Tory cosmopolitans tended to remain elite men, detached from the lower classes and disgusted with the patriotism that tore apart the world they had worked so hard to build. Newport’s small, patrician loyalist community, for example, managed to convene in Widow Stearns’s King’s Arms Tavern in 1774 to draft a petition (subsequently published in the *Massachusetts Gazette*) criticizing the American Political Society and other Sons of Liberty for falling in with lower class colonists and “discoursing of matters they do not understand, raising and propagating falsehoods and calumnies of those men they look up to in envy, intending to reduce all things to a state of tumult, discord, and confusion.” Elite, Tory cosmopolitans labeled revolutionary cosmopolites who depended upon the ignorant masses to push their disloyal cause as *lesser* citizens of the colonies, Empire, and

⁴²² “American Political Society Records (1773-74),” accessed August 17, 2012, <http://www1.assumption.edu/users/mcclymer/us%20survey/APSrecords.html>

world. Inciting rebellion from the Empire under the guise of defending “the rights of mankind” was bad enough, but relying on the “many-headed mob” to do so was absolutely unforgivable.⁴²³

While Tories fell back on old tenets of cosmopolitanism to make their case, patriots found new avenues to achieve revolutionary cosmopolitanism. Thomas Paine’s groundbreaking pamphlet, *Common Sense* was crucial to the “protorepublican,” cosmopolitan, multi-class political movement that exploded throughout America after 1763. Published in 1776, Paine’s pamphlet reached an unprecedented readership throughout America as it littered taverns’ tables and became a center point of tavern discussion. While staying in an Alexandria, Virginia tavern in 1776, the loyalist Nicholas Cresswell noted that “a pamphlet called ‘Commonsense’ makes a great noise...[Paine’s] sentiments are adopted by a great number of people who are indebted to Great Britain.” By espousing the virtues of a utopian, egalitarian, secular, republican society free from the class and consumer struggles inherent in monarchy, Paine spoke just as much to the lower classes as anxious patricians. In doing so, Paine found plenty of detractors among elite patriots. John Adams, in fact, attributed to Paine the lion’s share of the blame for the disorder that accompanied independence, combating the “democratical” influence of *Common Sense* with his own pamphlet in 1776 and ridiculing the “leveling spirit” that spread throughout the Atlantic world in the 1790s as “Paine’s yellow fever.” Perhaps realizing that criticisms from patricians like John Adams spoke more to pre-existing than recent anxieties, Paine also shrewdly labeled himself a “citizen of the world,” which helped him appeal to the upper- and middle-class cosmopolitan patriots who increasingly crowded America’s taverns.⁴²⁴

Amidst his repeated cries for patriotism, liberty, and justice, the perceptive Paine laced *Common Sense* with a deliberate cry for cosmopolitanism, requesting that all “ye that love

⁴²³ Conroy, *In Public Houses*, 282-85.

⁴²⁴ Foner, *Tom Paine*, xxvii-xxxv; Cresswell, *Journal*, 136.

mankind...stand forth!” As “every spot of the world over” was “overrun with oppression,” America should emerge as the world’s cosmopolitan center to “receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.” Paine thus appealed to revolutionary cosmopolitans’ sense of duty to the lower classes and the rest of the world as paternal patricians as well as their urge to retain their elite identity as citizens of the world. By breaking free from the bonds of “tyranny” America could step forward not only as a cosmopolite’s breeding ground, but also as an “asylum” for the “rights of mankind” and a beacon of cosmopolitanism for the rest of the world. In 1782 Paine contended that the American Revolution had allowed America’s citizens to understand the world in a cosmopolitan light: “We see with other eyes; we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts, than those we formerly used. We can look back on our own prejudices, as if they had been the prejudices of other people.” Paine—himself a professed citizen of the world—realized that in order to muster the full force of America’s revolutionaries, he had to appeal to their cosmopolitan side.⁴²⁵

Besides playing to elites’ sense of cosmopolitanism and paternalism, Paine also centered his revolutionary ideology on patriotism and nationalism. Paine realized that even if certain patricians professed to pursue cosmopolitanism, they, along with many other Americans, felt a peculiar loyalty to America. Paine was intent on using this nascent nationalism to his own advantage, and thus attempted what so many before him had—to bridge the gap between national allegiance and cosmopolitanism. Paine viewed America’s Revolution not only as a secession from Great Britain, but as he contended in *Common Sense*, “the cause of all mankind.”

⁴²⁵ Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (New York: Eckler, 1918), 37; Thomas Paine, *A Letter Addressed to the Abbe Raynal, On the Affairs of North America; in which the mistakes in the Abbe’s account of the Revolution of America are corrected and cleared up* (Rockville, MD: Manor, 2008), 54; John Keane, *Tom Paine: A Political Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1995), 229-232. On Paine’s self-identification as a citizen of the world, see Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis*, Chapter VII (London, 1776-1783) where he professed: “My attachment is to all the world, and not to any particular part.” Also see Ian Dyck, ed. *Citizen of the World: Essays on Thomas Paine* (London: Christopher Helm, 1987).

With a successful American Revolution, Paine thought that America could “begin the world over again.” Thus Paine utilized revolutionaries’ growing sense of American loyalty in combination with their urge to define themselves as defenders of “the rights of mankind” to push a new sort of American cosmopolitan patriotism; one founded on universal ideologies of liberty and rights, but also wholly reliant on Americans’ vision of themselves as distinct from the rest of the world. Cosmopolitanism remained a global identity steeped in bias and self-superiority.⁴²⁶

North American taverns consequently serve as fundamental lens through which to understand Americans’ transition from proud Imperial subjects to instigators of Revolution, and finally to Republican citizens. After 1763, American taverns transformed from public spaces of intense Imperial connection into revolutionary spaces where taverngoers evaluated, condemned, and avoided many Imperial connections in favor of more national, Republican ideals. Patriots and loyalists shifted traditions of class, consumerism, and cosmopolitanism to their own means. Consumer decisions came to symbolize political decisions, class lines forever changed in the face of rebellion, and cosmopolitanism divided between Imperial and republican allegiances. Revolutionary taverns were altered manifestations of a time-tested institution of Imperial connection.

⁴²⁶ Paine, *Common Sense*, x, 57.

Conclusion

On June 5th, 1782, the elite-led Sons of St. Patrick Society celebrated the anniversary of the feast of their patron saint at Philadelphia's City Tavern. President George Washington attended the anniversary, as did various members of Congress and foreign ambassadors, ministers, and consuls who lodged in Philadelphia. When dinner convened, the leaders followed custom by drinking a variety of toasts. Where only ten years earlier patricians had centered their toasts around the British Empire, however, Washington and his compatriots now toasted first to "The United States," second to various European Empires, and third to "Perpetual peace and commerce with the whole world." Rather than serving as spaces of Empire, post-Revolutionary taverns increasingly symbolized America's detachment from the British Empire and fitful Republican development. As always, then, taverns continued to reflect America's trajectory, worldview, and desires. One worldly "correspondent" lauded how cosmopolitan America had become by 1782, noting, "Every language of Europe is now spoken in [America's] Coffeehouses, and every dress of Europe is now seen in [America's] streets." He continued, "Every friend to peace and the interests of humanity...must rejoice in beholding the happy effects of independence upon this country." As Americans ushered in an exciting new age of Republicanism and growth, they adjusted taverns to fit their evolving purposes.⁴²⁷

British American taverns had not always been hives of revolution, discontent, and transformation. Until 1763 colonial American taverns served as important connectors to the Empire—spaces where colonists consumed global goods, reinforced and sometimes contested Imperial class systems, and confronted cosmopolitan ideologies and identities. Pre-Revolutionary taverns were, in short, spaces of Imperial connection, understanding, and

⁴²⁷ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 12, 1782.

ultimately conflict. Yet by serving as spaces of Imperial connection, taverns in many ways also provided colonists with the skills they would ultimately need in Revolution. In taverns colonists learned how to confront class issues, how to organize themselves around ideas, how to act as consumers, and how to resist control. The tavern space provided patricians an arena in which to tackle their concerns over the lower classes while also extending their ideologies of gentility and Imperial power on the public landscape. At the same time, taverns also served as arenas of intense class conflict where lower class colonists of every color, sex, and religion resisted elite mechanisms of control and asserted themselves as important parts of colonial society. By gulping down beverages such as coffee, tea, chocolate, wine, and rum, reading tracts and letters, conversing and trading with strangers, and viewing various exhibits, moreover, taverngoers became vital constituents in local and world consumer networks. Taverns, in short, were neither spaces of latent radicalism before 1763, nor were they inevitably nurturing colonists for Revolution. Rather, they were spaces of Empire—important creations of colonists who craved connection to their mother country before 1763, and increasing detachment thereafter.

Like the Americans who continued to drink at their tables and sleep in their rooms, post-Revolutionary taverns continued to change with and for American society. Americans still frequented taverns for local and global networking after the Revolution, just not with the express purpose of asserting their position in or connection with the British Empire. Rather, many saw their public participation and interaction in taverns as symbolic of their identity as Americans—what they considered the most Republican, cosmopolitan, liberty-filled nation on Earth. One contributor to the *Pennsylvania Gazette* asserted in 1782 that America had affirmed the importance of “universal benevolence and peace,” strengthening the ties “of universal interest and unlimited commerce” forever. An English visitor to America at the end of the eighteenth

century contended that upon meeting a Briton in an American tavern, Americans would “immediately begin to boast of their own constitution and freedom, and give him to understand that they think every Englishman a slave, because he admits to be called a subject.” Finding Americans taverngoers’ discussions of liberty “crude and dogmatical,” the Englishman noted that most of their opinions were borrowed from “wretchedly compiled” American newspapers, which, after having read a few, “they think themselves arrived at the summit of intellectual excellence, and qualified for making the deepest political researches.” Although this Englishman’s experiences with Americans were no doubt laced with bias on both sides, it nonetheless provides us a window into understanding Americans’ feelings of pride and importance after the Revolution. The alcohol and bonhomie of the tavern space surely only amplified such satisfaction.⁴²⁸

Such post-Revolutionary national pride, however, led certain Americans to demand a public drinking space more befitting of their grand Republic. Historian A.K. Sandoval-Strausz contends that the transformation of taverns and rise of hotels in the 1790s correlated directly with the establishment of the United States federal government under the Constitution of 1787. Seeking to once again gain control over and distance from the lower classes after the tumultuous Revolution, elite Americans combined the forces of government and public space more than ever to create official, government-mandated public monuments to the grandeur of the emerging American Republic. Included among these new projects were grand hotels such as Washington, D.C.’s Union Public Hotel (1793), New York City’s City Hotel (1794), and Boston’s Exchange Coffee House (1806). While the Union Public Hotel was literally funded by the federal government, local elites (who were also powerful members of the local government) formed subscription lotteries to fund the City Hotel and the Exchange Coffee House.

⁴²⁸ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 12, 1782; Weld, *Travels*, 391-93.

Like elite-led taverns in the pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary period, urban hotels served as patrician bastions of gentility and power. These distinguished architectural structures rose as high as ten stories, and boasted as many as 170 rooms devoted to lodging in addition to various other grand rooms for dining, drinking alcohol, coffee and tea tables, dressing, dancing, and card playing. Pushing prices beyond the grasp of the lower classes, hotels indicated a “deliberate attempt to create a new class of public houses which would stand unmistakably apart from their predecessors.” Elite Americans realized that in order to truly gain power over the public and their spaces, they had to combine forces with the most powerful entity in America—the federal government. Eventually hotels’ tandem emergence with federal power made them the most popular public spaces for Americans’ new desires. As Sandoval-Strausz contended, Americans intended hotels “to establish a new paradigm for public houses, public space, and public life in America.” Americans had made a new nation, now they needed a new type of public space to accompany it. Hotels became the ultimate realization of elites’ need for their own private spaces of power and exclusivity.⁴²⁹

Patricians’ establishment of private hotel spaces did not stop the lower classes from criticizing the upper classes’ ongoing attempts at exclusivity. More powerful than ever after their forceful assertion during the Revolutionary War, the American masses scorned the developers of New York’s City Hotel as lords who favored “the ancient Colony system of servility and adulation.” When Boston’s somewhat detested Exchange Coffee House burned down in 1818, lower class onlookers reveled over the smoldering embers of a hotel “[which] arose on the ruins of many industrious citizens” and bore “evidences of the fallacious promises, which were too successfully practised on the credulous tradesmen.” Another onlooker jeered that the Exchange

⁴²⁹ A.K. Sandoval-Strausz, “A Public House for a New Republic: The Architecture of Accommodation and the American State, 1789-1908,” *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 9 (2004): 61, 63, 59; A.K. Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotel: An American History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 43.

Coffee House “was conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, but it is now purified by fire.” Realizing that the upper classes considered hotels as direct representations of their own might, many plebeians found joy in such structures tumbling. Just as they had for so many years, then, lower class Americans continued to resist elite mechanisms of control and power through words and action.⁴³⁰

Consequently, as American patricians increasingly retreated to their gilded hotels, private gardens, dainty tearooms, soothing spas, and centers of government in the 1790s, most other Americans continued to frequent those spaces which had harbored them for so long—taverns. Lower class men upheld the tavern space as arenas of masculinity as they gambled, drank, and fought, all the while inciting ridicule and scorn from the various reform societies springing up across America from the late eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. Yet taverns were not immune to the changing tides of the early American Republic. They too were swept up in the waves of gentility, reform, and nationalism that hotels fostered, and accordingly certain tavernkeepers began to advertise that in their tavern “every lodger had a room to himself,” while other proprietors reopened their establishments as “hotels.” Tavernkeepers in the northeast increasingly attempted to present their spaces as more orderly and accommodating than others, thus appealing to the sort of men less likely to destroy the reputation (and perhaps furniture) of their public taverns. Lower class, rough taverns still existed of course, but their existence was hard-fought with the ongoing temperance movement and the ultimate passage of prohibition in the twentieth century. Like they always had, American taverns reflected the places and people around them.⁴³¹

⁴³⁰ Sandoval-Strausz, “A Public House for a New Republic,” 63; Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotel*, 39.

⁴³¹ Sandoval-Strausz, “A Public House for a New Republic,” 66; Michael Kaplan, “New York City Tavern Violence and the Creation of a Working-Class Male Identity,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 15 (Winter, 1995): 591-617;

Taverngoers and tavernkeepers also adjusted taverns to fit the era of “Manifest Destiny” (and an all-time drinking peak) that swept throughout America in the eighteenth century. As Americans pushed west and brought copious amounts of alcohol with them, saloons replaced taverns in name but not purpose. Saloons continued to serve liquor, offer food and lodging, and cater to segregated social classes. Fights broke out in these central drinking establishments and rich clashed with poor. As Western boomtowns matured into cities and men grew rich from gold and trade, however, Americans in the West required more segregated, proper spaces for public recreation. Like taverns before them, saloons evolved to include more substantial and upscale spaces that varied in size, décor, clientele, and services. Yet as temperance became a sticking point first among Americans such as Carry Nation and eventually throughout the general populace, taverns and saloons descended into the realm of supposed iniquity and crime. Such an image of lower class taverngoing, of course, was not new, as elites had attempted since the sixteenth century to curb the inherent disorder of plebeian taverngoing. Nonetheless, as the lower classes snuck moonshine in back rooms and speakeasies during the second half of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, hotel-goers in metropolitan areas continued to enjoy alcohol since, as paying upper class citizens, they were supposedly more “refined” and “controlled” than the drunken tavern rabble. America’s drinking spaces may have changed to fit the times, but many of the class lines that dated back to the colonial era still remained quite intact.⁴³²

While further stratification and diversification of America’s public drinking spaces followed the Revolutionary period, women gained unprecedented power in the early American

Richard Stott, *Jolly Fellows: Male Milieus in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

⁴³² Elliott West, *The Saloon on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979); Perry R. Duis, *The Saloon: Public Drinking in Chicago and Boston, 1880-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983).

Republic and its hotels. Having established themselves as important members of the British Empire by acting as tavernkeepers before the Revolutionary War and active constituents of the non-importation movement thereafter, American women gained new footholds in American society after the Revolution as men looked to them as “Republican mothers” destined to raise American children into just, strong, Republican constituents of a proud, powerful nation. This enhanced importance in the private sphere afforded women more public influence. The female presence in American hotels was a direct reflection of such gender changes. Where women’s main role in public life (including taverns) in the eighteenth century had been subservient, more “respectable,” upper class women’s presence in hotels came to signify these spaces as even more elite, powerful, and exclusive. It must be stressed that women’s hotel presence offered only a small step for females in the public sphere, considering men still held relative power over them in hotels. Nonetheless, women’s accepted presence in hotels speaks to larger mechanizations of change in the early Republic. Women’s voices grew more forceful by the day, and somewhat ironically (but perhaps not), it was women who eventually led the prohibition and temperance movements, effectively shutting down thousands of taverns throughout America.⁴³³

Beyond the maturation of taverns, the birth of hotels, and the establishment of Federal Government, America’s Revolution set off a chain of events that not only reshaped the British American Empire, but also forever altered the Atlantic world’s Imperial landscape. America’s successful rebellion forced the British Empire to take its global pursuits further east as Royal outposts intensified in Asia, the Pacific, and India. The victory of Republican ideology through

⁴³³ Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty’s Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980); Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Sandoval-Strausz, “A Public House for a New Republic,” 62-63; Meacham, *Every Home a Distillery*, 136; Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (New York: Scribner, 2010); Michael A. Lerner, *Dry Manhattan: Prohibition in New York City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement*, Second Edition (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

outright revolt, moreover, sparked the ignition of an “Age of Revolution” throughout the Atlantic world as Haiti successfully rebelled from France and French revolutionaries overthrew the Monarchy in the late eighteenth century. Such global reverberations revealed, as historian C.A. Bayly noted, “the interconnectedness and interdependencies of political and social changes across the world well before the supposed onset of the contemporary phase of ‘globalization’ after 1945.” The equilibrium so important for the existence of the British Atlantic Empire had forever destabilized, transforming into an upstart American Republic in North America, some contested sugar islands in the West Indies, an increasingly liberalized West Africa, a tumultuous South American continent, and finally the United Kingdom who looked east rather than west for the future of their Empire.⁴³⁴

Taverns, then, have always been direct reflections of the people who attended them. They served as connectors to Empire when colonists still so ardently sought such an identity, detachment points from the Empire when patriots crowded their halls, and finally shifting places for Republicans looking to a new future. While taverns fell somewhat to the wayside during the nineteenth century as hotels and the private spaces like the home replaced them as prime meeting spots, taverns and saloons nonetheless continued to serve Americans looking for a drink, camaraderie, and maybe a bed. While no longer spaces of a British Empire, taverns were still—and always will be—reflective arenas of human interaction and desire.

⁴³⁴ Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World*, 1; Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*; Laurent DuBois, *Avengers of the New World: the Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); David Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

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